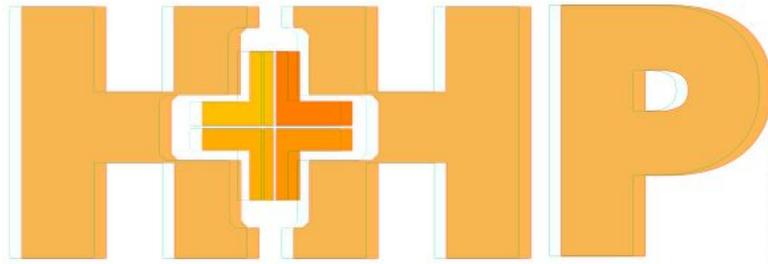


## Annual Report



HISPAÑOLA  
HEALTH  
PARTNERS



# 2020



*Photo credit: Patricia Borns*

## Lavi Se Dwol

Lavi Se Dwol, "Life is funny," is one of the thousands of phrases seen painted on the colorful trucks that crawl over the impossible roads of Haiti. This one stuck out for me, because unlike the usual appeal to Jesus to spare the driver, it acknowledged the ridiculous roulette of existence here. In rereading Graham Greene's *The Comedians*, one finds that he too

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endorsed the sense of humor in this land. This "beautiful and bedeviled country," he wrote 55 years ago, "is a dark blend of terror and farce."

Chaos has prevailed here over the past two years - frequent protests involving huge crowd manifestations, tire-burning roadblocks with flying bullets and lawlessness, and now compounded by the pandemic. Despite these setbacks, HHP has made steady progress in improving healthcare in our isolated corner of southeastern Haiti. In an area once completely neglected, today our clinic, Centre de Santé Union de Grand-Gosier (CSUG), is open for 24/7 health services, with improved female cancer detection, more maternal-child health and dental services, ultrasound technology, and staff development into research and capacity building. We were well-prepared to take on the Covid-19 pandemic with a staff-designed program that protects the most vulnerable.

At the same time, our clinic is moving closer to self-sustainability and now raises almost 25% of its annual budget. We thank you, our loyal supporters, for the nurturing you have provided as our impact grows, and for helping us keep the sense of humor and hope this job requires.

*Louise Lindenmeyr, Co-founder, Executive Director*

## **A Training Program for Traditional Birth Attendants:**

### *Ann Bay Lavi Jaret*

*Ann Bay Lavi Jaret* ("Give Life a Helping Hand"), our traditional birth attendant training program, started in June 2020 with the knowledge that many women in our community prefer to give birth at home with traditional birth attendants, or *matwòn*. This is concerning for several reasons. Haiti's maternal mortality rate remains the highest in the Western Hemisphere (UNICEF). The odds of a woman delivering her child with a skilled professional in rural Haiti are low because of the mountainous terrain, poor roads, and distance from a hospital or clinic.

*Matwòn* are present at 70% of births in our region. *Matwòn* are respected members of the community who women know will treat them with dignity and respect. However, many

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matwòn lack the equipment and training to identify high-risk pregnancies and treat serious complications.

The onset of the Covid-19 pandemic has placed pregnant women at increased risk as many forgo prenatal visits at the clinic for fear of getting infected with the virus. Additionally, the recent Hurricane Laura devastated the rugged rural roads with flooding and landslides, adding another barrier for access to professional prenatal care.

In March 2020, HHP hired midwife Ruth LaFleur, who while studying at Midwives for Haiti learned how to build a training program for matwòn, 90 percent of whom do not read or write. She helped design *Ann Bay Lavi Jaret*, our program that is training 18 matwòn and community health workers in three remote regions in our zone. Matwòn learn basic principles of hygiene, safe birth practices, and recognition of high-risk pregnancy, while community health workers promote family planning among their constituents. Ruth makes home visits with the matwòn and tracks patient outcomes.



**Ruth LaFleur teaching matwòn. Photo credit: Patricia Borns**

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With a grant from Global Force for Healing, a charitable organization focused on worldwide maternal health, <https://www.globalforceforhealing.org/>, we were able to train matwòn and community health workers in Covid-19 prevention, provide personal protective equipment, and distribute hygiene kits and dietary supplements for expectant mothers and their families. Recently, Global Force for Healing has awarded us another grant to continue ABLJ for the next three months.

Following the HHP philosophy of building from the ground up, *Ann Bay Lavi Jaret* enhances services to the region by utilizing our community's human resources to help give every mother and baby a healthy start.

## **Cervical Cancer Eradication *Ede Tèt Nou 2***

Haiti has one of the world's highest cervical cancer rates, but it does not have to be so. This slow-developing disease, which affects women in their prime, is perfectly preventable if we can reach them. Haitian women also carry a high burden of breast cancer, lacking a system to diagnose and treat the disease.



*Ede Tèt Nou* or "Helping Ourselves," takes the fight against these cancers to the countryside, bringing HPV self-testing and self breast exams to 1600 rural women. HHP has been screening women for cervical cancer since 2013 and has screened close to 4000 women so far. *Ede Tèt Nou 2* brings the highest standard of care possible to women in the region.

We have screened 1600 women using the HPV self-test and found an astonishing rate of positive high-risk results - in some parts of our region it's 37%, with a rate of 23% overall. This is the highest rate of positive cases in Haiti so far collected. Our volunteer researcher, Rebecca Henderson, is linking us with Partners in Health <https://www.pih.org/> to publish this important data in a paper co-authored by our Haitian staff.



