



Vol. 23, Winter 2022

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Hurricane Florence—From Relief to Long-term Recovery

by Kim Gingerich, BDM Rebuilding program assistant and former long-term project leader

Brethren Disaster Ministries' Rebuilding Program focuses on long-term recovery, which often continues for years after a disaster. For example, BDM's response to Hurricane Florence, which actually started with preparing for the 2018 storm, is still on-going.

In April 2018, BDM established a Hurricane Matthew (2016) recovery project in Lumberton, N.C., with Steve Keim and me as long-term project leaders. The project was repairing and rebuilding homes there, and in Nichols, S.C., when Hurricane Florence made landfall on Sept. 14, 2018. Florence parked over the area for two days and unleashed its record-breaking rainfall, destroying roads and damaging thousands of homes, including many of those that BDM had just repaired.

Aware that Hurricane Florence was coming, storm preparations were made at the Lumberton housing facility and the homes that were being worked on, including an extraordinary effort by that week's volunteers to finish the roof on one house before they evacuated ahead of the storm. Our project leadership team stayed and rode out the storm. The rain and flooding resulted in most of the roads being closed, forcing BDM to cancel several upcoming volunteer teams.

BDM is not typically "on

the ground" when a disaster occurs. However, the circumstances provided an opportunity to experience that side of a disaster response firsthand. BDM's partners, the North Carolina Conference of the United Methodist Church (NCCUMC), were staying in a church two blocks from our housing location, which quickly became a donation center. We were invited to help with the unloading of donated supplies from tractor trailers. The fellowship hall soon filled up with stacked and sorted supplies with everything from water and food items to diapers and toiletries. As quickly as the hall filled up, it emptied out as survivors and other distribution centers began arriving to get the much needed supplies.

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This room in a Hurricane Matthew damaged house had been repaired by BDM before it was re-flooded during Hurricane Florence. BDM volunteers returned to remove part of the drywall and insulation before repairing it again. The mark on the cabinet shows how high the floodwater reached.

Photo courtesy of BDM

Steve and I also participated in daily coordination calls hosted by the North Carolina Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (NCVOAD), giving us valuable insight into the coordination of responding agencies to ensure equal and adequate distribution of resources during the initial relief and short-term recovery phase. We connected with Crisis Clean-up through these calls and were able to serve some survivors with debris, trash, and tree removal.

When the roads finally opened back up and we were able to get out and survey the damage, we discovered the heartbreaking reality that some of the homes we had recently completed in



January 2022—More than two years after Hurricane Florence damaged this home, volunteers removed the old shingles, repaired the roof, and installed new shingles. Photo by Troy Barnhart

Lumberton and Nichols had flooded once again. So, when BDM volunteer teams were able to return to the project, they not only continued the Hurricane Matthew recovery, but also began the difficult work of gutting and rebuilding these re-flooded homes. Due to Steve's foresight, the type of flooring previously installed could be pulled, cleaned, and reinstalled, saving homeowners and our partners thousands of dollars. BDM also worked on other Florence damaged homes. It was a blessing to be able to respond quickly to the flood damage, but we were only able to do so because we were already there and the partnerships, housing, and systems were already in place.

Although the Lumberton project was scheduled to remain open until the end of July 2020, the arrival of the COVID-19 pandemic meant that the site closed permanently in March.

Fortunately, BDM had already begun exploring options for the next Rebuilding site and had connected with potential partners in North Carolina's Pamlico County working on Hurricane Florence recovery. BDM is delighted to have established these partnerships and to have started its Coastal NC project in Bayboro in September 2020. The project paused in April 2021 but BDM was warmly welcomed back for a second term of service beginning in October 2021.

By the time the Coastal NC project



Fortunately, the flooring installed in this Nichols, S.C., home during a BDM rebuild after Hurricane Matthew, could be removed, cleaned, and reinstalled after it flooded again during Hurricane Florence. Photo courtesy of BDM

closes at the end of April 2022, three and a half years will have passed since Hurricane Florence. And still some survivors will not have fully recovered, which sadly often happens as funding for materials dries up. This extended time frame is why this effort is called "long-term recovery". And it is why BDM decided many years ago to prioritize long-term recovery. Because, after other volunteer organizations are gone, donations are being rerouted to the most recent disasters, and all the news agencies have long forgotten about an event, BDM stays as long as it can. Providing hope. Restoring lives. Rebuilding communities.

