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Basic Principles

As disciples of Jesus Christ, members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints strive to follow the Savior’s admonition to feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, take in the stranger, clothe the naked, and visit the sick and those in prison (see Matthew 25:35–36).

Welfare services

Since its beginning, the Church has organized to assist its members to provide for the physical, spiritual, social, and emotional welfare of themselves and others. Welfare services are provided in accordance with principles set forth in scripture and are financially supported through the voluntary contributions of Church members who fast one day each month and donate at least the value of the meals missed.

When members and their families are doing all they can to provide for themselves and still cannot meet their basic needs, they may turn to their bishop for temporary assistance. The bishop, as a local minister, is in the best position to determine the nature and quantity of the help required to meet the individual’s or family’s specific needs. The bishop is assisted in his efforts by priesthood quorums and the women’s Relief Society.

To assist in welfare efforts, the Church has established in many locations a resource system of storehouses, canneries, production projects, thrift stores, employment centers, and family services offices. Because the purpose of the Church’s welfare assistance is to help people to help themselves, recipients of these resources are given the opportunity to work to the extent of their ability for the assistance they receive. Additionally, Church members who volunteer their time, skills, and talents do much of the work in the storehouses, canneries, and so forth. Some members volunteer full-time, serving as welfare missionaries and teaching such things as basic living skills, nutrition, sanitation, literacy, and career development.

Humanitarian relief

The Church also sponsors humanitarian relief and development projects around the world that benefit those of other faiths. These projects include emergency relief assistance in times of disaster and programs that strengthen the self-reliance of individuals and families and increase the capacity of communities and institutions to serve others. Hundreds of full-time volunteers with skills and experience in education, agriculture, social work, business, and medicine serve throughout the world as part of these humanitarian projects.

More information is available at the Church’s Provident Living Web site, www.providentliving.org.

2006 Statistics

Days of labor donated to Church welfare facilities	623,153
Days of labor donated to disaster relief	157,000
Employment and training placements	
U.S. and Canada	94,617
Internationally	144,793
Total number of:	
Storehouses	137
Home storage centres	100
Production projects	57
Employment resource centres	285
LDS Family Services offices	69
Deseret Industries thrift stores	44
Storage and distribution facilities	37

Missionaries serving in Welfare Services 3,552

Examples of missionary assignments:

- Managing Employment Centers
- Teaching English as a second language
- Teaching marriage and parenting skills
- Improving agricultural and medical practices
- Distributing clothing
- Supervising welfare projects and missionaries

Major disaster assistance efforts (1985 - 2005) 181

Recent examples:

Beirut, Lebanon conflict relief	2006
Yogyakarta, Indonesia earthquake relief	2006
Hurricanes Katrina & Rita relief	2005
Pakistan Earthquake relief	2005
Africa measles vaccination campaigns	2004 – 2006
Southeast Asia tsunami relief	2004 – 2006
Europe, Chile & African flood relief	2004
Florida Caribbean hurricane relief	2004

Humanitarian assistance (1985–2006)

- Countries served 163
- Food distributed 49,809 tonnes
- Medical equipment distributed 8,303 tonnes
- Surplus clothing 66,429 tonnes
- Educational supplies 5,313 tonnes
- Cash donations \$AU 256.0 million
- Value of material assistance \$AU 896.9 million

TOTAL HUMANITARIAN AID **\$AU 1.152 billion**