Celebrating 20 Years of The Lambi Fund of Haiti

20th Anniversary Celebrated at Camp Perrin

20 years of partnership, 20 years of hope, 20 years of growth, 20 years of sustainability and enlightenment. That is what the Lambi Fund of Haiti’s 20th anniversary celebration in Kanperen (Camp Perrin), South Department was about. It wasn’t about the Lambi Fund or what “we” have accomplished as an organization, but rather what our partner organizations have been able to accomplish with your help.

Members from more than 40 of our grassroots organization partners were present along with the Lambi staff, consultants, friends of Lambi and those who simply heard of the Lambi Fund’s good work throughout the years. They brought with them a powerful sense of excitement and encouragement with their smiles and laughter. As each person entered, members of our board and staff greeted them with t-shirts that each person wore that day, Lambi staff and partners alike. Although we were all in different vibrant colors, we were all one. There was no hierarchy or separation of class – something that the Haitian people have suffered from for far too long.

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2015 Delegation to Haiti

The Lambi Fund of Haiti will host a delegation to Haiti from February 1 thru 7.

Billed as a 20th Anniversary Delegation, we will visit sites in Artibonite and Northwest Haiti, including the water project that was the focal point of our 2014 anniversary campaign.

If you may be interested in joining us, please visit our website, http://www.lambifund.org/news_trave.shtml, for more information.

Get to know us. Give to grow us.

GivingTuesday is December 2nd, 2014. Please join us on this global day of giving.
The Lambi Difference

The strategies of the Lambi Fund have evolved over twenty years working in, and building relationships with, local farming communities all over Haiti. Over that time, we have worked with more than 250 organizations, 164 of whom we met with this year to celebrate our work together. In reflecting on what distinguishes the Lambi Fund from other NGOs, our partners highlighted the respect and value that we place on them and our relationship. As we sit together at the table of development, we are always open to learning, to sharing our experiences and to arriving at a mutual understanding so that we may work in unison to strengthen their capacity. In so doing, we honor their wisdom, their vigilance and their extraordinary efforts.

At the Lambi Fund of Haiti, we place as our highest value the knowledge and the wisdom of the Haitian people. We begin from the simple premise that “those who do, know;” that is to say that those who are closest to the work are most likely to know what works within their communities and their environment, and what strategies are most likely to be successful in changing current circumstances. We understand that projects that arise from within the people and the communities themselves will have a much higher level of ownership by those same people and, as such, will be more likely to succeed.

From this core value arises the Lambi Fund’s first and overarching strategic consideration: Organizations approach the Lambi Fund with their priorities, their ideas, their projects. We do not seek to impose our vision, our values, or our ideas for what might constitute a good project.

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Although this celebration was held in southern Haiti, organizations such as Tet Kole Northwest made the two-day journey just to attend. Some of Tet Kole’s members make up a band, Awozam, which performed at the celebration. There was music, there was singing, there was dancing, there was food, and there was merriment. But this was more than just a party. It was an opportunity to reinforce our bond with the people that we serve in rural Haiti and to let them know that they are not alone, that we appreciate their hard work and dedication to succeed and to take care of their families and themselves.

Each person in attendance got the chance to introduce themselves and share where they came from, how they partnered with Lambi, their hardships and how the partnership with Lambi has helped them turn things around. It was an amazing feeling to be able to put faces to the names and to be in the presence of such resilience and strength.

Some of them shared personal testimonies of what this partnership has done for them and their communities as a whole. The abundance of thanks that Lambi received from each person who spoke was emotional and overwhelming. Many of them shared their thoughts on how the work that the Lambi Fund is doing is work that the government should be doing for their people, others, the fact that it is so important and meaningful to them that Lambi, unlike other organizations, treats its partners with the respect and leadership that they fully deserve.

It became even more special when our partners presented us with gifts to show their appreciation for our partnerships. They brought fruit from the fruit trees that they planted with their own bare hands, milk from their goats, and kasav (a delicacy made from processed manioc) produced at their grain mills. These gifts only solidified what we already know to be true – the people of Haiti may be poor in resources, but with their motivation when they are presented with sustainable opportunities, there is no limit to what they can do. It was a powerful feeling to see the work that you, our partners – and their partners – outside of Haiti, have helped to foster. Thank you!

While the awards and gifts the groups presented the Lambi team spoke volumes, the celebration itself was more of a way for us to thank our partner organizations for working with the Lambi Fund of Haiti. When it came time to serve food, it was another rush of emotions and satisfaction for the Lambi staff and board to be able to “roll up our sleeves” and serve each organization member first as they were our guests of honor.

