

Communi-**clik**

Breaking News from Florida's International Volunteer Agency



SEPTEMBER 2012

Disaster Mitigation and Safety in Haiti

Tropical Storm Isaac claimed the lives of 24 Haitians and caused \$242 million damage in the agricultural sector. Nearly 400,000 earthquake victims still living in displacement camps were hit hardest by the storm wind and rain. Fears of increasing cholera cases are now surfacing.



Destruction in Cite de
Soleil after Isaac

In the past year, FAVACA has been active in Haiti training farmers in pigeon pea production and irrigation, hotel managers in food and beverage management and human resources, beekeepers in hive and pest management, farmers in animal husbandry and nutrition, and youth in leadership and entrepreneurship skills, among many other projects.

FAVACA remains committed to strengthening our Haitian partners. Please help support these long-term development effort by clicking the following link: [Donate to FAVACA!](#)

Youth Entrepreneurship in the Bahamas

The Caribbean Group of Youth Business Trusts assists young people in achieving economic independence, fosters self-employment and introduces young entrepreneurs to sources of business expertise, financial assistance, and public/private sponsored youth programs. FAVACA Volunteer and Executive Director of the University of West Florida Small Business Development Center Larry Strain traveled to Nassau, Bahamas June 6-12, 2012 to present on the importance of entrepreneurship in economic development at the "Partnership Symposium: A Workshop for Stakeholders in Building Entrepreneurship" co-hosted by the Caribbean Group of Youth Business Trusts and the Caribbean Community.



Young entrepreneurs from Abaco

He also conducted workshops in Nassau and Abaco for young entrepreneurs on best practices in business and entrepreneurial development, avoiding classic entrepreneurial mistakes and cultivating customers in today's economy. Some of Strain's recommendations to assist young entrepreneurs include establishing a Bahamian Youth Business Trust with the private sector in the lead, involving stakeholders from across the Bahamas, providing incentives to further encourage an entrepreneurial environment, and offering

Bahamian entrepreneurs technical assistance such as collaborating with a U.S. Small Business Development Center.

Strategic Development in Costa Rican NGO

For the past 46 years, the Costa Rican Demographic Association (Asociación Demografica Costarricense - ADC) has served thousands of Costa Ricans and helped transform Costa Rican society's awareness of reproductive and sexual health issues. ADC requested the assistance of FAVACA to strengthen their governance infrastructure and understand best practices of recruiting and retaining volunteers. ADC currently has a team of 100 volunteers and wants to improve the screening and



retention of these volunteers while at the same time turning them into advocates and fundraisers for the organization. Carlos Zepeda, President/CEO of Organizational Management Advisors LLC, agreed to provide the training and traveled to San José, Costa Rica June 7-10, 2012. Prior to traveling, Zepeda conducted 13 online training sessions to better understand the challenges facing ADC and get to know the organization. Once in country, he built the capacity of ADC's Executive Director Hilda Picado Granados and her core staff to improve

volunteer recruitment forms and develop new strategies to better manage and organize volunteers based on their interests and history. A protocol for background checks was also introduced, so that all client information remains confidential and the most qualified volunteers are selected.

Zepeda met with ADC's Board of Directors and presented on board responsibilities, clarifying ADC's mission statement and becoming ambassadors for the organization. He discussed board strengths and weaknesses, ways to promote consistent messaging to the public, the intersection between a personal mission and the organization's mission, ADC's achievements in the last two years and donor recruitment. He also taught the board and staff about best practices in program design, fundraising strategies and best practices, and ways in which ADC could

successfully implement change. Zepeda's training was extremely successful and many of his recommendations have already been implemented and have improved the organizations' professionalism and management.

