



RAYJON SHARE CARE

Annual Report 2023

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OUR MISSION:

Rayjon Share Care works in partnership with communities in Haiti and the Dominican Republic to reach their goals in sustainable development and social justice. We invest in relationship building and the two-way exchange of knowledge, resources and skills to create bridges of sharing—local to global.



OUR VISION:

Our community partners in Haiti and the Dominican Republic are empowered and have the resources to determine their future.

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Constanza, Dominican Republic

rayjon.org



Our Impact

Community Development Highlights 2022-2023



CONSUELO, Dominican Republic

In the small community of **Barrio 41**, the preschool operated by

our partners at **PLADESCULBA**

made sure that **45** children had the best possible start, with quality education and nutrition to help them grow strong. PLADESCULBA Director Georges Thertulien worked hard to connect local families with other organizations and vital services. This collaboration meant that some of the most pressing needs of marginalized families were met (see below). Music class for **12** youth has brought much excitement, and the garden which supplies the preschool with nutritious produce continued to thrive.



[Children at PLADESCULBA Preschool, Barrio 41]

As partnership with Dominican organization Puente grew, some BIG needs were met!



Following last year's successful projects that brought water, bathrooms, cement floors and repaired roofs to Barrio 41 families, it was clear we could do more together! Rayjon supported the creation of a Puente leadership team in the Consuelo region. They conducted community needs assessments in multiple "**bateyes**," sugarcane plantations inhabited primarily by families of Haitian descent, and facing situations of extreme poverty, poor sanitation, and often with glaring human rights abuses. **The community of Batey Experimental prioritized new roofs for 22 families whose homes were in extreme disrepair.**



Our Impact

Community Development Highlights 2022-2023

In each Rayjon-Puente collaboration, the local community leads the charge, providing a minimum of 25% of total project costs, often in the form of in-kind labour.



In progress:

- 32 bathrooms ("Puente Potties") are being constructed in Batey Alejandro Vas

Our approach fosters long-term relationship building. Dominican municipal public works (MOPC) now sends a team of workers to assist each of these projects.

[Community members vote to move forward with construction of bathrooms]

Our partners at ASCALA brought essential medical care to **7** batey communities where health care services are otherwise unavailable, assisting **363** patients in



just 6 months. Of particular note were the **168** "acompaniments," wherein a member of the ASCALA team accompanied a Haitian migrant to a hospital or lab visit. Without such advocacy, Haitian patients, even pregnant women, risk on the spot deportation or refusal of treatment. ASCALA is also facilitating an empowerment program for women from Barrio 41. **30** women participated in workshops, receiving training and guidance to develop small business plans. In June, **10** women received seed funding to invest in their businesses!

[Women's savings and loans group, Barrio 41]

This year we formed a new partnership with a federation of **community committees**, representing distinct bateyes and marginalized neighbourhoods in the Consuelo area. Their leadership in organizing elections, delegating responsibilities and advocating for a place at the table within all levels of Dominican government is impressive! To start, Rayjon supported a small but important step: registering as an official organization in the DR, which will open doors to applying for local funding, and create new ways to make their voices and priorities heard.

[Photo: Darío Bigamos Masiy, is doing an exceptional job as Federation President!]



Our Impact

Community Development Highlights 2022-2023



CAP HAÏTIEN, Haiti

at the **Centre for Nutrition & Education for Women & Children (C-NEW-C)**

The rising cost of living has put additional pressure on urban families in Haiti's 2nd largest city of Cap-Haïtien. Programs are designed not only to meet emergency needs, but to help participants gain knowledge, skills and self-confidence to reach their full potential, earn a decent income and overcome poverty for the long-term.

75 primary and secondary students attended school with the help of the **Tuition Support Program**, including **9** students who graduated high school.

Spencer L. [photo at right] was one of **5** exceptional students to be awarded a **post-secondary scholarship**. He's just finished his 2nd year of medical school and his first hands-on internship at a local hospital!



Scholarship students also fulfill community service requirements at the CNEWC, proudly giving back to the community that helped them grow into the strong and confident young adults they are today.

65 adults participated in **Alpha Adult Literacy** classes, **26** women took part in **LifeSkills** manual trades/crafts training, and **35** women received **Microcredit** business loans, achieving a **100%** repayment rate 4 years in a row!

[These 10 women were celebrated for outstanding achievements through Microcredit!]



[2nd year nursing student Kerlande M. helped out in the Nutrition Program during her community service hours]

The **Nutrition Program** provided life-saving care for **60** children.



"I feel enriched in knowledge...With these skills we can achieve so much more in Haiti because here many people live thanks to manual work." —Germine, LifeSkills Participant

Our Impact

Community Development Highlights 2022-2023

ST. MARC, Haiti with Rayjon Share Care Haiti (RSCH)

The Pinson Community School is far from the city and far from any hope of government funding. With a skyrocketing cost of living and a tight budget making it hard to pay teacher salaries and purchase supplies, Pinson parents rallied. Despite their personal difficulties, they chose to invest in the future of their **250** children from K-6, contributing **25%** of school operating costs on their own. RSCH also partnered with another local organization to bring a medical team to Pinson to dispense anti-parasitic treatment.



[Mme. Elida administers anti-parasitic medicine]

The "Breadfruit Project," in partnership with the Haitian Women's Federation (FEFEH)



- Site construction complete!
- 1,000 saplings distributed!
- Community grain mills running, generating a reliable income

In 2023-2024, FEFEH hopes to move from propagation into milling breadfruit into flour for sale/consumption.



Through the Alpha Adult Literacy Program **145** students in **4** villages in rural St. Marc learned to read and write!