Winter Tornado Outbreak Response

On December 10-11, 2021, a devastating outbreak of 61 confirmed tornadoes swept through eight states with Kentucky, Illinois, and Missouri being the most impacted. Two storms traveled over 100 miles each, producing tornadoes along the way, making this the largest outbreak of tornadoes in December on record and, with 90 confirmed deaths, the deadliest. The resulting destruction

leveled whole towns, such as Mayfield, Ky., but also caused much damage along the 250-mile paths of the storms.

Immediately after the tornadoes, Brethren Disaster Ministries began communicating with partners, particularly those with a presence in the areas, and attending calls with multiple state VOADs (Volunteer Organizations Active in Disaster) to learn of opportunities to respond.

These efforts are continuing as the response moves into the short-term and long-term recovery phases.

A \$15,000 grant from the Emergency Disaster Fund supported distributions of relief kits and blankets to tornado survivors by Church World Service (CWS). With the intention of supporting the most vulnerable disaster survivors, the CWS grant also supported

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programs assisting unaccompanied minors affected by the tornados.

As BDM's program of immediate response, Children's Disaster Services (CDS) actively worked with partners to assess needs for children in the days following the storms, finding that generally local organizations were available for those efforts. A small CDS team provided childcare at a local MARC (Multi-Agency Resource Center) set up by Missouri Emergency Management in Defiance, Mo., to help affected families in that region. CDS

is in discussions with partners and churches in the area on ways to alleviate the trauma of children caught up in the tornados and their aftermath.

The BDM Rebuilding Program, with its focus on long-term disaster recovery, will be working with partners in the tornado affected areas to determine how to assist with long-term recovery efforts. A particular interest will be on the damaged areas that may not have received the most attention and resources for relief and recovery.

Additional funds will be utilized for recovery needs in the affected states in the months to come as needs are identified either directly or through partners. Brethren Disaster Ministries is very grateful for the many individuals, congregations, and districts who have continued to reach out with love and compassion to donate toward the Winter Tornados relief and recovery. The timeline for the recovery of these families and communities will be a long one and your generosity helps us reach out to those who need assistance the most.



Tornado damage in Defiance, Mo., where CDS volunteers provided childcare to survivors seeking assistance at a Multi-Agency Resource Center.

Photo courtesy of National Weather Service, St. Louis



An EDF grant supported the distribution of relief kits and blankets to tornado survivors in Kentucky.

Photo courtesy of CWS

Volcano Recovery—Home Rebuilding in DR Congo

The BDM rebuilding program in Democratic Republic of Congo (DR Congo), in partnership with the Eglise des Freres au Congo (Church of the Brethren in DR Congo) church in Goma, has completed the construction of 31 new homes and repairs to 23 homes. This concludes the joint response to the volcanic eruption of Mt. Nyiragongo near the town on May 22, 2021, which destroyed 3,629 houses. According to reports from Goma the construction supported “432 people due to eight people per household, on average, including 87 men, 105 women and 240 children”, and involved “some members of the local Church of the Brethren of Goma, some widows,

some [from the Twa community], as well as other populations whose homes had been ravaged”. The report continues that this supports “432 people due to eight people per household, on average, including 87 men, 105 women and 240 children”.

The home construction program was part of a larger response that included food and household supply distributions to 445 households, or about 3,560 people. Funding was also provided to the Church of the Brethren in Rwanda to support families that fled across the border after the eruption. In total, \$70,000 in Emergency Disaster Fund (EDF) grants supported this response.



A sign on a new home built with EDF grant funds for a volcano survivor in Goma (DR Congo) celebrates the partnership of the Eglise des Freres au Congo and Brethren Disaster Ministries.

Photo courtesy of Faradja Dieudonne

Homes for Haiti: Transition to Home Construction

The 2021 Haiti Earthquake response has been busy transitioning from relief programs to the construction of a supply depot and homes for earthquake survivors. By the end of January 2022, more than \$79,000 from the Emergency Disaster Fund had supported relief supplies, water filters, medical clinics, and the start of home construction. Long-term plans are to build at least 25 new homes in the community of Saut Matherine, with hopes of building more. More than \$300,000 will be needed to reach these goals if donations can be found.

