

SIFAT Journal



Sharing God's Love in Practical Ways

Spring 2010

Responding to Haiti's Earthquake

By Tom Corson
Executive Director

Jimani, Dominican Republic (DR) was to be just a stopover for the night. Our plans were to go directly to Port-au-Prince the epicenter of the 7.0 earthquake that had wreaked havoc and created unthinkable misery for the people of Haiti just two weeks earlier. Trey Reed of Roanoke, Ala., a 2009 SIFAT graduate, and I had taken on a challenge presented by several groups working together in DR and Haiti to support medical work and orphanages that had been so heinously impacted. The challenge was clean water, and the need was imperative. We wanted to get to Haiti and get to work. During the next two days, our emotions went from being frustrated by not being able to stick to our agenda to realizing God wanted us right where we were.

As we waited for our ride to take us into Haiti to install water systems, we tried to be useful in the "war zone". Survivors of the quake were being brought to the Jimani clinic from Haiti in helicopters, ambulances, pickups and even dump trucks. The 200 plus medical volunteers were overwhelmed. Most of the patients coming from being pulled out from the rubble of collapsed buildings had major traumas: broken limbs, open fractures, amputations. The few operation rooms at Jimani were running around the clock with no x-ray machines or equipment we take for granted here in the US.

Unfortunately by the time we arrived, we were seeing second or third round amputations performed because the victims had not

received antibiotic after the first amputations to get them out of the rubble. I can only imagine what the medical professionals were going through. Several were sent home in what I would consider "shell shock".

Sharewood, one of the organizations SIFAT is working with in Haiti, had managed to get equipment for wifi and telephones delivered to Jimani. One morning I was able to use this technology to call home to check in with my children before they left for

school. I found myself choking back tears before I could talk to anyone. My family in a safe comfortable home, juxtaposed to everything these people were experiencing. Only God can keep us sane in times like these.

Trey and I each had mattresses on the floor in a house adjacent to the hospital/orphanage compound. If we reentered the room during the day, typically we would find someone from the night shift at the hospital sleeping on our mattresses.

Soon after our arrival, another 4.5 earthquake hit. One man with multi fractures to his leg was so terrified, he jumped out the second floor of the orphanage breaking his back. No one wanted to be crushed in a building...again. After that, most

of the people, including the patients, moved outside—risking malaria-biting mosquitoes rather than the possibility of being crushed under a building.

During the day if we were not needed for water issues, we tried to be helpful moving patients from the clinic to recovery in what



Tom Corson and Trey Reed traveled to Haiti after the earthquake to install water purification systems. While there, they had the opportunity to help in a medical clinic in Jimani, Cominican Republic. Tom is pictured above talking with one of the children who had surgery at the clinic.

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Bolivar Sanga Attends Practicum, Returns to Serve in Bolivia

By Sarah Corson
SIFAT Cofounder

Bolivar Sanga, the first Quichuan to graduate from a university in Ecuador as an engineer, was one of our 2009 students. In 1994, he studied in Venezuela during the first SIFAT practicum held in Latin America. Because of Bolivar, SIFAT went to Ecuador in 1996 to offer a practicum in his village, Caliata. Since then, Bolivar has tried to get a visa to study on our Galilee Campus, but visas to the United States are difficult to obtain.

Last year, SIFAT was hard pressed to find an engineer who would stay in the remote area of Quesimpuco, Bolivia, to direct the building of a bridge over the Chayanta River. We could not find an American or Bolivian engineer who could and would live in the harsh area for the extended time necessary. But Bolivar thrives on challenges, and he was eager to try it. For six months, he lived in a tent in weather that was often freezing, eating the sparse food the people of the area ate, becoming one with the people and demonstrating his ability to help people work together in developing their communities.

As an employee of SIFAT, Bolivar received a visa to attend the 10-week practicum in Alabama after waiting for 13 years. Though he can work well in Quichuan or in Spanish, he demonstrated real talent in improving his English rapidly, so that he rarely had to ask a translator for help during the practicum. Additionally, he helped teach the course on appropriate well drilling where there is no electricity or gasoline motors to use in drilling. Bolivar will be joining the SIFAT Bolivian staff in April to lead a clean water project in community development in the isolated rural area around Ixiamas.

