

## Fond Doux Flyer September 2021

Hand in Hand with Haitians

### Earthquake and Storm Hit Haiti

Shades of the 2010 earthquake danced through the heads of our friends, neighbors and partners in Fond Doux when a 7.2 magnitude earthquake hit along the fault line of South Haiti about 8:29 AM August 14<sup>th</sup>. The Haitian Civil Protection Agency said (8/20/2021) 2,189 people were killed and 12,268 people injured and up to 130,000 homes damaged or destroyed. Major damage to Fond Doux did not occur, but people were afraid to sleep in their homes according to our Executive Director Emile Maceus.

Makendy Lazard, head of the Simple English School in Miragoane where our English scholarship students attend, said, "We were just traumatized, but outside of that we are fine." But there was some major damage nearby -- just 20 miles west of Fond Doux. An aftershock of 5.0 magnitude hit Miragoane about 1:05 PM. Makendy explained that the public hospital that serves the rural community was overwhelmed with the injured. They did not have enough medicine or food for the injured.



**Collapsed Home near Miragoane<sup>1</sup>**

Funds for relief were immediately raised and plans laid to help not only those that were directly hit by the twin disasters, but those affected by their aftermath. Our Executive Director wanted to take some supplies from Petit Goave to Les Cayes (the center of the destruction), but because of the threat of violence and the difficult roads, the board reluctantly did not approve the request.

Instead the board forwarded some supplies to Les Cayes through the Paulos Group that organized in-country relief. The Paulos Group opened up two soup kitchens between Les Cayes (the hardest hit large city) and Camp-Perrin, with a goal of serving two thousand meals a day.

Matt McCormick, Paulos Group partner, said, "While our logistics team is at work on this, we have another team scrounging the island's importers and warehouses for tarps and tents." The truck needed to go through an area infested with gangs. Matt continued, "We contract with Haitian drivers who drive these routes on a near daily basis. They know the geography, hot spots, what to watch for, how to negotiate, and maybe most importantly—they blend in."

One of our translators now lives in Dame-Marie, Haiti. His house was destroyed. The Foundation provided him some money to help him with food and provisions and also the means to help others.

#### **This is what he told us.**

"Thank God I am safe in Dame-Marie, but the damage is truly catastrophic. Hospitals, churches, schools have been damaged, no death. This is the same region that was devastated by Hurricane Matthew in 2016. I woke up that morning. I ran out. It was about 8:29.



**From Burke in Dame-Marie**

This house which I lived in shook so bad, roof and door, wall collapsed. All around people ran out. Few of them were harmed. Many houses were damaged. This could not have come at a worse time for this country that is reeling still from the assassination of President Jovenel Moise and then the tropical storm Grace has just knocked in the door. The quake comes at a time when the government is in the throes of crisis and civil unrest and gang violence are plaguing

<sup>1</sup> Used by permission of Mission to Haiti

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the country. Hospitals have been overwhelmed with a sharp rise in COVID-19 cases . . .

We had been sleeping on the street. Now I am living in a shelter surrounding with old sheet metal. The road from Jeremie to Dame-Marie was blocked. In the area food has become very expensive. Our needs are food, water, clothes, a laptop (a friend let me use his) . . .

It's unimaginable that families forced out of their homes because of the earthquake are now also dealing with a tropical storm and the risk of flash floods and landslides. Everything you can do with your compassionate and generous support to bring relief to many of us who are suffering is welcome."

The board has authorized or spent \$3350 on direct and indirect relief including \$1000 provided by the Outreach Committee of Epworth Church designated for food and disaster relief. We received several other sizeable gifts to be used at our discretion. We profoundly thank them and all donors for their support. We authorized spending over \$1000 for people with damaged homes through the Paulos Group and through our translator William Burke. We also aided our translator Burke himself. The board through the efforts of the FDFC also purchased and arranged the distribution of tarps and food (beans, rice and oil) for the vulnerable in Fond Doux and Platon. These people were mostly more affected from the rise in cost of food and inability to travel.

## Community Survey Results

Following twin outbreaks of malaria and typhoid in Fond Doux, the Haitian Fond Doux Foundation Committee authorized a community survey to seek out additional information. As a result, 156 individuals in the community were contacted. The survey sought to determine the use of mosquito nets and places of standing or stagnant water as a prelude to combating malaria. It also sought out information on the sources of drinking water and the places for "relieving oneself" as a prelude to combating typhoid.

The survey results have not yet been completely analyzed. But preliminary analysis produced some significant results. One was the surprisingly large number of people that had been afflicted by either typhoid and malaria or both recently – over 50%. Clearly a health crisis!

Another was the very large number of people who have no toilet, even an outside toilet but use the open air and ground to relieve themselves. Most of

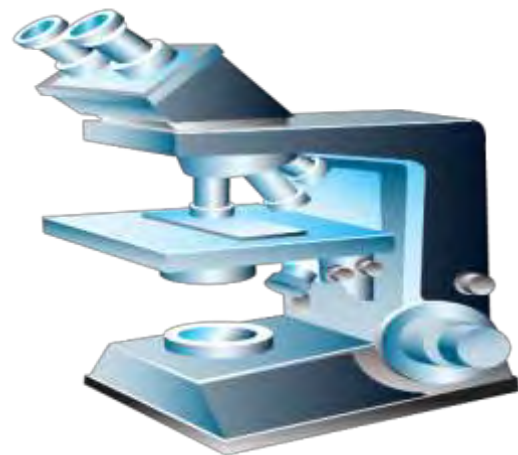
them do not use the public latrine. As a result, one must assume that ground water is definitely polluted and may be a factor in the spread of typhoid.

