



CLWR REQUESTS SUPPORT FOR HUMANITARIAN AID IN GAZA

January 7, 2009 – [Canadian Lutheran World Relief](#) (CLWR) and its partners in the region have taken action to address the humanitarian needs of the many Palestinians who are unable to escape the escalating violence in the Gaza Strip. Funds to support immediate relief efforts are needed.

The agency is cooperating with other members of Action by Churches Together (ACT) International, including the Lutheran World Federation (LWF), to respond to emergency needs as the situation develops. Priority relief measures in the coming days and weeks include the provision of food items like rice, flour and high protein biscuits; cooking fuel; blankets; medical supplies; as well as psychosocial counselling.

Aid workers report desperate circumstances. Food is in extremely short supply. Fuel is running low. Mobile medical clinics have been destroyed by Israeli air strikes. Hospitals continue to receive a steady stream of patients, many of them civilians who were struck by shrapnel or falling debris while sitting in their homes.

“No one goes out on the streets except if they really have to,” said Omar Almajdalawi from Jabalia in Gaza, an aid worker with ACT International member DanChurchAid. He tells that most people now live with open windows, despite the cold, so that the glass does not break into a hundred pieces from the impact of missiles exploding in the area.

At the Al Ahli Arab Hospital in Gaza City, a ministry of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem, supported by ACT International members, staff have been working around the clock to cope with casualties and are exhausted. Director Dr. Suhaila Tarazi reports "the hospital is in urgent need of medicine and supplies. There is no electricity in all of Gaza and so we are currently running off of generator power. We have very little supplies left - enough to last for another week. If this crisis continues, we will be in a very dire situation."

CLWR has a long history of humanitarian work in the region through the LWF, including support for the Augusta Victoria Hospital (AVH) in East Jerusalem. AVH offers specialized medical services like cancer treatment and dialysis to Palestinians. The hospital does treat some cancer patients from Gaza and will need additional funds to cover the costs of housing, food, transportation, and other support for these patients and accompanying family members who are unable to return to Gaza.

Contributions for this emergency response can be made at www.clwr.org/donate. CLWR forwards 100 percent of all donations designated for emergency response measures, retaining no portion for administration costs.

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CLWR carries out international emergency relief, development programming, refugee resettlement and alternative trade merchandising on behalf of the two major Lutheran church bodies in Canada (the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada and Lutheran Church–Canada) and Canadians of goodwill. As a registered not for profit agency, funding comes through donations and through agreements with Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). CLWR is a member of the Canadian Council of Christian Charities, the Canadian Council for International Cooperation, the Lutheran World Federation and Action by Churches Together (ACT) International. The agency's head office is located in Winnipeg, with regional offices in Vancouver, Toronto and Santa Cruz (Bolivia).