



Vol. 22, Winter 2021

INSIDE

2020 Atlantic Hurricane Season Facts..	2
Would you like to receive BRIDGES by email?	2
Terry Goodger Resigns	2
Rebuilding Updates	3
Brethren Disaster Ministries 2020 Rebuilding Responses	3
Celebrating a Brethren Partnership and Servant Leadership in Puerto Rico..	4
Beginning 2021 with House Blessings..	5
Brethren Disaster Ministries 2020 Project Expenses	6
2021 Disaster Response Auctions	7
2020 COVID-19 Project Expenses	7
Brethren Disaster Ministries 2020 Project Funding & Grants.....	7
CDS Updates	8
Children's Disaster Services 2020 Response Statistics.....	9
Children's Disaster Services 2020 Training Workshops	9
Nigeria Crisis Response 2020 Report..	10
COVID-19 Grant Program Update..	11
Earthquake Relief in Sparta, N.C.....	11
A "Rise Up!" Thank You	12



**BRETHREN
Disaster Ministries**

is a program of the
Church of the Brethren



**Children's
Disaster Services**

is a program of
Brethren Disaster Ministries

For more information on
Brethren Disaster Ministries
1-800-451-4407
www.brethren.org/bdm



Church of the Brethren

Brethren Disaster Ministries BRIDGES

Rebuilding Homes • Nurturing Children • Responding Globally

Rare Powerful November Hurricanes Devastate Central America

by Roy Winter



Hurricane Eta caused massive flooding in Central America.

Photo courtesy of CWS

Coming at the end of the record-breaking 2020 Atlantic hurricane season (see box, page 2), powerful Category 4 hurricanes Eta (Nov. 3) and Iota (Nov. 16) made landfall in Nicaragua within 15 miles of each other, causing widespread destruction, landslides, and flooding in El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) reported that a whopping 8.8 million people in the region were affected by the storms, with 4.6 million (more than half the population) from Honduras alone. Damage reports in the region are incomplete due to the difficulty of reaching remote areas but reports make it clear that hundreds of thousands of homes were damaged or destroyed, roads

and bridges were washed away, there were many landslides caused by rain and flooding, and much of the crops were lost in the floods. At the end of 2020, at least 200,000 people remained in shelters, less

continued on page 2



BDM partner Proyecto Aldea Global (PAG) quickly organized food distribution to areas in Honduras devastated by flooding following Hurricanes Eta and Iota.

Photo courtesy of PAG

November Hurricanes

continued from page 1

than half the population had access to safe drinking water, and many still needed help with food, sanitation, drinking water, and shelter.

As part of Brethren Disaster Ministries' early response, \$45,000 in Emergency Disaster Fund (EDF) grants are supporting immediate relief programs of three partners. A \$10,000 grant to Church World Service (CWS) supports targeted communities in Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua with food kits, hygiene supplies, blankets, medical supplies, and water. Another \$10,000 grant is supporting food distributions through a new partner, the Christian Solidarity Program for Honduras.

Proyecto Aldea Global (PAG, Project Global Village) is a long time BDM partner and a very effective development organization in Honduras. A \$25,000 grant to PAG is supporting immediate feeding programs, transportation costs for a container of food from the U.S., and home repairs.

BDM plans to work with partners like CWS and PAG in 2021 to expand the hurricane response to focus on home rebuilding, agriculture, and



New efficient homes are being built in flood-free zones in Honduras by Proyecto Aldea Global (PAG) for families whose homes were destroyed in Hurricanes Eta and Iota.

Courtesy of PAG

safe drinking water sources. PAG has already started rebuilding with an efficient 400 sq ft home design of three rows of cinderblocks, treated wood and a tin roof, at a cost of about \$2,000 each, and providing villages with safe piped drinking water for about \$6,000 per village. A recent additional EDF grant of \$25,000 is supporting these programs. Please join this effort and give to hurricane relief through the Emergency Disaster Fund.

2020 Atlantic Hurricane Season Facts

- Busiest hurricane season on record
- 30 named storms included 13 hurricanes, six that were major
- Record nine named storms from May to July
- Second time in history that Greek alphabets were used once names were depleted
- Eta was most catastrophic storm of 2020
- First time that two hurricanes have formed in the Atlantic in November
- Fifth consecutive Atlantic hurricane season that was both above normal and had at least one Category 5 hurricane

Would you like to receive BRIDGES by email?

Brethren Disaster Ministries will soon be offering our Bridges newsletter electronically for those who would prefer not to receive a paper copy.

