

Mercy-USA

for Aid and Development®

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Our newly hired medical team took a few seconds before starting another busy day last month to line up for our camera at the doorstep of the new Mercy-USA Primary Health Clinic in Idlib province, Syria.

Mercy-USA Primary Health Clinic is Running at Full Speed Already

When Assad Regime troops tore into the neighborhood being served by Mercy-USA for Aid and Development's Health Clinic, our remaining staff knew they had to shut the doors, and run for their lives. Any humanitarian workers found in the Rebel held areas would be arrested or worse, so the remaining medicine and equipment had to be abandoned. That was in the last days of December 2016. Less than three months later, Mercy-USA opened a new, more comprehensive primary health clinic in northern Syria to serve the healthcare

needs of a population of at least 30,000. We're proud to have not wasted a moment in getting a new healthcare clinic up and running quickly and efficiently. We refurbished an empty building



that provides plenty of room to serve the surrounding population, and since word has spread that

there is free healthcare and access to qualified medical professionals, the waiting areas are full. *Read more on the next page.*

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Mercy-USA for Aid and Development is a nonprofit relief and development organization dedicated to alleviating human suffering and supporting individuals and their communities in their efforts to become more self-sufficient.

Incorporated in 1988, Mercy-USA's projects focus on improving health, nutrition and access to safe water, as well as promoting economic and educational growth around the world.

- Registered with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID)
- Special Consultative Status with the United Nations
- Member of InterAction

44450 Pinetree Drive, Suite 201
Plymouth, Michigan 48170-3869
Telephone: 734-454-0011 1-800-55-MERCY
(1-800-556-3729)
FAX: 734-454-0303
info@mercyusa.org

mercyusa.org

Other Mercy-USA Offices

- Tirana, Albania
- Tuzla, Bosnia
- Medan, Indonesia
- Nairobi, Kenya
- Tripoli, Lebanon
- Mogadishu, Somalia
- Antakya, Turkey

Healthcare to Syrians who haven't seen a doctor for years.

Imagine having a child born with birth defects but having no doctor to guide you in caring for her special needs. Bushra was born with deformed limbs, and her parents had no access to healthcare due to war and poverty. That all changed when Mercy-USA opened the Primary Health Clinic in Idlib Province in northern Syria earlier this year.

Clearly distressed, Azba, Bushra's mother carried the very sick 2 year-old Bushra, who was struggling to breathe into our new clinic. Mercy-USA pediatrician, Dr. Fatema Alsood, treated the baby for pneumonia, and prescribed medicine but went one step further. She sat down with Azba and reassured her, promising to take special interest in Bushra and guide Azba in caring for her daughter as she grows up. Dr. Fatema's extra concern and assurances to the family gave them hope for Bushra's future.

This was the first time Bushra had ever been seen by a physician. Nearby, free and competent medical care is something Azba and her husband can now rely upon for all of their children and themselves.

The new Primary Healthcare Clinic is serving a population of at least 30,000 people, many of whom like Bushra, have not seen a doctor for years because of the war. In addition to primary health, we are offering pre-and post-natal care, pediatric care and just as importantly, psycho-social care in response to the extreme trauma the protracted war has caused.



Dr Fatema writes a prescription for Bushra's pneumonia. Her mother took it to our pharmacy in the same location and had it filled free of cost. No worries about how to afford needed medicine or care.



Bushra's pneumonia was treated at her first-ever doctor's visit to our Primary Health Clinic. While she looks frightened, those deep cries helped her to get the much needed medicine into her lungs.

Bushra's parents were so relieved to find a doctor for their baby that they invited our photographer to visit their home that day. Azba asked him to thank the Mercy-USA donors for helping her family and her neighbors with this much needed access to quality medical care.

A Mother's Story of Coping with Devastating Drought in Somalia

"Since I was born, I have never known any other business but keeping animals," said Khadija who is like so many pastoral Somalis right now. Three successive years of drought in parts of the country have decimated the livelihoods of pastoral communities. Many families with large herds of sheep, goats and camels were doing well until the drought arrived, slowly killing their animals from starvation and disease. In these communities, a family's livestock is its wealth and livelihood.

About fifteen miles outside the small city of Las Anod, rough and makeshift settlements known as Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps have sprung up, filled with hundreds of disconnected families who have been forced to give up their livelihood to look for food and water. Families have been split up as the men take their remaining camels in search of pasture while mothers have gathered their children and joined others in IDP camps. Here, these very independent and proud women and children are forced to rely on humanitarian aid.

We visited Khadija's makeshift home on a day we delivered food baskets and water to the camp and she told us her family's story. The common threads of her sadness were repeated by many throughout the camp, telling of their pride-killing hunger and poverty, and their loss of extended family or community. "I have no one I can trust to watch my children if I need to find food or work", said Khadija. She's worried about her husband and two eldest sons as she hasn't heard from them in months when they took the camels in search of grazing pasture.

She told us, "My 6 children here hadn't eaten any solid food for three days before I received this food donation from Mercy USA. It has really saved us. Mercy-USA is the first organization that has donated food and water that will last a family for a long time."



The IDP camp that Khadija and her children live in lacks even the basics of life like sanitation or water.





Gaza School for the Blind and Visually Impaired Benefits the Entire Community

The effects of the ongoing, ten-year Israeli-imposed blockade of Gaza have had a destructive impact on the lives of children and their families. Restricted movement of people and goods has crippled the economy and caused widespread unemployment. 70% of Palestinians in Gaza live in poverty.

