

Tzu Chi Delivers Aid to 280 Australian Flood Survivors

Written by Tzu Chi Foundation
Monday, 24 January 2011 14:44



On January 22, 100 volunteers carried a large-scale distribution of medical goods and daily necessities to 282 people in the northeast Australian city of Brisbane, which has been hit by the worst flooding to hit the country in 50 years. They plan to carry out a second large-scale distribution in the city next week.

Since last month, a series of floods in the northeast state of Queensland have left at least 30 people dead and forced thousands to leave their homes. The state government has declared three quarters of Queensland a disaster area, with at least 70 towns and more than 200,000 people affected. Economists estimate that the flooding, in Queensland and the southern state of Victoria, could cost at least US\$3 billion in lost coal exports and agricultural production, with reconstruction costing an additional US\$20 billion.

The volunteers came from Melbourne, the Gold Coast and Sydney as well as Brisbane itself. The recipients were from low-income households in the districts of Darra and Goodna, with 18 from Darra and 91 from Goodna -- in total 109 households and 282 people.



The volunteers held the first distribution in a community centre in Darra on the morning of January 22 and the second that afternoon in the Redbank Plains High School in Goodna. They gave out medical kits, towels, toothbrushes and toothpaste, face towels, soap and other daily necessities and blankets made out of recycled plastic bottles. They also gave each recipient a cash card worth A\$500 (US\$500). In addition, they gave them a message of comfort from [Master Cheng Yen](#), showing that even in distant Taiwan people are concerned about them. In presenting the goods, the volunteers bowed and embraced each recipient, to show their care and respect.

During the afternoon distribution, Paul Pisasale, mayor of the local town of Ipswich, came in person to express his thanks for the help which Tzu Chi was providing. He said he was surprised by the efficiency and mobilization of the volunteers and expressed his admiration for the recycled blankets. "I hope that everyone can bravely face the challenge and help each other," he said. "The city government will help everyone pull through this crisis."

After they had completed the distributions, the volunteers began planning a second, large-scale one next week. They believe when others are hurt, they feel the pain; when others suffer, they feel the sorrow. Tzu Chi brings love and care to those in need.