

STUDENTS Program

Educating 600 students in 4 *partner schools*.

Your Partnership:

- Improves facilities and provides educational materials for students
- Trains teachers in participatory education methods
- Provides training and seed capital for school staff and local community to create social enterprises (small businesses) that can help pay for teacher salaries and other expenses

The Need

Nearly 50% of school age children don't go to school. Education in Haiti faces two major problems: a lack of material resources and poor quality. A lack of government support means that almost 90% of schools must rely solely on enrollment fees to support their work. Unfortunately, families – more than 50% of Haitians live on less than a \$1 a day – can't afford to pay much and schools end up scraping by just to survive: teachers regularly go unpaid, facilities remain dreadfully inadequate, and students lack even basic educational materials.

In addition to this, the quality of education in Haiti is itself a problem. Having developed out of the colonial French model, traditional education in Haiti is harshly authoritarian and does little more than domesticate students to accept their oppressive surroundings. Corporal punishment and humiliation are standard classroom management techniques, which creates a culture of fear among students. Classes proceed through rote memorization in French, a language often only poorly understood by teachers themselves. Also, the content of learning rarely has anything to do with the kinds of knowledge that would have practical benefit for students.

Partner School Strategy

Through our relationship with a grass-roots organization called The Association of Peasant Youth for the Development of Lagonav (AJPDG), Haiti Partners has learned about a sustainable local school model that responds to some of Haiti's education problems. This model has shaped our Partner School strategy.

First, to deal with the lack of resources, stakeholders (teachers, students' families, and community members) create social enterprises. These small-scale commercial ventures involve things like grain storage, and through them the schools are able to generate revenue to support themselves beyond their meager enrollment fees for expenses like teacher salaries.

Second, in order to improve educational quality, schools receive teacher training. This includes training in specialized content and methods, which help them prepare their students with the knowledge and skills to actively engage and overcome the problems facing their communities. This includes things like sustainable agriculture, reforestation, soil conservation, and non-violent and participatory education.

We select schools with strong leadership but lacking in resources. With them, we develop an accord and work plan for supporting them over the course of three years by providing seed capital, teacher training, and funds to improve their building.

Goals

To help students:

- Develop their God-given potential
- Cultivate their sense of character and personal responsibility
- Gain the know-how to support themselves
- Learn to educate themselves
- Become engaged citizens and community members

To help the school:

- Engage teachers, parents and students to improve their school
- Become sustainable long-term
- Share their learning with others to replicate success

How you can help

- \$3,600 (\$300/month) supports a classroom for a year
- \$20,000 supports an entire school for a year