



Proclaiming good news to the poor...

Haitifund.net

Haiti Christian Development Fund

The Haiti Christian Development Fund (HCDF) is a faith-based, tax exempt organization that depends on contributions for its ministry to the people of Haiti. It is a careful steward of the resources it receives, a beacon of hope in a country with so many needs and so few effective programs.

The Area and People

Financially the poorest country in the western hemisphere, yet one of the richest in the generosity and kindness of its people – Haiti is 600 miles southwest of Florida (about a two hour plane ride from Miami). Fond-des-Blancs is a rural community of 70,000 residents in the southern peninsula of the island. Fond-des-Blancs is a typical rural Haitian town. It is seventy miles from the capital city of Port au Prince. The last ten miles are accessible only by a dirt road which traverses over mountains and rivers that can take more than an hour to travel. There are no government services such as electricity, waste disposal, and maintained roads. A cell phone tower has recently provided better communications with the rest of Haiti and beyond. The only governmental presence is the tax office and the Justice of the Peace. From the day HCDF first visited the community, the people and their well-being have been the main concern, which continues to be the focus behind all HCDF's activities.

The Vision

Over thirty years ago, after spending a combined total of eight years at Voice of Calvary (located in Jackson, Mississippi) under the discipleship of John Perkins and his pioneering message for holistic Christian community development - Reconciliation, Relocation and Redistribution - Jean and Joy Thomas founded the Haiti Christian Development Fund (HCDF) and launched a comprehensive holistic community development endeavor in Fond-des-Blancs, Haiti with the following goals:

- **Evangelism:** HCDF witnesses the love of Jesus Christ in word and deed. The churches and theological training programs teach the truth that Christ came to attest to. They address the issues of superstition which has kept the people enslaved to their own fears, as well as model the love and concern for the oppressed and poor in tangible ways. Starting with a small congregation of four people, the Fond-des-Blancs church has grown to eight congregations with a combined membership of over 1000. Every community in the greater Fond-des-Blancs area has increased in population, thus creating an even greater need and opportunity for sharing the good news of Christ in word and deed with the poor.
- **Education:** To break the cycle of poverty, HCDF has been offering a quality education to the children of the community since the 1980s. L'Exode Primary School has developed an excellent educational program as exemplified by the high student exam scores. Parents are eager to enroll their children in the L'Exode schools, which currently include over 1,500 students in HCDF-supported schools across seven campuses. Responding to the tragic destruction of so many high schools in the 2010 earthquake, HCDF launched its own high school in 2012, partnering with a US university to assure the buildings are durable in earthquakes and other storms. The academic standards at L'Exode schools are as high as any in Haiti. HCDF extends even greater opportunities for its top high school graduates by offering university scholarships to advance beyond high school and then return to the community in leadership roles.
- **Community Development:** HCDF wants to empower the residents of the community to maximize their resources and community infrastructure required for self-sufficiency. Through cooperative efforts, HCDF has been engaged in road improvement, livestock production, agricultural ventures, reforestation, water

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purification, malnutrition aid, and the establishment of a credit union. Their first project was to cap a spring and pipe the water to a convenient point along the road. This project brought clean, healthy water to the town. They have supervised the construction of 200 miles of road through the mountains. They organized the planting of millions of trees - reforesting the formerly barren hillsides. They have established a credit union and instigated a pig-breeding program, replacing local pigs decimated by a swine flu. Thanks to generous support from a donor and the test plot projects sponsored by Covenant World Relief, HCDF is launching its most ambitious agricultural project yet, focusing on irrigated production that rewards the efforts of local farmers with high yields and brings a great supply of nutritional foods to the local market.

- **Leadership Development:** HCDF is ensuring the success of the projects by preparing the next generation of leaders. HCDF prepares the graduates of its educational programs to return to the community in leadership roles. Today the entire administrative operations of HCDF's ministries in Fond-des-Blancs are in the hands of indigenous leaders. To assure that there is a new generation of leaders for the community development programs, the churches, and the schools, HCDF has begun the "Caleb Project" - a three-year, intensive training program for six promising young leaders. They have selected areas around the perimeter of Fond-des-Blancs where there are no schools, churches, and development projects and in two years will have been positioned as leaders in that work locally and in other similar ministries.

Current Community Development and Needs

The ministry of the Haiti Christian Development in Fond-des-Blancs continues to evolve as needs arise. As HCDF looks to an even larger geographical area of involvement, the plans are to do the following:

- **Child Sponsorship:** The numbers in the L'Exode schools continue to rise, and with the addition of university-supported students, there is a great need for many more child sponsors. Less than 10% of the L'Exode students currently have sponsors. More information about the HCDF child sponsorship program can be found on the Haiti.net website.
- **Educational Facilities:** Many of the same buildings used as church sanctuaries also house the schools. Several of the churches are expanding their present facilities and others need to construct new buildings. Some do not even have the bare necessities. A modern high school campus is now in place, with plans to expand it as it continues to add new groups of students, while the primary schools and six satellite schools need resources to create the environment for even more effective education.
- **Coop Needs:** Over the years, HCDF has opened or improved over 200 miles of road. Having the equipment to maintain those roads is a high priority. The Credit Union is in need of new capital in order to respond to the growing demands for small business loans. The new agricultural coop project will provide food for the schools as well as increased production, income, and job opportunities for the people in the community, but requires many resources. There are many needs to improve the way of life for the people.
- **Reaching Other Communities:** The Caleb Leadership Program is preparing the next generation of leaders and expanding the reach of community development to people beyond Fond-des-Blancs. The current leaders will need partners and resources to replicate what has been done in Fond-des-Blancs.

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Join Us

Please join us in bringing hope and resources to the poor in Haiti. We invite you to visit the haitifund.net website to learn more about where you can help, whether it is through child sponsorship, partnering with the next generation of leaders, supporting a particular project, or contributing to the general fund where money is allocated to the most pressing need.

We invite all of our supporters to see for themselves how their financial and prayer support helps exemplify the love of Christ in providing for the basic needs of the poor. If you decide to come and visit us in Fond-des-Blancs, we assure you that you will return with an expanded perspective and deeper understanding of Christ's words: "Anything you did for one of the least important of these brothers of mine, you did for me." (Mt 25:40)

Check the calendar on the website and send us an email about the timeframe of your preferred visit. We'll work with you to ensure that your visit is one that will be a life-changing experience.

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