Sharing Some Thoughts from Lutheran World Relief Missions ...

**Once feared lost, lifesaving supplies found in Beirut explosion's rubble**

Matt Hackworth **-** Reported on Aug 14, 2020 **-** Below is the original story published shortly after the blast.

Thousands of the quilts and kits Lutheran World Relief supporters created in love for neighbors in need in Lebanon sit among the twisted metal and rubble in Beirut’s nearly-destroyed port. "It's an unprecedented situation," [Anera](https://www.anera.org/) in-kind program coordinator Lina Atat said while waiting at a security checkpoint to enter the port. "Getting supplies is challenging, and many of these are life-saving." Anera was to take receipt of seven containers from the port. Three contained LWR goods, and the rest were donated pharmaceuticals. All were bound to support Anera’s effort to help Palestinian and Syrian refugees living in Lebanon.

Yet the Aug. 4 explosion changed things for Anera, and for hundreds of thousands of Beirutis who lost loved ones and homes. Atat, a pharmacist, explained Anera’s connections to the U.S. State Department and helped to ensure an emergency airlift of medicines is planned.

The Port of Beirut is closed for shipping following the ammonium nitrate blast that killed more than 150 and forced 300,000 from their homes. Staff from Lutheran World Relief and Anera have not been successful at gaining access to the port, which is heavily protected by the military, in order to confirm the condition of the resources meant to help.

"But Lutheran World Relief was the first to offer to replace what was lost," Atat said. Lutheran World Relief humanitarian assistance staff are working to replace the lost quilts with stores from a Dubai warehouse managed by the United Nations. Traveling over land, the quilts will join Anera’s programs in Lebanon, where 1 in every 4 people is a refugee. The total value of the lost LWR shipments was approximately $624,000 and included 22,000 quilts, sewn by individuals and members of Lutheran congregations across the U.S. The loss could mean a bitter winter for thousands of refugees and other vulnerable groups Anera serves. Then, on August 17th, there was a new report:

# More details emerge on humanitarian goods caught in Beirut explosion damage

BEIRUT – Digging through the piles of rubble in the city’s destroyed port, local staff have been able to locate and extract the remains of a shipment of humanitarian supplies meant to help refugees and other vulnerable communities in Lebanon. “We’re still learning all we can, and it’s like piecing together a complex puzzle,” said Carrie Taneyhill, Lutheran World Relief’s director of humanitarian response.  Taneyhill said staff from local partner, Anera have been able to reach the scene of three damaged shipping containers holding more than $600,000 of humanitarian supplies, including kits assembled to promote personal hygiene and bales of hand-sewn quilts from churches.

The goods had been reported as destroyed by the Aug. 4 ammonium nitrate blast that killed more than 180 people. The devastation forced more than 300,000 people from their homes. Destruction was so severe that the area around the port, where the shipping containers had been housed, has just now been able to be reached.   Lutheran World Relief staff have worked for weeks with Anera staff to gain access to the port to verify the damage. It appeared at first glance that the three containers were behind a building, a spot which may have afforded the containers some small amount of protection from the blast. The containers were damaged – but not completely destroyed, as initially believed.   “Our local partner, Anera is still sorting through the damaged goods to see if anything can be salvaged,” said Melanie Gibbons, Lutheran World Relief’s outreach and engagement team leader.  “Our goal is to help the people of Lebanon and to keep those making that help possible – our supporters – fully informed as things unfold.”

**Christ Lutheran Church Women (CLCW)**

**Lutheran World Relief**

Distributing humanitarian supplies is only one component of the Lutheran World Relief response. The agency is also working to address immense shelter needs, helping poorer families to repair and return to their homes.

In the Spring of 2020, due to COVID we were unable to ship quilts & kits to the Lutheran World Relief Warehouse. In September 2020, the Minnesota warehouse was empty & in Maryland, their shelves were empty, also. Since the pandemic began, they have received about 40% of their normal amount of donations. Quilts and kits are desperately needed!

Right now, there is a strong emphasis on the need of Personal Care Kits. We hope that you will have time to look at the LWR table and see what is needed for each kit. And, we can always use help with the quilt making!

In 2020, for the Fall shipment, we were able to ship 82 Quilts, 31 Personal Care Kits, 28 School Kits, 32 Baby Care Kits, and 11 Sewing Kits.

**Christ Lutheran Church Women (CLCW)**

**Lutheran World Relief**

Distributing humanitarian supplies is only one component of the Lutheran World Relief response. The agency is also working to address immense shelter needs, helping poorer families to repair and return to their homes.

In the Spring of 2020, due to COVID we were unable to ship quilts & kits to the Lutheran World Relief Warehouse. In September 2020, the Minnesota warehouse was empty & in Maryland, their shelves were empty, also. Since the pandemic began, they have received about 40% of their normal amount of donations. Quilts and kits are desperately needed!

Right now, there is a strong emphasis on the need of Personal Care Kits. We hope that you will have time to look at the LWR table and see what is needed for each kit. And, we can always use help with the quilt making!

In 2020, for the Fall shipment, we were able to ship 82 Quilts, 31 Personal Care Kits, 28 School Kits, 32 Baby Care Kits, and 11 Sewing Kits.