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Bolstering Education in Haiti's Broken Capital

As rubble is slowly cleared and everyday activities resume, another uncertainty emerges in post-quake Haiti: School. When the quake struck, it halted throughout the entire country. Nearly three months later, an already complex and inadequate education system struggles to get back on course.



The chapel still stands behind the rubble of St. Francois de Sales Primary and Secondary School.

In the south, although not all the schools were affected physically, the catastrophe canceled classes for nearly eight weeks. Schoolhouses still stood, but parents feared sending their children back to

the classroom, where so many in Port-au-Prince were lost. As fears eased, schools resumed in March and saw hundreds of new students trying to enroll. After fleeing the capital, these children are resolved not to waste the school year- to start somewhere new, carry on, and graduate any way they can.

In Port-au-Prince, schools still struggle to reopen. Three out of the nine primary and secondary schools that *Hope for Haiti* works with in the



capital area were damaged. One was completely demolished and another is waiting to be torn down. And



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yet these
schools have
organized
weeks of

psychosocial programs: camp-like activities, games, and lessons led by teachers and community members to help children confront and, at least for a short while, forget what happened.

A make-shift classroom for make-shift activities and lessons at St. Hélène Primary and Secondary School, Kenscoff.



1st grade students pack a classroom at St. Michel Congregational school in Les Cayes, where over 105 new students have enrolled since the quake.

Our goal has been to bolster these programs, both in the capital and the south. We've continued subsidizing teacher salaries at all 37 *Hope for Haiti* supported schools. We've used schools as access points to deliver relief supplies, medications, and food. But we know it's not enough. The needs have increased. Parents have less. Families lost assets, and adults lost jobs. For most, paying for school is even less feasible than before. We've recorded over 500 displaced students from Port-au-Prince at our schools in the south, where they overwhelm classrooms already tight on space and short on resources. These students come with nothing: no books or uniforms, no shoes or pencils. And while such problems aren't new to education in Haiti, they're now more compounded than ever before.

We've identified the challenges ahead, but now we need help responding. Our supporters thus far have enabled us to make a commitment: we'll do all we can so that students at *Hope for Haiti* partner schools can finish the year with a quality education.



School begins again in Cayes as students continue enrolling outside Port-au-Prince.

Our partners need to rebuild, and our support of teachers

must continue for years to come. In post-quake Haiti, education will determine whether or not the country's youth have a chance. Together, we can make sure they get one.



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