



Konbit Sante

CAP-HAITIEN HEALTH PARTNERSHIP

2017 ANNUAL REPORT

Letter from the Executive Director

Dear Friends,

This past year has been eventful in the US and on the world stage. We have witnessed a growing chorus of leaders retrenching from any pretense of obligation to one another as global citizens, but rather defining and prioritizing “winning” from a very myopic perspective; one that frames winning as a zero sum game. The idea of compassion - even “smart compassion”- seems to be increasingly seen as the losing end of a grand bargain. I have often wondered how different the world might be if we all concentrated more on assuring that no one was left behind, or left without.

Fortunately, there are many people going about the business of working hard to make the world a better and more just place for all of us. At Konbit Sante, our small part of that is grappling with how to best support improvements in health systems in Haiti that have the responsibility to provide care to some of the poorest people in our hemisphere. This year we have done a lot of soul searching about what “smart compassion” means in this setting.

Compassion involves addressing meaningless suffering and preventable death. Both of these terms imply that if things were done differently, they wouldn't happen. When death and suffering are preventable – that is, when they are the result of addressable failures - they are not only tragic, but working to prevent them becomes a moral imperative. Unfortunately, we continue to see women and children die because essential medications are not available. Health facilities that are supposed to provide care are under-staffed, and equipment failures are unattended to. Too often, there is a general lack of adequate planning,

“We are all in the same boat on a stormy sea, and we owe each other a terrible loyalty.”

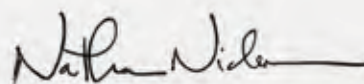
- Gilbert Keith Chesterton

investment, and leadership in the health system... the list goes on. The ultimate sign of a failed health system is the meaningless suffering and preventable death that occur under its watch.

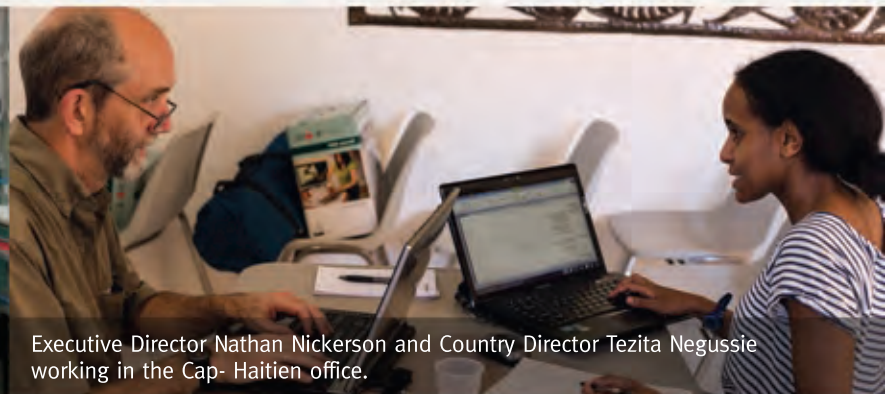
Konbit Sante is determined to compassionately and collaboratively address ways in which a failing health system can adapt, and can improve. It humbles all of us who are engaged in this work to know that there is no quick fix to this situation, and the guidebook for success has yet to be written; but as time goes by we learn that part of the answer is persistent support for those who envision a better future for their own community.

This report seeks to showcase the hard work and efforts of those - both in Haiti and abroad - who have taken strides to improve a health system that continues to struggle against unyielding challenges, such as politics, climate change, growing food insecurity and a lack of clean water.

We hope you join us as we work toward greater health equity for all Haitians.



Nathan Nickerson, RN, DrPH,
Executive Director



Executive Director Nathan Nickerson and Country Director Tezita Negussie working in the Cap-Haitien office.

Letter from the Country Director

As I come to the end of my tenure as Country Director, I struggle to summarize in a few paragraphs my experience of the past 11 months. I had been traveling to Haiti regularly with Konbit Sante for about six years, but living and working full-time in Cap-Haitien has clarified both the challenges and opportunities of health care delivery in Haiti for me.

