More Than Just a Grain Mill

It was an important day for ODTPG (Oganizasyon Dye Tou Puisan Gilgo) when members, Lambi Fund staff, delegation travelers, children, and community members from far and wide eagerly packed the newly constructed Grain Mill in Southern Haiti just south of Les Cayes.

ODTPG, a grassroots organization dedicated to improving the community through sustainable projects and micro-credit funds, orchestrated an exciting inaugural ceremony for the Grain Mill, which began with a Ra-Ra (parade) in the streets full of singing, dancing, and drums.

As they made their way into the mill, nearly one hundred observers quickly filled the building, leaving many to watch the events through the windows or open doors. This elaborate celebration of speeches, member introductions, music and theatrical performances culminated with the inaugural starting of the grain mill and a short demonstration of its machinery. Despite the harsh hurricane season and resulting dismal outputs of crops, organization and community members alike had reason enough to celebrate.

Before ODTPG partnered with The Lambi Fund of Haiti, locals were forced to travel two or three days to the nearest mill in order to have their rice and grains milled.

In addition to the obvious financial burden this placed on the poor farmers from the labor lost during this trip, the roads were in poor condition and dangerous. Now, local farmers can easily and affordably have their grains milled in their community. ODTPG members provide milling services for a reasonable fee to others in the area, bringing more income to the community.

The modern machine produces high-quality milled rice and grains, allowing farmers to sell their goods at a higher price in the markets.

In Haiti, these mills are run mostly by women, which further strengthen gender equity and their ability to contribute economically to their families’ livelihoods.

This grain mill is an exemplary model of sustainable development at work. Not just one or a handful of individuals benefit from the Lambi Fund partnership, but entire communities are lifted up and local economies strengthened.
SASH, a grassroots organization in Southern Haiti, was founded in 2003 by 12 local beekeepers. Initially, they came together and discussed their problems with current beekeeping methods, the market, and environmental changes like droughts.

As these discussions continued, they realized they should work together in order to strengthen their beekeeping businesses.

Their organizational goals include modernizing SASH members’ beekeeping apparatus, protecting the environment and providing support for new members.

Prior to SASH’s partnership with Lambi Fund, beekeeping methods consisted of using half of a hollowed out tree log placed on the ground with palm leaves stuffed in the ends. In this enclosed space, bees would make their beehives and produce honey. Using this simple method made it difficult to effectively harvest all of the honey, and what was produced lacked purity. Modernizing their methods was one of the major reasons why SASH formed.

SASH requested the materials and methods necessary to modernize their beekeeping techniques. Lambi Fund provided funds for SASH to buy 16 modern beekeeping boxes, smokers, extractors, veils, tools, and gloves.

Members attended workshops on strengthening organizational leadership from Lambi Fund staff. They also learned about effectively running and managing the beekeeping business, and received training on modern beekeeping techniques from an apiary expert.

Strides made by SASH and its community are inspiring. They own the land that houses the beekeeping boxes.

They now have 30 fully functioning boxes and are in the process of making 30 more. SASH members’ commitment to the beekeeping project is integral to the success of their business. Banyan trees surround the land and help attract bees to produce high-quality golden honey.

Droughts and continued deforestation decrease the numbers of flowers available for bees to pollinate so the SASH members are committed to replanting tree saplings throughout the region in partnership with Lambi Fund.

Currently, these beekeepers produce and sell honey by the gallon. They also sell beeswax for candles, propolis, royal jelly, and bee venom for medicinal and therapeutic uses. SASH also reports that other beekeeping groups in Haiti have come to SASH to learn from their newer methods.

As this organization looks to the future and opportunities for expansion, they discuss desires to explore international export of their products. They also want to expand their inventory of beekeeping equipment, some of which can only be purchased in the U.S. These tools make their work even more efficient and productive.

Less handling of the honey is required, the honey obtained is even cleaner and they can obtain as much as five high quality gallons of honey per box.

