



FRIENDS FOR HEALTH HEADLINES

FALL, 2015

A newsletter for Friends for Health in Haiti, by founder and executive director, Catherine E. Wolf, MD MPH



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Our Mission

The mission of Friends for Health in Haiti, Inc. is to improve the health status of the people of Haiti through high-quality health care provided in a caring, compassionate and respectful manner, as a means of demonstrating God's love in this world and as a reflection of our faith in Jesus Christ.

Save the Date!

Our eighth annual fund-raising banquet in Milwaukee, Wisconsin will be held on

Saturday, April 23, 2016

Watch our website, blog and Facebook for updates.

Please contact us if you are interested in sponsorship opportunities or donating to our auctions.

Visit the FHH Store

On our website:

FriendsForHealthInHaiti.org

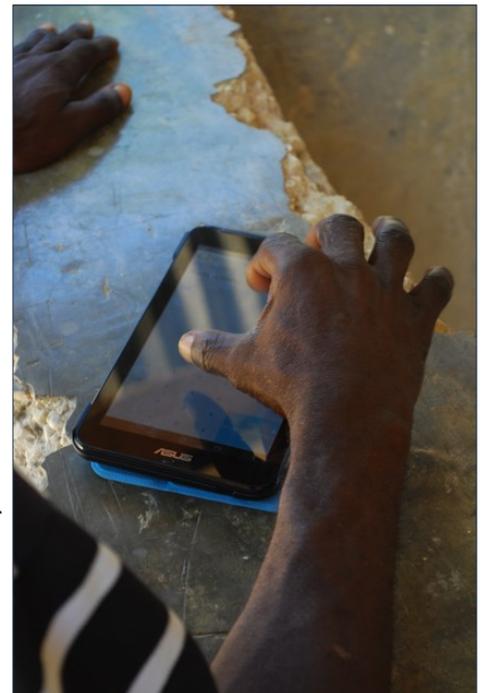
Support us and spread the word with hats, water bottles, coffee mugs, t-shirts and more!

INTRODUCTION

Sometimes the Lord puts a thought in your mind or a plan in your head and it feels like the right thing to do. After that, you talk about it with trusted friends to confirm that it is, indeed, a goal worthy of being pursued. So it was with our **Census Project**, the idea of which first came into my mind in March 2015. What was an initial thought became a plan and eventually a reality. Welcome to our world here in Haiti! This issue of our newsletter is dedicated to the underserved Haitians that our Census Workers discovered in their daily treks through the mountains and valleys of one of the most remote areas of the country. There they found people who had never before received a visitor to their home, had never seen a car or a motorcycle, had never bought a new pair of shoes or a new dress or shirt or a piece of candy for their children. These are people we are here to serve. Read below to find out how we discovered them.

HOUSE TO HOUSE THEY WENT... AND THIS IS WHAT WE LEARNED!!!

For the past few years we have been involved in a very exciting **Water and Sanitation Project** and we are now in the process of building latrines for some of the people living in the six communities served by this project. A few months ago I was wondering how in the world I could estimate the number of latrines that would be needed in **all** the communities that are served by the clinic. That question is what prompted us to embark on a very challenging journey – to conduct **a house to house census** in the three large rural sections (like counties) from which most of our patients come. We began by recruiting 18 men and 2 women from these areas to be our Census Workers. With assistance from Dr. Nicole Warren, faculty member at the Johns Hopkins School of Nursing (**JHSON**) and the Johns Hopkins School of Public Health (**JHSPH**), we purchased handheld tablets on which survey information could be collected.



Small tablet used to collect data for the census project

HOUSE TO HOUSE, CONTINUED

Each of the tablets was equipped with a **GPS device**, so we could obtain an exact location for each of the houses that were surveyed. We held an initial training session with the Census Workers in May 2015 (see our newsletter from July 2015). Then, on June 27th, we did a follow up training and gave the Census Workers their equipment (tablet, logbook, work sheets, backpack, FHH caps, FHH water bottles, ID tags, Sharpies and pens) and sent them on their way.

Four of the teams went to the largest rural section, Haute Guinaudée (HG) and three teams to Ravine à Charles (RAC). The last three teams started a month later in Basse Guinaudée, which is the area closest to the clinic. The teams decided among themselves which communities each team would cover. Each day they went out and **visited every house** in the community, asking for consent to conduct the interview and record information on the tablet. All people interviewed were over 18 years of age and neighbors sometimes answered questions if the homeowner wasn't present. **Each house was given a unique number** which was written above the door of the house, if the homeowner consented.

One of the Census Workers recorded all the information on the tablet while the other one filled out the logbook on which was recorded the most important information. This logbook was later used to verify the information that was downloaded from the tablets. If, for some reason,



One of the census teams signs for tablets and other equipment they received at the start of the census



Fanor Lanoux records on the tablet while Elien Oscar writes down information on the log sheets at one of the houses in the census

One of the census workers writes down the house number on the door frame of a house (this prevented duplication of the census by another team).



the tablet wasn't working, the surveys were completed by hand on paper survey forms.

Each weekend, Gemi, our community coordinator met with the Census Workers and downloaded information from the tablets onto a laptop. He also kept the workers supplied with battery packs that they used to charge the tablets, since most of them didn't have access to electricity in their homes. Gemi then charged the battery packs at the clinic, getting them ready to distribute again to the teams.