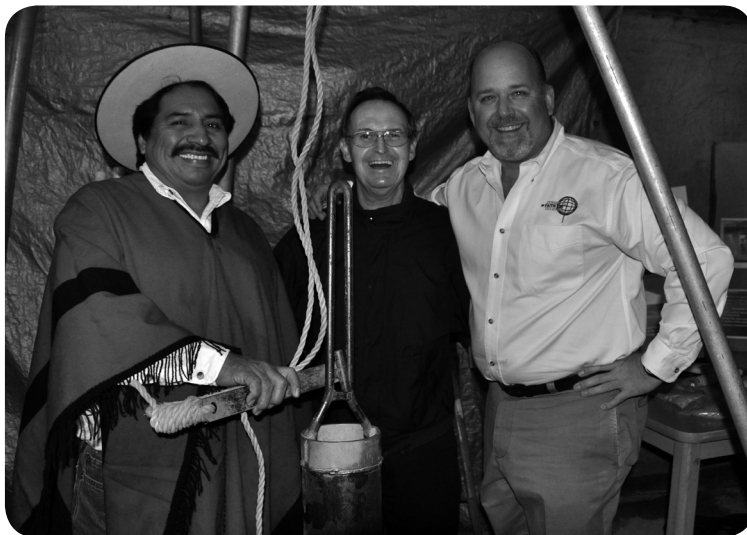
The first missionary who brought the Gospel to the Quichuans in Bolivar's region labored 50 years without a single convert, but

she finished translating the New Testament into their language before returning to the United States. Other missionaries followed up on her work, but with very little success. Descendants of the Incas, the Quichuans were marginalized in their own country and clung to the beliefs of generations of their people before them. Finally, in 1969, since only four men and their wives had been converted, the missionaries gave up on converting Quichuans and left the area. Those eight Christians suddenly realized that there was no longer anyone to help their people know Christ. If their people were to be reached, they themselves would have to do it.

Bolivar's parents were two of those eight people. They began to go to the surrounding villages to hold open air services and were greeted with stones and angry mobs of their own people. As a child, Bolivar witnessed his father beaten unconscious. Bolivar's father's life was barely saved by his older sister throwing her own body over his to take the heavy blows intended to kill him. When he accepted Christ as his Savior, he knew it might mean his own death at the hands of his people. But the persistence and love shown by

those first Christians finally won the rest of their neighbors, and a revival swept over the whole area. Today 95 percent of the people in his province are Christians. Bolivar is like his parents in that nothing can be too hard or too dangerous for him to tackle the job for Christ.

In April, Bolivar joined the Ixiamas, Bolivia, staff to begin working with the local community to start water clubs to drill wells using the appropriate technology he learned at SIFAT. Anniston Rotary Club, from Anniston, Ala., donated \$3,000 to get this project started. Trinity UMC from Birmingham, Ala., is sending a short-term mission team in July to serve alongside Bolivar in remote jungle villages.



Ecuadorian native Bolivar Sanga (left), board member Leroy Talley and executive director Tom Corson stand with Bolivar's project at graduation. Bolivar will be using this type of drill when he begins the clean water project in Bolivia.

From Refugee to Practicum Graduate

By Sarah Corson
SIFAT Cofounder

Martha Partor, one of our 2009 graduates, fled Liberia during the civil war that destroyed much of her homeland. She and her husband John, a Baptist minister, barely made it across the border to a United Nations refugee camp with their five children. For two years, their home was a big tent where a thousand people slept, each with only enough space to roll out a sleeping mat. They lived in the camp, until the war stopped, and they could go home.

