

# THE *PROGRESS* REPORT

A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

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## SOL: A MODEL FOR COMMUNITY HOME LOANS IN DESLANDES

Shown here: Camilla Molière in front of her new home.

Partners in Progress is working with our partner Ecole Communautaire Gamaliel de Deslandes to create a home loan program based on a traditional cooperative savings model known as “sol.” Sol is a unique savings and financing approach that has reshaped the way Haitians save and spend their money. A sol is a group of community members who come together to create a common savings fund used to finance individual financial goals of each member. Sol members then make payments on a weekly, biweekly, or monthly basis. At the time of each payment, the total amount collected is disbursed to one person in the group. Everyone continues to pay into the fund until every person has received their payment.

Mongesly Clervil, a PIP board member who grew up in Haiti, saw firsthand the positive impact sol had on his community. “There is no written contract,” he says, “and yet people have great pride in themselves



Mongesly Clervil

and the program and do whatever is necessary to make their payments on time. Sol has a very high success rate among all who participate.” A friend of Mongesly’s, named Edna, began organizing sols so that she could start a business and support her family. Through sol, she grew a sustainable business selling fabrics and was able to pay for her six childrens’ education, and their university tuition. In doing so she built a better life and far brighter future for herself and her family. For anyone who thinks a community home loan program is beyond the capacity of rural communities in Haiti, sol is living, breathing proof to the contrary.

There are plans to adapt this model in order to provide financing for the Building Home Project in Deslandes. Participants would create a sol, and their payments would be used to cover a portion of the home construction cost. They would make payments until all participants received funds to put toward their new homes. A subsidy, and owner sweat equity through participation in home building konbits, would pay for the cost not covered through the sol.

## MESI ANPIL! (Thank You Very Much!)

Thank you, friends, for your valuable support this past year. Through your generosity, Partners In Progress is advancing a unique model of development that is enabling communities in rural Haiti to write their own story for a brighter future.

By providing opportunities to plan for the long run, to strengthen local assets, and to build alliances across communities, the rural communities we work with have begun to change their narrative—from one of dependency to one of self-sufficiency.



Dieuseul Saint Jean on Konbit Devot trial farm.



EGD Animateur Claubert Versey and Agroecology Educator Sanfina Cues on Aerobic compost tea trial plot.



# FARMER-TO-FARMER TRAINING NOW IN FIVE COMMUNITIES ACROSS HAITI

The Farmer-to-Farmer training of the Konbit Vanyan Kapab Agroecology Project is now in five communities from three different departments of Haiti. This past summer 44 additional farmers from Fondwa, Papaye, Savannette Cabrale, Vye Kay, and villages near Deslandes entered into the two-year training program in agroecology.

Farmer-to-Farmer training is a three-step experience which takes place over two years. In step one, farmers participate in a three-day workshop held in Deslandes. Konbit Vanyan Kapab farmers trained as Agroecology Educators provide interactive training using theatre, hands-on demonstrations, and have participants practice designing agroecology systems. In step two, farmers participate in individual and group planning so that they are then able to test the agroecology techniques on their own farms. Farmers receive an allowance of tools, plants and other materials, as well as technical support

throughout the growing season. In step three, farmers participate in group evaluations, where they share their successes with agroecology and discuss any challenges they faced. Based on lessons learned from the first growing season, they evaluate and modify the agroecology techniques for the following season.

New innovations are emerging. Konbit Vanyan Kapab farmers began incorporating new techniques in 2018, such as integrating livestock and diversifying the way cover crops are used. These techniques increase yield and farm income, and also help mitigate the impacts of climate change. Farmers will soon be processing crops to be used in the creation of specialty products for market.

A food dryer is being constructed to test the process for drying ingredients for a traditional tea and soup mix with the aim of selling them at local markets.



Vye Kay and Savanette Cabrale farmers enjoy soil foodweb game.



Vye Kay and Savanette Cabrale farmers learn how to find contour for planting ramp vivan.

## BETTER TOGETHER: CROSS-COMMUNITY COLLABORATION FOR CREATIVE SOLUTIONS AND SELF-RELIANCE



CEB block making crew give block making demonstration for St. John's delegation.

Partners in Progress is forging new, creative alliances among communities and organizations across Haiti and in the U.S. Farmers from Deslandes have partnered with farmers from five communities across Haiti to share know-how and resources for sustainable farming. The Global Institute for Food Security and International Agriculture at North Dakota State University is working with PIP and Ecole Communautaire de Gamaliel to design value added specialty products for market.

Compressed Earth Block (CEB) builders from Deslandes and women graduates of the plumbing program of Sisters of St. Antoine Professional School in Fondwa will soon collaborate to construct a house on the Sisters of St. Antoine Farm. PIP is also helping lead a collaborative school construction project bringing together the St. Yves School in Savanette Cabrale, CEB builders from Deslandes, and St. John's Catholic Church in Grafton, North Dakota.

Why does this matter? Through the collaborative building process, knowledge and ideas are shared, and more creative solutions to development challenges emerge. Resources are also shared which stretches development dollars and promotes greater self-reliance.

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