

Tzu Chi Holds Distribution for 1,290 Households in Mexican City

Written by Tzu Chi Foundation

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On December 8, the Tzu Chi Foundation held a distribution of relief goods for 1,290 households in the central Mexican city of Xochimilco and a free clinic offering Western and Chinese medicine to 291 people. The recipients were all victims of a devastating earthquake that struck the country in September.

At the ceremony before the distribution, Avelino Mendez Rangel, Mayor of the city, expressed his deep gratitude to the foundation. “After the earthquake, the city government provided water and materials to our citizens,” he said. “But we have limited ability to give all the help needed, because the damage was very severe. We thank Tzu Chi for reaching out with both hands to help Mexico.” He showed a book from Tzu Chi volunteer Stephen Huang which contains the Jing Si Aphorisms in four languages; Huang encouraged him to read one page each day and remember it. He carries the book with him all the time. He opened a page and read the sentence for that day: “If we don’t do something meaningful, our life will pass by in vain. But if we work unceasingly for the betterment of mankind, ours will be a beautiful life.”

The day of the distribution was bright but with a biting wind. When the recipients took the blankets, the volunteers wrapped them around the old people. Comforted by this, their faces broke into a broad smile.



Volunteer Xiong Shi-min had just moved to Taiwan from the United States, and works for Tzu Chi Foundation. He immediately went to Mexico to take part in the relief work. He said that, when he had seen the container truck travelling rapidly, he had a bad feeling that it was going too fast and driving recklessly. But, during this mission, he felt very anxious when the shipment was still stuck in the Mexican port. It was no easy matter to arrange its departure from there. So, when he saw the lorry leaving the port, he felt very excited.

Brother Xiong has a rich experience of relief work. “The situation of each one is different. On this occasion, we have received a great deal of help directly and indirectly from local volunteers. Every works they do down here will be the reference for the future. It has been more than two months since the earthquake, but things have not moved so quickly. In fact, visiting each family has been well prepared. The local volunteers have come from many places and worked with volunteers from 12 countries and regions. Together they have done a good job of carrying the wishes of Tzu Chi people around the world.”

For the distribution on December 8, about 40 local volunteers took part. One of them was Brenda Narciso, who was herself a victim of the quake. She both wore the vest of a volunteer and also took relief goods for herself.

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During the quake, her house collapsed. When the volunteers came to help her, she told them: “Our home still has a kitchen that can be used,” she said. “Please help the other victims first.” In fact, the space of her kitchen is extremely narrow, part of a small house. Brenda actively chose to be a volunteer and led the volunteers to see other families. Her spirit inspired other local people to step forward and help Tzu Chi.



After the distribution, she took her cash card to buy goods, blanket, bamboo bank and medicines. She said: “Tzu Chi is really good. You have come from so far away to help us. We thank you deeply.”

Bao Yi-han is a young staff from the U.S. headquarters of Tzu Chi. During the distribution, she was extremely busy, going everywhere to help in whatever way she could. She was full of gratitude to the many brothers and sisters with her who helped her to grow. She started her service with the relief work at Hurricane Harvey and then worked with Xiong Shi-min. With them were Tim Lu from the Religious Affairs Department of the headquarters in Taiwan and Joy He from the foundation’s Charity Development Department. Everyone worked on the relief projects after two major disasters in the U.S. and then on that in Mexico. Up to now, they have taken no rest.

Bao always has a broad smile: “finally, after more than two months of preparation, I can help them now. I thank very much the local residents for not giving up on us.” During the time of the survey, some local people expressed their thanks to Tzu Chi and some embraced the volunteers and gave them vegetables, fruit and food from their own houses. Sometimes she felt uneasy in her heart: “they gave so much to us. We gave nothing to them. But today (December 8) everything is perfect. Finally we can provide help.”

The distribution is only the beginning. The road ahead is very long. Stephen Huang, Director of Global Volunteers of the foundation, hopes that, in the future, Mexico will bring its strength together.

Report by Jennifer Chu, Mexico