

HAITIAN CHILDREN'S AID SOCIETY



»»» Hi from Haiti Children's Home!

It takes a village to raise a child; and our village is incredible! HCAS works with supporters on the Canadian and American side of things, while the in-country team works to raise the children in our care and support community programs. The team in Haiti is made up of many people. Emily, Jenya and Erin are Canadian volunteers who help manage the day-to-day operations at HCH. Many of you have prayed for adoptions for the children at HCH. Mathieu, our national director, faithfully manages adoptions, and supports the staff and children at HCH. Nurse Nunel and Nurse Roland perform their jobs skillfully and conscientiously. From the security guards, the nannies and house parents, to those who help with gardening and maintenance; we are so thankful for each and every one of our staff members.

This season has been full of challenges and blessings, and we have learned so much about the grace of God. As you may know, Haiti has been going through a long, hard season. There has been increasing gang violence and control, which has impacted every part of life; from access to clean water and food, to the transportation of fuel, the ability for kids to attend school, and access to healthcare throughout the country. We acknowledge that we have not struggled the way many have in this island country we call home, and we are forever grateful for the security and safety God has provided for us.

The Biden Parole Program was established in January 2023, offering a possible route for Haitians wishing to enter the USA. As tens of thousands of Haitians applied for this program, passport offices and other government services became overwhelmed. We saw a slowing down of processing times for some of our kids whose adoptive files were awaiting attention. The Partners in Health hospital in Mirebalais, as well as many other hospitals and clinics around the country, lost valuable doctors and staff and are now basically empty. One cannot blame families and individuals who have sought safety and security in the USA, but this "brain drain" has greatly impacted our community and all aspects of Haitian society.



Clinic



The Haiti Childrens Home clinic and nutrition program continues to grow and be our most active community outreach program. We are forever thankful for the support and prayers that we receive for this program as it provides such vital opportunities for our neighbours to access public health education and family strengthening programs which help parents gain the confidence they need to care for their kids. We were thrilled to inform 42 parents this year that their hard work and dedication has created an environment for their children to meet our weight and overall health requirements to successfully graduate from our Nutrition program. We are so proud of these children and their parents who, even in the face of incredible adversity, remained united and focused on the goals we set before them.

One of our success stories from this year is little baby "M." Her and her mother have been in our program due to special conditions since she was born. Baby "M" struggled to gain weight in our formula program for over a year until finally just recently her health turned a corner and she is now making small weight gains with every visit. We are so blessed to walk alongside these parents as they battle for the health of their children. For baby "M" and her mother, this was a huge victory over malnutrition, lack of education of special needs, and the fear that they couldn't succeed together. Stories like these always stay with us and help remind us of God's faithfulness and His love for us if we choose to walk in obedience with Him.



Baby M then and now: consistent support and education make all the difference

Unfortunately, due to the continued and ever worsening gang wars in Port Au Prince many more Haitian families have been displaced. Thousands of people have fled their homes bringing only what they can carry in the hope of safety and some reprieve from the violence. As a consequence of this we have seen a huge influx of patients at our nutrition program. Since January of this year, we have accepted 170 new kids, and approximately 70% of them came from the Port Au Prince area. This brings the number of clinic appointments to serve families and children to 3382 so far in 2023. To help facilitate further support of these individuals and families, we also have an opportunity at this time to source a shipping container of "manna packs" at a reasonable cost. These have been unavailable for some time and we are pursuing this opportunity trusting funds will become available.

CLINIC...



The Haiti Childrens Home clinic and nutrition program is run by our head nurse, Mis (pronounced mees, the common Creole word for nurse) Roland. Mis Roland has proven herself to be such a blessing to both us and our community. She cares for all our patients with the utmost kindness and dignity, and we couldn't manage to support so many families without her. She is a fantastic public health educator who is deeply sensitive to their physical needs, but also their need for correct health information that will give them the confidence to care for their children. One of her dreams for our clinic is to provide a more comprehensive free pharmacy. With such a pharmacy HCH could better treat the specific needs of our local clinic patients before their health issues become more serious and require hospitalization. Due to unclean water in our area, our most common clinic cases are skin infections. While many of the treatments for these may be inexpensive and easy to come across even here in Haiti, the majority of patients we see at the community clinic are unable to access them. For this reason many easily treated issues can quickly become acute if simple things like antibiotic/antifungal ointments and clean bandages are not used. We are incredibly thankful to the organizations and individuals who have poured into our clinic, and pray for Mrs. Roland's dreams for a more comprehensive clinic to better serve our specific community needs.



