



## WINDOWS ON OUR WORLDS

News from **PARTNERS IN PROGRESS (PIP)** – Summer 2011

### **“Soil Health” Initiative Advances Sustainable Agriculture, Moves to Phase II**



The “**Konbit Vanyan Kapab** (“**Together We Can Succeed**”) **Soil Health Initiative**” involves farmers from four neighboring villages, organized into four traditional work groups (“*konbits*”), who have been advancing a plan to encourage a more sustainable form of agriculture in the region centered on the village of Deslandes since 2009. **Partners in Progress** (PIP) is providing technical and financial support for the project and PIP’s strategic partners in Deslandes – the **Center d’Inspiration Jeunesse** (CIJ) – provide technical and management support under guidance of a *Komite Planifikasyon* (*planning committee*) comprised of community elders.

Phase I of the project was completed in March 2011 and culminated with the design and planting of four 1-acre plots to test and demonstrate various low-input and sustainable agricultural methods such as poly-cropping, companion planting, composting, mulching and the use of cover crops or “green manures”, and construction of “*ramp vivan*” (“*living contour barriers*”) to control erosion and enhance water retention (shown right).



Phase II will include a farmer-led “**Peasant Farming Conference**” to evaluate the results of the test plots, expansion of existing demonstration fields, start-up of two additional fields, and planning for micro-enterprises based on crops and value-added agricultural products. Farmers will also plan for the development and expansion of a local **Agroecology Education Center** to help advance knowledge of sustainable food production and natural resource management and of strategies for building long-term community resilience in the face of political, economic, and environmental shocks.

### **Fondwa Medical Clinic Open Daily – New Fatima House Orphanage Progresses**

The **Fondwa medical clinic** and **Fatima House Orphanage**, operated by PIP’s partners in the Association of Peasants of Fondwa (APF), were destroyed in the earthquake of January 2010. A “clinic in a container” was put in place last year by **Heart to Heart International**, which sends a volunteer physician and medical team to provide medical services one day a week. **Sister Carmelle Voltaire** manages the day-to-day clinic operations, providing primary care, maternal and child care, and nutrition intervention to the Fondwa community with ongoing general support from **Partners in Progress** and **Family Health Ministries**.



Construction of a new **Fatima House Orphanage** complex in Fondwa is nearing completion thanks to support from the **Humility of Mary Sisters**. The new buildings are constructed from a material that sandwiches a foam core between two sheets of aluminum and provides both durability and increased seismic zone safety. The new dormitories have recently been furnished with bunk beds. A security wall and plumbing remain to be completed. Fatima House is home to some 65 orphaned and “at risk” children and is operated by APF and managed by the **Little Sisters of St. Antoine** under the direction of **Sr. Simone Achille**. Both Partners in Progress and Family Health Ministries provide general operating support for the orphanage.

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## **St. Antoine School Concludes Academic Year, Reconstruction to Begin Soon!**



The **St. Antoine School** concluded a successful academic year lodged in transitional buildings jointly financed by **Partners in Progress** (PIP) and **Family Health Ministries** (FHM). PIP and FHM provide ongoing subsidies for teachers' salaries and for the school lunch program, which provides a daily meal to approximately 600 students, teachers and staff. At the end of June, students completed standardized, national exams set by the Haitian ministry of education. These are given annually to students in the sixth and ninth grades (marking the end of "*fondamenta*" and "junior high") as well as to students in "*rheto*" and "*philo*" (the next-to-last and last years of secondary school).

Final plans for construction of a new **St. Antoine School** classroom complex are nearing completion! Much of the pre-construction work – including geotech survey, topographical analysis and soil analysis – is finished. Planned construction will return the school to its pre-earthquake capacity of 700 students and will include 4 buildings, each of which will have 4 classrooms suitable for 40-44 students. The complex will be built on a foundation of stone obtained from nearby locations. Locally produced cement masonry blocks that meet international building standards will be used for a first level. An upper level made of imported, pressure-treated and termite-protected pine is planned. Work on the foundation is set to begin by late summer.

## **"Earth Block" School Construction Advances CIJ Vision for Development**

Following completion of the first "compressed earth block" (CEB) classroom building, PIP's strategic partners in Deslandes – the **Centre d'Inspiration Jeunesse** (CIJ) or "Youth Inspiration Center" – have begun planning and preparation for a second classroom building, which will house four additional classrooms and be part of a complex that will host a range of youth enrichment activities and community gatherings. The foundation for the second building was outlined in March (shown right). A third classroom building, which will house another 5 classrooms, and separate kitchen are planned. The project incorporates anti-seismic and anti-hurricane design strategies as well as ecological features such as natural ventilation techniques and vegetative shading to enhance the learning and teaching environment of the school.



The CIJ development vision builds on the existing community-oriented culture and aims to promote an ecologically sustainable, economically self-reliant and resilient community through the development of community facilities including: a renovated water system, the school (which also serves as a social and cultural center) a communications center and radio station, an Agroecology Center that will serve as a seed and tool bank, a soil laboratory, and an agricultural extension center along with several community owned and operated businesses.

## **"Hearts for Haiti" Celebrates a Decade of Support for Education in Fondwa!**



For more than a decade, members of **Sacred Heart Parish** (Pittsburgh, PA) have been making possible the monthly subsidy **Partners in Progress** (PIP) provides for teachers' salaries at the **St. Antoine School** in Fondwa. The "**Hearts for Haiti**" program, founded by **Betty Hanigan**, a long-time friend of PIP, has made possible more than \$100,000 in financial and "in kind" support during the past ten years!

Pictured left are **Mara Keen** and **Sr. Lynn Rettinger**. Mara, following the example of her sister **Maiti Keen**, has for two successive years dedicated her birthday party to St. Antoine School, asking for donations instead of gifts! **Sr. Lynn**, principal of **Sacred Heart Elementary School**, continues to find imaginative ways to raise awareness and generate support among Sacred Heart students. These include "dress down" days, the sale of "Haiti angel ornaments" at Christmas, vitamin collection, raffles, and a "pajama day"! To all our "**Hearts for Haiti**" supporters we say "*mesi anpil, anpil*" – "thank you **VERY, VERY** much"!

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