

YWAM Team Assists Storm Recovery in Argentina

Heavy rains, hail and powerful winds swept through Buenos Aires, Argentina, leaving considerable damage to a large part of the western suburban area and downtown. The storm hit on the evening of April 4.

In Ituzaingo, the area surrounding the Youth With A Mission center in Buenos Aires, the damage caused by the wind gales, rain and hail left thousands of fallen trees, 95 percent of the city without power and 70 percent of the city without telephone lines. Some 500 businesses were affected and around 5,000 residences were seriously damaged. At least 15 people have been found dead.

The Municipality and National Guard began working immediately, but they were overwhelmed within hours and solicited the help of diverse organizations. YWAM responded to the request for help, and Thursday morning began to send work teams to collaborate with the task of tree removal, rubble and debris removal, clean-up, water repartition and more.

The teams are working 10 hours a day—as long as there is daylight, since the greater part of the city has not yet recovered electricity. In order to restring the ruined electrical lines, they need to first remove wires and cables, tin sheets and other debris.

God has given YWAM the opportunity to be able to pray and minister to the people affected by the story and they have received testimonies from volunteers. One elderly woman despaired, saying: “God doesn’t hear my prayers. He doesn’t hear us. How did this happen?” The team replied: “Don’t you think that we are God’s answer?” which moved the woman to tears.

Another man approached the team and stated: "I would say 'May God be with you,' but evidently He already is." YWAM is continuously receiving stories such as these; the people are grateful for the work and the dedication. As their truck goes by, the neighbors come up and offer to pay for the work, but YWAM refuses, saying their goal is to bless the community with what they have.

The situation is still critical, as response teams do not have enough tools. There are people living on the street, and pickets and protests are widely seen by neighbors who are angry at the water and electricity providers, though they are working around the clock to help improve the situation of those that have lost it all.