



Women Fleeing Port-au-Prince

Photo by Odelyn Joseph

MFP Targets Healthcare and Hunger in Embattled Haiti

Haiti is experiencing the **worst level of violence that MFP has witnessed in more than two decades**. Most of the insecurity (kidnappings, murders, sexual assaults) have occurred in Port-au-Prince (PAP) as a result of clashes between armed gangs for control of territory and from direct assaults on citizens. Approximately seven hundred thousand residents have fled the violence in PAP to safer areas in the countryside and other parts of the city.

But the unrest has followed the internally displaced people and has spread beyond PAP to towns close to Gros Morne, MFP's base of operation in the northern Artibonite region.

Recently released United Nations statistics are dire:

- Only 20% of health facilities in PAP and 40% nationwide are operational.
- 45% of the Haitian population lack access to clean drinking water.
- 50% of the Haitian population (5.5 million people) are on the brink of famine.

The small (400 police) UN-sponsored Multinational Security Force (MSS) dispatched to Haiti has yet to control the civil disruptions or to secure the roads for distribution of essential goods and services. Strengthening of the MSS is desperately needed to quell the terror and fear that is wreaking havoc on the daily lives of most Haitians. (continued on next page)

While many health facilities in Haiti are closing and relief organizations are pulling back, **MFP is strengthening its medical programs and training new personnel** to meet the crisis. We are focusing on:

- **Augmenting delivery of high quality, life-saving health care** particularly in cancer prevention and treatment, infection control, and maternal care.
- **Preventing hunger** by delivering food to those most in need: school children, the elderly, and the disabled.
- **Protecting patients and staff** from armed violence.

We care for more than 12,000 women, with more patients coming to seek our help each year. Our success in Haiti is dependent on developing strong partnerships, as we have in other countries. We have forged partnerships with the Alma Mater Hospital, women's organizations, religious communities, and medical and surgical specialists throughout the country and the U.S. Gros Morne is a poor community whose **citizens have access to excellent health care.**



U.S. doctors performing surgery at Alma Mater Hospital.



Meet Jacqueline

Haiti has one of the highest maternal mortality rates in the world because women deliver at home without skilled birth attendants. MFP presents a safe, free option: delivery in hospital. As in previous publications, we share a patient's story.

Jacqueline Joseph is a twenty-six year old woman who lives with her husband in Jolivert, 20 miles from Gros Morne. When she was two months pregnant with her first child, a community health worker encouraged her to travel to the Alma Mater Hospital (AMH) for pre-natal care. It is a difficult journey and she had no money. Also, she felt unsafe travelling on the rural roads.

The health worker convinced her to deliver at the hospital. He assured her he would accompany her to AMH and Medicine For Peace would pay the hospital costs. Madame Joseph had a complicated delivery and her health team at AMH was forced to perform a Cesarean section. We are happy to report Madame Joseph is well, and her baby girl is prospering in the hospital's well baby program.



MFP Awarded Grant to Support Care in Remote Villages

The Dignity and Development Project (DDP) has awarded a grant to MFP to support the work of our community health workers in remote villages in the mountains surrounding Gros Morne. DDP supports organizations throughout the world who seek to ensure inclusion, especially **for communities who live in the most tragic and seemingly unsurmountable conditions.**

Our community health workers live in rural villages and are the liaison between their communities and the health care and social services we provide. They educate patients in their villages, identify health issues, assist patients to access our clinic, and visit homes to provide comfort, food and health care to our patients who are terminally ill. The community health workers are critically important during



Michael Viola with colleagues Astrud Fortune and Erlöse Cerfrère.

this unprecedented period when villages are isolated because of the widespread lawlessness and brutality of armed gangs. They allow us to continue to provide the high level of care our patients deserve.

Eating Cats and Dogs: Dangerous Rumors Stigmatize Haitians



Community agricultural project in Gros Morne

When it comes to Haiti, false rumors have a long lifetime. They feed the distorted stereotype about Haitians' identity. In the 1980s, a scientist at the U.S. National Cancer Institute asserted, without evidence, that AIDS originated in Haiti and spread to the United States. Baseless rumors continued that all

Haitians have AIDS. Both assertions have been proven false.

Similarly, the recent rumor that Haitians in Springfield, Ohio are eating their neighbors' cats and dogs has been widely debunked, but continues to resurface in the political discourse and on social media.

The hateful rhetoric **inflicts considerable harm on people living in Haiti.** We can see the effects on the ground. Many Haitians survive through remittances sent home by family members living abroad. Haitians living in the U.S. now struggle to find jobs. Further, these rumors have tainted Haiti's international reputation, making it more challenging to secure economic development and humanitarian aid. Medicine For Peace disseminates accurate information about Haitians and the real challenges they face. **Every time you donate to MFP you reject callous lies about Haitians.**



The Children's Scholarship Fund: Kathleen Crane's Legacy



Kathleen reading to Haitian children at the Foni Bo School.

Thirty years ago, Kathleen Crane, a founding member of Medicine for Peace, established the Children's Scholarship Fund for Girls (CSFG) with the goal of providing a safe and nurturing education for girls fleeing the civil war in El Salvador. Kathleen's idea for the Scholarship Fund was a novel concept from its inception: to partner with parents to support their child's education, to establish a system of academic peer mentoring within the CSFG itself, and to reinforce pride in each girl's own cultural heritage.

Since its start, the CSFG has expanded to include girls from families spanning across Central and South America. Following the 2010 earthquake in Haiti, Kathleen also partnered with the Foni Bo School in Gros Morne to assist with teachers' salaries, tuition, books, and the hot lunch program.

This, too, aligned with the mission of CSFG: all children – especially girls – deserve a safe and nurturing learning environment with the hope that their education will open avenues of opportunity.

Kathleen's vision was a success. **All our graduates in the United States have received subsequent scholarships to college, and a number of women are now in law school and medical school. We are also pleased to announce that all 6th grade students at the Foni Bo School passed the state examination this year.**

This year, we lost one of our greatest activists. But Kathleen's legacy only makes us further committed to ensuring that the CSFG continues to use innovative approaches to educate children in the United States, Haiti, and, perhaps, beyond.

Donate
Now

Medicine For Peace

2732 Unicorn Lane Washington, DC 20015
email: info@medicineforpeace.org Tel: 202 441 4545
Donate online: www.medicineforpeace.org