Donate now to Lambi Fund of Haiti if you want to support beekeeping in Haiti.
Q&A With One of Our Partners

Benilia Claude, of Ti Komite Legliz (TKL)-Oscar Romero Ox Plowing Project

**Lambi Fund:**
You are a founding member of TKL-Oscar Romero. What led to forming this organization and what is your current role?

**Benilia Claude:**
In August of 2004, a group of us younger members in the community were sitting around and talking about how difficult our lives were and the many struggles we faced in trying to make a living.

This area was not developing as quickly as others and we decided that if we hoped for any sort of future, we needed to join together and help one another.

We went door to door encouraging people to attend a meeting, and soon the community became very engaged and involved in TKL-Oscar Romero.

Members asked me to run for President of the organization and I was elected.

**Lambi Fund:**
What is your involvement with the Lambi Fund?

**Benilia Claude:**
In 2008, TKL-Oscar Romero formed a partnership with the Lambi Fund of Haiti that allowed us to overcome our shortage of resources in working the land.

We have been able to implement a successful ox plow service for the community that allows farmers to affordably plow crops that were previously sown by hand.

I have also participated in numerous organizational training workshops from Lambi Fund.

I would say that life experience and the Lambi Fund trainings have helped me obtain the management skills necessary to be a good president.

I understand that life is hard, and that you cannot let go or give up in the struggle for a better tomorrow; I never want to lose hope. Being a mom helps, too.

Currently, the members and I are poor and we would like to be able to expand the mutual fund so that everyone can be assured access.

The fund allows us women to do more for our families: we can borrow 2,000 gds to buy products to sell at the market so that we can make a small profit.

I guess, ultimately, the most frustrating thing is that there are not enough resources to support our organization’s long-term vision.

**Lambi Fund:**
What are your and TKL-Oscar Romero’s plans for the future?

**Benilia Claude:**
I hope to continue in partnership with the Lambi Fund so that members and I may continue to strengthen our community.

We would like to continue our reforestation efforts, start a micro-credit fund especially for women, and work to ensure that all of TKL-Oscar Romero’s children have the funds to attend school. I know that at times progress is slow, but a sustainable future for our community is real.

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**Join us on the next delegation to Haiti.**

See firsthand some of the grassroots organizations partnering with Lambi Fund. Email us at info@lambifund.org to get a delegation application.
Clean Water Project: A Final Report

The Women’s Association of Tet Kole – Northwest (KFTK-NW) wanted to build five community cisterns. This project was developed as a response to needs identified by local Haitian women, and has strengthened democracy and built community.

KFTK-NW is one of the largest and best organized women’s groups in Haiti. KFTK-NW has a total of 600 women’s groups and each one of them has five to 15 members.

The group wanted collective cisterns in five communities: Ka-lak, Kolombye, Dityet, Savways, and Lakoma. Cisterns increase the supply of potable water, thus decreasing water borne disease and improving children’s health. Community cisterns also help those responsible for obtaining water in rural Haiti: women and girls.

Lambi Fund provided the inputs (sand, gravel, cement, iron, binding wire, PVC, sheets of aluminum, steel, wood, plywood, transportation) needed to build the cisterns. Lambi Fund provided follow-up and evaluation on a regular basis.

Organization members provided the labor, water, and gravel to construct the cisterns.

Project Launch

KFTK-NW leaders and Lambi Fund discussed the overall strategy of the project and KFTK-NW created the management committee and subcommittees to manage the project.

Members of the KFTK-NW and Lambi Fund staff met with PlanConsult, the organization hired to build the cisterns.

They determined that four cisterns would be located in the Rey-mon area because residents had to walk 5-6 hours to find water.

Reymon was selected even though delivering construction materials to the area was to be very difficult due to the poor road conditions.

Training

Organization members attended the training, and all participants indicated they learned a great deal about cistern construction, water quality, hygiene and health.

An additional training on water purification will be held for the organization members.

Construction of Cisterns

Heavy rains impacted the Rey-mon area, and it was difficult to transport the materials to the four project sites. But because of the members’ commitment to the project, the engineers and contractors received all the needed materials at the construction sites to begin the projects.

