Parent Education Project: Supporting Parents of Malnourished Children in Petionville, Haiti

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Overview

- Haiti
- Children & Malnutrition
- Micro, Meso and Macro Interventions
- The Role of the UM Library Mini-Grant
- Next Steps
Haiti: an Introduction

- Population: 10.6 million
- Size: 10,714 sq. mi
  - size of Maryland
- GDP per capita: $1,200 U.S.
  - compared to $53,000 in the U.S.
- Highly mountainous; dense urban and sparse rural areas
- Economy largely dependent on foreign aid & NGO’s
- 59% of the population lives on less than $2 US per day
Challenges for Social Work in Haiti

- Malnutrition & Diseases
  - Cholera, Malaria, Zika
- Violent Crime
- Poverty
- Lack of Infrastructure
- Lack of education
How do we intervene?

- Childhood nutrition as target issue
- Where to begin?
  - Micro and macro challenges
- Partnership with Espwa Berlancia
  - Located in Petionville, Haiti, about 4 miles from Port-au-Prince
  - One of very few intake malnutrition clinics in Haiti
  - Founded with the goal of returning healthy children to their families
Micro-level Interventions: Childhood Nutrition

- Staff of full-time nurses providing round-the-clock care
- Medical mamba—dietary supplement
- Returning children to families
Meso-level Interventions: Parent-education Program

- **Goals:**
  - Avoiding relapse
  - Equipping parents and families to meet kids’ needs

- **Parent-education program:**
  - Nutritional education
  - Occupational education
  - Business development skills
  - Agricultural training
UM Library Mini-Grant: Partnering with Haiti

*Espwa Berlancia: Middle Ground Parent Education Program*

Key Progress since receiving the grant:
- Initial renovations on the property and furnishing the education center
- Completed health and business curriculum for the initial pilot class, using existing models and research to make it evidence-based.
- Allowed 10 parents to stay with their children while they receive emergency medical care for malnutrition
- Taught 5 parents an introductory business class, with 3 subsequently receiving business loans to start businesses in agriculture/crop production and commerce
UM Library Mini-Grant: Partnering with Haiti

Key Progress since receiving the grant (continued):

- Hired 2 new full-time Haitian staff, plus many contract laborers
- Provided professional development training for 6 Espwa Berlancia staff
- Held an “Information Day”-- including a health class, malnutrition awareness training and an intro to savings and money management group-- for over 20 parents of children who have passed through the malnutrition center
- Partnered with Harvest 107 to start a community garden, to be used for growing food and as a teaching tool for the agriculture classes.
- Worked with UM library staff to connect to resources and evidence-based research
Macro-level Interventions and Next Steps

- Help construct a database/referral system for mapping and connecting non-profit and humanitarian organizations in Haiti
- Use our knowledge and resources to support efforts to build infrastructure
- Partner with already existing efforts and resources on the ground to build capacity and relationships with Haitians
- Advocate for better U.S./global policies
Thank you!

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Haiti demographic data from World Bank, Wikipedia and IMF.