

SPRING 2021



productive cooperatives HAITI



*“Change will not come
if we wait for some other
person or some other time.
We are the ones we’ve been
waiting for. We are the
change that we seek.”*

~ BARACK OBAMA



The Foundation for International Development Assistance
Fondation pour le soutien du développement international



EDITORIAL...

When I arrived in Haiti in January, the plan was to return to Canada in March. This was not to be. It is now May and it appears that it was easier to get out of Canada than to get back in. My prolonged time here has been nothing but rewarding. COVID is virtually non-existent here leading to some intrigue as to why this may be the case. However, there remain other factors that limit our mobility in country such as random kidnappings and political protests. We are accustomed to these things in Haiti and practice necessary precautions as we go about our work. A primary advantage is that we are viewed as a local organization rather than foreign and, we are known by reputation rather than by brand. Travel, nonetheless, is always strategic.

We have just wrapped up the first quarter of implementing our 'Beyond 2020 Vision' strategy. It is my experience that most organizations mistake/confuse *measurement of activity* with impact. The number of children sponsored in school or the number of meals distributed is not impact. Nor is the number of patients we see or the number of meetings we attend, trainings we conduct, or number of reports we complete.



Impact addresses the *effect* or *influence* our actions/activities have on the situation we perceive as needing change. FIDA/pCH has had to take a hard look at what our impact has been in terms of our overall mission and vision. What has really been our influence in terms of investing in sustainable models and programs such as cooperative, agriculture and adult literacy? While we may say that many of the members of cooperatives do not consider themselves poor (or definitely less poor), they continue to want to advance. When asked, "What is the change you desire?," it is difficult for them to articulate. "We want to work together. We want to go forward," they say. But forward to what, is not something they seem to be able to clearly express. They know they want change, yet they continue to re-elect leaders they do not trust. They show up at meetings with a semi-hope that something will change. They know they need health services, but they do not believe it is in their hands to be able to provide such.



Well, this time we changed it up. Throughout the last number of months, in meeting after meeting, in training after training, with members, leaders, current staff, new staff, prospective staff, the pcH mission and vision was hammered home and tested, in exhortation, in power points, in diagrams and figures, in questions and answers... in offices, conference rooms, churches, schools, and in roofless structures, through cold and rain. They sat and stood under tarps, and they began to enlarge their minds as to what is in their hands. At one meeting, I put to them that if 1,000 members register for health services, they can not only support a medical team but would have enough profit to construct a clean water service (for example). Eyes widened. Chatter erupted.



As of the end of April, 211 families are paid registrants in the health services pilot. A photo is taken of the primary holder; the “photo booth” backdrop, a sheet draped over the end of the Toyota ambulance. The photo is transferred to a health card with a barcode to monitor all visits as well as medicines dispensed. The demonstration to the medical team had them intrigued as to how technology can bring dignity to the poor. It is, indeed, a brave new world.

The unimaginable, imagined. The impossible being made possible.

Betsy Wall, Executive Director
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THE LEGACY OF PURPOSE: TROY SANON, PCH BOARD CHAIR

For the people and by the people: these words have been implanted in my mind for the last 28 years. I saw the call to serve on the pcH Board and later, to facilitate the FIDA/pcH 2021-2026 strategic plan, to be *for my people and by my people*. Having three country boards come together in Haiti and complete a dynamic, participatory, responsive, realistic and inclusive planning process was my greatest dream for the organization that gave me my first job. There is nothing cooler than serving as Board Chair of an organization founded by one's mentor, a person whose life inspired your first book.



I found myself struggling through the early preparation of the sessions. “Why am I trying to do a perfect strategic plan?” I realized that I was not needing to do a perfect strategic plan but to do it *for the people and by the people*. These people are *my people*: the cooperatives, the communities, the donors, the Board Members, and the staff. We are one.

