



Newsletter of the Haiti Fund, Inc.

June 2011

## Reflections on a Year in Haiti

It is hard to believe it has been only a year since Debbie and I first went to Haiti to work with CODEP. We consider it a unique privilege to observe and participate with the amazing people of Haiti as they have adjusted to the earthquake crisis. Through it all CODEP has emerged as a trusted organization used in a variety of ways including food and tool distribution and growing seedlings for the UN Food & Agricultural Organization.



It was also a joy to see managers and people of CODEP rise to a variety of problems and demonstrate significant leadership skills in resolving them. They organized work groups, distribution systems and found new ways to organize the work in the project. Through this, they learned much detail about how CODEP and the Haiti Fund functions and became much more involved in managing themselves and making decisions about how to budget and wisely spend scarce monetary resources.

The most significant step has been gaining a clear understanding that they are the leaders. They are willing to challenge the ideas of others and work out solutions in a friendly way. Animator meetings are sometimes raucous affairs, with long discussions (arguments?) leading to better decisions. And the best part? The willingness to challenge me - whether misunderstanding culture, my having an idea they consider hare-brained, or patiently explaining why doing something a slightly different way makes more sense.

The richness of seeing them grow and develop during our time in Haiti has brought home a strong sense of how development projects work, why we are there, and most importantly, how God is at work in all that we do - tree planting, canal digging, fish raising, school support, nutrition, home building - the list goes on and on.

You can rest assured that your support of CODEP through Haiti Fund is among the more important things you do and is deeply appreciated by all the people affected by this work. Thank you, thank you!

John Winings, Haiti Fund Executive Director

# Building 101

On Friday, Dan stayed home. Kurt went “up the hill” to watch the CODEP construction crew build a Ti-Kay (Small House) almost completely by themselves. Both Dan and Kurt are volunteers from Building Goodness Foundation in Charlottesville, VA, a long-time CODEP partner who have been building houses in Haiti and Nicaragua for more than 15 years.



Since the 2010 earthquake, they have stepped up the pace and will build a total of 39 Ti-Kays and 6 or more larger houses for CODEP, plus several schools and churches, including one each for CODEP.

But the process of designing and building the small houses has been a major undertaking. Mike Stoneking, Vice President of BGF’s board and a well-known Charlottesville architect is the project manager for Ti-Kays. He designed the homes so they can be built in 14 panels, six trusses, plus a sturdy foundation and with a metal roof. The best part is that each one can be built in about a day.

For the typical week, during which three houses are built, on Monday the foundations are put in place and leveled, and the holes for concrete footers are dug and poured. Then on Tuesday and two other days that week, the three homes are put up – panel by panel, taking care to keep them square, plumb and level, with trusses in place, and the cross-members and roofing materials in place by day’s end – replete with interior bolt-locks for doors and windows.

Each home is finished in one day, and during the alternate days, the volunteers join the crew at a place in Léogâne called Delaney Bay, which has a warehouse where BGF’s tools and wood materials are stored. Lest you think BGF volunteers live in the lap of luxury, they build a Ti-Kay for themselves and sleep in it every night during the week.



Each one is 18 square meters (12 feet by 16 feet, plus a four-foot front porch), and has four windows, two narrow Haitian-style front doors, and a large back door. Made of termite-resistant treated wood, the homes are designed to withstand earthquakes, hurricanes and are expected to last twenty years or more.

But, perhaps the most rewarding thing about the whole project is that there are Haitian people who have learned the process and, at this writing, are nearly able to assemble the ti-kays all by themselves in the mountains. This has been the goal from the beginning, and there is a core-crew of CODEP and non-CODEP people who manage the process.



There is lots of joking over who is the “Big Boss” but Guytaud, Maradona, Rene, Walton, and Jimmie each have skills they have honed to the point where they can keep pace with a US building crew with no problem. And, their hearts are in it, teaching Haitian new-comers with patience and grace how to put in a klou with a mato (nail, hammer), checking the blueprints occasionally and being sure each house is level and plumb.

All of this is quite a sight to see, and at the time of this writing most of the people in the mountains are bargaining for how they can get a CODEP Ti-Kay too. Of the 39 planned to be built in the CODEP area, 22 are for CODEP workers and 17 are for others, not in CODEP, who lost their houses. BGF plans to build a significant number of others elsewhere in Haiti.

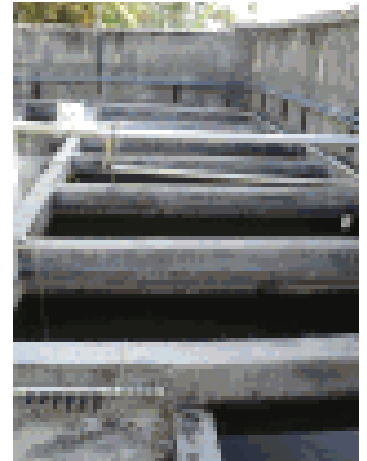
So, we extend our thanks to BGF and our hats are off to the volunteers and Haitian people who have stepped up to help their friends and neighbors in this great rebuilding effort.

# Hatchery

In April, Bill Mebane, Superintendent of the Aquaculture Engineering Division of the Marine Biological Laboratory in Woods Hole, MA, John A. Hargreaves, PhD, aquaconsultant and former Associate Professor, Louisiana State University Agriculture Center, and Jamie Rhoads, Haiti Fund board member and long term resident in Haiti visited CODEP.

The thrust of their work was to rejuvenate our fish hatchery, study methodology of providing fingerling fish which will grow quickly and provide a valuable source of protein for people living in the CODEP area.

In addition, they set up a procedure for Ingram Caswell, one of the Directors of L'Acuil Operations, along with her husband Dale, to manage the hatchery and grow the maximum amount of fingerlings possible.



Because of the high cost and necessity to import fish food, the folks at MBL have developed a process whereby photosynthesis by the sun of phytoplankton provides natural food for the fish. This process involves hydro-composting so that algae blooms occur and the resulting phytoplankton attach to soft surfaces in the ponds. These are provided by long pieces of bamboo strung across the ponds.

CODEP gets free bamboo from a bamboo furniture maker, and also buys cheap chicken compost (scrapings off the floor of a chicken coop) used along with other hydro-composting elements (papaya leaves, table scraps, manure) to create the food. There is a long history of fish-farming in CODEP, but it has not grown commensurate with the rest of the CODEP project in the past few years.

So, the animator management group discussed it thoroughly and decided to revamp and re-energize the program through a series of incentives and adding fish production objectives to the plans for the year. They even expect they will be able to market some excess fish under the CODEP Brand name. (Mak KODEP in Creole).



If your church or organization is planning a trip to CODEP anytime soon, don't be surprised to find yourselves stringing up long strands of bamboo pieces for this fish project.

Many thanks to the energies, ideas, hard-work and time spent by Bill Mebane, John Hargreaves, Jamie Rhoads and, of course, our own Ingram Caswell.

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## Making a Difference in Haiti

As John's message on the cover indicates, Haiti Fund and CODEP are making a huge difference in Haiti. We need your help to continue making a difference. Contributions are running well below prior years, largely due to the uncertainties of the world economy. We understand the same is true of organizations like the Red Cross. Our appeal to you is to send a check today so that the development work continues unabated. Thanks so much for anything you can do.

**Send contributions to:** The Haiti Fund, Inc. PO Box 1075 New Bern, NC 28563-1075.

On behalf of our Haitian brothers and sisters, thanks for your prayers and support.  
Joel Millikan, editor.

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