***Nurse Musac is treating all positive women with a new technology called thermocoagulation. Photo credit: Patricia Borns***



***Medical Director Dr. Peigne using our new Butterfly ultrasound. Photo credit: Patricia Borns***

Women with suspicious breast masses are examined by ultrasound with our new portable Butterfly system. Our gratitude goes out to the Conservation, Food, and Health Foundation, whose generous support made this program possible. Thanks also to the Butterfly Network for gifting us their annual user's fee.

We witnessed history in the making on November 17, 2020, when the World Health Organization approved its *Global Strategy to Accelerate the Elimination of Cervical Cancer*. HHP looks forward to joining the collective effort to transform this strategy into lives saved.

## **HHP's Covid-19 Response**

The threat of Covid-19 hit Haiti early in March when the first few cases were detected there. Borders and airports were closed and the Ministry of Health began creating protocols. Infectious disease experts feared the worst - a pandemic hitting an impoverished nation that lives in chronically crowded conditions - and began to set disaster preparations in place.

Five hours by jammed bush taxi from Port-au-Prince, we feared the impact of Covid-19 on our community of subsistence farmers in mountainous terrain. We needed to prepare and

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protect our staff, educate the local population on how to reduce their risk of catching the virus, and support the most vulnerable: pregnant moms, their families, and the elderly.

Global Force for Healing generously stepped in and helped us jumpstart a program that responds to the above needs. Personal protective equipment and cleaning materials were purchased so the clinic could function as hygienically as possible. Newly acquired pulse oximeters help evaluate a Covid diagnosis and oxygen provides supportive care. Supplemental food was given to pregnant moms and their families along with hygiene kits. CSUG's midwife and community health workers went from door to door to talk about Covid-19 and distribute locally made masks.

Reflecting on the year since the pandemic hit, we are cautiously optimistic about the future impact of Covid-19 on our vulnerable populations. We have kept our mothers and babies safe, healthy, and disease-free. Thanks to GFH, we are better prepared with an action plan and appropriate equipment to confront whatever challenges await us as the virus continues on its unpredictable path.



***Demonstration of handwashing with a homemade foot-powered system.***

## **Dental Clinic**

Dental care is very difficult to come by if you live in the mountains of Haiti. Over the years, religious-based missions have helped fill this gap but the recent chaos has ground volunteerism to a halt. Meanwhile, teeth continue to deteriorate! HHP follows a different model, employing well-trained professionals from within Haiti to help their people. In February 2020, a team of Haitian



***Our dentists always teach prevention, but years of pain was eliminated with an extraction.***

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dentists brought their portable rig and treated more than 100 members of our community over a period of two days - one of numerous visits we have hosted.

## Meet our Professionals

Alexandrine Mardy is the Administrator of our partner clinic, Centre de Santé Union de Grand-Gosier (CSUG). Under her watchful eye, the clinic orders supplies, pays salaries, files reports and government paperwork, and creates and adheres to an annual budget. She interacts with patients and outside contractors and supervises the staff on a daily basis. Alexandrine has thus become a respected presence in the management of the expanding CSUG.



*Alexandrine Mardy*

Alexandrine was born in nearby Grand-Gosier, a local girl who has done well for herself and for our community. She studied business and

information sciences and has a Masters in Management from INUKA University in Port-au-Prince. She is a pro with spreadsheets.



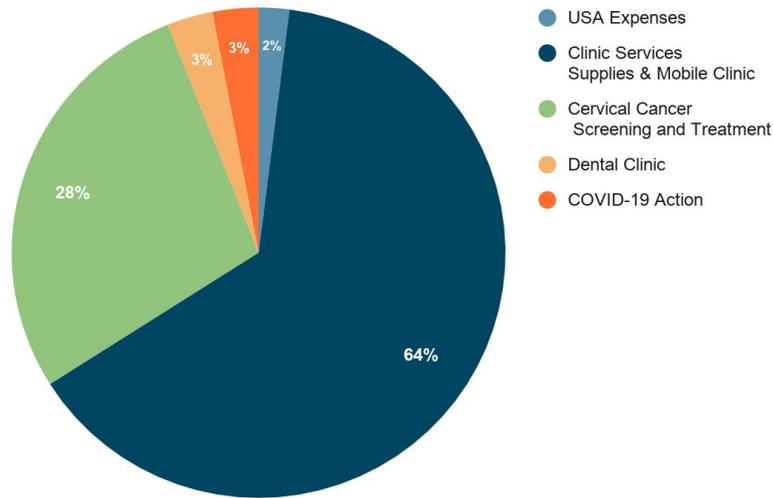
*CSUG staff and HHP president putting together clean birth kits*

Administration is central to the success of any health facility and Alexandrine brings professionalism and commitment to the clinic. With CSUG now a 24-hour operation, the administrative challenges and workload have only increased, and Alexandrine has embraced the expansion. HHP salutes her hard work and team spirit!

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## HHP Spending

In 2020, HHP spent \$88,214, 98% on the ground in Haiti. CSUG, our partner clinic, generated 25% of its own operating expenses, doubling its earning capacity in a single year. Moving forward, self-sufficiency is in sight, thanks to HHP and donor support.



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*Hispañola Health Partners is a non-profit organization incorporated in Colorado, USA, in July of 2013. You can help with a tax-deductible donation through our website or at the address below. Many thanks!*



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