We work in a complex and challenging environment: the public health sector in Haiti is highly centralized, poorly resourced, and lacking in strong measures of accountability. It is a disservice to the communities we serve, our colleagues and donors to minimize or dismiss these realities. In that context, Konbit Sante is committed to a model of capacity-strengthening that is without much precedent in Haiti, especially in the public sector. That puts us in the forefront of health organizations, with all the uncertainties and risks that position entails. In the end, successes and results with meaningful impact are extremely hard won and require tenacity, flexibility, patience, and a commitment to the long haul.

One may ask, then, why does Konbit Sante pursue a model of capacity strengthening that extends beyond the routine practice of “train and equip”? The answer is that we believe in the value and dignity of all people. We believe that a mother should not bleed to death while giving birth or that a child’s mental and physical development be stunted because of where they happen to live in the world. We also believe that the potential to create more just societies lies within local people. Our role is to accompany our partners as they navigate a lengthy, nonlinear journey toward positive change.

This year I saw our persistence and focus on Haitian health professionals yield benefits to the community. Nurses and lab technicians at Fort St. Michel Health Center came together to address factors that lengthened the time of prenatal visits for pregnant women. I was heartened to witness the Pediatric Department at Justinian University Hospital implement a life-saving protocol to ensure that all children born in the hospital received every element of newborn care upon birth. These steps may seem miniscule, but they are integral to the long march to quality care and justice led by Haitians and supported by Konbit Sante staff, volunteers, and donors.

I hope that you will continue to support us and our partners in this journey.

Sincerely,



Tezita Negussie, MPH, MSW
Country Director



The new pediatrics facility under construction at the Justinian University Hospital



Pregnant women waiting for prenatal care at Fort St. Michel Health Center

Workforce & Health Services

Human resources - a sufficient number of adequately trained people - are the single greatest resource for a health system. In addition to funding the salaries for over 40 healthcare workers who provide direct care within our partner facilities and communities, we are constantly looking for ways to help them be more successful in their work.

Pediatricians Now Attending All Births

The world has witnessed a significant reduction in the rate of infant deaths in the past 35 years. While this is cause for celebration, the survival rate has been much lower for children in the first 28 days of life. At Justinian University Hospital (JUH), we see this trend play out. Although newborns make up 44% of admissions into the Pediatric Department, they constitute 62% of deaths. It is widely acknowledged in the global health community that two-thirds of neonatal deaths are preventable with existing tools and knowledge.

At the forefront of prevention efforts are qualified health care providers, employing essential equipment, medicines and practices immediately at birth. This basic intervention became a reality in 2017 at Justinian University Hospital after many years of planning and many false starts. Until recently, almost all births were attended by an obstetric doctor and nurse. The obstetric team focused on the care of the mother, in keeping with their training, experience and sense of expertise. A healthy

newborn was seen by a pediatrician several hours after birth and a critically ill newborn was transferred to the Pediatric Department, sacrificing the most precious and important seconds in the child's life.

In 2017, this changed. Due to the leadership of the pediatric resident educator and consistent support for this initiative by Konbit Sante staff, an average of 94% of children born at JUH now receive immediate pediatric care at birth. A pediatric resident and intern are assigned to cover all births in the Maternity Department 24/7. Their presence ensures that a newborn who struggles to breathe at birth receives resuscitation, a preterm baby is placed on her mother's chest for kangaroo care or in an incubator to regulate her temperature, and that all babies receive the basic care needed to safeguard their survival and well-being.

With data collection and tracking, Konbit Sante and JUH staff will be able to continue to monitor outcomes and reduce the percentage of preventable newborn deaths at JUH.





bCPAP Training

Last fall Konbit Sante hosted four volunteers from Connecticut Children's Medical Center to conduct a training on bubble CPAP for nearly 30 doctors, residents, interns, and nurses at JUH and HCBH. CPAP is a respiratory device that delivers oxygen to babies and infants, particularly preterm and low birth weight babies, with respiratory distress. Improved knowledge and skills on the use of CPAP should contribute to a reduction of neonatal deaths at JUH. After the training the respiratory therapist, Lisa LeBon, shared her experience with her workplace colleagues, and they decided to use their funds to purchase two more of these machines. Since then, another generous donor has purchased two more, so the unit has their target number of five machines that will all be online in the new building. The same group returned in November to do further training on this at the bedside.

