



2013 HAITI YOUTH SUMMER SOCCER CAMP PARADE IN DUMONT, PORT-SALUT, CAYES

Reunion Sportive d'Haiti, Inc.



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Newsletter

RSH 4th Annual (2013) Haiti Youth Summer Soccer Camp

by Jean-Michel Voltaire, Esq.



The 2013 summer soccer camp, sponsored by Digicel and others, was a huge success and provided much needed assistance to 791 at-risk young people in the south of Haiti. More than 600 local merchants (99% of them women) also benefited by attending the camp, to sell their merchandises as a means of supporting their families.



In all, 70,000 people attended the games, throughout the summer, to socialize with friends and families. The games were

broadcast on ten radio stations throughout the south.



RS Haiti shipped a container of sports equipment that the Minister of Haitians Living Abroad helped move through customs. We distributed 3,500 shoes to school children, 2,500 dresses to women, and sport equipment (uniforms, balls, shoes) to 791 participants. We provided daily meals to the participants at the camp and food to 1,500 women and children.



To help the Haitian economy, we purchased all the uniforms locally. We had 36 teams, for a total of 791 boys and girls, men and women, aged 10 through 25. They came from 30 villages and towns, including Salino in Port-au-Prince, Les Cayes, Torbec, Gauvais, Arniquet, Saint Jean du Sud, Port-Salut, and many other surrounding cities. We hired 45 locals to manage the camp for 50 days, people who would have been otherwise unemployed.



Through its summer camp and other projects, RS Haiti is working to prevent juvenile delinquency and teen pregnancy, and to promote youth leadership

empowerment and local economic development. Investing in the youth is investing in the future of Haiti, because more than 70% of the population is below the age of 30. Many of these young people were victims of the earthquake. Many are living in extreme poverty, without access to clean water, adequate sanitation, electricity, or a decent education. They are having a hard time getting even a daily meal. Many do not go to school. Ninety-five of them are unemployed, and are living a life of idleness or delinquency. The rate of teen pregnancy is very high. Therefore, a new Haiti is not possible without investing in its newest generation.

In addition to receiving free soccer equipment and daily meals, summer campers learned about leadership, team-building, prevention of juvenile delinquency and youth pregnancy. These kids never missed a day at the camp, and got up early in the morning to exercise. They were engaged both physically and intellectually.



The official sponsor of the 2013 camp was Digicel, a major telephone company in Haiti, which takes its social responsibility seriously and invests enormously in the youth of Haiti, so that they can become better citizens. Mr. Delice Yardley, one of Digicel's Managers for the Les Cayes region, noted that "this soccer camp is the best organized and most attended in the South department. Over 7,000 people attended the final championship game.



According to Mr. Yardley, "development program is having major social and economic impacts on Haiti's youth." "Digicel is proud to accompany and help the youth as they are the future of Haiti. The

camp's success explains why Digicel hired 5 local dance groups and DJs from Les Cayes and Port-au-Prince to entertain participants, showcasing the youth's artistic talents.



The camp was also featured twice in *Le Nouvelliste*, the oldest Haitian newspaper.



Each year, in spite of their social and economic conditions, we witness the kids involved in RS Haiti's summer camp transform the unthinkable hardship into an unshakable commitment to building their lives. Watching young people who have suffered so much, playing at the soccer camp with persistence, sportsmanship, and determination to move forward, is an unforgettable experience. Their courage and perseverance in the face of adversity exemplify the best of Haiti and the resilience of a generation ready to meet their challenges with dignity and grace.



Wilson Dena, RSH Haiti Executive Director oversees the camp. He says that "the story of these children is one of survival, faith, and strength. They are heroes who are searching for a future." Emmanuel Charlien, our Project Manager, said that "these children will ultimately become extraordinary leaders whose courage, commitment, and impact will transform Haiti. We are inspired by their stories and strength of character."

RS Haiti awarded former District Attorney Jean-Marie Salomon its annual Leadership Award for providing security and motivating youth to take on leadership roles in their communities. We also formally thanked Senator Franky Exius and other government officials who attended the games and supported the kids.

Food for campers was donated by USAID, Catholic Relief Services, and Food for the Poor.





The shoes and sports equipment were donated by U.S. Soccer Foundation, Eurosport, and SoccerRECYCLE through the foundation's Passback Program. Ocean Job Lot, a major retail company in Rhode Island, donated the dresses and some shoes.



We could not have the 2013 soccer camp without the contributions from Digicel, Pat n To's Ice Cream, Haiti Renewal Alliance, CEEPCO Contracting, NOAH, as well as from our individual supporters who believe in making a difference in the lives of Haiti's youth.



Reunion Sportive is a 501 (c)(3) organization and accepts tax-deductible donations online at www.RSHaiti.org.

Address: 903 Kennebec Avenue, Takoma Park, MD 20912.

Board of Directors: Hansy Piou, Marie Millien, Richard Chema, Michele Crawford, Georges Guida, Dr. Claude Surena, and Jean-Placide David. We are grateful for their leadership, generosity, and hard-work throughout the years.







ACTIVITES



