

The January 12, 2010 earthquake led to the collapse of Haiti's social, economic and health infrastructure, resulting in the breakdown of community networks, increased poverty and sexual violence. One year following the earthquake, UNICEF (2011) reported that one million people remain displaced, living in approximately 1,200 IDP camps. Haiti is the poorest country in the Western hemisphere: in 2009 it ranked 145th out of 169 countries on the United Nations Development Programme's Human Development Index. Poverty and a lack of employment opportunities pose serious barriers to health and well-being.

This report is an exploration of the lived experiences of internally displaced youth in Leogane Haiti after the earthquake. Through the use of Photovoice, their stories are told. Here, these youth explore their fears, hopes and dreams. They reveal their unshakable faith and courage in the wake of loss, violence and destruction. They express their desire for more involvement in the community support networks that have proven to be a significant source of strength to them and they advocate for safe housing, health benefits, education and employment. Here, the youth of Leogane speak up on behalf of all Haitians, in hopes that they are heard and that action will be taken.

This research offers a multi-level and gendered perspective on the social and structural production of violence, HIV vulnerability and deleterious health outcomes. It examines the implications of living in poverty, unstable housing and explores the disconnect between surviving and realizing one's potential.

Voices of Leogane Youth

Girls: ages 18 - 24

Marie-Claire



What I want you to see is how people are living in tents after January 12th. When people are living under them there is no security. A lot of things can happen to a person especially a woman living under a tent. I remember an incident when I saw a young girl who was living in a tent alone. This is what allowed the young man to go into the tent. This young man knew she was the only one in the tent and meanwhile she thought it was only him, and three men came in. The girl

wanted to defend herself; she didn't have time because they beat her, ripped her clothes, and cut her. Sometimes they even kill. You could even scream for help, no one comes to help because they have guns on them. If the person doesn't want to kill you, you can't even find a police officer to investigate. And sometimes you can go report it but they start, and never finish. At times there are people who say they do not want to report it because they know it won't be handled.



Emanuela

The way they start a fire to make food in Haiti. Long time ago in Haiti they used to start a fire with three rocks and then they put on wood. But today they have evolved. The world has evolved, they think of different ways to start a fire. They use this thing called "recho". This is a small stove-like contraption made out of steel, sometimes it can be made out of cement. When they are going to cook they put charcoal inside of it. Then they buy pine and matches to light the fire so that they can cook the food. You can buy these stoves from the same people who make other steel products. These stoves are expensive they can run you 500 goude depending on which one you buy, it can also be cheaper. But also there is a lot of danger

in using these stoves. It depends where you are using it. You can place it in a bad place and it falls and burns you. People living in the city use these stoves more because they can afford it.



Rosita

I want to talk about a picture that made me sad after the earthquake they call “gou-dou-gou-dou”. We did not have time to have funerals for anyone. We had to dig a big hole that was really deep to put the dead. At that time it was big trucks that were picking up the bodies. Schools were demolished with the students inside. Hospitals were demolished with the sick inside; even churches were demolished with the parishioners inside. After the aid organizations came to Haiti, they had to prepare something for the deceased. They created a gated area out of wood, really nice, so that we could honor the dead every 12th of January. This

was a really sad day that we Haitians will never forget. When I was taking this picture I was very sad and brought to tears.



Bernadette

I am talking about the house that I have because it was given to me after the earthquake. It is because of the earthquake I received the house. It is a house that is a tent. It is because of the earthquake that I am now living in a tent. I do not like it but I have no choice because it is what I have. It does not make me happy but I have no choice. Because of the earthquake people

are worse; they are sleeping under a bunch of terrible things. I hope the country can change for us all. I am not the only one who is uncomfortable. I would like for Haiti to go back to the way it was. I am praying a lot. This kind of life is not the life for us; living this way allows anyone to say anything they want to us because of the way they see us living. I would like for Haiti to change. I would like for the violence to stop along with everything else.



