

## CitiHope International and Our Children's Earth Foundation Announces Opening of School for Haitian Immigrants in Dominican Republic

September 22, 2008

**Project:** A new school, built to educate 120 Dominican children, opened in September 2008. Impoverished families of Haitian descent reside in the new community of Los Algodonos, a village built in 2008 by The Samaritan Foundation. Los Algodonos provides a place where people can live, worship, learn and work in safety, free of the extreme vulnerability caused by acute racial discrimination.

Most of the 120 children (110 Haitians and 10 children from a nearby village) have never attended school. This opportunity for quality education is the first step on a path leading out of poverty; the new school will be fully accredited before the end of the 08/09 school year.



Photo Courtesy Tim Tuccelli, June 2008

The school's professional director has hired staff, including teachers, teachers' aides, and a custodian. The new school is equipped with necessary furniture, including desks, chalkboards, textbooks and supplies. Students will be provided with school uniforms, mandatory in Dominican Republic.

Access to education is often denied Dominican-Haitian children, many of whom lack proper documentation to attend state primary schools, even when such schools exist in close proximity to children's homes.

**Implementing Partner:** CHI will continue to work with its previous partner, The Samaritan Foundation, founded by Elio Madonna, a retired Toronto businessman. Twenty years ago Mr. Madonna visited the Dominican Republic, and what he saw filled him with compassion to make a difference in the lives of the poor and impoverished. The foundation has since built over 7 new villages, providing over 650 families with a fresh start in a new dwelling and safe community - offering prospects of home and enjoyment of their human rights. Additional village communities are currently under construction.

**Sustainability:** The Samaritan Foundation is engaged in establishing partnership with IN Network, an organization that operates schools and promotes individual child sponsorships, in order to provide funding, manage and operate the school beginning in 2009. In future years individual donors will sponsor individual students eliminating the need for continued grant funding.

**Monitoring & Evaluation:** CitiHope began its work in Dominican Republic by first responding to 1998's hurricane, providing humanitarian assistance in the San Pedro area. Since that time, CHI has engaged in a series of private and governmental initiatives to help the needy in the Puerto Plata area, partnering with private donors such as the Elliott Foundation and Servidores de los Enfermos, and government agencies such as the Dominican Republic Ministry of Health and the USAID Office of Food for Peace's IFRP Program. As such, monitoring and evaluation missions are regular and full follow-up reporting will be conducted twice before the school year ends.

**Project Partners/Sponsors:** Courtney's Foundation, CitiHope International, Our Children's Earth Foundation and The Samaritan Foundation.

**Other Joint Project Activities and Strategies:** CitiHope International and Our Children's Earth Foundation have collaborated on two projects in the Dominican Republic in 2008. After an April mission trip, CHI and OCE were able to make arrangements to meet urgent needs for Casa Nazaret, an orphanage for children with physical disabilities and mental challenges. A new food refrigerator, washing machine, air conditioning unit and bedding were supplied.

In June, OCE in partnership with CHI funded the purchase, delivery and clinician training of an HIV/AIDS blood analyzer to CEPROSH clinic in Puerto Plata. This delivery allowed patients to receive prompt blood analysis and updated prescriptions thus ending arduous trips to Santiago for testing.