



# COFHED

COMMUNITIES ORGANIZING FOR  
HAITIAN ENGAGEMENT & DEVELOPMENT

**FIELD  
UPDATE**  
SUMMER 2023

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2023 gala

# THANK YOU FOR YOUR STREADFEST SUPPORT

Our 2023 gala – “See Us As We See Ourselves” – was an incredible success, and we thank each of our incredible enlightened allies for making the evening unforgettable. The proceeds from the gala are already getting put to good use in supporting our partner communities in reaching their collective hopes and dreams as well as sustaining the increasing number of villages looking to partner with COFHED.

**Weren't able to make it to the gala? It's not too late to enjoy the evening's programming and contribute.**



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The past nine months have seen a steady drumbeat of natural disasters affecting our partner communities. These compound already critical issues including widespread unrest, extreme prices on ordinary goods and the aftermath of the August 2021 earthquake.

Since last fall, the region has lost two entire harvests – the first to an extreme drought that began nine months ago, then another earlier this summer from flooding rains that washed away crops that the villagers were growing in the parched land. This back-to-back loss of crops could have devastating consequences for our partner communities, many of whom rely on these harvests for food security as well as income. While there are a few heartier crops like yams that are still growing higher up in the mountains, there isn't nearly enough to sustain everyone, and the cost of these important foods is expected to skyrocket. Beans and corn, which are a cornerstone of local diets, have largely been wiped out.



Lastly, a series of earthquakes averaging around 5.0 magnitude shook the earth about 90 miles to the west of Camp-Perrin on June 4 and 6, compounding the suffering from the flooding. We received only minor damage from these, but the legacy of the August 2021 earthquake is still at the forefront of many people's minds.

Amongst all these devastating natural disasters, it's easy to believe that the villagers would lose hope by now, but they haven't. Instead, they're leaning into each other, their own ingenuity and advocacy and tapping into the resources and knowledge they have from partnering with COFHED.

**Please continue to pray for peace, health and stability for our Haitian brothers and sisters.**



The August 2021 earthquake devastated our partner communities in countless ways, including the loss of many major buildings such as schools. In the immediate aftermath, the villagers had set up temporary school structures so that there was minimal disruptions to their students' educations.

Still, the temporary structures left much to be desired in terms of features and comfort, so the communities stepped up to advocate for themselves and forge partnerships with aid organizations to rebuild these schools. While AHAAMES (Association Haïtienne d'Assistance Agricole, Médicale, Educative et Sociale) and UNICEF led the reconstruction in Raymond and Lougou respectively, local craftsmen and construction workers from the communities themselves labored tirelessly to make the buildings even better than before, with new earthquake-resistant features.

**We think the results speak for themselves – Lougou and Raymond both have beautiful new school buildings in which their overjoyed students and staff wrapped up the 2023 academic year.** Moreover, the villagers have incredible pride in their achievement, having set out to replace these essential buildings that were ruined in the natural disaster, and successfully completing the job.

And *that* is the proof that sustainable change has the power to transform communities and mindsets.