

STANDING TOGETHER

6 MONTHS ON



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STANDING TOGETHER

The Salvation Army's response to the Queensland floods and Cyclone Yasi: a six month report.

The floods and cyclones that hit Queensland from December 2010 to February 2011 were of a magnitude that stunned the nation. No sooner did stoic locals, emergency services personnel and volunteers mop up from one disaster, nearby another one struck. For many it would have seemed that the tragedy was never ending.

And whilst the crisis is over, for many the tragedy does continue. Picking up the pieces of a home shattered, a life lost or a livelihood ruined is a long and painful process.

The Salvation Army was on the frontline when the floodwaters ripped through and the cyclone hit – our personnel and volunteers served thousands of meals and supported victims at evacuation centres, roadblocks and in the muddy sand-bag lined streets.

And we're still there. We've moved out of evacuation centres and into people's streets. Standing alongside flood and cyclone survivors who are struggling to rebuild their homes and lives.

Trauma counsellors have been employed, financial counselling services increased and a 24-hour disaster hotline is still operational.

All this has been made possible through the generosity of Australians.

\$23.6 million has been given so far to The Salvation Army Queensland Flood and Cyclone Relief Appeal. On top of this, hundreds of Australians gave up time to help during the crisis and others donated quality goods that were distributed.

One of the most beautiful things about this appeal is that it hasn't been just the unaffected who have given generously.

I've heard many stories from the front-line of the selflessness of flood and cyclone victims themselves. One Salvation Army officer doorknocking in Emerald tells me that as soon as she arrived anywhere with her Salvation Army uniform on, people would straight away reach for their wallets to give a donation. These were flood victims, many of whom had lost everything. It took the officer some time to convince them that it was their turn to receive rather than to give.

To all those who gave, from individuals to corporations, the men and women of The Salvation Army are so grateful. Thank you for allowing us to do what we do.



**James Condon
Commissioner
The Salvation Army
Australia Eastern Territory**



Whilst the crisis is over, for many the tragedy does continue. Picking up the pieces of a home shattered, a life lost or a livelihood ruined is a long and painful process.



STANDING TOGETHER IN CRISIS



When the flood and cyclone disasters struck Queensland The Salvation Army went into action to feed the thousands of emergency service personnel, people affected at evacuation centres and even travellers stranded on blocked roads.

More than 200,000 meals and refreshments were served by Salvation Army officers, staff and volunteers at 25 different disaster zones across the state including Rockhampton, Theodore, Emerald, Bundaberg, Brisbane, Strathpine, Ipswich, Gympie, Toowoomba, Warwick, Maryborough and Grantham. (At the two main Brisbane evacuation centres alone, around 30,000 meals were served over a 10 day period).

The Salvation Army also assisted individuals and families in north Queensland affected by Cyclone Yasi, feeding around 1000 people a day.

Not only were meals served, Salvation Army personnel gave out personal hygiene supplies and set up clothing supply areas at a number of evacuation centres. These centres became a refuge where victims received physical nourishment, emotional support and vital information about the various emergency support options available to them.

When the wind and waters subsided, mobile catering units brought Salvation Army personnel alongside people as they went back to their devastated homes and began to clean up and assess the damage.

More than 1000 volunteers were involved in the crisis response, with Salvation Army teams flown in from New South Wales and ACT to assist. Many volunteers spent weeks on the road, moving from one disaster zone to the next.

In Warwick, west of Brisbane, Salvation Army Captain Mark Williamson said: "Many people are distraught, many people are in tears. We offer them emotional and spiritual support. The Bible talks about the value of giving food and drink and we are doing just that in the form of a sausage sandwich, plus a shoulder to cry on and a listening ear."

