

DISASTER RELIEF

Strategies



OPERATION | **BLESSING**
INTERNATIONAL



Operation Blessing is one of the largest charities in America, providing strategic relief in 23 countries around the world on a daily basis through programs such as disaster relief, safe water, food security, vulnerable children, medical aid and community development.

Usually when disasters strike, victims are in immediate need of safe water, food, medical attention and special care for children. OBI is often able to launch an emergency relief response within 24 hours—then when the smoke clears, continue to help victims with long-term economic recovery programs.

From major disasters such as Hurricane Katrina to the Haiti earthquake and the Japan tsunami, OBI continues to be a leader in developing innovative, entrepreneurial and “ask-don’t tell” disaster response strategies.

DISASTER RELIEF *Strategies:*

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Ebola Crisis | *Liberia*



Ravaged by the deadly Ebola virus, Liberia’s people are desperate for supplies that will end the worst outbreak in history. OBI has been on the ground in Liberia fighting on the front lines—using chlorine generators to produce a powerful disinfectant for hand washing and cleaning surfaces. Teams are distributing the much-needed solution to hospitals and communities, as well as delivering food supplies to families under quarantine and providing protective gear, including masks and gloves, to medical personnel.

Mosquito Fish | *New Orleans*



In the wake of one of the most catastrophic hurricanes ever to hit the U.S., thousands of abandoned swimming pools threatened to breed plaques of mosquitoes and spread disease. OBI sent out teams of volunteers to plant mosquito-eating fish into some 5,500 pools, helping to pioneer a safe, eco-friendly and effective strategy—the first-ever of its kind in response to such a large-scale U.S. disaster.

U.S. Navy | *Haiti*

Following the 7.0-magnitude Haiti quake in 2010, OBI developed a key partnership with the U.S. Navy, securing space onboard the USNS Sacagawea to transport 200 tons of critical relief supplies and 10 water purification units. After arriving to Guantanamo from Florida, the supplies were transported by U.S. Navy helicopters to the USS Bataan and then to OBI's temporary headquarters at the Port-au-Prince airport. Later, OBI erected a tent in a camp of 3,000 people to serve as a school building for hundreds of children, with U.S. Navy SeaBees building desks and benches for the students.





Tsunami Boats | *Japan*

After a devastating tsunami destroyed the livelihoods of Japanese fishermen, they were in desperate need of equipment, however local boat companies were overwhelmed with the demand. OBI outsourced an order to a boat-building company in Maine who had been downsized and the resulting benefit was two-fold: the company was able to hire back its workers, providing struggling American families with income, and hard-working fishing families in Japan were back on the water earning a living.

Brick Factory | *Indonesia*

After the worst tsunami in recorded history devastated Indonesia's Aceh coast in 2004, OBI established a brick factory to employ local residents and support ongoing reconstruction efforts—producing a monthly average of 100,000 bricks. Teams also constructed a loading dock to receive supplies by sea, and OBI and partnering agencies chartered a tug boat to pull a 50-foot by 180-foot barge loaded with thousands of bags of cement, plywood, rebar and enough metal roofing for several hundred houses.



Safe Water | *Bangladesh*



After a devastating cyclone struck Bangladesh, OBI brought in water purification systems capable of treating 600 gallons of water an hour. With some of the most affected areas difficult to access by vehicles, villagers transported the units by rickshaws and in some cases used bamboo rods. Months after the disaster, the units continued to provide desperately needed safe drinking water to over 12,000 villagers.

Helicopter Relief | *Mozambique*

In January 2007, torrential rains in central Mozambique left thousands stranded without food, water or shelter on islands created by the rising floodwaters. Utilizing helicopter support from Mercy Air, OBI and German partner, Humedica, airlifted food, medical aid, tarps, blankets and other relief items to reach flood victims. Other strategic partnerships included the International Red Cross and World Food Program, who supplied relief goods to OBI—one of the only NGOs able to reach the cut off communities by air.





U.S. Disasters

In the wake of devastating hurricanes, tornadoes, floods and storms, OBI's domestic disaster relief team is able to respond quickly and strategically thanks to a fleet of relief equipment that includes skid steers, cranes and other heavy equipment, a mobile command center, construction trailers, and mobile kitchens. Teams are also experienced in coordinating mass volunteers with general and specialized skills as well as setting up volunteer base camp infrastructures and helping to train and equip local churches and partners.



Yao Jin Village | *China*

After their village was completely destroyed by a 7.9-magnitude earthquake in 2008, OBI undertook one of the most significant relief efforts to date, building 54 new homes for every family in the village. The construction efforts provided villagers with jobs and a source of income, and teams also helped restore the villagers' livelihood by supplying them with livestock to raise.

Drones & Desalinators | *Philippines*



In 2013, one of the largest typhoons in history struck the Philippines, devastating communities. Utilizing drone technology, teams were able to view the scale of destruction as well as see the scope of the needs in areas that may not have otherwise been accessible. Teams also provided families with new boats and transitional homes, and also partnered with Japanese corporation, Toray, to desalinate saltwater and provide disaster victims with much-needed drinking water.

Fish Farm | *Haiti*



The nation of Haiti has been crippled by disasters, creating a food security crisis. At OBI's Fish Farm & Hatchery, protein-rich tilapia are being bred and raised to help feed children at Zanmi Beni Children's Home as well as nearby orphanages, schools and hospitals. OBI is also working with the Haitian Department of Agriculture as well as a faith-based local charity to pioneer fish ranching – planting fingerlings (baby tilapia) in ponds and reservoirs across Haiti to help replenish the fish stock.

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