Patricia

Today I am happy to talk about the church I go to. I like the pastor and all the staff that work with him. When this church gathers everyone together, all the people in the church feel like they are having a good time because everyone is jumping up and down. It is very beautiful. I like this church a lot. I feel like I'm in the sky worshipping, because these people have what you call, god's action, on them. When they are singing, worshipping, and preaching, this church is really interesting. I am happy God chose me to do his work. This church is especially beautiful when we are worshipping. Thank you.



Guertrude

Good morning to whoever is reading this. I am living in a tent, my father is dead, and I have no one. If you help me, help me, god will pay you back. When it rains I have to just sit there. They owner of the tent gave us three years, the three years is almost up. I cannot even walk away from the tent because nothing is secure. The bugs don't let me sleep and the sadness is carrying me away. I do not have anyone to rely on. I do not have any hope; I just need god to deliver me. My mother suffers with ulcers and I do not have the money to take her to the doctor. She is my everything. They worst is I don't know what I am going to do because when I am not there, I am happy. My mother tells jokes, she makes me not think about our situation too much. I would like to help my mother, I know my dream will come true in the name of god.



Fedna

I chose this picture of this child because his mother was not here, and he kept crying. I gave him food, he is a child that I like a lot. When I was done feeding him, I showered him and made him go to sleep. When his mother came she was very happy that I did that for her. After wards she told me that she had not fed him all morning; that made me very sad. Because I know what it feels like to be hungry, I understand how he felt. This little boy is very happy. When I finished feeding him, he began to laugh with me and then I remembered to take his picture and talk about him today. My heart hurt so badly when I saw him crying that I chose to talk about him today. He is a child that I like a lot. Thank you.



Edline

Good morning to everyone reading this. What I wrote is about two kids visiting. They were playing and began fighting. These are kids living in Haiti. These two kids don't have a mother or a father. Both are living in Haiti. If they are playing, they cannot go a day without fighting. They had nothing to eat; they went to a mango tree. There was an old lady passing and she screamed "hey, what's going on with my mango tree" the two kids said, "we are hungry that is why we were taking mangos" the old lady asked, "where are your parents?" they answered, "we do not have parents, our parents are poor."



Mirlande

This picture is of the kids in the community of Leogane. They are playing innocently, their parents do not have the means to make them feel happy. These kids always come to my house. I like to be around children but I cannot give them what they really deserve; to make them feel like they are safe. I give them the foundation of what I know, but it is not enough. These children really need to be treated like they have value. Their parents were not prepared for this. Sometimes life situations cause people to have poor foundation and poor education. This causes them to be juvenile delinquents when they get older. They say that children are the future. That is why children need to be shown their worth.



Monique

This is an old lady who is not in good health. She suffers from a “big foot” illness and she does not see well. When I got to her house, I asked her to take her picture. She did not want me to but after convincing her, she agreed. I told her the reason I was taking the picture was so that I could explain the “big-foot” illness, and how people with it suffer. This illness is from a large mosquito with long legs that stings people and it causes swelling of the feet.



Natacha

This is a picture of the stadium in Leogane. This is where the girls and boys used to come and play sports and where they used to play ball, but after the earthquake that occurred in our country on January 12, everything changed. There were a lot of people whose homes were destroyed, they had to live in the camp that was once the stadium. These people are going on their second year in the stadium. These people have not found anyone to supply them with a home. After the event, there were a lot of other countries that came to our country but they have not accomplished much because they have not been able to help these people. They eventually left the stadium but under a lot of force. The way you see this picture is the way the stadium still is, even after the people left. It is dirty and it was the only place where the youth used to spend their free time. It is dirty, people even relieve themselves in there.



Lovensky

The reason that pushed me to take this picture is that it reminds me of a lot. I remember January 12, where my mother was sitting under the house. During the earthquake, she was a victim. Her left leg was broken but I had already ran and left her, because she did not know what was going on. I had already learned what an earthquake was because my professor talked about this in school. An earthquake was predicted, but we did not know when it was coming. I will never forget that day. Me being her only daughter, I was running to the hospital alone. Everyone else had their own issues to deal with. That thought really stays in my mind. What made me happy was when they came and told me my mother's leg would be saved,

that they were not going to amputate, that made me really happy. And I think this is a day Haitian people will never forget.