Palestinians who are blind or visually impaired are at an even worse disadvantage. Seen as a burden to the struggling community, blind or visually impaired persons are often marginalized from society and don't have access to resources for self-sufficiency.

Mercy-USA is supporting an important education project operated by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) to offer blind or visually impaired children early intervention and subsequent integration into mainstream schools.

This special school provides material and technical support to the children to access learning. The children receive eyeglasses to improve their impaired vision if appropriate. They are assisted

by a Brailist, and taught to use the Perkins Braille machine as well as special technology to open up new worlds of information previously not available.

Children are taught basic life skills and how to successfully navigate the world around them. Along with life skills, the children are kept on grade level with the mainstream curriculum.

One of the most important components of this school is the new integration program. The goal of this program is to integrate the children into mainstream schools by grade 4, allowing the students to become fully engaged members of the community. UNRWA teachers are being taught how to accommodate the visually impaired students and are able to facilitate their learning on par with their other sighted students.

By fully integrating the children into mainstream schools in Gaza, they not only gain the same educational opportunities as their sighted peers, the greater community learns to value them as equals in the society.

Wedding, Birthday, Graduation? Ask for a Gift of Love!

Many people are opting out of the traditional gift registries and instead asking that a donation be given to Mercy-USA in their name as a celebration of love or accomplishment!

We've thought of a few ideas below. Please share your ideas with us and we'll feature them in another issue of the newsletter!



Weddings: If you already have a waffle iron, flatware and all the dishes you need, you can ask your guests and well wishers to celebrate your new life together by feeding others who are in dire need. A \$90 food basket in Syria will feed a family of six for a month!



Graduations: Ask your family and friends to help you support kids learning computer skills and English in many of the countries we work in to mark your accomplishment.



Birthdays: Pick any of our projects that touch your heart and tell your friends and family that instead of a big party, you'd like to help fund education in Bosnia, bring water to a drought-stricken family in Somalia, or help a farmer in Indonesia.



Tribute for a Life Well Lived: Water wells built in Somalia are a very popular gift given in the memory of a loved one.

Contact us to help you set up a Gift of Love for your next big life event! info@mercyusa.org.

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In addition to your one-time charitable donation, there are easy ways to donate. Consider joining Mercy-USA in this vital effort with a sustaining gift:

Automatic Giving Program

A gift of your choice can be automatically deducted monthly from your bank or major credit card account.

Employee Matching Program

Encourage your employer to match your donation.

Stocks

Mercy-USA accepts stocks as a charitable contribution.

Make a Bequest

Remember Mercy-USA's mission in your will.

Be an Advocate for Mercy-USA's Mission

Volunteer in your community to promote Mercy-USA's work. Call us for details on how you can get involved!

Where we work • mercyusa.org



Albania

- English and computer skills training for orphans
- Read to Succeed program for school-age children and teens

Bosnia and Herzegovina

- Vocational and career training for orphans, at-risk teens and young adults
- Agriculture Education Center to aid farmers, and local communities with sustainable farming methods

The Gaza Strip

- Supporting special school for blind and visually-impaired elementary school-aged children

India

- Seasonal food aid

Indonesia

- Aiding farmers and local communities with sustainable farming methods. Also assisting farmers in forming cooperatives
- English and computer skills training for orphans

Kenya

- Fresh water to communities affected by severe drought

Lebanon

- Syrian Refugee assistance in Wadi Khalid, Lebanon
- Mobile Health Clinic serves refugees four times a week providing vaccines, pre-and post-natal checks and regular medical exams.
- Palestinian Refugee Assistance in Beddawi and Nahr-Al-Bared Palestinian Refugee Camps
- Vocational training courses

Somalia

- To date over 525 new or rehabilitated wells for access to clean drinking water throughout Somalia including emergency drought relief
- Nutritional support and health services for mothers and children
- Hygiene and sanitation training and promotion
- Tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS treatment and prevention

Syria

- Monthly food baskets for 1,000 vulnerable families in northern Syria
- Winterization projects for vulnerable children and their families
- Blankets, mattresses, mats for displaced families
- Hygiene packages for 1,000 vulnerable families
- Primary Health Clinic serving a population of over 30,000 people in northern Syria.



Donate Online: www.mercyusa.org • Call Toll-Free: **800-55-MERCY (800-556-3729)**

Clip and Mail this Donation Form to Mercy-USA • 44450 Pinetree Dr. Ste. 201, Plymouth, Michigan 48170-3869 • US Federal Tax # 38-2846307
In Canada: PO Box 56102 • Fiesta Postal Services • 312 Grays Rd • Stoney Creek, ON L8G 5C9 • Charity Business #89458-5553-RR0001

Contribution / Pledge Form

- One Time Donation** \$ _____
- Monthly Donation** \$10 \$25 \$50 \$100 \$250 Other \$ _____
- Check**
- Credit Card** (Fill out Credit Card Section)
- Pledge** \$ _____

I give my permission to Mercy-USA/Mercy-USA (Canada) to withdraw from my Credit Card the amount I have indicated above. I also understand that I may change or end a monthly donation agreement at any time with a written notice.

Credit Card Information (Charged in US Currency)

Account No. _____

Expiration Date _____ Sec. Code _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Name (Please print) _____

Address _____ Apt. No. _____

City _____ State/Province _____ Zip/Postal Code _____

Daytime Telephone _____ Evening Telephone _____

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More ways to contribute!

Many companies match their employees' donations; ask your employer if they have a "Matching Gift Program".

Automatic Giving Program: A gift of your choice can be automatically deducted monthly from your bank account. Please call us toll-free at **800-556-3729** for details on how you can make an easy and sustaining gift.