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Helping Haitian's Health

Before one can begin to understand why efforts to help in Haiti are not making as big of an impact as one would originally think, there needs to be an understanding of Haitian culture and lively hood. The classic family living in Haiti this year is going to consist of "main" family along with any adopted children or any older relatives that no longer have a spouse to live with. The family's diet is going to be poor due to an accumulation of reasons. An ordinary diet would include rice and beans (if living in a more urban area) or foods such as sweet potatoes, yams, breads, and coffee (if in a rural part of the country.) There are two main meals eaten throughout the day. The main eating times are early in the morning and mid-afternoon. The majority of people eat a small snack right before bed, too. Even though Haiti is viewed as a lower end country, education is extremely important to its inhabitants. Since most Haitians are farmers, schooling can create a problem for small family farms which is what Haiti's society is structured upon. The recent disaster that nature has struck also puts a limit on what already meager schools can do to educate their children. Many schools were destroyed, not to mention the death of students and staff. Heath care also became a massive issue after the earthquake of 2010. The time when heath care was more important than ever was also the time when it was needed than in previous years. After the quake hit, millions of Haitians were hurt and there were not enough people with enough education or ability to help all of the injured people. Even now there are still many people dying from events unrelated to the natural disasters such as childbirth and the inability to get help because there are so little facilities that are anywhere close enough for the majority of the population to get help. As a result of the lacking health care natives and elders are creating their own forms of healing the sick and diseased. Some of these healers are those who specialize in herbs and their effect on the body. There are many others such as spiritual healers and those who have learned how to massage the body. Urban and smaller rural families have many similarities. Both communities are based upon farming and neither have a great amount of money going through the economy. Although, food has been coming in through aid from countries such as Canada, Spain, the U.S. and many other countries for a long time. The issue with "community or private gardens" is that most people are already farming on their own so there are not as many gardens such as these to go to. One of the major road blocks in increasing agricultural productivity are that only a small portion of the land is even up to par for farming or using for horticultural purposes. Even more land than what would be considered suitable is already being used. Farmers cannot make a living without using the farm land that they have, but at the same time they are only making the land less suitable for later use. Employment is hard for the Haitians partly because of all the aid they are receiving. The primary occupation right now is farming. A leading complaint about the aid Haiti continues collecting is about how it's distributed. When foreign countries come in and use their excess food to give away, it makes less of a demand for what the native farmers have already harvested, and decreases their income substantially. As a matter of heath care, it's not a problem with Haitians being poorly educated and not understanding that nutrition is important, but an issue of there not being any way for them to get the proper nutrition all people need.

Helping Haiti has pros and cons depending on where someone resides. In the United States it allows farmers to get rid of excess crops that would otherwise go to waste. In Haiti, it takes sales away from the people who are trying to make a living selling food. Presently, Haiti is still considered a disaster zone by many of the world's leaders. The economy is still in the gutter, people are still watching their children starve, and civilians are killing their friends and neighbors simply to get a bite of food or a drink of water. Haiti has gone back to the survival of the fittest in the 21st century. The resources are being used up by farmers who are not making any profit off of their harvests. Using land over and over again without modern inventions shrivels away its ability of producing healthy plants or supporting animals properly.

Once this is gone, and the immediate and undeniable need for help has vanished from the public eye, Haitians won't have much to support themselves on. While looking at Haiti from a nutritional standpoint, women, children, elderly, and the sickly appear to be at a great disadvantage. These groups are up against stronger men who could easily overpower them, reducing the probability of getting the food being offered. The trend seems to be staying the same. While Haiti has not been seen in the media nearly as much as it has been in the past, the situation still isn't at an acceptable level. For the average family in Haiti, the dilemma remains for them to accept food from another country which means the food they have reaped will simply go to waste, or to take their chances selling their own food. Their produce has a largely decreased value because of alien countries being there, giving away free rations. It appears to be unwise for families who are already poor to be spending their money on food when they could try to get it from a free place. If the vulnerable populations in Haiti were successfully helped, the quality of food could increase because it would have a smaller distance to travel (assuming the crops were from Haiti) making the crops fresher and also offer a wider variety of produce because the worry of spoiling during travel would decrease in large numbers. If the United States came up with a way to allow the food to come from Haiti, the economy of Haiti would see a monumental boost. Allowing the money to come from the country itself leads to an increased circulation of money and it would also feed money to those in great poverty, the poor, rural farmers.