If we have your email address, you will be receiving an email asking about your preferences. In the meantime, you may also send an email to bdm@brethren.org, or give us a call at 800-451-4407, regarding any preferences or any questions you may have.

Terry Goodger Resigns

Terry Goodger resigned as the Rebuild Program Assistant for Brethren Disaster Ministries, a position she had held since June 2017. Her last day was December 31, 2020. Terry was extremely valuable to the rebuilding program. Her work



Photo courtesy of BDM

included communicating with and assisting the rebuilding sites; interfacing with and scheduling weekly volunteer groups; working with District Disaster Coordinators; and tracking and updating rebuilding program information. Terry previously served on the staff of the Church of the Brethren at the Brethren Service Center in Material Resources from 2006-2016.

We thank Terry greatly for her service and wish her well in her new job. We look forward to her planned volunteer support of the BDM ministries in the years to come.

Rebuilding Updates

Dayton Ohio Project

The rebuilding site in Dayton, Ohio, closed to weekly volunteers at Thanksgiving 2020, several weeks earlier than expected due to COVID-19 spread in the area. The site had already been scheduled to be suspended for January through Easter of 2021. The current plan is for work on the 2019 tornado recovery to resume in April, with continued COVID-19 protocol work using local volunteers for the first month, followed by the weekly groups listed on the BDM schedule traveling to resume overnight teams.

BDM has received a \$17,000 grant from The Dayton Foundation to cover the 2021 expenses paid to our volunteer housing facility at the Memorial Presbyterian Church.



Much of the tornado recovery work in Dayton involves repairing siding and roofs that were damaged by the winds.

Iowa Derecho Grant

Brethren Disaster Ministries has been awarded a National VOAD (Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster) Lowes Grant for volunteers from the Northern Plains district to continue to organize support for families affected by the Derecho, a series of thunderstorms that blew across the Midwest on August 10, 2020 causing widespread damage. This award includes \$8,000 in Lowes gift certificates to purchase construction materials for home repairs. In addition, cash funds were issued to support the facilitation of the project and reporting. Plans are in process for this work to be completed in the spring of 2021.



By Sammy Deacon and courtesy of BDM

Brethren Disaster Ministries 2020 Rebuilding Responses

Project location	Disaster type	Weekly volunteers*	Work days	Hours served	Value of service**	Families served
Rebuilding Projects						
Carolinas	Hurricanes Matthew & Florence	133	1,062	8,496	\$231,091.20	19
Puerto Rico	Hurricane Maria	59	501	4,008	\$109,017.60	58†
Tampa, FL	Hurricane Irma	125	797	6,376	\$173,427.20	21
Dayton, O.H.	Tornados	219	1,634	13,072	\$355,558.40	12
Coastal, N.C.	Hurricanes Matthew & Florence	77	777	6,216	\$169,075.20	14
Short-term response††	Hurricanes Matthew & Florence	5	25	200	\$5,440.00	1
Totals		618	4,796	38,368	\$1,043,609.60	125

* Includes repeat volunteers

** Estimated Value of Volunteer Service is \$27.20/hr per IndependentSector.org

† Total families served with provision of materials and volunteer labor (4); materials and/or contract labor in 2020 (42); or materials and/or contract labor in 2019 and 2020 (12)

†† Short-term response in Lumberton, N.C., when BDM site was closed

Celebrating a Brethren Partnership and Servant Leadership in Puerto Rico

The Puerto Rico Hurricane Recovery program was a joint effort of Brethren Disaster Ministries and the Church of the Brethren Puerto Rico district. It began shortly after Hurricane Maria devastated the island in September 2017 and was completed in June 2020.

An in-person commemorative event of the recovery program could not be held in 2020 because of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, BDM is working on multiple ways to celebrate both the program and the incredible partnership that developed with our Puerto Rican brothers and sisters as we worked together “with the help of our God” (*Nehemiah 6:16*) to serve survivors. A poster inserted in this edition of the Bridges newsletter, and a video that is currently in production, help to highlight the work from emergency response to rebuilding.

As part of these celebrations, we would like to thank all those who answered the call to lead while serving families affected by the storm. These servants and partners, most of whom gave their time voluntarily, were an

answer to prayer to be able to accomplish the work of the Lord.