LEFT: CAPTAIN PETER MCGUIGAN IS GIVEN A TOUR OF FLOOD-DEVASTATED ROCKHAMPTON BY THE CITY'S DEPUTY MAYOR ROSE SWADLING. **ABOVE, FROM LEFT:** ONCE ADDICTED TO DRUGS AND NOW A SALVATION ARMY VOLUNTEER MATT HITZMAN FROM BRISBANE'S STREETLEVEL MISSION SPENT 10 DAYS HELPING PREPARE MEALS FOR FLOOD VICTIMS IN ROCKHAMPTON: "THE SALVOS HELPED ME TURN MY LIFE AROUND AND NOW, THROUGH VOLUNTEERING MY TIME HERE, I HAVE THE CHANCE TO GIVE BACK TO OTHERS; THE SALVATION ARMY SERVED 100,000 MEALS DURING THE CRISIS.

Standing together in crisis

“It’s horrific out here; I just can’t put into words what we’re seeing. But the resilience of people is amazing and in the middle of the anxiety and grief, people are trying to stay positive.”

SALVATION ARMY MAJOR MARGARET DOBBIE IN IPSWICH AT THE HEIGHT OF THE FLOOD EMERGENCY

Salvation Army volunteers George and Linda Clarke knew their house was flooded, but that wasn’t going to stop them from serving meals at the emergency evacuation centre in Ipswich.

“There are so many other people who were just so much worse off than what we were,” George says.

Eleven days earlier an emergency team from The Salvation Army Ipswich, including George and Linda, had responded to the call to fly to Rockhampton when severe flooding hit the central Queensland city. They spent the next ten days serving 400 meals a day, non-stop.

“I don’t know what I would do if our place went under water,” Linda remembers saying to her husband George as she served meals to the people of Rockhampton who had lost everything.

Soon afterwards, the team was advised to return home to Ipswich, as the city braced for the floods to come.

Once there, George and Linda became stranded – the Wivenhoe Dam had overflowed, blocking the roads that led to their home.

Instead, they went straight to the emergency evacuation centre at the

Ipswich Showgrounds, where they would serve 12,000 meals over the next 18 days to other stranded residents.

Finally the roads cleared and George and Linda were able to get home. It had been flooded with six inches of water. The couple had been caught off guard – because their home was situated in an area that rarely floods, they hadn’t taken out flood insurance.

But Linda is thankful: “We still have our home ... We didn’t lose our livelihood; we didn’t lose all our furniture.”

After a few days off to pull up the carpets and get the furniture out, the Clarkes went back to serving at the emergency centre, waiting for their house to dry out.

Salvation Army officer and evacuation centre team leader Major Bruce Dobbie says: “they both have that selflessness ... putting other people first.”



DEAN SAMPSON

Service Number

Locations where Salvation Army Emergency Services (SAES) services deployed	25
Volunteers involved in provision of emergency services	1,346
Breakfasts served	22,255
Lunches served	35,535
Dinners served	36,269
Refreshments served	106,810

“It’s horrific out here; I just can’t put into words what we’re seeing. But the resilience of people is amazing and in the middle of the anxiety and grief, people are trying to stay positive.”

– Salvation Army Major Margaret Dobbie in Ipswich at the height of the flood emergency

STANDING TOGETHER IN NEED

When the floodwaters subsided and Cyclone Yasi's winds died down, residents of affected areas were left to pick up the pieces.

The Salvation Army launched a disaster appeal with donations being made through the organisation's website, call centre or at any Woolworths or Big W store. Woolworths matched all donations dollar-for-dollar between 13-21 January, raising \$15.8 million. However, customers were still able to make donations in these stores right through February which further contributed to the total of over \$20 million.

Australians responded to the plight of Queenslanders with overwhelming generosity. The Premier's fund received donations of \$273.6 million and The Salvation Army received donations totalling \$23.6 million.

As the emergency phase operations came to an end and evacuation centres closed, The Salvation Army established Disaster Relief Assistance Centres and mobile outreach teams throughout Queensland.

Assistance offered includes one-off grants for immediate needs (non means tested and given in the form of store gift cards); assessment for further assistance to replace essential goods not covered by insurance; and the supply of white goods and donated products.