Clinic staff: Mis Roland and Nene

SCHOOL



SPONSORSHIP

At HCH, we see first hand the positive impacts that our programs have on individuals and families as we work to strengthen and support them in the midst of countless hardships. Our School Sponsorship Program was born years ago when we saw a need in our community and wanted to meet it. Families in the clinic programs were struggling not only to fight malnutrition, but also to send their kids to school and we recognized that this was a huge opportunity to step in, encourage, and propel families in the direction of positive change. Our School Sponsorship Program started with only a handful of kids that were admitted into our Nutrition Program, and over the years, with the help of many generous donors, we have been able to expand our reach to over 115 kids in the greater Mirebalais area. When we register a student in our School Sponsorship Program, we commit to supporting them throughout their entire educational career, whether that means finishing their high school diploma, pursuing a trade, or going to university. This has been our biggest year yet, with over 100 students ranging from kindergarten to grade 9, four highschool students, and five pursuing a university degree with "M" on her last year of nursing school. On average, students in Haiti only make it to a grade five level, therefore it is a huge accomplishment when these students rise above the norm and reach goals they never thought possible. Sponsoring a child's education means giving much more than just shoes, backpacks, pencils, and uniforms. It's giving relationship and dignity to these families, showing them the value of taking responsibility for their futures, and praying that with each interaction seeds of the Gospel are being planted deep within their heart. This program is one of our biggest expenses of the year, but its value goes beyond any amount of cash. When you hand a student a new backpack and shoes, the smile in their eyes and their quiet "mesi" makes it incredibly worth it. They know that people are in their corner, invested in their lives, caring about them now and into the future. As we look to 2024, we are praying for more partners to come alongside us financially and in prayer so we can continue to effectively support and strengthen the students in the program.



Left: Nene leads families in prayer for the upcoming school year

Right: 3 of 6 siblings, ages 3-10, that are all being supported to go to school for the first time



Garden, Livestock, and Sustainability...

Chickens, goats, turkeys, oh my! Only a year ago we had a small flock of chickens, a couple goats and a weedy garden, but big dreams of how we could create a more sustainable environment here at HCH. With the rising costs of food, we have been working hard with a dedicated team of gardeners to grow produce that we can use weekly in the kitchen, as well as planting larger crops such as peanuts to make our own peanut butter! We are finalizing plans to build a small greenhouse that will host our tomato plants and we are excited to start the building process in the coming month. Our flock of laying hens have been supplementing the amount of eggs we buy each week, as this is an easily accessible protein but a costly one to buy in the market, as the majority of eggs are imported from the Dominican Republic. We have added ducks and turkeys into the mix to increase the production of eggs and meat, and one turkey may even be ready for our Christmas dinner! Our goat herd has rapidly grown, as we now have 14, with the last two being born this month and a few more on the way! Soon we will be taking some goats to the market and are excited to invest that income back into our dreams of becoming more and more sustainable.

The kids of HCH are incredibly helpful, enthusiastic, and inquisitive when it comes to the garden and animals, and have been learning a lot about responsibility, compassion, and hard work. We are in the beginning of creating a goat program where the older boys will learn more about animal care, financial investment, and money management, as they take responsibility for the buying, raising, and selling of their own goats! Despite all the challenges we have faced with the garden and animals this past year, we are so thankful for the lengths we have come and the places we are going!

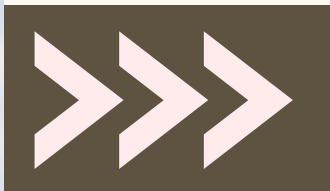




Wall Project of 2023...

One of this year's biggest projects was to build a new perimeter wall for the HCH compound. Why was there a need to build a wall when we already had one? Even though the old wall had provided good service, for a number of reasons it had reached its maximum life expectancy and had become both a safety and a security risk. Now we have a much more robust wall that, unlike before, encompasses our entire property and will last for decades to come. We were able to hire a local contractor who put together a team of local young men that worked through rain and shine to get the job done. We are so thankful that HCAS put a huge effort into fundraising and advocating for this project and that it was completed in such a short period of time!





CHRISTMAS BLESSINGS

Year End Donations
Donations received by
or postmarked
Dec 31 will qualify for
a 2023 tax receipt

Donate at www.hcas.ca



Etransfer donation to

info@hcas.ca



Cheques Payable to HCAS

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Edmonton, AB T6T 0K8



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HCAS

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