

# Brethren Disaster Ministries **BRIDGES**

Rebuilding Homes • Nurturing Children • Responding Globally

Vol. 18, Winter 2017

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Bridges can be found online at  
[www.brethren.org/bdm/updates](http://www.brethren.org/bdm/updates)



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1-800-451-4407  
[www.brethren  
disasterministries.org](http://www.brethren<br/>disasterministries.org)

## Nigeria Crisis update: Progress in the midst of struggle

by Roy Winter

After 2 ½ years of partnering with and supporting Ekklesiyar Yan'uwa a Nigeria (EYN, Church of the Brethren in Nigeria) through the Nigeria Crisis Response, there have been both improvements and challenges. EYN leadership has moved back to their original headquarters in Kwarhi, and damaged homes and offices have been repaired on the Church compound. Even though they are challenged by ongoing violence and food shortages, approximately 75 percent of the displaced families have returned home to start the process of rebuilding. Those that can't return home are settling in new areas and starting new congregations.

However, challenges remain. The violence caused by the terrorist group Boko Haram continues in parts of northeast Nigeria. With 70 percent of

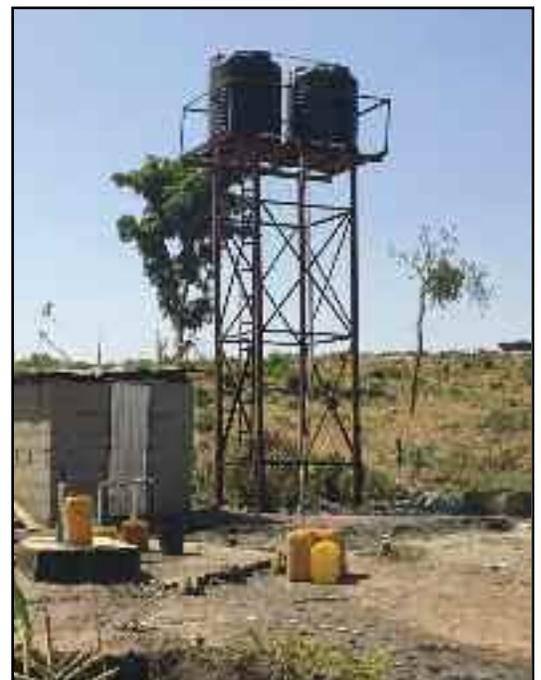
church buildings destroyed, the cumulative stress and trauma of this time is very difficult for EYN leadership and local communities. As each church struggles financially and considers how to rebuild, the national Church is also struggling with its own financial crisis. At times, the situation seems overwhelming and the demands on leadership are immense.

The Church of the Brethren, in partnership with EYN and five Nigerian organizations, is supporting a large scale, comprehensive response to the crisis in Nigeria. Major program activities in 2016

*continued on page 3*



An important aspect of the Nigeria Crisis Response is the distribution of seeds, fertilizers and tools to help families regain self-sufficiency. Photo by CRHill



When a solar powered pump was installed in one village, the chairman exclaimed, "There is enough water for everyone; no need to look for fuel to pump the water. It is like water is coming right from heaven." Photo by CRHill

# Nigeria Crisis Response partner profile: Women and Youth Empowerment for Advancement and Health Initiative (WYEAHI)

Led by Aishatu Margima, WYEAHI has been a small but effective partner in the Nigeria Crisis Response, supporting a livelihood and job creation program with excellent case management, client selection and training. Through this partnership, 1,269 families are better able to feed and care for themselves. We celebrate this partnership and the excellence of WYEAHI's work.

Items distributed by WYEAHI	2015-2016 Total
Sewing machines	210
Bean cake kits	402
Grain milling machine	222
Groundnut oil kit	330
Small business grants	45
Seed & fertilizer kits	60
<b>Total families served</b>	<b>1,269</b>
<b>Total individuals served</b>	<b>8,886</b>
<i>Communities served: Madagali, Michika, Mubi, Askira/Uba (Lassa), Hong, Gombe</i>	



*Joyful women in Askira, Nigeria, receive beancake kits distributed by WYEAHI, led by Aishatu Margima (left). Selling the popular snacks will help them support their families.*

*Photo courtesy of WYEAHI*

## Violence continues in Nigeria

*by Roxane Hill, Nigeria Crisis Response coordinator*

Although we have seen Facebook posts and news releases stating that the Nigerian army has defeated the Boko Haram, violence still continues in northeast Nigeria. One attack, killing or injuring over 100 people in a Madagali market in December 2016, made the news but most of the ongoing attacks in the Madagali and Gwoza area go unreported.

