

President's note on Haiti Chaos



Many people now know of all the chaos in Haiti. The CHAMPs team has not been spared by this. Our 4 staff managing the dental and medical clinic does not live directly in Village Trianon. They are in the Cange' region or Mirabalais. Without gangs and roadblocks their commute is less than 20 minutes. However, gangs infiltrated almost every community in this "central plateau." Dr. Vania's hospital was targeted and daily gunshots leave everyone virtually inside their homes.

Because it was impossible to travel, we were forced to suspend clinics after Feb 12. Dr. Vania's hospital was targeted when thugs powered into entrances with semi-automatic rifles. Vania told us "every day gangs continue attacks on official buildings and police stations. Police cannot resist; either they flee or they die. The mayor's life was threatened in Mirabalais and then power resources were cut off. It's ridiculous." (written March 11)

On March 6 after Prime Minister Ariel Henry' agreed to step down. There was a 3-day ceasefire when 12+ different gang groups conjoined and agreed to a ceasefire. This lasted 3 days and because CHAMPs has supplies shipped to Port au Prince. We made 2 successful runs to and from the capital to pick medicines and other items waiting at the ship port; (they actually hired someone with security to do so; no one really trusts the language of gangs, but it was successful.)

As the board discussed, there was no way we could assure safety in our clinic setting. CHAMPs is VERY clear about safety FIRST and foremost, so we had to wait it out. I honestly didn't expect any change for 4-6 weeks.

But on March 25th, after just a 7-week pause, all 4 staff agreed it was safe and roadblocks were clear for them to resume both dental and medical clinics. (Port au Prince street violence continues heavily.) Our team presses forward and planned a 2nd day open clinic to make up for lost days. These professionals are incredibly dedicated given what they've seen and survived.

Wendy Zehner, our partnering NGO at Luke 101, wrote me last night and said this; "The Haiti medical Expat page listed clinics and hospitals that have been permanently closed. Many reported working at half capacity; at least in part to incredible difficulty accessing medicines. What you guys are doing is amazing! Let's pray that we can continue to get medication's there."

Our CHAMPs board is so proud to have these Haitian nationals represent us, and continue service to Trianon, with the help of our donors. Please know we appreciate you so much!

Kay Anderson – CHAMPs President