- Pastor José Calleja Otero, Puerto Rico district executive, and district disaster coordinator José Acevedo led the efforts in the district and, with the members of the District Recovery Committee, case managers and other church leadership, were critical in the success of the program and response.
- The members of the Castañer Church of the Brethren, under the leadership of Pastor Jamie Diaz and brother Antonio Medina, were gracious hosts to our leaders and volunteers, many of whom were able to worship with the congregation during their stay there.
- The volunteer rebuilding program would not have been possible without the long-term volunteer leadership of Carrie Miller and construction assistants Joel de León Feliz, a member of the Church of the Brethren in the Dominican Republic,

(2018) and Carmelo Rodriguez (2019-20). They led the volunteer groups, provided language interpretation, and coordinated the construction process. Also invaluable were the 20 other BDM disaster project leaders from other districts who committed time during the life of the project as well as the many volunteers who traveled to the island to serve.

It was a true blessing to walk with and serve alongside all those involved in this project to shine the love of Christ to those who were helped.

Joel de León Felice was the construction assistant for the first four months of the rebuilding project in 2018.

Photo courtesy of BDM



Puerto Rico district disaster coordinator José Acevedo and his wife Raquel supported both the families served and the BDM volunteers. *Photos courtesy of BDM*



Construction assistant Carmelo Rodriguez (l) and Ms. Gloria check the rebuilding progress on her home.

Photo courtesy of BDM



Carrie Miller was honored by the Puerto Rico district for her service. (l to r) Carrie, Nevin Dulabaum of BBT, PR district executive Pastor José Calleja Otero, Antonio Medina of the Castañer Church of the Brethren.

Photo by José Acevedo

Beginning 2021 with House Blessings

"Thank you so much! Your team down here is incredible. Not only are they good at the repair end of things but they are very good at building relationships with the people they are helping, and I can tell it has really made a difference." From a local BDM partner in Pamlico County, N.C.

Brethren Disaster Ministries continues the 2018 Hurricane Florence recovery in Pamlico County,

N.C., while partnering with the Pamlico County Disaster Relief Coalition and the Fuller Center Disaster ReBuilders. Even though several volunteer groups in January 2021 were cancelled due to COVID-19 numbers in their home states, BDM project leaders were able to continue working on homes. In the first four weeks that the project was open in

2021, three new house blessings took place, bringing survivors home over 28 months after Hurricane Florence damaged their houses. This Coastal NC project is scheduled to continue, with extensive COVID-19 protocols in place, through April of 2021.



Miss Betty's house blessing



Mr. Jesse's house blessing



Miss Alberta's house blessing

Photos this page courtesy of BDM unless otherwise noted.



Disaster project leader Arlene Kindy painting.



The badly deteriorated ramp to Mr. Jesse's house was repaired.



Disaster project leader Jim Dorsch rebuilds a bathroom.

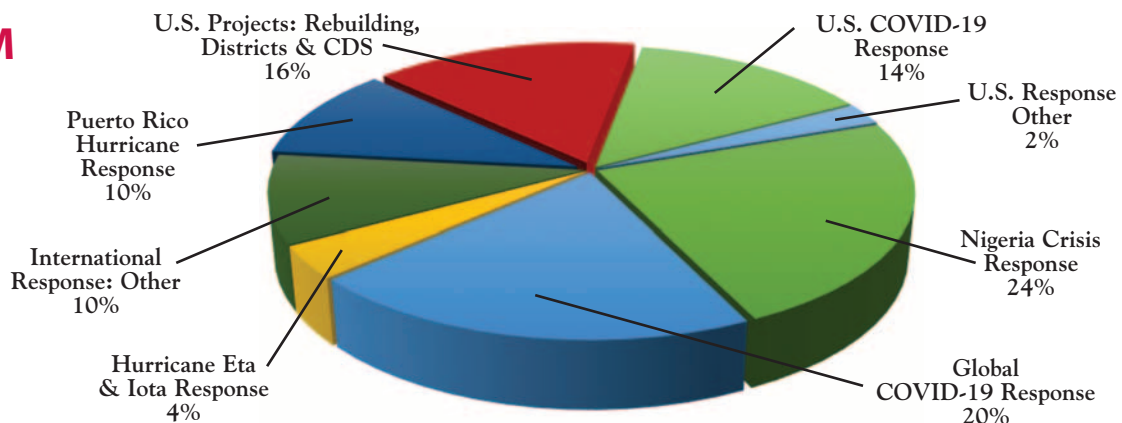


BVS volunteer Evan Ulrich (l) and long-term project leader Kim Gingerich working on flooring. Photo by Doretta Dorsch