In a recent attack on a town near to Madagali, two young men were killed and three girls were abducted. Staff liaison for Ekklesiyar Yan'uwa a Nigeria (EYN, the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria), Markus Gamache, reported that many families had returned to the area after having fled for their lives last year, leaving their crops to be harvested by Boko Haram. These attacks are causing some to flee again. "They have been there for more than

a year," he said, "but they have never slept once in their houses and though they planted crops they are not able to enjoy the fruit of their labor." Gamache continues to receive daily requests from families wishing to relocate to the Gurku Interfaith Camp for displaced people, which is already filled to capacity.

Despite their suffering, EYN President Joel Billi encouraged church members not to lose hope. He said that the church has lost people and buildings, but God is always by our side and will never let us down.

Please continue to support Nigeria through your prayers and donations to the Nigeria Crisis Fund. Find out more about the Nigeria Crisis Response, a joint effort of EYN and the Church of the Brethren, at [www.brethren.org/nigeriacrisis](http://www.brethren.org/nigeriacrisis).



*Before returning home with their new beancake or groundnut kits, WYEAHI recipients receive small business training to help them be more successful.*

*Photo courtesy of WYEAHI*

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# Nigeria workcamp

by Donna Parcell

Donna Parcell reflects on her involvement in the first of several planned church construction project workcamps sponsored by the Brethren Evangelical Support Trust (BEST) and Ekklesiyar Yan'uwa a Nigeria (EYN, the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria). The church construction project motto, "Come let us rebuild," was inspired by Nehemiah 2:17. The first workcamp was led by Global Mission and Service executive director Jay Wittmeyer.

In November of 2016, a group of nine members of the Church of the Brethren in the U.S. traveled to Abuja, Nigeria, to participate in the first workcamp held after the Boko Haram insurgency. We were welcomed with open arms. Our EYN brothers and sisters, known for their hospitality, were very gracious hosts. Everywhere we went we heard, "You are welcome."

A highlight was getting to visit several local churches for worship. Our group divided up and visited six different churches for the two Sundays we were there. We loved the music and the passion expressed during worship. We also loved the joy with which offering was given!

For our work, we helped to build a church in the village of Pegi, about an hour's drive from Abuja. The church was for people from Chibok



Donna Parcell (left) participated in the Nehemiah Project workcamp in November 2016 to build a church for displaced people from the Chibok area. Photo by Jay Wittmeyer

who had fled after the Boko Haram attacks. We spent long hot days carrying bowls of dirt that were packed down for the foundation. We carried bowls of sand and rocks to make concrete and cement. We carried bowls of cement and concrete, and also cement blocks, to build the walls. It was hard but rewarding work.

As hard as we worked, the Nigerians worked even harder. A different local EYN church helped each day, as well as the people from Chibok. This was the first workcamp that Nigerians have participated in and they were very excited to do so. The women were carrying heavier loads than us, and most of them had babies on their backs. Their resilience was an inspiration.

Our Nigerian brothers and sisters were so appreciative of us being there, and so encouraging. With every load that I carried, people would say, "Well done, mama. Thank you, mama." Literally, every time. When I felt that I couldn't carry another load, their words of encouragement always inspired me to go on.

During our time in Nigeria, we also visited the Gurku Interfaith Camp for internally displaced people. We were able to help with a food distribution, and got a tour of the camp. We talked with several families and learned their stories. We were encouraged by how well the Christian and Muslim people lived and worked together and supported each other.

The workcamp was an amazing experience on many levels. Supporting our brothers and sisters during their time of hardship is so important. Physically being there and working alongside them and



The Nehemiah Project workcamp motto—Come let us rebuild—was inspired by the rebuilding of Jerusalem and the temple as related in Nehemiah 2. Photo by Donna Parcell

building relationships has value beyond measure.

## Nigeria Crisis update

continued from page 1

focused on peace building and trauma healing, including specialized programs for children; distributions of food, medical supplies and household goods; agricultural training and support including distributions of seeds, fertilizers, and some goats and chickens, as well as support for a soybean initiative through the Global Food Initiative; livelihood training, tools and materials; building and repairing homes; providing safe water; supporting education, including repairing and renovating schools and Kulp Bible College; supporting EYN leadership; and advocacy in the U.S. and Nigeria to support peace and justice through the Church of the Brethren offices of Peace and Public Witness.

