

MOVING FORWARD: DISASTER RESPONSE IN 2011





TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 3 Relief | United States
- 4 Short-Term Recovery | Japan
- 5 Long-Term Recovery | Haiti

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INTRODUCTION

Throughout 2011, disasters continued to splash across front pages and TV screens. While Episcopal Relief & Development was actively engaged in numerous areas around the globe, this report highlights a few examples of the major disaster response work from the past year.

As depicted above, disaster response tends to progress in recognizable stages through a cycle that ideally begins with advance preparedness. Warning signs may precede the impact of disasters like tornadoes and hurricanes, allowing time for additional protective measures, though other events, such as earthquakes, can strike unexpectedly. In the immediate aftermath of the impact, the priorities are getting people to safety and searching for those that are missing – activities most often coordinated by local government in partnership with dedicated first-response organizations. Episcopal Relief & Development then works through local churches and other long-standing community institutions to provide support beyond the immediate rescue and relief phases, investing in the short- and long-term recovery of survivors.

At each stage of disaster response, Episcopal Relief & Development’s goals are to provide assistance to those most vulnerable, and to help communities make a full and sustained recovery. In order to do this, Episcopal Relief & Development focuses on strengthening community leadership and mobilizing area resources to develop solutions that fit the local context. This approach is also at the core of the organization’s development programs, which build capacity and infrastructure in order to improve quality of life in a community, and also increase its ability to respond after disasters. Where there are water and sanitation systems in place, flooding is less likely to result in waterborne disease. Where there are teams of health volunteers and strong youth groups, people will be ready to spring into action after an earthquake or tornado and help their communities recover. And where there are strong networks within a community, fewer vulnerable people – shut-ins, the elderly and others – will fall through the cracks.

Disaster response is perhaps the most high-profile of Episcopal Relief & Development’s activities, but it is just one of the ways that the organization continues its work to heal a hurting world. Communities that become stronger through locally led development programs are better equipped to respond quickly when disaster strikes and move forward into full recovery. Episcopal Relief & Development is committed to supporting the work of its partners worldwide to help communities identify and build on their strengths, and overcome the challenges of poverty, hunger, disease and disaster.

RELIEF UNITED STATES

FAST FACTS

- **Country:** United States ([click for more information](#))
- **Disaster:** 2011 saw flooding and tornadoes from the Midwest to the Northeast, hurricanes from the Southeast to the Northeast, and wildfires in Texas
- **Partner:** 17 Episcopal dioceses around the United States ([click for more details](#))
- **Number of lives touched by Episcopal Relief & Development response:** 12,676

DISASTER: The 2011 US tornado season was the deadliest in 50 years. In April 2011, over 748 confirmed tornadoes touched down along a wide swath of the country that extended from the Midwest and Southeast all the way up to New England. The period from April 25–27 was by far the most severe, with over 300 confirmed tornadoes and 322 storm-related deaths. Total damages from just these three days were estimated to exceed \$10 billion. On April 27, a tornado hit Chattanooga, Tennessee and surrounding areas, destroying homes and businesses and knocking out power.

RESPONSE TO DATE: Following the storms, Episcopal Relief & Development worked with a variety of Episcopal Church–affiliated ministries in tornado-impacted areas. One of them, Metropolitan Ministries, responded to needs in Chattanooga and the surrounding rural areas. Staff and volunteers expanded their existing ministry and helped local businesses provide emergency financial support for housing, utilities, food, gasoline, prescription medications, communications and other necessities. With assistance from Episcopal Relief & Development, Metropolitan Ministries was able to continue its existing work at full capacity, while extending services to help those impacted by the tornado.

LONG-TERM RESPONSE: After partnering with Metropolitan Ministries in the relief phase of the tornado response, Episcopal Relief & Development helped the organization hire a case manager to work through the end of 2011, and provided funding to help resolve open cases. In addition, Episcopal Relief & Development continues to work with local church partners in other areas that were affected by the same cluster of storms, including the Episcopal Diocese of Alabama. Most of the ongoing response work involves home reconstruction and rehabilitation.