Agribusiness Training in St. Kitts and Nevis

Many farmers in St. Kitts & Nevis are relatively new producers having taken up this occupation after the closure of the sugar industry. Monitoring and recording their production is not something farmers are accustomed to doing and the Caribbean Agriculture Research and Development Institute (CARDI) and the Department of Agriculture in St. Kitts and Nevis are jointly requesting farm management and cost production training for farmers. This need was expressed during a recent review and planning meeting held by the Department of Agriculture, in which farmers made a public appeal for assistance in record keeping. CARDI and the Ministry of Agriculture requested a specialist to conduct sessions on the cost of production for both livestock and crops, along with training in record keeping, highlighting its importance in the current trading environment.



CARDI's Country Team Leader Ms. Pathleen Titus delivers remarks at the Agri-business workshop sponsored by her organization, in collaboration with the Department of Agriculture on Nevi

First time FAVACA volunteer Dr. van Blockland agreed to provide the training in St. Kitts and Nevis from July 8-14, 2012. Dr. van Blockland serves as Professor Emeritus in Finance and Agriculture and an Adjunct Professor at the Warrington School of Business and Program Director at the University of Florida. Dr. van Blockland has an extensive educational and professional background in Agribusiness and Financial Management, along with a distinguished international career where he has provided approximately 1,000 presentations, workshops, and seminars nationally and internationally. Van Blokland has also written over 500 publications and provided over 200 broadcasts

on the subject of Agribusiness and Financial Management. He worked with farmers on budgeting farm expenses and estimating potential revenue for both crops and livestock. Participants learned to create a ledger to keep track of farm income and expenses, something few farmers did before the training. The farmers will now start to implement record-keeping after understanding the ease in creating and maintaining the ledgers and the benefits this information has on forecasting profit or loss.

Domestic Violence Prevention in Colombia

Maria Jose Fletcher and Mercedes Lorduy of [VIDA Legal Assistance](#) hosted Colombian Fellows Narda Berardinelly and Marianita Montilla, participants of FAVACA's U.S. Department of State Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs Colombia Professional Exchange program. As follow-on training, Fletcher and Lorduy traveled to Colombia on June 24-July 8, 2012. Their expertise and experience in establishing programs and nonprofits dedicated to addressing women's empowerment, freedom from violence, access to justice and social development was requested by [La Red de Mujeres Chocoanas](#), a coalition of 54 affiliated women's

organizations throughout Chocó that promote and empower women and strengthen their organizations. In Bogota, Fletcher and Lorduy visited the Center for Integral Attention against Sexual Violence (CAIVAS-Centro de Atención Integral Contra la Violencia Sexual) operated by the District Attorney's Office in Bogota (Fiscalia General de la Nación) to better understand the process victims experience.



Fletcher & Lorduy at the Courthouse in Choco, Colombia.

The volunteers then traveled to Quibdo, the capital of the Department of Choco, where they were hosted by La Rede de Mujeres Chocoanas. They met with and made presentations about best practices in preventing domestic and sexual violence to women's organizations in Quibdo as well as Andagoya, San Juan, Itsmina and Condoto. Many of the participants were astonished to hear about cases of violence that exist in the US. While there are greater resources in the US to care for victims' medical needs and greater confidence in receiving justice than

in Colombia, the women's advocates recognized the parallels. The volunteers stressed the need to have systems and services in place before doing large scale outreach about victims' rights. The volunteers also traveled to Barranquilla to work with [FEDECARIBE](#), a nonprofit organization that promotes the development of community organizations in the Colombian Caribbean, and the University of the North to provide a series of seminars to women's rights organizations on domestic violence prevention. This project was made possible due to the support of the State of Florida Department of Economic Opportunity and the U.S. Department of State Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs.

Loss of State of Florida Funds

For the last 30 years, the State of Florida understood the direct correlation between its policies and development and their impact on the well-being and growth of countries in the Caribbean and the Americas. Unfortunately for the second time in FAVACA's history, our funding from the State was removed from the budget. Yet the demand for assistance has never been greater. Agricultural pests, health epidemics, economic downturns and gang violence know no borders. Please help us continue to respond to demand-driven requests for training in economic development, disaster mitigation, domestic violence prevention, preventative healthcare and agricultural hazards, and many other needs expressed by our partners by donating to FAVACA now!

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