One of their daughters, a teenager, had diabetes, but they couldn't get medicine for her. She struggled to live and made it through those two years until they returned to Liberia, but died soon afterward. When Martha shared her story with us, there were tears in her eyes as she talked of her daughter, but she smiled and said, "I just thank God so much for helping her live until we got home, so we did not have to bury her there near the refugee camp." Her testimony reminded me of I Thessalonians 5:18, "For this is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus, that in everything you give thanks." Martha and John live out the Gospel even in the toughest of times.

Pastor John is a graduate of our 2000 practicum. He returned hoping to send Martha to the 2001 practicum, but it took nine years before that dream came true. In 2009, Martha graduated, too. She has been a great inspiration to the other students and to our staff. Now she is returning to Liberia to continue her work with the women and children as they try to recuperate from the ravages of war, taking back with her many technologies learned at SIFAT to help them in their circumstances.

During the war, the electric plants were bombed, clean water systems polluted, buildings and houses burned, roads destroyed. The country is pulling out of the horror they have been through, but progress is slow because everything has to be rebuilt. In this setting, Martha and Pastor John bring God's message of peace and forgiveness into the lives of the survivors tormented with nightmares of the violence they have lived through.

Their own house was destroyed, and it is still hard to find a house to rent. At times, they have to divide their family to stay in church members' homes until they can find housing again. Martha carried those concerns for her husband and their remaining four children in her heart while she was at SIFAT, but when she spoke her words were always filled with praise and thanksgiving, blessing others. A building that will be a home for the Partors, an office for their work and a guest house where they can take in homeless people short term has been approved as a SIFAT project. Money has been sent to begin it. You may contribute by designating your gift Partor Fund.



Martha Partor, a 2009 Practicum graduate, came from Liberia to learn ways to help the women and children with whom she works in Liberia. For nine years, Martha tried to obtain a visa to study at SIFAT until she succeeded in 2009.

Get Involved: Donate a Scholarship

Community leaders like Martha Partor and Bolivar Sanga are already being accepted for our 2010 Practicum. Help empower them in their ministries and communities by making an investment in the SIFAT scholarship fund. The practical technologies and training students receive at SIFAT will improve the lives of children and adults living in developing countries for years into the future. Please designate your donation "Scholarship Fund".



Spring 2010

Alumni Update: Raphael in Nigeria

Raphael Ogbole, a 2008 SIFAT graduate, serves with his family on the Mambilla Plateau in northeast Nigeria. At the beginning of 2010, his ministry spent time focusing on forming relationships with churches, traditional rulers and law enforcement agencies as a way to reach the entire community. They have started a vegetable garden project, using hybrid seeds from ECHO, which Raphael received when he went to their conference last year while serving as an intern at SIFAT.

In February, more than 70 community leaders, including local chiefs, police officers and leaders from women, men and youth groups, participated in a workshop aimed at creating awareness on fuel-efficient stoves, water filters, hygiene and fish farming as a way toward sustainable grass roots development. Also in February, Raphael held two other workshops on fuel efficient stoves and water filters. One workshop was at a local church, and the other was at a school. At the school, Raphael's goal was to help the 150 students start thinking about appropriate technology and share solid fundamental development principles. In March, Raphael continued his work by hosting three workshops

Prayer requests:

- For provision of finances and material for his family.
- Thank God for opened doors of ministry on the Plateau.
- Uphold Helen & Raphael as tjeu look to God to meet ministry needs, such as internet cards for sending and receiving e-mails without traveling a long distance.
- Thank God for a successful ending of the first quarter.
- Pray for peace and justice in Nigeria.



Raphael (kneeling right) is pictured with some of the students that attended a workshop on fuel-efficient stoves. They are gathered around one of the stoves they learned to build using appropriate technology Raphael learned from his training at the SIFAT Practicum.

Learn & Serve 2010

Wow! Can we begin to tell you how excited we are about summer camp this year? From our registration numbers, it appears this will be the largest summer in the history of L&S.

Our counselors have been selected, seven of the eight weeks of camp filled and a promo video filmed. Summer is around the corner! Limited space is still available for individuals or a small group. Visit www.sifat.org/learnandserve for more information.

