

IMPACT



A Newsletter of Children's World Impact **VOL. 1 | Issue #4**

FROM THEIR PERSPECTIVE

by: Michael Hoffman

Last year Children's World Impact undertook the construction of its second elementary school in the country of Haiti. The school was completed earlier this summer and welcomed its first group of students this past September. This project was in partnership with Schools4Haiti, another 501(c)(3) organization, also headquartered in Wisconsin. While CWI financed the construction of the building and furnishings, Schools4Haiti will maintain the ongoing operational expenses of the school. Although not part of the original plan, CWI is currently financing the construction of bathroom facilities for the close to 250 students and staff who attend and work at the school. We anticipate completion of this aspect by the end of this year.

Tyson Ray, founder of Children's World Impact, and I had the honor of traveling to Haiti this past summer to participate in a dedication ceremony for the elementary school. We were privileged to travel with 4 members of Schools4Haiti during our trip in early June. The dedication was particularly meaningful to Tyson, as the school was dedicated in memory of his childhood principal, Bob Johnson, who served Woods School in Lake Geneva for many years.

We undertook this project, like all our endeavors, with the intent of

making as great an impact for as many as possible.

The Cambridge Dictionary definition of impact, when used as a noun, is as follows: *the strong effect or influence that something has on a situation or person.*

The best way to measure impact, in my opinion, is by seeking the perspective of those for whom the impact was initiated in the first place. Here is what some teachers and students of the new elementary school at the Fondation St. Louis (Haitian spelling) in the city of Desarmes have shared with us.

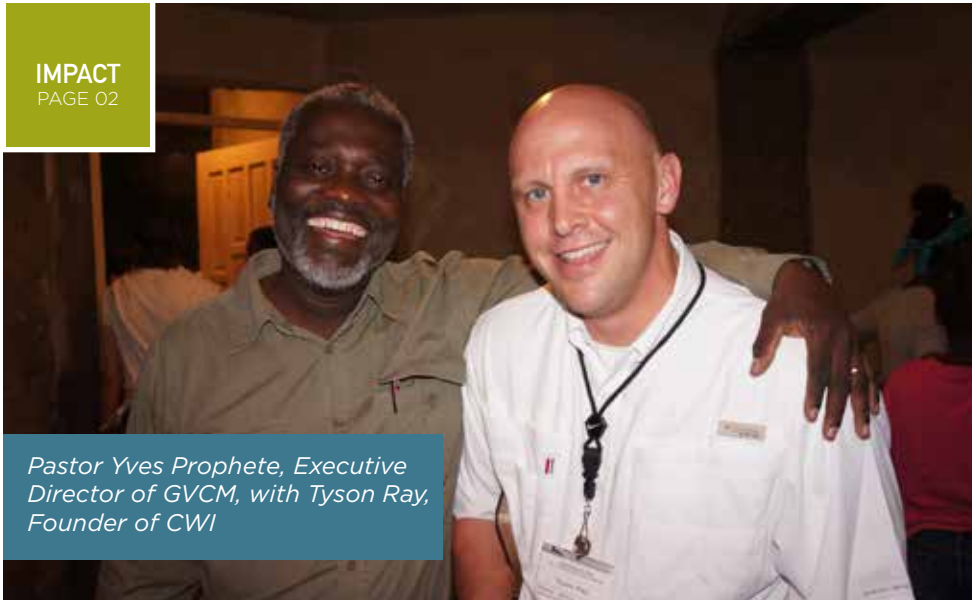
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"It is a very different world for the students and teachers now. We have more respect in the community because of the new building. More parents want their children to come to this school. We can be better organized and feel more comfortable."

Jean Jules Saint Louise, a 5th grade teacher



Students exiting 2 of the 8 classrooms at the newly constructed school in Desarmes, Haiti



Pastor Yves Prophete, Executive Director of GVCM, with Tyson Ray, Founder of CWI

LOOKING FORWARD

Haiti has long been the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere, with close to 60% of the population living under the national poverty line. In addition, the country reports some of the world's worst health indicators, which continue to inhibit the country's development. Haiti has struggled with poor health outcomes for generations, but the January 2010 earthquake that hit the country, further complicated healthcare issues. The quake demolished 50 health centers, a large part of Haiti's main teaching hospital, as well as the Ministry of Health.