Yvette

Since January 12, 2012, I have been sleeping in a tent camp. I am living under a tent. The tent is ripping and falling. We are all getting wet. People should help us. We are asking for help for the country.



Philomene

This barber shop was built after the earthquake. It started underneath a tree with one mirror. Then it went under a tent. Then we made it with plywood. Then it had a lot of mirrors and a wooden chair. Now it has several chairs. It wasn't cemented but now we put down ceramic floors. It is painted with nice paint. Soon it will have walls.



Marie-Rose

This is a picture of AJDC youth who are thinking for future developments...they are putting their heads together to plan for the community. This group has not received the support and they are tired of thinking for the community. They would like to think about the area they are living in by putting their minds together to develop their own areas. Okay, thank you!



Yvonne

The guys are really bad; they do not take care of their kids. It is with tears in my eyes I am telling stories of problems. This is a lady who is in bad shape, she had 5 children, their father died and she does not have the means to educate them. She has to beg in the street so she can feed the kids; that hurt me a lot when I got home. I was thinking and I was crying. What causes me more hurt is that the kids will go to school this year but next year they won't. When parents go looking for work, they are asked if they have a god-mother and a god-father, day by day things are getting worse. When I was talking to this lady, she said if she could find money to borrow, she would start street vending.



Marie-Claude

This lady is named Rosilia. She is a person who likes to work a lot. But she is a person who does not take advice. There was a time when she met with a man and the man never told her he was married. Then she began liking him. And then all of a sudden she fell ill. They made medication for her and she was getting better, but she was told not to go to the man's house anymore. But she still goes. Rumor says that the man's wife was killing her. She did not think that this was important; she went and the lady put a spell on her.



Bertha

First I would like to thank the group for the beautiful work they have done. My story is about how people are living in a community that makes me unhappy. And there really isn't anyone thinking about these people. The example I have is about two elderly people living somewhere that I do not really call a home or feel it is where anyone should live. When it rains they cannot sleep because the house is made out of fabric. I wonder when there is a hurricane, how will these people manage? Two years after the earthquake, all the help that has come in, no one has thought about them.



Rosena

I chose this picture because I don't feel good about how I am living. A tent lasts 6 months, but the whole family has been using it for a year and three months. I feel this is very difficult, the way I am living, when I think about it, it causes me a lot of sadness. I think about this a lot and it hurts me so much. This is why I chose it. When it rains, water gets inside and it rips and it cannot take anymore....Thank you.



Nerlande

This picture is of a child I saw crying but I do not know what is wrong with him. When I got close to him I asked him what was wrong. He said his mother went out and did not leave anything for him to eat. I had 5 gourde and I handed it to him. And then I told him to buy a cookie for him to eat. And then he reached out and took the money. When I heard this I thought it was very sad. And where they are sleeping is not a good place to sleep. They are getting wet by rain and they are saying to themselves, 'God look at this life I have'. My heart breaks for these people.



Tania

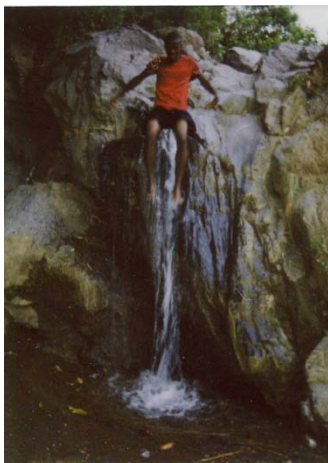
I want to talk about this young man. I took this picture and even though it is a picture that makes me sad, it didn't prevent me from taking it. To start, this is a young boy who went to school to help his family and friends, but because of the way of life for the youth in Haiti, he had to take a bunch of jobs that were very difficult. He works in area where sugar cane is processed to make alcohol. He is the one who throws the fire inside to heat up the alcohol. The steel roofs are very hot. It is very hard work.



