

Haiti NEEDS US!

Dear ICC Community,

You may have been following recent events in Haiti. I want to assure you your school, staff, students, and families are all safe.

However, the United Nations predicts that a humanitarian crisis is escalating from the tenuous economic, political, and security situation in Haiti that has intensified since the Presidential assassination in August 2021. Canada and other countries are considering intervention - see "[Haiti Needs Us](#)" [Globe & Mail, Oct 27](#).

Circumstances in Haiti Now

Food warehouses and supermarkets are bare; the cost of basic food staples – rice and beans – has now doubled. The cost of cooking oil and gas/diesel has soared 10x higher - effectively a 1,000% price inflation!! Since mid-September, no containers have been unloaded at the seaports - putting a stop to all delivery of cargo, including food. With 45% of the population already nearing starvation last March, [the hunger crisis is deepening](#).

[Clean water](#) is typically accessed through deeply dug wells, which must be pumped to the surface via generators. With no gas to operate a generator, Haitians are forced to drink unclean, unfiltered water.

A powerful gang alliance, known as the G-9, has barricaded roads to the seaport and the capital's main fuel terminal; gasoline stations are empty, generators inoperable and healthcare facilities, businesses and schools, including ours, have been closed.

Basic necessities for human life in Haiti - water, food, gas - are simply not available, or are out of reach due to the exorbitant cost.

Our Students, Teachers, Staff, and Families are Impacted

Most business and schools were closed in September, with an anticipated opening date of October 3. Most schools remain unable to open. There is fear for safety; no reliable transportation to the business or school (motos and "tap-tap"s are simply too expensive to use); and, no ability to operate the business or school without diesel, gas or propane. Healthcare facilities remain open, providing the few services they can, with little-to-no power.

- ☞ Inflation has reached an all time high.
- ☞ Parents are not working, and are not receiving any income.
- ☞ Schools, including ours, remain unable to open as of today's writing.
- ☞ Families are unable to secure food staples: cooking oil and beans are beyond what families can afford and are hard to secure; rice is more available, but is still much more costly.
- ☞ Families are unable to access fresh produce: most Haitians secure their fresh produce from local, small open-air markets. If they are able to walk to a local market, they may be able to access fresh produce. If not, the cost of taking public transportation is simply too high to go to a market.
- ☞ In the town of Montrouis, where our school is located, there is no longer local access to clean water. There is a natural spring in the mountains located high above the town; this is the water the community is trying to drink. It is a day-long journey on foot to access.

[Haiti in My Heart](#), along with our Administrator Paul, our School Director Madame Remicile, our staff and teachers, are committed to providing [basic necessities, education services, and stability to our children and families](#).

We will not abandon our children and families in Haiti.



Educational Services

Mme. Remicile (School Director) and Paul (Community Administrator) met with our teachers in late October to determine how best to support our students in their education, without placing students and staff at risk.

We are hoping we can open the school with regular programming and hours in January 2023. Until then, teachers have created curriculum and lesson plans for a full 6 weeks of modified programming.

As of November 7th, and operating until the Christmas Break, students may attend a modified "school program" on campus. The school will not be "officially" open, and the entire student body will not be able to be on campus for the full day.

- ♥ Teachers and administrative staff will be onsite for the full day.
- ♥ Grades 7-9 may attend every afternoon from Monday-Friday.
- ♥ Preschool and Kindergarten classes may attend every morning on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday.
- ♥ Grades 1-6 may attend on their specific day of the week, in the morning.

Not all students will have a safe ability to attend. Families are not required to send their children to school. Students will be provided work to be completed at home, when not attending on campus. Teachers are ready and prepared to assist students who do not attend, when they return to school.

Basic Necessities

Our annual [School Feeding Program, Meals for Minds](#), is not possible in its usual format of providing daily student and staff lunches at school - the students can't safely attend on a regular basis as our school campus can't be seen to be "open as usual". Yet, the need has never been greater for access to stable, secure non-perishable food.

We know that the majority of Haitians eat just 1 meal a day. Our [School Feeding Program](#) usually ensures that at least this 1 meal is secured. Without our [Meals for Minds](#) program that would have provided a daily lunch for students and staff over the last two months, families have had to either stretch their other food resources even thinner, or have simply done without.

Paul is able to secure the necessary quantities of food we need to provide a modified [School Feeding Program](#) during these 6 weeks of modified school programming. Teachers and staff are being provided a regular daily meal during their full day. Students are being provided a snack during their part-day attendance - consisting of peanut butter, crackers/buns, a hard boiled egg, fruit when available, and juice.

These measures are only a temporary stop gap. Families have been doing without for over two months, facing heart wrenching circumstances and making tough choices you and I will never face – How will I provide a meal to my children today? Who in the household will go without a meal today?

Our [Meals for Minds](#) December appeal this year will address this food security crisis. We will raise funds not only to secure staff and student daily lunches but also provide at least one non-perishable food distribution to our 250 student and staff families.

The cost of food has skyrocketed. To provide a daily meal for one student for the school year has now doubled to \$200. At current prices, our [School Feeding Program](#) will cost \$46,000; the family food distribution will cost \$14,000. In previous years, a similar distribution to our families cost only \$5,000.

How You Can Help

When we see such desperate situations, our hearts are moved, and sometimes we feel powerless to help.

Scan this code or click this link to read Rachel Ziebart's story of giving and her thoughts on the power of gifts (<https://www.haitiinmyheart.ca/rachel>).



You are part of a community in Canada and Haiti that moves mountains!

It is inspirational to see the determination and dedication of our leadership and staff in Haiti to continue to provide education and nutritional support to their community despite their personal circumstances.

We are committed - as always - to supporting children and families in Haiti, most especially in great times of need. We have done so, with the ICC's community and parishioner support and generosity.

Make A Gift

Scan the QR code to pay by debit or credit card, or click this link:
<https://www.haitiinmyheart.ca/meals-for-minds>

Send an e-transfer to info@haitiinmyheart.ca

Cheques can be dropped off at the ICC office or mailed to:
HIMH, 434 Glenwood Avenue, Kelowna BC V1Y 5M1.

Please make cheques payable to "Haiti in My Heart". You can take other action, too!

Donation cards and envelopes will also be at the back of the church for your giving convenience.



Send A Message of Hope

At the back of the church on the weekends of November 18/19 and 25/26 you will find post card sized blank "Messages of Hope" and pens. Write a brief message of hope to one of our families in Haiti. These messages will be couriered to Haiti on December 5th and each family will receive a Message of Hope with their food package at the distribution. We have 250 families – can you take a few minutes to write a Message of Hope?

"One of the marvelous things about community is that it enables us to welcome and help people in a way we couldn't as individuals." ~ Jean Vanier



You are the HIMH community. Please feel free to chat with me personally, in person, by zoom, or on a phone call.

With much gratitude,



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