Haiti Earthquake Response 2021-2022 Budget	
Food & Water	10,500
Household Supplies, Tarps & Water Filters	10,000
Medical Clinics	9,000
Trauma & Resiliency Support	4,000
Home Construction Supplies	170,000
Depot/Temporary Housing Supplies	20,000
Haitian Workers and Volunteer Stipends	30,000
Transportation & Vehicle Expenses	30,000
Misc. & Fees	2,000
USA Expenses/Coordinator Stipend/Travel	14,500
TOTAL	\$300,000

In January 2022, Ilexene Alphonse traveled to Haiti to monitor the progress of the response and to learn about the challenges faced by the Haitian church leaders. Ilexene, the pastor of the Haitian Church of the Brethren in Miami, Fla., is assisting BDM and the Haitian Church with the earthquake response. Following is a summary of Ilexene's trip report:

"Loving and merciful Father God of Jesus Christ, for we are powerless against this great multitude which is coming against us, against Haiti. We do not know what to do, but our eyes are on You." (Prayer of the Haitian people based on Chronicles 20:12)

I travelled to Haiti on Jan. 18, 2022, then flew on to Les Cayes to avoid road troubles. Traveling by ground

transportation from Port au Prince to Southern Haiti is very dangerous, and you may be kidnapped or killed.

In Cayes, I was welcomed and picked up by motorcycle by Pastor Viony Desir, Haiti annual conference moderator and earthquake response project coordinator. I visited all the home construction job sites, met with beneficiaries, and took pictures. The home beneficiaries were very happy, excited, and thankful for the blessing of a new house. All of the beneficiaries are going above and beyond

expectations of contributing materials and/or labor to help build their home.

The rebuilding project is making progress but there are a lot of challenges, such as escalating costs of materials and transportation, and difficulty accessing water for construction, except from the river that is located far from the construction sites.

The Haitian Church board sent their greetings to "each one of our brothers and sisters in America." They are really pleased with everything that is

going on in Saut Mathurine. One board member said, "The work of Church of the Brethren in Saut Mathurine is nothing less than a miracle." The social work and the rebuilding project are growing the church, said Pastor Moliere Durose.

People are still living in very difficult and bad situations. When you go inside the "shelters" where families are sleeping, you can look up and see the stars. They cannot shake off the flu and fever that is going around because they sleep in the cold and wake up in the falling of the morning dew. No other church, institution, organization, or even the government are doing anything for the people in Saut Mathurine.

The whole community is very thankful for everything we have been

doing with them and for them. The needs are great, but what the Church of the Brethren in Haiti, Brethren Disaster Ministries, and the Church of the Brethren Global Mission are doing in Saut Mathurine is great! Lives are changing. People are coming to Jesus Christ because of what is happening there. One of my favorite quotes from them is "the Church of the Brethren restored hope and respect in the community."



Strong houses are being built through the Haiti Earthquake Response. With the rising costs of materials and unsafe roads, the average cost of a new home is now near \$10,000, with the new homeowner contributing to the supplies needed.

Photo by Ilexene Alphonse



Many earthquake survivors are still living in makeshift shelters constructed with debris from their broken houses.

Photo by Ilexene Alphonse

Nigeria Crisis Response Update

The long journey of walking with and supporting the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria (EYN) through eight years of terrorism and violence continues. The joint work of BDM, EDF grants, and EYN is making a significant difference and saving lives.

At the same time, it is very difficult and the violence continues to spread, hurting the whole country. The following pictures help to tell the story of programming, relief, and recovery amidst ongoing tragedy. Please continue to pray for our Nigerian Brethren and to support the Nigeria Crisis Fund. (www.brethren.org/nigeriacrisisfund)



Home Repair - Repairing burned homes is a high priority so families can return to safe areas and rebuild their lives. This home in Kautikari was being repaired in December 2021.



Trauma Counseling - Nearly all members of EYN churches have experienced trauma and deep suffering during this crisis. Trauma healing workshops and individual counseling sessions are an important part of helping families recover.



Pemi EYN Church Burned by ISWAP - On Jan. 20, 2022, the Pemi EYN Church was burned down for the second time in two years. During this attack 17 children were kidnapped and homes and shops were burned. Attacks like this happen weekly or multiple times per week in Northeast Nigeria.



Food Distribution - Food distributions to prevent malnutrition and starvation continue to be vital for survival in some of the displaced persons camps, like this one in Maiduguri. Most of these families are from the Gwoza area and do not have access to farmland to support themselves.



Livelihoods - EYN leaders presented these widows from Kwarhi with grinding mills, giving them a way to support themselves and their children.



Water - Safe drinking water is vital for the health and recovery of communities. As part of the Nigeria Crisis Response, 38 wells with electric or hand pumps have been provided, such as this new well at the Wamdeo community.



Agriculture - Seed distributions, like this one at the EYN camp for displaced families in Luuru, allow families to grow their own food and become less dependent on aid, even while displaced from their homes.

