

# BEYOND BORDERS



HELPING PEOPLE BUILD MOVEMENTS FOR LIBERATION IN HAITI

Spring 2017

## BEATRICE'S WISH:

**"I would like every child who is in slavery like I was...to be free."**

*Nan Kafe, Haiti –*

**B**eatrice Brinus' world began to unravel when she was still too young to understand what was happening.

In 2014, Beatrice's father walked out on her family, and her mother sent Beatrice to live with a woman who promised to provide for her and send her to school. Instead, it was the start

of a year-long ordeal of forced labor, abuse, and neglect for the eight-year-old.

In Haiti, approximately two-thirds of the estimated 400,000 children enslaved are girls, and among all Haitian girls, one in six becomes enslaved.

Each day before dawn Beatrice rose to fetch water and kindling, light the fire over which

she cooked breakfast, wash dishes, sweep and mop, and prepare the other children for school.

Often she was sent alone to the bustling local market to buy provisions and carry them home.

Even the task of

*Beatrice's Wish Continues on page 6*

Visit [www.GirlPowerHaiti.org](http://www.GirlPowerHaiti.org) and watch a two-minute video to see how you can make a difference for girls like Beatrice.

## Ensuring No Girl Suffers Like Beatrice Did

**J**acqueline Bunke can't stand to think that another child might suffer like Beatrice did.

"I am sure that Beatrice has many friends," Jacqueline said, "and none of them should ever be treated like she was."

Her determination to do something for girls in Haiti led Jacqueline to join Beyond Borders' *Girl Power Haiti!* campaign.

"I'm going to pray, I'm going to give, and I'm going to help put an end to violence against girls in Haiti," she said.

As the *Girl Power Haiti!* campaign launches, Jacqueline is inviting family, friends, and members of her church to support the cause of freedom and equality for girls in Haiti.

"No girl should ever be sent into slavery," Jacqueline said. "Every girl

should be treated with respect and love, and have the same opportunities as boys."

Equality for women and girls is a long-held article of faith for Jacqueline, who has volunteered at a domestic violence shelter and advocated for the passage of

the Equal Rights Amendment.

On her first trip to Haiti in 1998, Jacqueline and members of her church – Sulphur Grove United Methodist in Huber

*Jacqueline Bunke Continues on page 6*

**"I'm going to pray, I'm going to give, and I'm going to help put an end to violence against girls in Haiti."**

– Jacqueline Bunke



*Children on Lagonav Island who, like Beatrice, were recently freed from slavery.*

*Beatrice (above) is free now thanks to supporters of Beyond Borders' Girl Power Haiti! campaign.*

**“Women Used to Think They Were Nothing Without a Man.”**

## Testimonies of Change From Rethinking Power

Jacmel, Haiti –

In 2010, Beyond Borders’ launched Rethinking Power to prevent violence against women and girls in five communities in southeastern Haiti.

Today, Rethinking Power programming has reached 25 urban and rural communities throughout Haiti. These communities are becoming places where the voices of women and girls are heard and violence against them is no longer tolerated.

This spring’s *Girl Power Haiti!* campaign will help Beyond Borders expand the Rethinking Power program to even more communities where we are already working.

These testimonies tell of the kind of community-level and personal transformation that is taking place thanks to the work of Rethinking Power.



*Rethinking Power has trained thousands of grassroots leaders like these since its launch in 2010. This spring’s Girl Power Haiti! campaign will help expand the program to more communities.*

### ROSELINE PANTALEON

*Domestic violence counselor from the community of Kapwouj*



**“In this community, women used to think they were nothing without a man. Sexual and physical violence against women and girls was common,**

and husbands routinely beat their wives. Now, thanks to Rethinking Power and other response organizations, incidents of violence and rape in Kapwouj have dropped dramatically, women and girls are no longer afraid to seek help, women have come to see that their worth isn’t conditional, and men have learned that women have the same rights as men. There’s more work to be done here so that everyone understands what it means to prevent violence against women, but it’s a pleasure to see the change that’s happened already because of Rethinking Power.”

### MRS. DUVERT HERMANCE

*Wife of a pastor in the community of Jacmel*

**“I am a mother of 10 children. I didn’t use violence when I raised them, but I also didn’t understand the concept of balancing power between women and men. In fact, in my church women would come forward with complaints of abuse: their husbands hit them, they had swollen eyes – and I didn’t know what to do. In the neighborhood where I live, I heard the stories of women and**

**“We aren’t afraid anymore to speak up if abuse happens, and violence against women in our community is down because of it.”**

– Mrs. Duvert Hermance

girls who were suffering sexual and physical abuse from a spouse, a parent, or a teacher, and it’s only after the presence of Rethinking Power in our community that all of us now know how to respond. We aren’t afraid anymore to speak up if abuse happens, and violence against women in our community is down because of it. The truth is out now. And when I can’t speak up on my own, I can call on others to come and help me.”