This summer, check the SIFAT blog for posts about camp to see what our students are learning and how they are serving. You can also encourage youth attending from your church by sending mail to them. Check the web site for instructions to e-mail or mail students.

Can't come to camp? Retreats are available throughout the year and are great for groups of all ages - middle school through adults. Contact learnandserve@sifat.org for programming options and to schedule your group.

Use GoodShop and GoodSearch

When shopping online, don't forget to use www.goodshop.com to have a percentage of your purchase donated to SIFAT.

Searching online? Use www.goodsearch.com to conduct online searches. Choose SIFAT as your charity, and GoodSearch donates to SIFAT every time you search for something!

Work Teams Volunteer at SIFAT

By Nate Paulk
Campus Director

In October, a group of NOMADS (Nomads On a Mission Active in Divine Service) arrived on the Galilee Campus to begin work on our campground. Group members were Jim and Shirley Neil, Bob and Verna Schroter, Roger and Sandy Westerman and Gary and Linda Williams. These four couples served a three-week term, and their work was directed toward renovating the bath house. The NOMADS closed in the ceilings, installed new toilets, painted the interior and other much needed improvements.

Future improvements will include renovated RV sites that are equipped with 50-amp services. We are still looking for work teams to help run the new electrical and plumbing lines and landscape. If individuals or groups are interested in helping to finish the campground renewal project, please contact Nate, paulkn@sifat.org.

Updating the campground will play an instrumental role in hosting future NOMADS groups and other individuals with RVs. Additionally, the campground is available for families or individuals to rent. For information on visiting SIFAT's campus and staying in the campground, please contact Nate.

For more information on NOMADS membership, visit www.nomadsumc.org.



Left: NOMADS team members spent three weeks beginning our campground renewal project. From painting and cleaning to ceilings and grounds, the group left SIFAT much better than they found it.



Right: Members of the University of West Georgia's Wesley Foundation mix and pour concrete while working on a project to irrigate the field across the creek from the cafeteria.

By Rev. Karen Kagiyama
Wesley Foundation
University of West Georgia

We came to the mud-splattered SIFAT campus bleary eyed from rising early on our first day of spring break. After quick introductions, we immediately started dismantling bunk beds for refinishing and tearing down an old solar shower.

The next day, we collected every bit of scrap metal left at SIFAT since 1979. We found old wiring and cable, rusted pipes and roofing tin and several unidentifiable objects that must have once been useful. Our piles grew, and as the sun came out, we gave thanks for a warm spring day and the fun of hauling stuff on the BUV.

We took time to explore the urban slum and Global Village. We were amazed at how realistic both looked and talked about what life is like for people around the world. We were challenged to think about the poverty of our neighbors and hoped our small tasks were part of SIFAT's mission.

On the third day as we set giant poles for a cable for an irrigation system, we talked about our next trip to SIFAT. In just a few short days, our group had connected deeply to the mission and vision of SIFAT. It is a place and a community that causes one to consider the world as one connected whole. The Global Village represents the real global village of which we are a part. The work we do at SIFAT makes a difference because SIFAT has made and is making a difference.

Volunteer on our Campus

Whether you come as an individual or as a work team, SIFAT has a place for you!

Contact campus director Nate Paulk, paulkn@sifat.org, for information about projects for work teams or opportunities for individuals.



Spring 2010

Agape Total Childcare Center - Uganda:

Agape Total Childcare Center in Lugazi, Uganda, was founded by SIFAT graduate Williwam Nsubuga and his wife Adella. Agape is home to orphans who lost their parents to AIDS. SIFAT helps sponsor this orphanage.

In William Nsubuga's latest report, he began with a huge praise to God's grace. Outgrowing its present location, Agape Total Childcare Center has been able to pay in full for property on which we will build a much needed orphanage for 65 children and school for 250. William states, "I am humbled and amazed for what the Lord can do through his servants and maidservants!"

In his update, William said he has been able to grow corn, which the children help harvest. Growing their own food helps keep food costs down. William emphasizes that involving children in gardening is not child labor, though. He shares Paul's words in the New Testament that "if you don't work, there should not be a reason whatsoever for anyone to eat." The children love riding in Agape's new truck, so no one wants to miss a trip to the garden!