Beatrice

This picture I chose to talk about is showing how the children of Haiti are living. Their situation is odd and complicated; they cannot even go to school because there are no means. Problems with money and the economy causes these kids to walk in the streets. Some of them hand out on the back of a car looking like delinquents in the street. This kids are without hope and no future. They are without a place to stay, they are sleeping in the streets. This picture you see, is in front of an alcohol making factory, this is where they spend most of their time. Before I am done, I would like to thank the group.

Boys: ages 18 - 24



Michel

I am 19 years old. I live in Leogane, Haiti (WI). I have one brother and one sister. My mother's name is Cline and my father's name is Fred. I play soccer, basketball, tennis, chess, Chinese checkers, etc. This picture is perfect for me. I like this picture because it is my dream to have a picture like this. I like to have a "cascade". That is all for my conversation about the picture.



Yves

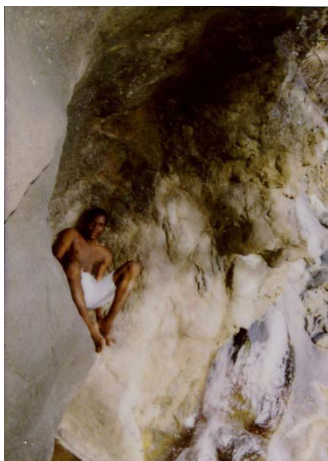
I am very happy about this picture because this picture remind me of a lot of things and because everybody in the area practices Voodoo. For a long time they have been talking about Agwe, which is a spirit that causes a lot of trouble. When it/he/she possess someone it/he/she can do harm. It is a very mean spirit. Like when the people are doing Voodoo/spiritual ceremonies, they always use this spirit Agwe. Voodoo is an ambience, when you are in it, you feel very good because when Agwe is there; it/he/she does many things to make you or your heart happy. I feel good about the picture because it was my first experience taking photos. I was

happy when the camera was in my hands. This picture I took attracts a lot of attention. Everyone likes the picture of Satan. The majority of Voodoo priests give good services. They all like the fact that I took this picture.



Jean Pierre

I am talking about this picture that I like a lot. This is the only garage in the area. They fix all the bicycles, motorcycles, cars, and generators. This is a bicycle that is being fixed, very well fixed, the mechanic said.



Peter

My name is Peter. As we are observing this picture, you will be able to see me in it. This picture is a picture I adore a lot. I can tell you that I am in a slide/waterfall. There are a lot of beautiful things in this area that can please a lot of people in the way we are living. We can see that this picture is very beautiful but what I like is the way I appear in the picture. I think that I am very happy to write this story about my picture. I thank you.



Robert

This is a picture of a grocery store that is located in our neighborhood. This picture is something important to me because this is a store where everybody in the neighborhood can buy groceries such as rice or soft drinks.



Peterson

I like auto mechanics a lot. I will like to work as a mechanic.



Dieubon

This picture means that every single rock is a pile of people who were buried under it. I took this picture because I like the way it appears.



Woodson

This is a cemetery where they burry dead people here. My mother is buried in this cemetery.



Davidson

Dog and Cat. I like the dog a lot because when I am sleeping at night, the dog gives me security so that robbers and thieves can't come in my house. Especially after the earthquake, there were a lot of thieves in the streets who were stealing anything and everything that the people own. There were a lot of people who lost a lot of things. And it was a thief who was stealing them but thieves did not come to our house because we have the dogs. The dogs don't easily bark at people during the daytime but at night you can't walk close to the dogs in the yard. If the dogs don't know you, they will tear you up with their teeth because they are very mean. This cat gives a lot of protection against rats and mice. The rats are eating our things. When we come back from the public market we found the cat. We have been getting a breather with mice and rats. The cat is very smart about catching the rats.