As at 30 June more than 12,200 people in Queensland had been assessed and received financial assistance from The Salvation Army. Each of these has received at least a \$200 Woolworths gift card, with many receiving much more significant assistance.

The Salvation Army has employed 12 full-time disaster case workers to assess and distribute assistance to people struggling to get back on their feet. Additional financial counselling services are also being provided, and trauma counsellors have been employed to attend to people's emotional needs.

"The Salvation Army has been overwhelmed by the needs we have encountered in Queensland communities impacted by flooding and Cyclone Yasi earlier this year," says Major Paul Moulds, who is heading up The Salvation Army's flood response effort. "We are so grateful to Australians who have trusted us with the resources to respond to these needs. We will not let you down."

Salvation Army Qld Flood and Cyclone Relief Appeal – as at 30 June 2011

Income	\$ Amount
Cash donations	18,329,454.00
Government grants	202,282.00
Gift cards	5,113,200.00
Total income	23,644,936.00
Expenditure	\$ Amount
Welfare grants	4,689,009.00
Welfare – gift cards	2,446,520.00
Administration costs including staff and resources	693,238.00
Future capital support projects (committed)	3,334,630.00
Woolworths rebuilding local community infrastructure (committed)	2,000,000.00
Goodna recovery project (committed)	2,425,000.00
Rural recovery project (committed)	2,000,000.00
North Queensland recovery project (committed)	2,000,000.00
Allocation for further grants for individuals and families	1,389,859.00
Welfare – gift cards to be allocated	2,666,680.00
Total budgeted expenses	23,644,936.00

"The Salvation Army, they're giving you back your dignity by allowing you to purchase new stuff, rather than having to accept second-hand goods."

– Lockyer Valley flood victim Barbara.



JAMES LAWS



LEFT: LEILANI'S FAMILY RECEIVED ASSISTANCE WHEN THEY NEEDED IT MOST. & ABOVE: LEILANI SHOWS SALVATION ARMY WORKER TROY THE WATER LEVEL MARK FROM THE EMERALD FLOODS.



ABOVE: WELFARE DISTRIBUTION CENTRES WERE SET UP TO PROVIDE PEOPLE WITH THE ESSENTIALS THEY NEEDED.

Standing together in need

“The Salvation Army was right there at the right time.”

EMERALD RESIDENT LEILANI.

Leilani's family was sleeping on their damp floor when Major Owen Pattison and his wife Captain Pam Pattison of The Salvation Army stopped by and offered the family of five emergency assistance. Their house in Emerald had been flooded. They moved as much furniture to higher ground as possible, but most was ruined.

Captain Pam Pattison recalls, “Leilani was trying to be very positive, but was just distressed like everyone else as to how they were going to manage, and what

was going to happen next and how long it was going to take ... We were able to give her some help straight away.”

The Pattisons doorknocked the streets of Emerald offering food vouchers to families who had lost most or all of their possessions in the floods. Eligible families like Leilani's were given grants to buy the household goods they needed for life to begin to return to some semblance of normality.