There are other probable futuristic issues that may come about to influence the efficiency of aiding vulnerable populations and improving the effectiveness of humanitarian relief and food aid in conflict zones and disaster sites. The most commonly thought of factors are a jump in the population growth, water becoming rare, disease, and urbanization. If there were to be a sudden spike in the country's population, the predicament concerning Haiti would be how to feed the people. Communication is low in the country which would lower the likelihood of enough foods getting to the right places. There are already many inhabitants who are dying because they lack the ability to get food for an assortment of reasons varying from sickness, status, or residence. Water is one of the only things that is keeping Haitians alive. The body can sustain itself on water without food for a miraculous period of time. However unlikely it is, if water were to be running low, the result would undoubtedly be disturbing. Health is not the only explanation for water's importance. Haiti's chief way of life is farming and the raising of crops. Any and every kind of produce needs water to survive. Without water, crops would die which would leave the bulk of the population jobless without any way to acquire any money besides taking even more charity from other countries such as the United States. For Haiti, as for any third world country, disease is always an aspect to consider. Many diseases such as malaria, typhoid, tuberculosis, intestinal parasites, and STD's all have a hefty impact on the situation in Haiti. The country is already limited on the amount of money it has to spend, so most medical facilities are low priority and are more than likely to stay there. Because of the health care situation, other health specialists have become a large portion of the healers of Haiti. Lastly, there is a possibility of urbanization. Unlike all of the other probabilities, urbanization would be an advantage in helping Haiti. The greater part of the residents all joining together would quite possibly cause a ripple effect in numerous aspects of assisting the nation. External aid would have a much easier time getting all the supplies to the people that needed it if the needy were gathered in the same place. Urbanization could also start a path to more job opportunities. With the help of outside countries, there could be openings for government jobs such as building roads, police, and more teachers. As other jobs besides farming began to increase, the economy would likely see an impact.

By looking at the condition that Haiti is currently in, the fact that something needs to be done is evident. Both health care/humanitarian relief and food aid need to significantly be increased. The United States may also need to consider a new way of going about the relief that would help Haiti in several ways besides just the obvious and foremost reasons. One personal proposition to amplify the benefits of health care and humanitarian relief for the U.S. and Haiti is to allow new graduates to go to Haiti and help instead of staying in their homeland and remaining unemployed. The United States would firstly have to

raise enough money to pay the new doctors enough to get by. Raising the money is just a mole hill compared to the amount of good it would do the sickly and under educated in Haiti, not to mention the exceptional and rewarding experience it would grant to the blossoming physicians. For the safety of our citizens, Haiti would have to construct new infrastructures for our nation's young people to work in. There would be a need for people to come and build these hospitals and care centers. The jobs could then go to former farmers who are essentially losing money with the land they keep using. Even though the work would be temporary, it would allow for the land to recover from all the years of hard work it has endured. After a few years off, the soil would be more productive than ever to raise crops bigger and better than in previous years. This begins to play a part in the second factor, food aid. The biggest turn off of the aid that the United States has been generously offering is that it largely overpowers small family farms, which is what the majority of families in Haiti do for a living. Many people suggest using these farmer's excess food that they have to feed Haiti's people instead of using it as a dumping hole for America's extra crops that nowhere else to go. If the plan discussed earlier was put into effect, it would allow some of those farmers, who feel like the aid has been overshadowing them, to have another source of money, even if only for a short amount of time.

The situation in Haiti can only begin to be remedied when all Americans rise to the occasion and answer the silent pleas coming from this devastated country. The efforts may start out as small, like schools having fund raisers or local business donating goods for an auction in which the proceeds would go to help the effort. Moving up to a bigger scale, the national government could help these new doctors pay off their student loans to motivate more of them to help. It would also be imperative that the government listen to the Haitians and keep lines of communication open so that its citizens don't feel as if it's a takeover. Large companies could loan employees in similar work related positions such as management organization or education. Some may choose to go a step further and give medical supplies to Haiti. Internationally, there are organizations such as the World Bank that could greatly promote the support that Haiti needs. The World Bank would be ideal for the pay of the workers who assemble the hospitals and care centers. Assistance from the World Bank would also be helpful in buying the produce from the native Haitian farmers. Non-governmental and civil organizations would also be great for helping with the health care. Assistance from organizations such as the Red Cross would be vital in implementing the framework for the future of Haiti's medical relief. There is no effort too small or any donation too big when it comes to the help that Haiti needs to have a triumphant future.

It's evident that the condition that Haiti is presently in can only work for so long, and then the walls that are holding the whole thing together will tumble down. A few of the major issues within Haiti's borders presently are it's health care, education about health, the economy, and the affects of food aid. Some solutions could possibly be to use American citizens to promote health and using Haiti's own food to feed their citizens which would essentially boost the economy. For Haiti to have a fighting chance of becoming an efficient country, onlookers need to unite and rally behind those who are trying to make a better life for themselves.

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