

Institute for Justice & Democracy in Haiti Bureau des Avocats Internationaux

# You Helped IJDH Prevent Forced Evictions of Earthquake Survivors.

Annual Report: 2010-2011 Fiscal Year August 18, 2011

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Page 8 Organizational Partners and Board of Directors Despite a wave of illegal forced evictions, IJDH-BAI has protected 3,200 families facing threats of eviction.

With more local staff on the ground, more displaced families can defend their rights to adequate housing in the face of violent evictions and no provided alternatives.

Between June 2010 and March 2011 an estimated 234,000 people were evicted from IDP camps. Almost a quarter of the 680,000 people remaining in the camps are threatened with illegal eviction. That number is increasing, as Haiti's new administration implements an aggressive campaign to close camps.

Families evicted from camps usually have nowhere to go. They move to roadsides, other camps, or houses condemned as unsafe from earthquake damage.

However, thanks to your generous support, BAI lawyers are helping IDP camp residents fight back. Our lawyers represent camp communities in court and provide "know your rights" trainings in camps. We help communities use the media and organize to enforce their rights and pressure the Haitian government to end evictions until adequate housing alternatives are provided. A prosecutor has decided to move forward with a criminal suit against a local



mayor brought by the BAI on behalf of victims of the mayor's campaign of forced evictions.

This system works: only two of the ten camps where BAI has provided training and representation have suffered eviction- providing protection to 3,200 families with no alternatives. Some camps have resisted evictions for over a year. With your continued support, IJDH-BAI can increase and sustain efforts to defend the rights of displaced earthquake survivors.

IJDH-BAI and our collaborators secured an injunction from the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) last November which called on the Haitian government to implement a moratorium on all evictions from IDP camps, to provide adequate alternative shelter, to train the police to know the rights of Haiti's displaced communities, and to protect women and children from violence associated with unlawful evictions.

Protecting earthquake survivors from illegal forced eviction is important. But the long -term value of IJDH-BAI housing rights advocacy is to force open the courthouse doors to Haiti's poor, and provide communities the skills they need to successfully demand enforcement of the full spectrum of their rights.





## Legal Spotlight: Me. Marie Esther Felix

Winning Justice for Rape Victims



match continued donations up to \$5,000.

IJDH/BAI successfully organized evidence for the prosecution on Duvalier's political violence crimes, especially murder, torture and false imprisonment, and his looting of the public treasury. The BAI has filed complaints on behalf of three individual victims of Duvalier's regime, and is working on more with your continued support. IJDH/BAI continues to build its case, through interviewing witnesses and victims in Haiti and North America, and conducting legal and factual research to prove Duvalier's liability for crimes against humanity, and has recruited top U.S. law firms who have contributed tens of thousands of dollars in donated legal services to the case.

#### IJDH-BAI Trains Next Generation of Haitian Human Rights Lawyers in June 2011.

With the help of the Center for Constitutional Rights, four Haitian law school graduates joined the BAI for on-the-job training in human rights lawyering. The graduates all come from strong backgrounds for social justice lawyers- one lives in a tent in an internal displacement camp, another is a grassroots organizer who went to law school when he saw that organizing could not be conducted without government interference. At the BAI, all trainees receive help with their memoire, or master's thesis, and training in both the technical legal skills and the social orientation necessary to successfully advocate for the rights of the poor in Haiti. With continued funding, we hope to hire the best candidates as BAI lawyers, and start a new class of trainees.

IJDH helped win redesignation of Temporary Protected Status (TPS) which provided a temporary safe haven to an estimated 10,000 Haitians who came to the U.S. in the year following the quake.

•With the TPS extension, successful applicants will be allowed to remain in the U.S. through January 22, 2013.

Now, IJDH continues to lead the fight to create a Haitian Family Reunification Parole Program, allowing Haitians already approved for visas to join their families in the United States instead of remaining on a 4-11 year waitlist.

The over 105,000 beneficiaries of this program would not only be reunited with their families, but would help Haiti's economy recover by sending money back home.

