



Prosperity Catalyst
Investing in women changes everything

Empower Women in Haiti to Support their Children and the Environment through Beekeeping

Goal: \$50,000

Summary

Beekeeping can be an important source of income for women and children in Haiti, where over half of the population lives in poverty. We are raising \$50,000 to set up and staff 10 beekeeping demonstration sites and bee-plant nurseries. These sites will train 400 new beekeepers (at least 60% women) in Western Haiti each year.

Challenge

Haiti is the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere. Over half of the population lives below the national poverty line and 24% live in extreme poverty, on less than \$1.23 a day.

Haiti also has one of the highest rates of gender inequality in the world. Women there are often excluded from the traditional labor market and are more likely to be unemployed, leaving them particularly vulnerable to economic insecurity. Beekeeping has the potential to be a lucrative business and a promising opportunity for women in particular as it can be done close to home with relatively low startup investment and time commitment. However, women have traditionally been excluded from the beekeeping industry in Haiti.

Education costs in Haiti are exorbitant for most families. It costs about \$250 a year to cover school fees, books, uniforms, and supplies for one child in primary school. While primary school attendance has risen in recent decades, only 10% of students complete secondary school, and Haiti continues to have the lowest literacy rates in the region.

Solution

Studies have proved that income in the hands of women is invested directly in their family and children. By providing women in Haiti with an opportunity to earn, we ensure that their children will be able to receive an education.

Since 2012, Prosperity Catalyst has been developing and strengthening women-led businesses in Haiti. We launched our beekeeping program in 2018 and saw immediate results, as newly minted women beekeepers earned more income, which went directly to their children's education and other important family needs.

\$50,000 will fund 10 new demonstration sites, each with 5 hives and 2 sets of beekeeping equipment, plus pay for agricultural specialists and trainers, like Patricia (pictured above), an agronomist and long-term beekeeper. The 10 sites will train 400 new beekeepers (at least 60% of whom are women) each year. Once established, the training hives can be active for several years. Even during training, trainees will begin producing honey that earns a modest profit, which can be used for a pooled emergency fund or to meet other urgent needs.

Long-Term Impact

Once a woman has completed our training, she has access to a micro-loan to purchase hives and equipment for her own beekeeping operation through a local Haitian lending partner, Fonkoze, and Kiva.org (a crowd-sourcing platform that raises small loans from women with in the U.S. and elsewhere for women who have little or no access to financing). Every single woman who has applied for a beekeeping loan with us has been completely funded within a matter of hours! Each fully-functioning hive produces \$188 in sales per year— enough to cover a child’s primary school fees for the entire year, with some left over for uniforms and books. Most beekeepers start with two hives and split their colonies—doubling their earning potential—annually, paying for new hives either from revenue generated or by obtaining a new loan. Small farmers in the areas where we work don’t use chemical pesticides, so these hives become a small but important part of the global effort to save the bees.

Each of the 10 demonstration sites will also serve as a nursery for pollen-producing plants, many of which were destroyed when Hurricane Matthew decimated the country in 2016. Each of our trainees will receive 6 bee-attracting plants—lemon, avocado, mango, and moringa trees as well as aromatic plants such as citronella, basil, and melice. The trees and herbs, which trainees will plant at their homes, will not only help beekeepers to produce honey and profits, but will also help improve families’ nutrition, and provide much-needed environmental rehabilitation for the island nation.

In Haiti, a few beehives can change a family’s future. 400 new beekeepers a year could change the country. Please help us make it happen.