

**General Guidelines for Apply for Virginia Conference UMVIM Matching Funds for Haiti Disaster Response and Humanitarian Aid Projects:**

- Matching Funds are intended for disaster response and/or humanitarian projects authorized by the Haitian Methodist Church (Eglise Methodiste d'Haiti – EMH) and approved by the Virginia Conference Director of Justice and Missional Excellence.
- Matching grants can be made up to the amount of \$5,000 per project.
- Proposals must be submitted in writing to the Conference Director of Justice and Missional Excellence with corroborating data from the Haitian Methodist Church indicating approval. [It is suggested that any project for consideration be approved by the superintendent of the circuit where the project will take place and that said approval be reported to the Haiti District Office.]
- Once project funding is approved, it is recommended that these funds be wired to the Treasurer of the EMH, Andre Rocourt, with the request that receipt of funds be promptly acknowledged.
- At the close of the project, it is recommended that an account be given for the final disposition and effective usage of project funds.

\*Definition of Disaster and Humanitarian Projects: A **disaster** is defined as “a serious disruption, occurring over a relatively short time, of the functioning of a community or a society involving widespread human, material, economic or environmental loss and impacts, which exceeds the ability of the affected community or society to cope using its own resources.” (Wikipedia) **Humanitarian aid** “is material and logistic assistance to people who need help. It is usually short-term until the long-term help by government and other institutions replaces it . . . The primary purpose of humanitarian aid is to save lives, reduce suffering and to respect human dignity.” (Ibid.)

**In respect to humanitarian projects, however, a broader application of the definition may apply to UMVIM work in Haiti. There is more than one way to define *the saving of lives, the reducing of suffering* and the *respecting of human dignity*. Saving life can mean adding quality to life by creating opportunities for human beings to value their own worth, to grow in self-confidence, to become better equipped for meeting life’s challenges, and to more deeply experience the abundant life of which Jesus spoke (John 10:10). Any project that gives people the ways and mean to *raise themselves into fuller self-actualization* through acquisition of life skills, practical experiences in the utilization of those skills and opportunities to invest those skills for their own betterment and for the community of which they are a part, can be considered a humanitarian project. More specifically, humanitarian projects can include such enterprises as education; community service; feeding programs; agricultural development; fishing; cottage industries; micro-credit; medical care; pastoral training; and so forth.**

It is important that **goals** for every project be **specific and measurable** in terms what kind of partnership exists, who will benefit, and how the project can serve the greater good. From the outset is important to **know and to respect what each partner will bring into the relationship**; One side of the partnership may bring funds, goods or services, while the other side of the partnership may bring gifts of hospitality, cultural, historical and spiritual awareness, coupled with a willingness to engage in various processes of self-development, all leading to mutually agreed upon goals. Such goal-setting would include consideration of how the project can be helpful to an individual or individuals; and how will it could benefit the larger church or community? Can it become self-sustaining? How so, or why not? Finally, how will the project maximize human dignity and give hope for a better tomorrow?