

Water

We are focusing our water efforts right now on capping springs. Doing so provides the community with cleaner and more abundant water (often more than doubling the quantity). Capping a spring takes about two weeks and costs approximately \$1,400 and serves anywhere from 400 to over 1,000 people.

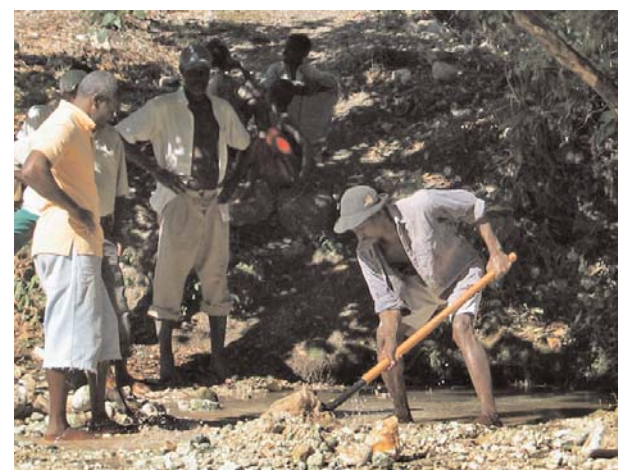
Felici Bena, age 12
(as retold by Kai)

She carries water home in a five gallon bucket on her head. She really appreciates this spring capping project because it will protect the source which used to get polluted by the goats and dogs (causing diarrhea in the people).

Heavy rains also pollute the source and that won't be the case once it is capped.

Many people come to this spring and having the water collect at night in a reservoir will make it faster for people to get their water.

(FIAI will be capping this spring soon)



Work starting on Veilot spring capping.



Our mason shows off the completed Veilot spring

Faith in Action International

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Spring 2008

Literacy Tree Nurseries Clean Water Roads Ministry Animal Husbandry Agriculture

Letter From the Executive Director

Greetings from warm and sunny Haiti,

As always, this is our busiest time of the year. There is a constant stream of people coming through the office. They leave here going in all directions with seeds and materials for the tree nurseries, spring cappings, and soil conservation projects.

This is what we have going on currently:

- * Sixteen adult literacy classes meeting four days a week, averaging 25-30 students each
- * Twenty four tree nurseries
- * Four new springs capped in March
- * Over one hundred farmers are doing extensive soil conservation practices
- * Christian movies are being shown (over 2,500 people total in attendance so far in 2008)
- * Forty six Haitians working! (almost all are part-time)

Kai, a friend from Germany who is a forester and worked in Southern Haiti for six years came for a few weeks. Besides helping FIAI refine our tree and soil conservation efforts he is also encouraged us in improving our relational ministry. Sometimes we get too busy and forget to slow down and listen to the people. Kai reminded us of how important it is to share the gospel in all that we do. It was a real blessing having him here.



Kai on the hike to Tenet.

Due to a change in import customs and rising fuel costs the cost of many staples in Haiti has doubled in the last six months. Rice, beans, and cooking oil, used daily by most Haitians, have been affected (as well as many other things). As such, the majority of Haitians are really suffering (though not eating dirt as reported recently all over the internet). Please pray that the government quickly addresses the situation.

Please also continue to pray for God's direction in all we do.

Thanks,

Tom Braak

Upcoming Events

The Door to Haiti Through the Photography of Larry Braak

Grand Haven Area Arts Council
Come view Larry Braak's photography all month long!
You are also invited to a reception on March 21st from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Grand Haven Area Arts Council
1045 Columbus Street
Grand Haven, MI

Mission Trip to Haiti

October 24 - November 1
There is a great opportunity to serve, grow, and plant spiritual fruit.
For more information, please contact Tammy Davison at 616.842.8951 or email tammy@faithinactionint.org.

Please Help...

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.

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‘Deye Mon Genyen Mon’ by Larry Braak

During a trip to Haiti in February I was reminded of how the FIAI staff is challenged daily by the difficult decisions it must make as it seeks to serve the great and innumerable needs of the people with its limited resources of funds and manpower.

For instance, one day we assessed the need in a mountain village for a tree and plant nursery. A representative from the village had appeared at Tom and Ficilta’s door recently with the request and told a convincing story of the tremendous need. He said that the villagers had observed the benefits of nurseries by visiting other villages where FIAI had worked.

Tom had heard that there were two rival groups in this area and each group was asking for a nursery. Our task was to explore the motivation and commitment of the villagers to work together and to determine if FIAI could realistically meet their requested need.



After two hours of driving up into the mountains on a ‘road’ strewn with loose boulders, we could advance no further by 4 wheel-drive truck as the road had become only a rocky foot path. Ficilta had prepared a pot of Haitian spaghetti. After gaining needed nutrition, we continued the journey by foot.

After another two hours of difficult climbing we reached the summit about 2000 feet above the valley where we had started. I came to more fully understand the old Haitian proverb, ‘deye mon genyen mon’ (‘there are mountains beyond mountains’) as I gazed out upon successive mountain peaks in the distance. Incidentally mountains make up 80% of the land mass in Haiti. The tallest is 8000 feet. In the distance we could see the remains of a French fort which was

to be our meeting place. Upon arriving at the fort, we were greeted enthusiastically by about fifty villagers who had gathered for this meeting with us.