# The worst disaster

The worst “disaster” of the last decades is the massive humanitarian crisis caused by global violence and terrorism. As former United Nations secretary general Ban Ki Moon stated, “We are facing the biggest refugee and displacement crisis of our time. Above all, this is not just a crisis of numbers; it is a crisis of solidarity.” With more than 65 million people displaced by violence in the world, this crisis has been the focus of 75 percent of Brethren Disaster Ministries (BDM) international programming in 2016. The largest program area was the Nigeria Crisis Response, which accounted for \$4.24 million in relief and recovery ministry during 2014 -2016.

Responding to this crisis includes work in many parts of Africa including Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Tanzania and South Sudan. By supporting COB Global Mission and Service partners and Church World Service programming, aid is targeted where needs are greatest and our resources have a greater impact. The crisis work is extended further through a partner with the Lebanese Society for Education and Social Development (LSESD) supporting Syrian children with food and education. This now

includes a special program to help children traumatized by violence to develop better coping skills and psychosocial wellbeing.



Children wait as emergency food supplies from BDM are distributed by Church of the Brethren mission worker Athanasus Ungang. He reports that the children, women and elderly in Payam Pacidi are going through the “toughest time in their lives” as starvation is increasing. Caught between a civil war and drought, many in South Sudan are suffering from a major food crisis.

*Photo by Athanasus Ungang*

Grants from BDM supported the Church of the Brethren in Rwanda and the Evangelical Alliance of Rwanda in distributing badly needed food to Burundian refugees living in Kigali and Gitarama area.

*Photo by Pastor Etienne Nsanzimana, Brethren Church of Rwanda*



A \$43,000 Emergency Disaster Fund grant to a local partner organization in Lebanon is providing education and trauma healing support to these and other Syrian children.



Amid the chaos and violence of the Syrian war, these Syrian refugees in Lebanon enjoy a Christmas meal.

*Photos by Alia Abboud*

# Hurricane Matthew Response in Haiti

by Roy Winter

On Tues., Oct. 4, 2016, Hurricane Matthew, a powerful category 4 storm, hit Haiti. The total rainfall from the storm reached from 25 inches up to 40 inches in isolated areas, causing widespread damage, killing up to 1,600 people and affecting 2.1 million Haitians. Significant damage to basic infrastructure, agriculture and livestock losses made this a humanitarian disaster for nearly a million people.

The Haitian Church of the Brethren (Eglise des Freres Haitiens) responded quickly through a partnership with Brethren Disaster Ministries. An initial grant of \$30,000 from BDM supported emergency food and supply distributions to 15 communities.

In a planning session with BDM staff on Nov. 2, 2016, a comprehensive plan was created for a joint Haitian Church/BDM long-term recovery program. Ten Haitian church leaders have been assigned to the Disaster Team with the task of

leading the response and recovery activities. The planning team decided to focus on long-term recovery programming along with medical support for disaster survivors. Animal, plant and seed distributions are planned as phase two activities, while home repair and rebuilding is planned for phase three. Medical clinics will be provided during all phases.



Goat distributions began in Haiti in early in 2017 to help communities recover from Hurricane Matthew. The goats were examined and vaccinated before being given to families.  
Photo by by Jean Bily Telfort



The first phase of the Haiti Hurricane Matthew Response provided rice, beans, spaghetti, oil, spices, soap, laundry soap, combs, candles and children's clothing to the 15 communities.  
Photo by Jean Bily Telfort

## New budget and donation process

The Mission and Ministry Board of the Church of the Brethren approved a new process for budgeting expenses for Brethren Disaster Ministries, the Emergency Disaster Fund and similar programs with restricted donations. In the past, BDM would budget for office rent, computers, equipment, phones and financial services needed to support the ministry. In this way, BDM was paying a fair share of ministry expenses. These expenses were \$94,500 in 2016.

Starting in 2017, these budgeted expenses have been removed from the BDM budget and replaced with a new simpler approach called the "Ministry Enablement Contribution." This means nine percent of all restricted gifts to the denomination, including the Emergency Disaster Fund, will be designed for support functions needed for that ministry. In a typical year donations to Brethren Disaster Ministries, Children's Disaster Services and the Emergency Disaster Fund total around \$1 million, which would make a Ministry Enablement Contribution of \$90,000 in those years. Thus, on a typical year the available funds for disaster work will be about the same as the old budgeting process. When a major event happens, like the Nigeria Crisis, more funds will go to support all the extra work such a crisis creates for all denominational staff.

The next time you or your church make a donation to BDM, CDS or the Emergency Disaster Fund, you will see a note about the nine percent Ministry Enablement Contribution. If you have any questions about the new budget approach, please contact Roy Winter, [rwinter@brethren.org](mailto:rwinter@brethren.org) or 410-596-8561.

