



ROOTS OF DEVELOPMENT'S 2025
**ANNUAL
REPORT**

LETTER FROM OUR LEADERSHIP

2025 brought unexpected challenges, from the increased violence and insecurity in Haiti, to the collapse of the US Agency for International Development, to the widespread withdrawals from aid commitments around the world.

And yet, Roots, with the support of our incredible network, facilitated, supported, and participated in unprecedented acts of collective action. We brought together new networks, expanded our work across Haiti, connected with new allies, and pushed for collaboration, at a time and in an industry where major players regularly choose to go it alone.

Many people believe that progress in Haiti is impossible under the current circumstances—but Roots and our partners in Haiti prove every day that progress is possible through local leadership, community investment, and true partnership.

If there is one thing you take away from this report, let it be this: our work in Haiti continues every day. Leaders are being trained, projects are being implemented, and lives are being improved. And, even more importantly, the social fabric of Haiti is being rewoven and reinforced where decades of foreign intervention has eroded trust and created competition.

2025 demanded even greater strength, focus, adaptability, and purpose from all of us, and we couldn't be prouder of what we achieved.

Sincerely,

Rudy Brioché
Board Chair

Chad Bissonnette
President & Co-Founder



Photo: Gwoup Konbit & Rasin Developman



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ABOUT US

For over a century, top-down aid has imposed priorities on communities, bypassing local knowledge and resources. It has disrupted local cooperation, fostered dependency, and misallocated billions that could have supported sustainable change.

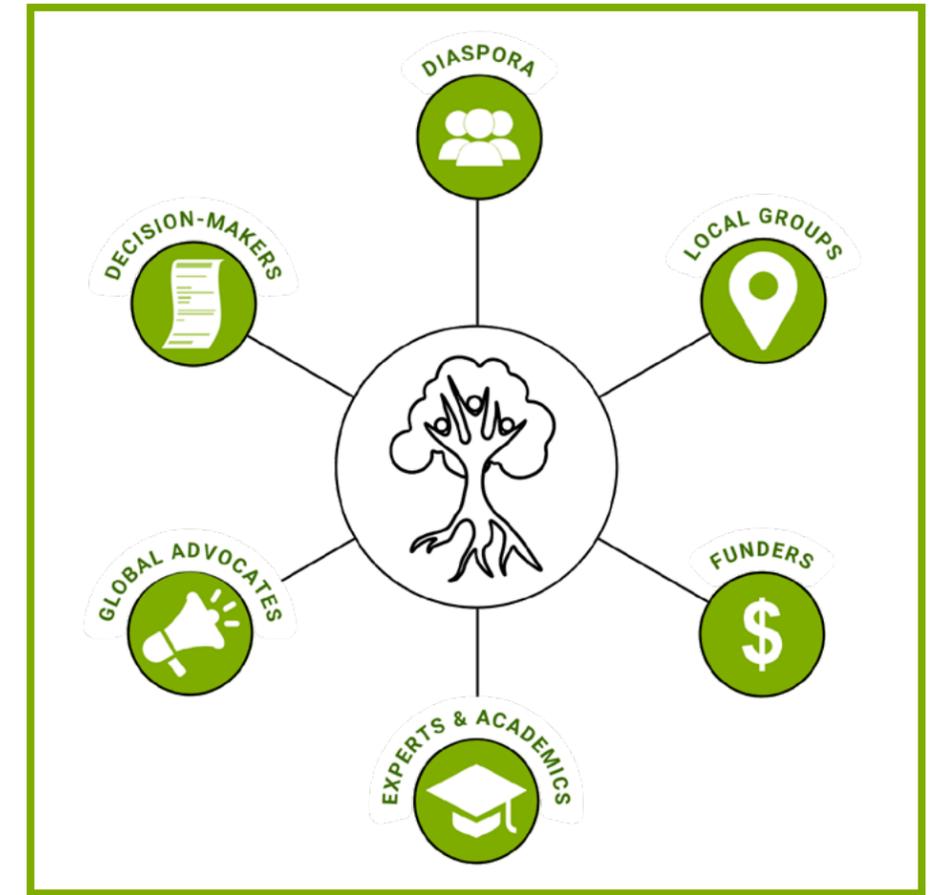
Haiti provides a stark example of these challenges. Donated dollars have frequently been lost, mismanaged, or absorbed by unaccountable leaders and large foreign actors, consistently undermining communities' ability to solve their own problems. Today, Haiti's current sociopolitical crisis demands immediate action—collective action at the intersection of humanitarian aid, peacebuilding, and development, anchored in local realities, values, and leadership.

The dismantling of the US Agency for International Development and similar withdrawals from aid commitments around the world present an unexpected opportunity to shape the next phase of international aid: **one that centers local knowledge and resources, promotes social cohesion, strengthens civil society, and creates genuine, long-term partnerships that drive transformative change in Haiti.**

Roots of Development is a US-based, 501(c)(3) organization that was founded in 2007. **Over the past twenty years, we have built an extensive, interconnected ecosystem that starts in communities across Haiti and extends around the world.** Our network includes individuals, funders, academia, government, diaspora, local organizations, advocates, and more.

We truly believe in the power and necessity of collective action, which can be found at every level of our work, from our Haitian partners' initiatives promoting mutual aid via the historical practice of *Konbit*, to our efforts alongside international collaborators to conduct research, build coalitions, and advocate for change.

We represent an alternative to the conventional aid system—a national network of effective, Haitian-led organizations and an international ecosystem of funders, advocates, and allies, united by the idea that communities should be shaping their own futures. **Together, we intend to change Haiti's trajectory, reshape the international aid system, and improve the quality of millions of lives.**



OUR 2025 BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Rudy Brioché (Chair), Brenda Huneycutt (Vice-Chair), Jenna Willits (Treasurer), Jean Francois Bauer (Secretary), Luc Castera, Gina Guillaume-Joseph, Karl Racine, & Ben Knowlton.

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We are proud pro-bono clients of Mintz LLP and Newport One.

OUR REACH

\$437,973

IN DIRECT
INVESTMENTS IN OUR
LOCAL PARTNERS

ALL 10

OF HAITI'S
DEPARTMENTS
REACHED



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ABOUT GWROUP KONBIT

Konbit is a deeply Haitian tradition of mutual aid, collective action, and solidarity stemming from rural agriculture that can be traced back as far as the country itself. Gwoup Konbit is a social movement reviving *Konbit* within Haiti in order to bring into fruition a society built on *Konbit*'s values and principles. The five values of *Konbit* are: solidarity, responsibility, collaboration, reciprocity, and participation. The twelve principles of *Konbit* are: sharing, transparency, trust, respect, equity, ethics, perseverance, flexibility, adaptation, innovation, interdependence, and sustainability. Gwoup Konbit's founding members are: Le Paradis Haïtien, Konbit San Pou San, Rasin Devlopman, Leaders de Demain, Metanoia, Rajepre, Posiblite, and Pak Nan Ginen.

ABOUT RASIN DEVLOPMAN

Rasin is our original local partner, based on the island of La Gonave. Their mission is to strengthen the capacity of local leaders so that they are better equipped to manage their own development and improve quality of life on the island. Rasin was founded in 2017, and has since expanded their *Twa Wòch Dife* program to reach **100% of the island**. In addition to improving quality of life through community-led projects, Rasin strengthens civil society by fostering leadership and offering support to other groups and initiatives on the island. Their main programmatic pillars include: the *Volontè Pou Chanjman* (Agents of Change); *Fanm Djanm* (Strong Women); Community Dialogues; and *Kore Solidarity* and Community Impact Projects.