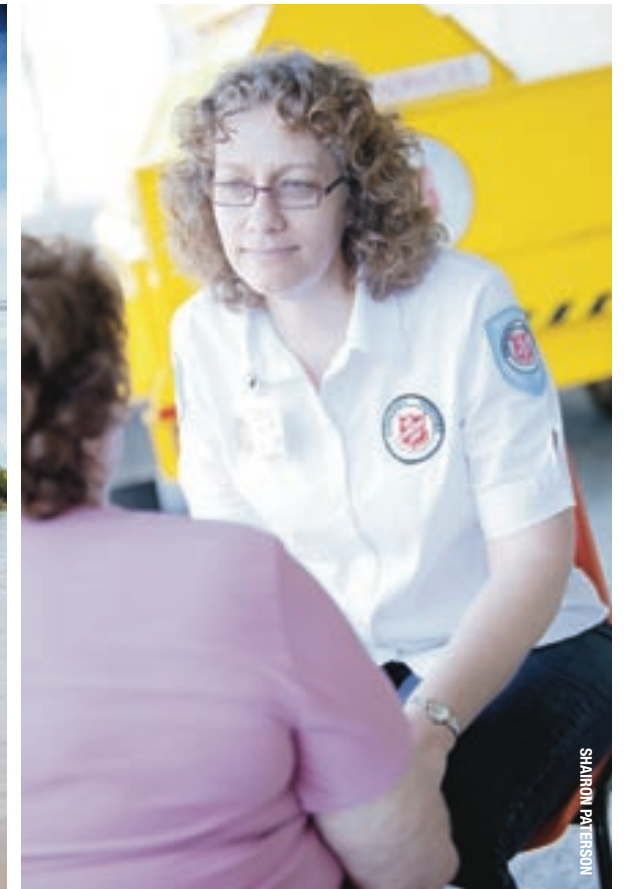
Leilani says: “We were able to get a queen-sized bed for us and another single bed ... so everyone had beds because of The Salvation Army. We were also able to get a new fridge which was awesome because we were living out of an esky ... and then we just replaced

things like cupboards and storage space like dressers and drawers.”

Receiving the grant simply helped relieve some of the pressure. Many families in Emerald didn't have insurance, or were unable to receive the money they had hoped for from their insurers. The Salvation Army saw the importance of sending workers to the streets to meet people and provide direct, immediate assistance while applications for funding from other sources were being processed.

Leilani says: “The Salvation Army was right there in the forefront at the right time being able to give people assistance where it was needed.”

STANDING TOGETHER THROUGH THE



SHARON PATERSON

The Queensland flood and cyclone disasters have had a huge emotional toll on many Queenslanders. While people have shown extraordinary courage and resilience the impact is still very real.

Tragically, 36 people were killed and many others needed to be rescued. For many, the impact will be felt for months or years after the reconstruction is complete.

When the crisis began, The Salvation Army immediately deployed chaplains to affected areas to be available to anyone affected and to offer a listening ear.

In early February The Salvation Army launched a 24-hour dedicated assistance

line. This phone service is based at Salvo Care Line Brisbane, The Salvation Army's Queensland telephone counselling service. Callers have access to a friendly, listening ear and the helpline also provides information about financial and other assistance available. Thousands of calls have been received.

Two specialist trauma counsellors have also been employed and are touring the hardest hit areas to provide psychological support.

In south Queensland there is a particular concern at the impact on children, with some schools reporting high rates of anxiety, absenteeism and other stress related symptoms. Salvation Army counsellors are working closely with schools to assist.

In the Lockyer Valley, west of Brisbane, where flash flooding claimed many lives, Major Marie Gittins says The Salvation Army will stand by locals for the long

TEARS

Standing together through the tears

“It’s all gone. You’ve got nothing.”

– BELINDA, RECALLING THE FEELING OF LOSING HER HOME.

Belinda’s family lost almost everything, except each other, in the Ipswich floods.

Today the extended family of eight are renting and living in an overcrowded three bedroom house, while struggling to also pay the mortgage and rates on their family home which was completely submerged during the floods.

It’s unlikely the family will ever live in what was their dream home again. Belinda’s sister Donna purchased the large property only a year ago, and was planning to build a granny flat, so the extended family (including the two sisters, Donna’s husband and children and their mother) could all be together.

Months on, it is the youngest members of the family who seem to be the hardest hit, Belinda says. She fights tears as she explains how her four-year-old nephew Lachlan struggled terribly in the lead up to starting his new kindergarten. She says: “He didn’t want to go to kindy because no one would like him, because he (didn’t) have anything.”

Looking back, Belinda still struggles to tell her story. She was home with her brother-in-law and had to evacuate to the Ipswich Showground when the water hit.

They then had to deliver the devastating news to the rest of the family. The flood waters had risen two feet above their roof. Everything was destroyed.