More Targeted Trainings

Community Engagement Training

Konbit Sante supported Dr. Mesadiou, the Director of the ULS Health Center, to take a course on improving your skills in social change, collaborative leadership, and community mobilization from Future Generations University. The course was taught by former Konbit Sante student intern and volunteer; now Dr. Meike Schleiff, DrPH.

Biomedical Technician Training

The biomedical technician staff from both the Justinian Hospital and the Haitian Convention Baptist Hospital attended a two-week intensive training on diagnosing and repairing medical equipment provided by a group called MedAid from the UK. This was made possible by a grant secured by our partners at HHA (Hope Health Action). This not only enhanced the skills of all seven technicians, but they were also provided wonderful sets of individual tools, and a larger set for each hospital.



Management & Leadership

Management and leadership are the mortar that hold all the building blocks of a functional health system together. Without management, all else is for naught.

Servant Leadership Conference

Dr. Steve James has been living and working in Haiti for more than 30 years and teaches a management approach called servant leadership that resonates with many of the most positive aspects of Haitian culture.

We invited him to present his thoughts at a management and leadership symposium that was well attended by the leadership staff of all our partner facilities. Everyone present was engaged, motivated, and challenged to think about how they could “heal” their health centers. Our plan is to follow up this groundwork with specific skill building to put the leadership concepts they learned into action in their workplaces.

Equipment Management at the Justinian University Hospital

In addition to helping procure medical equipment for the new pediatric facility at Justinian University Hospital, we want to assure that there are management systems in place to track the condition and functionality of the equipment and to have a mechanism in place to requisition parts for repairs and maintenance. While the Ministry of Health assigned three

biotechnicians to the hospital a couple years ago, their impact has been minimal without a system to identify and requisition replacement parts.

To address this issue, Konbit Sante recruited and hosted a group of volunteers from the Polytechnic School of Montreal to work with the Haitian biotechnicians for two months to create an equipment management database. The volunteers - Jacynthe Tessier, Nicolas Bernier, and Sarrah Njeh - are part of a school-based organization called Project PC2 that provides training on the use, maintenance and repair of medical equipment in low-resource countries.

During their time in Cap-Haitien they worked side by side with the hospital biomedical equipment technicians every day, teaching them how to use the new database to inventory more than 100 pieces of equipment. The database includes information about each piece of equipment including specifications, condition, and reference to user manuals. In addition, a system was put in place to request replacement parts.

Since this system has been implemented, many pieces of equipment have been repaired, thus greatly reducing down time. And the Haitian biotechnicians have become important assets to the hospital.

Next steps are to establish monthly meetings with our French-speaking volunteers from Montreal to review reports and problem solve equipment challenges. Next year they plan to return to help establish a similar equipment management system at the Haitian Convention Baptist Hospital.



Medicines, Supplies and Equipment

It is not possible to provide quality healthcare without the needed tools and materials available at the point of care.



