

## United States

*IOCC was established in 1992 and is the official humanitarian organization of the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of the United States. IOCC provides emergency relief and development assistance to those in need worldwide, without discrimination, and strengthens the capacity of the Orthodox Church and local NGO and community partners. Its global operations are managed from its headquarters in Baltimore, Maryland, in the United States, with field offices in Eastern Europe, the Middle East, East Africa, and the US. Since its founding, IOCC has provided more than \$800 million worth of aid in over 60 countries around the world, and has extensive experience implementing programs in partnership with United States government agencies (USAID, BHA, PRM) and the United Nations (UNICEF, WFP, UNHCR, OCHA), as well as with European and international donors.*

*IOCC's work in the United States began following the tragedy on September 11, 2001. Since then, IOCC has programmed over \$67 million and coordinated over 76,000 hours of volunteer service in responding to natural and human-caused disasters around the US, including hurricanes, tornadoes, floods, mass shootings, and other emergencies. IOCC staff and volunteers are ready to deploy in the early aftermath of an emergency anywhere in the country, but the work of preparing for, responding to, and recovering from emergencies happens every day.*

### Emergency Preparedness

Through its **Homefront** program, IOCC strengthens the capacity of Orthodox Christian parishes in the United States to respond to emergencies in their neighborhoods and communities. Parishes in the program train both to continue their ministry amid emergencies and to serve their neighbors during a crisis. Staff, volunteers, and community members learn from experienced IOCC staff what to expect when a disaster happens in their local area and how to plan and manage a response. They create disaster preparedness plans to map out responses to the most likely disasters in their area. They also learn how to coordinate with other responders to ensure their efforts are

part of a larger plan, needs are prioritized, and initiatives don't overlap. There are currently 66 parishes participating in the program and are at various stages of training and capacity building.

Through IOCC's youth service-leadership conference, **Serv-X-Treme**, rising high school seniors learn how to become catalysts in their peer groups and engage with the needs of their communities both in times of crisis and every day. Participants explore the importance of volunteering, the role of service, and ways that solidarity with those in need can give hope to and foster resilience in individuals and communities facing challenges.

### Emergency Response



IOCC's **disaster response** program provides early assistance to communities suffering from the effects of a disaster. Teams are led by an experienced IOCC staff member or

trained and experienced volunteer who plans and directs the team's efforts. Team members include both IOCC volunteers from around the country who have trained with IOCC and may have responded to

previous emergencies, and local volunteers—often members of the local Orthodox parish—who are ready to serve with IOCC. Teams can provide a variety of response services, from distributing relief supplies and offering referrals to local services to clean-up and debris removal as the situation requires. IOCC's teams may be based out of a Homefront parish or another base of operations, and they work to respond to the acute human suffering that follows a disaster and help begin the recovery process.

## Emergency Response *(continued)*



IOCC **Frontliners** also arrive early in the response and recovery process following a disaster. These teams have been responding to disasters since the creation of IOCC's US program in 2001. Frontliners are

highly trained and credentialed professionals and volunteers who can provide emotional and spiritual care to those affected by the events they have survived or witnessed. Frontliners are also trained to provide support to first responders as they navigate the challenges inherent to disaster response work.

Experts in their fields, Frontliners bring with them their own professional experiences as well as the training IOCC has provided them on disaster response. They can provide direct psychosocial, emotional, and spiritual care to those suffering, and they know the signs and symptoms to look for that indicate someone may be suffering but is not yet ready to ask for help. Frontliners can offer information about local providers and let other friends, family members, and community members know what they are seeing and how to support people at all stages of their grief and pain, and throughout the process of coming to terms with trauma.



**Care Calls** are another intervention IOCC can deploy when responding to a crisis. *Care Calls* are phone or video calls made by trained IOCC staff and volunteers to individuals identified in the emergency (by

Frontliners, Emergency Action Teams, or through referrals by other responders) who may be feeling isolated, overwhelmed, or unsure how to process their feelings. While many people today are comfortable connecting via social media and other nonverbal communication channels, some, often the elderly or those living alone, appreciate the opportunity to talk and learn that someone is listening and ready to help. *Care Calls* follow an intentional, vetted script prepared by experts. A *Care Call* could be a one-time call or a series of calls, and can also result in a referral to a Frontliner or to another service provider who can offer support.

**Care Compass** is a set of tools response teams and Frontliners can use. Created by IOCC in consultation with experts, *Care Compass* is a series of online resources on grieving, family dynamics, resilience, and self-care to which people in need can be referred. These resources, useful for communities and individuals alike, can be accessed at any stage in the recovery process, and can help them understand that their feelings, fears, and concerns are common and normal. The tools can also help them find the confidence to reach out for additional support.

## Emergency Recovery



The acute phase of emergency response may last hours or days, but the recovery process can last years or a lifetime. IOCC's **home builds** help with this process over the days, weeks, and years that follow a disaster. IOCC volun-

teer teams are led by an IOCC staff team leader or experienced volunteer who can identify projects for the team to work on and coordinate with other agencies, local government, and volunteers to

ensure IOCC's efforts complement and are part of the wider community response. IOCC teams may be present in an area for a few weeks, months, or over several years to help communities recover from disasters by rebuilding homes in affected communities. The work of helping hands is important, but so is the solidarity of standing shoulder to shoulder with affected community members and homeowners to remind them that others are with them in the face of adversity. Some of IOCC's volunteers come from disaster-affected communities themselves and are committed to offering others the work of helping hands their own communities have received.

**THROUGHOUT THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC**, IOCC continued its projects around the world while taking steps to protect staff, partners, and beneficiaries. All projects are continuously evaluated for multiple risk factors, and appropriate modifications made. IOCC ensures that all staff and beneficiaries receive information about COVID-19, including testing locations, and integrates this information into ongoing projects, as indicated by local health authorities.

# Active Worldwide Programs



● Emergency Preparedness & Response .....	119,043
● Water, Sanitation, & Hygiene (WASH).....	66,540
● Sustainable Livelihoods .....	23,912
● Food Security & Agriculture.....	112,602
● Health .....	658,135
● Other (Education, Nonfood Items, Shelter, Protection) .....	2,703

## IN 2022, IOCC SERVED 982,935 PEOPLE WORLDWIDE

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