Marie Esther Felix never handled a rape case until August 2010. However, with the support of IJDH's Haiti affiliate the Bureau des Avocats Internationaux, she has become one of just a few lawyers specializing in rape cases for poor Haitian women and girls. Unfortunately, this also makes her one of the busiest attorneys in Your support

allowed BAI to secure over 45 arrests of alleged rapists since Esther joined the BAI to represent victims of sexual violence. Your support also allowed us to secure an order from the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) last December, which instructed the Haitian government to confront gender-based violence through concrete steps that increase security and privacy in Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps and increase arrests and prosecutions.

Haiti.

Through our collaboration with grassroots groups and international partners, Esther and our legal team in Haiti have interviewed over 600 victims of rape since the Project began

in June 2010. We have used the evidence to file over 50 complaints, refer victims to appropriate services, and advocate for a more effective Haitian government and international response to the gender-based violence epidemic. Our work deters future rape by punishing perpetrators and forcing a more active response by the Haitian law enforcement and justice systems, along with the international community managing camps and providing security.



Through the support of the Goldin Institute, IJDH and the BAI helped our grassroots partner KOFAVIV hire 25 male agents in February 2011 to provide surveillance in a camp in downtown Port-au-Prince. The BAI's coordinator for grassroots women's groups, Rose Getchine Lima, helps coordinate the group.

Since May, the agents report that there have been no rapes in the area and that domestic violence has decreased. Even better, the agents have, on their initiative, expanded their role to include outreach to other men in the community to discuss men's roles in violence against women.

The project demonstrates that community-based and womendesigned solutions are effective in preventing gender-based violence. We hope that the project can be used as a cost-effective, empowering and successful model for many other camps across Haiti with your continued support.



### The prosecution of Jean-Claude Duvalier continues thanks to the generosity of donors like you – helping us meet, and surpass our \$30,000 goal for the case. A special thanks goes out to an anonymous donor who has pledged to

#### To donate, or for more information on fundraising efforts, go to: https://ijdh.myetap.org/fundraiser/bringbabydoctojustice/

Thank you for helping this vital work continue.

## Thank You for Helping us Stand Up for the Rights of Pre-Trial Detainees Languishing in Haiti's Inhumane Prisons.

IJDH-BAI's Health & Human **Rights in Prisons** Project (HHRPP) a collaboration with Partners in Health is liberating unjustly held prisoners and fighting for improved conditions for those who remain.

With your support, HHRPP lawyers and doctors continued

to fight for the rights of people kept in some of the worst prison conditions in the world. Over 80% of Haiti's prisoners have not been convicted of a crime and 40% of detainees have reported being tortured in custody. Many cells are so crowded that inmates must take turns to sleep on the floor. Diseases, including cholera, thrive due to inadequate food, potable water, sanitary facilities and medical care. Last year, HHRPP

provided legal and medical screenings to over 500 prisoners and freed over 50 people who were unjustly detained. We expect to free many more this year as three motivated HHRPP lawyers in Hinche, Mirebalais and St. Marc develop their skills with the help of the BAI's advanced training programs.

80% of Haitian **Prisoners have** never been convicted of a crime On average Haitian defendents have **square feet of** space.

### With your help, IJDH-BAI coordinated the compilation and submission of 13 human rights reports to the United Nations Human Rights Council.

IJDH-BAI submitted the reports in coalition with 57 grassroots groups, internally displaced persons (IDP) camps, nongovernmental organizations and academic institutions – giving Haiti's poor majority an opportunity to stand up for their own rights in an international forum.

In October 2011, the United Nations Human Rights Council will assess Haiti's compliance with its human rights law obligations under the Universal Periodic Review (UPR). The UPR provides a unique opportunity for civil society and grassroots groups to engage with the Haitian government on human rights, especially since the new

IJDH-BAI has engaged

government took office in May. With continued support, we hope to bring legal representatives from our sister organization, the Bureau des Avocats Internationaux (BAI), and grassroots partners from Haiti to relate their stories and opinions in person and organize side events for the press and government representatives active in Haiti. in a public advocacy campaign to maximize the impact of the thirteen reports. In January, the BAI and the U.S. Human Rights Network organized a training for grassroots activists in Haiti. A second training on advocacy will be held in August. The BAI hosts regular press conferences on the UPR process, speaks often on the radio, and ensures that grassroots voices are represented in discussions in Haiti on the UPR. In

