



LOCATED IN ROCHE-JABOUIN, PORT-SALUT, HAITI

## Report: Completion of First Phase of Kindergarten Project

Reunion Sportive d'Haiti is pleased to report that it has completed the First Phase of its Kindergarten construction project in Haiti to replace a school that was wiped out by Hurricane Matthew in October 2016. The Kindergarten has 3 classrooms, a library, an office, and sanitation facilities. As it happens, the Kindergarten is located in Roche-Jabouin, Port-Salut, a fishing village not far from the area hit by the recent 7.2 earthquake and Hurricane Grace. Miraculously, the Kindergarten has survived both the earthquake and Grace and despite all the setbacks, kindergarten classes have begun.

Reunion Sportive d'Haiti is now looking for funding to complete the Second Phase of the project: furnishing the library, getting tablets for the children, and adding a school meals program, medical office, solar powered-electricity, playground, and a security wall. These programs will ensure that the children receive a comprehensive early education.

Our wonderful partners and funders are listed at the end of this report.

The Kindergarten is in Roche-Jabouin, a remote coastal village, with a population of approximately 1,600 people living in extreme poverty and forgotten by their own government. Roche-Jabouin has the highest rate of children malnutrition, infant and maternal mortality, inadequate sanitation facilities, no electricity, and food insecurity. The roads leading to the village are unpaved and extremely difficult to access during the raining seasons. Roche-Jabouin has no health clinic, and many children are routinely diagnosed with malaria, acute diarrhea, tuberculosis, and water-borne diseases.

When Hurricane Matthew, a category 4 storm, hit Roche-Jabouin in 2016, it destroyed not only the school, but also 119 of 125 houses, leaving the entire population homeless, with no shelter, no school, no clothes, and no food.



### After Hurricane Matthew

After the hurricane, the children had no access to adequate facility for their early education, as classes were then conducted in a makeshift house that was unsafe and unsuitable for educating children. When it rained, the floor was covered with water, resulting in class cancellation and children being sent homes, forcing them to lose several weeks of schooling.



Inauguration Day



Understood the humanitarian crisis facing the children of Roche-Jabouin and the importance of education, Reunion Sportive d’Haiti took to heart what Nelson Mandela was preaching: “Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world. The power of education extends beyond the development of skills we need for economic success. It can contribute to nation-building and reconciliation.” Education enables children to “exploit their similarities and common goals, while appreciating the strength in their diversity.” He continued to say “[t]here can be no keener revelation of a society’s soul than the way in which it treats its children.”

We have operationalized Mandela’s teaching by building and operating this Kindergarten to educate these children, to give

them new hope and put them on the path to a better future, as education of children between ages 3 and 6 is paramount to their cognitive development. The first few years of education and preparedness are the most crucial to establishing a solid foundation from which children can adapt to school systems and learn successfully. During this period, children develop primary skills that form the foundations of reading, counting, and social interaction.

Our Kindergarten will improve the chances of these children to succeed in school and in life by providing them with a comprehensive early childhood education in a safe environment where their human dignity is fully respected.

CONSTRUCTION EXPERIENCE

As the above pictures show, the construction site was rocky. The construction of the Kindergarten began in July 2020 with a grant from the Dodge Family Fund. Without this initial funding, the work would not have started, and probably the school would not have been built. Initially, the plan was to build only two Kindergarten classrooms, but after additional consultation with our local staff and government officials, we revised the project by adding a third classroom, one office, a library, and modern bathrooms to accommodate more children and to provide a full kindergarten education.





The project was built by local citizens with local materials, which has had an enormous economic impact on the village and surrounding communities. We hired 34 locals permanently working six days a week for over a year. When putting the concrete roof, we added 25 locals to assist with the heavy

duty of mixing cements and sand by hands and carrying them in small buckets. We purchased water from locals, and had an engineer overseeing the construction project. As a result of this construction, these people have had a job to earn a living to support their families, be able to put food on their table

and buy educational materials for their children. We also supported local businesses by buying construction materials (i.e., cement, steels, sand, gravel, and other materials) from local suppliers, some of which are formal businesses and others are not.



