



# GLOBAL FOOD INITIATIVE

2023

## Global Food Initiative Fund Allocations

Church of the Brethren

### **International Allocations**

**Burundi: Sustainable Agriculture Workshop** **\$2,166**

A conservation and sustainable agriculture workshop was held near Bujumbura, Burundi, on May 3-4. The training was hosted by the leadership of the Church of the Brethren in Burundi and attended by 30 participants. Those in attendance were given instruction by GFI volunteer Christian Elliott, a retired farmer who has received training in Farming God's Way (mulch-based agriculture techniques utilizing Biblically based creation care instructional materials) through workshops in Kenya and the U.S.

**Burundi: Water Project** **\$6,380**

The Church of the Brethren in Burundi received funding for the construction of a water tank in the capital city, Bujumbura, where the main congregation is located. Municipal water in the area is only available intermittently. Potable municipal water is stored and distributed free of charge to community members. The congregation has opened a nursery school that will also be served by the water. Funds were used for the purchase of a 10,000-liter plastic tank, construction of a steel frame to support the tank, plumbing costs, and transportation for the tank and materials.

**Democratic Republic of Congo: Drip Irrigation Training** **\$4,500**

Production workshop in July in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Twenty participants received instruction by a Ugandan-based trainer from Healing Hands International (HHI). Upon completion of the event, participants received drip irrigation kits to take with them. Each is tasked with setting up demonstration gardens upon returning home to multiply the impact of the workshop.

**Dominican Republic: Aquaculture Project****\$300**

Three members of the Iglesia de los Hermanos, Comunidad de Fe, (Church of the Brethren, Community of Faith), received training in November, 2023 as part of a larger aquaculture project. The Comunidad de Fe consists largely of Haitian Kreyol speaking Dominicans and Haitian immigrants living in the Dominican Republic (DR). The training was provided by a company in the DR, Acuaponia Dominicana, which sells equipment for aquaculture installations, as well as providing training and follow-up.

**Ecuador – Venezuela: Agriculture Training Exchange****\$9,950**

Hosted by the Fundacion Brethren y Unida (FBU - Brethren and United Foundation) in the Andes of Ecuador, volunteers from the Asociación Iglesia de los Hermanos (ASIGLEH - Church of the Brethren in Venezuela) spent three months in a work-study arrangement. The participants from Venezuela received training in organic agriculture and agro-ecological principles, as well as dairy management. Trainees will be called upon to work with ongoing agricultural development projects in Venezuela.

**Ecuador: Community Garden****\$8,000**

This was the second year of support for Fundacion Brethren y Unida (FBU - Brethren and United Foundation) to work with a church-based community gardening effort in Ecuador. The church, located in Llano Grande (rural parish of the canton Quito-Ecuador), has historic ties to the Church of the Brethren and is currently associated with the United Methodist denomination. The garden project is open to both church and other community members and operates under the traditional “Chakra” model, with multiple generations working together. FBU has extensive experience in community development work, including organic agriculture training, and working with indigenous communities to form local markets.

**Ecuador: BVS Position****\$8,030**

GFI partner Fundacion Brethren y Unida (FBU - United and Brethren Foundation) in Ecuador received support for a BVS placement for the year. FBU grew out of the work of the Church of the Brethren from the 1950's until the 1990's. Numerous BVSers served in Ecuador during those years. The BVS volunteer is working on the FBU farm, in the local community, and with the executive director of FBU on grant-writing and social media publications.

**Mexico – Tijuana Coffee Project****\$3,500**

Members of the Mt. Horeb Church (soon to be Church of the Brethren - pending government approval), and individuals associated with Bittersweet Ministries received an allocation of from the GFI to support a coffee start-up business in Tijuana, Mexico. Project leaders are working community members to train them in roasting, marketing, and selling coffee that will come directly from farmers in southern Mexico. This project is different from most GFI projects. GFI

has struggled to find a way to impact the poor who live in urban areas. The recipients of this project are benefiting by gaining skills and business training. The grant covered the cost of purchasing coffee directly from farmers in Colima, Mexico; the remodeling of a storage room in Bittersweet's Goat Shack restaurant/guesthouse; training in marketing; shipping; a coffee maker; cups and spoons for taste testing; and permits for selling and distributing coffee.

