



Community Development and Environmental Stewardship in Haiti



*how far will you go to
make a difference?*



237 Flatbush Ave. #146 | Brooklyn, NY 11217
347.750.6143 | info@btpartners.org | btpartners.org

BT Partners is a registered 501 (c) 3 non-profit organization

Be part of it!



Bonjour !

In 2008, we dared to introduce a bold new volunteer travel program in Haiti, when most had written off the country. Since 2008, we've been offering insight into Haiti and enabling our community partners to tap into a vast pool of global citizens, ideas, and skills in order to tackle critical community development problems.

In 2010, the country was devastated by one of the worst natural disasters in modern history. Scores of lives were lost and Haiti's resiliency was challenged. But not defeated! Haitians are eager and more committed than ever to rebuilding their country— and this time to do it sustainably.

"I learned to trust myself."

—Melissa B.
Nurse
Portland, Maine



We continue to be committed to our partner communities, and our volunteers who, with open minds and hearts, have lent their skills to improving the lives of so many others. This year, four years after the earthquake, we look forward to welcoming whole new groups of volunteers from all over the world who care about the world beyond their national boundaries.

Kembe Fem,

Valerie Bazelais
Founder

Program Dates Costs and How to Apply

Date	Application Deadline
April 13-20	March 15
July 6-13	June 1
July 20-27	June 15
August 3-10	July 1
August 10-17	July 15
October 6-13	September 1
January 5-12	December 1

***Special dates can be arranged for groups of 7 or more.**

Total Program Cost: \$1470

Volunteer fees pay for lodging, three meals a day, airport pick-up and drop-off, some site seeing and leisure activities and provides a project grant for the community. A deposit of \$300 is required with registration.

To apply:

Download an application: at www.btpartners.org/volunteerinhaiti

Email Us: info@btpartners.org

Call Us: 347.750.6143

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Is Haiti Safe?

Haiti is a developing country like any other with many challenges, but offers a great and awe-inspiring experience well worth the time to prepare. Volunteers can easily stay safe and healthy by preparing before their arrival and by exercising awareness and safety measures while in country. BT Partners provides pre-trip information to volunteers and has a competent team in Haiti to help volunteers stay safe and healthy.

Why do I have to pay to volunteer?

Your stay entails much preparation and support that cannot be borne by our communities nor our organization. The program fee pays for food, lodging, security, and other support. It also pays for activities that offer volunteers a balanced understanding of Haiti, its history and affirming aspects of its culture. It also allows us to provide a small grant to the community projects.

A Week to Remember



Volunteers are greeted at the airport in Port-au-Prince and driven to the BT Partners guesthouse for a thorough orientation. The following day volunteers depart for the program site, meet community partners, and begin working. On the fifth day, volunteers leave Marbial and explore local sites in and around the southeastern region. Volunteers return to Port-au-Prince for debriefing and final day in Port-au-Prince before departure for home. Accommodations vary from guesthouses and hotels to rural cabins.

Who is this Program for?

Admittedly, this program is not for everyone. It is challenging to say the least. Volunteers work in a very hot climate in a rugged area with bare-bones facilities. For those who are up to the challenge, however, the program offers a unique opportunity to gain insight and perspective on global issues and even explore an international development career. It is also chance to discover a place that few tourists go, and to truly venture off the beaten path, while contributing to improving the lives of others. The CES program is perfect for anyone who would like to add purpose to their next trip abroad.

“ It literally changed my life.. ” Jared Z. 2011
Financial Analyst

About Haiti



Haiti occupies the western half of the island of Hispaniola next to the Dominican Republic. Haiti means “*land of mountains*” in the language of the Arawaks, the original inhabitants of the island and lives true to its name, being home to some of the highest peaks in the Caribbean. The country has a rich history which belies its modern day associations with extreme poverty and political strife. It was once the most important colony of the French colonial empire. And its founders led a slave revolt which created the second independent nation in the America’s and the first free black republic at the height of the transatlantic slave trade.

Despite its epic past, Haiti for the last three decades has almost only been associated with political strife, a dictatorship, and extreme poverty— even considered by some to be a pariah in the resort laden Caribbean. In 2010, however, attention once again focused on Haiti after a devastating magnitude 7.2 earthquake struck the tiny nation of roughly nine million and claimed over 200,000 lives. This unimaginable event forced the world to take a second look at Haiti and precipitated a massive international relief effort.

Haiti now also faces a pressing environmental problem which threatens its recovery and its long-term future. Only 3% of its forests remain. Though there are many factors contributing to the environmental degradation, lack of investment and poverty in the country side stand out. Most Haitians, nearly 60%, still live there and depend on the resources of the countryside for income and even identity.

Despite its problems, Haiti is renowned for its art, music, and vibrant culture; and has never stopped mesmerizing visitors with its misty mountains and interesting microclimates. A push for tourism dollars is a major part of the country’s recovery plan, and has opened the door for a number of offerings including: scuba diving, para-gliding, and surfing.

Haiti has faced many challenges before, but the resiliency of its people have remained steadfast. With more measured approaches that are inclusive, creative, and allow for the sustainable use of resources, Haiti can thrive in its community of nations— and may even become an example.

Community and Environmental Stewardship

The CES program seeks to build the capacity of vulnerable groups and community partners to develop local and sustainable solutions to meet the challenges of an ever changing world. Volunteers work hand in hand with community partners, namely small scale farmers, girls groups, youth, and women.

Along-side their community partners, volunteers use their skills and know-how to devise and implement projects that integrate principals of environmental and community stewardship in efforts to combat hunger, improve access to health, education and economic opportunity. Projects can range from assisting a farmers association develop a business plan for increased revenue to devising a set of games and activities to teach conservation to children.

The CES program welcomes volunteers each season for one week. Volunteers are based in the rural community of Marbial, close to the historical town of Jacmel. Time is divided with working on community projects , exploring local sites and engaging in cultural activities.



*“Men Anpil, Chay Pa Lou” Many hands together
make the load lighter—Haitian Proverb.*

Program Goals

The volunteer program has three goals:

- To fill in the skills and knowledge gaps for our community partners.** Volunteer assignments are created by matching community need with volunteer skills and interest in the areas of health, environment, youth, community development and education.
- To provide volunteers balanced insight into Haiti’s rural communities.** Most from the outside world often see Haiti only through the lens of news reports of poverty and strife. Though one cannot gloss over Haiti’s problems, it is important to recognize the strong potential and resourcefulness of its people. Without this recognition, it is difficult to see Haitians as partners in their own development—and that is the critical piece to sustainable development. Haiti also has a unique history and boasts an enriching culture. Visits to Haiti lead to a better understanding of not just Haiti, but of the Americas and ourselves.
- To build a community of like minded people who care about the world beyond their national boundaries.** Volunteers gain first hand knowledge about the world; and therefore, become well placed to build awareness wherever they go well after the volunteer experience has ended.