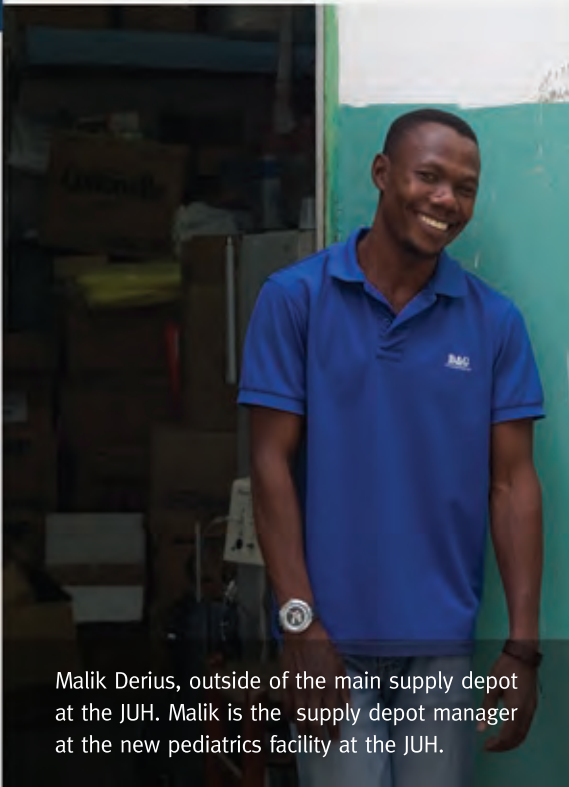
To manage the process, we support a supply depot manager for the pediatric service. It is his responsibility to track quantities of essential items monthly, allowing us and service leadership to anticipate any low supplies months in advance, thus allowing time to restock and avoid critical shortages. We are still refining procurement options but we expect all this effort to really pay off in the coming year. More on that to come in future communications.

Our goal is that no parent should be asked to try to gather together money to seek out emergency medicine at a local pharmacy when their loved one is experiencing a life-threatening emergency.

Essential Medicines for Newborns

With the help and fundraising support of volunteers from Connecticut Children's Medical Center, we have been able to assure that medicines and supplies that are essential to have on site to save the lives of newborns are always available at the pediatric service at the Justinian University Hospital.

Lists of essential medicines and supplies and anticipated monthly quantities needed have been created, and a procurement plan that identifies the most cost-effective sources has been developed. The plan includes requesting materials from reliable donor sources, purchasing deeply discounted materials from non-profit vendors approved by the World Health Organization, and some purchasing directly from manufacturers.



Malik Derius, outside of the main supply depot at the JUH. Malik is the supply depot manager at the new pediatrics facility at the JUH.



Konbit Sante's 18th Shipping Container

In November, Konbit Sante sent its eighteenth container of medical supplies and equipment to Cap-Haitien. J.B. Brown & Sons continues to donate warehouse space which allows us to store donated and purchased materials, sort them, and stage them for shipping. While this container included important and requested materials for all our partner facilities, there was a particular emphasis on materials for pediatric and newborn care as well as rehab equipment for children with disabilities.

Midwife Kits from Direct Relief International

We are grateful for all the medications that our partner, Direct Relief International, makes available for requisition by our partners. And we are especially pleased to participate again in their Midwife Kit program. Each of the recently-acquired 25 kits contains all the materials and medicine needed to attend 50 births at a skilled facility, thus mitigating costs for 1,250 women in our service area who otherwise would not be able to afford them.

Research, Data & Evaluation

If there is no tracking or measurement, then there is no management. Where there is data and analysis, active management for positive change is possible.

Fort San Michel Health Center (FSM)

Prenatal Care:

To strengthen and expand access to services at the Fort St. Michel Health Center (FSM), Konbit Sante is now paying for prenatal visits for women who cannot afford them. Funded by USAID, this program is designed to decrease the barrier to care for the most vulnerable women.

Even if care is free and accessible, in order to have a positive impact for the mother and child, it is important that each visit include all of the essential elements of good care: physical exam; blood and urine screening tests; multivitamins, iron and folate pills; and counseling about pregnancy, delivery options, and family planning. So, we carefully collect and analyze information on what services each of the women receives monthly,

to see how well the center is meeting this standard. The results are shared with the staff involved in providing the care as well as the leadership of the center. The areas that need improvement are discussed, not to affix blame, but to identify strategies to improve.

It is this last step that is so often missing. Data usually goes in one direction- to the funder or a central office - and isn't shared with the people actually doing the job! The nurses at FSM gave very thoughtful feedback about the areas of concern, and had ideas about how to improve the service going forward. Regular monthly reviews are now integrated into our work, and reviews indicate that more women are now receiving complete visits.