I knew instantly I was experiencing my missing piece... the coming together, the discussing together, as a team, and creating a written blueprint for all to see. Here is a team that owns the vision. This is the essential foundation for FIDA/pcH to realize a higher level of impact, attract more resources and employees with passion and motivation. I have never been so optimistic, not only for pcH but for Haiti. I admit I did not expect such level of commitment that I see at pcH. Each one see themselves *called* to this vision for their country. It is quite unusual to find here in Haiti.

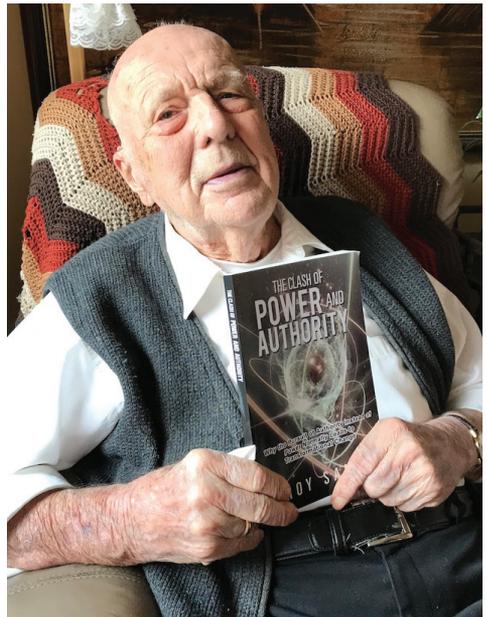


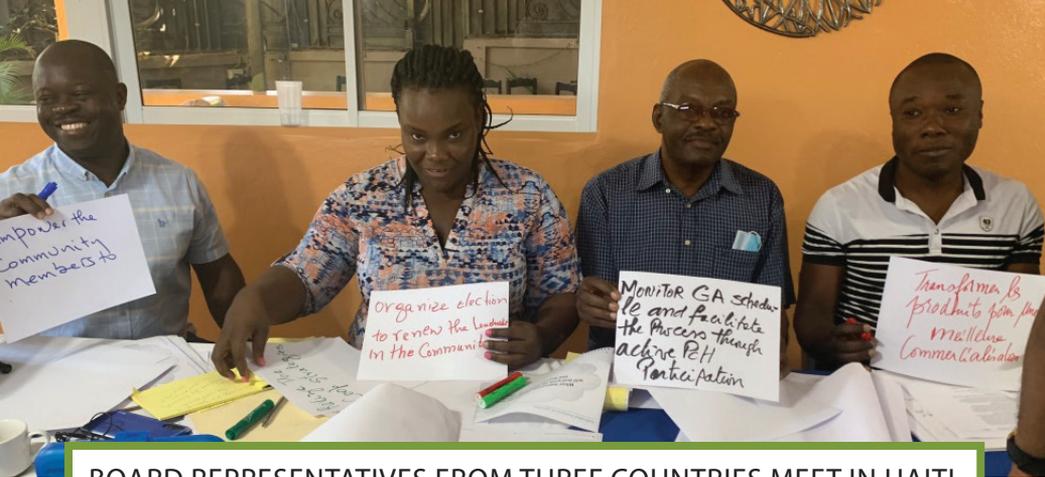
Jack Wall saw true development as an endogenous process... *“It must be for the people and by the people or it will surely fail,”* he would often remind me. I worked for Jack in Haiti from 1988 to 1995. I know the man. He believes in the ingenuity of the people and is fully committed to this. His life inspired me to write my book, *“The Clash of Power and Authority”*. I learned from Jack that a life of impact is through a belief in purpose. It is why I answered the calling to serve on the pCH Board. I know this work will never be in vain because it is rooted in the vision of a person with natural authority; one who dedicated his life to serving the poor.

God called me and has given me the gifts I need to guide pCH strategically. I have answered.

“And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.”

