



Ravine des Roches is a community in the section communale of Limbe that has actively mobilized local resources to address its problems through local organizations. The achievements include the construction of a school and the provision of schooling for 150 children, and the construction of a road to access the community.



What can other communities learn from Ravine des Roches?

* Mobilization of community resources



History of the community

Ravine des Roches, true to its name, is a rural section of the commune of Limbe that has a rocky ravine running through the middle of it. Because of its position, the people of this community have always struggled with access to the town of Limbe and beyond because there was no bridge to cross the ravine and the roads were in terrible condition. In the absence of schools in Ravine des Roches, children struggled to get to the schools that were further away in the town of Limbe.

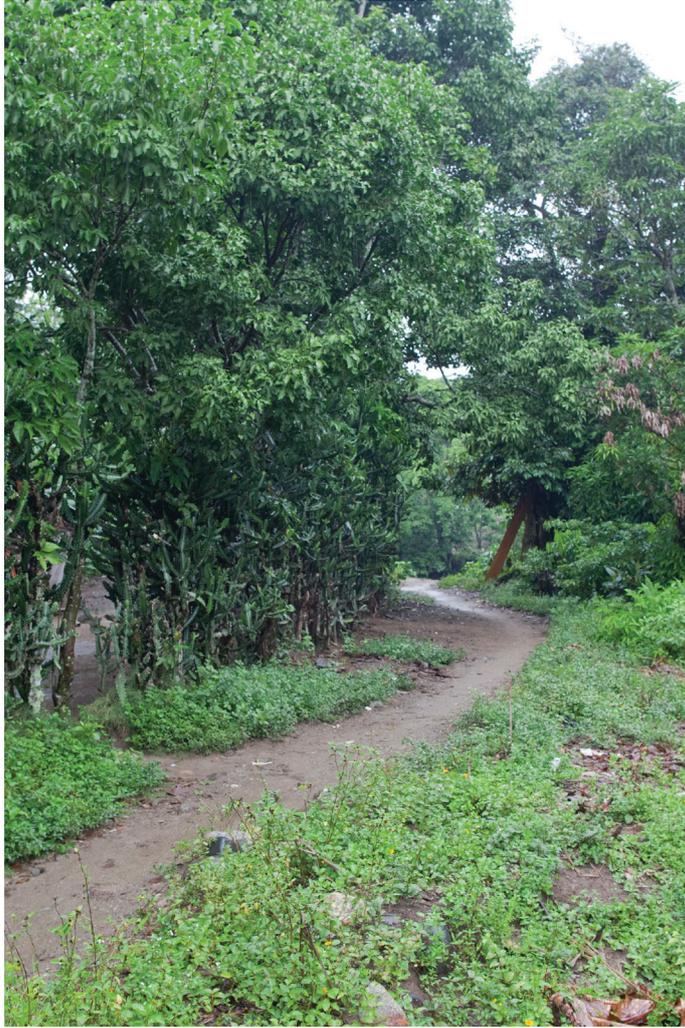
Summary of the work

In 2005, a group of women in Ravine des Roches began to sit together and discuss their problems. They realized that if they didn't form a proper organization, their plans would never be realized, and they founded OFARR (Organization of Active Women of Ravine des Roches). It started by pooling its members money to raise more funds for a small shop selling rice, oil, ice, etc in the town. One woman a day would volunteer her time to run the business, based on whoever had time. With transparency in its bookkeeping and hard work, the common business has been successfully run for 7 years, and the profits of that business are lent to other women to help them develop their own businesses, or in community initiatives.

One of those community initiatives is a community school. Ravine des Roches had no primary school, and the women observed this problem and tackled it with the same attitude that they tackled their livelihood issues: with organization. They organized a committee, and got contributions from every corner of the community to construct the school through a konbit. The teachers work voluntarily, and they raise money for school supplies with community theater performances. They began with 138 children in 2010 and now provide schooling for 150.

Ravine des Roches is also home to an organization called RCDZL (Assembly of Citizens for the Development of the Zone of Limbe), which was formed in 2008 to tackle some of the community's infrastructure problems. They mobilized community konbits to work on the road, mobilizing the community through the churches, the voodoo temples, the schools, and the farmers cooperatives. They made the road so accessible that a Diaspora from the community was able to invest in building a community clinic.





What can other communities learn from this initiative?

Ravine des Roches has developed an expertise in community mobilization: whether it is mobilizing women to create interdependence and solidarity through business, mobilizing the community to take responsibility for its children by constructing and managing a school with entirely local resources, or mobilizing a community to construct its own roads and bridges to bring them closer to the rest of the country, nearly everything this community does is with its own local resources and energy. This community can be both inspirational and instructional to communities across Haiti.

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