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Relief Effort Update for Haiti Disaster: One Year Out

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A year ago this month the Ocean Reef community came together to respond to a devastating 7.2 magnitude earthquake in southwestern Haiti, home to the families of many of the Club's more than 120 Haitian-American employees. The Foundation's Haiti Disaster Relief Fund, initiated after the massive 2010 earthquake and again after Hurricane Matthew in 2016, was quickly activated and funded by the Membership's response to an appeal sent by the Club.

Thanks to the community's generosity, within a week of the appeal we were able to wire \$70,000 in emergency relief in a timely and efficient manner. With a focus on supporting Haiti-based agencies with healthcare capabilities to provide general aid, treat injuries, and address the ongoing COVID-19 crisis throughout the affected areas, strategic grants went to Hope for Haiti (\$25,000), Health Equity International (\$10,000 for St. Boniface Hospital), the Haitian Health Foundation (\$10,000), and the Haiti Development Institute of Boston Foundation (\$25,000 for small clinics).

Our practice in disaster relief has been to meet urgent needs straightaway, reserving some

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funds to meet targeted and emerging needs as we learn more and, wherever possible, support longer-term solutions. When all was said and done, the Foundation collected almost \$160,000 to that end.

Our second round of grants totaled \$50,000 and was more specific to reaching families of employees. Through information gathered by the Club's Human Resources team, we were able to confirm that the highest concentrations of employee families are in hard-hit and hard-to-reach, remote areas in the city of Pestel and the adjacent Los Cayemites islands.

When roads were impassable and dangerous, Pointe Sable En Action used boats to procure and distribute \$25,000 in rice, cooking oil, and tarps to both areas, going to great lengths to reach out to the family members of Club employees in doing so. The second \$25,000 grant went to ESPWA (meaning hope in Creole) in collaboration with the Haiti Community Foundation Network to build two neighborhood cisterns in the city of Pestel, which lost its water infrastructure in the quake and identified clean water solutions as the highest priority for the community. While very limited electricity,

runaway inflation, fuel shortages, gang activity, and other complications make recovery efforts challenging, our strategy of working with organizations that have a longtime presence on the ground with largely local, Haitian staff and investing in institutions that will remain long-term to meet needs as prioritized by the Haitian people themselves, continues to serve us well.

After closely following the successful completion of the two cisterns, each providing clean water to about 4,000 families, we have found the organization that successfully managed the projects to be a reliable partner under very difficult circumstances.

I am pleased to report that the final \$40,000 grant went to another collaboration of ESPWA and the Haiti Community Foundation Network for repairs to the large primary water cistern for the city of Pestel, which will provide a sustainable source of clean water for more than 24,400 residents, as well as those in surrounding communities. So, a year out from the initial disaster, we are funding a major project that will have a huge and long-term impact on a whole community that we know includes many near and dear to employees. As always, we'll stay on top of it and share the results.



The Foundation monitored the progress of the two smaller cistern projects with frequent photos from the ground in Haiti and will continue the practice with the larger project.



The support of the Ocean Reef community is recognized on this sign for funding the adjacent community cistern, one of two, that provides water to thousands in the city of Pestel, where many family members of Club Associates live. Member donations have also funded a larger city of Pestel cistern in the works to provide a sustainable source of clean water for more than 24,000 residents.