

# **Community Empowerment Network (CEN) (Petion-Ville, Haiti)**

## **Team Retreat Notes**

The Core Team of the Community Empowerment Network (CEN) organized a retreat on June 2nd, 2013. The goal of the retreat was:

1. Build a stronger team and promote interchange among members, and
2. Develop basic organization definition regarding long-term goals (3 year), short-term goals (1 year) and elements of a strategy for the first year of operation.

The team spent the first 45 minutes of the retreat doing some fun activities to help the members of the team get to know one another. Soon after, the team spent some time debating to come to a common understanding of what the mission of CEN should be. This made it easier for the team to lay out a 3 year goal and a 1 year goal.

### **Three Year Goal:**

In three years, the Core Team feels that CEN should be already providing or able to provide the following services:

1. Have a Training and Information Center in Petion-Ville, Haiti;
2. Promote initiative that involves public & private partnerships;
3. Develop successful projects to establish good reputation;
4. Work closely with groups working on high impact projects;
5. Support at least 25% of schools and religious institutions that are preparing or implementing a community project;
6. Contribute to the realization of 3-4 projects big visible projects;
7. Work with schools and other institutions to develop and deliver civic and moral education;
8. Promote internet access in all schools;
9. The Haiti Strategy Team meets at least quarterly to ensure that CEN has the right strategy in place and makes recommendations to the US Board of Directors. Ensuring that the Executive Director and his/her team are on track in achieving the objectives of CEN on the ground; and
10. The US Board of Directors and Haiti Strategy Team meet twice a year.

### **One Year Goal:**

In order to achieve the Three Year Goal, The Core Team was divided into three subgroups: Program Design Committee, Fund Raising Committee, and Communication Committee. Each committee elaborated a work plan for the next year.

The **Program Design Committee** will, among other things:

- Identify and secure a Training and Information Center in Haiti. Look for potential real estate/get estimates on rent. Meet with Haitian business owners who could donate computers. Determine the type of talents we will need to staff the center.

- Find a legal team to help with the process.
- Write a charter, develop bylaws etc...
- Identify organizations that may be able to support CEN financially.
- Recruit 15 Board members in the US.
- Identify schools, churches, and businesses in Petion-Ville as potential partners.
- Design Training Programs on project design and implementation, as well as training programs with Service Learning/Civic Engagement content.
- Identify and partner with domestic/regional schools that have strong service learning programs such as: University of Maryland Baltimore County, Montgomery College, American University, Howard University, and University of the District of Columbia.
- Identify Universities with graduate student programs that would benefit from field work/research with CEN such as American University IPCR practica - Internships for credit.
- Identify and partner with Haiti and US Public schools that have strong civic engagement. Programs like Ashlawn Elementary Global Citizens Project.
- Create a platform that will allow public and private institutions to benefit from community service and service learning programs which will in turn benefit the students by giving them an opportunity to acquire life skills.
- Develop a strong program campaign/marketing mechanism.
- Create a Strategy Team in Haiti made of volunteers representing all the actors in the community.

*The Program Design Committee follow-up meeting is scheduled for July 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2013*

The **Communication Committee** will, among other things:

- Develop a CEN identity and presence on the web and social media.
- Keep the community of supporters aware of CEN's activities and motivate them to participate, donate and volunteer.
- Serve as a transversal support for other CEN teams: fundraising, program design, etc.
- Design organization logo, letterheads, business cards, slogan
- Buy domain
- Create a temporal website using Wordpress
- Register social media channels: Twitter, Facebook, Youtube
- Start developing content
- Find out the cost of developing a website with database and volunteer futures.

*The Communication Committee follow-up meeting: June 16, 2012-* The goal of the meeting is to check in regarding the status of social media.

The **Fundraising Committee** will, among other things:

1. Ensure that Articles of Incorporation are filed in Maryland and Haiti
  - Armele has already submitted paperwork and is awaiting certification from the state of MD (she will submit her receipt to the team). Jean Leroy Vilceus Jr. was named the Resident Agent when the paper was filed.
  - The total cost of filing with the state of MD is estimated at \$350 dollars. All team members are asked to contribute \$25 to cover the cost.

- While in Haiti, Armele is also encouraged to begin looking for folks who can help incorporate the organization in Haiti.
- 2. Obtain a tax ID
- 3. Open a Bank Account for CEN
- 4. File for 501c3 Status - Once paperwork is submitted, the estimated approval process takes 3-6 months. The cost of filing is \$700.
- 5. Host a Summer Fundraising Party
  - The Fundraising Team will plan a summer fundraising party to raise money for the 501c3 filing costs and towards other organizational start-up costs. The date and location of the party will be determined.
  - Attendees will be informed that their donations will not be tax deductible because we will not have 501c3 status at that point.
  - Haitian arts, crafts, and other Items of varying prices will be on sale and auctioned at the event. (Armele is encouraged to bring crafts from Haiti that can be sold at the event).

The **Fundraising Committee follow up Meeting - Friday July 12<sup>th</sup> 7:00 -8:30pm** -(Location: 7115 Forbes unless the Silver Spring location is confirmed at that point) - The goal of the meeting is to check in regarding the status of the articles of incorporation and begin planning the fundraising party. Olga & Alexandra will draft an agenda for the meeting.

The whole Team will reconvene July 21<sup>st</sup>, from 5:00 – 6:30 pm. Location TBC.