Fritz

The old man started to talk to me about how he is bored in the yard, what he is eating, and where he is sleeping. The old man can't walk if he does not have a cane in his hand. He can't do a lot of things because of his age. He is not in good health to live the life an elderly can live in a house by himself. I was very sad when I was standing outside looking at the old man. I took the road; I entered inside the old man's house, through the yard. I started to look at how the old man is living in the house by himself. He began to explain to me how he is living in the house by himself, how he sleeps, and how he eats. The old man is living in a house without gate, a house without shades, a house without a bed, a house that is falling apart and is falling down.



Kesnel

This picture shows the sadness and the catastrophe of the earthquake and the people, the young people in the house. The picture shows kids who are living in tents and how hungry they are. The kids are alive but they are not living.



Paul

For me this picture represents the sadness after the earthquake happened. In this picture you are looking at how a lot of people died underneath this house. There are people with broken feet. There are people with broken hands. There are people who spent days under this house before they died but the reason they died is because they did not find anyone to help them. You see this person is fighting to come out before he finally got out. He fell at least ten times inside the house as he watched people who are dying in front of him. He felt sad even though his life was in danger but in this case, we can't save everybody. You must save yourself. Even if you see your wife as you run out, you can't save her. You must save yourself. To end, that

day will never be erased from my memory.



Patrick

This is a small cow that I like a lot. The reason that pushes to write about the cow is because I can consider this cow is my helper because when I need money, it is the cow that gives it to me. When I need to pay for school, when I need to buy school supplies, it is the cow that gives money. I must tell you that he is not the only cow that I own. I own 3 other cows. They are not even my cows. I am watching after them for somebody. Thank you, this is the small story I can tell you about my cows, so I can make a living, so I don't die.



Etienne

This wooden boat, I took its picture with the sea. It is with this boat that my family creates all our economic opportunities to get the things they need. I wanted to write about it because it helps my family. I like it a lot. It is something I will never forget because it is the way my family creates money. It is with it that they do everything they need. They go in the ocean to swim. I like the ocean. Thank you. That is all I wanted to say about the sea and the boat that creates economic opportunities for the family.



Johnny

Good afternoon everybody, this is a story about young kids who are living alone. They don't have parents. They are two brothers. They have a wheel barrel that is helping them to live. Their parents died in car accident while they were in the street looking for ways to feed their kids. The kids wake up at daybreak; grab their wheel barrel to go look for a better life. They used the wheel barrel to carry cargo. When they find somebody with cargo who asks them to their cargo for them, they bargain for a price then they carry the cargo for the person. The older brother pulls the wheel barrel from the front and the younger brother pushes it from behind so that they can find a bit of money to eat. They don't always find people that ask them to carry cargo for them.



Marc

I like the culture of the country. The farmers are very encouraged. Sometimes, some get discouraged because they get mistreated. There are some rich people who hired them to work and they don't pay them. That doesn't please them. Someone finally told them not to work for free anymore but they can't because farming is the backbone of the country. If they don't farm, they won't be able to eat. They always say that "if the people up top don't come down, the people down below can't come up". This means if the farmers don't come to the city to sell their goods, the people who live in the city won't find food to eat.



Claude

It was a pleasure to take this picture because 1/12/2010 tore apart the country of Haiti. The work that they are doing makes feel like the country is rebuilding and that pleases me to see. Even though the sun was really hot, that did not discourage the Haitian people to continue the work of the country or to continue the rebuilding efforts. Then I asked them a question; they told me that the Haitian Governments had a project to widen the roads that were too narrow because that used to cause a lot of accidents. That is why I was interested to take this picture. Plus the workers were not shocked that

I was taking their pictures.



