

# VITAL SIGNS



Stories of Health and Hope from Around the World



IMPROVING HEALTH



INCREASING ACCESS TO MEDICINE



RESPONDING TO DISASTERS



Adriana, Israel and their son pictured in their new home in Arauca, Colombia.

## Responding to the Health Care Crisis for Fleeing Venezuelans

*Six years ago, Adriana, Israel and their son fled their home in Venezuela with only what they could carry.* The family escaped violence, political instability and extreme shortages of food and medicine by crossing the river to neighboring Colombia.

Adriana is blind and unable to walk due to childhood meningitis and rheumatoid arthritis. Israel serves as Adriana's primary caregiver, tending to her around the clock. Their only income comes from selling goods in a local park, but too often they earn less than a dollar a day.

More than 7 million people like Adriana and her family have fled Venezuela with an estimated 2.9 million of these migrants and refugees residing in Colombia. Thousands more arrive every day. This dramatic population increase has strained Columbia's health facilities.

*Continued on page 2*

## Delivering Medicine to Save Lives in Eswatini

Local health organizations in Eswatini, located in southern Africa, struggled to procure enough essential medication to treat the large population. But, through a local partner and with your support, AmeriCares can provide the treatments and medicines that improve health and save lives.

Thanks to you, our partner has been able to expand its reach—from serving 300,000 people to 1.2 million. These important services now cover the majority of Eswatini's population.



Health worker Sanele Simelane prepares a dose of tranexamic acid, which AmeriCares provided to a local partner in Eswatini.

Dr. Elton Chakayuka gives one example of how you're making a real impact in his maternal health practice:

"AmeriCares donated tranexamic acid to a hospital in Eswatini, part of a large donation of many medicines to many facilities in the country. Tranexamic acid came at just the right time as we were scaling up our maternity and c-section services. This drug is literally a lifesaver for cases of excessive bleeding—particularly for post-partum hemorrhage and also for cervical cancer patients."

Dr. Chakayuka also shared, "Thank you so much for making sure that we maintain stock of such critical pharmaceuticals!" ❤️



## Letter from the CEO

To ensure our programs supported the people who need them the most, I frequently travel to places that have experienced a natural disaster. Each time, in the aftermath of chaos and damage, I find inspiration in what your generosity has achieved to help people recover.

Just one year ago, wildfires decimated communities in Maui, Hawaii. But you immediately responded and helped AmeriCares send urgently needed medicine, relief supplies, mental health support and, with the help of a local partner, a portable health clinic.

The forecasts are predicting an extremely active summer hurricane season and potential record-breaking high temperatures. Now is the time we must prepare so that if disaster strikes, we're ready with medical aid to provide urgently needed relief and recovery.

With you beside us, we can continue to save lives and rebuild communities—this summer and all year long. "You provided absolutely necessary hope and healing and light," says one grateful Maui health provider. "Mahalo nui loa" (thank you very much).

Thank *you* for your compassion and generosity!

Christine Squires, President and CEO

## Supporting Health Care Workers Amid Earthquakes and War

For Ehsan\* and his family in Aleppo, Syria, the deadly earthquakes that struck Türkiye and northern Syria in February 2023 felt like "judgment day." The family survived, but they endured terrifying hours searching the rubble for friends and relatives. Their home was structurally damaged, forcing them to move. Just as they had already done 25 other times in the last decade because of the civil war.

On top of that, Ehsan faced the ongoing reality of conflict engulfing his city as he worked as a guard at a health care facility. He collected the bodies of those lost to

the violence. Ehsan became withdrawn and joyless.

**"Something new in my life started to happen. I started having positive energy. Life became worth living."**

—Ehsan, \*name changed to protect his privacy

Thankfully, Ehsan found relief in an AmeriCares mental health and psychosocial support program for health workers—made possible thanks to your generosity. Although life in Aleppo remains a struggle, Ehsan now feels part of a caring, supportive network. ❤️



A health worker speaks with a patient at the AmeriCares-supported Al-Zohoor Primary Health Clinic in Northern Syria.



An earthquake survivor looks at the aftermath of the devastating 7.5 and 7.8 magnitude earthquakes that hit Syria and Türkiye.

### Health Care Crisis continued from page 1

AmeriCares opened four medical clinics in Colombia to serve this vulnerable population. As more refugees arrived and the demands for primary care services increased, we expanded to 10 clinics—in addition to our mobile clinics. To date, we've conducted over one million patient consultations since 2018.

Adriana, Israel and their son receive vital medical services through AmeriCares, including crucial treatments for Adriana's health conditions, plus mental health

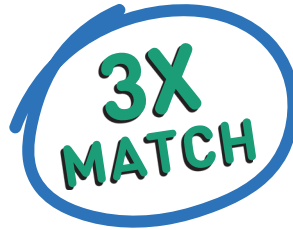
**"Our clinics are a lifeline for Venezuelan families, migrants arriving from other countries and host communities across Colombia."**

—Diana Gutiérrez de Piñeres Botero, AmeriCares Colombia Country Director

services. Your support of AmeriCares ensures that families can receive the care that they need to survive even in the most challenging conditions. ❤️

## Triple Your Impact Today!

We hope this newsletter gave you insight into the power of your contributions to **Americares**. Today, if you make a gift, you can have an even greater impact. Thanks to generous donors, a pool of matching funds of \$509,000 will make your support go three times as far! That means if you make a gift to Americares by August 30, it can be tripled.



Please respond by August 30 to ensure that your gift makes **THREE times the impact** for people in need.

This is a great opportunity for you to help Americares have the resources to respond to health crises at a moment's notice. Your gift will help ensure we can provide emergency medical aid and services to those affected by natural disasters, poverty, disease, conflict or other crisis.

To donate, just use the enclosed envelope. Or to put your gift to work even faster, visit [americares.org/SummerNews2024](https://americares.org/SummerNews2024). ❤️



A Lab Technician draws blood from a patient at San José Clinic in Houston, TX

#### 4 | HEALTH IS ON THE WAY



Health is on the way.™

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[americares.org](https://americares.org)

Americares is a health-focused relief and development organization that responds to people affected by poverty or disaster with life-changing health programs, medicine and medical supplies.

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## Emergency Response Partners

These organizations support Americares year-round readiness for global emergencies.

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