**Nigeria: Agriculture Department Vehicle Repair**

**\$3,000**

Ekklesiyar Yan'uwa a Nigeria's Agric Department received a grant to repair a vehicle that was in an accident while enroute from EYN headquarters in Kwarhi, Adamawa State to the GFI-EYN jointly sponsored thresher fabrication workshop in Jos, Plateau State. Vehicle maintenance has not been part of any previous grants requested by the Agric department in support of its Soybean Value-Chain work. In the 5 years of the existence of this project, EYN had not requested any support for vehicle repairs. This vehicle is important to the Agric Department for reliable transportation to its projects.

**Nigeria: Soybean Value Chain Project**

**\$25,000**

The Soybean Value Chain project of Ekklesiyar Yan'uwa a Nigeria's (EYN) began in 2017. A key component of the project is the Volunteer Extension Agent (VEA) program. Fifteen VEAs work in rural farming communities to provide technical advice on growing soybeans and maize to local farmers. They are provided with farming inputs (seeds, fertilizers, and pesticides) and must maintain demonstration farms as part of their responsibilities. The project continues to maintain a connection to a much larger pan-African program of the Feed the Future Initiative of the United States Agency for International Development's Soybean Innovation Lab.

**South Sudan: Agricultural Development Conference**

**\$2,429.50**

Three Brethren members from various countries attended a symposium on best practices in agricultural development in Juba, South Sudan, from February 20-22, 2024. The symposium was jointly sponsored by ECHO (Educational Concerns for Hunger Organization) and Tearfund. Those attending the symposium were Athanasus Ungang (Global Mission staff serving in S. Sudan), Bwambale Sedrack (Church of the Brethren in Uganda), and Chris Elliott (Global Mission and GFI volunteer). Grant funds covered airfare, ground transportation, visas, registration, lodging, and meals.

**Spain: Community Garden**

**\$5,616**

The community garden project of the Gijon congregation of Iglesia Evangelica de los Hermanos (CoB in Spain) came into existence in 2015. Since its inception, many families have benefitted from this project – primarily immigrants and people with low incomes. Fresh produce from the garden supplements dry and canned goods distributed through a food pantry operated by the local congregation. The GFI supported this project for the sixth year, with funds being used to

support the purchase of two greenhouses/high tunnels, along with some funds for the purchase of tools, vegetable transplants, water, and tractor rentals.

**Tanzania: East Africa Agricultural Development Symposium** **\$5,000**

Three East African Brethren representatives attended ECHO's East Africa Biennial Symposium on Sustainable Agriculture and Appropriate Technologies in Arusha, Tanzania. The three church leaders were Athanasus Ungang (Church of the Brethren staff in S. Sudan), Expert Bukene (lead pastor of Church of the Brethren in Burundi), and Sedrack Bwambale (lead pastor of Church of the Brethren in Uganda).

**Uganda: Dryland Vegetable Production Workshop** **\$3,490**

Held in Kesese, Uganda, this workshop was attended by 25 participants identified by leadership of the Uganda Church of the Brethren. It was held April 13-14. Those in attendance were given instruction on how to construct raised beds, make compost, and set up drip-irrigation systems. A Ugandan-based instructor from Healing Hands International (HHI) provided the training. Upon completion of the event, participants received drip irrigation kits to take with them. Each is tasked with setting up demonstration gardens upon returning home to multiply the impact of the workshop.

**Venezuela: Crop and Animal Production Project** **\$15,500**

This is the second GFI allocation for this crop and animal production project of the Asociación Iglesia de Los Hermanos Venezuela (ASIGLEH or Church of the Brethren in Venezuela). This grant supported nine micro-projects including poultry, maize, banana, and various vegetable production efforts that will be spread out across the country. Of the crops harvested in 2022-23, some were given to families in need, some were sold to add to the 2023-24 project budget, and some were utilized to help feed delegates to the 2023 annual conference.

