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Model Village Project

History

In 1986 God turned our hearts to the plight of the Haitian people risking their lives and the lives of their family through their desperate attempts to leave their homeland. The question of “Why” was not producing any answers until a visit to that country showed the naked truth of what life in Northwest Haiti really was. It was a place without resources to sustain human life. It was a place that had no hope. It was merely a place. It was quickly recognized that the people only existed. Their primary goal each day was to find water to drink and some type of food. Every day they were faced with this dilemma; nothing else was more important.

This was the beginning of Living Water Ministries, a mission to help the people by telling them about Jesus Christ. It is important to carefully look back through these 24 years to explain how the presence of God and the Gospel in these villages has been able to bring about a new way of life.

Living Water Ministries (LWM) made its presence known through building churches, schools, and clinics in a large number of villages. This gave the people an opportunity to hear the Word of God proclaimed, educate their children, and find basic medical help. As the days and months turned into years, the people were experiencing a hope that they had not expected. The transformation of the mindset of the people that confined them to poverty level existence had to begin with the children. Recent articles in the newspaper reported that one particular older Haitian gentleman returned to his home town in Northwest Haiti after living in the US for a period of time. His reason - because he did not want to be rescued from his former way of life. We all recognize that change is one of the hardest things we must do in our role as a human being, and the older we become the less likely we will adapt to it. The key to changing life in Haiti is no different. Therefore, we chose to focus our efforts on the younger generation.

Living Water Ministries Approach

There are three general classifications we will use to document our Model Village Project. We will use the following to describe the development of Petite Paradis which is the village we have selected.

- Phase I - Discovery – for a faith based organization such as Living Water Ministries this takes place when God directs us to a group of people, a particular situation, or a specific area.
- Phase II - Primary Establishment – evaluation of the need and development of basic necessities
- Phase III - Entitlement – incorporation of commodities, revenue generation, and administrative infrastructure to make them whole and self sufficient

Discovery

In November 2002 it was recognized that expansion of the ministry was needed. Plans to develop a Campus that would provide centers of ministry, education, healthcare, and private enterprise began to take form. The pursuit of locating a piece of property in 2005 led to the discovery of a small village along the coast that is known as Petite Paradise that is adjacent to the proposed LWM Campus. It was the poorest village that has been discovered by LWM. It is a small fishing village that looks like a barren desert in the most remote area. The ground is a type of lava rock. The average rainfall is only 5 to 15 times per year. The people live in mud huts that show the ravages of tropical winds and rains. There was no church, no school, and no clinic. Their fleet of fishing boats were almost beyond use which limited the distance they could cover resulting in the disastrous fact that they had fished-out their area. The clothes they did have were nothing more than rags. You could not find anyone wearing an actual pair of shoes. Men and women were living together but were not married. There was no concept of a Biblical family unit. The report brought back by the Board Members visiting the area was that Petite Paradise was the poorest and most remote village they have found in all of Haiti.

God made it possible for LWM to acquire over 600 acres of coastal property right next to this little village. We gave the Campus the name of God's Paradise because of the vast potential that was waiting for the right kind of development. What we did not fully comprehend was the potential of the village sitting next to us. We typically work with 5 to 7 villages at one time until they become self-sufficient. We immediately added Petite Paradise to our active list of supported villages and actually made them our number one priority. Every time any of the Board Members or Mission Teams traveled to Haiti, we spent time in this village. We brought extensive medications to them to care for their poor physical conditions. We brought clothes and shoes for them. They showed a great desire for education for their children so they made a four sided building out of sticks that did not have a roof that they wanted to use as a school. This was a valiant effort, however, the sweltering heat of the sun made it impossible to conduct classes. It became very easy to love these people and a bond between them and us quickly developed. LWM constructed a church for them that is also used as a school during the week.