Partners In Health

Over 20 years of health and social justice

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About Partners In Health

Partners In Health is an international organization based in Boston, Massachusetts that works in a total of 12 countries to deliver high quality health care and break the cycle of disease and poverty. Haiti has long been the heart of PIH's work, and the foundation for our expansion into Africa and beyond. In 1983, Dr. Paul Farmer and Ophelia Dahl worked with several Haitian leaders in the village of Cange, a squatter settlement in Haiti's impoverished Central Plateau, to establish a community-based health project. In 1987, Dr. Farmer and others founded Partners In Health (PIH) in Massachusetts to support activities in Cange; at the same time they created Zanmi Lasante (meaning 'Partners In Health' in Haitian Creole) as our sister organization in Haiti.

Today, Zanmi Lasante is the largest health care provider in Central Haiti, serving a catchment area of 1.2 million across the Central Plateau and the Lower Artibonite Valley, and employs over 4000 people, almost all of them Haitians, including doctors, nurses and community health workers. The small clinic in Cange has become a full-service medical complex that includes a 104-bed hospital, infectious disease treatment, pediatric inpatient and outpatient care, a women's health center and emergency obstetrical care, pharmacy and laboratory services, and numerous community development programs. Beyond Cange, Zanmi Lasante has worked in close partnership with the Ministry of Health to strengthen the delivery of comprehensive medical care through a dozen public hospitals and health centers in Central Haiti and the Lower Artibonite, where we have renovated dilapidated clinics, trained staff, and provided essential supplies, medicines, and equipment. To combat the root causes of poverty and disease, Zanmi Lasante also implements social and economic programs in nutrition, agriculture, water and sanitation, and education. In 2008 Zanmi Lasante recorded 2.6 million patient encounters through clinic visits, mobile clinics, and vaccination campaigns, a substantial increase from 1.9 million visits the year before.

From Haiti, over the last 20 years PIH has expanded our medical mission to other settings of extreme poverty, political conflict, or international neglect. In addition to Haiti, we operate comprehensive, integrated primary care and infectious disease treatment programs in three African countries: Rwanda, Malawi, and Lesotho. We conduct treatment and training programs for multidrug-resistant tuberculosis, a disease that disproportionately afflicts poor countries and is particularly deadly in combination with HIV, in Peru, Russia, Lesotho, and most recently, Kazakhstan. In collaboration with local partners, we support community-based rural health programs in Mexico, Guatemala, and Burundi. Finally, we have a health promotion program for poor and marginalized HIV patients in inner-city Boston, Massachusetts, where PIH is headquartered.

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