Approximately 40% of this Caribbean country lacks access to basic, essential health and nutrition services. Almost half of all children, aged 12-23 months, are fully vaccinated. Additionally, 22% of Haitian children, under the age of 5, are stunted.

While these statistics can be overwhelming and disheartening, they also provide opportunity for tremendous impact. As we anticipate welcoming 2018, CWI is looking forward to embracing a new project that will improve the healthcare opportunities for

individuals in and around Mirebalais, Haiti. The CWI board of directors has voted to purchase land and finance the construction of a medical clinic in partnership with Global Vision Citadelle Ministries (GVCM), complete with 4 exam rooms, a room for medical procedures, as well as a large pharmacy.

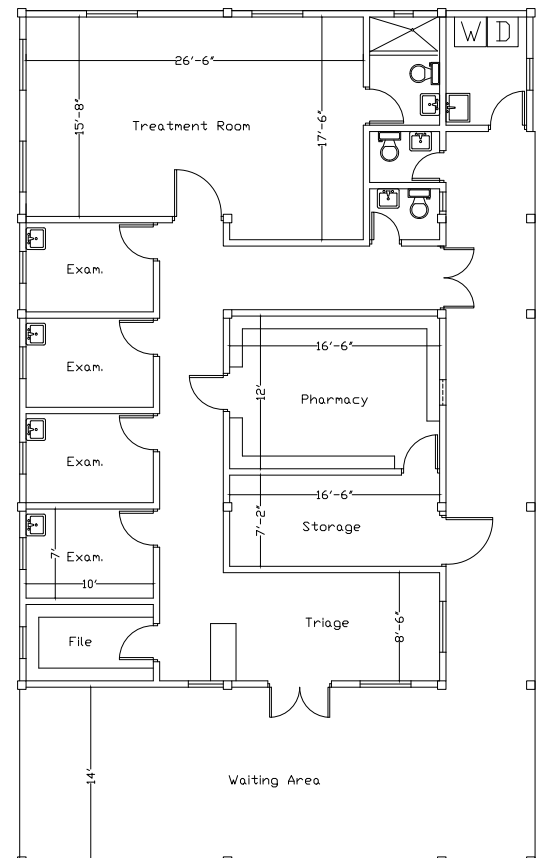
CWI has had a long-standing relationship with GVCM and its executive director, Pastor Yves Prophete. We financed the construction of the Amos School Building, which serves the educational needs of local community children and the nearly 130 orphans housed in the GVCM orphanage, as well as built the Joshua Building, a dorm for the older male orphans. GVCM has served as "headquarters" for many of the CWI mission trips to Haiti.

For many years, GVCM has operated a medical clinic in Mirebalais. They currently pay \$4,000 a month to rent a small building that inadequately meets the medical needs of the community. The high cost for rent doesn't permit the clinic to meet payroll for the

3 doctors, 2 nurses, and 3 nursing assistants that keep the clinic running. The new facility will allow the current rent costs to be used for payroll and operational expenses, and to better serve the medical needs of the GVCM orphans and the thousands of community members who currently receive medical attention from this facility.

Thanks to the generosity of a faithful donor, we have the necessary \$35,000 needed for immediate land purchase. We also have a donor who will match the first \$10,000 raised toward the estimated \$50,000 construction costs for the project. Please consider how you can become a part of this vital ministry in Haiti. You can use the donation card enclosed in this newsletter to make an end of year donation toward this cause. Join us in making an impact in Mirebalais, Haiti! ■

GVCM CLINIC MIREBALAIS, HAITI





A HOUSE AND A HOME

Children's World Impact has financed the construction of five family homes in international locations. Two of the homes were in Ecuador, South America, in response to the earthquake of April, 2016. The most recent home project, the third in Haiti, was completed this past summer for a single mother and her children. Members of the board of directors for CWI met Saintemène during a visit to Haiti in the summer of 2015. They learned that she was raising four children single-handedly, with no stable place to live, and was supporting herself by making rugs.