The financing and construction of the four cisterns was completed on time. The original plan included a fifth cistern of 10,500 gallons at the organization's Jean Marie Vincent Center in Lakoma.

However, based on a study of the terrain and the building structure and roof, the organization and Plan-Consult modified the original plan to include two smaller cisterns.

All of the cisterns have been completed and are working well. They are filled with water from recent rains in January and February.

Conclusions

Because women are the ones responsible for obtaining water in rural Haitian communities, the KFTK-NW project beneficiaries are women and girls. Instead of spending hours walking to a far away water source, women can spend more time on other activities when a water source is located within their community.

Girls can attend school rather than spending the day walking long distances to get water. Community cisterns decrease water borne dis...
New Projects

Your support can help bring projects like these to life

Ox Plowing Service

The 54 members of the Organization of Farmers from Besi and Klona (OPBK) want to help farmers in their area increase land productivity and improve food security by providing ox plows, and to offer credit funds to members at a low rate of interest.

The organization will also plant 20,000 seedlings for their reforestation effort.

The Lambi Fund will seed the credit fund, purchase six oxen, three plows, and tools such as hoes, carts, pick, pumps, will hire a veterinary agent and will provide training on project management, hay production and storage, and tree nursery construction and management.

Micro-credit and savings

The 201 members of the Peasant Association Ba Rivye Mansel (AGPBRM) in the Artibonite asked for seed money for a micro-credit and savings fund to assist 40 women in the organization in starting small businesses.

AGPBRM will also reforest the area by planting 20,000 forest and fruit trees.

Lambi Fund will capitalize the micro-credit fund, provide materials to build the nurseries, purchase seeds and hire a nursery attendant.

Lambi Fund will provide training in micro-credit management, organizational development, and reforestation to ensure project success.

Sustainable Development

The 75 members of the Peasant's Association for the Development of Barye Batan (AGPBD) want to take an integrated approach to assist farmers in their area.

They want to establish a credit fund for farmers to plant beans, corn and millet, and they want to build a grain storage and seed bank facility.

AGPBD will also plant 20,000 tree seedlings to reforest the area.

Lambi Fund will finance the credit fund and purchase seeds for the seed bank and for the tree nursery. Lambi Fund will also provide funds for materials to build the tree nursery and the grain storage and seed bank facility.

Lambi Fund will provide training in micro-credit management, grain/seed storage, organizational development, and reforestation.

Reforestation

The Association of Bwa Bene 4th section of Veret (ABKV) wants to plant 120,000 trees over two years.

They will plant a total of 30,000 seedlings every six months at three sites.

The Lambi Fund will provide funds needed to purchase seeds, tools and equipment such as rakes, pump, picks, machetes, watering cans, shovels and wheelbarrows for each site, hire three agricultural technicians, and provide training on sustainable agriculture and seedling production.

Read About All of Our New Programs at www.lambifund.org

Your support can help bring projects like these to life.
Why the Lambi Fund of Haiti Works

The Lambi Fund of Haiti works because of its unique bottom-up collaborative approach that is different from the top-down approach of many charities. The Lambi Fund’s original, grassroots development model succeeds because it relies on Haitians themselves to determine the needs and the most effective solutions in each community. The Lambi Fund’s emphasis on democracy, a community’s actual needs, and peasant-led solutions ensures more successful outcomes.

As a result, we hear positive feedback from peasants. Here is a quote from a member of an organization that developed a community solution to economic sustainability: “This project has taught us how to protect our fields and the surrounding mountains so that we have more crops, cleaner water and less erosion in the future.” —Member of organization with sustainable agriculture project.

Our Programs
- Alternative sustainable development
- Environment
- Organizational and leadership training
- Community micro-credit
- Animal Husbandry

Our Principles
Lambi Fund supports peasant led community organizations in Haiti that promote:
- Non-violence
- Gender equity
- Self-sustainability
- Non-partisanship
- Grassroots democracy

Our Future
- Improved economic conditions
- Increased food availability
- Increase in potable water
- Improved environment
- Increased gender equity
- Improved democratic functioning

A Delegation to Remember
By Andy Clarke, DU Intern

Twice a year, the Lambi Fund of Haiti hosts a delegation for donors, board members, and those interested in learning more about Haiti and the work of The Lambi Fund.

