

# Hurricane Matthew Newsletter February 2017

## Tony and Mary DeKoter



Thousands of homes were damaged or completely destroyed by Hurricane Matthew.

On the morning of October 4, 2016, Hurricane Matthew struck the southwest coast of Haiti leaving mass devastation in its wake. With winds up to 240km an hour, Matthew barreled it's way through southwest Haiti causing major damage and destroying homes, crops, trees, schools and other public buildings.

The torrential rains and relentless winds caused extensive flooding, landslides as well as water shortages and

power outages. The slow moving hurricane hovered for 24 hours causing over 800 deaths, hundreds of injuries and missing persons.

Hurricane Matthew destroyed over 80% of the crops in some of the affected areas. Storage containers for food and food staples in homes were totally wiped out as well. In the aftermath of the hurricane the only food available for many was what had been ripped from the trees or was found in the abandoned gardens. Many lived on avocados for days.

World Renew and the Canadian Food Grains Bank responded by providing 1,600 households in Duchity, Lescave and Gorgette with rice, maize meal, black beans and cooking oil for three months.

Corn and black bean seeds were also provided by World Renew. Some of the seeds have been planted with the expected crop to be harvested in two months.



One of the beneficiaries on his way home with his rice, beans, maize meal, bean seeds and oil.



Ivanese standing beside what is left of her house.

On October 4 Ivanese Joseph woke up to the sounds of pouring rain and fierce winds. She felt the earth move and realized that a palm tree close to the house was being uprooted. The entire palm tree eventually blew away. When the house began to break down, along with her eight children, Ivanese

moved to the cooking house that was still somewhat intact. When it became apparent that they would not be safe in the cooking house they fled across the road to the church. The church is a sturdy stone building but the openings for the windows had no bars or covering causing rain and debris to enter through the openings. Along with many others they waited out the torrential rains and gale force winds for an entire day before they could return to see what was left of their homes.

Ivanese was able to collect tin and some wood to build a temporary shelter to keep them out of the rain. She received a tarp from World Renew to cover the shelter. Ivanese and her eight children sleep in this shelter. It may be a long while before they have their home repaired.



The temporary shelter built after the hurricane.

Ivanese is able to make a small income by selling buns and bread from her house.

It is a two hour walk to her garden on the mountainside. Her older children planted the beans and the corn seeds that she received from World Renew. Her bean crop is doing well but the corn crop has all but dried up in the hot sun. Ivanese will be able to harvest a good crop of beans in two months.

Ivanese gives thanks to God for sparing her life and her children's lives and to World Renew for providing food for the three months. She is so grateful that she has shared the food with those less fortunate.