Maternity Service Evaluations:

An important part of Konbit Sante's strategy for best applying our resources, is to conduct assessments of the capacities and capacity gaps in the delivery of health services across our partner facilities and communities that they serve. Contributing to that effort, volunteers Kim Simonian, MPH & Carol Kuhn, MD conducted an evaluation of these maternity services at FSM and HCBH. While their assessment showed that both the capacities and gaps are quite different in each place, they both have important needs and the assessment will help us strategize for how best to help strengthen them.



Using Konbit Sante's experience and relationships to improve and expand care

SONT

SONT ("Sante Okap se Nou Tout") is Creole for "Cap-Haitien's health is up to all of us". This group of Cap-Haitien women approached Konbit Sante about working through us to support the Justinian University Hospital by raising funds and volunteering. We are not aware of another case of community members organizing to support and strengthen their public hospital like this, and so were thrilled that they wanted to do it with us.

"As none of the founding members of the group is familiar with how hospitals function, it seemed important to us to seek the help and counsel of an organization whose knowledge and experience would help us target our actions more effectively. We found in Konbit Sante the perfect partner, as their knowledge of health care gave us a sense of "security" in deciding how to invest our time and donations. We totally trust them, and are very grateful for their collaboration, as up to now it has been crucial."

- **Pascale Gaetjens**, SONT Founding member



Care to Communities (C2C) is an organization that supports the development of local clinics in Haiti, with a goal of providing high quality care that is ultimately able to sustain itself over time. This year, when they won a Canadian Grand Challenges grant to expand a program for maternal and infant survival in Northern Haiti, they asked Konbit Sante if we could be the fiscal sponsors for this 18-month project.

"Konbit Sante brings to this partnership an exceptional level of management and good governance. They hold themselves to high standards in everything they do, ensuring that their programs are integrated into the Haiti healthcare landscape in a way that is supportive and efficient. They have earned the trust of the Ministry of Health and peer organizations in Haiti because they bring both expertise and humility. C2C is proud to work in concert with Konbit Sante to ensure that these organizational values translate into high-quality health services for vulnerable Haitian families."

- **Allison Howard-Berry**, C2C Executive Director



Smile Train, the well-regarded international organization that provides and supports cleft lip and palate repairs, has been a friend and partner for many years. We really liked their model of building local capacity by training local surgeons and providers, and so we have collaborated with them as they established a relationship to offer this service in Northern Haiti at the Justinian Hospital.

"Smile Train is proud to collaborate on projects with Konbit Sante. They have been an invaluable resource to us as they not only have eyes and ears on the ground in Haiti, but they have a deep understanding of the needs and realities that the local hospitals face. Their solid relationships with local stakeholders based on mutual understanding, respect, and trust renders Konbit Sante a key player whenever implementing community-based programs in Haiti. We are thankful for their continued leadership and guidance and look forward to further collaboration with this fantastic organization."

- **Shannon Lambert**, Regional Director, Americas

Facility Infrastructure

Health facilities and infrastructure should facilitate high quality care, not be a challenge to overcome.

New Pediatrics Facility

At long last the new \$5 million USAID-funded building that will house the Justinian Pediatric Service is complete, and the move from the temporary site that they have been occupying since their old facility was demolished two years ago will occur this fall. The new building is five times the size of where they are now, and has many amenities that they have never really had: plenty of exam rooms and adequate space between beds. It also has an interior connection with the Maternity Service, so that newborns can be transferred directly without having to go outdoors. With this great opportunity for improved care will come a great challenge in terms of managing all of this, including the facility utilities themselves. Konbit Sante originally proposed this project to USAID six years ago, was involved in the design and planning, and will still be there to support continued improvements of the quality of care provided there, long after the engineers and contractors have left.



Responding to Emergencies

This year was a stark reminder of how vulnerable Haiti is to the intensified weather phenomena. In fact, Haiti is ranked third most vulnerable country in the world on the Climate Change Vulnerability Index 2017.