### Challenges

Throughout the construction, we confronted several major challenges that affected the pace of the work and increased substantially the cost of this project. Construction began in July 2020, but two months later, in September of 2020, the US dollar was devaluated against the Haitian Gourde (US dollar lost 50% of its value), which reduced our purchasing power by 50%. For example, in August 2020, we exchanged \$1 for 120 Gourdes, but a month later, the exchange rate was substantially reduced to 60 gourdes for \$1. Our capacity to complete this project was undermined because the price of construction materials was not reduced proportionally. In addition, our workers' salaries were in Haitian Gourdes, as a result we needed more \$US to change to pay the workers. Finally, due to gas shortage (caused by strikes and other events), it took longer for local suppliers to provide construction materials on time, and thus increasing the cost of delivery and delaying the construction. These challenges were compounded by the insecurity and political instability, and at the end, our construction cost almost tripled the initial cost.



Amount Raised: \$215,000  
Cost of the First Phase: \$210,500

### Expenses:

Labor: \$85,000

Construction Materials: \$103,000

Teaching Materials, School Supplies,  
and Furnitures: \$16,000

6 Motorcycles: \$6,500



### **Inauguration Day**

The Kindergarten was inaugurated on September 9, and opened its door on October 6. We have 61 students attending, and 55% of them are girls. We provide these children with school uniforms and supplies. We have hired 3 teachers, 2 assistant teachers, one director, and one janitor. Due to lack of competent staff in the village, our teachers are from different areas and travel by motorcycles that we donate to ensure their daily attendance.

## SECOND PHASE/FUNDING NEEDED



### 1) NEED TO FURNISH LIBRARY

Furnishing the library, buying teaching materials, tablets, and school supplies, so that the children can have access to books and learning materials.

### 2) SCHOOL MEAL PROGRAM

Building the cafeteria, kitchen, for the school meal program that is paramount because these kids are extremely poor and many suffer from chronic malnutrition. That program will provide critical support to vulnerable children and complementary nutrition education to support the child development, hunger reduction, and promote lifelong healthy eating habits.

### 3) SOLAR-POWERED SYSTEM

Installing a solar-powered electricity system in the school to conserve food for the school meal program, and to keep medicine and vaccines refrigerated (if we add the medical office). The electricity will enable us to have computers, printers, tablets, and access to the internet for the school operations. Additionally, the electricity system will also enable the children in the village to read at night. Currently, once the sun goes down, the children cannot read because they have no access to electricity.

### 4) MEDICAL OFFICE

Adding a small medical office to provide basic preventive healthcare and vaccinations. The village has no medical clinic, and a large majority of children do not get their vaccinations on time (many don't get them at all) because the nearest hospital is hours away. Given the remoteness of this village, it's essential that we have the capability to provide basic care if a student becomes sick. This



medical office will be headed by a registered nurse and will have an enormous impact on the children's quality of education and on the entire village, because all the children in the village will get access to vaccinations and basic medical care. Even adults who are injured can receive first aid assistance or get regular check-ups to control their diabetes, hypertension, or other chronic diseases.

**5) PLAYGROUND**

Installing a playground for the kids to play. Physical education is important, and this project will serve both the kindergarteners and other children in the entire village. Physical education provides cognitive content and instruction designed to develop motor skills, knowledge, and behaviors for physical activity and physical fitness. The playground would enable the children to engage in daily physical activity, which will enable them to be physically active.

**6) SECURITY WALL**

Adding a security wall for the children's safety and privacy, as well as covering the ward with sand for the kids to play.

**PARTNERS:**

We are extremely grateful to the following partners who made the First Phase of this project possible:

- The Dodge Family Fund
- Looking Out Foundation
- Emen Family Charitable Fund
- Innovative Worthy Projects Foundation
- Digicel Foundation
- Hansen Family Foundation
- CPPS Heritage Mission Fund
- The Libra Group
- Food for the Poor
- Sisters of Charity of Halifax
- Gedeon GRC Consulting, ADIHA, as well as many individual donors and supporters.





Workers digging rocks to create the foundation for the school construction



Parents with their children



Students attending classes