Another thing we noticed is that there is not just one source of drinking water in the community. Insuring clean water for the community may not be an easy fix. The board is reviewing these and other findings.

## Our New-Project Priorities

The Board of Directors of the Fond Doux Foundation met at the vacation home of Linda Mitchell at Emerald Isle on July 31, 2021. They made some significant decisions concerning major new projects of the Foundation.

**Clinic.** Getting a clinic operational is the number one priority of the Foundation at the present time. With the long-awaited signing of the contract with the Wesleyenne Church, the clinic building is now being prepared to meet the needs of the clinic. We have gathered funds to begin renovation. More are always welcome. We are opening with a "bare bones" approach, but with greater resources we would like to expand to phase II, adding a basic laboratory as quickly as possible. That will make the clinic exponentially more effective.



*Important Equipment for a Lab*

The United Methodist Women of Epworth United Methodist Church have already raised sufficient money to cover a year's salary for the nurse. They had agreed to fund at least six months and then evaluate. Although many tasks will be handled by volunteers, a cleaning lady has been secured that must be paid and someone to maintain records will probably need to be hired as well. The salaries for these positions are very modest as all the jobs are part time, but they provide subsistence for people with little income.

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**Chicken Farm.** The chicken farm or egg farm is our second priority. Like the clinic, it has been a project that has been in the planning process a long time. This project fits perfectly into the purposes and long-term goals of the Foundation. However, the Foundation has previously been slow to approve it, at least in part because of the inherent risks associated with any agricultural endeavor. That risk is enhanced by the extreme weather conditions of Haiti -- drought and hurricanes.



We have trained a Haitian on the care of chickens and are going to monitor closely the business side to make it effective. Presently designated funds will cover a little less than one fourth of the start-up costs. Profits are to be used to combat malnutrition in children.

## Grant Applications

The Board has been working with a pro bono consultant (Melissa Armitage of Kansas City, Missouri) in understanding and now seeking grants for the Foundation. There is no guarantee we will be successful; but unless we try, failure is guaranteed. She suggested that we begin with setting up an office (by whatever funds possible), then seek grants for two other high priority items – the irrigation project and latrine improvement.

**Office.** She stressed the importance of an office. An office is important to enhance community support by making the Foundation not only visible but also accessible. It is also important for potential donors as it adds credibility to a small non-profit and shows commitment for the long term.

It may be possible to find grants to build and furnish an office or to operate and staff a start-up and even pay for the salary of an executive director. These usually last for only a year or two and then other sources of income need to be secured. To find such grants may also take much time and energy. We decided we would see whether we could begin with one of the rooms in the clinic building to at least establish an office.



**Potential Office**

Long-term we may pursue another option. The Foundation has been searching for suitable land in or near Fond Doux and has secured a pledge for purchase of land to build a library, office and other facilities to enable long term viability of the Foundation.

Grants toward erection of some of these facilities may be pursued if we are fortunate to obtain initial grants. Major support from our existing donors (both individuals and churches) may determine whether these grant making entities choose to fund our projects. Your support is crucial. Thank you.

**Irrigation proposal.** The Haitians already have secured a quotation on what an irrigation project might cost. However, to apply for a grant requires far more detail on how the irrigation program is going to be constructed and operated.



Again, there is no guarantee that we can find such a grant. But because it could have such a powerful, positive effect on the community and requires presumably only a one-time grant, it rates high on the probability for funding scale. The Foundation is proceeding to obtain preliminary information and then more detailed drawings if the project seems feasible to us.



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**Latrine Improvement.** Although the latrine did not initially land high on the list of projects likely to be funded, it did so because of lack of any estimate of cost or actual plan to improve the situation.



**The Existing Latrine**

The present public latrine has no separation of sexes, no roof and no way to wash your hands afterwards. A large portion of the community uses the public latrine or open ground. That is very Inconvenient and unsanitary. And, it may be contributing to the high rate of typhoid in the community. The Foundation is creating a proposal to address these and other problems. It is in planning stage.

## Pay Increase for Platon Teachers

The only public building in the Platon community is the school. It has a tin roof with canvas and plywood walls. It has four teachers for nursery school through sixth grade.



At the request of Christians in Fond Doux, Haiti, the Fond Doux Foundation began providing a teacher salary subsidy to prevent the school's closing.

Prior to this, teachers were being paid \$50 a month (on months when they were actually paid.) Since the

Foundation began support, the Foundation has insured regular payment of 1700 Haitian dollars for one teacher and 1500 Haitian dollars for the other three averaging about \$80 US with the intention to increase pay to a minimum of \$100 per teacher per month, a still ridiculously low figure.



**Pastor Jonas –School Administrator**

Recently, the teachers' monthly pay has been increased to 2200, 2000, 2000 and 1700 Haitian dollars respectively. This brings the pay up around or a little over the goal of \$100 in US money. We can maintain that for the rest of this year, but need to find another donor or donors to cover the extra \$100 subsidy authorized. We hope that someone's heart will be moved to assume this obligation. We are presently heavily dependent on a single donor for over half of our subsidy. We condition our support upon in-service teacher training, student assessment, and institutional and financial transparency – a goal of quality education.

For information on this or any project or to contribute, you may contact us in the following ways:

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**The Fond Doux Foundation** engages friend-to-friend with people in and around the village of Fond Doux, Haiti, helping to provide better access to medical care and health education, improved nutrition through agriculture and animal husbandry, educational scholarships, and intercultural faith-based activities. FDF is a 501(c)3 organization based in Durham, North Carolina, USA, whose Christian community outreach began in 2011.