Konbit Soup
JOUMOU
NASYONAL 2026

12 MONTHS OF IMPACT

There are many ways to measure impact—people reached, projects implemented, increase in quality of life—but for Roots, our impact is measured in the success and efficacy of our and our partners work together, both in Haiti and around the world. On the right, you'll find a calendar that shows each of the days Roots of Development, Rasin Devlopman, and Gwoup Konbit took action to further our missions, from convenings to tool creation to project implementation. Below, you'll find quotes from our partners about the significance of Roots' partnership. And, in the pages following, you'll find an in-depth exploration of the ways the Roots-Rasin-Gwoup Konbit ecosystem made an impact in each month of this year.

"Supporting a social movement is rarely linear. It requires patience, trust, and a willingness to engage with complexity, uncertainty, and evolving structures. The partnership between Gwoup Konbit and Roots of Development reflects this balance.

While honoring the organic nature of a social movement, Roots has invested in strengthening organizational capacity, learning systems, and adaptive governance—so that the movement's impact can grow, endure, and remain accountable to the communities it serves."

— Louino Robillard, Gwoup Konbit and Rasin Devlopman

"Thanks to the strategic support of Roots of Development, Gwoup Konbit is better able to serve local communities, structure and prioritize the activities of the Konbit movement, and strengthen its impact on the ground. This support does not replace local leadership, it reinforces it. It deepens learning, broadens perspectives, and enables more people to understand the movement's vision and values. Roots also provides the movement with greater visibility, opening the door to a wider audience that discovers, supports, and values this community-driven initiative. **In this way, the movement remains firmly rooted in the hands of its community while benefiting from expanded reach and support that amplify its impact."**

— Joseph Jethro Sérémé, Gwoup Konbit

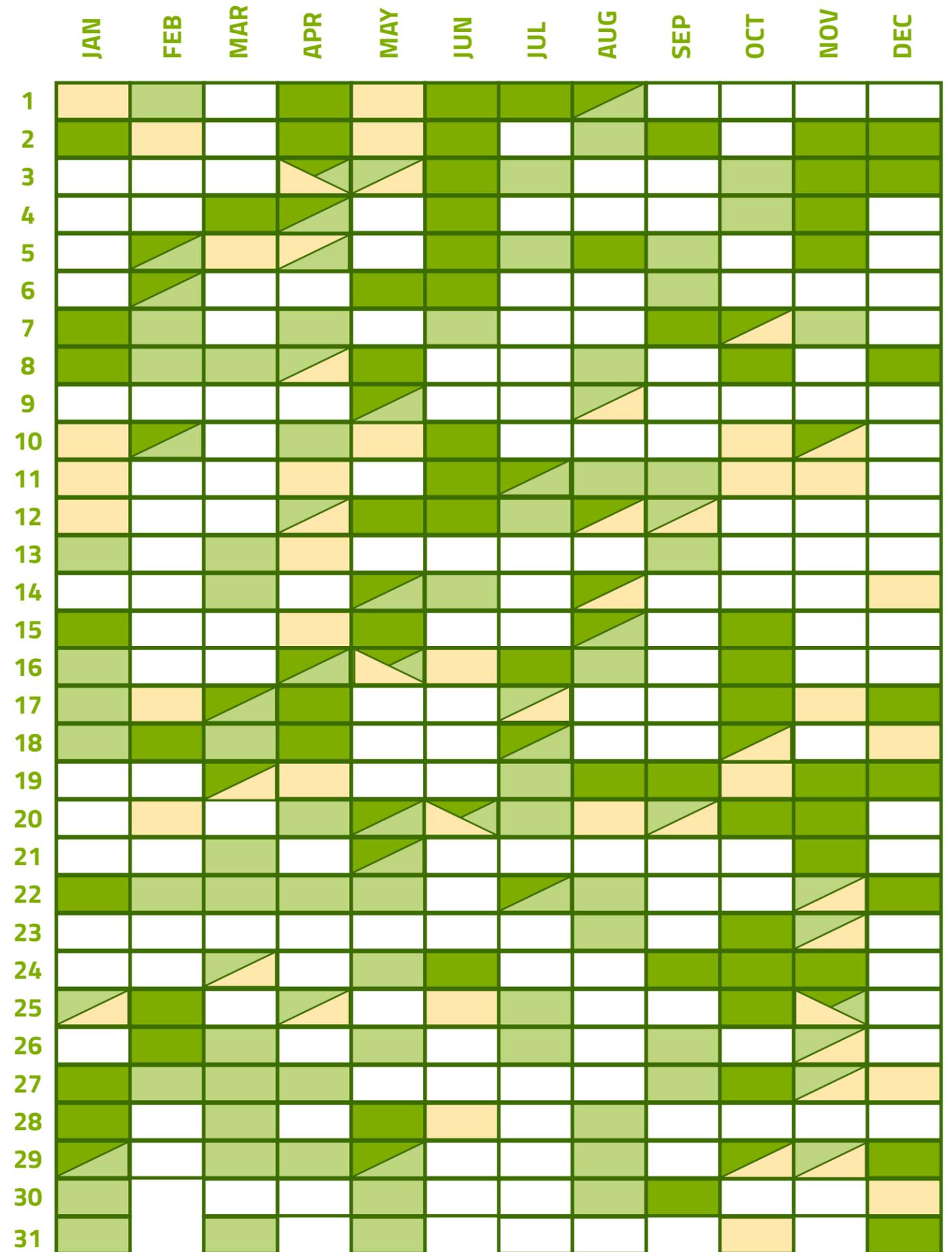
"Sustaining a social movement means embracing complexity while protecting its autonomy.

The partnership between Gwoup Konbit and Roots of Development shows how outside support can strengthen local leadership, deepen learning, and expand impact, without ever taking the movement out of its community's hands."

— Cassandra Jean Francois, Gwoup Konbit and Konbit San Pou San

KEY

- ROOTS OF DEVELOPMENT
- RASIN DEVLOPMAN
- GWROUP KONBIT



JANUARY

January 2025 brought the new year, along with new challenges. In the US, a new presidential administration rocked the foundations of the conventional aid system by freezing all US foreign aid for 90 days and issuing a stop-work order on all US-funded projects. In Haiti, 150 additional police officers from Central American countries and 200 officers from Kenya were deployed, joining those that have been stationed in Haiti since June of 2024 and bringing the total Kenyan deployment to 600 of a promised 1,000. The UN Secretary General warned that, without additional international support, Port-au-Prince could be totally overrun by gangs.



Photo: Gwoup Konbit

On January 1st, Gwoup Konbit held the 6th annual Konbit Soup Joumou in 34 cities and communities across Haiti to celebrate Haitian independence day. They served more than 18,000 bowls of soup at events that included music, dance, and cultural activities.



Photo: Konbit San Pou San

On January 12th, Gwoup Konbit member Konbit San Pou San held a blood drive and first aid training in commemoration of the 15th anniversary of the 2010 earthquake. The training was specifically for forty journalists still working in Port-au-Prince through the violence.



Photo: Rasin Devlopman

On January 13th, Rasin Devlopman held an Introduction to Social Change training for their *Volontè Pou Chanjman* (Agents of Change) in Pointe-a-Raquette. On January 17th, they held one on Community Leadership based on *Konbit* in Anse-a-Galets.



What is Mutual Aid?

by Jeremie Jean-Baptiste, January 2025

Throughout the month, the Roots team produced several new resources for the Development without Dependency Knowledge Hub, including data visualization for Rasin Devlopman's survey of community-based organizations on La Gonave and articles on mutual aid and giving responsibly to disaster relief. We also participated in the virtual book launch for *Community-led Development in Practice*, an edited volume that explores the nine interconnected dimensions that are foundational to the success of CLD initiatives. Chad Bissonnette and Louino Robillard co-wrote a chapter on the transition from Roots to Rasin.



Photo: Rasin Devlopman

On January 18th, Rasin Devlopman held an official groundbreaking ceremony for the construction of the La Gonave Community Leadership & Development Center. The ceremony included leaders, community members, and elected officials from across the island.



On January 15th, Roots team members Louino Robillard and Chad Bissonnette participated in a Haiti Response Coalition discussion on emergency response. Roots co-sponsored the entire Redefining discussion series, which ran from December through May.