William shares that all of the children can say a prayer in English! They are also appreciative of what the Lord is doing in their lives and pray for their supporters.

Agape will welcome three volunteers from the USA this summer. Jarred Griffin, who presently works with Learn & Serve at SIFAT, Hunter Pugh, from Greenville, S.C., and Hatherine Bouldin, from Scottsboro, Ala., will have the opportunity to do some sightseeing, but then William quickly points out the garden will be calling their names.

Praises:

- Ten of the children have joined high school, and they passed with no failures.
- Continued improvement in the children's health.
- The people who purchased a ticket for William and Sean to visit the USA. William must come to the States once every six months to keep his residency. He uses this time to speak in churches and promote Agape.

Requests:

- Remember the new Agape site in your prayers, for the Lord

to provide the funds and labor needed for its completion.

- A short-term team of volunteers will go later this year to clear the property and begin construction. If you are interested in being a part of the team, please contact Peggy Walker, walkerp@sifat.org.
- As always, challenges arise. William writes, "We trust in the Lord to provide more donors. We haven't met our funding needs for this quarter."



(Left to Right) William Nsubuga, Tom Corson and Gerald Paulk toured the new site of Agape Total Childcare Center. Short-term teams will begin working there this year with Gerald and his wife Sue leading the first team.

Want to help Haiti?

Invest in training a Haitian trainer to teach other Haitians to help themselves for the long-term. SIFAT is offering a three-week intensive Field Training for Haitians to learn practical skills of food production, clean water and sanitation technologies, child survival, fuel efficient cookstoves, and community development skills. This Haitian church and community leader, in turn, will put his or her training into action in Creole at the community level.

Your \$350 will provide one week of intensive practical training for a Haitian community leader. You will be investing in Haiti's future for the long term. Contact Kathy Bryson, brysonk@sifat.org, for more info.

Hope for Haiti Help Build a Parsonage in Quesimpuco

By Leslie Loyd
Haiti Mission Team Member

It is almost impossible to exaggerate the devastation that Haiti has experienced the past few months. When I arrived in Port-au-Prince, I was shocked to see how many people were homeless, hungry and in need of the most basic essentials. I was eager to get our team of health care professionals to work right away. We worked at the Good Sheperd Clinic providing general care to about 200 patients and gave more than 4,000 tetanus vaccinations at the clinic, in tent cities and even in market places. We also gave out food and helped to build a few houses. We met people from all over the world and all walks of life pitching in to help. Aid is needed everywhere!

The blessings we received were not in the work, but in getting to know the beautiful people of Haiti. They have incredible faith and a resilient spirit; many told how they worshiped God after the earthquake before they began to rebuild. They were incredibly eager to share their stories with us and their dreams of rebuilding their country and lives. I would strongly encourage you to use your gifts to help the people of Haiti. Everyone is needed.



By Ivan Roman
Latin America Project Manager

SIFAT has worked with our graduate Benjo Paredes and CENATEC in the Quesimpuco area since establishing a church, hospital, high school and boarding home. We are happy to share with you that the Bolivian Methodist Church, with an impeccable record in its educational ministry, has agreed to help us and will administer our high school beginning 2012. As a first step toward this goal, the church appointed an ordained Quechuan minister for Quesimpuco.

Rev. Adolfo Quispe and his family arrived in Quesimpuco on March 6 with a warm welcome from the community. For now, they are living in a room at the health clinic. However, they need a parsonage! The church has proposed a two-story addition to the church building with facilities for the pastoral family and a Sunday School/Fellowship Hall. We have raised \$5,000 of the \$16,500 needed to complete this project.

Will you partner with us to raise the \$11,000 still needed to provide Rev. Adolfo and his family a home from which they can minister to these remote communities?



Left: Rev. Adolfo Quispe and his family arrived in Quesimpuco on March 6 to serve at the Methodist Church. Right: The Bolivian Methodist Church and SIFAT sign an agreement for the church to provide a pastor for Quesimpuco. Support is needed to build a parsonage for the pastor and his family.