We were very blessed to have the assistance of Caddi Golia, a recent graduate of Johns Hopkins School of Public Health (JHSPH) and Brooks Morgan, a public health student at JHSPH. They came to Haiti a week after the initial teams went out and helped to troubleshoot the first data that came in. Brooks stayed for six weeks doing all the data analysis for us, revising the survey questions as needed to reduce errors and give us accurate information. In addition, he **created maps of the surveyed houses**, giving us a visual look at what was being accomplished each week by the census teams.

HOUSE TO HOUSE, CONTINUED

The three teams that covered Basse Guinaudée (BG), which was the smallest section, finished their work in less than a month. The workers in HG and RAC worked for almost three months in order to cover all their territory, which was quite remote and very vast (an approximate area of 70 square miles). Gemi went out with the HG teams who spent 1-2 weeks at a time up in the mountains without coming back home. The terrain was rough, the houses were far from one another and the Census Workers reached places they had never known existed. Here is what they recounted when they returned:



Gemi uploads data from a tablet to a laptop. Lifaite Andre looks on.



Looking across to a steep mountain ridge in the distance

"The hills were so steep, we had to slide down them on our bottoms so we wouldn't fall."

"When you walked along the mountain ridges, you couldn't look from side to side because you would get dizzy because it was so high."

"Anne (the only woman in the group) volunteered to cook for us every day. She was the first one up in the morning and fixed spaghetti for breakfast and rice and beans for supper. She did a great job!" We had given them money to buy food supplies in the local markets so they could cook their own food while they were away from home. It showed them that we understood the sacrifice they were making by being away

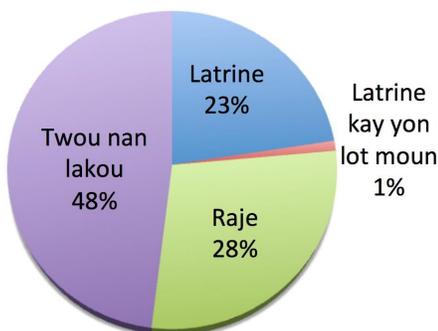
and were willing to help ease the burden.

"Everyone on the team was a Christian so each evening seemed like a revival service. We sat around with whoever's house we were at and sang hymns and prayed together. Most of the churches in that area were Protestant churches and the pastors welcomed us and helped us find all the houses to survey. We were very warmly welcomed."



One of the Census Workers carries a large sack on his head filled with food supplies for their week up in the mountains

Ki Kote Ou Poupou?
Where Do You Defecate?



Preliminary results show that 23% of households have a latrine, 48% use a hole in the ground and 28% defecate in the bushes. 1% use a latrine in another person's yard

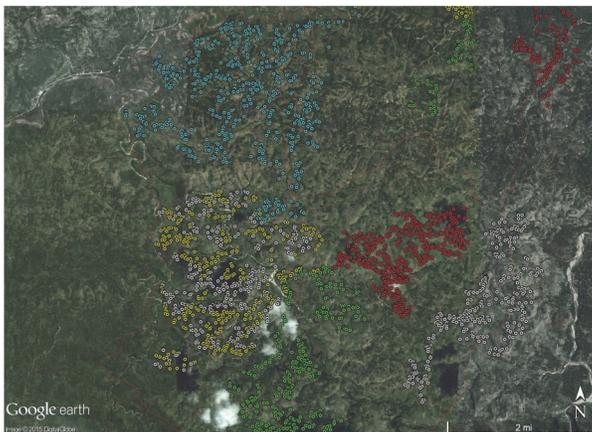
"We saw things we've never seen before in Haiti. There were adults walking around with no clothes on and houses that were only sticks standing together. We've never seen people so poor. When we cooked our food, we shared it with the neighbors and everyone was happy because they were eating. When people heard that the clinic had sent us, they asked us if we had brought medication with us. They had no way of getting medication or medical care."

Gemi shared with us that sometimes the team members would reach into their pockets and give \$10 or \$20 to people just because they were so poor and they felt bad for them.

HOUSE TO HOUSE, CONTINUED...

There were some humorous stories they shared as well, like the night when Gemi and Jameson woke up during the night because they were being bitten by ants that were on the floor of the house in which they were sleeping. They said there was no relief for them, even when they tried sitting up to sleep. The ants were relentless! Once they got home, any mention of ants left them both laughing.

We are very grateful for our dedicated, courageous Census Workers, some of whom are also our Community Promoters. They did a wonderful job and we held a **big celebration** on October 3rd at the clinic to thank them. With the assistance of students and faculty from JHSON we conducted some feedback sessions with the workers, after which we all ate fried goat and rice and beans! The census data is presently being analyzed but the initial results show that almost **8000 households** were visited and the area has a population of over 40,000. Only **20% of the homes have latrines** and Tippy



Individual houses are identified by dots. Each of the four teams had a different color on the map.

Taps (low tech method for handwashing) were most prevalent in the yards of people living near our Community Promoters. This gives evidence to the success of the community education efforts of our promoters and further motivates us to spread water and sanitation education activities to even more remote areas of the country.

Once all of the data from the census is analyzed, we will put it on our website for all to see. In the meantime, we are starting a **Designated Fund** to help the neglected Haitians we found in these remote areas of Haute Guinaudée and Ravine à Charles. This may involve providing agricultural support, medical care by way of mobile clinics, distribution of clothing through the churches in the area or even food packs to those in need. Let us know if you have any ideas on reaching these neglected people, many of whom are fellow Christians. Stay tuned for further developments!



Census Workers and JHSON students at the October 3rd celebration



Anne Similien receives a Certificate of Thanks from Dr. Katie Wolf, Dr. Nicole Warren and nurse Cherie Severe

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