



FAITH IN ACTION  
INTERNATIONAL

[www.Faithinactionint.org](http://www.Faithinactionint.org)

FALL 2008

Literacy Tree Nurseries Clean Water Ministry Animal Husbandry Agriculture



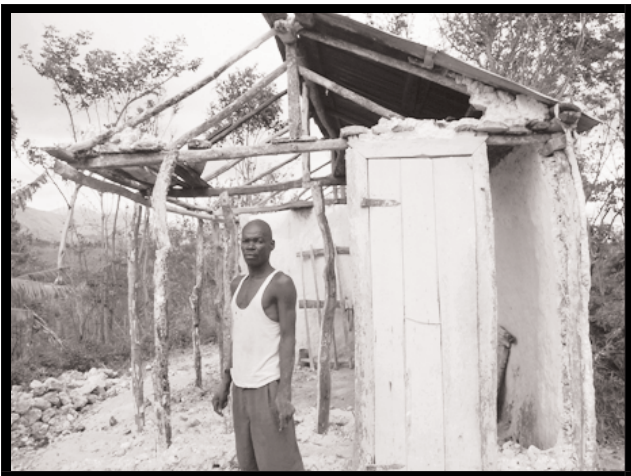
Letter from the Executive Director

Greetings in Christ!

The last six months in Haiti have been rough. In June I was already reporting a serious problem, as many people could not afford to eat. Food prices had gone up. The people were anticipating their first harvest when a three-week drought hit in June. It destroyed many gardens. I knew then that this winter (Haiti's dry season) would be even worse. In July heavy rains fell and washed out even more of the crops. The roads were washed out, preventing us from easily getting up into the mountains. Then the hurricanes hit. Our village of Verrettes did not suffer any damage. We actually thought the hurricane had missed Haiti.

However, we were soon hearing stories of the damages in the mountains where we work. In the hills above Verrettes over two hundred homes were destroyed, many goats drowned, chickens were blown away, crops were destroyed, and trees were uprooted. Multiply those damages in our small area by all the mountains in the country, and the situation is catastrophic. There has been no other assistance for the mountain people. Faith in Action International has been distributing rice and beans, as well as cooked meals at times to the communities in the mountains. Many of these people work for the feed doing soil conservation or road repair. We have also been able to food those who are handicapped, sick, or too elderly.

Ficilita and I will be in the U.S. until Dec. We would love to visit with you while we are here. Blessings, Tom Braak



One of over 200 hundred homes in the mountains destroyed by hurricane Ike



Photo - This child's family lost their home and gardens. I visited them on my first trip up to see the damage. All they had to eat was 4" stunted corn that they had gleaned from their ravaged garden. They had it boiled in the morning and were roasting it when we passed by in the afternoon. We gave them uncooked food in Verrettes the next day to take home. I so wanted to take the two children home with me but Ficilita disagreed. Looking back, I know that she was right. I chose to not go any farther that day.

### Thank you for your prayers, encouragement and financial gifts!

You may use the enclosed envelope, and make your check payable to:  
Faith in Action International, P.O. Box 171, Spring Lake, Michigan 49456

Faith in Action International is a non-denominational, non-profit 501 (c)(3) organization formed for charitable purposes, and gifts are deductible to the extent allowed by law.

## Soil Conservation

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This year, we did a lot of work in two communities as a demonstration. We selected the areas based on the need and amount of community involvement in other FIAI activities. In 2009, we will be encouraging farmers throughout the region to work together to build two terraces per garden. This new approach as well as the new approach for the tree nurseries will allow us to reach more communities while leading to a more sustainable program.

## Trees

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We have 18 community nurseries and six youth nurseries. The total number of plants grown this year per nursery has dropped as the farmers, being hungrier than in the past, have not had the energy nor time to devote to the nurseries. Also, they are putting more time into soil conservation. We are considering having one large tree nursery starting in 2009 or 2010 in Verrettes rather than the many community nurseries, freeing people up to spend more time terracing their gardens. We would continue the youth nurseries as that is more about ministry and youth development than it is about the trees. We have added a few new tree species this year including cashew and chocolate. We are also encouraging farmers to plant some Haitian cotton (more drought tolerant than that grown in the states). Due to the hunger issue, and the anticipated growth of the problem next dry season (winter months), we are providing the farmers with more plants that produce crops quickly, such as hot peppers, tomatoes, and papaya. This produce then would be sold in the market to provide a ready source of income for the farmers. We anticipate a total distribution of 110,000 trees this year and about 20,000 vegetable seedlings. We would like to increase the tree production next year to over 300,000 seedlings with the majority going to those doing soil conservation.



Large scale soil conservation (making terraces) taking place above a spring in an attempt to get more rain water soaking in, replenishing the spring. Prior to this effort the spring dried up for four months a year. Trees will be planted densely in the spring of 2009. We will know how well this effort works in December, after the rains stop.