Photo: Rasin Devlopman

On January 25th, Rasin Devlopman held a *Reyaji* community dialogue session on technology and social media for income. *Reyaji* sessions are moderated and led by local Haitian experts on topics chosen by community members and are open to all.



Photo: Gwoup Konbit

On January 25th, Gwoup Konbit member Leaders de Demain hosted a *Fanm Lidè* (Women Leaders) session on "Identifying and exploiting opportunities: keys to success in a constantly changing environment" for thirty young women in Port-au-Prince.

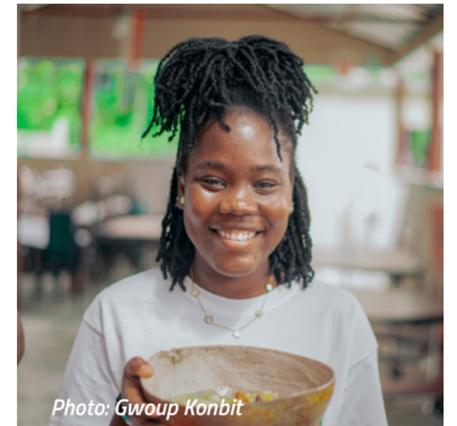


Photo: Gwoup Konbit

On January 25th, Gwoup Konbit held a workshop on *Konbit* values and principles in Limonade, a town near Cap Haitien. Participants also worked together to clean the nearby tomb of François Capois, a Haitian revolutionary hero, putting the values and principles of *Konbit* into practice.



Photo: Rasin Devlopman

On January 30th, Rasin Devlopman kicked off another course of *Fanm kap Kondwi* motorcycle courses for young women on the island of La Gonave. The program graduated 37 women in 2025, for a total of 181 since Rasin began offering the courses in 2021.

FEBRUARY

In February, the efforts to dismantle the US Agency for International Development accelerated as it was moved under the purview of the State Department and workers were put on leave and issued termination letters. An executive order attempted to eliminate the Inter-American Foundation (IAF), the US African Development Foundation (USADF), and the US Institute of Peace (USIP). All of these actions, however, were caught up in a series of federal court cases and, for the most part, put on hold. In Haiti, the gangs took new territory outside of Port-au-Prince proper, the first Kenyan police officer was killed in the violence, and Haitians took to the streets en masse to protest the violence and their displacement.



Photo: Leaders de Demain

On February 2nd, Leaders de Demain concluded their "Challengers" competition and selected a winner. Through the Challengers, twelve young adults undergo extensive training and participate in nine collective challenges and seven individual challenges to cultivate their leadership.



On February 6th, Roots began conducting in-depth interviews with funders of Haitian-led development. The purpose was to learn more about the other funders in our sector and their funding priorities, practices, and preferences in order to promote further collaboration.



Photo: Konbit San Pou San

On February 20th, the Limonade chapter of Konbit San Pou San held a blood drive, through which they mobilized 88 donors, collecting 58 bags of blood. Konbit San Pou San regularly holds blood collection events to supply hospitals and clinics across the country.



Photo: Rasin Development

Throughout February, members of the *Volontè Pou Chanjman* recreated the trainings they received in January on Social Change and *Konbit* for members of their communities. Nine *Pase Mayèt* replication sessions were held throughout the month, covering 7 of 11 communal sections and both city centers. *Past Mayèt* sessions allow the *Volontè Pou Chanjman* to practice and enhance their understanding of the material through teaching, and they exponentially increase the reach of the information. In total, more than 1,000 people were reached through *Pase Mayèt* knowledge-sharing sessions in 2025.



HIGHLIGHT: USAID FREEZE

In February, Roots accelerated its efforts to respond to the US foreign aid freeze. On February 10th, Roots published "USAID Freeze: Updates and Recommendations" on our website. Our recommendations were for future foreign aid to:

1. Shift Funding to Local Organizations.
2. Avoid Dependency.
3. Reduce Bureaucracy and Enhance Adaptability.
4. Improve Communication & Accountability Mechanisms.
5. Prioritize long-term impact over short-term solutions.
6. Expand Partnerships & Collaboration.
7. Invest in "the aid nexus."

You can read our full response at rootsofdevelopment.org/usaid-freeze-february-2025/.

We also collaborated with Haiti Renewal Alliance, Haiti Policy House, and Haiti Response Coalition to hold a virtual town hall on "Haiti Without AID" on February 25th, and we continued to meet with a group of other funders of Haitian-led development to coordinate our information and response in the wake of the freeze.



Photo: Rasin Development

On February 22nd, Rasin held a *Reyaji* community dialogue session on "Business Creation: from Idea to Reality." During *Reyaji* sessions, Rasin opens its offices to diverse groups of young adults who are looking to discuss the topics that are important to their lives on the island.



On February 2nd, Gwoup Konbit awarded seed grant funding to a group called MERCI AGRO in the Nippes department of Haiti for their inter-school gardening project. The purpose of the project was to promote the environment, unity, social cohesion, and agricultural practices.

MARCH

In March, the Transitional Presidential Council in Haiti rotated leadership, the US extended its ban on flights to Port-au-Prince through September, gangs launched new attacks on the capital and surrounding areas, and more mass protests occurred on the streets of Haiti. In the US, court cases surrounding the freeze of foreign aid continued to progress, ordering the administration to pay its outstanding debts and commitments. Secretary of State Marco Rubio announced that more than 80% of USAID's programs had been terminated, with the rest being brought under the purview of the State Department.



Photo: Rasin Developman



Photo: Rasin Developman



Photo: Rasin Developman



Photo: Rasin Developman



Photo: Rasin Developman

HIGHLIGHT: FANM DJANM

One of Rasin's programmatic pillars is its women's programming, called *Fanm Djanm*, or Strong Women. On March 8th, International Women's Day, Rasin launched its annual series of *Fanm Djanm* workshops on the theme of "Empowerment for women and girls, a path to equality." The workshops are designed by and for women, held in towns across the island so that they are accessible to as many people as possible. This year, Rasin held 12 workshops, reaching 662 women across 9 communal sections, plus the Anse-a-Galets and Pointe-a-Raquette city centers.

Rasin's other women's initiatives also made progress in March. The women of the *Yon Fanm, Yon Metye* (One Woman, One Profession) vocational training program participated in a workshop on professional success; motorcycle courses continued; and Rasin began its *Fanm kap Plante* (Women who Plant) communal gardening program, through which women's groups receive training and seeds to start their own vegetable gardens. All of these programs are designed to meet women where they are, educate and empower them, and improve their material quality of life.



Photo: Gwoup Konbit

On March 19th, Gwoup Konbit held an editing session for the Konbit Guide. The Guide is an in-depth exploration of the values and principles of *Konbit*, an historically Haitian form of collective action, mutual aid, and solidarity that forms the basis of Gwoup Konbit.



Photo: Rasin Developman

On March 13th, the *Volontè Pou Chanjman* of Palma, the first communal section of Anse-a-Galets, officially opened their joint social business that allows community members to conduct money transfers. The VPC developed a total of 26 community action plans in 2025.



On March 17th, Roots began publishing a live timeline of news regarding the US freeze of foreign aid and the subsequent consequences and court cases. View it at rootsofdevelopment.org/usa-id-freeze-timeline-updated/.



Language's Role in Shaping Aid Outcomes: Why Words Matter in Humanitarian Work

by Jeremie Jean-Baptiste, March 2025

On March 4th, Roots published "Language's Role in Shaping Aid Outcomes: Why Words Matter in Humanitarian Work" on the Development without Dependency Knowledge Hub. Read the article at rootsofdevelopment.org/languages-role-in-shaping-aid-outcomes/.



Photo: Leaders de Demain

On March 24th, a team from Leaders de Demain traveled to Mamon, a remote town in central Haiti, to work with children and teenagers through their *Timoun se Demen* (Children are the Future) initiative, which improves children's self-esteem and confidence through workshops.



