

HELO Haiti Update October 5- November 11 2016



Update from HELO

November 11, 2016

I am happy to share these photos from my recent visit to HELO. Repairs are well underway, all cookhouses and depot roofs have been repaired, many workers are rebuilding Home 3 and the bridge entering our property. Children are happy to be back in school and HELO's family continues to grow with the birth of two adorable sheep!

There is still a long road ahead of us: Home 2 rebuild, replacement of Home 3's mattresses and other household items lost or broken when a tree crashed through the wall, roof repairs to the "barn" and church, repairs to latrine and showers at Home 1. Solar panels blew off roofs and need replacement, as do batteries and inverters damaged by rain.

Step by step, brick by brick, we will rebuild. "Men anpil fe chay pa lou," Many hands lighten the load — we are so appreciative of your support!

Thank you for your continued support,

Elisabeth Kennedy
Co-Founder & US Director
www.HeloHaiti.org



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Fri 10/21/2016 8:48 AM

I am sad to report that Magda will be unable to visit this month due the devastation of Hurricane Matthew. We hope you will still consider attending our scheduled fundraisers (Wine'd Down Wednesday on 10/26 and Pasta for a Purpose on 10/29). I will have photographs of my visit to Haiti last week and share stories and our rebuilding strategy. All funds (100%) will go towards our rebuilding efforts.

I sincerely thank you for your support,

Elisabeth

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Fri 10/21/2016 8:34 AM

Dear friends,

I am grateful to have returned home from Haiti safely, but my heart aches for our loved ones. I am overwhelmed by the devastation and great need that surrounded me in Haiti, and still more overwhelmed by the generous outpouring of support. I cannot find words to convey my gratitude to each and every person who has opened their hearts to donate to help us rebuilt after the devastation of Hurricane Matthew.

Funds already raised helped get our children into more secure temporary housing and purchase mattresses, clothes and shoes to replace items lost in the hurricane. Food was purchased and we were so fortunate to get a donation of Manna Packs (thank you Haiti One!) to provide protein rich meals to our children. Aquatabs and bleach were also purchased to protect children and staff from cholera.

It is difficult to describe the devastation, which some refer to as a war zone. I have never been in a war zone, so I feel I cannot use that analogy. It was as if the biggest tornado you can imagine swept the southern peninsula, taking nearly everything in its path. Tin roofs did not stand a chance against the high winds of a category 4 hurricane, and nearly every building – home, school, church – lost at least part of its roof if not all of it. Belongings not blown away by that wind were ruined by the heavy rain and/or flooding. Trees still standing are stripped of leaves, most branches broken or gone. Gardens and

livestock gone... Not only was this crop wiped out, but seeds that would be used for future crops are also gone. This tragedy will affect all of Haiti for a long time (70% of Haiti's produce is grown in this area) and hunger and high food prices will continue for some time.

Haiti needs our prayers. All of our housefathers are pastors in area churches, and each of their churches were destroyed -- leveled, not even a bench remaining. One pastor told me "people are living under rocks, like animals. They have lost everything."

I will go back to Haiti in a few weeks and continue to do what I can to facilitate rebuilding stronger. If you would like to help, I pledge that 100% of your donation (97% if made on line) will go directly to Haiti for Hurricane Matthew relief to help us rebuild Homes 2 and 3, our church/primary school, and help with outreach to those families in our area who have lost everything.

Bondye beni ou, e Bondye beni Ayiti! God bless you, and God bless Haiti!

Elisabeth

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Fri

10/21/2016 8:34 AM



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Wed 10/12/2016 5:42 PM

HELO friends! We've received more updates from LaBorde:

We were able to patch most of home 2's roof with pieces of tin that were found around our land. While it's not a permanent solution, it is enough to get children back into their home. The children in home 2 were also THRILLED to receive brand new mattresses!

Photos of home 1 and home 2 damages are attached here as well as photos of our primary school/church's roof, which is in good shape for the most part with the exception of a lifted part in the back. We also found additional damage in home 3's bathroom.

We are working with a local engineer to get quotes on how much everything will cost to rebuild and replace. We thank you all for your patience and continued support, in the meantime, we hope you will enjoy adorable pictures of the children

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Above: Home 2's food depot.



Several HELO staff members worked together to patch home 2's roof with scrap tin found in our land. It's a temporary solution that allowed us to move children back into their home.



Damage found in home 3's bathroom.

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Happy children of home 1 pose on a downed tree in their backyard. You'll also notice our fallen rabbit hutches in the background.

From the front: Vanya, Oslain, Regina, Cindy, and Evens.



Home 1's kitchen & food depot, missing roof.



Home 1's showers



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Happy children of home 1 (Oslain, Evens, Cindy, and Regina) pose in front of their kitchen and food depot as well as remaining pieces of tin.



Big Kendy models his shirt, which has "happy" written on the back. It's serving as a reminder to everyone to keep smiling.



Missing panels of the roof of our primary school/ church.

Roof of our primary school/church, mostly in tact with the exception of the far end.