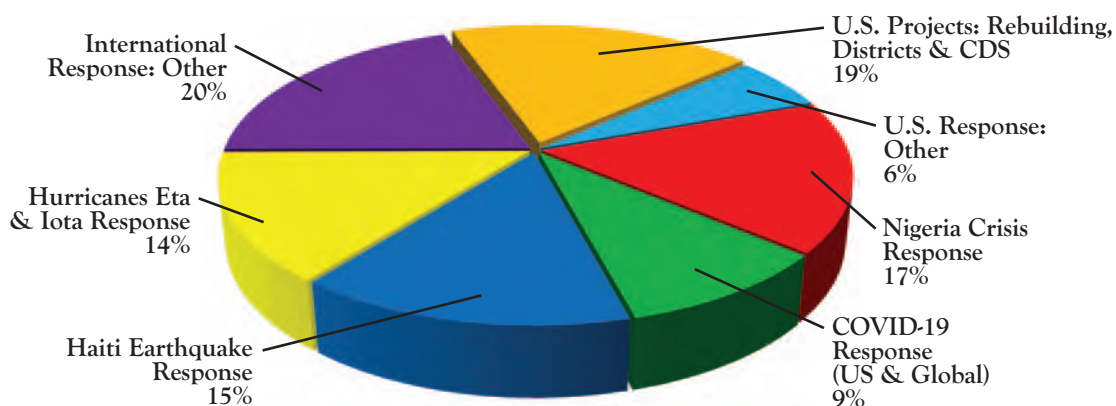
All photos courtesy of EYN

Brethren Disaster Ministries 2021 Project Expenses

Status		Amount
U.S. Projects		
Active	BDM—Coastal NC Hurricane Florence Response	\$55,654
Active	CWS—Afghanistan evacuees emergency resettlement	\$52,000
Completed	BDM—Nebraska flood recovery	\$4,471
Completed	BDM—Dayton, Ohio Tornado Response	\$69,894
Completed	BDM—COVID-19 Response—U.S. Churches (two congregations)	\$7,300
Completed	BDM—Northern Plains District—2020 Derecho response	\$3,334
Completed	CDS—Southern U.S. border humanitarian response	\$32,457
U. S. Total		\$225,110
International Projects		
Active	Lutheran World Relief/IMA World Health—Yemen war relief	\$5,000
Active	CWS—2021 Haiti Earthquake Response	\$50,000
Active	BDM—2021 Haiti Earthquake Response	\$79,726
Active	Church of the Brethren Global Mission—South Sudan civil war recovery	\$24,500
Active	Lebanese Society for Education and Social Development (LSESD)—Winterization assistance for displaced Syrians	\$30,000
Active	CWS—Hurricanes Eta and Iota response in Central America	\$40,000
Active	Proyecto Aldea Global (PAG)—Hurricanes Eta and Iota response in Honduras	\$75,000
Active	BDM—Nigeria Crisis Response	\$146,460
Completed	Trauma Healing and Reconciliation Services (THARS)—Storm damage repairs (Burundi)	\$3,000
Completed	CWS—Response for Myanmar humanitarian crisis	\$5,000
Completed	Rwanda Church of the Brethren—Families displaced by Mount Nyiragongo Volcano eruption	\$15,000
Completed	Eglise des Freres au Congo—Volcano response (DR Congo)	\$55,000
Completed	COVID-19 Response—Church of the Brethren in Venezuela (ASIGLEH)	\$17,500
Completed	COVID-19 Response—Church of the Brethren in Nigeria (EYN)	\$15,000
Completed	COVID-19 Response—Church of the Brethren related ministries in Mexico	\$5,000
Completed	COVID-19 Response—IMA World Health in India	\$15,000
Completed	Christian Solidarity Program—Hurricanes Eta and Iota response in Honduras*	\$10,000
Completed	COVID-19 Response—Church World Service	\$25,000
Completed	Eglise des Freres au Congo—Displaced families by militia violence (DR Congo)	\$15,000
Completed	CWS—Flash flooding in Timor-Leste and Indonesia	\$5,000
Completed	Fundación Brethren y Unida—Severe storms and hail response (Ecuador)	\$15,000
International Total		\$651,186
TOTAL BDM PROJECT EXPENSES		\$876,296

