

**American Friends Service Committee
Final Activity Report
Haiti Reforestation for Peace Project
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Grand' Anse, Haiti

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INTRODUCTION

More than a year after the departure of ex-President Jean Bertrand Aristide, the country has not found political and economic stability. Despite the presence of an international military force (MINUSTAH – United Nations Mission to Stabilize Haiti) in Haiti since March 2004, the insecurity continues to escalate. Port-au-Prince and other neighborhoods such as Belair, Cite Soleil, Martissant, La Saline, Nazon have been transformed into battle zones where armed bandits continue to spread terror with heavy gun fire during the night and day causing death and destruction of property. In addition, in the past several months there have been many kidnappings and car-jackings where gangs have demanded ransoms of hundreds of thousands of American dollars.

Few serious measures have been taken by the national police or the MINUSTAH to guarantee the security of the population that grows desperate every day. We could characterize this period as one of near civil war. This dramatic situation has created a ripple effect throughout all Departments in Haiti. Transportation from and to the capital is done with great difficulty and many passengers have been held for ransom, looted, and killed by armed bandits on roads and highways.

On the other hand the economic situation is more and more alarming. After the passage of Hurricane Ivan and Dennis in the south coast and Jeanne in the Artibonite Department, North, and Northwest where peasants have been left to fend for themselves, a period of drought affected the entire country causing loss of crops and animals. Agricultural and other products for basic consumption are difficult to find and when available prices are very high. Peasants do not have the purchasing power to keep up with their needs.

In this difficult context, the AFSC-Haiti continues to strengthen the capacity of the most impoverished population of Moron, Dame-Marie, Anse Hainault, and Irois to improve their social, economic, and health conditions, and improve their capacity to resolve conflicts non-violently.

The AFSC-Haiti Program started in 2000 a reforestation project with four main objectives:

- Conservation of trees and improved management of forested areas
- Introduction of new species of trees in order to diversify the existing forest stock with trees giving useful products such as fruits and nuts.
- Public awareness and motivation of the population regarding environmental problems.

- Target population is working and living in peace and democracy as a community.

Reforestation Project

Today, if there is one AFSC-Haiti project that merits special attention, this project is the reforestation work. After more than five years, AFSC-Haiti started a reforestation project that included training, community education, establishments of nurseries, the distribution of saplings and the systematic assessment of the project and its results. In the current phase of the reforestation project, AFSC-Haiti staff worked together with twelve community-based groups to create satellite nurseries and also produce saplings at the AFSC-Haiti agricultural center in Deremont, Dame-Marie.

The table below shows that activity in Deremont

Type of Seeds	# of seeds planted	# of seeds germinated	# of saplings distributed
Cacao	9,098	7,788	5,730
Coffee	826	826	530
Dame-Marie	1,896	1,890	1,002
Avocado	624	468	326
Capable	648	600	200
Citrus	1,763	1,582	537
Walnut	984	434	705
Bread fruit	784	784	512
Papaya	780	546	433
Cedar	741	741	600
TOTAL	18,144	15,659	10,575

The objective was to have 25,000 saplings for Deremont. AFSC-Haiti was not able to achieve the objective due to the fact that staff was not able to find some seeds that were in the original plan such as various types of mangoes, oak, mahogany, etc. The number of seeds planted differs from the number of seeds germinated due to the bad quality of certain species. It is rare to germinate 100% of seeds planted as there is always a small loss. AFSC-Haiti staff was also not able to do all the distribution during the first semester due to the drought. The distribution will be completed during October, 2005.

Twelve community-based groups participated in the project and each group determined their objectives as noted in the table below.

Community	Community-Based Group	Quantity Hoped for
Moron	OPBM	5000
	Fanm Deside Lafig	3000
	Tet Kole Rozali	3000
	AKFK	3000
	Fanm Solid Gitonye	3000
Anse d'Hainault	Paysan Site Limye	5000
	Gwoup Afe Lakay	6000

	Fanm Pasyans Sika	4500
	OJA	3000
Dame-Marie	OFTAD	3000
	Fanm Djan'm	3000
	Fanm Tet Ansanm Gwezel	3000

The drought problem and the impossibility to find certain seeds also impeded the groups to achieve their original objectives.

The table below shows the actual situation of each group

Community	Community-Based Group	Quantity of seeds distributed	Type of Seeds Planted
Moron	OPBM	3544	Cacao, cedar, citrus, capable, Dale Marie
	Fanm Deside Lafij	1000	Cedar, orange, Dale Marie, oak, walnut
	Tet Kole Rozali	1920	Cedar, orange, Dale Marie, oak, walnut
	AKFK	700	Cedar, orange, Dale Marie, oak, walnut
	Fanm Solid Gitonye	1812	Cedar, orange, Dale Marie, oak, walnut
Anse d'Hainault	Paysan Site Limye	2686	Cedar, orange, Dale Marie, oak, walnut
	Gwoup Afe Lakay	2139	Cedar, orange, Dale Marie, oak, walnut
	Fanm Pasyans Sika	2669	Cedar, orange, Dale Marie, oak, walnut
	OJA	3508	Cedar, orange, Dale Marie, oak, walnut
Dame-Marie	OFTAD	3300	Cedar, orange, Dale Marie, oak, walnut
	Fanm Djan'm	3300	Cedar, orange, Dale Marie, oak, walnut
	Fanm Tet Ansanm Gwezel	3387	Cedar, orange, Dale Marie, oak, walnut

These saplings are ready for distribution. AFSC-Haiti staff is waiting for the rainy season to do it. In addition to the difficulties already mentioned the community-based groups also had to deal with the destruction of some saplings by animals stomping on them by accident.

IMPACT OF THE REFORESTATION PROJECT

Despite the political and economic crisis Haiti continues to experience during this period, the project obtained positive results. The members of the community-based groups are satisfied and see a difference in their economic conditions. Community-based groups were able to have a small project as they charge one gourde or more for each sapling distributed to help cover costs and generate a small amount of income. Staff noted during the period the high level of motivation seen among community-based group members. In Deremont 22 women helped with the nursery by preparing the black bags for seedling. Many that are not partners yet have asked to become involved with the projects, so staff created a waiting list in case there are openings. The demand is greater than AFSC-Haiti's capacity to respond.

The reforestation project has helped make the population more aware of the importance of intensifying the local production of cacao as it is a major export product and very important for the economy of the country.

CONCLUSION

The reforestation project started by AFSC-Haiti in the Grand' Anse department is very important to the community-based groups and the country. It has helped bring greater understanding of the importance of the environment in people's lives and the devastation that cutting trees for charcoal production can cause. In addition, many peasants learned the importance of certain types of fruit and nut trees for their economy such as the case with cacao and cashews. AFSC-Haiti staff was able to introduce new species, as some kids of mangoes and citrus fruits and bring back some almost extinct forest trees such as Dale-Marie and cedar. This project is also proof that working together as democratic and peaceful community brings strong results. The members of the community-based groups were able to experience a different type of working methodology that focuses on the community, respect for each other, and respect for the environment. The larger impact may lie in their ability to apply what they have learned to other aspects of their lives and create conditions for a more just, democratic, and peaceful society.