

## South Africa - Food Distribution for Blaze Victims

Written by Tzu Chi Foundation  
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On March 15, Tzu Chi volunteers held a food distribution to help victims of an early morning blaze that had engulfed over 400 shacks in the Joe Slovo informal settlement in the Langa township of Cape Town on March 9. Hot meals were handed out to help relieve the suffering of the victims.

It was through a Tzu Chi volunteer's employee who lived in the settlement that Tzu Chi volunteers learned of the disastrous fire. They immediately went into action to survey the disaster area and made plans to hold a food distribution.

On the distribution day, the volunteers got up at 4 a.m. to prepare the food. It was a major undertaking to prepare 1,500 meals. After all the food was ready, they set out for the settlement. There the volunteers mindfully placed food on plates, and then they handed them out to people, smiling and saying "Thank you."

Other than providing hot meals, volunteers guided local children in picking up litter scattered on the ground. They also introduced Tzu Chi to the residents and thanked them for giving them the chance to serve.

This was the first time people in the settlement had come in contact with Tzu Chi volunteers, and they were impressed and touched by their humbleness and warmth. Originally, concerned about the possibility of chaos during the distribution, Tzu Chi volunteers had qualms about working there without any help from the police. Fortunately, it all went smoothly. This distribution enabled the volunteers to realize that so long as people can treat others with loving warmth, they can all get along in harmony.