By her own admission, she had made decisions in her past that were not to her best advantage. However, she showed a sincere desire to make a better life for herself and her children. Recognizing this desire, CWI committed to building her and her children a modest new home.

Like many women in Haiti, Saintemène had no identification card and no official documentation proving her citizenship. The first step in the project was to help obtain these documents for her, with the help of contacts living in Haiti. With this proof of citizenship, a plot of land was purchased in her name. The land had a makeshift house on it that provided shelter for Saintemène and her children during the construction phase of the project, but it was clear that this home was not suitable for a family of five.

Once construction began, things moved forward in a timely manner, and the home was ready for a dedication ceremony when Tyson Ray and Mike Hoffman visited Haiti this past summer. The builder, a local pastor, Mike and Tyson's Schools4Haiti traveling partners, and some of Saintemène's neighbors gathered



for the ceremony. After a prayer of thanksgiving and a robustly sung song of praise, the group enjoyed an ice-cold, Haitian Coca-Cola®.

There's an Irish proverb that states, "Bricks and mortar make a house, but the laughter of children makes a home." By the smiles on the faces of Saintemène's children in the photo above, it seems this house is also a true home! ■

FROM THEIR PERSPECTIVE

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“The old school did not have a big yard and the school was very small. It was just one structure divided into small spaces. They used sheet metal for a roof and tarps for the walls. There was just dirt for a floor, not cement. We didn’t have nice benches or nice chalkboards. The school is fresh and nice. We have enough benches and space.”

Omel, a 5th grade student

“There is space for students to put their bags. The students can spread out. They are much cleaner and not so muddy. I am more proud of teaching and can do more and have better talks with my students. It is much better to have a chalkboard on the wall. We are not as hot because of the nice windows and doors.”

Beniel Dorceus, a 3rd grade teacher

Clearly, this project is impacting the students, the teachers, and even the community at large. While the immediate impact is evident from the students’ and teachers’ shared perspectives, the long-term impact of education on a community is immeasurable. In a country such as Haiti, where approximately 50% of children never experience an education, we anticipate the impact of this school will extend for generations to come. ■



“I did not like the old building. I like this one with nice blocks for walls. Also, the classroom is not so hot. We have windows and a nice breeze. I feel more comfortable and can learn better in this classroom, because I cannot see the other students. It is much easier to take notes on new desks.”

Fabula, a 3rd grade student

“We are not under a tarp and do not get dirty and wet when it rains. Our classrooms are much bigger and it is better to learn in a proper environment.”

Wilner, a 6th grade student

“I like the way we function as a school now. I know I need education for my future. We have more things for our school, like posters on the walls.”

Juslin, a 5th grade student



“I love it much better because of the big yard. I like having more space in the classroom. I think I am learning more in the new building.”

Viender, a 3rd grade student

“I love the big classroom. The teacher can work better in this room. Break time is more fun with the large yard to play with classmates. This class has more confidence in their education because of this building.”

Benjimina, a 6th grade student



MORE THAN A RUG by: Michael Hoffman

Many of my most prized possessions have very little monetary value. One such item, a rug, rests in my kitchen, in front of my sink. I stand on it whenever I am doing dishes. Yes, I still “do” dishes, because I live in an older home without a dishwasher. I only paid \$40 for the rug, but every time my feet are cushioned by it, I am reminded of its inestimable

value; I am reminded that it is much more than just a rug.

This rug was hand-twined by a Haitian woman who earned \$20 for her craft. Tyson Ray, founder of CWI, and I stumbled upon this micro-entrepreneurial floor covering business during a trip to Haiti in the summer of 2015. While staying at a guesthouse there, we were introduced to this grass-roots enterprise and met some of the women who were making the rugs, using a simple loom and recycled sheets. We learned how meaningful this money was to these women in providing food for their families and keeping their children in school.

