



GENERAL FEDERATION of WOMEN'S CLUBS

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How Can We Help?

At the end of August, there were three major stories on all the networks and other news agencies – Wildfires on the West Coast, Hurricane Ida and the Afghanistan evacuation. We know how we can assist those affected by wildfires and the hurricane – we have our GFWC club members to talk to as well as our reliable relief agencies. But how do we help those evacuees/refugees who are coming with only what they can carry?

Living in Virginia, I am in a unique situation as evacuees are coming through 3 bases located in the state – Fort Lee, Fort Picket and the Marine Corps Base Quantico. Churches in the Fort Lee area are already working with the base Chaplains to provide them with the essentials and other items they may require while they are in temporary quarters on the base.

Several agencies are also assisting the evacuees: Islamic Center of Virginia, International Rescue Committee, Commonwealth Catholic Charities, and Islamic Relief. Commonwealth Catholic Charities, based in Richmond, Virginia, has been assisting those at Fort Lee. They have provided orientation for the newly arrived families and will now work with them to find housing, schools, employment, etc. We hear that most of the evacuees are in good spirits and optimistic to build new lives here in the United States.

The Afghan community established here in Central Virginia is also making the evacuees feel comfortable and welcomed.

One thing that we all can do, whether for the newest evacuees or others who have been here for a little while – is to make them feel welcome. Most of them assisted our service members in some capacity – they now need our help. In one news report it stated eight bases were accepting evacuees. Determine if one is close to you and see what support and/or supplies may be needed.

But what can we do for those who remain in Afghanistan? It has been reported that the World Health Organization has flown in urgently needed medical supplies to Kabul. There

may be other world or national organizations that are working to assist those in Afghanistan with needed supplies. UNICEF USA and Islamic Relief USA are both accepting monetary donations. Islamic Relief USA has offices across the nation where volunteers can assemble boxes of necessities which are then sent to teams for distribution in Afghanistan.

GFWC has several Resolutions on our books that we can use to support refugees and those still in Afghanistan. Those Resolutions are:

015-945 – Refugees

RESOLVED, That the General Federation of Women’s Clubs urges all governments to:

- Find effective means of reuniting refugee families through the efforts of the United Nations and other international organizations;
- Provide protection and assistance to unaccompanied refugee minors;
- Take actions to provide for the safety and security of refugees, especially women and children.

015-930 – Human Rights

RESOLVED, That the General Federation of Women’s Clubs calls upon all nations to end human rights abuses and genocide by promoting the rule of law, peace and understanding among all peoples.

015-970 – Totalitarian Aggression

RESOLVED, That the General Federation of Women's Clubs urges its member clubs to support efforts to prevent aggressive actions by totalitarian regimes and to implement sanctions against such actions.

015-975 – United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)

RESOLVED, That the General Federation of Women’s Clubs supports immediate ratification and implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW); and further

RESOLVED, That the General Federation of Women’s Clubs urges its members and member clubs to become active supporters of CEDAW ratification by contacting their United States Senators and the White House to urge their support for U.S. ratification.

The full Resolutions can be found on the GFWC website, in the Digital Library.

We can work with each other, national and world organizations, and our government to assist those who remain in Afghanistan.

We **CAN** make a difference in someone’s life!

[Gathering Facts and Working for Change](#)