On March 19th, Roots supported a Haiti Response Coalition virtual discussion on "Haiti and Aid: Strategies toward self-reliance virtual discussion," as a follow-up to other events in February, with speakers Guerda Nicolas, Jake Johnston, and Wolf Pamphile.

APRIL

In April, mass protests continued in Haiti as people demanded an end to the violence and for greater protection from their government. In response, the Haitian government adopted a “war budget” to allocate more money to police and military forces. USAID’s foreign service officers were ordered to return to the United States by August while conflicting court cases continued to cast doubt on the futures of the Inter-American Foundation, US African Development Foundation, the Millennium Challenge Corporation, the Wilson Center, and others. The administration acknowledged that some aid programs were mistakenly cut and had to be put back into place.



Photo: Rasin Developman

HIGHLIGHT: STREET LIGHTS

The island of La Gonave does not have electricity—the only small power plant ceased operations in May 2021. Since then, the residents of the island have lived in darkness, limiting nighttime economic and social activity.

From 2017 to 2025, Rasin and its *Volontè Pou Chanjman* installed 123 solar-powered street lamps in communities across 10 of 11 communal sections on the island of La Gonave, as shown on the map below. In April of 2025, *Volontè Pou Chanjman* installed streetlamps in Palma, Grand Source, and Petit Source.

A survey done by the Rasin team this year showed that the installation of the streetlamps led to more meetings, cultural activities, and social events. One of the biggest benefits they measured was on children, who they found spend an average of one to two more hours per night on schoolwork.

Bringing light to communities strengthens trust and social cohesion by reducing the fear of crime and allowing people to come together more frequently.

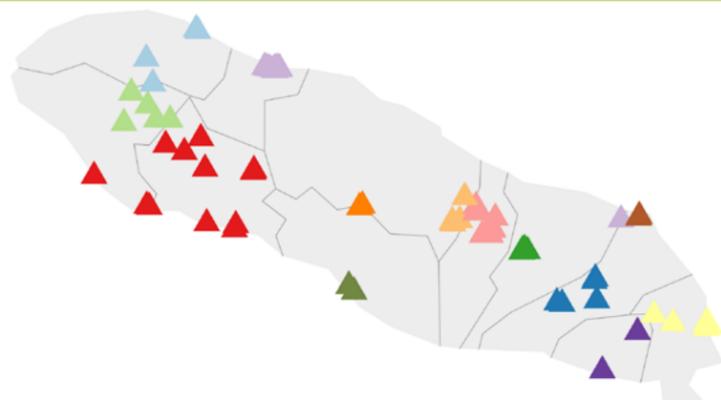


Photo: Rasin Developman

On April 3rd, 17 women graduate from Rasin Developman’s *Fanm kap Kondwi* (Women who Drive) motorcycle courses. The courses have been shown to boost women’s self esteem and confidence, in addition to increasing their independence and access to opportunity.



Photo: Rasin Developman

On April 12th, Rasin Developman facilitated the virtual participation of a La Gonave delegation in the 75th commemoration of the first Haitian women’s congress, which took place in Limonade. Because of Rasin, La Gonave was present for this national, historic event.



Photo: Leaders de Demain

On April 11th, Leaders de Demain’s *Fanm Lidè* (Women Leaders) participants visited a school to educate more than 70 students about reproductive and sexual health and wellness, with a particular emphasis on preventing early pregnancy.



Photo: Leaders de Demain

On April 5th, Leaders de Demain held a *Fanm Lidè* (Women Leaders) workshop on discrimination and challenges in the workplace. They also held a workshop for 70 people on April 15th on the topic of “Success in Employability and Entrepreneurship.”



Photo: Konbit San Pou San

On April 13th, Konbit San Pou San participated in the first-ever Health Expo at the El Rancho Convention Center in Petion Ville. There, they passed out information on blood donation, collected donations, and educated attendees about *Konbit*.



Photo: MCLD

In April, Roots continued its work helping bring people together and foster collaboration in the wake of the foreign aid freeze, including becoming the Co-Chair of the Movement for Community-led Development’s US Government Hill Advocacy Working Group.

MAY

In May, the United States designated the Viv Ansanm gang coalition as a foreign terrorist organization. This official status allows the US government to sanction individuals and organizations cooperating with or supporting the gangs—including those providing humanitarian aid inside affected areas of Port-au-Prince, who must negotiate with the gangs to reach communities. Following the announcement, Secretary Rubio told Congress that the State Department had no intention of punishing aid groups. The State Department also began pressuring the Organization of the American States (OAS) to get more involved in the situation in Haiti. The Secretary-General of OAS acknowledged that the Kenyan-led mission was struggling.



Photo: Rasin Devlopman

In addition to being trained, local leaders on the island of La Gonave in the *Volontè Pou Chanjman* program implement a variety of projects in their communities. In Petit Anse, the *Volontè Pou Chanjman* opened a multifunctional mill that can be used to grind grain or other food.



Photo: Konbit San Pou San

On May 10th, Konbit San Pou San held another blood drive in Port-au-Prince. Less than 25% of blood demand in Haiti is met annually—Konbit San Pou San aims to fill this gap by educating the public about the benefits of blood donation and offering opportunities to do so.

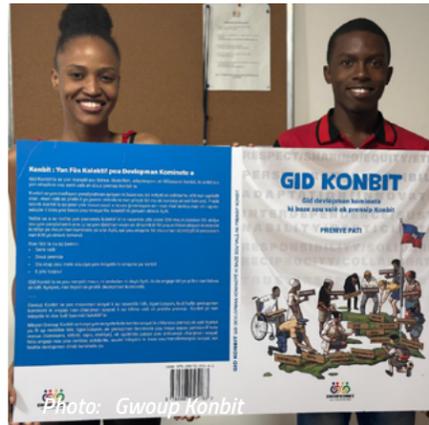


Photo: Gwoup Konbit

In May, as work finalizing the Konbit Guide continued, Roots began setting up meetings for Gwoup Konbit to present the Konbit Guide to potential partners and supporters. They presented the Guide and campaign plan to Fondation ESPWA, FOKAL, Ayiti Community Trust, and others.



Photo: Rasin Devlopman

On May 3rd, Rasin graduated six women from its *Yon Fanm, Yon Metye* (One Woman, One Profession) program, adding to the twelve that graduated in 2024.

In order to offer vocational opportunities to women that are generally reserved for men, Rasin initiated a partnership with Flar Ecole Professionnelle, a local trade school, to launch *Yon Fanm, Yon Metye* in 2024. The women are taught skills in plumbing, electricity, tiling, etc., and receive training on topics like self-esteem and women's rights.



Photo: Rasin Devlopman

After a training on May 16th and 17th, the *Volontè Pou Chanjman* conducted *Pase Mayèt* sessions on conflict management in all six communal sections of Anse-a-Galets. In all of 2025, the VPC held 37 *Pase Mayèt* knowledge sharing sessions.



Photo: Rasin Devlopman

On May 24th, Rasin Devlopman joined in a collective initiative of seven other groups on the island to mobilize young people to plant orange, lemon, coffee, coconut, and other fruit trees that are endangered on the island. The trees will help supplement the island's local food supply.



Photo: Gwoup Konbit

On May 2nd and 3rd, the Gwoup Konbit guide team held sessions on respect, ethics, sustainability, and transparency. They also gave micro grants to projects to renovate and register a tourist site and build hygiene facilities at a cultural center and library.



HIGHLIGHT: HILL ADVOCACY

In 2025, in response to the collapse of US foreign aid, Roots stepped up our relationships and presence in hill advocacy efforts.

In May, we had initial meetings with the offices of Senator Warren, Senator Warnock, Congressman Costa, and Congressman Frost to establish ourselves as a reliable source of information on Haiti and international aid. In the following months, we also met with the offices of Congresswoman Jayapal and Congresswoman Randall. We regularly reach out to these offices with resources and information on Haiti, Haitians in the United States, and international aid.