Salvation Army Corps Officers, Majors Bruce and Margaret Dobbie worked day and night at the evacuation centre, helping to serve 12,000 meals over 18 days to hundreds of stranded residents.

RIGHT, FROM TOP: “THEY ARE WORTH THEIR WEIGHT IN GOLD, THOSE TWO!” – FLOOD SURVIVOR BELINDA REFERRING TO SALVATION ARMY MAJORS BRUCE AND MARGARET DOBBIE; THE DEVASTATION CAUSED TO BELINDA’S HOME.

They have continued to support Belinda’s family, who are struggling with the financial burden of having to pay a mortgage as well as rent.

“They got us a new fridge ... some new sheets and towels and quilts for the kids. And just being there has helped,” says Belinda.

The Salvation Army also encouraged the family to submit the necessary applications to receive funds available to help them rebuild their lives.

But it’s not only the financial burden, it is the emotional turmoil the family is going through that is the hardest to overcome. Belinda says she greatly appreciates the support that Margaret and Bruce have given her family, “They are worth their weight in gold, those two!”



haul: “The people in this valley have been devastated. They have seen terrible things that will be with them forever, and they need long-term assistance and care.”

In April The Salvation Army hosted a holiday camp at its Collaroy Youth Centre in Sydney for a number of families affected by the disaster – many of them still grieving the loss of loved ones.

It was an emotional time but those who attended said it was a positive experience for them and their children. One participant said that during the camp he was able to relax for the first time since losing family members in the flooding.

“It was great to be around people who had been through the same thing,” he said.

Salvation Army flood and cyclone assistance line – 1300 66 22 17

“One family only had moments to cling to the guttering of their roof to save their lives ... what is needed now is long-term counselling and the rebuilding of lost and damaged homes and lives. It will take a long time but The Salvation Army will be there.”

– Lockyer Valley Salvation Army officer Major Marie Gittins

STANDING TOGETHER ON THE LAND



ABOVE: CAPTAIN MARK BULOW MEETS WITH A LOCAL FARMER.



LUCY CUNNINGHAM

LUCY CUNNINGHAM

Standing together on the land

“A lot of farmers that you talk to in this area, you can see that they are severely traumatised and depressed through what’s happened ... and, tragically, some have even turned to suicide...”

– CAPTAIN MARK BULOW, TOOWOOMBA

The ‘inland Tsunami’ that devastated the city of Toowoomba, Queensland, in January made headlines around the world.

However it’s the farming communities around the city that are finding it hardest to recover, according to Salvation Army Captain Mark Bulow.

Mark says one of the greatest concerns is the fact that the large cotton farming communities in areas such as Millmerran and Cecil Plains (Queensland) had already received advance ‘forward’ payment for crops that were then destroyed by floods.

Many farmers have been overwhelmed: “They’d been very excited – this was going to be a bumper crop. They thought they were going to break out of some of the debt they were in, but it has just put them further into debt,” Mark says.

Mark and a local council representative have visited around 65 families on farms – offering a listening ear and some financial help. They drove 9000 kilometres in the first few days after the flooding, and many thousands following.

“There’s a huge need out there,” he says. “There are fences that have been completely washed away and the farmers can’t put stock back on their properties until the fences are fixed up.”

As well as giving out the flood appeal grants, Mark has been providing emotional support to shell-shocked landowners.

He speaks about one farmer who met them on the road and just broke down and wept: “He just said, ‘Look, I’m doing okay but it’s my wife. My wife isn’t coping at all.’ So we stayed and spoke to him for a bit. ... These are hardened farmers. This guy was 55 years old. Strong, calloused hands, worked outside all his life. A real bushy. And he broke down because his wife was struggling.”

Mark was able to offer financial assistance to the family and is also handing out copies of The Salvation Army’s *Braver Stronger Wiser* DVD – a powerful tool produced to combat depression in rural communities.

In it, four people tell of their personal battle with depression: “They can watch that and they can see that there’s hope,” says Mark. “There’s a way out, and although it’s tough, we can get through it.”