PAYING IT FORWARD

Marvin and his wife, Willie, both in their seventies, used to have a home in the town of Apison, 10 miles east of Chattanooga. Like many of their neighbors, they lost everything when their house was hit by the April 27 tornado. A few days later, Marvin and Willie got connected with the staff at Metropolitan Ministries, who were able to help Marvin replace the dentures and glasses he had lost in the storm. They also helped cover the cost of doctors' visits. Grateful for the assistance they received, Marvin and Willie wanted to pass on the gift. Living out of a small camper given to them by a friend, Marvin and Willie began shepherding volunteers who showed up in their neighborhood to lend a hand. With donated tents, the couple established a meeting space where they handed out sandwiches and drinks to whoever needed them, and told volunteers and passers-by how they could assist.

SHORT-TERM RECOVERY

JAPAN

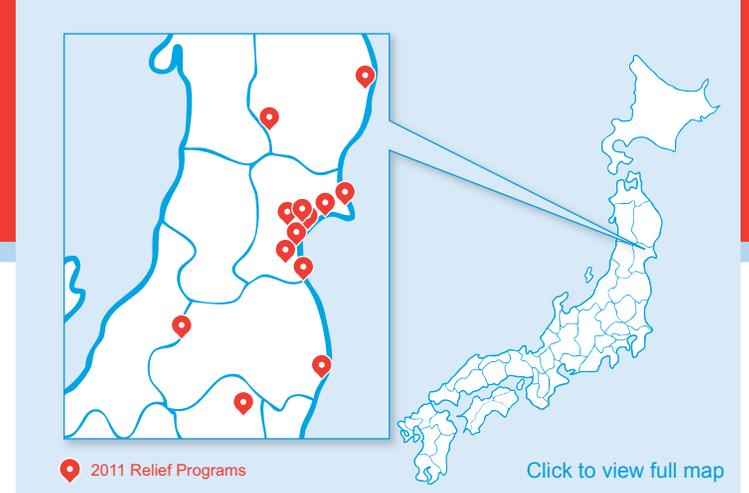
FAST FACTS

- **Country:** Japan ([click for more information](#))
- **Disaster:** In March 2011, a 9.0-magnitude earthquake centered off the northeastern coast caused a massive tsunami and led to a nuclear disaster
- **Partner:** Nippon Sei Ko Kai (NSKK, the Anglican Communion in Japan)
- **Number of lives touched by Episcopal Relief & Development response:** 5,000

DISASTER: On March 11, 2011, at 2:46 pm local time, a 9.0-magnitude earthquake struck off the northeastern coast of Japan. The tsunami triggered by the massive earthquake washed away several coastal cities, causing widespread property damage in Japan and as far away as the US West Coast, and leaving thousands in Japan dead or missing. In addition, the tsunami caused an emergency situation at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant, where several reactors experienced core meltdowns as a result of damage and loss of power. The government instituted a mandatory 20-kilometer (12.4-mile) evacuation zone around the plant. In total, the most recent Japanese government statistics report 15,839 people dead, 3,642 missing and up to 300,000 displaced.

RESPONSE TO DATE: NSKK provided emergency relief supplies to people in evacuation centers who were displaced by the triple disaster. NSKK also made a special effort to reach those who had stayed in their damaged homes or moved in with friends and relatives, and would not have received assistance otherwise. NSKK is building on its initial relief work within marginalized communities – including migrants and the elderly – to develop their longer-term rehabilitation program, called *Issho Ni Aruko* (Let Us Walk Together). NSKK also continues to use local funds to rehabilitate diocesan structures (churches, parsonages, kindergartens) that were damaged by the earthquake.