### RICHARD SINOL

*Teacher and pastor of a church in the community of Meno*



**“I’ve experienced many changes in my personal life since I took part in Rethinking Power**

**training. I used to yell at children and hit both my own kids and my students. Now, I can’t even remember the last time I laid a hand on any child. As a church**

leader, I tell people, Rethinking Power has changed the way my wife and I interact. We make decisions about managing our household together now. And I’ve seen the changes in my community too. Men don’t beat their wives like they used to, and instances of rape are rare. Women participate in community meetings and aren’t afraid to speak up. They know they have the right to be full participants in the community. Husbands and wives attend Rethinking Power trainings together. Meno is a changed community since Rethinking Power began.” ✕

## GIRLS FLYING KITES:

### A Playful Act of Defiance Against the Discrimination Girls in Haiti Face

Port-au-Prince, Haiti –

Girls have special hidden powers to transform our world. That's why this spring, Beyond Borders is launching the second annual *Girl Power Haiti!* campaign with a goal of raising \$150,000 to support work in 103 communities that unleashes the power of girls.

Research from across the developing world shows that investing in the safety, education, and equality of girls is the most effective way to improve the quality of life for everyone in a community.

But in Haiti, girls are far less likely than boys to complete high school. Girls are nearly twice as likely as boys to become enslaved, are exposed to more physical and sexual violence than boys, and are denied opportunities afforded boys.

Right now, you can come together in an act of solidarity with girls in Haiti to change this.

Each spring the skies in Haiti fill with colorful homemade kites. The concentration on the faces of children making these kites turns to wonder and joy as they see their creations rise and twirl in the sky.

Look closely, though, and you will notice that these children are all boys. Girls in Haiti are simply not supposed to make or fly kites.

While their brothers are playing, girls are far more likely to be cooking, cleaning, and carrying water.

Perhaps it is a small injustice to deny girls this joy, but it is emblematic of the

discrimination that robs them of opportunities and freedoms granted boys.

This discrimination – that persists into adulthood – not only excludes girls and women from opportunities, it makes them more vulnerable to exploitation and violence.

This spring Beyond Borders will give girls the chance to engage in a joyful act of defiance.



Members of the newly inaugurated girls' club in the community of Lavale make and fly kites in Jacmel. Beyond Borders' Rethinking Power program launched 16 new girls clubs this February.

of the struggle of girls here and to raise funds for the *Girl Power Haiti!* campaign that supports work to free, educate, protect, and give voice to girls. ✕

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In schools and girls clubs, they will organize themselves to make and fly kites and use this activity to challenge others to consider the many

of the struggle of girls here and to raise funds for the *Girl Power Haiti!* campaign that supports work to free, educate, protect, and give voice to girls. ✕

A child flying a kite is free. Haitian graffiti artist Jerry Moïse Rosembert created this image to express Beyond Borders' vision of a Haiti in which no child is enslaved, and girls enjoy the same opportunities as boys.



**JOIN US!** Visit [www.GirlsFlyingKites.org](http://www.GirlsFlyingKites.org) to watch a video of girls making and flying kites in Haiti and to learn how you can organize a kite flying event in your community.

## Beyond Borders and School Sisters of Notre Dame Partner on Lagonav Island

**B**eyond Borders is honored to establish a new partnership with the School Sisters of Notre Dame to transform some of the most isolated and impoverished communities in Haiti.

“Through this partnership, the School Sisters of Notre Dame are playing an integral role in helping communities in Haiti become places where no child is enslaved, every child is in school, every woman and girl lives free of violence, and every family can earn a dignified living,” said Beyond Borders’ Executive Director David Diggs.

As Beyond Borders’ *Schools Not Slavery* initiative expands from nine to 14 communities on the island of Lagonav, the School Sisters of Notre Dame will partner with



*SSND delegation visiting Lagonav Island, April 2016. (L to R: Mary Gunning, Sharon Slear, School Director Jean Venel Despasaint, and Arlene Flaherty.)*

two new communities: Tipalmis and Nan Mango.

“Among the many points of intersection between Beyond Borders’ mission and our own, is our shared commitment to the protection of vulnerable women and children and to education that transforms and calls all to eliminate the root causes

of injustice,” said Sister Charmaine Krohe, SSND, provincial leader for the Atlantic-Midwest Province.