### Hurricane Matthew Response Haiti 2016-2017

Activity	Budget
Emergency food distributions (completed)	\$30,000*
10 medical clinics	\$20,000
Goat and chicken distributions	\$13,000
Seed and plant distributions & education	\$8,500
Home repair & rebuilding	\$83,250
Staff expenses (stipends, meals, travel)	\$5,250
Total	\$160,000
* Actual expenditure was \$29,278	

# CDS Hurricane Matthew response

Hurricane Matthew hit the U.S. on Oct. 8, 2016, much further north than originally projected. After



Two girls enjoyed the companionship of each other and CDS volunteers during their time in a CDS child care center as they constructed a train for getting out of town. Photo by Mary Geisler

several weeks of having teams on call and prepared to go, the call finally came through to move our team into North Carolina. Once this group arrived, they never stopped moving! They served in several different shelters and ended the deployment in a FEMA assistance center. The team also moved hotels several times. The survivors had evacuated multiple times and Red Cross had moved headquarters multiple times due to rising floodwaters, so it seemed fitting that our team would be on the move as well.

One of the shelters housed tribal community members. The team was told the survivors in this shelter might be cautious of strangers interacting with their children. First time CDS caregiver and Child Life Specialist Kelsey Loftus

wrote, “The shelter manager had warned us that they may not be welcoming. However, we experienced just the opposite. Parents were extremely grateful for us and the opportunity to take a break and engage in self-care.”

Many thanks to all the volunteers who responded with a calm and compassionate presence to a record number of 12 disasters in 2016!



These boys know that sometimes the best toy can be an empty box coupled with imagination. Photo by Mary Geisler

## Calling all CDS Kits of Comfort™

One of the encouraging things that came out of the enthusiastic responses to the intense Children’s Disaster Services workshop schedule of 2016 was the interest in having Kits of Comfort™ (KOCs) clustered in local communities. As a follow-up to this interest, we are updating our list of volunteers who are both currently storing KOCs and who have expressed interest in creating one.

We are working to track as many KOCs and their locations that we can. If any of the following questions apply to you, please contact Kristen Hoffman at [khoffman@brethren.org](mailto:khoffman@brethren.org) or call 410-635-8735.

- Do you have a KOC or know the location of a KOC you passed on to another volunteer to keep?
- Is your KOC up-to-date, ready for deployment or training?
- Did you have a KOC, but it is now outdated or dismantled?
- Are you working on building a new KOC and need paperwork?

- Does your KOC have mandatory paperwork from CDS that is current? It will read “Children’s Disaster Services” in the header (old paperwork includes material reading “Disaster Child Care” or “Cooperative Disaster Child Care”).

- Is there anything else you need?

When we send out emails asking for child care givers to help in the event of a deployment, it is helpful if at that time, you would also include whether you have a KOC ready to go or if you know of one in the area that is ready and accessible. Of course, KOCs can be used for local activities too, especially when highlighting the work of CDS (disaster drills or exercises) or with children who have experienced trauma or loss (such as homeless programs, prison visitation, or visits/programs for children who are struggling in various settings - church, school, community organizations). Thank you for helping us keep our records up-to-date!



CDS 2017 deployments have begun! We sent a team into Albany, Ga., to provide nurture and care for children in a MARC (Multi Agency Resource Center) in response to the tornadoes of Jan. 21-23. This photo from Baton Rouge 2016, shows some play materials from our Kits of Comfort that travel with teams to disaster sites. These items, supplemented by ‘found materials’, such as boxes, provide meaningful opportunities for children to express themselves and begin the healing process following a disaster.

Photo by Cathy Stengel

# CDS workshops

We are so appreciative of all the trainers, hosts and community partners who help make our workshops happen. Many thanks also to those who attended the workshops and are following through with the certification process. We have already had some of our new 2016 volunteers out on several of our responses. They have brought a new energy and passion to our calm and steady work. There has been much interest in connecting with other emergency response partners in local areas. This is how we spread the word about our work!

Anyone 18 or over is welcome to attend the 27-hour training required to become a certified CDS caregiver. References and background checks are also required for certification. Once caregivers complete certification, all expenses for disaster responses are paid for. The training is an overnight experience, simulating a shelter situation, and includes an overview of our work, information about working with children and families in disaster situations and practice in setting up a children's center with a Kit of Comfort.

Registration for upcoming 2017 workshops can be found on our webpage - [www.brethren.org/cds/training/dates.html](http://www.brethren.org/cds/training/dates.html)

## Dates and locations

Feb. 3-4: Independence, Mo.

