

Global Emergency Relief, Recovery & Reconstruction (GER³)

Annual Report
2019



Our Mission

GER³'s mission is to assist crisis-affected communities globally to build back better following disasters through integrated relief, recovery and reconstruction services.

Our Vision

Our long-term vision is a global network of resilient communities that were built back better following crises, providing the best possible example to the world as to how disaster relief, recovery and reconstruction can be implemented.



Background

Global Emergency Relief, Recovery & Reconstruction was established in 2016 as a 501c3 non-profit dedicated to supporting crisis affected communities to build back better. We clear the debris left by a disaster, provide temporary facilities and immediately start the reconstruction process with a particular focus on affected homes, schools and health facilities.

GER³ focuses on addressing key challenges in the disaster relief and recovery space through sustainable, culturally appropriate and community led interventions:

Debris Management: Disaster debris must be effectively managed before people can return to their homes, schools and access health facilities. Few non-profits have the specific expertise to manage complex debris and recycle debris into useful new materials. GER³ seeks to apply sustainable and environmentally focused approaches to debris management, creating new livelihood opportunities and rebuilding communities.

Supporting Vulnerable Communities: Specific vulnerable communities are too often left behind during disasters due to poor targeting of resources. GER³ focuses on identifying vulnerable communities and designs programs to support most vulnerable communities and individuals.

Integrating Reconstruction: While relief and recovery efforts start immediately following a disaster, many communities do not see the reconstruction process start for months or even years. GER³ integrates reconstruction at an early stage, allowing for a faster and more efficient recovery process while also focusing on sustainability and building back better.

Bridging the Humanitarian & Development Gap: Finally, the gap between the humanitarian and development communities creates a lack of integrated and durable programming that links all three phases of a response. GER³ is committed to bridging the space between humanitarian aid and development programs.



Dear Friends,

2019 was GER³'s third consecutive year of growth in the humanitarian community. We are excited to share with you that in 2019, GER³'s impact greatly exceeded previous years' work. As a young organization, we also made significant strides in developing robust systems and processes for various components of our work including financial systems, policy development, human resources, deployment processes, procurement protocols, and more.

Through effective programming and engagement in 2019, we continued to establish our name, our unique approach and mission and our added value to the humanitarian community. We are proud to continue to exemplify and demonstrate the value of community-led approaches, engaging local team members and focusing on sustainable, innovative approaches to relief, recovery and reconstruction. 2019 allowed our team to build a strong foundation for continued growth and impact in 2020 and beyond.



2019 Highlights –Hurricane Dorian Response in the Bahamas

In response to Hurricane Dorian, GER³ rapidly deployed to the Bahamas within days of the storm. Our agile Global Response Team (GRT) was able to quickly reach the affected communities in Grand Bahama well before most other relief organizations. Among the first on the ground, we quickly assessed the needs, built a strong local team and began implementing critical relief mechanisms such as debris management. Our team continued to design and implement programs specific to the needs of affected communities, enabling efficient, coordinated and community-led initiatives. The core of our work focused on debris removal and rehabilitation of schools and most vulnerable communities and households.

GER³'s early presence and effective support was widely recognized by the communities of Grand Bahama. Our focus on community engagement and building back better proved to be extremely impactful and resonated well with donors and partners. As a result, our initial response to Hurricane Dorian led to the development, implementation and growth of many successful programs. Beginning with debris removal, muck-and-gut and mold remediation, GER³ expanded operations to include structural rehabilitation and repairs, always focusing on sustainability and increased resiliency. Maintaining a longer-term presence, GER³ began to bridge the relief and recovery phases in 2019, with an aim to continue reconstruction programming through 2020.

Debris Management & Housing Rehabilitation Project

Communities in East Grand Bahama were among the most severely affected by Hurricane Dorian. These communities experienced significant damage to infrastructure as well as the loss of water and electricity. Many houses were completely destroyed and many were badly damaged. Funded by the Center for Disaster Philanthropy, GER³ designed and implemented a “Debris Management, Livelihoods & Sustainable Green Recovery Program”. The program focused on identifying most vulnerable community members and households and supporting them with debris management, recycling, housing rehabilitation and building back better.

Working closely with community members, GER³ developed a strong team of local cash-for-workers and identified most vulnerable homes to be included within the program. Over a two-month period, the grant was used to assist over 50 homes, 12 apartments, 6 local businesses and two schools across three communities.

