

## 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 \$830 million worth of aid in over 60 countries around the world, and has extensive experience implementing programs in partnership with United States government agencies (US State Department, PRM, USAID, USDA) 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 \$72 million and coordinated over 126,000 hours of volunteer service in responding to natural and human-caused disasters around the US, including hurricanes, tornadoes, fires, 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 experi-

enced 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.

### 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 Action Team 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 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 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 another set of tools response teams and Frontliners can use to help those impacted by disasters. 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.



## Hurricane Helene/Hurricane Milton Response



After Hurricanes Helene and Milton devastated the southeastern US in the fall of 2024, IOCC immediately responded with the provision of emotional and spiritual care (ESC) to survivors and conducted needs assessments in Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia. Informed by these assessments, IOCC focused its response on Tennessee and Florida. Soon after, IOCC dispatched Action Team members and volunteers to these

locations to assist with cleaning up and muck out homes to prepare for rebuilding. IOCC has now fully transitioned to the rebuilding phase of its Helene and Milton response, and has solidified its commitment to these recovery efforts for a full 24-months (from the start date of the response). To date, over 1,800 hours of labor have been dedicated to muck out work, over 1,600 hours to rebuilding, and almost 300 hours to emotional and spiritual care for survivors.

## Long-Term Recovery

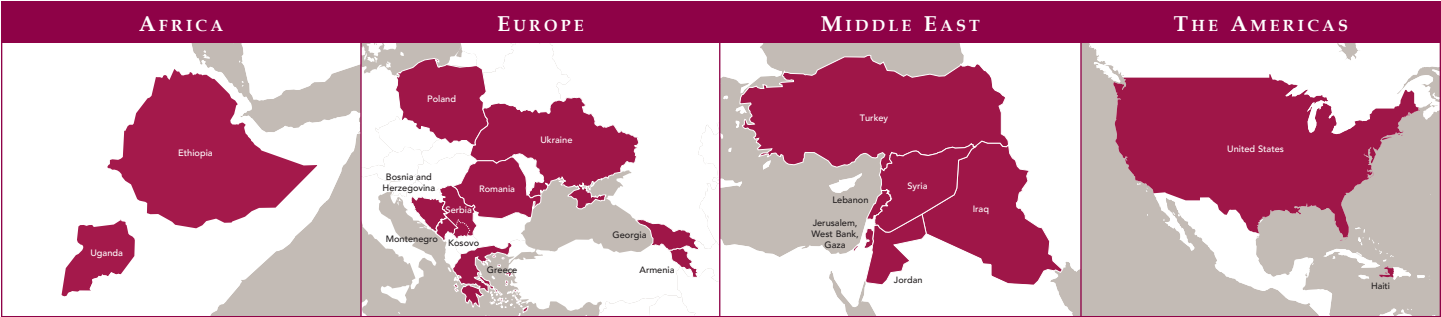


The acute phase of emergency response may last hours or days, but the recovery process can last much longer. IOCC's Home Builds help with this process over the weeks and months, and often years, that follow a disaster. IOCC

volunteer teams are led by IOCC staff or Action Team Leaders who can identify projects for the team to work on and coordinate with other volunteers, partner agencies, and local government to

ensure IOCC's efforts complement and are part of the wider community response. IOCC teams will engage in short and long-term efforts to help communities recover from disasters by rebuilding homes in affected communities. The work of volunteers and staff members 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 help their own communities have received.

# Active Worldwide Programs



- Ethiopia
  - Uganda
- Armenia
  - Bosnia and Herzegovina
  - Georgia
  - Greece
  - Montenegro
  - Poland
  - Romania
  - Serbia including Kosovo
  - Ukraine
- Iraq
  - Jerusalem, West Bank, Gaza
  - Jordan
  - Lebanon
  - Syria
  - Turkey
- Haiti
  - United States



Emergency Preparedness & Response	110,270
Sustainable Livelihoods	26,290
Food Security & Agriculture	108,902
Health	742,444
Other (Education, Nonfood Items, Shelter, Protection)	159,618

## IN 2024, IOCC SERVED 1,147,524 PEOPLE WORLDWIDE

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