In addition, we continued our work with the Movement for Community-led Development US Government Hill Advocacy Working Group and Haiti Advocacy Working Group (HAWG).

We also co-sponsored a Haiti Policy House training for members of the Haitian diaspora to learn the best ways to advocate toward Congress on May 20th.

JUNE

In June, President Trump signed a travel ban on citizens from twelve countries, including Haiti. A UN report found that 1.3 million Haitians had been displaced across Haiti, a 24% increase since December 2024, and another UN report found that violence against children had increased by 500% in the previous year, ranking it in the top five most dangerous places for children in the world. The Kenyan-led Multinational Security Support mission reached its one-year milestone, still with only about 1,000 of the intended 2,500 officers deployed, and Haiti's Temporary Presidential Council confirmed that had hired mercenaries and private contractors to fight the gangs.



On June 11th, Roots hosted a Haitian cultural concert for our network in Maryland. More than 350 people registered to attend this fun evening of music at the beautiful Riversdale House Museum as part of our summer-long Support through Solidarity campaign.



On June 12th, Roots published "Let's Talk About Peacebuilding," an interview with Louino Robillard, the Co-Founder of Gwoup Konbit, where he discusses the links between development and peacebuilding in Haiti. Read it at rootsofdevelopment.org/robipeacebuilding/.



Photo: Gwoup Konbit

On June 25th, 257 community leaders (*Konbitè*) from across Haiti came together for Gwoup Konbit's 5th annual conference, this year on the theme "Let's Apply the Values and Principles of Konbit." Attendees heard from speakers including Louino Robillard, Co-Founder of Gwoup Konbit, and Chad Bissonnette, President and Co-Founder of Roots of Development.

The conference was broadcast virtually via Zoom and social media, and clips of interviews and workshops were shared throughout the day, generating more than 40,000 views.



Photo: Rasin Devlopman

On June 7th, Rasin Devlopman began teaching a new cohort of their *Fanm kap Kondwi* (Women who Drive) motorcycle courses. Since the program began in 2021, Rasin has taught almost 200 women to drive motorcycles, the primary means of transportation on the island.



Photo: Haiti Funders Conference

HIGHLIGHT: HAITI FUNDERS CONFERENCE

This year, Roots of Development had the opportunity and honor to sponsor and contribute to the organization of the 6th Haiti Funders Conference, held in Boston from June 4th-6th. 150 people attended the conference, the theme of which was "Collaborating for Impact." Roots and our partners worked with the Haiti Development Institute and other conference organizers in three areas:

1. Roots led research on understanding funders' priorities, practices, and preferences, hosting a plenary and breakout session at the conference on those topics.
2. Louino Robillard, co-founder of Gwoup Konbit, participated in a panel discussion on peacebuilding in Haiti.
3. Roots and Gwoup Konbit led a workshop on the topic "What do we want aid to look like in Haiti," using the soon-to-be published Konbit Guide as a framework.

Find a full summary of our sessions at rootsofdevelopment.org/haiti-funders-conference-june-2025/.



Photo: Rasin Devlopman

On June 14th, Rasin Devlopman held a training on project management for the *Volontè Pou Chanjman* in Pointe-a-Raquette. In total, Rasin held eight capacity strengthening workshops for the VPC in 2025, four for the group in Anse-a-Galets and four for the group in Pointe-a-Raquette.

JULY

In July, the US Agency for International Development (USAID) officially closed its doors, and the Trump administration announced its intentions to end Temporary Protective Status (TPS) for Haitians in the United States. TPS allows migrants from dangerous areas to live and work in the US legally without fear of being deported. It was first extended to Haitians after the 2010 earthquake and repeatedly renewed due to instability in the country. A court ruling ordered TPS to be extended at least until February 2026. Also in July, the UN reported that gangs had “near-total” control over Port-au-Prince and imposed sanctions on more gangs. The Haitian government sent 400 police officers to Brazil for training.



Photo: Rasin Developman



Photo: Rasin Developman



Photo: Rasin Developman



Photo: Rasin Developman



Photo: Rasin Developman

HIGHLIGHT: ANKADRE

In July, Rasin launched their *Ankadre* youth engagement programs in both communes of the island.

In Anse-a-Galets, 23 participating students were taught to swim through a partnership with a local instructor. The vast majority of La Gonave’s residents are unable to swim, a problem perpetuated by regular boat accidents and drownings. Since they began the program in 2023, Rasin has taught 60 children to swim.

In Pointe-a-Raquette, 13 students received computer literacy lessons. They were taught the basic principles of hardware and software, peripheral operation, operating systems, internet connection, and the use of Microsoft Word. The objective is to give young people the necessary foundations to understand technology, create, innovate, and transform their ideas into concrete actions.

The *Ankadre* program gives the youth of La Gonave a productive place to direct their energy during the break from school and creates strong social bonds across diverse young people.



On July 17th, Roots of Development and the Embassy of Haiti hosted the DC premiere of a new documentary, “The Heroes of the Massacre River,” the story of the Canal of Ouanaminthe, a project completed by the community in the spirit of *Konbit*.



Photo: Rasin Developman

On July 17th, Rasin organized a day of *Konbit*, mobilizing the *Volontè Pou Chanjman* to help construct a clinic in Plezans, a community in Pointe-a-Raquette. The clinic project was initiated by the community there, and is supported by Rasin Developman.



Photo: Rasin Developman

On July 3rd, Rasin held a training on fundraising for the 27 *Volontè Pou Chanjman* of Anse-a-Galets. Throughout 2025, the *Volontè Pou Chanjman* underwent more than ninety hours of training to strengthen their leadership and community development skill sets.



Photo: Rasin Developman

On July 20th, Rasin graduated another six women from their *Yon Fanm, Yon Metye* (One Woman, One Profession) vocational training program, for a total of twelve women trained in a professional skill like plumbing, tiling, or electricity in 2025.



Photo: Rasin Developman

On July 5th, Rasin held a training for a local *Mutuelle de Solidarite*, the Haitian term for a cooperative savings and loan group. Rasin supports *Mutuelles* across La Gonave with training on financial management and supplementary funds to support their communities.



Photo: Pak Nan Ginen

In the remote town of San Raphael, Gwoup *Konbit* member Pak Nan Ginen is building a dormitory so that grassroots leaders doing *Konbit* across the country can come to rest and recharge at their peaceful tree nursery and sanctuary. Construction progressed greatly throughout 2025.

AUGUST

In August, Haiti declared a three-month state of emergency in the West, Artibonite, and Center departments in response to a surge in gang violence. A federal grand jury in the US indicted the gang leader known as Barbecue and the FBI offered a \$5 million reward for his capture. The US proposed that the UN fund a more aggressive 5,500-person "Gang Suppression Force" be deployed to Haiti to replace the Multinational Security Support mission, the mandate of which was slated to end in October. Also in August, a human rights report produced by the US State Department on the situation in Haiti highlighted the prevalence of extrajudicial killings by Haitian police officers.



Photo: Rasin Developman

On August 23rd, the *Volontè Pou Chanjman* held a *Pase Mayèt* session replicating the fundraising workshop they received in July. 55% of *Pase Mayèt* attendees are women—an especially important group to reach, since community activities are often dominated by men.



Photo: Gwoup Konbit

On August 12th, International Youth Day, Gwoup Konbit was honored by the Haitian Ministry of Youth, Sports and Civic Action alongside one of its founding members, Leaders de Demain, and Leaders de Demain's Founder, Andy Vibert.



The Hidden Cost of Food and Clothing Drives

by Joey Panner, August 2025

On August 1st, Roots of Development published "The Hidden Cost of Food and Clothing Drives" on the Development without Dependency Knowledge Hub. Read the full article at rootsofdevelopment.org/food-and-clothing-drives/.



