

## **Microlending in Haiti with partner KOFIP**

Eighteen years ago, through parishioner Anna Boekstegen, St. Nicholas learned about Kolektif Finansman Popilè (KOFIP), the Haitian Non Governmental Organization that sponsors savings groups called “mutuelles de solidarité” throughout Haiti. Mutuelles make innovative use of colored boxes for group savings (Green Box), emergency funds (Red Box), and outside loans (Blue Box). KOFIP trains participants, convenes small groups, and provides ongoing technical assistance, but the groups themselves decide on what loans to make and take full responsibility for collecting them.

Our parish’s first grant to KOFIP came in 2006, to hire a local organizer in the North of Haiti in order to bring mutuelles there for the first time. After the 2010 earthquake, we renewed our support for KOFIP. Our project led to lasting results. The same organizer hired for our initial project in 2006 still works with KOFIP today, and now there are 246 mutuelles in the North, with 6,874 members. These groups now have combined Green Box savings of more than \$158,000.



*Mutuelle meeting near Limonade, Haiti*

## **Current project**

Despite the ongoing crisis in Haiti, mutuelles in the countryside are still meeting. However, they urgently need outside resources to facilitate economic activity and livelihoods. Our current project is to support fifteen mutuelles in the Anse-Rouge region of Haiti, which has undergone extensive drought. The project will help revitalize the mutuelles by providing each group with in-kind loans in the form of 2 pigs, 10 goats, 30 chickens, and 525 pounds of corn seed. KOFIP will provide training to each mutuelle in management as well as animal husbandry. To contribute, you can donate online to the Haiti Microlending Fund through either church’s Faith Direct account ([stjohn23evanston.org/give](http://stjohn23evanston.org/give)).

With this project, we remember Anna Boekstegen and remember her lifetime of dedication and service to the cause of peace, justice, and opportunity throughout the world.

To contribute, you can donate online to the Haiti Microlending Fund through either church's Faith Direct account ([stjohn23evanston.org/give](http://stjohn23evanston.org/give)). For information, contact Rosalie Murphy, [murphyrosalie@gmail.com](mailto:murphyrosalie@gmail.com).