The local employment opportunities supported through this grant encouraged the East Grand Bahama populations to get back into their communities and begin the recovery process as soon as possible. Most of these individuals were unemployed, largely a result of hurricane Dorian. Many of their homes were also badly damaged or destroyed. With the cash-for-work program, residents were able to get back on their feet financially and acquire new skills in chainsaw work, mold remediation, sheetrock installation, roofing, painting and more. These skillsets can be used towards future work opportunities and reconstruction activities on the island.

The communities of High Rock, Freetown and Gambier Point expressed overwhelming appreciation for GER³'s support. The project was a great opportunity for GER³ to employ its values and unique approach to immediate relief and recovery and to demonstrate how effective community engagement and sustainable initiatives can be implemented.



School Recovery & Teacher Housing Project

Getting children back to school was a key component of relief efforts in Grand Bahama. Until schools were able to reopen, families who had evacuated were hesitant to return to their communities. GER³ led debris management and rehabilitation activities in seven schools in the Freeport area. Funded by UNICEF and in close collaboration with the Ministry of Education and School District Superintendent, GER³ was able to support the rehabilitation and reopening of seven (7) schools on Grand Bahama.

Rehabilitation work included debris removal, muck-and-gut, roof repairs, mold remediation, plastering, sheetrock installation, painting, blackboard and whiteboard installation, doors installation and agricultural center rehabilitation. GER³ provided work opportunities to many local Bahamians (cash-for-workers and contractors) to support these activities. This not only provided a source of income to those who lost their jobs as a result of Dorian, but also enhanced their skillsets and ability to secure additional employment opportunities. Seven of the highest priority schools in Freeport were rehabilitated with GER³'s support, allowing students, teachers and staff to return to learning in a safe, functional environment and regain a semblance of normal life.

In addition to schools, GER³ supported the rehabilitation of teachers' and social workers' homes. GER³ worked with the schools to identify staff members who were particularly vulnerable to the effects of Dorian and then supported various rehabilitation activities in the homes of six teachers and two social workers.

In December 2019, GER³ transitioned the School Recovery and Teacher Housing project to Abaco, where hurricane devastation was more severe and recovery efforts were still in early stages. Initial assessments were completed of schools and homes in order to select beneficiaries for the project's continuation in 2020. Most notable was the identification of the Central Abaco Primary School (CAPS), the largest primary school in Abaco, to be the primary focus of GER³'s work beginning in 2020.



Partnerships

In addition to establishing impactful programs and donor relationships, GER³ is grateful for the support and collaboration with many partner and peer organizations. Without a coordinated and collaborative approach, GER³ would not have had such success and impact in 2019. We are grateful to have deepened existing partnerships and to have established new relationships with the many great contributors to the humanitarian community.



UNICEF
Center for Disaster Philanthropy
CORE Response
Field Ready
DART UK
Team Rubicon
Rocky Mountain Institute
IsraAid
Adra
UNDP
All Hands and Hearts
World Central Kitchen (WCK)
Waugh Construction
The Red Cross

2020 and Beyond...

As our work continues in 2020, GER³ is expanding work in the Bahamas, focusing on the rehabilitation and reconstruction of schools, vulnerable homes and hurricane shelters. We look forward to exploring the many opportunities to support through the reconstruction process, exemplifying our vision of bridging the full cycle of relief, recovery and reconstruction.

Thank You

We are extremely grateful for the opportunity to put GER³'s values, mission and vision into action. Donations from family, friends and donor agencies allowed us to exemplify and model what GER³ was founded to do. We built a strong foundation of programs, partnerships and growth in 2019 that has set us up for successful future response programs. We are thankful for the continued faith and encouragement of our supporters and are proud to share our accomplishments thus far. We look forward to continuing growth in 2020 and supporting global communities to become more resilient in the years ahead.



Testimonial

The GER³ team went beyond what was expected of them and I can truly attest to the fact that as a result of their hard work and dedication many of our schools were able to open and receive students in the quickest time possible.

I wish to extend my personal appreciation to the Team for their commitment and perseverance to the mission of restoring and rebuilding our institutions. To date, all of our schools are open and operating. Students continue to return home from other islands and other schools. Thank you once again for your assistance to our District as we accept our mission and mandate of providing quality education to the children of the Bahamas.

Sincerely,

*Ivan Butler
District Superintendent
Grand Bahama, Bimini & The Cays*

**Global Emergency
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