Feb. 25-26: LaVerne, Calif.

April 28-29: McPherson, Kans.

March 25: Dallas, TX (specialized workshop for Child Life Professionals)



Participants in the September 2016 Kalamazoo, Mich., CDS workshop brainstorm for a group activity. Photo by Katie Nees

## CDS 2016 Response Statistics

Location	Disaster type	Vol.*	Days	Hours served	Value of hours served**	Children served
St. Louis, Mo.	flood	8	22	176	\$4,146.56	45
Monroe, La.	flood	6	42	336	\$7,916.16	61
Houston, Texas	flood	10	122	976	\$22,994.56	396
Houston, Texas	flood	6	49	392	\$9,235.52	94
Orlando, Fla.	mass shooting	7	46	368	\$8,670.08	68
Angleton, Texas	flood	5	27	216	\$5,088.96	103
Kernville, Calif. (local)	wildfire	5	17	136	\$3,204.16	34
White Sulpher Springs, W.Va.	flood	4	36	288	\$6,785.28	27
Kernville, Calif.	wildfire	4	24	192	\$4,523.52	44
Baton Rouge, La.	flood	29	299	2,392	\$56,355.52	762
Fayetteville, N.C.	hurricane	13	80	640	\$15,078.40	148
Nigeria†	terrorist violence	†	†	†	†	†
<b>Totals</b>		<b>97</b>	<b>764</b>	<b>6,112</b>	<b>\$143,998.72</b>	<b>1,782</b>

\*Includes repeat volunteers.

\*\*Estimated Value of Volunteer Service is \$23.56/hr. for 2015 per IndependentSector.org

†A special Healing Hearts program was created and started to support Nigerian children impacted by violence. Nigerian workshop leaders trained by CDS are reaching thousands of children in dozens of communities. See CDS Workshops 2016 table for additional information.



Participants in the Healing Hearts Training of Trainers workshop, Kwarhi, Nigeria, December 2016: Led by John Kinsel, the 25 participants were trained in trauma healing work with children affected by the violence of the Boko Haram. Nine women attended as a follow-up training to the first workshop in April 2016. Many of the participants work with Christian and Muslim children in their communities, so this time the training used stories appropriate to both faith perspectives with a focus on healing and compassion. EYN (Church of the Brethren in Nigeria) director of Women's Ministry, Suzan Mark, expressed her gratitude for Kinsel's leadership, saying, "It's good to have you here with us in Nigeria, especially the Northern part. You may not know how much you have affected lives positively; bringing understanding of children trauma healing and the healing heart stories."

Photo by Rev. Yuguda Mduruvwa, EYN

## Children's Disaster Services 2016 Workshops

Date	Location	Type of training	Participants	Trainers*	Volunteer trainer hours	Value of hours served**
Jan. 12	New Orleans, La.	Child Resource & Referral Workshop	22	2	20	\$471.20
Jan. 29	Sebring, Fla.	Level I	10	2	80	\$1,884.80
Feb. 29	Irvine, Calif.	Level I	31	2	40	\$942.40
March 19	Jacksonville, Fla.	Level I	7	2	40	\$942.40
April 1	Windham, Maine	Level I	30	2	80	\$1,884.80
April 16	La Verne, Calif.	Level I	25	3	120	\$2,827.20
April 18	Jos, Nigeria	Training of Trainers (Healing Hearts)***	16	2	90	\$2,120.40
Sept. 10	Tampa, Fla.	Child Life Specialist Workshop	39	2	40	\$942.40
Sept. 30	Kalamazoo, Mich.	Level I	35	2	40	\$942.40
Oct. 14	Manassas, Va.	Level I	22	3	120	\$2,827.20
Oct. 19	New Windsor, Md.	Critical Response Leadership	39	5	80	\$1,884.80
Dec. 2	Seattle, Wash.	Level I	32	2	40	\$942.40
Dec. 2	Kwarhi, Nigeria	Training of Trainers (Healing Hearts)†	26	1	90	\$2,120.40
<b>Totals</b>	<b>13 locations</b>		<b>334</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>880</b>	<b>\$20,732.80</b>

\*Includes repeat trainers; some trainers were paid staff members and not included in volunteer hours

\*\*Estimated Value of Volunteer Service is \$23.56/hr. for 2015 per IndependentSector.org

†By the end of 2016, over 100 volunteers had been trained in the Healing Hearts Curriculum.



