Dear Friends of the *What If Foundation*,

As I look back on 2019, I see a year filled with rising challenges as well as milestones of hope. The political and economic crisis that began in the summer of 2018 deepened in 2019 with nationwide protests, as people from all walks of life rose to demand justice and accountability from the government. Unfortunately, the crisis also brought continued spikes in inflation, a stark rise in street violence, school and business closures, and nationwide food shortages, which meant many more people were unable to put meals on the table and find a path forward.

As dire as these challenges have been, it never ceases to amaze me how quickly Na Rive can adapt their programs to changing circumstances and find effective and compassionate ways to serve the children and families in Ti Plas Kazo. During the height of the crisis in 2019, the Na Rive team worked with the local community to assess security concerns and redesigned logistics at the Fr. Jeri School and the Food Program to keep the children safe, fed, nurtured and learning. Their resilience, ingenuity and leadership — as well as the environment of trust, warmth and joy they create in even the bleakest moments — has made them not just a school, but a bedrock of the community.

The summer marked one of the most significant achievements in the history of the *What If Foundation*, as the Fr. Jeri School celebrated its first high school graduating class. 10 of the 11 students passed their final exams and most were able to secure a spot at either a local college or a technical school to continue their education in the areas of law, hotel management, administration, nursing, and construction. As new generations line up for graduation, they’ll do so with the hope and confidence instilled in them by the Fr. Jeri School, and knowing that caring people like you are invested in their future.

2019 also brought exciting developments at the *What If Foundation* as we strengthened our fundraising capacity through the launch of a new website and design guidelines, the creation of a video on the Fr. Jeri School, and the implementation of new IT systems that will help us reach more people. All with the goal of amplifying our voice and building the *What If Foundation* for growth, so we can support more meals, more scholarships, and greater opportunities on the ground.

The start of this new decade with the arrival of COVID-19 has brought the world an unprecedented challenge, and one of particularly uneven implications for Haiti given its vulnerable population and lack of healthcare infrastructure. Yet, as the Na Rive team and the Ti Plas Kazo community have proven over the last 20 years, their strength and hope are indomitable.

Thank you, this year and every year, for all you do to support the children of Ti Plas Kazo and for keeping Haiti in your hearts. None of this critical work would be possible without your kindness and compassion.

With gratitude and hope,

*Catherine Lelong*

Interim Executive Director

*What If Foundation*
A NOTE FROM OUR FOUNDER

Over the last 20 years, our Haitian partners have shown me time and again what love in action looks like. It takes great courage and strength to provide food and education in the midst of a crisis, and in 2019, Haiti experienced multiple crises at once as a result of political strife and economic collapse.

As you’ll read in these pages, Na Rive found a way to continue serving desperately needed meals and education at the Fr. Jeri School, bringing hope and stability to the community of Ti Plas Kazo. The work that you make possible through your donations served as a beacon of light for countless children and their families.

I spoke with Lavarice Gaudin, Na Rive’s Program Manager, during a particularly volatile period of 2019 when it was dangerous to move about Port-au-Prince and he shared this:

“If you strongly believe you have a mission, you continue to do it no matter the obstacles. Our mission is to serve. We are being as careful as we can be and we keep working, keep helping, keep serving the children. When so many people depend on you, you work for them, find strength from your faith, and do not give in to fear. We are focused on doing what we can to bring relief, hope, and a better future for all who are within our reach.”

Lavarice’s words have stuck with me ever since. The devotion of the women and men who cook the meals, teach the children, and lead these programs with so much love, moves me deeply. This is sacred work that we are all a part of. It is not detoured by challenges, but finds a way through. It’s bold and brave and is at the root of our history, our present, and our future.

To be in partnership with Na Rive and with each of you is a privilege and blessing. Thank you for bringing hope to the children and keeping the flame lit.

Lespwa fe viv (hope gives life),

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Margaret Trost
Founder
What If Foundation
FOOD

Hunger and malnutrition remain a daily reality for the majority of Haitian children and their families. *Lamanje*, Na Rive’s community food program which started in 2000, continues to provide vital nourishment for the Ti Plas Kazo community. There are three ways that your donations support local children and families.

**COMMUNITY CAFETERIA**
Every Monday through Friday, the Na Rive cooking team serves a hot, nutritious meal to the children who live nearby. Up to 500 meals were distributed with love each afternoon at the Community Cafeteria in 2019, down from a high the previous year as the political crisis, shortages and street violence made it harder for families to travel safely.

**SCHOOL CAFETERIA**
Every school day, students and staff of the Fr. Jeri School are served lunch in the cafeteria. This is a rare occurrence in Haiti, since most schools do not provide food to their students. But Na Rive knows this daily meal supports the nutritional needs for learning and creates the bonds that nurture a powerful sense of community. Up to 430 meals were served to students and staff every school day in 2019 at the School Cafeteria.

