

HELP THE MUSTARD SEED GROW

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About our partners

Contributions to the Mustard Seed Campaign will go towards supporting the work of the two following partner organizations of *DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE*:



CANADIAN CATHOLIC ORGANIZATION FOR
**Development
and Peace**



Kamenge Youth Centre, Burundi

The Kamenge Youth Centre in Burundi was founded in 1991 by Xaverian Fathers, who at the time recognized the need to address rising ethnic tensions in the northern districts of the capital Bujumbura. Sadly, a brutal civil war broke out in 1993 that would last 12 years. In that time, the Centre took on a greater role, becoming one of the few places to offer respite for youth from the violence surrounding them and give them hope for a better future. Today, the Centre has 40,000 youth members who participate in a variety of activities, including theatre, sports, language courses and more, to encourage tolerance, peace and good citizenship amongst a new generation of Burundians.

“Without the Centre, I might discriminate against others. I might not have access to all the knowledge that I was able to acquire here. Without the Centre, I would not be who I am today.”

Nshimirmana Jean-Paul, member of the Kamenge Youth Centre

A prayer to celebrate the Mustard Seed Collection

Dear Lord God,
we thank You for the mustard seed
and what it teaches us about Your love.
Lord - plant Your seed into our lives -
help us to be open and giving
to those less fortunate so that wonderful things may happen....
we ask this in Jesus' name.
Amen.



Learn more at devp.org/mustardseed

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JACHA (Youth in Action for Change), Haiti

Founded in 1989 by the Notre-Dame-du-Bon-Conseil Sisters, JACHA brings together local youth to engage them in activities to improve community life. Here is an article about their work in post-Earthquake Haiti.

JACHA, a youth organization in Jacmel, has long been working to improve the future of Haiti by looking after two of the country's best resources: its youth and the environment.

The organization brings the two together by teaching youth about the importance of the country's environment and by actively engaging them in preservation activities, such as tree planting and organizing awareness campaigns in their communities.

Jacmel was not spared by the January 12th earthquake. This cultural capital of Haiti lost many of its heritage buildings and a large portion of the city's residents are now living in camp sites that dot the landscape of this coastal town.

With the city covered in rubble and people moving into the crowded tent cities, JACHA recognized an urgent need to ensure that these spaces did not quickly fill with rubbish and increase the potential for the spread of disease.

The organization quickly put together a cash-for-work program supported by Development and Peace that mobilized over one hundred youth members of the organization and dispatched them to camps to organize clean-up committees and speak to residents on how to manage waste and keep their surroundings clean.

"Life in the camps is impossible. No one looks after us," says Dayana Alexandre, 21, who lives with five other people in a tent. "At least with the activities from JACHA, I feel better and safer. They are helping me develop," she says.

The importance of this kind of work in the camps became frighteningly evident with the rapid spread of cholera in the country.

As soon as news of the dissemination of the disease broke, JACHA asked its youth members to speak to residents on precautions they can take to prevent the spread of cholera. Although, there have been some cases in Jacmel, the city has mostly been spared from the disease.

In fact, disaster prevention has become a large part of JACHA's work and when the hurricane season was approaching, members worked diligently in the camps to warn people of what and what not to do to remain safe.

"If people had known what to do in the earthquake, we would not have lost so many people. That is very sad. That is why we wanted to start a prevention program. Why we had to," says Jackson Marcelin, one of the coordinator's at JACHA.

JACHA, however, is also concerned with giving youth the opportunity to improve their future prospects so they can flourish. They organize a variety of classes for their youth members, who range in ages from 15 to 30.

The courtyard of the organization is always full of young faces chatting and laughing. Some are there for English or computers courses, while others gather for cooking classes. JACHA even organized a papier-mâché workshop for some local kids. It is an art form that Jacmel is renowned for, and despite the city losing some of its heritage in the earthquake, at least other forms are being preserved and appreciated by a new generation of Jacmelians.



Thank you for your support!