During the two celebrations in Haiti (Latebonit in April and Kanperen in May), 483 participants from 164 different organizations gathered to celebrate with us. Looking forward, as our partners always do, they challenged Lambi Fund to work with them to network among our partner organizations to mobilize and advocate for change and to build meaningful grassroots democracy in Haiti. The road ahead may be long, but we have accepted this challenge and invite you to join us in continuing our efforts to bring the Haitian people to stand and be firm on their own two feet. Lambi cannot work without these peasant organizations, but they have shown us - time and time again - that with the right support they can work without Lambi. We will continue to give them the boost and training that they need to succeed, but ultimately Haitians are a capable and self-reliant people. What we teach them they not only carry out, but also improve upon. Hats off to our partners in rural Haiti and to you, our invaluable supporters. We would not be able to celebrate anything without their partnership or your belief in Haiti and its future. Thank you.
GIVE WATER/GIVE LIFE REACHES GOAL!

This past July, we asked you to consider making a gift to support our campaign to build 20 water cisterns in the communities of Dityet, Mawotye and Lakoma in Northwest Haiti. And you responded. With the recent grant of $30,000 by the Prospect Hill Foundation, the Lambi Fund of Haiti has secured donations of $87,240 out of a goal of $88,060.

109 individuals and foundations stepped up to support this project. This included the Argosy, Joseph and Marie Field Family Environmental and the Fernandez Pave the Way Foundations.

If you haven’t had a chance to participate in this project but would like to, it’s not too late. While this campaign was for 20 cisterns to celebrate 20 years of operations in Haiti, these communities actually requested 30 cisterns. We will need to raise an additional $27,000 in the next year to fully complete this project.

Villagers began gathering rocks in October and construction materials have been ordered. Actual construction should begin in November and will continue until completed sometime in the spring of 2015. The delegation traveling to Haiti this coming February will visit the project to learn first hand from the people in these communities about the difference these cisterns are making in their lives.

From the citizens of Dityet, Mawotye, and Lakoma, from the members of Tet Kole [Heads Together] Northwest, our partner on this project, and from all of us here at the Lambi Fund of Haiti, thank you for making this project such a success!

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The Lambi Fund’s mission is to strengthen the grassroots, democratic movement in Haiti. Because it is our view that the peasant organizations that dot the landscape of rural Haiti embody within them the values of a free and democratic Haiti, we have made a strategic decision to work exclusively with these organizations as we seek to bolster economic justice, democracy and sustainable development in Haiti.

Finally, in our lengthy experience working in Haiti, we have come to understand that brief interventions are rarely successful, and that projects that do not incorporate learning and a process of continuous improvement are not sustainable over time. The Lambi Fund of Haiti has adopted a tactical approach that includes a lengthy (up to nine months) and deep, pre-evaluation process to identify organizational strengths and weaknesses; a long engagement (up to two years) that addresses organizational strengths and weaknesses previously identified; and a thorough post-project evaluation that provides organizations with guidance as they step out on their own into an uncertain future.

The Lambi Fund works in five primary areas: Sustainable development, capacity building, reforestation, animal husbandry and community credit funds.

Development assistance has a dismal track record: As many as three in four development projects are likely to fail. This is particularly true of Haiti where, even prior to the earthquake, billions in aid over decades had resulted not in an emerging middle income nation with a fully functioning democracy – as is true almost everywhere else in Latin America – but rather in a most imperfect democracy and an economy that has plunged from 159th on the UN Development Index after the earthquake in 2010 to 168th today, one miserable notch better than Afghanistan which has experienced nearly 40 years of continuous warfare.

Given the human and financial stakes involved in determining what is, and what is not, effective is a very serious issue. Successful development assistance must be sustainable over time. Sustainability occurs when projects are not simply relevant to, but arise directly from, the people to whom and for whom development assistance is being provided. It goes well beyond teaching a woman to fish so that she may eat for a lifetime; it means asking her what she wants to eat, what is standing in her way from eating, and how she would like to address her food crisis. Development is sustainable when it meets the objects of its compassion, not on the playing field of our hopes, dreams and aspirations for them, but rather on the field of their own hopes, and dreams and aspirations for their own development.
Here at the Lambi Fund of Haiti, our 20th anniversary is not only a time to celebrate the past, but a time to look forward to the future and the new changes that come with it. We are excited to announce the arrival of our brand new brochure.

We are also thrilled to announce our new website, which will go live in January 2015 at www.lambifund.org.

20 years of information, 20 years of projects, successes and news have left our old website full to the brim. We are taking this anniversary as a time to re-organize everything that the Lambi Fund has to offer, in the hope that you, our supporters, can easily access information, stay up to date with projects and understand how your donation helps the people of Haiti strive for democracy.

We have heard from many of you. Please keep your input coming. Write us at info@lambifund.org

To get your own copy of the brochure, go to our website, or email us at info@lambifund.org