Romans 8:28





BOARD REPRESENTATIVES FROM THREE COUNTRIES MEET IN HAITI

To be sure it was an historic event, as Board Members of pcH, FIDA Canada and FIDA USA, along with invited partners gathered to meet in a newly renovated Conference Room at Wall's International Guest House in Haiti. Each country has five members, a number of them present via ZOOM due to the recently applied COVID restrictions. The theme of the three-day forum (February 4-7, 2021) “Beyond 2020” intended to look at our collective history and identify our vision and goals going forward. The sessions were led by Troy Sanon, Chairman of the pcH Board who introduced us to Technology of Participation® (ToP) training which provides structured facilitation methods to help groups think, talk and work together. We all found it a brilliant and effective tool to identify our goal and objectives in our “Beyond 2020 Vision” strategy.

Scott Johnston, Board Member, FIDA USA, reflected, “The process reminded me of the words of the apostle Paul in his second letter to the Christian community in Corinth: ‘Now He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest... This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of the Lord’s people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God’ (2 Corinthians 9:10-12). My prayer is that I will be able to generously pass on these ‘seeds’. This vision is one that is bold, challenging, audacious, exciting, empowering and most importantly, do-able. I am grateful for having been asked to serve on the Board and humbled by such an invitation to empower co-operative men and women through our Beyond 2020 Vision Strategy.”



Most recent Board Member, Bapthol Joseph, adds, “I believe this process to be a right and sound investment for pcH, FIDA USA and FIDA Canada. It not only allowed various stakeholders and Board Members to engage in a focused interaction over three days, it also fostered a professional bond. The new ToP methodology used by the facilitator, Troy Sanon, forced us to think outside the box with both an outcome and action-driven mindset. The entire process was highly participative and yielded desired outcomes.”



FIDA USA FUNDS AMBULANCE TO HAITI

Brad Newbury, founder, President and CEO of the National Medical Education and Training Center in Boston is the mover and shaker behind the gift of a true blue “ambulance” to complement the current health services program. (Typically, we also refer to our Toyota Land Cruisers as “ambulances” as they can comfortably transport a stretcher.) Brad is also a member of the Harvard Disaster Medicine Institute as is FIDA USA Board Member, Scott Johnson. It was Scott who introduced Dr. Joey at a Caribbean Disaster seminar in St. Maarten. Brad’s contribution was inspired by the FIDA/pCH vision of mobile clinics and telemedicine in Haiti. It is envisioned to equip this particular ambulance with tele health technology so that there can be constant monitoring of patients while enroute to hospitals. Traffic congestion can often make such trips a risk to a patient’s condition precipitating life and death circumstances.

We are deeply appreciative of all those who contributed toward funding the shipping and related costs to get this unit to Haiti.





A REFLECTION: BETSY WALL, PCH COUNTRY DIRECTOR

This past month, while observing training sessions for newly elected leaders of thirteen cooperatives, I wondered, what had we missed? I was hearing voices of diminished self-confidence, helplessness, self-pity. I confess that I took less time to be reflective than I did to “rant”. I told them how (Mennonite) farmers in my home area produce enough to feed a family of ten for an entire year in a three-month growing season (and that many of them do so without farm mechanization or government assistance). I reminded them that they all come from agriculturally producing areas with good soil, adequate rainfall and year-round growing seasons. I went on. *“Many of you have accepted NGO projects valued in the thousands that are defunct or have achieved nothing. Why do you accept what does nothing for you? Why do you keep believing you need someone else to change your life? What are you waiting for? You are all created in the image of God.”* I exhorted, *“You have been given heads to think. If you continue to believe you are not blessed, then you are a slave to your own thinking!”* For some reason, this got an applause. I sat down and decided that no one would be able to leave until each one wrote down what they had learned and what they were going to commit to change. I stood at the beginning of the lunch line to receive their statements.

And there it all was, in their hands... hope no longer waiting.



The last word goes to Barack Obama: *“Change will not come if we wait for some other person or some other time. We are the ones we’ve been waiting for. We are the change that we seek.”*

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