*Grant was approved in 2020 but funds were not disbursed until 2021

2021 BDM Project Expenses



Brethren Disaster Ministries 2021 Project Funding & Grants

Emergency Disaster Fund (EDF) Total	\$1,719,361
<i>Nigeria Crisis Fund (included in EDF Total)</i>	\$163,535
<i>2021 Haiti Earthquake Response (included in EDF Total)</i>	\$143,819
Rebuilding Program Grants (not included in EDF)	
<i>Greater Dayton Disaster Relief Fund of The Dayton Foundation grants (2)</i>	\$27,000
<i>NVOAD & Lowes Iowa Derecho Recovery Grant (\$8,000 as Lowes credit)</i>	\$9,000
<i>NVOAD & UPS Spring 2021 Long-Term Recovery Grant - Dayton, Ohio</i>	\$5,000
CDS Program Grants (not included in EDF)	
<i>Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) grants</i>	\$15,000

Brethren Disaster Ministries 2021 Rebuilding Responses

Project location	Disaster type	Weekly volunteers*	Work days	Hours served	Value of service**	Families served
Rebuilding Projects						
Dayton, Ohio	tornados	528	2,520	20,160	\$575,366.40	11***
Coastal NC	Hurricane Florence	255	1,644	13,152	\$375,358.08	28
Short-term response: King Lake, Neb.	flooding	23	124	992	\$28,311.68	7
Local response: Iowa	Derecho	23	57	456	\$13,014.24	7
Totals		829	4,345	34,760	\$992,050.40	53
<i>* Includes repeat volunteers ** Estimated Value of Volunteer Service for 2021 is \$28.54/hr per IndependentSector.org</i> <i>*** Includes six homeowners and five houses for future purchase by rental survivors</i>						

Children's Disaster Services 2021 Response Statistics

Location	Disaster type	Volunteers*	Total work days	Hours served	Value of service**	Children served
McAllen, Texas	border crisis	15	190	1,520	\$43,380.80	2,651
Surfside, Fla.	building collapse	8	28	224	\$6,392.96	1
Dulles, Va.	Afghan evacuees	10	110	880	\$25,115.20	1,215
Baton Rouge, La.	Hurricane Ida	11	95	760	\$21,690.40	262
El Paso, Texas (Fort Bliss)	Afghan evacuees	29	406	3,248	\$92,697.92	9,598
Defiance, Mo.	winter tornados	2	2	16	\$456.64	1
Total: 6 responses		75	831	6,648	\$189,733.92	13,728
<i>* Includes repeat trainers ** Estimated Value of Volunteer Service for 2021 is \$28.54/hr per IndependentSector.org</i>						

Children's Disaster Services 2021 Training Workshops

Date	Location	Type of training	Participants	Trainers	Volunteer trainer hours	Value of service*
10/22/2021	Byron Center, Mich.	Level 1	15	2	40	\$1,141.60
11/5/2021	Roaring Spring, Pa.	Level 1	7	2	40	\$1,141.60
8/30/2021	Hybrid	Level 2 CRC**	11	1	10	\$285.40
Totals	3 locations	2 types	33	5	90	\$2,568.60
<i>Training workshops scheduled for 2021 were reduced due to the COVID-19 pandemic. * Estimated Value of Volunteer Service for 2021 is \$28.54/hr per IndependentSector.</i> <i>**Critical Response Childcare</i>						

Rebuilding Updates

Iowa Derecho Response

In 2021, Brethren Disaster Ministries worked in partnership with the Northern Plains District to hold a local response in Iowa. After a Derecho swept the state in August 2020, the district supported debris removal efforts with a clean-up weekend in September 2020. BDM worked with district disaster coordinator, Matt Kuecker, and other leaders to recruit volunteers to support rebuilding efforts during the weekend of June 2-5, 2021, when 23 volunteers repaired the homes of seven families. Funding for the work was primarily covered by a grant that BDM secured from NVOAD (National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster) and Lowes which provided \$8,000 in Lowes gift cards to purchase materials and another \$1,000 to cover expenses for hosting volunteers. The remaining funds needed were covered by a grant from the Emergency Disaster Fund of the Church of the Brethren.

2022 Leadership Training

BDM conducted a modified Disaster Project Leadership training at the beginning of the year with two construction and four household participants. Two days of online training on Jan. 19-20 were followed by a Jan. 29-Feb. 6 in-person training on the Coastal NC site.



Kim Gingerich Accepts Position

After over seven years serving in a long-term volunteer leadership role on the BDM rebuilding sites, Kim Gingerich moved to a temporary staff position in May 2021 as the interim Rebuilding program assistant. We are happy to announce that in October 2021 Kim's position became a permanent one. Kim works in the BDM offices at the Brethren Service Center in New Windsor, Md., to support the Rebuilding Program's projects, volunteers, and leaders. She can be reached at kgingerich@brethren.org or 410-635-8730.