BDM volunteers are working on homes damaged by storms and flooding in October 2015 in Columbia, S.C.  
Photo by David Lerell



BDM has a new four-stall shower trailer which will also include a washer and dryer. The trailer was partially funded with support from Mid-Atlantic district and the William E. Cross Foundation.  
Photo courtesy of BDM

## Upcoming disaster relief auctions

Brethren Disaster Ministries benefits from the proceeds of several annual disaster relief auctions. Thank you to the many volunteers who give their time and talents to making these auctions a success. Are you holding an auction or fundraiser to benefit the Emergency Disaster Fund? If so, let us know and we can help advertise it.

**May 6: 37th Mid-Atlantic District Disaster Response Auction**  
Carroll County Agricultural Center in Westminster, Md.;  
Information available at [www.madcob.com/disaster-response-auction](http://www.madcob.com/disaster-response-auction) or call (443) 960-3052

**May 19-20: 25th annual Shenandoah District Disaster Ministries Auction**  
Rockingham County Fairgrounds in Harrisonburg, Va.;  
Information will soon be available at [www.facebook.com/brethren-auction](http://www.facebook.com/brethren-auction) or call 540-234-8555

**Sept. 22-23: 41st Brethren Disaster Relief Auction** (Atlantic NE and Southern Pa. districts)  
Lebanon Valley Expo Center, Lebanon, Pa.; Information available at [www.brethrendisasterreliefauction.org](http://www.brethrendisasterreliefauction.org)

# Rebuild Program update

## Disaster Recovery Support Initiative

The Disaster Recovery Support Initiative (DRSI) partner rebuild site supported by BDM and the disaster ministries of The United Church of Christ and Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Columbia, S.C., concluded at the end of October 2016. During its 10-month existence, volunteers served 22 families affected by storm damage and flooding in October 2015, bringing them home and making their houses safer. Two hundred and thirty-four volunteers from 12 different organizations stayed at the volunteer housing at Holy Apostles Orthodox Church.

The goal of the DRSI is to form a Disaster Recovery Support Team that has experience and can support communities as they are planning their recovery. From January through November, this local support in Columbia, S.C., was led solely by BDM volunteer Tim Sheaffer. The goal for a team is about to be realized. Two members of this team are in final contract negotiations with an expected start date of February 2017. DRSI team members will be employees of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and will represent the DRSI when serving in these deployed roles. They will begin their service with training and planning sessions with staff from the three partner denominations.

Tim Sheaffer and UCC long-term volunteer Marcy Magness are serving



Ruth Stump (left, Shenandoah) and project leader Lindy Frantz (Pacific SW) continue work on a house where BDM replaced the roof due to storm damage. Photo by Jenn Dorsch

in Clay County, W.Va., during the months of December through February. They are working with the local long-term recovery group (LTRG) and West Virginia Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster where needed as they plan their recovery and make plans to host volunteers very soon.

## South Carolina

BDM will continue a volunteer rebuild site in Columbia, S.C., in 2017, where there is still much work to be done for survivors. As of the beginning of January, disaster case managers shared that there were over 600 homes still needing help just in that area. Staff and leaders are working closely with the Midlands Flood Recovery Group in unique ways to make this possible. This includes BDM applying for grants from the United Way of the Midlands to cover construction materials and applying for multiple other sources of funding on behalf of each homeowner to make the grant money stretch as far as possible. Housing for this site will continue to be at Cornerstone Presbyterian Church.

## Detroit

The BDM Detroit site closed and moved just before Christmas 2016 in the middle of two snow storms. While in Detroit from April to December 2016, BDM was able to partner with the Northwest Detroit Flood Recovery Project to serve 57 families in restoring their basements following flooding in August 2014. By the end of 2016, they reported that work on all but one of the homes on their case list had been completed, and work for that client was scheduled to be finished in January 2017. BDM supported the Detroit site with \$10,000 for construction materials during the life of the project, as well as helped with construction assessments from disaster project leaders on site.



Volunteers remove the shingles on a roof in Columbia, S.C. home that was damaged in storms in October 2015. Photo by Jenn Dorsch

## Project 2

Due to a lack of communities that would be prepared for BDM, as well as an inconsistent volunteer and leadership response to keep a second site open in January and February, the vehicles and trailers from Detroit are being stored at the Shenandoah District Office until another site is identified. All volunteers on the schedule for the first two months of 2017 will be serving on our South Carolina site. BDM staff is working to identify where other groups scheduled for Project 2 in 2017 will be serving, and will be in touch with those groups for confirmation.