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Mon 10/10/2016 9:39 PM

Our U.S. Director, Elisabeth, is down in Les Cayes and LaBorde visiting with the children and assessing the damage. We received a few updates:

"Les Cayes is so devastated that I didn't even realize we had arrived.

Sadly, the city lost it's beloved city gate and many trees are gone so the city looks very different. The road to home 1 is barely passable due to downed trees and the road to homes 2 and 3 is not passable via vehicle.

Damages by home:

- Home 1: roof over the cook house is completely gone. Many trees fell damaging our latrine, showers, and duck pen. Our rabbit hutch has fallen, but our rabbits are still alive! However, both goats have died and the older boys' beloved garden has been destroyed.
- Home 2: trees came down on the back of the home; however, our house parents and staff came together to chop up the tree and began working on restoring the homes roof. All mattresses were ruined, still need to be replaced.
- Church: missing roof, but otherwise standing tall."
- Primary school: was not able to get in to assess the damage."

We received some pictures of Home 3 from Elisabeth today (attached here); unfortunately it became too dark to take pictures of Homes 1 & 2, we hope to receive pictures of them tomorrow. Home 3 is the most devastated out of all of our homes; the damage is severe and quite heartbreaking. Our entire roof and most of our back wall are completely gone. We lost part of the roof in home 3's food depot, which resulted in our loss of food.

On a much happier note, despite everything, the children remain happy and hopeful. They, especially baby Britus, are also enjoying their delicious protein bars! Special thank you to each and every person who donated food, sheets, blow up beds, tarps, and of course, your monetary gifts. We truly cannot express our gratitude.

We will send pictures of the remaining damage tomorrow (hopefully) and hope to have a better idea of rebuilding costs soon. Thank you everyone!

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Thu 10/6/2016 10:48 PM

Dear friends,

I was able to connect with Pastor Jean (Haiti Director) for a more in depth update from HELO. Sadly, it brings heavy news.

The FANTASTIC news is that all children and employees are safe; however, in addition to losing all of our tin roofs (with the exception of a divine miracle over the original school building), trees fell on homes two, three, kitchens and food store rooms causing heavy damage. All of the food we had on hand has been destroyed due to rainfall or has been washed away. All of the children's beds, school uniforms, and most clothes have also been destroyed.

Due to the challenge of getting information out of Haiti as well as getting resources to the orphanage, I will be traveling down to Les Cayes in a matter of days. What we need:

- MONETARY DONATIONS! I will be buying as many building supplies and food as possible down there to begin rebuilding. See Donate button on Facebook or via website www.HeloHaiti.org/how-to-help
- Protein bars (clif, power, odwalla, kashi, luna, nature valley, kind, Quaker Oatmeal or Chewy)
- Other food that is easy to carry and provides nutritional value (ex: PBFit or PB2, trail mix, dried fruit, tuna pouches)
- Air mattresses (preferably larger than twin size)
- Electrolyte packets and/or jellybeans
- Sheets and/or sleeping bags
- Tarps
- Duct tape/bungee cords
- Children's underwear and socks

While I can only carry two bags, whatever I cannot bring this time we will bring with the next team or try to find a way to get them down. If you are willing/able to donate anything before I leaves, we would be eternally grateful. We can come meet you, come all the way, anything. Please message, call, text, email myself or any board member that you know for more information or to set up a pick up time.

Thank you for your continued support, our Board will be posting regular updates during my travels and I will do my best to pass on any updates until then.

With heartfelt gratitude for your love and support,

Elisabeth

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Wed 10/5/2016 11:54 PM

Dear friends,

We finally have some news, good and bad:

The good news is no one is injured, everyone -- staff and children -- are okay.

The bad news is we lost roofs on the church, primary school, home 2, and home 3. Children and staff have sought refuge in the new secondary school, which has a concrete roof. Mattresses are ruined, not sure what else, including food in our store rooms. Few buildings are standing in the community where there is heavy wind and flood damage. We are relieved that the children are okay. Buildings can be replaced. Lives cannot.

We are moved by the realization that we completed the primary school just before the earthquake in 2010, and that school became home to many children orphaned by that earthquake. We completed the secondary school just before Hurricane Matthew, which is now home to many of those same children. God is good, faithful, and stronger than any disaster.

We've a lot of work to do, we are so grateful for our faith, your love and your support. We will update you again when we more concrete information about a rebuilding strategy.

With faith, hope and love,

Elisabeth

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Wed 10/5/2016 8:29 AM

Dear friends,

While we anxiously await news from HELO, I share this message I just received from Pastor John's brother Lubin:

Good morning Sister Elisabeth-

I spoke with Pastor John last night, he mentioned that to his knowledge (thank goodness) we don't have any casualty. His most concern was the roofs on house most of them gone. Telephone communications and access roads are still a challenge. The trees around the mission house are gone vehicles damaged but he is fine.

My joy to serve

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Please continue to pray for the children and staff at HELO. I will send out another update when I get news from Haiti.

God bless you, and God bless Haiti.

Elisabeth