

Prosperity Catalyst's Emergency Response to COVID 19 in Haiti

Progress Report – July 20, 2020

Background

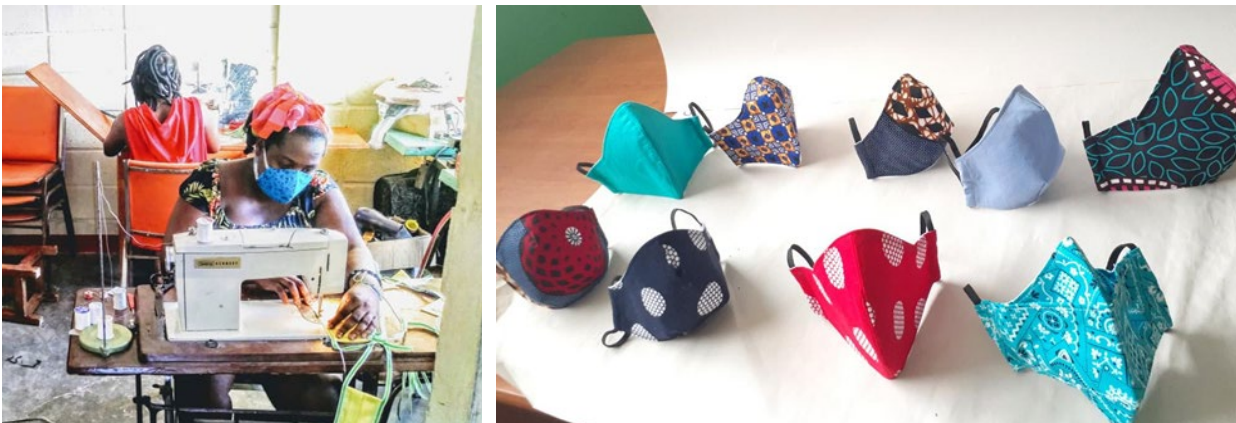
Prosperity Catalyst (PCat) and our Haitian partner *Fanm Limye* appealed to the Ansara Family Fund, Week of Compassion, and the Open Road Alliance for help in financing COVID prevention kits for our artisans and beekeepers. The Ansara Family Fund was the first to respond with a \$10,000 grant, followed shortly thereafter by the Week of Compassion with a \$5,000 grant. All the donors to our Hurricane Matthew effort approved the re-programming of the remaining \$6,000 in budget from that effort to respond to COVID. With your rapid response, we were able to quickly assemble and distribute COVID Prevention kits to the 1,000 artisans and beekeeping households with whom we have worked over the last 4 years. Our staff follow-up with them every two weeks to check to see if there have been any cases, so far, none of our partner households have reported any cases of COVID.

Update on COVID 19 in Haiti

As of April 13th, diagnosed COVID 19 cases in Haiti were at 33. Since then, it has grown rapidly to over 6,700 as of July 15th and is likely much higher than that given the scarcity of testing and reports of unexplained fatalities. Haiti has now re-opened its borders with the Dominican Republic and the airport, so COVID cases are likely to increase significantly moving forward.

The Kit

The *Fanm Limye* Prevention Kit consisted of a 5-gallon hand-washing bucket with a spigot, two bars of soap, two 8oz bottles of hand sanitizer, 2 washable fabric masks, and an educational flyer to help disseminate the prevention measures.



Mask Production

We contracted with 4 sewing businesses that are graduates of our artisan strengthening program to produce the 2,000 masks we needed. This put cash in the hands of an average of 6 seamstresses per business or 24 women, while responding to an urgent public health need.

Hand Sanitizer

As we were fund-raising for our COVID response, we began experimenting with the production of hand sanitizer meeting WHO standards of at least 70% alcohol. It took a few tries. Our first few batches were too liquid, but with some expert advice from a chemist, we were able to add a thickening agent that achieved the right consistency for the hand sanitizer. The women who produce *Fanm Limye* beeswax candles took the lead on mixing up 2,000 8oz bottles of hand sanitizer.



Kit Distribution Once we had procured all of the other items needed for the kit, including the 5-gallon buckets with a spigot and 2 bars of soap per household, our staff came together at the office and assembled the kits in batches – first for our artisans, most of whom live in the greater Port-au-Prince area, and later for our beekeepers. The artisans were scheduled to come to our

office in groups of 10, and were let in one at a time to pick up their kit. The kits for the beekeepers were delivered to a central location in each commune, where the beekeepers came in groups to pick them up. All the kits had been distributed by the first week of June.

Health Education and Stigma Prevention

At each of these distribution events, PCat's staff delivered information about how COVID is transmitted and how to use the items in the prevention kit to minimize the risk of transmission. In the rural areas, where radio does not always reach, we hired a motorcycle driver with a loudspeaker mounted on the back that disseminated prevention messages. It soon became evident that we needed to add anti-stigma messages, as news spread of health clinics treating COVID patients being burned down by frightened community members.



Monitoring and Evaluation Plan

One of the commitments made by beneficiary families in exchange for the emergency kit was to keep *Fanm Limye* informed of COVID 19 infections and mortalities. Each staff member is responsible for checking in with a sub-set of our beneficiaries once every two weeks to track any diagnosed or suspected COVID cases. As of last week, no cases had been reported.



Spending against Budget and Next Steps

As of the end of June, we had spent just over \$21,000 on this COVID prevention effort. Your support really made a difference for over 1,000 vulnerable households in Haiti, who felt grateful for the unexpected COVID prevention support.

Last week, we were awarded just under \$150,000 by Food for the Poor to procure and distribute a one-month food ration for our 1,000 partner households and to deliver prevention kits to 300 residents of a group home for people living with disability. As in the US, COVID has had a negative impact on economic activity, making it difficult for our artisans and beekeepers to feed their families. The Haitian economy has also been impacted by the recession in the US, as many Haitian immigrants have lost their jobs and are unable to send money back home. The slow down in remittances has hit Haitian households hard, so the up-coming distribution of basic foods will be greatly appreciated by the vulnerable families with partner within Haiti.

Thank you so much for helping to prevent the spread of COVID 19 in Haiti!