Dear Friends of the *What If Foundation*,

2020 was a year like no other. The impact of the pandemic rippled across every corner of the planet, and Haiti was no exception. Although the number of reported COVID-19 cases didn’t rise as quickly as feared, the socioeconomic effects were hard felt. This, coupled with the deepening political, humanitarian and security crises, made life in Haiti incredibly difficult. Our partner Na Rive told us they have never seen this level of unrest and violence before, which made running the programs risky and complex. Yet, their dedication and devotion to the children, the Ti Plas Kazo community, and their country only grew stronger. Day in and out they managed to deliver nourishing meals, a quality education and a supportive environment with love and hope, a true respite to the suffering and uncertainty on the streets. Against all odds, and thanks to the support of donors like you, Na Rive was able to accomplish meaningful milestones last year.

2020 marked the 20th anniversary of the Community Food Program, lovingly known in Ti Plas Kazo as Lamange. What started as a small meal distribution serving 200 children once a week, has grown to include a purpose-built community cafeteria and kitchen, a school cafeteria, and a pantry now serving over 5,750 meals per week. Over the last two decades, your support helped provide more than 5.5 million meals to hungry children and families.

The Father Jeri School celebrated its 4th year, welcoming 400 students from PreK to high school and offering an increasing variety of classes to support academics with income-generating skills. Despite school closures due to COVID-19 and the trauma and stress brought by the violence in the streets, all high school students managed to graduate and 83% of them received full government scholarships to attend university — a remarkable achievement in Haiti, where these opportunities are limited and extremely competitive nationwide.

None of this work would be possible without our committed family of donors and supporters. Together, we are building the future our mission describes: *A future where Haitians can grow out of the cycle of poverty and have the tools and access to forge a prosperous path. Where local communities become agents of change in their country, and a beacon of hope and pride. And where people from all backgrounds and places come together in solidarity with Haiti, to create change one small step at a time.*

Thank you for making opportunity and hope possible in Ti Plas Kazo.

With gratitude,

*Catherine Lelong*

Board Chair and Interim Executive Director

*What If Foundation*
A NOTE FROM OUR FOUNDER

This year marks the 20th anniversary of the community food program in Ti Plas Kazo. I remember the first email Father Jeri sent me sharing the good news. It was March 2000 and he described things this way: “Margaret, the program is wonderful! I want to let you know that it is working beautifully. From 200 participants last Sunday, it has doubled today. The news is being spread. Children are pouring on us. I use many volunteers. Many youngsters want to help.” Then came this sentence that still gives me chills all these years later: “There is great hope.”

I remember staring at my computer screen re-reading Father Jeri’s words. To live thousands of miles away from Port-au-Prince and yet to be connected to something so powerfully direct and important moved me deeply. I imagined all the children, the excitement, the plates streaming out of the kitchen, the impact of these nutritious meals and how the money I’d sent a few weeks earlier (a donation from a faith community) had helped bring Father Jeri’s vision for a community food program into reality. It all happened so quickly. The need was urgent, Father Jeri reminded me, “For a child who is hungry, this meal is a miracle.”

Week after week, year after year, for twenty years and counting this food program has remained a constant source of nourishment and hope for a generation of children and their families. The meals have never stopped, no matter the obstacle faced, including the year 2020. With the Covid-19 pandemic threatening and in the midst of extreme political and economic turmoil, the Na Rive cooks found a way to keep the children fed. Their innovation, courage and commitment combined with your generous donations ensured that food flowed out of the kitchen during a time heavy with suffering.

In a year that has been so difficult for the whole world, the partnership between the What If Foundation and Na Rive and what we have been able to achieve together is a beautiful reminder of what is possible when love is put into action.

With hope,

Margaret Trost
Founder, What If Foundation
Na Rive’s community food program, Lamanje, opened its doors for the 20th year running, providing vital nourishment for the children and families in Ti Plas Kazo. Thanks to your donations, this program has grown from serving a few hundred meals once a week to over 5.5 million meals over the past two decades. There are three ways the program supports the community.

**COMMUNITY CAFETERIA**
Every Monday through Friday, the Na Rive cooking team serves a hot, nutritious meal to the children and families who live nearby. Due to the pandemic and rising violence on the streets, food delivery at the Community Cafeteria was adapted to comply with safety and security measures and drastic variations in demand.