Photo: Rasin Developman

The *Volontè Pou Chanjman* of Ti Palmiste (an area of Pointe-a-Raquette) installed ten street signs in strategic places to help people traveling throughout the island to find their way to key locations.

This is one of fourteen projects undertaken by the *Volontè Pou Chanjman* in 2025, in total impacting more than 4,500 people across ten of La Gonave's eleven communal sections, plus the city center of Anse-a-Galets.

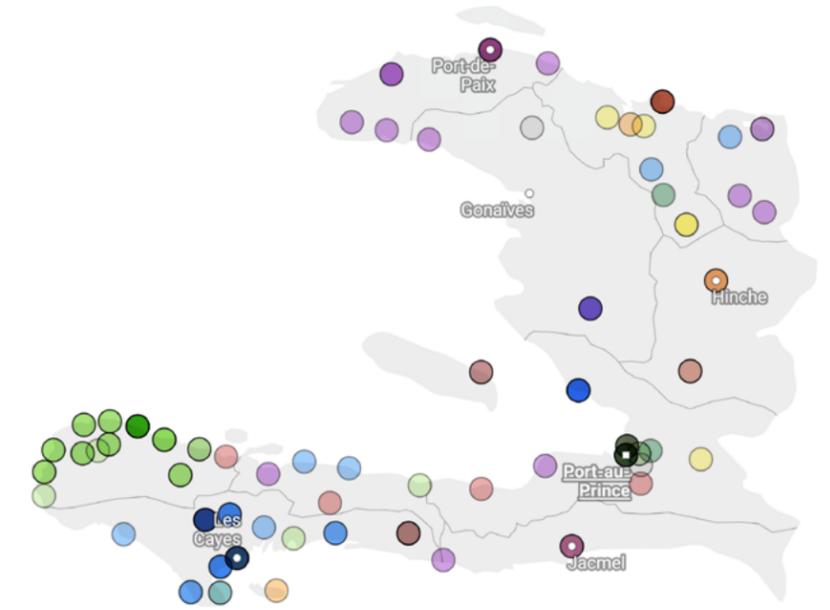
In August, Roots of Development led an effort alongside the Funders Coalition for Haitian-led Development to map our partners and grantees across Haiti.

The purpose was to identify overlap, visualize our geographic reach, and show the diversity and wealth of Haitian-led organizations currently operating across the country.

We mapped 200 organizations funded by the ten organizations in the Coalition, spanning all ten departments and with missions covering every sector.

Haitian-Led Organizations

Grantees of Funders Coalition for Haitian-led Development



Map: Charlie Estes, Roots of Development • Source: Funder's Coalition for Haitian-led Development • Created with Datawrapper



Graphic: Gwoup Konbit

HIGHLIGHT: GUIDE CAMPAIGN

On August 14th, Gwoup Konbit launched a national mass mobilization and education campaign around the values and principles of *Konbit*, as enumerated in the *Konbit* Guide.

Throughout the campaign, Gwoup Konbit plans to reach all 10 departments Haiti; organize 120 workshops based on the *Konbit* Guide; mobilize people through radio, television, and social media communications; and create a database of *Konbit* practitioners to encourage collaboration and resource sharing. Roots of Development, the Vitol Foundation, and many others have partnered to support Gwoup Konbit throughout this campaign.

"The *Konbit* Guide is not just a book, it is a tool capable of orienting the country toward a new direction," said Andy Vibert, Founder of Leaders de Demain and one of the leaders of Gwoup Konbit.

View the campaign launch video at: youtu.be/qQA_-5_Fm_Q?si=6nDnWTea3BaWHg1b.

View a summary of the content of the *Konbit* guide at: rootsofdevelopment.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/Konbit-Guide-One-Pagers.pdf.



Photo: Gwoup Konbit

The time has come!

SEPTEMBER

In September, the UN Security Council approved the US's plan for the Gang Suppression Force after the head of Haiti's Transitional Presidential Council addressed the UN General Assembly. The FAA extended its ban on flights to Port-au-Prince through March of 2026. The gangs tightened their control on areas outside the capital, and a drone operation by the Haitian police led to the deaths of eleven civilians, including eight children, at a birthday party. In the United States, the Supreme Court overturned a lower court order, ruling that the Trump administration did not have to distribute the more than \$10 billion in outstanding foreign aid funding commitments.



Photo: Rasin Devlopman

Rasin often supports the projects of other local groups on the island of La Gonave. One such project is *Gad Manje* (Food Keeper), in partnership with AAPLAG, which supports residents of the island to plant vegetable gardens and harvest and preserve their food for the off season.



Photo: MCLD

On September 19th, Chad Bissonnette participated in an event at American University promoting *Community-led Development in Practice: We Power our Own Change*, an edited volume compiled by the Movement for Community-led Development with a chapter co-written by Roots and Rasin.



Photo: Rasin Devlopman

Rasin also supports projects undertaken by local elected officials. In the community of Masikren in Petite Source on the island of La Gonave, officials came together, with the support of Rasin Devlopman and World Vision, to increase access clean to water in their community.



Graphic: RINGO

In September, Roots of Development joined The RINGO Reverse Call for Proposals, an innovative component of the Re-Imagining INGO (RINGO) initiative that “turns the model on its head” by having local civil society organizations define their priorities and invite international INGOs to apply to support them, rather than INGOs issuing calls and local actors competing to fulfill externally-set criteria. Roots of Development chose to participate both to deepen our own practice around equitable, locally led partnerships, and as a way to contribute our lessons learned to inform broader learning and systems change within the international development sector.



Photo: Gwoup Konbit

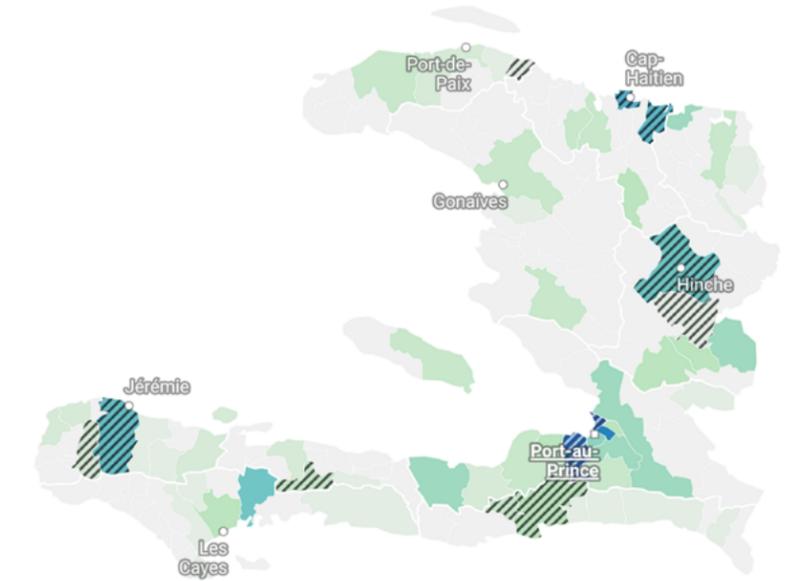


Photo: Gwoup Konbit

Applicants to Simen Semans Grants

Gwoup Konbit, May 2024 - December 2025

Number of Applicants



Map: Charlie Estes • Source: Gwoup Konbit • Map data: © OCHA • Created with Datawrapper

HIGHLIGHT: SEED GRANTS

Gwoup Konbit re-launched their *Simen Semans* Konbit Seed Grants for Social Change program on September 12th after a four month pause. Through the program, small groups, associations, and organizations across Haiti can apply for micro grants of 150,000 Gourdes (a little over \$1,000) to fund projects that address needs they've identified in their communities. Projects are evaluated by a panel of judges and voted on by the public on social media.

In the first year of the program, which ran from May 2024 to April 2025, 13 projects were selected—one per month, plus one bonus, representing six of ten departments in Haiti—to receive grant funding, out of more than one hundred that applied. Gwoup Konbit also held 10 trainings throughout the year for the seed grantees on konbit values and principles. The first round of *Konbit* seed grant projects reached over 6,000 people and included initiatives like turning excess mangoes into flour, planting school gardens, and offering vocational training to young mothers.