Brethren Disaster Ministries 2020 Project Expenses

Status		Amount
U.S. Projects		
Active	BDM—Dayton, Ohio Tornado Response	\$63,516
Active	BDM—COVID-19 Response—U.S. Churches (29 congregations)	\$174,062
Active	BDM—Coastal NC Hurricane Florence Response	\$30,081
Active	CWS—Disaster Recovery Support Initiative (DRSI)	\$30,000
Active	CDS—Individual Kits of Comfort for children impacted by 2020 disasters	\$7,957
Active	Northern Plains District—2020 Derecho response	\$350
Completed	Peak Creek (N.C.) Church of the Brethren	\$5,000
Completed	Puerto Rico district—earthquake response	\$5,000
Completed	BDM—Tampa, Fla., Hurricane Irma Response	\$22,386
Completed	BDM and Puerto Rico district—Puerto Rico Hurricanes Response	\$127,469
Completed	BDM—Carolinas Hurricanes Matthew and Florence Response	\$57,262
U.S. total		\$523,083
International Projects		
Active	CWS Hurricane Eta response in Nicaragua, Honduras, and Guatemala	\$10,000
Active	Proyecto Aldea Global (PAG) Hurricanes Eta and Iota response in Honduras	\$25,000
Active	Christian Solidarity Program—Hurricanes Eta and Iota response in Honduras	\$10,000
Active	Lutheran World Relief/IMA World Health—Beirut (Lebanon) Port explosion relief and recovery	\$10,000
Active	Lebanese Society for Educational and Social Development (LSESD)—Beirut (Lebanon) Port explosion humanitarian relief and recovery	\$25,000
Active	Shalom Ministries—Flood recovery in Democratic Republic of Congo	\$34,000
Active	COVID-19 Response—Global Churches of the Brethren and Mission Points: 11 countries (separate table)	\$193,550
Active	CWS—COVID-19 Response	\$20,000
Active	Proyecto Aldea Global (PAG) COVID-19 response in Honduras	\$20,000
Active	BDM—Nigeria Crisis Response	\$287,548
Completed	COVID-19 response—IMA World Health in Democratic Republic of Congo	\$15,000
Completed	Church of the Brethren Venezuela (ASIGLEH)—Limón River flood response	\$2,000
Completed	CWS—Hurricane Dorian Bahamas relief	\$25,000
Completed	CWS—Kenya flood relief	\$25,000
International total		\$702,098
Total BDM Project Expenses		\$1,225,181

2020 BDM Project Expenses



Disaster Response Auctions Scheduled for 2021



Quilts ready to be auctioned off at the 2019 Mid-Atlantic Disaster Response Auction
Photo courtesy of Jenn Dorsch-Messler

Brethren Disaster Ministries benefits greatly from the proceeds of several annual disaster relief auctions and other fundraisers and we truly appreciate those who give of their time and talents to make these events a success.

Even though the three major auctions were canceled in 2020, we are grateful to have received some funding from them through creative fundraising, special funds and endowments.

The auctions have set their dates for 2021 in the hope that it will be safe to hold large gatherings at those times. If not, adaptations will be made

to continue with some activities in order to continue to raise funds for disaster relief and recovery. Please watch for ways that you can join in and support these auctions in whatever form they take.

If you are holding an additional auction or fundraiser to benefit the Emergency Disaster Fund/Brethren Disaster Ministries, let us know and we can help advertise it.

May 21 & 22: Shenandoah District Disaster Ministries Auction & Sale—Rockingham County Fairgrounds, Harrisonburg, Va.; Information will soon be available at www.facebook.com/brethrenauction or 540-234-8555.

Sept. 24 & 25: Brethren Disaster Relief Auction (Atlantic Northeast and Southern Pennsylvania districts)—Lebanon Valley Expo Center, Lebanon, Pa.; Information is or will be available at www.brethrenauction.org, www.facebook.com/BrethrenDisasterRelief, or 717-823-2745.

Nov. 13: Mid-Atlantic District Disaster Response Auction—Carroll County Agricultural Center, Westminster, Md.; Information will soon be available at www.madcob.com/disaster-response-auction or 443-960-3052.