Medical Personnel Needed for Mission Teams!

Are you a doctor, nurse practitioner, nurse, pharmacist or in the medical profession? We need you to go on a mission trip with SIFAT.

Medical team members are needed in Haiti and Ecuador. Contact Peggy Walker, perdidopeg@aol.com, if you are interested in using your skills to share God's love in practical ways!

Short-term Mission Team Update

By: Peggy Walker
International Team Coordinator

Exciting things are happening on the international front for 2010. New opportunities abound despite the economic downturn in our country. Numbers are down, but interest is growing for SIFAT's continued work in Ecuador and Bolivia. Teams are being formed for new projects in both Zambia and Uganda, and an unprecedented quick response from our supporters allowed SIFAT to play a much needed role in the relief effort in Haiti.

Ecuador

Work on Dulce Refugio, the three-story classroom/cafeteria building in Villaflores, is the focus this year for construction teams. All foundation holes were dug and support columns were formed by SIFAT teams in 2009. Twelve teams are scheduled to complete the first floor in 2010. A VBS component on each of these teams will be working with the children in eight of SIFAT's projects in the outlying areas of Quito, in churches pastored by recent SIFAT graduates in Ecuador. Five medical teams will see more than 2000 patients in the communities in which we work.

Teams from the Auburn University School of Nursing and Auburn University McWhorter School of Building Science returned in early March. This is the beginning of a new opportunity for SIFAT to work with colleges and universities as part of their service/ learning emphasis. We anticipate other teams will be

added to the 2010 schedule as SIFAT becomes more involved in these programs.

Agua de Vida, the new Methodist church SIFAT teams built in Atucucho, is slowly growing and becoming a vital part of that community. In July, partial support from Compassion International will allow almost 200 students, ages 6 to 9, to attend afterschool classes in the church building. Most of these will be children who have advanced to public school after studying the SIFAT curriculum at Mama Yoli's and Little Seeds of God daycare centers.

Bolivia

Interest has grown in Quesimpuco this year and we have four very diverse teams scheduled to work there. The first will begin construction on a parsonage for the new Methodist pastor assigned to Quesimpuco, as part of the long term plan for the United Methodist Church of Bolivia to take over the financial and spiritual support in 2012 of certain SIFAT facilities there, including the church and high school.

Engineers Without Borders from Auburn University will be sending an assessment team to Quesimpuco in August to formulate a five-year plan for a project to help the people in that area. They will be exploring options that will fit into their guidelines, including clean water and sanitation treatment possibilities. A medical/dental team from Texas A&M will arrive



Left: A young girl in Quesimpuco, Bolivia, holds a lamb to be treated by a veterinarian team from Auburn UMC.



Right: Some of the boys at the internado in Ixiamas, Bolivia, pitch in to help build the new girls' dormitory and guest house.

In February 2010, students from Auburn University's McWhorter School of Building Science traveled with SIFAT to Ecuador for the first time. They built molds and poured columns for the new building at Dulce Refugio.



SIFAT 2009 graduate Isaiah Chot, SIFAT executive director Tom Corson and UMC district superintendent John Llunga stand on the land for the future site of the SIFAT Training Center and United Methodist Conference Headquarters outside Lusaka, Zambia.

in June, and a college evangelism/dental/veterinarian team from Auburn UMC will work there in May. Each of these teams will perform very unique and much needed services to improve the lives of the people in Quesimpuco.

Ixiamas – Rachel Parsons, SIFAT Ixiamas Director, and Mateo Tenorio, SIFAT 2009 Practicum graduate in charge of the boys in the Ixiamas internado, were married last December. They will continue the work started last year to build a new girls' dormitory and guest house for SIFAT teams. Work will also continue on our chocolate production at Two Trees, and Rachel is looking into the possibility of marketing this commercially in Bolivia. We are still working through the legal process of incorporating SIFAT Bolivia, so that the projects in Ixiamas will no longer be under CENETEC. Four teams are scheduled to work in construction and with the internado children in Ixiamas in 2010.