## West Virginia

BDM is exploring the possibility of sending volunteer groups on the schedule to serve in Clay County, W.VA., following the July 2016 flooding. We expect to partner with the Greater Clay Long-term Recovery Committee to help with projects like rebuilds, new builds and setting tiny homes that are being built outside of the county and brought in. Five volunteers from the Shenandoah District were already in Clay on Jan. 26 and 27 working to rebuild and put in a kitchen at a lodge building that was also flooded but is slated to offer volunteer housing through all of 2017. We anticipate that BDM volunteers will stay at this housing location when they serve in Clay County, but it will also be home to other volunteer groups when BDM volunteers are not there.

# Disaster Recovery Support Initiative in Columbia, S.C.

by Tim Sheaffer

“Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us.” Hebrews 12:1 [The Example of Jesus]

It has been 15 months since record rainfall devastated 24 counties in South Carolina over a three-day period. Most people passing through likely don’t even realize that there is still a lot of work to be done to repair the homes of those affected by the flooding and torrential rainfall. And while we know we are just a small part of the effort there, it is a joy to know we were able to help get volunteer rebuild work started in the South Carolina Midlands area and that we are still there doing our part.

As we began in South Carolina, it was uncertain how the new venture with the Disaster Recovery Support Initiative (DRSI) would play out. DRSI is a joint effort of Brethren Disaster Ministries, the United

Church of Christ (UCC) and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) (DoC). So, as always, we gave it to God ... and He returned blessings upon us all.

Though the DRSI project was not quite what we BDMer’s are accustomed to, many of our faithful volunteers responded, along with volunteers from our partner denominations, as well as some others. As a result, we were hard at work repairing homes a little more than three months after the storms occurred. To put this into perspective, it is normally at least eight months—and most often more than a year after an event—before we are able to “put boots on the ground” for a rebuild project. This would not have been possible without the combined resources of the DRSI partners. It was an affirming experience to see so many people of God from so many

and varied faith backgrounds come together simply as His children—al answering the same call from the same Lord and Savior to “Serve one another in Love” (Galatians 5:13). I am hopeful that the future will provide more opportunities for our Brethren to work side by side with volunteers from other organizations. And hopeful that, to His glory, we will be able to continue to respond more quickly to the needs of disaster stricken communities.



T-shirts tell the story of DRSI partnership in South Carolina: from left to right, Brethren Disaster Ministries, United Church of Christ, International Orthodox Christian Charities. Working together, DRSI partners and supporting organizations were able to begin work on homes damaged by flooding in Columbia, S.C., earlier than usual.  
Photo by Jenn Dorsch

## Brethren Disaster Ministries Rebuild 2016 Response Statistics

Project location	Disaster type	Volunteers*	Workdays	Hours served	Value of hours served**	Families served
<b>Rebuild Projects</b>						
Spotswood, N.J.	Super Storm Sandy	37	180	1,440	\$33,926.40	3
Greeley/Loveland, Colo.	flood/wildfires	322	3,555	28,440	\$670,046.40	34
Harts, W.Va.	flood	77	648	5184	\$122,135.04	7
Detroit, Mich.	flood	401	2,779	22,232	\$523,785.92	57
Columbia, S.C.	storm/flood	103	710	5,680	\$133,820.80	††
DRSI - S.C.†	storm/flood	234	1,452	11,630	\$274,002.80	22
<b>Rebuild Projects total</b>		<b>1,174</b>	<b>9,324</b>	<b>74,606</b>	<b>\$1,757,717.36</b>	<b>123</b>
<b>LTRG/Community support</b>						
DRSI - S.C., W.Va.	storm/flood	2	300	2,400	\$56,544.00	N/A

\*Includes repeat volunteers

\*\*Estimated Value of Volunteer Service is \$23.56/hr. for 2015 per IndependentSector.org

†DRSI (Disaster Response Support Initiative) projects included volunteers from BDM and 11 other organizations

††BDM volunteers worked exclusively with 10 of the total 22 families served in S.C.