The most recent trip was in November of last year. We visited Lambi Fund partners in the Southern Region, including a beekeeping organization, an animal husbandry program, an ox plowing service, and a community agriculture program.

After seeing Haiti, it became very clear that the need there is profound and widespread. Yet it was also apparent that the programs the Lambi Fund is doing are having a visible, tangible impact on the communities where they work.

We travelled through the countryside of Haiti by day, visiting programs, meeting people, and learning how grassroots organizations that Lambi Fund partners with are changing communities in Haiti.

We saw how well organized these groups are, and how the jobs and opportunities created by these programs were bringing not only relative prosperity, but also cohesion to their communities. There was a sense of unity in all the communities that we visited, no doubt fostered by the sense of collaboration and shared responsibility that is part of Lambi Fund programming.

In the evenings, our group retreated to hotels, where we enjoyed Haitian music, ate local food, and reflected on what we had seen and what more we could do to build on this progress.

We even took a much needed afternoon at the beach before heading back to the historic Oloffson Hotel in Port-au-Prince for the night. We laughed, we cried, but mostly we left with a sense of urgency and purpose that comes when one feels like s/he is on the right track, but that there is much, much more work to be done.

Haiti Director Josette Perard works with women at leadership training.
Why I Give

By John Morris

I give to the Lambi Fund because it is set up in a beautiful way. It empowers and inspires people to use their own skills and strengths, while honoring their dignity.

I have been fortunate in my life and I am blessed with a good job. Through the HP matching program, I am able to give to others knowing my gift will be multiplied. In Haiti, even a modest gift makes a huge difference.

I know I can’t solve the world’s problems, but I can help solve some people’s problems, and that is a wonderful feeling.

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Continued from Page 4

ease and improve children’s health. Instead of spending money on sending their children to the doctor, women can spend it on their children’s education.

The residents of Reymon and Lakoma said that the cisterns have brought great relief to the areas. Previously water was scarce in the two communities and residents had to walk long distances to obtain water, sometimes as far away as 15 kilometers.

KFTK members stated that people are coming from far away to look at the cisterns. Neighboring communities have already asked Lambi Fund to help them build their own cisterns.

More cisterns are needed in Reymon to meet the needs of the entire community. The two cisterns in Lakoma have resolved the water problems at the KFTK center.

The Lambi Fund received a letter from residents of Reymon that stated:

• The cisterns are capturing water to the satisfaction of residents.

• Reymon residents are very grateful to the Lambi Fund because they now have easy access to water.

• Children's health will improve in the long run.

• Lambi Fund’s support enabled KFTK-NW members to improve their capacity to manage projects.

Challenges

The biggest challenges faced were due to rising costs of materials, fuel and transportation; a lack of needed rocks in the area to complete the project; and recent hurricanes.

I want to make a difference for a rural Haitian community!

☐ Check enclosed for $ ___________________
  (make check payable to the Lambi Fund of Haiti)

☐ I want to help grassroots organizations in Haiti on a regular basis.
  I pledge to contribute $ _____ on a monthly/quarterly basis (circle one)

☐ Please charge my (circle one):
  Mastercard   Visa   AmEx

  Card number    Exp. Date

  Signature    Today’s Date

Name: ____________________________________________

Address: __________________________________________

City, State, Zip: ____________________________________

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For more information about the Lambi Fund or to make an online donation, go to www.lambifund.org

Return to: Lambi Fund of Haiti, PO Box 18955, Washington DC 20036   Or email us at info@lambifund.org
MISSION STATEMENT

The Lambi Fund’s mission is to assist the popular, democratic movement in Haiti. The Lambi Fund provides financial resources, training and technical assistance to peasant-led community organizations that promote the social and economic empowerment of the Haitian people.