



HEALING
ART MISSIONS



In the United States, everything we take for granted about health, life, and our freedom to move about has been challenged by the first pandemic of our lifetimes. COVID-19 is testing the effectiveness of the U.S. medical system. Many of us are experiencing barriers to accessing healthcare, including fears of exposure and overburdened facilities. The pandemic has placed a spotlight on the inequities in our society, with the greatest toll being taken on the most vulnerable and marginalized.

“At the heart of the crisis is a broad despair that the existing political and economic system has not overcome the rampant corruption, spiraling inflation, food and drinking water scarcities, lawlessness and endless other indignities that have steadily worsened the lives of people in the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere and one of the poorest in the world . . . Compounding the misery is a sense that nobody cares.”¹

The people of Haiti didn't need a pandemic to experience such challenges. Haiti, as a nation, has spent decades in social and political crisis. President Moïse rules by decree, while simultaneously being investigated for corruption. The economy is in decline with an increasingly unstable currency, fueled by violence as gangs fight for control of the streets. Food insecurity is rising, exacerbated by natural disasters. Corruption is rampant; billions of dollars of international aid and loans to improve infrastructure, education, and health services have gone missing or been

misspent. Chaos and violence continue, closing hospitals, schools, and businesses and halting public transportation. Even if you can find fuel for your vehicle, there is risk of being stopped and robbed, car-jacked, or killed.

Seeing the disruption COVID-19 is causing in the richest country in the world, it is hard to imagine the devastating long-term impact the virus will have on Haiti's population, given that there are few resources available to mount an effective

response. Haitians suffer from a severe lack of PPE, oxygen, hospital beds, and materials for laboratory testing, as well as basic food and shelter. Combating COVID is further hampered by the spread of misinformation and denial the virus even exists, leading to hostilities toward COVID-19 treatment structures and stigmatization of affected people.

“The country is in no shape whatsoever to handle a pandemic. Hospitals and clinics are scarce . . . Haiti has only around 65 ventilators, 20 of which are not in working conditions, and some 125 intensive care beds, for a population of 11 million. Oxygen facilities are lacking, and the country has a single laboratory capable of handling COVID-19 tests.”²

A Case for Support

HOPE IS THE BELIEF THAT THINGS CAN CHANGE

For 22 years, Healing Art Missions (HAM) has helped support the people of Haiti. HAM provides critical support for rural communities that lack access to basic resources: healthcare, education, employment, and clean drinking water. The lack of these resources creates the condition of structural poverty.

At HAM, our success derives from connecting diverse communities to work together to address inequities that harm the most vulnerable. Together we have built an effective community-based healthcare system in rural Haiti in the face of coups, hurricanes, kidnappings, earthquakes, zika and cholera, and now COVID-19.

HAM's primary program is a community health clinic opened in 2000 to serve the population of Dumay, a subsistence farming community northeast of Port-au-Prince with a population of about 20,000. The Dumay Primary Care Clinic currently employs a staff of 32 under the leadership of Dr. Jean Fritz Jacques. Support staff and nurses, all from local communities, help to keep the primary care clinic, pharmacy, and laboratory open five days a week, while OB/Delivery and rehydration services are available 24/7. The health clinic includes a Safe Birthing program, offering comprehensive prenatal and postnatal care, including ultrasounds. HAM also operates a monthly eye clinic within the health clinic, offering complete eye exams, glaucoma and cataract treatment, distributing eyeglasses, and treating eye infections.

Working in Haiti, where the environment of uncertainty is as established as bedrock, we have but one advantage: the resilience of Haitians; their ability to adapt in the face of adverse conditions. COVID-19 may be the toughest challenge we've faced to date. HAM's dedicated Haitian staff mobilized quickly to respond to the COVID-19 crisis. The clinic's leadership team collected PPE, developed and implemented new health and safety protocols, and conducted staff trainings. They met with community leaders, providing those leaders with much needed supplies (face masks, hand washing supplies, sanitizer, and printed information) and prompting them to lead by example. The staff has set up public hand washing stations in the surrounding neighborhoods, and provide regular instruction and advocacy on washing hands, wearing masks, and personal distancing. Dr. Jacques participates in weekly meetings of a working group focused on coordinating the COVID-19 response in Haiti, facilitated by the Multisectoral Commission for the Management of the COVID-19 Pandemic, in collaboration with the Ministry of Health (MSPP), the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), and major international humanitarian groups.