Whilst much of the relief effort has focused on the major Queensland cities and towns where the floods and cyclone displaced thousands of people, The Salvation Army has also been reaching out to farmers who have lost their livelihoods.

According to Cotton Australia, approximately 30 percent of crops in the Darling Downs area were wiped out. The banana, sugarcane and tropical fruit industries were also decimated. Not only did farmers lose potential income, they've also seen farm infrastructure and, in some cases, livestock, carried away in the floodwaters.

The Salvation Army rural chaplaincy network responded immediately.

Envoy Simon Steele, a helicopter pilot with The Salvation Army's Outback Flying Service, was able to access north Queensland farms beyond the reach of other modes of transport after Cyclone Yasi hit.

He and wife Natalie visited rural inland properties and were the first point of face-to-face contact with the outside world for many farmers since the cyclone and floods struck.

"A lot of them said to us that they really just wanted to be seen and not forgotten," Simon says.

RIGHT, FROM TOP: SALVATION ARMY FLYING SERVICE ENVOY SIMON STEELE DELIVERS A FOOD HAMPER TO AN ISOLATED FARMER; THE SALVOS *BRAVER, STRONGER, WISER* DVD.

There were also many practical ways to help. Taking a farmer on a tour of his property in the helicopter to assess the damage from the sky can be a valuable, but emotional activity. Most of the rural properties have hundreds of kilometres of fences, and if they are damaged, the farmer runs the risk of losing their cattle. A quick aerial survey from the chopper and the farmer's mind can quickly be put at ease.

"Or if they aren't okay, they know what they're up against. They're not sitting there wondering 'how much damage have I got? Are the cattle still in my property?'," says Simon.

Teams of rural chaplains are now touring devastated areas of Queensland, providing financial and emotional assistance to farmers, as well as helping with the practical tasks necessary to get farms up and running again.

To help combat an onset of depression within the farming community, rural chaplains are handing out free copies of *Braver, Stronger, Wiser*, a Salvation Army produced DVD that teaches people how to recognise and manage depression.

A new DVD, aimed at assisting people recover from disasters, is currently in production.



SHARON PATTERSON



"There was a property that I dropped into and I had to land the helicopter in a few inches of water. I just couldn't find a dry spot to land."

– Salvation Army Flying Service Chaplain Simon Steele.

STANDING TOGETHER FOR THE LONG



MEERVA HOLLAND

The Salvation Army recognises that it will take many Queenslanders years to recover from the enormity of the natural disasters that hit the state in early 2011. This means remaining flexible and changing direction, or increasing our support, depending on what is happening on the front line.

In response to a sustained high level of callers to its 24-hour disaster assistance line, The Salvation Army has launched “Operation Reinforce”, an initiative to deploy teams of Salvation Army staff and volunteers to assist workers at the front-line. Salvation Army employees have been released from their normal work duties to participate.

The volunteer teams assist for a period of five days and undertake assessment, pastoral support and visits to residents of flood and cyclone affected areas.

Their work ranges from:

- Assessment and visitation of people on the lists provided by Flood Relief Line
- Delivering donated goods,
- Food preparation and support to other volunteers,
- Door knocking in areas particularly affected by the natural disasters to check on residents’ well being.

Those with complex, ongoing needs receive ongoing support from full time staff attached to local Salvation Army centres.

Over an eight-week period Operation Reinforce staff and volunteers have undertaken thousands of assessment visits to Queenslanders affected by the disasters.

Captain Stan and Connie Hindle can attest to the importance of going door-to-door to check on how people are coping. These retired Salvation Army officers travelled to Nth Queensland in their caravan to assist in the recovery efforts. Stan recalls, “I went down to a particular house and saw a lady there ... and she said to me, ‘You know something, you are the first person to come into this house since the cyclone to see if we are alive or dead!’”.

