



Press release:
Ile a Vache, Haiti

Haven Heroes working directly with Haitian Community

32 Haven Volunteers are working to rebuild structures in Haiti

(30th May 2013) 32 Haven volunteers from across Ireland and America departed from Dublin airport last week bound for Haiti, as they embarked on an experience of a life time. They have spent the last couple of days since their arrival on the small island of Ile á Vache, south of Haiti's mainland, working in scorching conditions.

The Haven volunteers are working directly with the community in a hands-on participatory approach. There are groups working round the clock to install a pavement up a steep hill from the local market and port, Madam Bernards, as well as a group preparing computer rooms in 3 local schools and restoring community areas.

The group are working against the clock to install the pavement before the imminent hurricane season which starts on the 1st of June. Another major tropical storm is forecast again this year for the small island which is still trying to recover from the devastating effects of Hurricane Sandy last October. The road is the main route to L'oeuvre St. Francois d'Assises orphanage and the local schools. During the rainy season the route turns very hazardous for the children some of whom have serious physical or mental disabilities- the mud mixed with the slippery rocks makes the route impossible to navigate in heavy rains.

Leslie Buckley, the founder and Chairman of Haven said: *"The work the Haven Volunteers have done in the last few days has been astonishing. The community is behind us all the way and have welcomed the volunteers with open arms. They have made us feel at home in Ile á Vache and we are proud to be able to contribute any way that we can to their community and help them to prepare for the upcoming hurricane season which unfortunately will once again be very active this year."*

First time Haven volunteer, Linda McConn, from Dublin said: *“It has been an experience of a lifetime volunteering with Haven over the last couple of days. I’ve made so many new friends; the Haitian people are very friendly and welcoming. It was a privilege to work with the local Haitian communities; we hope that the work we have completed will be beneficial to the local people of Ile a Vache in the future.”*

The Haven volunteer group will return to Ireland on the 2nd of June after spending 10 days volunteering on Ile Vache, south of Haiti’s mainland.

About Haven: Haven is an Irish non-governmental, non-political, non-religious, organisation. Haven’s mission is to build strong sustainable communities by facilitating the construction of shelter and the provision of water and sanitation solutions, and to provide training and community development to ensure sustainable livelihoods.

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