Zambia

Plans are coming together for the new SIFAT Training Center and United Methodist Conference Headquarters to be built on land purchased jointly by SIFAT and the UMC outside of Lusaka. We were able to walk the land while in Zambia last November, and it is a perfect site for the proposed facility.

This opportunity was made available to SIFAT when we were approached by Engineers Without Borders at the University of Alabama at Birmingham to partner with them in a project to be partially funded by B.L. Harbert International, now building

the U.S. Embassy in Lusaka. Harbert will erect the perimeter fence and pour the foundations for the three proposed buildings. An EWOB team from UAB will go to Zambia in May to begin construction, and a SIFAT team from Trinity UMC will continue the work in June. This will probably be a three year project depending on the number of SIFAT teams we recruit for construction, and the extent of continued involvement by UAB. Trips to Zambia will be about 11 days and a mini-safari option will be offered to teams wanting to extend their stay.

Uganda

Tom and I had the opportunity to meet with William Nsabuga, a 2007 SIFAT Practicum graduate, while on an exploratory trip to Uganda in November. William has an orphanage for HIV-orphaned children in Lugazi, a village near Kampala. In his present location, there is room for only 35 children and no room for expansion. He currently has requests for 60 children, and the numbers increase daily. William, through support he has received from churches and individuals in the United States, has bought a much larger piece of land in nearby Mukono. Based on his proposal submitted to SIFAT, we will begin sending teams to help in the construction of the new Agape Total Childcare Center facility. When finished, this will be home for up to 70 orphans and also provide a Christian school for 250 children from the surrounding villages. The first SIFAT team is scheduled to go in late summer 2010.

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STM Update

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Haiti

A wonderful opportunity was given to SIFAT in January to partner with Sharewood and Harvest Field Ministry, both out of Huntsville, in the relief efforts in Haiti. Using the appropriate technology skills taught in the SIFAT Practicum, Tom was asked to bring clean drinking water to their clinics and orphanages impacted by the recent earthquake. Although SIFAT is not a relief agency, this was an urgent need of such proportion, we felt it necessary to help where possible. Response from SIFAT supporters to provide funding for the NewLife International water filtration systems has been overwhelming. Several were installed on our initial trip in January, and we are sending small teams to install several more. Trey Reed, SIFAT 2009 graduate, will be training people on the ground in Haiti to install and maintain these systems, which can supply up to 10,000 gallons of clean drinking water daily. Starting in April, we will also be working with some of our graduates from Haiti helping to bring clean water to the projects in which they are involved in many parts of the country.

Medical teams will be needed in Haiti for months to come and SIFAT has the opportunity to send several, beginning in April. These teams will have a corporate aircraft provided for their trip, and the only cost to team members will be \$25 per day to cover their food and lodging while on the ground. These teams will be working through the Chadasa Foundation at the Clinic of the Good Shepherd in Port-au-Prince.

Expanding SIFAT's resources into these new areas is certainly a challenge for our small international staff. However, the opportunities and the needs are so great that we look forward to working on these new projects in each country, and to see what wonderful things God has in store for our STM teams in 2010.



A nursing student from Auburn University weighs and measures one of the ladies coming to the women's medical clinic in Calderon, Ecuador. Medical teams in Ecuador serve at the project sites of graduates from the SIFAT Ecuador Practicum.

Philippines Update

SIFAT alumnae Josie Alcantara, Norma Manuel and Haidee Ilan spent April 5-6, 2010 in Tabuk, Kalinga Province. Josie had the opportunity to teach Leaf for Life, which uses leaves found in their backyards to enrich daily foods. Norma and a pastor taught natural farming, composting and vermiculture.



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Haiti

(Continued from page 1)

was the orphanage building. The resilience of the people was incredible. One young man about the age of my oldest son Josiah had two crushed arms. As I was taking him out of the vehicle to move him into the recovery area, he was kicking and carrying on in Creole. An interpreter explained he was saying he might not be able to use his arms in the future, but he could still play soccer, look out Beckham!