After the usual introductions, greetings and prayer, we were seated on chairs at the front. The rest were seated on rows of benches made of 3 inch wide planks tethered on rocks. As the fort is generally used as a school house, blackboards had been made by simply plastering two of the rock walls. The original roof had fallen in years ago. A partial roof now consisted of branches laid upon poles.

A villager first spoke about their need. He was followed by Eric Rincher (FIAI staff person) who talked about the logistics of establishing a nursery. Kai Bauer, a former agri-forester missionary from Germany who was visiting Tom and Ficilta, then gave a motivational speech emphasizing the necessity and benefits of working together. He sprinkled his talk with biblical precepts and examples.

Upon determining that the villagers were committed to working together and that FIAI could provide the necessary supervision and seeds, we decided that FIAI would assist the community in establishing a nursery. As a first step, we passed out bags of seeds of fruit trees and vegetables. After we had met for two and one-half hours we were served a hot lunch.



As we went down the mountain we met hundreds of people on the path. These villagers had been buying and selling goods at the twice-weekly market in Verrettes and now were returning home. I could not help but marvel at these beautiful, resilient people. Children and adults alike were carrying bundles on their heads which ranged from cases of soda pop to pigeon peas and furniture. Despite having walked six hours each way, they seemed remarkably happy and fun-loving. We often heard them singing in harmony.

FIAI, in responding to these needs, prayerfully is improving the lives of these people of God in some small but significant way. We seek daily to hear God’s direction and then to act responsively. Your prayers and support help us do so.

The peace of Christ.

Larry Braak

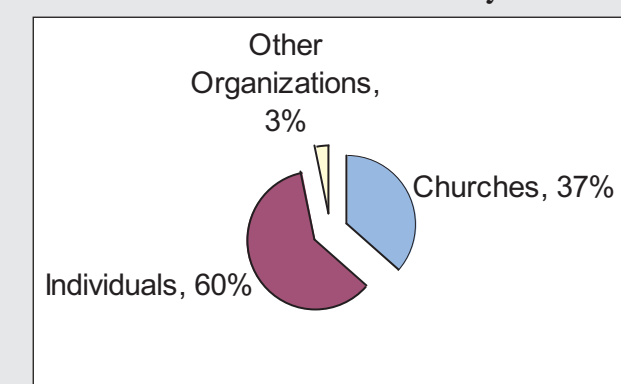
2007 Financial Review

The staff and board are thankful for you, our generous donors, for faithfully providing the resources to carry out the ministries of FIAI. Our accounting of FIAI donor sources and expenses by ministry is shown below.

2007 Expenses by Program

Water	\$34,000	26%
Trees	\$32,000	24%
Ministry	\$22,000	17%
Child Sponsorship	\$14,000	11%
Adult Literacy	\$16,000	12%
Administration	\$14,000	11%
Total Expenses	\$132,000	100%

2007 Income was Provided by Donors



Jean Rony Jean Baptiste, FLAI employee

It is amazing to see how great we have started this new year. Every year it is visible that FIAI improves its operation, by the way we have greater collaboration with farmers and also by how we take the effort to learn how to address them appropriately. We are developing a good bond with them.

In addition we have developed more effective ways to satisfy their requests. The farmers are happy with the way we coordinate things. The FIAI staff receives love and appreciation from farmers for the good work and collaboration we have with them and what we have accomplished. In letters they relate how the rate of kids’ death and illness has decreased dramatically since our work with them. Contaminated water used to be the major problem causing illness and death in kids and adults.

Farmers tell us that capping a spring is one of the most significant things that FIAI does to diminish the toll of death. Before capping a spring animals would contaminate the water by defecating in it. In February we visited an area where we were asked to do a spring capping. It was very sad to hear the stories of how when a family member develops an illness, the family is unable to afford to take the sick one to the clinic. The farmers were very happy when we agreed to cap the spring for their community.



Jean Rony learns grafting.

Capping springs creates other benefits. Capping a spring stores water all day and night. Therefore when the children come early morning to fill their buckets with water, they can do it quickly as the flow is greater. They then have time to attend school. The children shout, ‘water is life!’

FIAI staff teaches farmers the importance of working cooperatively. It is most gratifying to see farmers work together to create something that will benefit the whole community. For example, in preparation for capping a spring, they will develop a committee to receive materials and to organize the work to be done. They are all responsible, not just one or two persons. With that in mind everyone is involved and knows what is going on.

While we work with people in helping them help themselves with their basic needs we also spread the Gospel by showing the ‘Jesus Film’ and other movies related to the bible. We do this in churches and in public areas.

Our staff starts with prayer most every morning where we ask God for direction and for his purpose for us on that day. God provides many blessings! One of the blessings is that many more people are now able to read the bible due to their participation in our adult literacy classes. They are so happy for all that. With the literacy program they are able to read and write and are able to teach their children at home.

In Christ’s love,
Jean Rony Jean Baptiste