Timeline of the Universal Periodic Review: Haiti



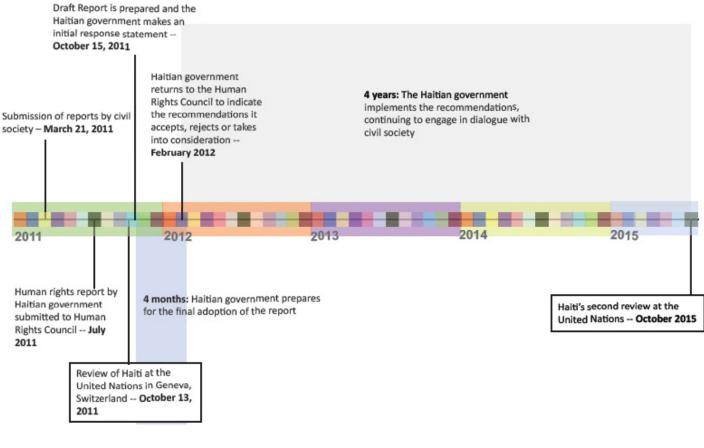


#### Yvon, a 40 year-old farmer and father of three children, was working on his plot of land on March 30th, when he was arrested and thrown into the Hinche prison.

Another man claims that he owns Yvon's farmland, and had enough money to hire a lawyer who could arrange for a prosecutor to arrest Yvon – for violating a court order by trespassing on his own land.

There was no court order, but this kind of abuse of the law is a common and effective way for larger landowners to deprive poor peasants of their only possession, their land. Typically the peasant sits in jail until he renounces his land claim. Losing land often means losing all hope of avoiding abject poverty.

The BAI lawyer in Hinche filed a *habeus corpus* petition, showed that there was no court order restricting Yvon's access to his land, and convinced the judge to release Yvon on June 10, 2011. Without HHRPP, he would most likely have spent at least six more months in prison, and he and his descendants would have lost their land forever.



July we lobbied important member state delegations at the UN in New York.

The Human Rights Council will make recommendations based on all the UPR submissions. IJDH-BAI and their partners will then fight to enforce the recommendations, through education, public advocacy and intervention with donor countries.

For a copy of our Universal Periodic Review reports, visit IJDH.org or email info@ijdh.org.

Thank you for allowing us to bring international attention to these important human rights issues!

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\*This list of donors includes only those gifts received within our 2010-2011 Fiscal Year (April 1, 2010- March 31, 2011). We want to thank those donors who have continued to give after this date, as well as recognize donors who have recently joined the IJDH community. Tides Relief & Reconstruction Fund, The Haiti Fund at The Boston Foundation, along with an Anonymous Funder, have since become new influential foundations supporting our work. We cannot thank each and every one of you enough for your support.

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#### IJDH Welcomes Rob Broggi to Board of Directors:

Rob is a hedge fund manager with Raptor Funds. He currently serves on the boards of the ONEXONE Foundation, the Roxbury Latin

School, the Sean McDonough Charitable Foundation. He has been a valued advisor and contributor to IJDH for the last two years, and his enthusiasm and experience are a great asset to IJDH's Board.



### **Board of Directors**

Rob Broggi, See above.

Brian Concannon Jr., Esq., IJDH Director.

**Paul Farmer, M.D. PhD,** founder of Partners in Health, Professor at Harvard Medical School, and Deputy UN Special Envoy to Haiti.

Laura Flynn, is an author, teacher, and activist.

**Ira J. Kurzban, Esq.**, is an attorney with Kurzban, Kurzban, Weinger & Tetzeli, and Adjunct Professor of Law at the University of Miami and Nova Southeastern University.

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**Irwin Stotzky, Esq.**, is a Professor of Law and Director of the Center for the Study of Human Rights at the University of Miami.

## IJDH and the BAI need your donations to continue our much needed work in Haiti. Please give what you can!

Checks (preferred) can be made payable to IJDH and returned to us in the enclosed envelope.

To pay by credit card you can either: Fill in your information on the enclosed envelope and mail it back to us; or,

#### Go to www.ijdh.org. Click the "Donate" button and enter the amount you'd like to give.

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