Around midnight the second night we were at the clinic, the director's wife woke us up to tell us they had no water. Upon investigating, we found that the submersible pump for the compound well was not working. One was ordered but not expected to arrive from DR until late the following day. There was no water for almost a thousand people. Polluted water was running down a ditch just outside the compound. This water had cycled through town where people washed their clothes, dumped their sewage, bathed and anything else you can imagine that was needed in a town related to water and sanitation use or disposal. We were able to install one of our New Life water purifiers we have chosen to use in this relief effort. It purified the filthy water to keep the clinic going. We were glad we had not been able to get a ride into Port au Prince earlier.

I want to thank each of you who has helped support the relief effort in Haiti. Even though SIFAT is not a relief organization, I believe we have and are continuing to make a difference for the people of Haiti. We continue to serve by installing water purification units in orphanages, by training Haitians to help with this effort, and due to the generosity of Regions Bank in providing their corporate jets to fly medical teams into Haiti, SIFAT is helping recruit medical teams each week to man clinics in Port-au-Prince.



Trey (center) trains local Haitians on a water purification system that uses table salt and a car battery to clean contaminated water.

Small teams continue to work in Haiti installing these systems and training locals how to use them. When maintained, the systems provide clean water for communities for years to come.



After seeing the immense human suffering going on in Haiti now, I would find it extremely difficult to face life, if we could not do something to help. But because of the generous donations so many have sent to SIFAT for Haiti, we are able to continue with this relief effort with a vision to take it beyond that to helping the people develop and become self-sustaining. Please keep this effort in your prayers as we seek God's guidance for our part in helping to transform this, one of the poorest countries in the world, into a miracle for the Kingdom!

Tom and Trey moved patients from ambulances and helicopters into the clinic. After surgery, the patients were moved to cots on the floor. Trey (left) pitches in to help the medical staff.



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SIFAT's Vision: Bridging the First and Two-thirds Worlds to alleviate spiritual and physical poverty, encouraging people to develop their God-given potential.

SIFAT's Mission: To share God's love through service, education and personal involvement with a needy world.

From the Desk of Tom Corson

For years, our African graduates have asked us to start a SIFAT Training Center in Africa. Now God has brought many diverse groups and people together to make it possible! The Engineers Without Borders' chapter at the University of Alabama at Birmingham came to SIFAT with a proposal to work together on a multi-year project in Zambia. UAB's School of Engineering and the University of Zambia joined this partnership to recruit students to help with the project. Money to buy the land, located near Lusaka, the capital of Zambia, was donated by Trinity UMC in Birmingham, and B. L. Harbert International, based in Birmingham and presently building the US. Embassy in Zambia, donated funds and labor to the project, thereby making it financially possible to begin construction. The training center will also be used by the Methodist Conference in the Democratic Republic of Congo and the provisional Methodist Conference of Zambia, both of which helped facilitate the legal aspects of founding the institution. Their Bishop provided the funds to complete the land purchase and for necessary permits and legal fees. Isaiah Chot, a SIFAT graduate who works with the Bishop in the DRC, will represent SIFAT in our absence.

After our SIFAT delegation approved the land and agreed on the price, I thought the purchase would be simple. But that is not the Zambian way. We then needed the approval of the local tribal leader, in this case, a chieftainess, to complete the transaction. Our Zambian partners briefed us on the rules for approaching the chieftainess, then took us to meet her. After an hour, she came in from her field and took her place under the large tree from where she judges tribal affairs. We waited until she decided to call us before we went close enough to be heard. A reed mat was spread before us and we then had to bow three times with our face all the way to the ground, for permission to approach. Finally, we were granted an audience. After hearing our request, she accepted our proposal and so another step in the process was completed. Any goal worthwhile demands our determined effort to reach it!

We will go to Zambia in May with the first team from UAB to begin construction. We are deeply grateful to God for this new opportunity to extend SIFAT training into Africa. Only He could have made this possible! Great things can be done for God when we all work together!