LONG-TERM RESPONSE: The target population of *Issho Ni Aruko* will be those left out of larger relief initiatives in impacted areas. The Church is building on its existing relationships and outreach ministries for this longer-term response. One target group is the Filipino population in affected areas around Sendai. Many of them have resided in Japan for generations, but lack access to government social services. Basing their activities on the Diocese of Chubu's program for outreach to Filipino immigrants, NSKK is continuing to provide pastoral care and other assistance, including translation services and psychosocial activities in Tagalog, the national language of the Philippines. The Diocese is also offering Japanese language classes.



EMPOWERING WOMEN IMMIGRANTS

Filipino women who lost their Japanese husbands in the disaster are at risk because their legal residency status may be called into question if they attempt to access government services. While many of these women speak some Japanese, most cannot read or write the language – a major issue in emergency situations when warnings and instructions need to be communicated rapidly, and a challenge in the aftermath as they seek means of supporting themselves and their families. NSKK has worked to either connect women immigrants to relief services or provide supplies directly. It is also offering Japanese language classes, with an opportunity for vocational training in either elder care nursing or English language instruction upon completion. Training options range from 16 weeks to two years, and include job placement through NSKK's connections to other organizations. With livelihood and language skills, the women will be able to stay and provide valuable services in their communities in Japan.

LONG-TERM RECOVERY

HAITI

FAST FACTS

- **Country:** Haiti ([click for more information](#))
- **Disaster:** In January 2010, a 7.0-magnitude earthquake struck Haiti, with its epicenter near Léogâne, approximately 18 miles west of Port-au-Prince
- **Partner:** Episcopal Diocese of Haiti and CEDDISEC (Centre Diocésain de Développement Intégré et de Secours)
- **Number of lives touched by Episcopal Relief & Development response:** 20,000 in 2011; 120,000 to date

DISASTER: The 7.0-magnitude earthquake that shook Haiti on January 12, 2010, was the largest the country had experienced in 250 years. The quake resulted in an estimated 217,366 deaths, and left over 1.5 million people homeless and displaced. The quake has had a particularly devastating impact on the Departments of the West (including Port-au-Prince), the South-West, and Nippes. Challenges continued in 2011, as Haiti faced problems such as violence over disputed election results, a continuing cholera epidemic exacerbated by inadequate living and sanitation conditions, and ongoing flooding and erosion due to tropical storms and hurricanes.

RESPONSE TO DATE: Episcopal Relief & Development has supported three phases of relief and recovery activities implemented by the Episcopal Diocese of Haiti and CEDDISEC under the banner of “Ayiti leve kanpe pou-w mache” (Haiti can rise up and move forward). The Rescue and Relief phase assisted survivors with health care, food and non-food items, water, shelter and sanitation. The Relief to Recovery phase continued the provision and expansion of health care services, along with the creation of short-term employment and construction of more stable housing and sanitation facilities. The Long-Term Recovery phase began in 2011.

LONG-TERM RESPONSE: In 2011, activities focused on household and community security, economic recovery, and livelihood development in 18 town and parish locations. These Long-Term Recovery activities expanded the short-term employment programs and construction projects begun during the previous phase. They also helped to start new initiatives to offer micro-finance for small businesses, combat gender-based violence, increase agricultural production and promote renewable energy. CEDDISEC continues its work to create opportunities for Episcopal parishes and congregations in Haiti to identify and lead recovery projects that in turn actively engage the community and contribute to sustainable development.



SALES WITH A SMILE

Yolande has been running her small shop in Port-au-Prince since 2004, selling toiletries, household items and soft drinks. After the earthquake, Yolande sacrificed her profits in order to help her community, since so many of her customers had lost everything. When people could not pay the full price for necessary items, she would sell them at cost, or simply give them away for free. To start growing her business again, Yolande applied for a micro-finance loan from CEDDISEC so she could stock high-turnover items like sugar, rice, flour and milk, with the hope of increasing her income. In just three months, she was able to save \$175 toward her yearly rent, and is on track to repay her loan in full. When asked why people choose her shop to buy their goods, Yolande replied with a laugh and a smile: “Because at my shop I give away the jokes for free!”



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