**Domestic Allocations**

**US: Eden, North Carolina – Community Garden** **\$1,125**

The First Church of the Brethren congregation, Eden, North Carolina, has a history of food ministries serving the community. This year they added a community garden to the list. Produce in the first year of this garden was distributed to neighbors, but the hope is that the garden will expand in coming years, with neighbors receiving their own garden plots. Grant funds were used for the purchase of irrigation equipment, fertilizer, seeds, plants, and monthly water costs.

**US: Fairbanks, Alaska – Community Garden & Soup Kitchen**

**\$9,050**

The Stone Soup Cafe community garden and soup kitchen in Fairbanks, Alaska, was awarded a grant for general upgrades in the kitchen and community garden. A greenhouse was erected to grow vegetable seedlings for its own garden and a garden in Circle, Alaska. Members of the Pleasant Dale Church of the Brethren (Decatur, Ind.), Bill and Penny Gay, spent their summer in Alaska volunteering with the organization, as well as in Circle.

**US: Lancaster, Pennsylvania – Food Storage**

**\$4,898**

Alpha and Omega Community Center purchased a new refrigerator and freezer for its food distribution program. Alpha and Omega Community Center provides a wide range of services to assist the Hispanic Community of Lancaster, Pa., to become prosperous contributing members of society. One of the Center's most important services is the distribution of food to help the families of the community.

**US: New Orleans, Louisiana – Bee Hives & Fruit Trees**

**\$4,200**

Located in the Lower 9<sup>th</sup> Ward of New Orleans, Capstone 118 continues to serve its neighbors through agricultural initiatives. The grant was utilized to purchase replacement beehives and fruit trees. Honey sales are a significant component of Capstone's annual income and are integral to its outreach. In addition, funds supported the restocking/rebuilding of some of Capstone's aquaculture demonstrations and covered fees for Capstone's director to attend a World Aquaculture Conference taking place in New Orleans.

**US: New Orleans, Louisiana -- Saltwater Intrusion Remediation**

**\$1,976.92**

New Orleans and nearby communities are struggling with the intrusion of saltwater into municipal water systems due to drought across the Mississippi River basin. Agricultural projects (aquaponics and small ruminants) operated by Capstone 118 are at risk. Capstone was awarded a grant for funds to get through the current crisis and prepare for future events. A small reverse osmosis system was installed along with a shallow hand well. Clean drinking water is being made available to Capstone's neighbors.

## Advocacy and Administrative Contributions

### US: Bread for the World Annual Hunger Report

\$500.00

*Each year the GFI contributes to the publication of Bread for the World's annual Hunger Report in support of advocacy for domestic and international food security.*

### US: Growing Hope Globally (GHG)

\$5,000.00

*Each year the GFI pays an annual fee on behalf of Brethren congregations participating in GHG Growing Projects.*

### US: National Farm Worker Ministry

\$2,000.00

*The National Farm Worker Ministry is a faith-based organization which supports farm workers as they organize for justice and empowerment. Each year the GFI contributes to this ministry.*

Subtotal – International Allocations

\$ \$102,861.50

Subtotal – Domestic Allocations

\$ 21,250.92

Subtotal – Advocacy and Administrative Contributions

\$ 7,500.00

**Total Allocated 2023 by GFI**

\$ \$131,611.42

Total Contributions in 2023 to GFI from individuals and churches

\$ \$262,381.28

For more information on any of these programs or initiatives, please go to

[www.brethren.org/gfi/stories/](http://www.brethren.org/gfi/stories/) to see copies of current issues of the GFI newsletter. The newsletter is available in print form to all Brethren congregations via the Source packet and to anyone upon request.

## Church of the Brethren Global Food Initiative Fund

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