

Abaco Strong



PROGRAMS OVERVIEW 2022-2023

Abaco Strong

Enabling Rebuilding of Sustainable Communities in Abaco



Overview

On September 1st, 2019, Hurricane Dorian, a slow moving category 5 storm, wreaked unimaginable devastation in Abaco. Dorian is regarded as the worst hurricane in the history of the Bahamas. Countless NGOs, emergency teams, and individuals reached out during the immediate aftermath of the unprecedented storm. Abaco Strong was formed by leaders in the community for the purpose of coordinating long term rebuilding efforts.

Our Mission is to enable the building of prosperous, sustainable, and environmentally responsible communities. We are working closely with community leaders to understand the needs of families and individuals impacted by Hurricane Dorian, and to help them to move forward and rebuild their lives.

Home Repair Program

It is estimated that 90% of the homes in Treasure Cay were destroyed or uninhabitable after the hurricane. We worked with local contractors in Abaco to repair 16 homes of Bahamian residents in the Treasure Cay Township. The applicants' homes were in various states of disrepair, and the projects have included roof repair, mold remediation, drywall, electric, plumbing, windows and door replacement, and more. Priority was given to elderly residents, single parents, and families with small children. Our goal is to provide safe and healthy living conditions for the residents of Treasure Cay.

We would like to thank Global Giving and the many private donors who contributed funding for this important program.



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Community Garden

Food security continues to be a critical issue since Hurricane Dorian struck in 2019, and Abaco meets the criteria to be defined as a food desert with limited access to fresh, nutrient dense food. Hydroponic and Aquaponic Gardening Systems offer sustainable and resilient solutions to the current climate.

Abaco Strong has partnered with The Blue Atlas Project, to build an Aquaponic Community Garden, and to enlist and train members of the community to participate and manage the facility. The aquaponic system consists of a 410 Gallon Fish Tank, and 34 Aquaponics Grow Rafts that hold 600 plants.

The Community Garden acts as a demonstration garden while providing organic vegetables for participating community members.

Sleep Soundly Abaco

Many of our residents had been sleeping on the floor since Hurricane Dorian struck, and we recognize the importance of a good nights sleep to well-being and productivity. In November of 2020, ninety bed frames and mattresses, along with pillows, sheets and blankets were distributed to residents in Treasure Cay and the surrounding communities.

In phase II of this project in February of 2021, Abaco Strong acquired and distributed 230 mattresses and bed frames to residents in Northern and Central Abaco, including Treasure Cay, Crown Haven, Grand Cay, Green Turtle Cay, Spring City, Murphy Town, Blackwood, Fire Road, Marsh Harbour, Central Pines, Dundas Town, Sandy Point, Coopers Town and Moores Island.

Many thanks to The Lyford Cay Foundation, TCCF, The Rotary Club of The Bahamas, Bahamas Ferries, and City Furniture who have made this program possible. We can all sleep a bit better tonight knowing that our friends in Abaco now have a clean and comfortable place to sleep.



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Abaco Youth Baseball

The families in Abaco have been through a lot in the past two years, and opportunities have become little to none for the children of the island. As the dust began to settle from the hurricane and the pandemic, the members of the community in Central Abaco took it upon themselves to create something special for our youth. With only 4 gloves, 2 bats, a bucket of baseballs, and hearts filled with passion, the Abaco Youth Baseball League was created. The program has grown exponentially with over 130 children, ages 4 - 14, participating in practices on Saturday mornings at the Murphy Town

Softball field. Practices will soon begin in Coopers Town, and we have plans of expanding the program throughout Abaco.

Lessons learned through team sports, such as the value of team work and discipline, will help the Youth of Abaco to develop lifelong skills that will prepare them to face challenges as they grow into responsible adults.

