



Our history in Haiti

Haven is an Irish non-governmental organisation (NGO), strongly committed to empowering the people of Haiti to build strong, sustainable livelihoods and communities.

We work solely in Haiti, focusing on three core development areas: water and sanitation, training and education, and shelter. Our long-term, sustainable development programmes and training courses promote improved health, create employment and enterprise, strengthen education, and eradicate poverty.

Taking a look at our history

Earthquake Response

Established in 2008, our main focus then was to provide shelter to families living in extreme poverty in Haiti, quickly moving to provide emergency relief in Port-au-Prince in the aftermath of the devastating 2010 earthquake. We became the second-largest provider of latrines in post-earthquake camps in Port au Prince, and provided important hygiene promotion workshops, hygiene kits, community shelters, and cholera mitigation programmes in the months that followed this major natural disaster.

Volunteers

Between 2010 and 2012, we organised a number of Build It Weeks, which brought hundreds of volunteers to Haiti to undertake considerable construction projects in local communities, including Ouanaminthe, Gonaïves, Gressier, Léogâne, and Île à Vache. During this time, we also opened our Haven US office, enabling us to expand our operations and widen the number of people we reach on the ground in Haiti.

The first annual Volunteer Programme launched in May 2013, continuing every April since. Between 2013 and 2015, it was based on the island of Île à Vache, a regional focus for our work in Haiti, where volunteers upgraded local community resources, planted trees, built pathways, installed solar lights and more.

In 2016, volunteers constructed a brand new kindergarten building for over 120 students and upgraded facilities at the only free school in the community of Fond Parisien, while, in 2017, volunteers repaired nine classrooms and built a new kitchen in a school in the rural community of Carrefour Dufont. Over 1,400 volunteers from all over the world have travelled with us to Haiti since 2009.

Community Development

As emergency recovery efforts began to take hold in the years following the earthquake, we started to look ahead, moving to our 2016-2020 Strategy which centres on sustainable community development and building a bright, secure and independent future for the people of Haiti.

Today, our training courses, for example, are empowering hundreds of local people in Haiti with the skills and confidence they need to secure their own livelihoods. Hundreds of local people learn the strongest farming practice and grow crops for market at our innovative Christine Farm. Our Income Generation Programme on Île à Vache trains people in boat-building, sewing and agriculture, giving them the skills and resources to strengthen their incomes and support their families. Meanwhile, women from disadvantaged backgrounds gain valuable hospitality and tourism skills through our Vocational Training programme in Port au Prince, enabling them to start new lives.

At the same time, our water and sanitation projects respond to ongoing issues in the communities we work with, such as poor water infrastructure, weak sewage systems, and low hygiene awareness. From building and repairing wells or constructing new water lines to installing water harvesting units and providing latrines, these projects open access to vital resources which greatly improve the health and lives of hundreds of local people in Haiti.

In early 2016, another Irish non-profit, Soul of Haiti, transferred its team and projects on the ground in Haiti to Haven. Pooling resources and combining expertise, their addition compliments our strategy and our impact in Haiti continues to grow as a result.

Every day, our projects and training courses are creating sustainable social enterprise, strengthening skills and enterprise, and empowering families to live free from poverty.

Hurricane Matthew

The most powerful storm to hit Haiti in over fifty years, Hurricane Matthew left more than 1.4 million people in urgent need of humanitarian aid in October 2016. Our team moved straight into emergency response, distributing 500,000 meals, 60,000 water-purifying tablets, 40,000 water sachets and 1,100 tarpaulins in the weeks that followed.

While it drew another devastating blow for the people of Haiti, now, we are looking to the future once again.

Looking ahead

Our vision is to build thriving communities which prosper independently: every day, we are moving closer to making that the reality. One by one, and hand in hand, we are overcoming the challenges that Haiti has withstood, committed to instilling real and very positive change.

Find out more about Haven today



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