## Water

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In June, Dr Peter Wampler, a geology professor from Grand Valley State University (and an FIAI board member), and Andrew Sisson, a student of Dr Wampler's, visited us. They tested over 25 springs for contamination. The results show that some form of purification must take place. We had installed concrete bio-sand filters in some homes but stopped a few years ago as they were too heavy to transport. FIAI is looking at the alternatives now.

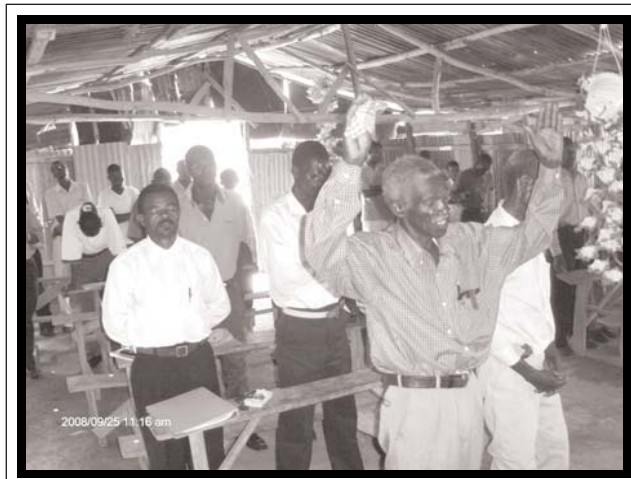
## Literacy

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We currently have ten adult literacy classes meeting throughout the mountains. These classes end in December. Depending on the financial situation of FIAI, we may need to suspend classes at that time.

## Ministry

FIAI has assisted more people this year than in the past with medical bills. Due to the economic situation people are waiting longer before going to the hospital, resulting in bigger health problems. We help when we can but have to turn many away. We continue to show Christian films at the requests of churches, and loan out our sound system for crusades. This month one church is borrowing our equipment for a week long crusade. They will have musicians and pastors from Port-au-Prince visiting. FIAI has provided instruments to a music class made up of approximately 35 young adults for several churches. They keep informing me that they need more instruments (guitars and keyboards are the most asked for). FIAI is supporting a newly formed pastor's association made up of over 50 local pastors. Their first desire is to find more spiritual training for themselves, as many of them are lay pastors. They also wish to tackle many of the problems in the area such as soil conservation, reforestation, etc. Perhaps in time we can turn over these efforts of FIAI to this new association.



Pastors in prayer at the first meeting.

## Changes planned in 2009

The widespread damage from hurricane Ike along with the financial problems brought on by rapid inflation in the past year has caused us to re-evaluate our methodology. We also realize that our donors are having serious financial worries. As such, we are preparing for the possibility of a couple of lean years.

### Increase our animal husbandry program

Donors can once again sponsor a goat. This will provide a family with a female Haitian goat that they will be able to breed with community-owned Boer/Nubian goats for a small fee (the latter also provided by FIAI). Recipients of the female goats will return to the community their first female kid goat.

### Move from communal nurseries to smaller, home based nurseries

We have noticed that community nurseries tend to drop off in participation and production by the fourth year. With the new method, neighbors can work together and develop small nurseries for themselves, deciding how many trees they want each year. In the past everyone received the same number of trees and the same varieties. Farmers will provide their own seed. FIAI will provide plastic bags, instruction, and encouragement. We will also Experiment with growing and processing the jetropha plant as a source of bio-fuel.

### Income Generation for FIAI

By farming for profit FIAI will be able to generate income for the project, provide jobs, and demonstrate (experiment) with new methods. After the first year of growing the traditional rice, beans and corn in succession, we will expand to grow other crops that are needed to improve the diet, beginning with sweet potatoes.

**Find larger organizations** to partner with and do things, or come in and do things that are either too big for us or not our specialty. These projects include: Installing a new pipeline for Verrettes, providing tin roofing to more than 200 households that lost their roofs in the hurricanes and rebuilding the Verrettes town square (community desires plants, trees, a fountain, gazebo, etc).

# *Faith in Action International*

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## **THANK YOU AND DONATIONS NEEDED**

We are very grateful for your support and generosity. Thank you all. It was good to see many of you at our celebration of 10 years in Haiti in mid-October. Please continue to keep us in your prayers. Our greatest current need is for general fund donations. These allow us to determine the best use. Our year-end appeal letter will be coming to you soon.

Thank you to all who contributed to our appeal for funds in order to feed people. We raised far more than what I had anticipated, allowing FIAI to provide several thousand meals. And we're not done yet!

I grieve for the people. Your supplemental donations have helped us to help them and helped me to keep my balance in very difficult situations.

Erik and Ficilta bagging rice for distribution



Know of anyone who you think might like to have receive our newsletter?

Please email Tammy <[tammy@faithinactionint.org](mailto:tammy@faithinactionint.org)> their address and we'll see that they get it.