On the heels of a natural disaster and a worldwide pandemic, the league faces many challenges. All of the structures, (bleachers, fence, backstop, dugouts, bathrooms, and concession stand) at the field were destroyed during Hurricane

Dorian's wrath. We have been fortunate to receive donations of practice uniforms and some equipment to jump-start the program. However, in order to give each child an equal opportunity to learn the game and improve their skills, much more is needed.

With the help of *The Rotary Club Bahamas*, *The Lyford Cay Foundation*, *Global Giving*, and many individual donors, we are providing scholarships, uniforms, and equipment, as well as working to restore the facilities and ensure the continued success of the program.



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Backyard Farms

In response to the urgent need for lowering food imports and household food bills in these economically hard times, the Ministry of Agriculture and Marine Resources has embarked on a 'Backyard Farming Program' for householders in The Bahamas. Abaco Strong is supporting this government program by providing shovels, seeds, seed starters, pots, soil enhancements and educational materials for those families participating in the program. We have also been able to distribute over 300 fruit trees for our Backyard and Commercial Farmers.

We are currently have 177 Backyard Farmers in Central Abaco and 136 Backyard Farmers in Northern Abaco that are growing their own fruits and vegetables for their families, as well as for sale at The Abaco Strong Farmers Market, which was implemented in February of 2023.



Community Clean Up

Abaco Strong sponsored a series of four clean up days in conjunction with Treasure Cay Township local government. Our amazing volunteers mowed, weeded and trimmed around the main road, and removed over 50 loads of debris. Volunteers also provided sandwiches and refreshments to keep our workers happy and hydrated. In 2023 Abaco Strong also sponsored a beach cleanup in Treasure Cay Beach. A massive team effort that brought significant improvement to our beautiful beach thanks to our 10 team leaders and 80 volunteers.

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ABC Breakfast Program

Many families in Abaco are still struggling to put food on the table due to the devastating impact of Hurricane Dorian and the extremely negative effect of the COVID19 Global Pandemic in a tourist driven economy. As a result, children in Abaco often come to school without the benefit of a healthy breakfast. Several studies suggest that eating breakfast helps children do better in school by improving memory, alertness, concentration, problem-solving ability, test scores, school attendance, and mood. (International Food Information Council Foundation, "Wake up to the Benefits of Breakfast". 2012)

Project Description

We are currently serving breakfast to 177 Students in first through sixth grade at Coopers Town Primary School located in Northern Abaco. Each student gets the benefit of a hot and nutritious breakfast two days each week. We are working with a local contractor/professional chef with the help of an assistant to prepare, deliver, and serve breakfast on Tuesdays and Thursdays. The children arriving on the bus, line up to get their breakfast and take it to the classroom before the start of the school day.



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ABC Breakfast Program Menu

Menu varies based on availability and cost of ingredients. Daily menu includes:

- Grits, corn beef, banana
- Grits, tuna, orange
- Pancakes, sausage, pineapple

Benefits of the Program

It has been proven over and over that children that eat breakfast are more successful in school. Some of the many benefits include:

- Breakfast fuels the brain and studies show that children are more alert, have better concentration and score better on tests
- Breakfast programs help to improve school attendance
- Improved mood and behaviour
- Improved overall nutrition and development
- Partially relieve the burden on families that are struggling with food security



Farmer's Market

We recently implemented a Monthly Farmers Market to support our Backyard Farmers and provide a venue for farmers, as well as artists, chefs, bakers, and others to sell their products to locals and tourists alike. The market has been a great success, serving over 40 vendors and hundreds of patrons each month. Our vendors are selling everything grown, caught, or made in Abaco, including fresh fruits and vegetables, seafood, plants and seedlings, baked goods, traditional Bahamian Dishes, original artwork, handmade crafts, and more.

The market has enabled many of our local residents to expand their businesses and to reach new customers, and encourages buying local in order to reduce imports.

For more information about Abaco Strong,

Visit: www.abacostrong.org or email info@abacostrong.org

Abaco Strong, Inc. is a registered 501(c)(3) EIN# 84 4453228, and a registered nonprofit in The Bahamas.