• HURRICANE MATTHEW:

When Hurricane Matthew hit southwestern Haiti with such ferocity, Konbit Sante looked for a way to help, even though Northern Haiti where our staff live and work was minimally affected. We immediately sent 640,000 water purification tablets, each one capable of treating 10 liters of water. We then sent additional funds to St Boniface Hospital Foundation, a well-regarded health facility in the impacted area for cholera treatment and prevention of water borne disease. Later in the year, we donated additional supplies, including five Stryker Stretcher hospital beds.

• FLOODING IN THE NORTH:

The tropical rains that followed shortly thereafter in the North, while unnamed, caused a tremendous amount of flooding. We decided that we needed to stage an equivalent amount of cholera prevention and treatment materials to be at the ready for the predictable rise in cholera cases that occurs whenever people's drinking water sources become contaminated. A special appeal to help staff from the ULS Health Center who lost all of their belongings in the flooding was met with such a generous response from Konbit Sante donors that were able to help them get back on their feet with things such as mattresses and other basic household items.

• HURRICANE IRMA:

As Hurricane Irma, the strongest storm ever recorded in the Atlantic, looked like Northern Haiti could be in its path, we worked quickly with Direct Relief to position a special Hurricane Relief Module of medicines and supplies to be deployed as needed to assist and treat casualties.

Meet Luphete Francois, Community-based Rehabilitation Worker

Providing Support for Children with Disabilities

Nearby the Haitian Convention Baptist Hospital (HCBH), there is a respite home for 26 children with disabilities, called the Maison de Benediction. The 'maison' stands in contrast to the many orphanages across Haiti, as it provides care for children as long as their families need assistance, but does not remove children from being near their families, their culture and their communities.

As you can imagine, many more children are deserving of the care provided at the Maison de Benediction, but resources are needed. However, thanks to the generosity of a Konbit Sante supporter who wanted to honor her sister's life working with children with disabilities in NYC, we have been able to support a Community Based Rehabilitation Program for three years.

We currently provide salaries and resources for two Community Based Rehabilitation Workers, who work in neighborhoods to identify and support families who have children with disabilities. There are over 137 children who are assisted by this program, by bringing information to the families as to how they can help and look after children with disabilities.

Luphete Francois, one of the CBR workers, said, "I visit active and inactive kids. I look for new cases, I write

reports on the welfare and well being of the children I see. And I provide information to the parents as to how to care for the kids with disabilities and especially for those who are ill. Then I provide information to schools to encourage them to integrate the disabled kids into the schools, so that they can learn without discrimination. I do the same with churches and I ask both schools and churches to respect, provide for, and appreciate disabled kids.

"The work is important because in the past, kids with disabilities were not valued, they were humiliated and not wanted. The CBR program has helped a lot to provide a better life within society. It helps parents cope better with caring for a disabled child. It helps the kids to find value in society. It stops lives from being thrown away.

"I love showing the parents, school and churches how the kids can live better and to appreciate all disabled children, helping them to be better integrated into society."

The CBR program will require funding to continue after next year. However, care is being provided now for children and their families who are in need.



AATPH gets Inter American Foundation (IAF) grant

AATPH is a local Haitian organization that reaches out to people with disabilities, and provides both rehabilitation services, recreational and social opportunities, and stigma reduction. Konbit Sante's Executive Director, along with a representative from the Swiss Paraplegic Foundation, have served as the technical advisors that helped make getting this grant possible for them. The AATPH staff have done a terrific job meeting the goals and objectives of the grant, which will strengthen their chances of getting continued funding to do their good work.



