

Canadian government grants \$2.6 million to Samaritan's Purse to continue Ebola fight

Organization using funds for community/household-based prevention & care program in Liberia

Calgary, AB, Friday, Dec. 5—The Canadian government's Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development is giving Samaritan's Purse Canada \$2.6-million to help the Christian relief and development organization continue its months-long fight against Ebola in the West African nation of Liberia.

Samaritan's Purse will use the funds to significantly expand its public education campaign—reaching out to an additional 35,000 Liberian households that have not yet been infected with Ebola—to prevent further transmission of the terrible disease that has already caused more than 5,600 deaths. The households will also receive infection prevention and control kits (containing basic hygiene items) to help protect them.

The federal funding will enable Samaritan's Purse to hire or renew enough contract employees to ensure the organization has more than 500 Liberia-based staff, including several Canadians, focused on Ebola.

Samaritan's Purse has already provided Ebola preventative education to more than 1.5 million Liberians, and provided prevention and control kits to more than 8,200.

The federal funding will also enable Samaritan's Purse to provide equipment and training so at least 500 households in which a family member has already been infected with Ebola can safely and effectively care for that individual at home.

Many Ebola-infected Liberians are unable or unwilling to seek treatment at a medical facility—often because the facilities are far away or already at capacity. The safest and most effective alternative in treating these patients without endangering other members of their community is by training family members to care for them appropriately.

Through Samaritan's Purse's efforts, Ebola-infected families are receiving Ebola treatment kits (including modified personal protective equipment, disinfectant supplies, and medications) and helpful instructions.

“By breaking the chain of transmission, the spread of Ebola can be curbed,” said Fred Weiss, Executive Director of Samaritan's Purse Canada. “We're very thankful for federal government support in addressing this urgent and desperate need.” In total, an estimated 213,000 Liberians will benefit from the funding.

During the next year, based on experts' projections of how many additional Ebola infection cases there will be, Samaritan's Purse anticipates needing \$5 million to:

- Continue focusing its Liberia-based staff—none of whom has contracted Ebola after receiving the same training and equipment they are providing to others—on the household-based program.
- Provide essential help for its staff to stop Ebola “flare-ups” as they occur—often in isolated communities that require significant effort and resources to reach
- Begin community recovery programs once the virus is contained

“The \$2.6 million grant we've just received from the Canadian government provides more than half the \$5 million we need, and so we are enormously grateful,” Weiss said. “We are appealing to the compassion of individual Canadians to provide the remaining funds. Please join us in being Good Samaritans in Liberia.”

DONATIONS: Canadians can donate at SamaritansPurse.ca/Ebola or by phoning **1-800-663-6500**.

Samaritan's Purse has been working in Liberia for 13 years. The Calgary-based charity had more than 350 staff involved in a variety of relief and development projects there before last March, when the Ebola outbreak began. Since then, all staff have been almost exclusively focused on fighting the virus that has claimed more than 2,900 lives so far in Liberia, and more than 5,600 throughout all of West Africa.

About Samaritan's Purse Canada

Samaritan's Purse is a Christian relief and development organization that takes its name from Jesus Christ's biblical story of the Good Samaritan. Like that Good Samaritan, who found a beaten man and helped restore him, we aid victims of war, disease, disaster, poverty, famine, and persecution. Our other initiatives include Operation Christmas Child, which sends gift-filled shoeboxes from caring donors to hurting children worldwide. Learn more at SamaritansPurse.ca.

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