



Dining for Women

Program Fact Sheet

Program: Haitian Health Foundation

Web Site: <http://www.HaitianHealthFoundation.org/>

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Mission: to provide health care, economic development, nutrition, self-help, education, and empowerment to the population of rural southern Haiti, with a concentration on maternal health and child survival.

Where They Work:



Haiti is the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere. The country suffers from an extreme lack of health care, high illiteracy, lack of arable land, and horrendous living conditions.

As a result, rural Haiti suffers from extremely high maternal, child, and infant mortality, high illiteracy, and over 70% unemployment. Not only are 1 in 3 pregnant mothers at risk during pregnancy, up to 70% of children treated at HHF's rural health posts are in some degree of malnutrition.

Haitian women are disenfranchised and often abused, yet they are the primary money makers and

caretakers for their families. HHF offers health care, education, and other support to decrease maternal mortality, prevent early pregnancy and sexually-transmitted diseases, as well as economic support, housing, animal distribution, and other strategies to promote survival of this vulnerable population.

One of the world's poorest countries and recently suffering an estimated \$900 million in hurricane-related damages, Haiti is defined as a low-income chronic food deficit country by the World Bank, only able to produce less than half of food needs (43 percent in 2008).

History

Haiti has been plagued by political violence for most of its history. The native Taino Amerindians who inhabited the island of Hispaniola when it was discovered by Columbus in 1492 were virtually annihilated by Spanish settlers. In the early 17th century, the French established a presence on the western third of the island, which later became Haiti. The French colony, based on forestry and sugar-related industries that damaged the land, used African slave labor to become one of the wealthiest colonies in the Caribbean. In the late 18th century, Haiti's nearly half million slaves revolted. Haiti became the first black republic to declare independence in 1804.

After the exile of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide in February 2004, an interim government took office to organize new elections under the auspices of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti. Haiti inaugurated a democratically elected president and parliament in May of 2006.

The southwestern region of Haiti, in and around the city of Jérémie, is nearly isolated from the rest of the country due to bad road access.

Once regarded as a bastion of Haiti's mixed African and European heritage elite, Jérémie earned the title "City of Poets" in honor of its literary and artistic community. The town was badly damaged by a hurricane in 1954 and went into a steep decline after 1964 when François ("Papa Doc") Duvalier ordered the closure of its port.



Haiti Facts:

- The first black republic to declare independence in 1804
- Population: 9.035 million
- 54 percent of Haitians live on less than \$1 per day
- Illiteracy is estimated at 44 percent
- Unemployment rate in the formal sector is between 70-80 percent
- 46 percent of Haitians do not have sustainable access to potable water

History of the Haitian Health Foundation

The Haitian Health Foundation began in 1982 with a trip to Port au Prince by Dr. Jeremiah J. Lowney, a Connecticut orthodontist, who traveled to Haiti to provide free dental care to the poor. In 1985, after working for three years in Port au Prince and other areas of Haiti with Mother Teresa's Sisters of Charity, Mother Teresa requested that Dr. Lowney move his small group's outreach to the rural city of Jérémie, a southwestern area of Haiti, which suffers a dearth of health care. HHF provides for over 100 rural villages, some an 18-hour walk from medical care.

The Project:

Dining for Women is directing our donations to support programs directly benefitting impoverished women in the rural mountains of southwest Haiti; specifically, **Adopt a Village**, **Give a Goat**, and **the Center of Hope**.

Adopt a Village	Give a Goat	Center of Hope
<p>Description: This program helps to bring health care and education to a destitute rural village of between 2,000-3,000 people. The funding brings medical care to the village, including the expenses of a village Health Agent – a resident Haitian, trained by HHF to become the health provider for the village.</p>	<p>Description: Provides pregnant breeding goats to indigent rural women. By owning a goat, a village woman is given a chance to make a better economic future for herself.</p>	<p>Description: Transportation and care for women with high-risk pregnancies from their villages in the HHF ambulance to the Center of Hope; food and medicine at the Center; birthing support – including a birthing kit full of sterile supplies.</p>
<p>How it works: Health Agents are trained to provide health education– such as oral rehydration preparation for diarrhea (a slow and painful death easily remedied with about 7 cents of sugar and salt), the importance of breastfeeding, and danger signs in pregnancy.</p>	<p>How it works: The goats are bred, with the offspring used to barter for food, tuition for children, rent, etc... Goat manure is used for gardens and the male goats (of little economic value) are slaughtered and eaten – a source of protein.</p>	<p>How it works: Health Agents work to identify and triage women who are at medical risk during their pregnancies. Identifying the problems early avoids women walking for hours over unpaved roads, known as the “death walk.”</p>
<p>Health education is done through songs, stories, and skits, as the population is mostly non-literate.</p>	<p>The village’s “Mothers Group” discuss and vote on goat recipients – choosing those who are the most needy. This democratic process empowers the community to participate in decision making and community building.</p>	<p>The average Haitian household comprises six people—mostly children. The death or disability of the mother has a catastrophic impact on the entire family.</p>
<p>Each Agent keeps track of between 2,000-3,000 villagers, providing basic medical care, especially preventive care, such as immunizations. DFW will adopt a village with a female Health Agent.</p>	<p>Although Haitian women are familiar with the care of goats, HHF requires a course on the care of the animals before they receive them.</p>	<p>Staffed 24 hours per day, seven days per week with nurses and skilled technicians; accommodates up to 50 women in high-risk pregnancies, as well as 25 children with severe malnutrition</p>
<p>The Health Agent also works to set up “Mothers Groups” in their communities – women who meet regularly to discuss the health of their families, set up ‘Community Chests’ for village emergencies, teach important health messages to other women (e.g., demonstrating breastfeeding techniques), etc</p>		<p>The Center treats several hundred pre- and post-natal outpatients each week; the <i>only</i> source of prenatal vitamins, immunizations, and sonograms in southern Haiti. The Center admits several hundred at-risk pregnant women and malnourished children annually, and nearly 9,000 women receive outpatient care each year.</p>

How HHF Measures Program Success:

The Haitian Health Foundation uses a comprehensive health information tracking system. The PHACT database enables them to extract specific household- and community-level information, which in turn informs their health interventions, the establishment of health indicators, coordination of community participation, and design and implementation of programs.

Financial Profile

Haitian Health Foundation applies 92% of revenues directly to programs and spends approximately 8% on administrative and fundraising overhead.

Our gift is directed to:

1. Center of Hope facility: Support for the woman includes: transportation from her village in the HHF ambulance, food and medicine while she is at the Center, and birthing support – including a birthing kit full of sterile supplies. HHF estimates for every \$500 donated, a woman and her baby’s life are saved. **By raising \$5,000 we will help ten women with at-risk pregnancies at the Center of Hope.**

2. DFW “adopted” Village in the rural mountains. DFW will adopt a village with a female Health Agent. **Our goal is to donate \$5,000 to our adopted village.**

3. Give a Goat. Our goal to provide 33 goats to be distributed to women in our adopted village. **By raising \$4,950, we can provide 33 goats, at \$150 each, to the village.**

Total DFW Goal: \$14,950

DFW Giving History with Haitian Health Foundation Program: New program

Sources:

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