At the time, there were about 25 rugs for sale at the guesthouse. Tyson and I purchased them all and brought them back with us, where



“There is no tool for development more effective than the empowerment of women.”

– Kofi Annan, UN Secretary-General, 1997-2006
Nobel Peace Prize Winner, 2001

they were auctioned at our annual golf outing dinner. The rugs were such a success at the dinner, that we “ordered” 150 more rugs, which we had shipped to us from Haiti. These sold quickly at our food packaging event that year, providing the women a steady income during their months of production.

From that point on, we knew we wanted to continue to be a part of empowering these women in using their skills to provide for their families. However, getting the rugs to the U.S. was a difficult and costly endeavor, and the issue of where we would sell them continued to be

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FACTS ABOUT WOMEN IN HAITI:

- *In 2012, more than 44% of households in Haiti were headed by women.*
- *It is common for fathers to deny the paternity of their biological children, resulting in women raising children in dire poverty.*
- *The majority of women with jobs work in the service sector or are self-employed.*
- *The main employment for rural Haitian women is sustenance farming.*
- *Women in Haiti are 20% more likely to be unemployed than men.*



VOLUNTEERS MAKE AN IMPACT

Over the past several years, CWI has hosted a Food Packaging Event that brought together hundreds of volunteers to package meals for distribution to hungry children and families around the world. After packaging over one million meals, CWI took a break from hosting the event so the organization could focus on projects in Haiti, Ecuador, and Ghana, Africa.

In reality, the hardest part of the event was the fundraising needed to pay for the materials and food product, which took away from other long-term projects and work CWI feels called to complete. Lakeland Community Church of Lake Geneva then stepped in, and through their *Multiply Initiative*, raised the dollars required to make another food packaging event possible. We were thrilled that many of our faithful volunteers were happy to have one more opportunity to serve.

On Friday, March 17 and Saturday, March 18, 2017, close to 800 volunteers showed up at Lakeland Community Church to package 100,000 meals that went to feed orphans who suffer

from food insecurity in Swaziland in Southern Africa.

CWI wishes to thank the congregation of Lakeland Community Church for their financial support of this event. Without their generous giving, this event would not have been possible. CWI thanks FORM Wealth for their organizational input in structuring the event. Their teamwork was essential for a successful event. In addition, CWI would like to thank the hundreds and hundreds of volunteers who showed up to package the meals. Their energy was palpable and the time they dedicated to making an impact will be felt halfway around the world for many months to come. ■



NEW TECHNOLOGY- NEW LOOK

by: Michael Hoffman

It's undeniable—we live in a technological world. We now have words commonly accepted in the English language, and part of most official dictionaries, that originated because of technology; words like *selfie*, *ping*, *adware*, and *tweet*, to name just a few. It is estimated that nearly 67% of the world's population will have access to a cell phone by 2019. According to a survey by Smart Insights, 80% of internet users own a smartphone.

Recently I was reading a *blog* (another tech word) that indicated 58% of searches on the world wide web are done on mobile devices. What this indicates is that the majority of us navigate our world with our cell phones. While print resources like phone books, dictionaries, and maps still exist, for most of us, these resources have been replaced by our phones or tablets.

What this means for businesses as well as organizations such as CWI is that a web presence is critical; not only a presence on the web, but one that is mobile friendly. Indeed, smartphones have changed the nature of web design over the past few years. Content that used to fit on a 13 inch laptop or a 22 inch desktop computer must now fit the screen of a device that is small enough to hold in one hand.

For this reason, CWI has made some recent changes to its website. While our old design served us well for the past 4 years, we felt it was time to make some alterations that would make for a better mobile experience for our users. We've streamlined our content and embraced a scrolling design, with less clickable links.

Check out our new look at www.cwi.org.

