Friends of the Children

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Dear Friends and Family,

We have a lot to share with you regarding Friends of the Children's medical clinic in LaMontagne, Haiti. To begin, Haiti's political environment has been extremely unstable and unsafe for the past few years. Haiti's president, Jovenel Moise, was killed during an attack on his private residence in July, 2021. Several foreign suspects have been arrested and remain imprisoned in Haiti. The prime minister, Ariel Henry, was appointed the day before the president's assignation and has been attempting to run the country by proclamation. The Parliament has since been disbanded, leaving the country without a single elected official as it faces intersecting catastrophes: famine, cholera, gang violence, fuel shortages and economic collapse. In the absence of a functioning state, gangs have filled the void. Haiti's capital, Port-au-Prince, is the center of a horrific turf war in which there have been prolific kidnappings and civilian deaths. It is estimated that gangs control up to 80% of Port-au-Prince, with more than 200,000 people displaced after gangs pillaged and burned their homes.

Although Friends of the Children does not operate in Port-au-Prince, travel through the chaotic and dangerous city is necessary to get to the site of our clinic in LaMontagne. Sadly, our American health care volunteers have been unable to directly provide the much needed medical assistance to the members of the community that we have served for *more than 25 years*. However, our longstanding relationships, on-going medical education to local health care workers and midwives, and fierce determination to sustain healthcare has paid off! In our absence, the local healthcare workers, physicians and ancillary staff have conducted two clinics per year. Approximately *5000 patients are treated annually*. Medication distribution to patients with chronic medical conditions continues. Friends of the Children has provided ample support for these clinics, such as purchasing and shipping medications and supplies, and providing patient care consultations. The cost of these services has increased dramatically, especially since all shipments and transportation from Port-au-Prince to LaMontagne must be accomplished by air due to concerns with safety and security.

Because of your generous and continued support, we are able to provide continuity of care to thousands of Haitian people who live in LaMontagne. Enclosed is an envelope if you wish to make a tax deductible donation to continue this life saving mission.

Please keep Haiti in your thoughts and prayers. It is our hope to return to the country we love as soon as it is safe to do so.

With our upmost and sincere gratitude,

Dr. John and Linda Underwood and
Friends of the Children Board of Directors

Examples of how donations are used:

• Nutritional supplements and formula for 5 malnourished children	$500
• One year supply of medications for 5 hypertensive patients	$400
• One year supply of medications and testing supplies for 3 patients with diabetes	$300
• Birthing supplies and prenatal vitamins for each pregnant woman	$200
• First aid supplies, including suture packs for each health care worker	$150
• One year of multi-vitamins for 4 children	$100

Photos from file

Sustaining Health-care in Trying Times:

One of the most important goals of Friends of the Children is ensuring the health care needs of the people of LaMontagne are taken care of well into the future. During each medical mission, medical staff provide education to the Caritas healthcare workers on topics such as primary assessments, first aid, wound care, and basic suturing. Once proficiency is demonstrated, each healthcare worker receives supplies to care for the residents of their respective villages.

Caritas workers provide medical care when we cannot be there. They treat many conditions such as cholera, malnourishment, diabetes, dehydration, and fevers. They are essential members of their villages and often the only members with any medical training. Needless to say, we are extremely proud of their dedication to the health and wellbeing of their neighbors!

The Haitian staff responsible for running the most recent clinic in August, 2023 included two Haitian physicians from Jacmel, 14 Caritas healthcare workers, 3 pill counters, 3 security staff, 1 pharmacist, 1 clinic manager and 1 housekeeper. More than 2000 patients were evaluated and treated. The patients with chronic medical conditions received a 6-month supply of medications. The staff physicians also provided education and supplies to the healthcare workers and local midwives.

Photos from August, 2023 Haitian-run clinic