Future 2022 Sites

The current Coastal NC project site will wrap up in April 2022. BDM leadership has been in talks with potential partners, and conducted a site visit at the beginning of February, to a possible new location in Waverly, Tenn., in Humphreys County. Deadly flash flooding took place in this small community in August 2021, damaging hundreds of homes, including washing 150 houses off their foundations. The speed of the flooding resulted in the deaths of 20 residents, including four children under the age of seven. Volunteer housing is set for the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, with set up scheduled for the last week of April.

More recent disasters in Kentucky and other communities in Tennessee have attracted a lot of volunteer interest, with the effect of reducing the number of volunteers asking to serve in Waverly. During conversations with local partners, one representative initially thought BDM wanted to deploy to

Disaster Leadership Training participants work together in person and on Zoom at a team building activity during the 2022 training.

Photo courtesy of BDM



Volunteers worked to clear a home in the Northern Plains District which was damaged during the August 2020 Derecho.

Photo courtesy of Northern Plains district

Kentucky, since most national organizations have asked about the work available there. However, when asked if help was still needed in Tennessee, he exclaimed excitedly, "You mean in Waverly? You all would actually still consider going there?" He was delighted about BDM's interest because there is still great need there and Waverly is not getting as much help because it is no longer in the spotlight.

Building and strengthening these kinds of partnerships after disasters helps BDM create connections for the future. In this case, some of the partnerships developing in Tennessee may provide connections to possibly serving in Kentucky in the future when they are more prepared for long-term rebuilding.

Humility and Joy

Jill Borgelt (Douglas County Long Term Recovery Group) sent these words of appreciation regarding BDM's October 2021 short-term response in King Lake, Neb.

We couldn't have been where we are now without your group's heart of service and willingness to do whatever we needed them to do. And they did it with humility and joy. They were all absolutely delightful to work with.

Afghan Refugee Welcome: CDS Serves at Fort Bliss

by Kathy Fry-Miller

The effort to care for children on the base at Fort Bliss, Texas, and serving families who fled Afghanistan at the end of the war, was a collaboration between Save the Children, Children's Disaster Services (CDS), Bruderhof, Latter Day Saints, and the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB). CDS teams served in four different humanitarian tents and offered morning and afternoon play sessions for infants, toddlers, and older children. We often reached the capacity of 80 people in these tents. While it was busy and usually loud, not only from children's voices but also the air conditioning system, we were able to build precious relationships of welcome for these children and the parents who accompanied them.

Our team of four was the fifth and final CDS team to provide direct service to the children. Save the Children continued to support these families through training and advocacy after the direct service teams left. I was grateful to represent CDS as part of the training team in the few days before I left to travel home.

Impressions from the experience

The Afghan people were always referred to as "guests". They were kind and helpful, eager to learn and share, playful, tired, anxious, and full of hope. Their bright smiles were truly heartwarming and seemed full of genuine connection. We also shared tears. There were so many tender experiences.

We learned words in Farsi/Dari and Pashto. The children loved seeing the cheat sheets we carried around. These young teachers eagerly answered all of our language questions. One little girl was so proud that she could speak five languages—Farsi, Pashto, English, Hindi, and Spanish!

The children were always giving us gifts: yarn and bead bracelets, pipe

cleaner rings and head bands, tissue paper hair bows, pictures they drew. When we tried to say they could keep them, they handed them back and said, "No, you!"

The children in the camp recognized our team as we walked through to our cars and tents. They waved with smiles, high fives, fist bumps, and sometimes hugs.

Favorite activities included toy airplanes, balls (especially soccer), bubbles, kitchen play, drawing, and any type of craft. One afternoon I spent at least an hour with several boys playing in the toy kitchen. One of the boys, who made me a stir fry of toy food (hot peppers, greens, tomato, carrots), said he liked to cook in Afghanistan.

Many people expressed gratitude to us. After even a few moments of interaction, we would often get comments like, "You are so nice," or "Thank you very much." One father played with me and his little girl. He said, "I told her you were her teacher." She said, "No, my grandma."

I showed one little boy how to draw on the chalkboard wall. He made a mark, looked at me, and giggled. Over and over, he would make a mark and then burst into giggles. A new experience—such joy!

Each person on our team got at least one opportunity to be in the play space in the tent where families who were leaving the base gathered for their orientation to the outside world. It was really special to see families with whom we had worked come through this tent. They were eager to leave the base, but also had so many questions about their new homes, especially if they weren't meeting up with friends and family.

The hope of all of us who worked with these families is that they will find welcome and kindness wherever they go.