ABOVE, FROM LEFT: THE SPIRIT OF TULLY HEADS: ‘BIT BY BIT, DAY BY DAY’; THE CYCLONE DECIMATED MANY HOMES

Standing together for the long haul

“Cyclone Yasi not only left people without homes, but also without jobs. People are struggling to make ends meet and it’s going to take a long, long time for this area to recover,”

– MAJOR MERV HOLLAND, CYCLONE RELIEF COORDINATOR, TULLY NTH QUEENSLAND.

Yasi struck on 3 February with devastating fury, taking everything in its path on the Cassowary coast of North Queensland. Whole houses have disappeared, roofs, walls, windows, contents, cane and banana crops, flora, fauna and roads were swept away in the 300 kilometre per hour winds. Latest damage estimates exceed \$1.5 billion.

The Salvation Army reached devastated towns like Tully and Cardwell as soon as the roads opened – even feeding people stuck in roadblocks on the way there.

When the initial crisis response wound down and emergency services personnel moved out, The Salvation Army stayed to help rebuild the lives of devastated locals.

Janet and her two teenage children survived Yasi unscathed physically, but not so emotionally. With the banana plantations in the area decimated, the box factory where Janet worked shut down. Although she still had a part-time job at a local café, her income dropped by a whopping 60 percent and soon she was unable to make ends meet.

“We’re struggling,” she says. “We’re doing it really tough.” Her car was destroyed in the cyclone and the family’s second car soon broke down. Janet has been forced to sell clothes and other belongings at the local markets in order to pay her bills.

Major Merv Holland says the stoicism of locals like Janet often masks the real pain being felt in the community: “The ‘Janets’ of this area are victims of a massive unemployment problem since Cyclone Yasi. There are people coming every day looking for work but moving on because there simply aren’t any job opportunities here anymore.” Sugar cane losses are projected to exceed \$500 million and bananas \$300 million, according to local sources.

Not only did The Salvation Army help the family get back on its feet with rental payments and supermarket vouchers, Janet accepted trauma counselling and says it has helped her immensely.

“I haven’t really spoken to anyone in the community about the way I am feeling because I’m very lucky compared to some,” she says, “but for the first time since things have happened I’ve been able to tell someone that: ‘no it’s not all fine.’ So that’s been a really big relief.”

Janet says The Salvation Army has given her hope. The family wants to move away from Tully to be closer to family in Mackay but can’t afford the relocation costs. Now, with The Salvation Army’s help, Janet is able



to repair a motor home she owns so that it can be sold to raise money for the move.

“Now that we’ve got that hope of moving... it’s just given us a real spring in our step.”

Many residents in Cyclone affected areas are effectively homeless, living in the shells of ruined homes. “If you walk along the streets of Tully you can see houses that are just covered in tarps even now – months after Cyclone Yasi hit.”

– Salvation Army Cyclone relief worker, Raija Toivanen, in Tully, Nth Queensland

ABOVE: THE SALVATION ARMY HAS HELPED JANET PICK UP THE PIECES AFTER CYCLONE YASI.

STANDING TOGETHER TO REBUILD



Standing together to rebuild lives

Rachael had a decision to make when floods hit her Queensland town: "I could be sitting at home smoking drugs or out helping other people in need".

The 21-year-old joined The Salvation Army's Brisbane Streetlevel program about a year ago to beat her drug addiction, and has been helping to prepare and cook meals.

"I was having family problems, like my mum didn't want to know me and I was getting into the drugs and just drinking too much and drowning my sorrows," she explains.

After getting her life back on track, Rachael began volunteering at Streetlevel where teams support homeless and disadvantaged people in inner-Brisbane through meals, meaningful volunteer work and a loving community.

When the floods hit, Rachael was displaced from the Goodna home she was staying in by the raging waters, but despite her devastation she wanted to help others first.

LEFT: IN REBUILDING THE HOMES OF OTHERS, STREETLEVEL VOLUNTEER RACHAEL (LEFT) HAD HER OWN LIFE TRANSFORMED. .