Jean- Robert

I am happy to participate in this activity with you strangers. I thank you because you push me to have these experiences. This experience was good for me. It is the experience that is going to make me talk about this picture. This picture that we are looking at is a picture of my grandmother and my cousin. My grandmother is an old lady who is very good to me on this earth. If it was not for her, I would have not been able to be a student in school today. Before God, this makes me sad today. I see the picture and the work; I can say to Grandma these are 5 gourds that I am giving to you for everything you did for me and will continue to do for me. I earned

these myself. Here, take it with joy! It is your own grandson who loves you very much and who you also love very much, until your dying days.



Michaelove

This is a tamarind tree (sour fruit that come in a pod). Ever since I was little, I grew up with the tamarind tree exactly like that. My parents always said that the tree is the magical power of my family. This is where they have Voodoo ceremonies to serve Zidol. My grandfather was the owner of the land. When my grandfather died, other people took over the land to care for it. This tamarind tree helped a lot of people in the family because when one has problem with magic/mystical powers thanks to the tamarind tree, they find the solution to their problems before God who is in Heaven.



Dieumene

I feel like I often take a lot of joy in taking pictures or write about what pleases me in my country or community. This is why I take this opportunity to share these emotions that I wanted to share for a long time. This picture is addressing a very important subject, which is the toilet. In my neighborhood of Destra, I notice that there is only one toilet and there are about 308 families. I am aware that this is some sort of catastrophe. The population takes pleasure into going to the toilet in the open, in the sugar cane field, and by the sea. But it is not their fault because they don't have any place else to go the toilet. I realized that they don't have toilets. That is the reason they go on the ground. Because ever since we started to build a

hut by the sea, they never go by the hut because they like to sit under it. Now they go to the toilet further from the hut because they don't want to smell it when they sit under the hut. Thank you.



Erick

A story about Haiti. We say hello to everyone who is looking at this picture. We are going to tell a short story about this picture. Thank you!

This picture will help us to understand this short story about Haiti. Haiti is a very poor country in the continent of America. We are remembering from our ancestors how Haiti used to be beautiful with lots of trees, very green like a green lizard. Today, Haiti is slowly disappearing because there are cutting down too many trees. We won't forget that the education of the children of the poor became possible because of the trees. Well Haitians, let's put our head together so we put an end to this destruction.



Fredo

I want to talk about a handicap person. His name is Paul. He is a distraction for everyone in the neighborhood. He gives a lot of service. For example, he pulls water from the well, they send him grocery shopping, and he does many other things for a handicap person. His mother passed away. He is living with his father in a one-room house. His dad is old or handicap (he can't do everything a healthy person can). Paul is a handicap person that many people appreciate. He is very humorous. He always falls when he is walking because his feet are not very strong. He has a wheel chair that he uses to get around. Many people take care of this man. They treat him like

a normal person. They don't treat by appearances. I think that is all.



Yvner Jean Claude

In Haiti, Voodoo is popular. It is a rite of passage that many people like. There are also many people who don't like it. I choose to take this picture because it has influenced/impacted me personally. There are Voodoo priests who do a lot of wrong things. They kill a lot of people to put under the cross. They cut up or dissect a lot of people. They have ceremonies. They usually kill a cow or they buy fish to serve to guests during the Voodoo ceremony. This is how they party. When they are putting the cross into the ground, they kill animals to bury under the cross. They sometimes bury people alive under the cross. It is the Voodoo priests who are doing

evil things. Thank you. That is all.



Pierre

It gave me great pleasure. I want to write about how they work to sustain their lives. I will like them to never get discouraged about what they are doing. The emotion that I felt when I went to see how they were working? I was very happy in my heart. When I ask what they were doing, they told me that they are earning a living.



Mackenson

I want to say hello to everyone who is looking at this picture. This photo makes me very sad. The lady whom you are looking at in this picture is handicapped. She was under the rubbles but God gave her life. She is paralyzed from the waist down. Another thing that made me sad is that she had gotten pregnant. I was thinking to myself 'how is she going to have this baby?' We were scared for her because she had surgery but thanks to God, she had her baby safely. Thank you.

Many thanks to all of our participants; your effort, your courage and your insights greatly inspire.

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