Up to 500 meals were distributed with love each afternoon at the Community Cafeteria in 2020, down from the high of previous years 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 Father 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 478 meals were served every school day to students and staff in 2020.

**FOOD PANTRY**
In order to support families that have been displaced and those living too far from Ti Plas Kazo to attend the daily meals at the community cafeteria, Na Rive created a food pantry where families can pick up rice and beans to cook at home. Up to 260 meals per week were provided to families who visited the food pantry in 2020, keeping nutrition on their tables and saving them from traveling miles in an often-dangerous journey.
EDUCATION

20 years ago, Father Jeri told our founder Margaret “first we feed the children, we keep them alive. Then we give them an education.” The What If Foundation began supporting scholarships for four children in 2001. Since then, thanks to the support of donors like you, the educational programs have grown to support hundreds of students from PreK to college each year. The culmination of these efforts is the Father Jeri School.

FATHER JERI SCHOOL
Na Rive established the Father 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.

In 2000, the School welcomed 401 students from Pre-K to 12th grade, up from 385 the year prior. It continued to grow the number of courses offered and supported students to achieve a remarkable pass rate in their government exams, despite the increased levels of stress and trauma from the security crisis and the effects of the pandemic. What’s more, 83% of high school graduates succeeded in securing state sponsored scholarships to the university of their choice, an extremely rare occurrence in Haiti.

There were 77 teachers, teacher assistants, technical instructors, administrative and support staff working at the Father Jeri School. Due to the pandemic, distance learning was provided by SMS and printed assignments. As the school was able to reopen in August, Na Rive ensured hand washing stations, temperature checks, masks and distancing were in place for a safe return to school.

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. 600 children joined the summer camp program in 2020, up from 300 in 2019, due to a heightened need to keep the children learning and playing in a safe environment given the security crisis. For the first time, Na Rive set up three different locations for the program across Port-au-Prince, to be able to accommodate all the children and observe social distancing measures.
**AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMS**

Na Rive offers afterschool support to students at the Father Jeri School as well as those from other local schools to help them prepare for their national exams. This program was particularly needed as many schools were forced to close due to the pandemic and security situation.

Enrichment classes are also offered to everyone in the community, with the aim of helping them learn income-generating skills and providing a nurturing space for children to be entertained and safe after school. Classes include sewing, masonry, English, computer skills, and videography, among others. 635 students were served by these programs in 2020.

**EXTERNAL SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM**

Prior to the opening of the Father 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 Father Jeri School, though we continue to sponsor the students who have been displaced and now live too far away from Ti Plas Kazo and those who do not yet meet the academic level of the Father Jeri School. This program supports students towards covering the cost of tuition as well as transportation, books, uniforms, and other school-related fees.

In 2020, we supported 42 external scholarships for students at various institutions who would have not been able to pursue their studies otherwise. Na Rive’s Program Director Lavarice Gaudin checks in with the students and the administration at their respective schools, to follow up on their progress and ensure they still qualify for this program.
Haitians continue to endure incredible challenges, from political unrest and economic injustice to food insecurity, cataclysmic weather, and the current pandemic. Every program your donations support is designed to foster opportunity and hope for the Ti Plas Kazo community, and beyond.

We believe food and education are the key building blocks to create lasting change, and that every act of service, every act of love, makes a difference. Our longstanding partnership with Na Rive is built on that shared belief and on a deep sense of solidarity, trust, and hope for a better future.

Standing proud on the hill, the Father Jeri School is a beautiful representation of that hope — of the determination, resilience, and the possibility of a more prosperous path ahead for the whole community. Over the years, we’ve witnessed how lives are being transformed in Ti Plas Kazo. We’ve seen children arrive at the food program and gain strength, pursue an education and aim further than they thought was possible, and give back to their community.

Thanks to your support and the ingenuity and devotion of Na Rive, we are able to keep spreading light and hope, no matter the challenges ahead.

“...The situation in Haiti was already difficult before the coronavirus. Now, people are even more hungry and they are scared. They don’t know what to do, where to go or who to trust. It breaks my heart to see the children suffering at the hands of both nature and mankind. These are dark times, but our hope is strong, and we continue to do what we can each day to help our community and those in most need. Thank you so much to all the donors for your support and contributions to the What If Foundation.”

Lavarice Gaudin
Program Director
NaRive
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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