CDS Updates

Sherry Chastain Resigns

The end of 2021 brought the resignation of CDS program assistant Sherry Chastain. With a reduction in trainings and slower pace due to the effects of the pandemic lingering, CDS reduced the program assistant position to part-time status as of the start of 2022, which affected Sherry's decision and ability to continue with CDS. We are grateful to Sherry for her service and wish her well in her future endeavors. CDS plans to post the position opening in the coming months for anyone interested in applying.



Sherry Chastain at the 2019 Mid-Atlantic District Disaster Response Auction.

Photo courtesy of BDM

Childcare at MAD Auction

A small team of CDS volunteers were present at the annual Mid-Atlantic District (MAD) Disaster Response Auction in Westminster, Md., in November 2021. The child care area was a busy happy place with children enjoying giant legos, play-doh, and puzzles.

Seeking hosts for 2022 Trainings

CDS would like to hear from churches interested in hosting a Children's Disaster Services training in 2022. Reach out to Lisa Crouch for more information at lcrouch@brethren.org.

Every Child is Unique in Disaster Response

by Lisa Crouch

When CDS volunteers work with a child after a disaster, it is important to remember to let the child lead the play. This important element is covered in every CDS training. When a child has experienced trauma, the one thing we do not want to do is cause additional trauma. Re-traumatization can occur if a child is asked about their story or prompted through play to share particular details of their experiences if they are not ready to share those feelings or memories.

However, through child-led imaginative play, CDS volunteers will often hear much of that child's story just through the interactive process of that play session. CDS is very specific in the selection of toys provided in a center for that very reason. Simple toys, which can be played with in whatever way the child wants at that given time, are powerful tools for a processing feelings without prompting. Each child responds differently to a disaster, depending on the many factors unique to that child. This is why it is important to not assume anything about a child and to always follow their lead. It can sometimes be surprising to hear or see just what pieces of the disaster linger in their memory.

The following reflection by CDS volunteers Patty Henry (project manager) and Lisa Miller illustrates unique interactions with children they worked with during the Marshall Fire response in Colorado in January 2022.

At 10:30 am on Dec. 30, 2021, a grass fire broke out in Boulder County, Colorado. Pushed by 115 mph winds, the Marshall Fire quickly became the most destructive fire in Colorado's history, burning 1,084 structures within six hours. Two human lives were lost. Five CDS caregivers responded to a Disaster Assistance Center (DAC) over two weeks to provide support for 25 children affected by the fire.

Patty recounted her interaction with one family: "Seven-year-old Sara* and her mother and siblings had only 20 minutes to escape before their home was engulfed with flames. Their home was among the first to burn. As Sara worked on a puzzle in the CDS childcare center, she remembered her new vacuum she got for Christmas.

She said, 'It's gone now.' She became very quiet. Sara's four-year-old brother placed a fire hat on my head and told me, 'There is a fire!' He pointed to the corner of the CDS play area. I told him to call 911, but he exclaimed, 'They can't get here.' So, I pretended to spray the fire



Medical play is a favorite activity in a CDS childcare center.
Photo by Patty Henry

out. He pointed to another area. 'It's everywhere!' he shouted. I continued pretend spraying all the areas where he pointed. He snuggled under a bean bag chair wrapping it around him for protection."

Another child we worked with, Elliot*, was 10 years old. He worked with Play-Doh and told us that he looked out his bedroom window because the wind was shaking his bed and TV. He noticed two "black finger-like clouds" and mentioned it to his little brother but not to his mother. They continued to play. Then the wind blew a small rock through his bedroom window. Elliot looked out again and saw flames rapidly approaching. He alerted his mother and they quickly ran to the car. The fire was there immediately. Elliot continued to play with his Play-Doh as he told a worker that they went to see what was left of their house, but found only the basement and "some metal". He found one of his toy cars in the yard, but it was stuck in ice and snow so he couldn't get it. He continued that his neighborhood was not recognizable because the destruction was so great, stating, "Nothing looks the same."

The effects of this fire will be felt for a long time for these families. CDS is grateful to be able to be part of their recovery process.

* The children's names have been changed to protect their privacy.



CDS childcare centers are stocked with simple items that encourage imaginative play as well as quiet places to rest. This center in a DAC in Colorado in January 2022 greeted children affected by the Marshall Fire.
Photo by Patty Henry

2022 Annual Conference and Virtual Blood Drives

The 2022 Annual Conference Blood Drive is scheduled for Wednesday and Thursday, July 12 & 13, from 8 A.M. to 6 P.M. in the Exhibit Hall of the CHI Health/Convention Center in Omaha, Neb.