SSND high schools, universities, and sisters raised \$40,000 for Beyond Borders’ hurricane recovery efforts on Lagonav Island and made an initial pledge of \$65,000 to support the work in

**“Among the many points of intersection between our missions is our shared commitment to the protection of vulnerable women and children...”**

— Sister Charmaine Krohe, SSND



Tipalmis and Nan Mango. This summer the SSND will send a delegation of teacher trainers to Lagonav from Notre Dame of Maryland University.

“It is a huge gift to have this partnership and to be connected to a community of religious women whose mission is so much in alignment with ours,” David said. ✕

Visit <http://ssndschooolsnotslaverypartnership.org/> to learn more about this new partnership.

## Peter Graeff: A Model of Solidarity

*Ansagale, Haiti –*

Peter Graeff, a dear friend who was present at the founding of Beyond Borders, died in January at a tiny missionary hospital here.

Peter lived with and served the “poorest of the poor” in Haiti for nearly four decades, and died, according to his wishes, with the people who had adopted him as their own.

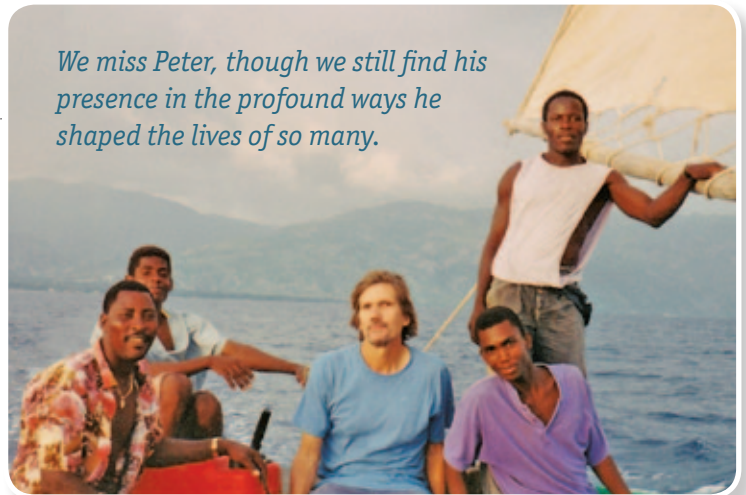
Peter’s compassion wasn’t a sentimental or spiritualized thing. He served without ever seeming conscious that he was serving. He was simply just very interested in everyone having what they needed.

He lived right among those who were left behind. And even when he’d given all his money and food away, he still took time to listen and empathize and strategize with those who were dealing with some hardship.

Peter had the gift of being deeply present to whomever he was with. He exemplified a model of solidarity that continues to inspire us.

We miss Peter, though we still find his presence in the profound ways he shaped the lives of so many.

*We miss Peter, though we still find his presence in the profound ways he shaped the lives of so many.*



*Peter en route to Lagonav Island, 1994.*

We trust that if anyone hears these words from Matthew 25, Peter will: “I was hungry and you fed me. I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink. I was a foreigner, and you took me in. I was naked, and you clothed me. I was sick, and you visited me...” ✕

## 16 New Girls' Clubs Launch with a Priority to Empower the Most Vulnerable Girls

Jacmel, Haiti –

In February, Beyond Borders' Rethinking Power program launched 16 new girls' clubs in southeastern Haiti. These clubs give priority to the most vulnerable girls in each community.

Led by Program Coordinator Emanuela Paul, and Program Specialist Sara Siebert, the Rethinking Power team spent more than a year developing a four-part guide to creating, launching, and running the girls' clubs.

Here's a Q & A with Emanuela:

### Why did Rethinking Power create the girls clubs?

Girls are at greater risk for violence, so many parents keep their girls at home, and that limits their contact with friends and their ability to develop social networks. Creating public spaces for girls – without the presence of boys – increases the security of girls, gives them voice, and helps empower and encourage them to create positive change in their community. We want to create spaces that are danger-free spaces where girls can feel safe to organize.

### What do you mean by 'danger-free spaces'?

A danger-free space is a place girls can call their own, where they can gather regularly without fear or risk. It's a space where girls won't be harassed or face violence, where they can talk openly, without any pushback or judgement. A danger-free space can be someone's home, or a room that is reserved especially for a girls' club. A school, church, youth center, or private outdoor space can fit

the bill too – but the space must have a fixed, regular time that is reserved for girls to gather as a club.

### What types of girls will you focus on recruiting for these inaugural 16 clubs?

We want to focus on the most vulnerable girls in the community, including girls who live apart from both parents and may be trapped in domestic servitude, school-aged girls who are not in school, girls who have a handicap, and girls who are living with a single parent.