A few of the hundreds of widows benefitting from the project in Ghana, Africa



**285 MILLION
WIDOWS**

115 million living in poverty

1 IN EVERY 10

African women, over age 15, is widowed

WHY WIDOWS

Children's World Impact is committed to looking after widows and orphans in their distress. This is part of our mission. According to a 2016 article in Forbes, many of the largest non-government organizations (NGOs) in the U.S. specifically target the needs of children and orphans, including Compassion International, Feed the Children, Save the Children, and ChildFund International. However, there was not one NGO, from the top 100 listed, that specifically addresses the needs of widows.

Although accurate information is limited, it is estimated that there are over 285 million widows around the world, with over 115 million of them living in destitute poverty. One in every 10 African women, over the age of 15, is widowed, according to The World Bank's *Poverty in a Rising Africa* report. While in the developing world, the majority of widows are older women who have lost their husbands to disease or

age, many women in the developing world face widowhood at a very young age due to civil conflicts, AIDS/HIV, treatable diseases, or being married to a much older man by arrangement. Many of these women face a lifetime of widowhood, often in the midst of raising large families.

In addition to the challenges of raising children without the financial support of a husband, many young widows face laws that strip them of their rights to assets, including land, income, and property.

According to the World Bank Group's, Women, Business, and the Law 2016 report, 90% of the 173 countries studied had at least one law limiting women's financial participation, including constraints on their ability to own or inherit land. These laws severely limit the financial stability and potential earning power of widows.

Not only do laws limit the stability of widows worldwide, many cultural rituals contribute to the financial and psychological challenges faced by widows. In India and many parts of Africa, rituals exalt the position of the dead husband, blame the woman for the death, and require the widow to mourn openly and in formalized ways. In some cultures, widows are confined indoors for up to a year, prohibited from washing for many months, or required to sit unclothed on a mat and ritually cry and scream at specific times of the day and night. Some African cultures require children of a widow to be given to a brother of the deceased husband. While many of these customs are illegal, rural widows, enmeshed in poverty, have very few avenues for claiming their legal rights.

How do widows survive in developing countries where there is no system of social security and where customs and laws socially and financially isolate this sector of women? If they are illiterate, untrained, and without land, their options are few. CWI continues to commit efforts and resources to provide widows in the Upper West Region of Ghana, Africa, income producing opportunities to improve their own lives and the lives of their

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WHY WIDOWS? continued from page 06

children. There is strong research that shows that increasing income for women results in spending that directly benefits their children. In addition, an increase in female labor in developing countries has a positive impact on overall economic growth.

This past year we upgraded the electrical transformer at the widows'

project in the village of Ullo in Ghana in order to provide a more reliable and steady flow of electricity for the women involved in shea butter production, bread baking, dry season gardening, and potable water sales. In addition, we are happy to report that a branch bank is being constructed in Ullo. This new facility will give widows access to financial services, including bank accounts and loans, which will help in assisting these women with a more stable financial future. ■



MORE THAN A RUG

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a roadblock. Most roadblocks are eventually removed, and this past summer we discovered a way to continue supporting these women.

During our trip to Haiti in June of this year, Tyson and I stayed in a new guesthouse in the city of Bercy. Run by Mike and Amy Rivas of Lifelong for Orphans, this beautiful new facility hosts numerous mission groups throughout the year who come to serve the Haitian people. It seemed like the perfect place to sell the rugs. After working out all the details, Mike and Amy agreed

that the guesthouse was the perfect venue for selling the rugs. In addition, they were so excited to be supporting the women, that they purchased a rug for each of the rooms in the guesthouse.

So, as I stand upon my rug each and every day I am reminded it is much more than a rug. It is a symbol of financial independence. It is a means to keeping children in school. It is a reminder that roadblocks are temporary. And most importantly, it is a symbol of hope and empowerment. ■

"It is small acts of love that can transform the world one life at a time. And together they form the vital core of a whole-person approach to justice."

Jedd Medifind



Breaking the cycle of poverty!

OUR MISSION

At Children's World Impact we commit to looking after orphans and widows in their distress, and to make a significant impact on the lives of the neglected.

OUR VISION

Children's World Impact seeks to break the cycle of poverty through care and community development.

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