Conference attendees are encouraged to sign up online in order to book the donation time that is best for them. To reserve your spot, go to <https://rcblood.org/3oAjmhp> and choose your preferred day and time. An appointment sign-up sheet will also be available at the conference.

Volunteers are needed to help in the registration and snack/recovery areas during the blood drive for one to two hour slots or longer. To volunteer, please contact Sharon (sfranzen@brethren.org) before the conference or Brenda and Ed Palsgrove during the conference.

Once again a **Virtual Blood Drive** will be available for those not attending the conference who wish

to donate locally.

We had 80 donors participate in 2021 and we are hoping to increase that number this year. More information will be available soon. For questions, contact bdm@brethren.org or 800-451-4407 ext. 1.



Would you like to receive BRIDGES by email?

Brethren Disaster Ministries is now offering our Bridges newsletter electronically. If you would like to receive Bridges by email, you may contact us at bdm@brethren.org, or give us a call at 800-451-4407. Bridges is also available online at www.brethren.org/bdm/updates.

2022 Disaster Response Auctions

Brethren Disaster Ministries benefits greatly from the proceeds of several annual disaster relief auctions and other fundraisers. Over the past two years the organizers of these events have not shied away from finding innovative ways to continue to support BDM through the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. We are grateful for the time, hard work, dedication, and creativity this represents—almost entirely by volunteer effort.



The dates for the 2022 auctions are listed below and it is our hope that as many people as possible will attend to show support for the efforts of the leaders and volunteers from these districts to provide funding for the disaster ministries of the Church of the Brethren. For up-to-date information on the status of each auction, please see the contact information below.

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

May 7: Mid-Atlantic District Disaster Response Auction—Carroll County Agricultural Center in Westminster, Md.; See www.madcob.com/disaster-response-auction or call 443-960-3052

May 20 & 21: Shenandoah District Disaster Ministries Auction & Sale—Rockingham County Fairgrounds in Harrisonburg, Va.; See <https://shencob.org/2022-disaster-auction>; www.facebook.com/ShenandoahDistrictBrethrenAuction; or call 540-234-8555

Sept. 23 & 24: Brethren Disaster Relief Auction (Atlantic Northeast and Southern Pennsylvania districts)—Lebanon Valley Expo Center, Lebanon, Pa.; Information will soon be available at www.brethrenauction.org, www.facebook.com/BrethrenDisasterRelief, or 717-823-2745.

Greetings from the Southern Ohio/Kentucky District

by Burton and Helen Wolf,
district disaster coordinators

Although the Dayton, Ohio, BDM site is now closed, the work here continues as other partners are picking up where BDM left off. It is with grateful appreciation that we write this note to those who came to be with us. BDMers filled 267 volunteer slots to complete the work. You came from many districts: Atlantic Northeast, Northern and South/Central Indiana, Illinois/Wisconsin, Michigan, Mid-Atlantic, Northern Ohio, Middle PA, Southern PA, Western PA, Shenandoah, and Virginia. Wow! What amazing support we received!

We now know something of how others feel when we go to their location to assist them with rebuilding. We are humbled by and thankful for the support we have received.

May it all be to the glory of God and for our neighbor's good!

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BRIDGES

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Rebuilding Lives in Central America: Hurricane Recovery Update

Hondurans are continuing to recover from November 2020's Hurricanes Eta and Iota, both powerful Category 4 storms. BDM plans to provide additional support to Proyecto Aldea Global (PAG, Project Global Village) to continue building new 400 sq. ft. houses, repairing damaged houses, repairing and improving water systems for thousands of people, and providing small animal projects to help improve livelihoods for the impacted families. So far, \$160,000 in grants from the Emergency Disaster

Fund (EDF) have supported the hurricane relief and recovery responses of PAG and Church World Service (CWS).

With rising costs of building materials, new homes are being built for about \$6,000, with the homeowners providing much of the labor, and home repairs are averaging \$2,500. Indoor plumbing and electricity are included in both new and repaired homes, which is amazing given the

cost factors. With EDF support, PAG and CWS plan to build 500 new homes and repair 300 homes. These homes, along with the opportunity to establish new livelihoods, bring hope of a better life to desperate Honduran families.



This single mother and her children rejoice for their new home, built by Proyecto Aldea Global in Honduras through an EDF grant.

Photo courtesy of PAG



EDF grant support for small animal husbandry brings livelihood opportunities for Honduran families.

Photo courtesy of PAG