COVID-19 Grant to EYN, Nigeria



EYN was praised for “doing what was not expected” as they brought food supplies to displaced persons without “religious bias or tribalism” and for helping “old widows [who] are crying for help.”
Photo courtesy of EYN

2020 COVID-19 Project Expenses Global Church of the Brethren Denominations & Mission Points		
Status		Amount
Active	Church of the Brethren in Democratic Republic of Congo	\$18,000
Active	COVID-19 Response in the Dominican Republic	\$11,000
Active	Fundación Brethren y Unida (Brethren and United Foundation) in Ecuador	\$10,000
Active	Church of the Brethren in Haiti	\$35,000
Active	Iglesia Cristiana Viviendo en Amor y Fe (congregation) in Tegucigalpa, Honduras	\$6,050
Active	Church of the Brethren related mission in Mexico	\$10,000
Active	Church of the Brethren in Nigeria (EYN)	\$29,000
Active	Church of the Brethren mission in South Sudan	\$11,000
Active	Church of the Brethren in Spain	\$24,000
Active	Church of the Brethren in Rwanda	\$16,000
Active	Church of the Brethren Venezuela (ASIGLEH)	\$23,500
	COVID-19 Total	\$193,550

Brethren Disaster Ministries 2020 Project Funding & Grants	
Emergency Disaster Fund (EDF) Total	\$1,136,987
Nigeria Crisis Fund (included in EDF Total)	\$158,644
Hurricanes and Puerto Rico Hurricane Responses (included in EDF Total)	\$14,009
CDS Program Grants (not included in EDF)	
Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) Grants	\$16,000

CDS Updates

Training

Children's Disaster Services (CDS) staff continue to monitor pandemic recommendations for gatherings and travel. We remain hopeful that beginning in September 2021, CDS will have a modified in-person volunteer training schedule for the fall. Watch our Facebook page this spring for training updates.

Deployment outlook

CDS staff are looking at ways to adapt the current response model in 2021 to allow play opportunities in a safe manner following CDC guidelines established for childcare centers. Discussions between Red Cross and CDS leadership continue as preparations for this year are already underway. CDS volunteers who would like to deploy in 2021 must be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 to be eligible for deployment.

Voices from deployments

Have you been trained and certified, but still haven't deployed on a CDS team? Maybe 2021 could be the year to take the leap. We recently spoke to several CDS volunteers who deployed in 2019 and here are their voices from deployment:

Lydia Dorje (California), deployed to California wildfires

I enjoyed meeting and working with other CDS workers, feeling I can be a small part of the healing and comforting process for the people in need.

Joyce Smart (Virginia), deployed to flooding in Beaumont, Texas

Speaking about the church and community in responding to the families in need, Joyce said, "What a blessing to see the 'open arms' of these people."

Nancy O'Neill (Michigan), deployed to tornadoes in Dayton, Ohio

The kids responded quickly to the CDS play area, our magical Kits of Comfort and the one-on-one attention we were able to offer. It was a joy to watch the community pull together.

Becky Copenhaver (Michigan), deployed to tornadoes in Dayton, Ohio

It is such an amazing feeling knowing you have provided a service for parents and their children. In the midst of their chaotic life, right then you have provided them a calm.

Bill Grove (Iowa), deployed to flooding in Missouri

Bill says that sometimes things can be challenging in a disaster setting—like having very little space to care for the children—but you make the most of it and when a CDS team is on-site, they are always very appreciated.

Judy Lewis (California), deployed to the Garlic Festival mass casualty event in California

We just tried to make our little corner of the world a happy, safe place with bubbles, clay, blocks, magnets, and all the interesting things we do. Most of the children adapt very quickly—probably relieved to be away from the intense stress. I would volunteer again in a heartbeat!



This CDS Critical Response Childcare team provided a safe space for children affected by the mass casualty event in Gilroy, Calif., in 2019. As one volunteer remarked about her CDS service: "Working with other people who are passionate about making a difference is very rewarding."

Photo courtesy of Red Cross

Toni Custer (Ohio), deployed to Hurricane Dorian in South Carolina and to the mass casualty event in El Paso, Texas

There are so many facets of CDS that are enjoyable. Above all is the feeling that you are making a difference for people at a very difficult time. Working with other people who are passionate about making a difference is very rewarding. It is also adventurous to be heading into a disaster site. CDS makes a difference in you and the people you serve.

Patty Henry (Colorado), deployed to the mass casualty event in El Paso, Texas

A disaster is never convenient and there are so many things that are in flux, changing sometimes moment by moment, but the CDS team, our administrators and our Red Cross partners always make the best things happen. I tell people that we have the very best part of any disaster because we get to play with the children.