She joined a group of Salvation Army volunteers and began repairing the worst-affected houses in Goodna, 20 kilometres south-west of Brisbane. In partnership with Westlife Church and Global Care, The Salvation Army has not only been helping to rebuild houses, but helping people rebuild their lives.

Streetlevel Team Leader, Salvation Army Major Bryce Davies says teams travelled to Goodna three times a week for months to rebuild homes and also offered devastated residents meals, fair trade coffee from a Salvation Army mobile coffee van, household goods and a shoulder to cry on when needed.

"These volunteers are people who are homeless or living in shelters or cheap housing and are really looking for something meaningful to do," says Bryce. "Being able to give back to others is a hugely positive experience and helps them in their own recovery from the various issues that have led them to the streets."

Rachael says she wouldn't have been able to help others without the love and support of the team at Streetlevel: "I've got friends around me now. I've got people to tell me, 'Rachael you can't do that,' if I start to go down the wrong track. It's a really lovely environment I'm in now."

LIVES

Thousands of Queenslanders became temporarily homeless as a result of the flood and cyclone disasters. The Queensland Government estimates that 136,000 homes were directly affected by flooding or cyclone damage.

Many accommodated in emergency evacuation centres were able to go back home when the waters subsided. Others, however, had no home to go back to. Or, if they did, it was a shell of its former self.

As well as working in evacuation centres that accommodated people in the short-term, The Salvation Army offered many people places to stay for the longer term.

Caravans were donated and set up at various locations, giving people a roof over their heads whilst they physically rebuilt their homes or waited until other accommodation became available.

Beds were also offered to nursing home residents forced to evacuate due to the Brisbane floods.

The Salvation Army's Riverview Gardens Aged Care Centre accommodated residents from the Russian Benevolent Society Pine Lodge Nursing home at Rocklea which was inundated with more than a metre of water.

"Our mission is to care for those in need. We're prepared to accommodate these men and women from Pine Lodge for as long as required," Salvation Army Aged Care Plus Operations Manager Luke Greive said at the time.

Partnerships were formed with a number of other groups, with The Salvation Army providing building materials to volunteer tradespeople who were rebuilding and repairing housing.

In rural areas The Salvation Army has provided materials to rebuild fences and is even buying feed for stock after crops were destroyed.

In other instances Salvation Army personnel and volunteers are taking on a reconstruction role – plasterboarding, tiling, painting and doing whatever is needed to make homes habitable again.



ABOVE, LEFT TO RIGHT: SALVATION ARMY SYDNEY WORKER NATHAN ASSISTS WITH THE CLEAN-UP DURING OPERATION REINFORCE.; STREETLEVEL TEAM LEADER MAJOR BRYCE DAVIES ASSISTS IN THE REBUILDING PROCESS AT GOODNA. ONE RECIPIENT, 88 YEAR OLD IRIS DIDN'T THINK SHE WOULD EVER BE ABLE TO LIVE IN HER HOME AGAIN WHEN THE FLOODWATERS WENT OVER THE ROOF: "I WAS PREPARING TO WALK AWAY FROM IT BECAUSE I THOUGHT I WOULD NEVER BE ABLE TO AFFORD TO FIX IT, BUT THE VOLUNTEERS HAVE BEEN GREAT. THEY'VE GIVEN ME BACK MY INDEPENDENCE ... I DON'T KNOW WHAT I WOULD HAVE DONE WITHOUT THEM.

"Our mission is to care for those in need. We're prepared to accommodate these men and women ... for as long as required."

– Salvation Army Aged Care Plus Operations Manager Luke Greive.

THE SALVATION ARMY
AUSTRALIA EASTERN TERRITORY
QUEENSLAND DISASTER REPORT 2011

STANDING TOGETHER IN CELEBRATION

Damian and his then-fiancée Shiralee had been putting the finishing touches on their wedding plans when the floodwaters washed their dreams away. Through the emotional and financial support of The Salvation Army, the couple were married two months after the floods destroyed their home. Damian says: "It just worked out perfect... I do believe that God is looking after us at the moment."