**FOOD PANTRY**
A substantial part of the community Na Rive serves moved to Ti Plas Kazo after the 2010 earthquake, when a tent settlement was established there for those who had lost their homes. In October 2016, the Haitian government dismantled that tent community, forcing hundreds of families to leave. These families – who have been relying on the food program for years – are now miles away from the place they have come to consider home, without permanent housing or enough income to reliably purchase food. To address this need, Na Rive created a food pantry where families can pick up rice and beans to cook at home. Up to 240 meals per week were provided to families who visited the food pantry in 2019, keeping nutrition on their tables and saving them from walking miles to Ti Plas Kazo to attend the community cafeteria.
EDUCATION

Na Rive established the Fr. Jeri School in 2016 to foster the next generation of leaders in Haiti: children who are empowered, thoughtful, resilient, resourceful, proud of their heritage and ready to work together for positive change.

FR. JERI SCHOOL
The Fr. Jeri School continued to grow in both size and reputation and has managed to maintain a high academic level and remarkable pass rate in government exams (91% in 2019 vs. a national average of 66%). In 2019, 385 children were enrolled in grades spanning from Pre-Kindergarten to high school graduation.

There are 49 teachers and 16 administrative staff working at the Fr. Jeri School. The teaching team, which includes 11 full-time and 38 subject specific part-time teachers, brings depth and breadth of expertise to the curriculum. Other support staff include a doctor, a nurse, a cleaning crew, and security guards. In addition to an increasing variety of classes, the School provides students with cultural and community enrichment activities throughout the year, including field trips to important national sites and a weeklong retreat.

EXTERNAL SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM
Prior to the opening of the Fr. Jeri School in 2016, we created a scholarship program to enable children in Ti Plas Kazo to enroll in local schools. Most of the external scholarship students have now been transferred to the Fr. Jeri School, though we continue to sponsor the students who have been displaced and now live too far away from Ti Plas Kazo to attend school there every day.

In 2019, we supported 29 external scholarships for students at various institutions who would have not been able to pursue their studies otherwise.

AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMS
Na Rive’s popular afterschool programs continue to thrive. Fr. Jeri students and community members receive academic assistance after school hours, as well as the ability to learn income-generating skills or life and leadership skills like financial management and public speaking. 250 students were served by these programs in 2019.

SUMMER CAMP
Over six weeks during the summer, parents can rely on a safe place for their children to play, receive nutritious meals, and learn income-generating skills like macramé, computer basics, calligraphy, and sewing. 300 children joined the summer camp in 2019, down from 2018 due to nationwide street protests and security concerns.
“2019 was a very special year for the Fr. Jeri School, as we celebrated our first high school graduates and the reputation of the School kept growing.

It was also a difficult year due to the protests and violence on the streets, which made transport and security very challenging for our students, staff, and children and families coming to Lamanje.

We are so grateful to the What If Foundation and its kind donors for supporting our work and making these critical programs possible. Together, we are feeding more children and giving more students the chance for a better future.”

Lavarice Gaudin
Program Director
Na Rive
HOPE

Haitians continue to endure incredible challenges, from political unrest to economic injustice, drought, food insecurity, and cataclysmic weather. Every program your donations support is designed to foster hope and opportunity for the Ti Plas Kazo community.

We believe food and education are the key building blocks to creating positive systemic change. Behind those building blocks is a deep, trusting relationship between the What If Foundation and Na Rive. Our shared commitment means we work together every single day to make hope possible.

The Fr. Jeri School is a symbol of that hope, not just for its students and teachers, but for the parents and families, who are encouraged to participate in their children’s education and increase their chances of success. Standing proud on the hill, the School represents determination, resilience, and the possibility of a better future for the whole community.

Through everyday interactions, sharing of stories during food distribution, and at special neighborhood events like Flag Day, the Na Rive team strives to reinforce community unity and the importance of civic duty and national pride to form the young leaders and change agents of tomorrow.

Several times a year, Na Rive also travels to marginalized communities around Port-au-Prince and beyond to help those most in need through food distribution and special projects — such as medical, sanitation, and emergency relief efforts — spreading light and hope no matter the challenges ahead.
2019 FINANCIAL SUMMARY

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EXPENSES BREAKDOWN

- **Food Program**: 46.4%
- **Education Program**: 33.6%
- **Fundraising**: 14.2%
- **Administration**: 5.8%

STAFF
Catherine Lelong
Interim Executive Director
Mia Masia
Donor Relations Associate

BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Catherine Lelong
Board Chair
Laura Crabb
Treasurer
Liz Owens
Secretary
Susan Carson
Kate Doherty
Adeline Dougherty

ADVISORY COUNCIL
Margaret Trost
Founder, What If Foundation
Bryan Sirchio
Director, Haiti Allies
Mark Zaifman
Founder, Spiritus Financial Planning

Since 2000, the What If Foundation has partnered with the Haitian community organization Na Rive to provide food and educational opportunities to under-served children in Ti Plas Kazo, Port-au-Prince.

By pairing the local expertise and leadership of Na Rive with the financial resources provided by our donors, we work together to make a difference in the lives of some of the world’s most impoverished children, providing hope and opportunity for a brighter future.

We are a 501 (c)(3) charitable organization established for the benefit of children in Haiti. All donations are 100% tax deductible as permitted by law.

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