Paula Langdon (Ohio), deployed to flooding in Beaumont, Texas and to the mass casualty event in El Paso, Texas

Paula is "always thankful when being deployed to know others are praying." She quotes 2 Corinthians 1:10-11: "He on whom we have set our hope. And He will yet deliver us, so you also joining us through your prayers, that thanks may be given by many persons on our behalf for the favor bestowed upon us through the prayers of many." (NASB)



CDS volunteers provide simple ways for kids to play and "just be kids".

Photo by Dot Norsen



CDS volunteers use creativity and resourcefulness to create fun and secure childcare centers, sometimes in very small spaces. Everything has a potential use: boxes, blankets, table, chairs, walls, etc.
Photos courtesy of Susan "Boon" Murray

Children's Disaster Services 2020 Response Statistics

Distribution of Individual Kits of Comfort (IKOC)*

Location	Disaster type	Value of IKOC**	Children served with IKOC
Nashville, Tenn.	local disasters	\$1,000.00	50
Lubbock, Texas	local disasters	\$1,000.00	50
Weslaco, Texas	Tropical Storm Hanna	\$800.00	40
Boston, Mass.	COVID-19 positive hotel	\$120.00	6
Kansas City, Mo.	flooding	\$1,000.00	50
Santa Clara, Calif.	wildfires	\$3,840.00	192
Butte County, Calif.	wildfires	\$3,680.00	184
Partnership with Native Americans (PWNA)	Tribal Communities - COVID-19	\$20,000.00	1,000
Lumberton, Texas	Hurricane Laura	\$4,000.00	200
Colorado	wildfires	\$2,000.00	100
Dallas, Texas	Hurricane Laura	\$8,000.00	400
New Orleans, La.	Hurricane Laura	\$3,840.00	192
Port Arthur, Texas	Hurricane Laura	\$1,000.00	50
Colorado	wildfires	\$1,920.00	96
Boston, Mass.	COVID-19 positive hotel	\$480.00	24
Total: 15 responses		\$52,680.00	2,634

* During the COVID-19 pandemic, in-person deployment of CDS volunteers was not possible. As an alternative CDS developed the IKOC to be distributed to children affected by disasters.

** Value of the materials in each IKOC is \$20.00

Children's Disaster Services 2020 Training Workshops*

Date	Location	Type of training	Participants	Trainers**	Volunteer trainer hours	Value of service***
Feb. 29-March 1	La Verne, Calif.	Level One	28	3	60	\$1,632.00
March 6-7	Bridgewater, Va.	Level One	31	3	60	\$1,632.00
Totals	2	2	59	6	120	\$3,264.00

* Training workshops scheduled for 2020 were canceled after mid-March due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

** Includes repeat trainers

*** Estimated Value of Volunteer Service is \$27.20 according to IndependentSector.org

Nigeria Crisis Response 2020 Report: EYN Calls for Advocacy to End the Violence

by Roxane Hill and Roy Winter

Escalating violence throughout 2020 in Nigeria culminated in Christmas Eve attacks on villages in the northeast. Boko Haram continued its method of random attacks in the night, burning homes, businesses, and churches, as well as killing or kidnapping individuals. Over two million Nigerians are Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and cannot return to their homes.

At the December 8, 2020, annual Tripartite meeting between Church of the Brethren, Ekklesiyar Yan'uwa a Nigeria (EYN), and Mission 21 (German and Swiss mission organization), Rev. Joel Billi, president of EYN, gave a brief overview on the escalating insecurity in northeast Nigeria and throughout the country. He shared deep concerns about increasing numbers of abductions, killing of civilians, Boko Haram attacks, and destruction of churches and property, which demonstrates a growing lawlessness in Nigeria.

Dr. Yakubu Joseph, Mission 21 country coordinator, stated that the Nigerian government has been unable or unwilling to address the insecurity in the country. A major driving force causing the insecurity is the very large and growing numbers of unemployed youth without much hope of finding jobs, who are demanding change in the country and some of whom join Boko Haram. Many in Nigeria don't know what is happening because the media has been compromised or suppressed, especially in Northeast Nigeria. EYN leadership is calling for all partners to advocate to their governments to provide international pressure on the Nigerian government for reform and to end the problems in northeast Nigeria.

Despite challenges of violence, insecurity, inflation, COVID-19, difficult travel conditions, and needs outweighing resources, the EYN Disaster Relief Ministry (DRM) faithfully and courageously continues their work.