For this second year of seed grants, Gwoup Konbit decided to increase the number of grants offered to two per month. From September to December 2025, another 119 groups applied and seven were selected to receive funding. All groups who apply are invited to receive training on *Konbit* values and principles; three training sessions were held in 2025.

The map above shows the locations of the groups who applied and were selected to receive funding from May of 2024 to December of 2025.

OCTOBER

In October, the UN Security Council warned Haiti's Transitional Presidential Council that time was running out to hold general elections and install a new parliament and president by the end of the council's mandate in February 2026. Doctors without Borders permanently closed their emergency center in Port-au-Prince due to the ongoing violence. At the end of the month, heavy rains from Hurricane Melissa caused 43 deaths and flooded 12,000 homes. Crops were damaged and livestock lost, putting livelihoods at risk, and schools were submerged in flood water. More than 100 miles away, Jamaica absorbed the full impact of the Category 5 hurricane, suffering an additional 45 deaths and widespread destruction.



HIGHLIGHT: ANNUAL EVENT

On October 16th, 150 guests attended Roots of Development's Annual Event in Washington, DC. Attendees enjoyed food, wine, and music and celebrated another year of Development without Dependency.® This year, we honored:

- Fondation ESPWA, an impactful Haitian network of networks,
- The Network of Engaged International Donors, an ecosystem of resources and connections for funders of international aid,
- and Peace Direct, a global peacebuilding organization and leading advocate for locally led aid.

We also welcomed special guests including Haitian Ambassador to the United States Lionel Delatour; Former USAID Senior Advisor for Localization Sarah Rose; Movement for Community-led Development Executive Director Gunjan Veda; Ayiti Community Trust President Guerda Nicolas; Kellogg Foundation Director of International Programs Jenny Petrow; Gwoup Konbit members Cassandra Jean-Francois and Jethro Sereme; and others.

OUR SPONSORS

OPEN SOCIETY FOUNDATIONS



On October 15th, Roots and Gwoup Konbit co-hosted a session at the World Bank Annual Meetings Civil Society Policy Forum titled "Strengthening Civil Society Through Indigenous Mutual Aid Practices." Our session was one of just 33 selected for the forum's program out of more than 300 proposals submitted, and the only session held on Haiti this year. Our panelists included: Louino Robillard, Co-Founder of Gwoup Konbit; Jessica Hsu, Roots Research & Advocacy Manager; Courtenay Cabot-Venton, Executive Director of the Share Trust; and Luis Ruiz, Executive Director of the Oaxaca Community Foundation.



Photo: No Filter Channel

Representatives of Le Paradis Haïtien and Gwoup Konbit made several media appearances in October, including on PodCLE and the No Filter Channel, to promote the Konbit Guide and the national campaign on the values and principles of Konbit.



Photo: Rasin Devlopman

On October 4th, Rasin Devlopman graduated 13 children in Pointe-a-Raquette from their Ankadre computer courses after 60 hours of instruction. On the same day, Rasin graduated 18 children in Anse-a-Galets from their swimming courses after 40 hours of instruction.



Photo: Gwoup Konbit

Louino Robillard, Jessica Hsu, and Dr. Cassandra Jean Francois of Gwoup Konbit, along with Nadege Bellande Robertson of Lakou Tanama, led a plenary session at the Haitian Studies Association Conference in Pittsburgh on October 25th titled "Healing & Repair."



Photo: Gwoup Konbit

On October 18th, Louino Robillard represented Gwoup Konbit at the World Conference on Humanitarian Studies in Istanbul, Turkey. Alongside the Universities of Dublin and Vermont, Louino spoke about the role of Konbit in community research and development.

NOVEMBER

In November, communities across Haiti took stock and began to rebuild after Hurricane Melissa. Haitians across the country and the diaspora were united in celebration when the Haitian national soccer team qualified for the World Cup, their first time since 1974 and only their second qualification ever. Haiti's Sunrise Airways briefly suspended operations when one of their planes was hit by bullets, and the gangs launched a full-scale attack on Haiti's Artibonite department, taking control of 50% of the region. Also in November, the Trump administration put a hold on all immigration applications and asylum claims from sixteen countries, including Haiti.



Photo: Rasin Devlopman



Photo: Rasin Devlopman



Photo: Rasin Devlopman



Photo: Rasin Devlopman

HIGHLIGHT: LA GONAVE PILOT

November 22nd-29th, Gwoup Konbit, in collaboration with Rasin Devlopman, piloted their national campaign on the values and principles of *Konbit* on the island of La Gonave. The pilot included:

- An island-wide forum with more than 80 participants representing local groups, elected officials, and community leaders.
- Awareness sessions at churches and schools that reached more than 1,200 people.
- A friendly soccer match in collaboration with a local team, with participation from 50 people.
- Conversations with a voodoo priest, staff members of World Vision, and other notable figures around the island.
- Interviews with La Gonave's community leadership and of workshops held at the forum were published on social media, attracting a great deal of interest from our national audience.

The La Gonave pilot was an important learning experience that will inform the rest of the campaign across the country.



On November 10th, Gwoup Konbit awarded seed grants to la Vallée de Demain for planting school vegetable gardens and to the Rotaract Club of Jacmel to provide students with access to books, research spaces, and learning in an environment that fosters intellectual development.



Photo: Rasin Devlopman

On November 7th, Rasin held a *Reyaji* community dialogue session on the importance of the Creole language in strengthening the Haitian education system. The four *Reyaji* sessions in 2025 reached nearly one hundred people, 46% of whom were women.



From November 2nd to 6th, Jessica Hsu, Roots' Research & Advocacy Manager, participated in Opportunity Collaboration, a summit for leaders dedicated to building sustainable solutions to poverty and injustice. She received their "Weaver Fellowship" to attend.



Photo: Rasin Devlopman

On November 25th, Roots published an article on the Knowledge Hub about the research that members of Gwoup Konbit are doing in Cite Soleil on Social Capital in Urban Fragile and Conflict-Affected Contexts. Read more at rootsofdevelopment.org/community-led-research/.



Roots of Development became an official member of InterAction, the largest U.S.-based alliance of international NGOs and partners. We began participating in working groups and integrating our work with InterAction and its members into our broader ecosystem.



Photo: Rasin Devlopman

On Monday, November 17th, 2025, Gwoup Konbit organized a training in the commune of Hinche about the values and principles of *Konbit*. Over 50 leaders attended the workshop, coming to learn, share, and strengthen their skills to better serve their communities.

DECEMBER

In December, Haiti's transitional government adopted a plan to hold a first round of elections in August 2026 with a runoff the following December, which would be the first national elections since 2016. Long-time UN peacebuilding expert Jack Christofides was named the special representative for the Gang Suppression Force; a number of countries, including Chad, Sierra Leone, Burkina Faso, and Gambia pledged troops for the GSF; and 230 additional Kenyan police officers landed in Haiti. Also in December, the Trump administration ended the family-reunification parole program for people from Haiti and other Latin American countries.



Throughout December, Roots worked with the Funders Coalition for Haitian-led Development to produce an article on the changes needed in disaster response funding in Haiti. Read the article at haitifunders.substack.com/p/why-disaster-funding-in-haiti-must.



On December 14th, Gwoup Konbit awarded its last two seed grants of 2025 to CHABIOGA for a project producing biochar to help protect the environment, and to Greenwave Haiti for a project that creates jobs for women and youth through the production of compost.



On December 14th, representatives of Gwoup Konbit and Le Paradis Haïtien went on *Matin Caraïbes* (Caribbean Morning) on Radio Television Caraïbes (RTVC) network to promote Gwoup Konbit's 7th annual edition of the national Konbit Soup Joumou.