Luphete Francois and other CBR worker at home visit



Financial Information *Our Fiscal Year is October 1st - September 30th*

Donor List

\$10,000 & over

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Elsie Lee Garthwaite Memorial Foundation
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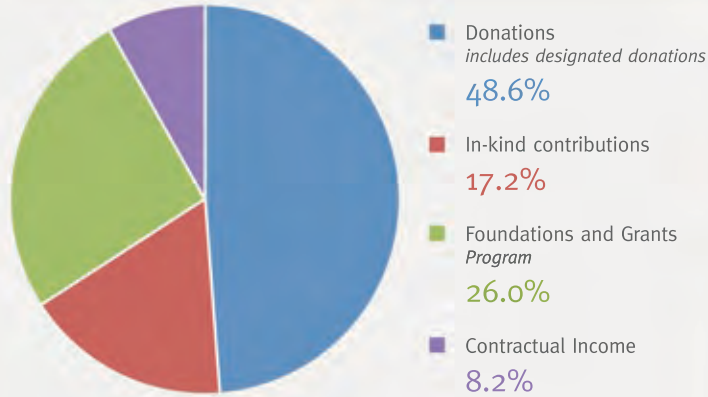
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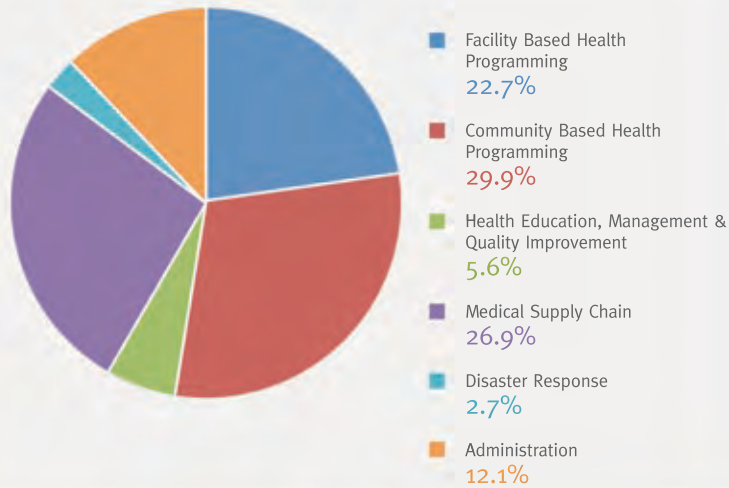
For full financial information, including independent audits and a full list of donors and supporters, please visit; konbitsante.org/financial-information.

Financial Report

Total Income: \$871,142



Total Expense: \$762,679



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David Sink
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Program Grant Support

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Konbit Sante turned 15!

Konbit Sante founders and supporters gathered this past March at the Ocean Gateway in Portland to celebrate 15 years of ongoing work.

Generously hosted by the City of Portland, Maine, Konbit Sante gathered to recognize the ongoing work of our many volunteers, and especially Charlie Stevens, Founder & CEO of Northern Data Systems. Charlie is a genuinely humble man with a great generous spirit. He was a member of the original Konbit Sante board and involved his family and company in the work. His son Paul made many trips to Haiti with us to help set up the first internet capability at the Justinian University Hospital, and they donated not only computer equipment, but our Maine office, now for over 13 years.

This deep level of support and stability led us to dedicate a digital library of medical resources in the new pediatrics facility at the Justinian University in Hospital in his honor.

Charlie surprised us all at our event, by making the single largest financial donation we received in 2017!





Nicole Wolf Photography:

A serendipitous meeting at a coffee shop led to professional photographer Nicole Wolf volunteering to come to Cap-Haitien to offer her skills toward helping tell the Konbit Sante story. Nicole was very familiar with Haiti after spending an extended period of time there after the 2010 earthquake. We are very appreciative of her keen eye and dignified approach to documenting and sharing the complex realities of life in and work in Haiti.



Haiti Convention Baptist Hospital Celebrates its 10th Anniversary

Konbit Sante congratulates the Haitian Baptist Convention Hospital on their 10-year anniversary, and were thrilled to take part in their festivities this year. This hospital, founded by ex-Konbit Sante staffer and pediatrician, Dr. Paul Toussaint, has grown from a small walk-in clinic to a full service hospital and rehab center in that time. Their dedication to service and quality make them an inspiration to partner with and support.

A nurse at the Haiti Convention Baptist Hospital attends to a newborn.

Strengthening Capacity for a Healthier Haiti



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