### What do you hope to achieve through the girls' clubs in the coming year?

We want these girls' clubs to help girls to:

- Advocate for youth and women's programs that meet the unique needs of girls,
- be educated about their bodies and reproductive health,
- believe that girls are equally intelligent and capable of learning as boys,
- express their opinions and be heard,
- regularly participate in community activities (clubs, groups, church activities, sports, etc.),
- correctly identify community and school resources for reporting sexual abuse if they experience or observe it. ✕



**“Creating public spaces for girls – without the presence of boys – increases the security of girls, gives them voice, and helps empower and encourage them to create positive change in their community.”**

– Emanuela Paul, Rethinking Power Program Coordinator

Below, Rethinking Power's Marie Isnise Romelus, center, with a girls' club at the Center for the Arts. Photo: Nadia Todres.



Visit [www.GirlPowerHaiti.org/blog/girls-clubs](http://www.GirlPowerHaiti.org/blog/girls-clubs) to learn more.

accompanying the youngest children to the bathroom and wiping them fell to Beatrice.

"Her caretaker did everything she could to humiliate Beatrice and to break her," said Alfrèd Rose, past president of the Nan Kafe Child Protection Brigade.

For a brief time, Beatrice – a gentle child who loves mathematics – tried to go to school and keep up with all the work. But it soon became impossible for her to attend even the substandard afternoon school that her caretaker sent her to.

"Beatrice was forced to work so much that she never had time to eat, rest, play, or study," Rose said.

Gender discrimination influences both how parents decide which of their children to send away and the way that girls like Beatrice are treated by their new caretakers.

When Beatrice's caretaker wasn't satisfied with her work, she and her two older children would beat Beatrice.

In addition to physical violence, a 2012 study by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and the Haitian Government found that child domestic servitude was significantly associated with experiencing sexual and emotional violence.

Child Rights Training that is a precursor to the Child Protection Brigades, and the three-year Rethinking Power program to prevent violence against women and girls.

Shortly after Beatrice's mom sent her away, Beyond Borders expanded the

Rights Training program on Lagonav Island.

With help from the Child Protection Brigade, Chrisla brought Beatrice home and enrolled her as a fourth-grader at the Vizyon Fred School – part of Beyond Borders' *Schools Not Slavery* network.

Chrisla and her husband Obenson decided to reconcile, and now both regularly attend Rethinking Power trainings to encourage gender equality and prevent violence against women and girls.

Life is still not easy for the family, but last fall

they joined an 18-month Beyond Borders' program\* to help struggling families lift themselves out of poverty and maintain a steady income.

Beatrice – now 11 – is happy to be home, and says she has one wish for children everywhere: "I would like every child who is in slavery like I was to return to their family and to be free, so that no child suffers like I did." ✂

\*See *Beyond Borders' Fall 2016 Newsletter* for more on this program.



Graduates of Child Rights Training on Lagonav Island, Dec. 2016.

**"We are here to stop this kind of abuse, to free boys and girls like Beatrice from slavery, and get them in school."**

– Alfrèd Rose, past president of the Nan Kafe Child Protection Brigade

"We are here to stop this kind of abuse, to free boys and girls like Beatrice from slavery, and get them in school," Rose said, adding, "and to prevent any more children from being sent away."

Beyond Borders' *Girl Power Haiti!* campaign supports the creation of Child Protection Brigades like Rose's. Since 2010, 82 brigades have been launched nationwide in Haiti.

*Girl Power Haiti!* also supports a six-month

Child Rights Training and Rethinking Power to her village of Nan Kafe.

Beatrice's mom Chrisla joined both, learning about the dangers of sending children away, and about how balancing power between women and men reduces violence and increases prosperity for all.

"Chrisla felt this push to go and bring her daughter home," said Freda Catheus, who coordinates the Child

Heights, Ohio – helped to build a new girls' club.

They witnessed firsthand the impact

it had on the girls in the community.

Now, Jacqueline hopes her support for the *Girl Power Haiti!* campaign will mean freedom from violence and discrimination, and equality of opportunity for more girls

like Beatrice.

"You can make a difference in people's lives," Jacqueline said, "and to be a part of something like that is really special." ✂

CONNECT WITH US!



Beyond Borders Haiti



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BEYOND BORDERS helps people build movements to liberate themselves from oppression and isolation. In Haiti and the United States, we are bringing people together for just and lasting change. We support movements in Haiti to:

- ✂ End child slavery
- ✂ Guarantee universal access to education
- ✂ End violence against women and girls
- ✂ Replace systems that oppress the poor with systems that support dignified work and sustainable livelihoods

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