Thank you to all who have given to the Nigeria Crisis Fund over the past six years. This has been the largest relief effort ever undertaken by the Church of the Brethren, with a total of \$5,805,218.89 being raised. In 2020, individuals and churches donated \$157,824 to support the Nigeria Crisis Response. Funds sent to Nigeria in 2020 totaled \$287,548 and supported the work of EYN and three smaller non-governmental organizations.

Here is a summary of the work accomplished in 2020:

- The DRM team visited the International Christian Center in southern Nigeria (where many EYN orphans are living) to provide food and encouragement.
- Medical assistance aided nine communities.
- A workshop was held on emergency response and disaster preparedness.
- A workshop was held for 152 women on security and peace building regarding gender-based violence.
- Grants for economic sustainability were given to 43 women in 20 communities.
- Five Skills Acquisition Centers graduated 72 women, with each receiving resources to begin her business.
- DRM work and staff were supported for the year.
- A truck was purchased to facilitate the transportation of materials.
- Repairs were completed on 51 homes in five remote areas for the most vulnerable, many of whom were widows.
- Fertilizer and seeds were provided for 1,200 families.
- Support continues for the ongoing EYN soybean project.
- New wells/boreholes provided water sources in six communities.
- Food distributions were held at 20 locations.
- Education scholarships were given to 86 children in eight districts.

- One-on-one counseling was conducted in four communities, with monetary assistance and support from the Mennonite Central Committee.
- Improvements were made to an IDP school and two teachers were employed for the year.
- DRM took on the additional responsibility for management of the COVID-19 relief grants.

A grateful widow who received a grinding machine through the EYN Women's Ministry, with support from the Nigeria Crisis Response, said, "With this machine, my life will be better and my children will go back to school again after Corona. Thank you, thank you, thank you to the Women's Ministry and to those who gave funds to support people like me. Send my regards to those who sent the money. My prayer to them is God Almighty will bless them and give them long life in peace."

The Nigeria Crisis Response will continue in 2021 with a smaller planned budget of \$125,000. Additional grants will be considered if warranted by special situations. Beginning in 2022, support will be provided as needed, rather than through a planned budget. We all pray that the violence ends by 2022 and families can move back to their homes.



After graduating from an EYN Women's Ministry skills acquisition training, a woman receives a grinding machine from Rev. Yuguda Mduvwa, director of EYN Disaster Response Ministry (l) and Dr. Yamtikarya Joseph Mshelia, director of EYN Women's Ministry (r).

Photo courtesy of EYN

COVID-19 Grant Program Update

With the COVID-19 pandemic still affecting the United States and 235 countries and territories, the Church of the Brethren continues to respond with two special pandemic grant programs addressing the ever-growing humanitarian needs of our members and our neighbors.

The U.S. COVID-19 Pandemic Grant program supports Brethren churches and districts in meeting humanitarian needs in their congregations and communities. The hope of this program is to encourage meaningful ministry, big and small, throughout the denomination. Grants have addressed a variety of needs, including through food distributions, feeding programs, temporary shelter, and assistance with utilities, rent, medications, and funerals. New grant

requests are still being accepted. Churches that received grants and have provided good reporting are being offered the opportunity for a second grant.

The Global COVID-19 Pandemic Grant program provides emergency support to global Churches of the Brethren and selected partners. This includes CoB groups in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Dominican Republic, Haiti, Nigeria, Rwanda, Spain and Venezuela, and mission points in Ecuador, Honduras, Mexico, and South Sudan. In many of these areas there is more fear of hunger than of COVID-19. Most of the programs have focused on providing safety and hygiene supplies and food. A few grants provided medical supplies and emergency

financial support for housing. This program has been vital in the support of marginalized people unable to work or travel because of the pandemic. COVID-19 grants totaling \$55,000 were also given to three international partners.

The COVID-19 grant programs will continue as long as needed, providing funds are available. Additional donations are needed to provide this much needed assistance to people who are struggling during this pandemic.

Covid-19 Pandemic Grant Summary		Amount
U.S. Grants	29 congregations from 11 districts	\$174,062
Global Brethren Grants	11 Global CoB denominations and mission points	\$193,550
Global Partner Grants	3 Partners – Church World Service, IMA World Health, Project Global Village	\$55,000
Total		\$422,612



A COVID-19 grant supported the Ephrata (Pa.) Church of the Brethren food distribution program.
Photo courtesy of Ephrata Church of the Brethren

Earthquake Relief in Sparta, N.C.

by Tim Sizemore, pastor, Peak Creek Church of the Brethren

On August 9, 2020, a magnitude 5.1 earthquake struck our small town of Sparta, N.C.. More than 500 buildings were damaged, with over 60 homes having major damage costing more than 40 percent rebuild value. Many homes were condemned with several families becoming displaced. It was by the Grace of God that there were no major injuries.