Photo: Konbit Soup Joumou

Throughout December, the Gwoup Konbit network prepared for Konbit Soup Joumou 2026. The Konbit Soup Joumou planning process takes several months, as local committees are set up at each of the sites, which plan and fundraise for their own events. The Gwoup Konbit technical team conducted a structured training on the application of *Konbit* values and principles for 39 volunteers of the Central Committee. This training equipped leaders to apply participation, transparency, equity, solidarity, and sustainability in planning, financial management, mobilization, and reporting. In addition, online trainings were conducted for local committees in every department, ensuring that all 26 sites worked under the same shared framework of values and principles. Soup Joumou mobilized 5,241,620 gourdes from 1,325 donors, the majority of whom are Haitians in Haiti, through 26 local committees in 9 departments.



Photo: Rasin Devlopman

On December 22nd, Rasin Devlopman sent Roots their annual report for 2025 and their annual plan for 2026. These are two standard documents shared every year between the two organizations so that Roots can be kept informed on everything Rasin has accomplished and what they hope to achieve as they continue to grow. This year's report included the significant achievement that, for the first time, Rasin reached all eleven communal sections of the island through their *Twa Woch Dife* program, and almost 7,000 people directly participated in one of their training and development programs.

A smiling man with glasses and a white shirt is the central focus of the image. He is looking slightly to the right and has his hands clasped in front of him. The background is a blurred indoor setting with other people.

OUR PLANS FOR 2026

1

INCREASE COLLECTIVE ACTION IN HAITI VIA OUR PARTNERS AND A NETWORK OF COMMUNITY-LED GROUPS ACROSS THE COUNTRY

2

GROW OUR RESEARCH & ADVOCACY PORTFOLIO AND PARTNERSHIPS BOTH IN THE HAITI AND GLOBAL CONTEXTS

3

COMPLETE THE FOUNDATION OF THE LA GONAVE COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP & DEVELOPMENT CENTER

OUR FINANCIALS

2025 saw massive shifts in the international development field; though we have never taken federal funding, we were still impacted by downstream effects of the funding freeze, as well as the ongoing crisis in Haiti. However, despite the challenges, 2025 was a successful year for Roots of Development. We raised a total of \$702,995, with 55% of that income coming from grants and another 27% coming from individual donations. We spent a total of \$844,743 in 2025, more than 80% of which went toward programming, and only 7% of which went toward administrative expenses. Our expenses exceeded our income due to large grants received in 2024 that we carried over into 2025.

TOP INDIVIDUAL SUPPORTERS

Rudy & Shawna Brioché ▪ Mark & Jamie Summers ▪ Thomas & Sharon Callahan ▪ Brenda Huneycutt* ▪ Jim Campen & Phyllis Ewen ▪ Ernest Voyard & Tanya Axenson ▪ Luc & Alejandra Castera ▪ Ken & Susie Campbell ▪ Karl Racine ▪ Daniel Alvarez ▪ Jean Francois & Marie Jose Bauer* ▪ Chris & Nicole Wells* ▪ Mike & Jenna Willits*

*Special thanks to those who are a part of our Forest for the Trees Monthly Giving Program. To learn more, visit rootsofdevelopment.org/recurringdonations/.

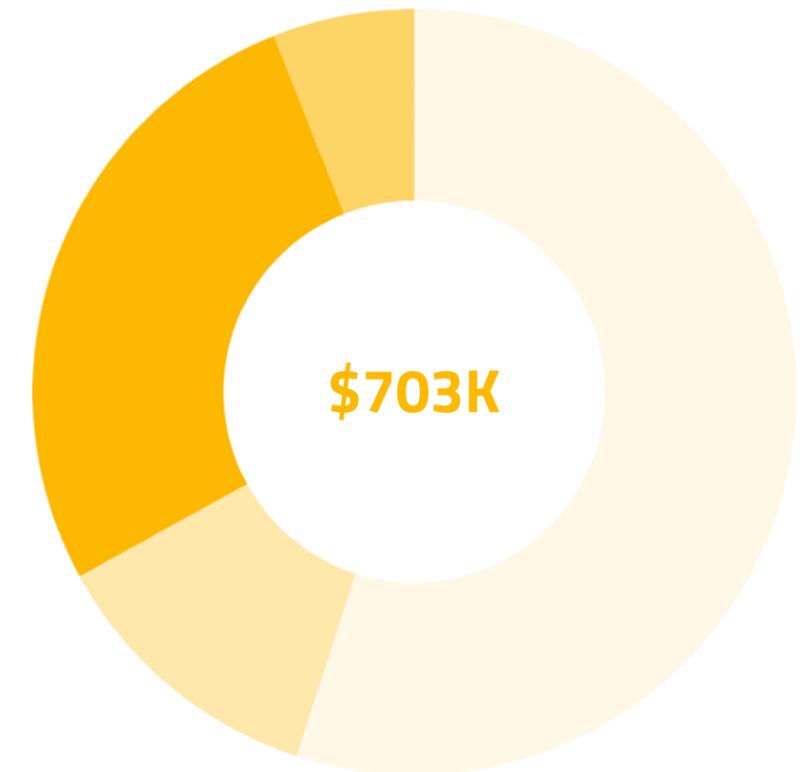
TOP CORPORATE & FOUNDATION SUPPORTERS

Vitol Foundation ▪ Montica ▪ Debley Foundation ▪ Comcast NBC Universal Telemundo ▪ Mintz ▪ Latham & Watkins ▪ Verizon ▪ Davis Polk ▪ Open Society Foundations



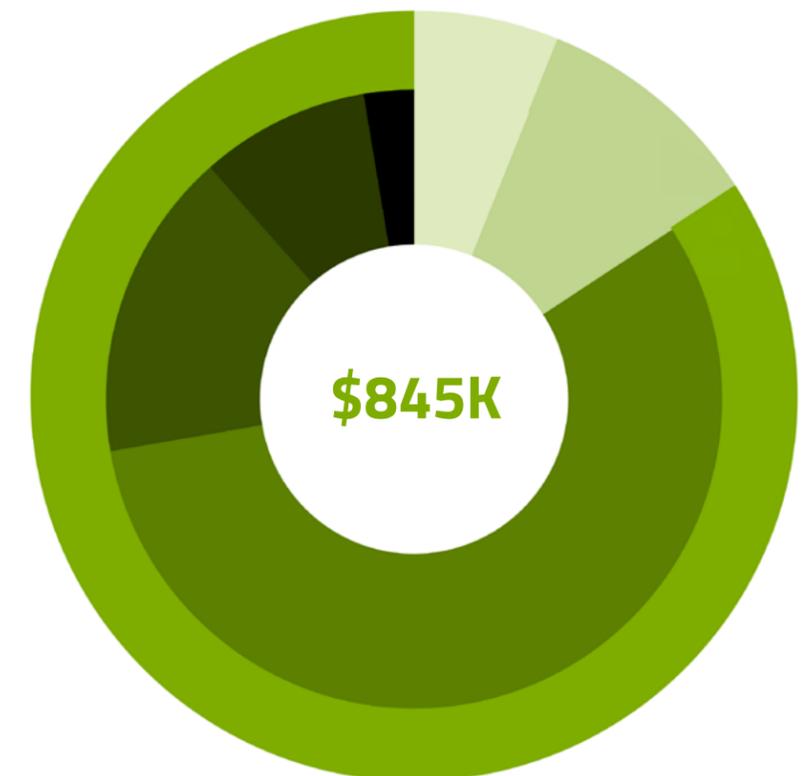
INCOME

- INDIVIDUALS
- BOARD
- CORPORATIONS
- FOUNDATIONS



EXPENSES

- ADMIN
- FUNDRAISING
- PROGRAM
- LOCAL PARTNER SUPPORT
- LEADERSHIP CENTER
- ADVOCACY
- NEW PARTNERSHIP OUTREACH



“An n Aplike
Valè ak Prensip
Konbit yo sou Zile
Lagonav.”



LEARN MORE
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