



Hope for Haiti Foundation  
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March 2006 Update

Dear Friends and Supporters

It has been almost a year since we provided an update to our friends and supporters. As usual, a lot has happened not only at the Hope for Haiti Foundation (HFHF) but also in Haiti.

In 2005, the people of Haiti did not enjoy relief for their suffering, which they have endured for over two centuries. Mothers and fathers continue to face the daily routine of not being able to feed their children. Haiti's infant mortality rate is the highest in the Western Hemisphere. In Haiti, education remains a privilege instead of a right for every child, and health care is a luxury. Most people in Haiti do not have clean drinking water or indoor plumbing, which we consider necessities. In addition to the daily struggle, in 2005, the people of Haiti experienced insecurity in ways they have never seen before: Young and old, men and women, and rich and poor lived in fear of being kidnapped. Most of those who were unfortunate enough to be kidnapped did survive the experience, but at great cost. We can only hope that—like they have for the last two centuries—the people will find a way to shake off these experiences and find the strength to move on once again, hoping that tomorrow will be different. If not for them or their children, at least for their grandchildren and great grandchildren.

In spite of all the tragedies these people have experienced, Haitians remain some of the most loving and resilient people anywhere. HFHF continues its work in Haiti in one of the most remote villages, Zorangé (Bainet). As we continue to travel there to work, our lives are enriched through great relationships we have developed with the wonderful people of this village.

Our work in education, working with church leaders, providing health care, and eventually touching the environment will continue not only for the next decade, but for generations. We are confident that our relationships will continue to develop and new leaders will be raised. These leaders are children today, girls and boys, but they are getting an education and will someday take part in the development of their village, their community, and their country.

## ***Progress***

### ***The School***

HFHF recently returned from its sixth mission trip to Haiti. The people who participated in the first mission trips clearly see that there has been progress. In 2000 when we opened the school, we could barely find five qualified teachers for the school. In July 2005, when we needed to hire two teachers, we had the luxury of choosing the best two candidates among a pool of seven qualified ones. Our budget did not allow us to hire them, but we hope to hire them in the future.

### ***The Church Leaders***

It has always been our goal to work with all the church leaders in Zorangé and the surrounding communities. These leaders are doing their best according to their capacity. It is our objective to work with the current leaders and help develop new leaders who are equipped to work to expand God's kingdom. We have started meeting with the leaders in an effort to develop relationships with them. This year we had our second church leaders' conference. The church leaders from the immediate area came as well as leaders who had walked miles to attend the meeting. We have one commandment as God's children and that is to love God and love each other. These church leaders belong to various denominations, but they are all our brothers and sisters. We hope to continue to expand our partnerships with church leaders throughout the villages and eventually throughout Haiti.

### **Health Care**

Health care is nonexistent in Haiti in a population of approximately 8.7 million people. Whatever the number of doctors per capita in Haiti, it is not enough. To say there is a medical need there would be a grave understatement. Six years ago a team of six embarked on a mission trip to Haiti. The team included three medical personnel: one physician assistant, one nurse, and one nursing student. The trip was titled, as one traveler recently reminded me, a "survey trip." The medical team worked all day from dawn to dusk. Throughout the day we moved the stations as the sun moved, because the clinic was held outside using trees for shade. Six years later, in January 2006, another team embarked on a plane to Haiti, this time with 19 travelers, including a doctor, nurses, an optometrist, and a pharmacist to conduct a medical clinic lasting 3 days; we administered care to 1,051 people.

This year our medical team worked side by side with Haitian medical professionals. There were four Haitian nurses and one wound care specialist that was trained by our medical staff 2 years ago. To see the team, *blanc* (foreigners), and Haitians working together was a sight to behold. Our goal has always been to turn things over to the Haitians, but we did not think that 6 years later we would find people who were willing to leave Port-au-Prince and come work with us in the middle of nowhere.

This is just a start. In January 2007, when we leave Zorangé, we plan to leave a functioning medical clinic that will serve the community on a daily basis. We will use one room of the school to set up the clinic, which will be staffed by the Haitians who have partnered with us for the last 4 years. They understand the culture, they speak the language, and they are more than qualified, as our medical team found out during this trip. Our team could not be happier about this prospective clinic. It has been a constant sorrow for us the last 6 years because we have only been able to go to Zorangé once a year to run these clinics. There is not one doctor, nurse, or nursing assistant to provide any kind of medical care to the people of this village or the surrounding villages. To go to the hospital requires a trip to Port-au-Prince, which costs money, and they have to arrange for getting care in the big city and staying for eventual follow-up care. The cost is prohibitive. As a result, the people in these villages find a way to cope with their pains, many eventually dying from diseases that are largely treatable. We must help!

School children are infested with worms, which eventually results in malnutrition, leading to the inability to learn at school. We have begun treating people in the village for these infestations, and we are treating every household where the evidence of parasite infestation has been seen. We will be persistent, and we will have a team of health care workers who will be trained and focused on wiping out this infestation from the community.

Progress is slow, and there is much more to be done. There is no potable drinking water, and there is a correlation between consuming undrinkable water and diarrhea in the communities. We have yet to find a company that can come and drill a well for us, but we will find a company and we will have clean drinking water in that village and in the surrounding villages.

## **Our Big Projects**

We will open a clinic in 2007. We intend to staff that clinic with at least five people: one doctor, three nurses, and one nursing assistant. In addition to that, we will train health care agents from the community. These trained agents will help ensure that the medicines prescribed to patients are administered properly. They will also become health educators, training people to promote good health in the surrounding villages and communities. Education on HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases is needed. Also, we will need to provide stipends for food to patients who are taking medicines that require food intake. We cannot tell someone to take a pill that needs to be taken with food when the patients may not have enough to eat.

## **The school building**

We will finish the school building. We will start the secondary school in September 2006 and the trade school in September 2010. We will provide every opportunity for the next generation so that they do not want to leave the village and go to Port-au-Prince to live, because the majority of these young people eventually end up on the streets rather than in a classroom. There are currently no jobs for high school or college graduate students. We will not be able to hire every person who is seeking work, but as long as they are willing to come back to the village and work, we believe there will be jobs for them as we continue to grow and expand our services.

## **The Hospital**

One of our goals is to build a hospital in Zorangé that will serve not only Zorangé but the surrounding communities and beyond. Zanmi Lasante (Partners in Health, a nonprofit organization with headquarters in Massachusetts with five clinics in Central Plateau, Haiti) provides care to over one million people in Haiti. We also know that many of these people come from all over the country, including Port-au-Prince, where there are many hospitals. Money is required to obtain health care in Haiti, and sometimes money is not enough, depending on where sick people live in relation to health care facilities. Hospitals are needed in Haiti to provide good medical care to those who need it the most—the poor.

We plan to focus on public health and infectious diseases, but we also plan to have other medical services such as internal medicine, pediatrics, and obstetrics and gynecology. We need your support. We need the support of many philanthropists and philanthropic organizations to help fund the construction of the hospital. We plan for this project to begin as soon as we finish the school construction, and we will need the support of each and every HFHF supporter.

The World Health Organization included the following paragraph in their 2005 Health Report: "Children are the future of society and their mothers are guardians of that future. Yet this year, almost 11 million children under five years of age will die from causes that are largely preventable. Among them are 4 million babies who will not survive the first month of life. On top of that 3.3 million babies will be stillborn. At the same time, about half a million women will die in pregnancy, childbirth or soon after."

Help is needed around the world—in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. We must never forget Haiti.

Sincerely,

Jean Elade Eloi  
Founder, Hope for Haiti Foundation