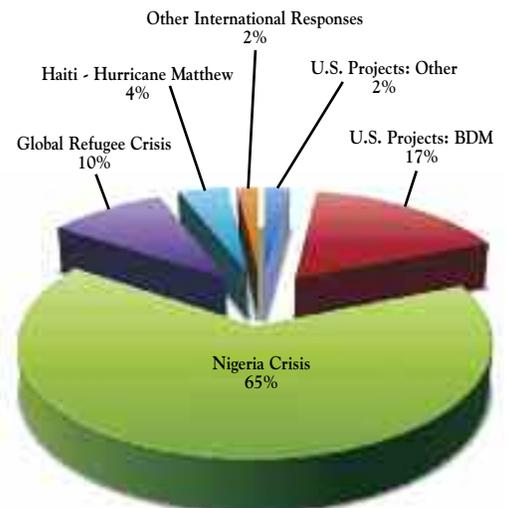
## Brethren Disaster Ministries 2016 Project Expenses

Status	Disaster	Amount
<b>US Projects</b>		
Active	BDM – South Carolina flood response	\$44,884
Active	Disaster Recovery Support Initiative (DRSI)	\$128,980
Active	CWS – U.S. Hurricane Matthew response	\$7,500
Completed	BDM – Eureka, Mo., flood recovery	\$2,954
Completed	BDM – Detroit, Mich., flood recovery	\$88,424
Completed	CWS – U.S. refugee resettlement	\$15,000
Completed	CDS – response to Texas flooding	\$3,802
Completed	BDM – Southern W.Va. flood recovery	\$27,510
Completed	WV VOAD – Southern W.Va. bridge project	\$25,000
Completed	BDM – Northeast Colorado flood recovery	\$71,532
Completed	BDM – Spotswood, N.J., rebuilding project	\$9,114
<b>U.S. total</b>		<b>\$424,700</b>
<b>International Projects</b>		
Active	BDM – EYN response to violence in Nigeria	\$1,468,679
Active	BDM/Haitian CoB Hurricane Matthew Response	\$53,259
Active	GMS – South Sudan war, food shortages, response vehicle	\$38,483
Active	CWS – Burundi refugee crisis - Tanzania	\$30,000
Active	Syrian refugee crisis – Lebanon	\$93,000
Active	Bittersweet Ministries – Haitian refugees in Mexico	\$2,500
Active	CWS – Haiti Hurricane Matthew response	\$40,000
Active	CWS – Haiti Earthquake long-term recovery	\$10,000
Completed	Emergency preparedness & canned chicken – Honduras	\$9,309
Completed	Heifer International – Ecuador earthquake response	\$20,000
Completed	Shalom Ministry – displaced families in the DR Congo	\$12,500
Completed	Brethren Church of Rwanda – Burundi refugee crisis	\$39,000
Completed	Dominican Republic COB – humanitarian assistance for deported Haitians	\$3,750
<b>International total</b>		<b>\$1,820,480</b>
<b>TOTAL BDM PROJECT EXPENSES</b>		<b>\$2,245,180</b>

### BDM 2016 Project Funding

Emergency Disaster Fund (EDF) total (excluding Nigeria Crisis Funds)	\$1,216,380
Nigeria Crisis Fund (part of EDF and not included above)	\$549,935
Nigeria – Christian Aid Ministries	\$235,000
Children’s Disaster Services: grant from United Methodist Committee on Relief	\$50,000
Children’s Disaster Services: grant from Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)	\$15,000
National VOAD for BDM Rebuilding Program in Detroit	\$5,000
United Way of the Midlands to BDM Rebuilding Program for building materials in S.C.	\$38,500
Disaster Recovery Support Initiative (DRSI) partner funding *	\$27,000
Four grants to DRSI for building materials in S.C. (United Way, NVOAD, One SC Fund) *	\$74,199
*DRSI is a joint program of BDM, United Church of Christ and Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)	

### 2016 Project Expenses





# BRIDGES

**Brethren Disaster Ministries**  
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New Windsor, MD 21776

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## Reflections on Detroit

by Cliff Kindy

Natural disasters strike people from all walks of life. Always, way out of proportion to their numbers, poor and minority communities are the ones most devastated in a disaster setting. This again happened in Detroit. The



Northwest Detroit Flood Recovery Project case managers Cheryl Tipton and Linda Staley stand on either side of a homeowner in Detroit.  
*Photo courtesy NWDFRP*

families BDM served in Detroit were almost all African-American. Though stories of random violence and gang activity fill our news channels, those were not the experiences of BDM volunteers [in Detroit]. The grandfather in one home was a physicist who had studied at Harvard. Older women would leave strange white BDM teams alone in their homes as they went shopping—homes secured by barred windows and double lock security doors at a time when white attacks on blacks across the country were making headlines. A young high school senior in another home hung around the BDM workers, asked questions and was soon pitching in to help hang drywall, re-set the basement banister and install the security hardware for the exterior doors. Had we been at that site



Disaster project leader, Jeff Bruens, stands next to a homeowner during the Disaster Project Leader Training in September 2016 in Detroit, Mich.  
*Photo by Jenn Dorsch*

another two days we would perhaps have enlisted another regular volunteer for BDM sites!