While the damage to property was bad, I believe the worry and anxiety that people had afterwards with all the aftershocks (more than 200) was worse. However, God does his greatest works in our times of need. I want to thank everyone in our large Church community for your out pouring of support. The Church of the Brethren Southeastern district contributed \$5,574. It is such a blessing to be part

of such a wonderful group of churches that love and support one another. Also, Brethren Disaster Ministries granted us \$5,000 for earthquake relief and again, to be part of a larger community of like-minded Christians who know the importance of serving is such a blessing. And it doesn't stop there, Friendship Church of the Brethren, a neighbor of ours, gave \$1,295.21! My home church, Peak Creek Church of the Brethren was able to give as well. All together God blessed our community with \$18,869.21 in financial support. These funds were distributed to 33 families along with letting them know we have folks that can help with certain rebuilding projects, some of which we have already done.

While the money will certainly help these families the more important blessing is the gift that people know God is there for them in their time of need and the Church is here to serve! Matthew 5:16 says "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." We have been given so much from Jesus Christ and what an honor it is to see the Church share their blessings with our small community. And in your good works you are doing exactly what Jesus wants, glorifying our Father in heaven. Thank you all so much for you service, grace, mercy, and love. God Bless y'all!



BRIDGES

Brethren Disaster Ministries

601 Main Street, P.O. Box 188
New Windsor, MD 21776

Address Service Requested

Non-Profit
Organization
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Westminster, MD
Permit # 15

A “Rise Up!” Thank You

In the fall of 2020, BDM reached out to the church with the Rise Up! fundraising campaign which both celebrated milestones and looked forward to our ministry in 2021.

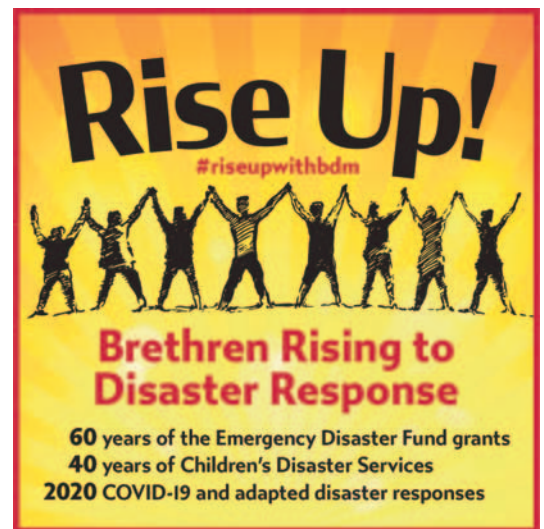
The year 2020 marked the 60th anniversary of the Emergency Disaster Fund (EDF) and the 40th anniversary of Children's Disaster Services. The BDM and CDS community, and indeed the whole church, joined with us in rejoicing for the many opportunities our ministries have had to “serve one another humbly in love” (Galatians 5:13, NIV). We also celebrated how we were able to meet and respond to the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic through creativity and adaptability.

In the midst of the celebration, however, we also looked to the future and realized that through most of the year giving to the EDF was reduced while at the same time we had stepped out in faith to continue to meet both

domestic and global needs resulting from disasters, including a record-breaking hurricane season, wildfires and the coronavirus pandemic. The Rise Up! Brethren Rising to Disaster Response campaign called for increased donations to help us meet these and similar needs in the year to come.

And you DID Rise Up! The response to our appeal was exciting and heartwarming, with December giving, in particular, well above what it had been in 2019, especially from individual giving. We are overwhelmed by your generosity and your faith in, and support for, our ministry. We are also confident that those who support BDM and CDS in other ways (prayer, advocacy, organizing, etc.) also increased their activity. We give thanks for all of you!

As we move into 2021 we are once again stepping out in faith as we bear



each other's burdens (Galatians 6:2) and look out for the interests of others (Philippians 2:4). Thank you for taking that journey with us!

BRIDGES is published three times a year by the
**Brethren Disaster Ministries of the
Church of the Brethren.**
Executive Director for Service Ministries: Roy Winter
Director of Material Resources: Loretta Wolf
Editor: Sharon Franzén
Design: Debbie Noffsinger