In early 2019, the U.S. State Department updated their travel advisory for Haiti to "Level 4: Do Not Travel due to crime, civil unrest, and kidnapping." The UN peacekeeping force, stationed for 15 years in Haiti to assist with the maintenance of order, left the country. With COVID-19, there are even more restrictions, even more violence and unrest, and Haiti is becoming even more isolated from outside help. HAM was unable to send medical volunteers to Haiti on our regular (quarterly) schedule in 2019 and 2020. Traveling only when safe to do so, we made three out of eight scheduled trips. When unable to travel, we've focused our efforts on providing as much long-distance support as possible to our Haitian staff, who continue to tirelessly serve their communities day in and day out. HAM's programs in Haiti continue uninterrupted, with an increase both in the number of services offered and the population served over the past three years.

This is what resilience looks like. This is what hope looks like. This is what it looks like when people care.

A Case for Support

HEALING ART MISSIONS EXISTS TO SUPPORT THE PEOPLE OF HAITI

In 2020, 13,326 patients were seen at the Dumay Primary Care Clinic, 519 surgical procedures were performed, 2,754 patients were given vaccines, and 6,244 laboratory tests were performed. The Safe Birthing program provided 1,113 patient visits, with 49 healthy births. The Eye Clinic performed 479 eye exams and distributed 67 pairs of glasses. Over the past two years, major updates have been completed for the operating room facilities at the clinic.

Additional HAM projects in Haiti include:

Clean Water Projects

Providing infrastructural support (filtration system equipment and technicians), education on clean water topics, and access to clean water in the communities of Dumay and Demier.

Charles Salomon Primary School

The Charles Salomon Primary School is located on the North coast of Haiti in the Part au Paix neighborhood of Baudin-Gros Sable, employing a staff of 23 teachers with 349 students in attendance from preschool through 9th grade. HAM provides financial support to cover staffing costs for the school. Most of the children in attendance live in impoverished area of the neighborhood and would not otherwise be able to attend school. Infrastructure improvements have been made to the school, including solar power installation, plastering, and painting.

Medical Missions

Medical mission trips generally take place four times a year, composed entirely of volunteers who pay for their own expenses, including travel. When volunteers are unable to travel (during periods of violence and civil unrest), our team on the ground in Haiti is supported and able to complete our mission.

Community-Based Support

HAM provides support to other organizations and projects with missions focused on improving the quality of life in Haiti, including social justice organizations, medical organizations, and nutrition programs.

TOTAL CLINIC PATIENT VISITS	244,417+
TOTAL VACCINES GIVEN	78,833+
CHILDREN EDUCATED K-8TH GRADE	835+
HOME WATER SYSTEMS	1,725+
GALLONS OF WATER PURIFIED	113,645+
HAITIAN ANNUAL WAGES PAID 2020	\$169,042+

Since its founding in 1998, HAM has worked with our partner communities in Haiti to provide access to healthcare, education, and clean water to rural families where previously there was none. As a result, these communities have experienced real improvements in their overall health and vitality. Lifespans and literacy have increased. HAM is the largest employer in the community and has helped out the overall local economy as a result.

FINANCIALS

Funding HAM's Haitian operations is the simplest and most direct way to make an impact in Haiti. We are a grassroots-funded non-profit organization supported by hundreds of individuals and dozens of community organizations. The HAM leadership team in the United States (Executive Director and Director of Operations) works on a volunteer basis, as does our small but dedicated Board of Directors. With an annual expense budget of over \$300,000, we demand financial transparency and accountability from all our projects and share these figures annually in our impact report.



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² No Love In The Time Of Corona. [online]

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