In Haiti when you can't read or write, you have to sign official documents with an "X." Students describe being deceived, misled to believe that the words on the paper meant something they didn't. Alpha student **Francilia** recalls,



"You are forced to believe what you are told and you act stupidly with two blind eyes. But now our eyes are bright open, they are not blind anymore, we can see and we don't have to believe lies anymore because we can read."



[Alpha participants, village of Lagaren]

Board Nominee

VICTORIA DIGBY

Victoria (Vic) is an American ex-pat from Michigan who has lived in S.W. Ontario over 43 years. Vic and her husband Paul lived and worked in Toronto for 10 years before eventually moving to London to start a family and raise their two children. 31 years later they decided to move to Sarnia during the pandemic. Now retired, Vic and Paul have been spending the past two years focused on home renovations, travel and two charitable commitments outside of Sarnia.

Vic's been an active supporter of Rayjon for over a dozen years, having travelled to Haiti on four adult & student (Fanshawe College) Awareness Trips and two Eyeglass Trips to the DR. She has attended many fundraising events, gifted family/friends with dozens of pounds of Rayjon coffee, and for the past two years has shared every other Monday morning with the dedicated Eyeglass cleaning crew. When she is not volunteering for Rayjon, Vic continues working part-time on her consulting business and teaches 5th and 6th graders Intro Guitar for the London Food Bank – Arts for Kids program.

Since being involved years back with focus-group research around the organization's mission/vision/values and strategic plan, Vic has witnessed the transformation Rayjon has made and is impressed with the high level of leadership, commitment and progress the Board has made toward developing a sustainable business model. Vic says,

"I'm looking forward to working with the other wonderful people who are serving on the Board for Rayjon. I appreciate the support my nominators have provided me this opportunity to serve and will do my best to uphold the financial position and standard that the Board has worked so hard to achieve."



Honouring Our Outgoing Board Chair



When Joanna agreed to participate in her first Awareness Trip to the Dominican Republic in 2016, she probably had no idea that she'd soon be invited to join the Board, and eventually would serve 2 years as our wonderful Chairperson! Joanna brought her school principal level of discipline to help keep meetings on track (and finish on time!), but she did so with humour, energy, and grace.

Being Chair during Strategic Planning, a recruitment process, and complete overhaul of the Rayjon policy manual is no easy task, but Joanna rose to the challenge and leaves big shoes to fill. She used her creative skills and her unique mind-map style of planning to bring together many complex pieces of information, transforming them into beautifully written and concise tools that will guide the organization for years to come.

JOANNA
CATTERSON

We're delighted that Joanna isn't disappearing. She's already committed to her 2nd Eyeglass Trip and plans to continue as a valuable Eyeglass Program volunteer. **Thank you, Joanna!**

Rayjon Renewed

In 2022 we shared our reimagined mission and vision statements and **Theory of Change**. We took that energy and moved forward into more detailed planning, culminating in **Local to Global: Rayjon Share Care's Strategic Plan 2023-2028**.

CHECK IT OUT!

In case you missed it, please visit our **website** (or click the image at right) to view the complete plan—which is not a static road map, but a living, ever-evolving tool to guide and challenge us to continue learning, growing and changing—*together* with our partners.



Haiti—What's Next?

There has been no shortage of terrifying news coming out of Haiti. A political vacuum after the 2021 assassination of Haiti's president. Corruption. Gang control. Violence. Illegal weapons. Not enough food. Kidnapping. Murder. Rape. We are not here to deny the reports or to trivialize the very real suffering that is happening in Haiti every day.

We are here to *listen*, to *learn*, and (hopefully) to foster a deeper understanding of the complex history, current situation and culture of Haiti, and the perspectives of our Haitian partners.

Renaud Thomas, Director of Rayjon Share Care Haiti, visited Canada in the fall of 2023. He had a lot to say about Haiti—what's happening and why, potential solutions, and what hope he has for the future.

His words reinforce our confidence in our partners to effect real and lasting change—in the face of a complex and difficult reality. The stories in this report are testament to their achievements.

Looking forward, we'll return to Renaud's key messages to Canadians:

- **Port-au-Prince is not Haiti.** Outside of the capital, many districts continue about their daily lives and business, growing and even thriving.
- **Foreign intervention alone won't solve the problems.** Haitians must lead the way forward, granted the right to determine their future.
- **Change will come from within**, as communities rise up to forge their destinies.

"...For a positive change to happen in Haiti, it will have to come from the communities in the first place."

—Renaud Thomas, Director Rayjon Share Care Haiti



[click here to read more wisdom from Renaud](#)

Financial Summary

For fiscal year July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

ASSETS

CURRENT ASSETS	2023	2022
Cash	\$ 90,999	\$ 179,895
Investments	352,814	256,487
Sales tax receivable	5,008	3,830
	<u>448,821</u>	<u>440,212</u>
CAPITAL ASSETS - NET	4,275	6,107
ENDOWMENT FUND	12,506	12,506
	<u>\$ 465,602</u>	<u>\$ 458,825</u>

LIABILITIES

CURRENT LIABILITIES	2023	2022
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	\$ 3,501	\$ 3,501
Deferred contributions held for designated projects		
	<u>199,194</u>	<u>195,320</u>
	<u>202,695</u>	<u>198,821</u>

FUND BALANCES

UNRESTRICTED FUND BALANCE	172,907	170,004
INTERNALLY DESIGNATED FUND BALANCE	90,000	90,000
	<u>262,907</u>	<u>260,004</u>
	<u>\$ 465,602</u>	<u>\$ 458,825</u>

Rayjon's endowment fund is held by the [Sarnia Community Foundation](#).

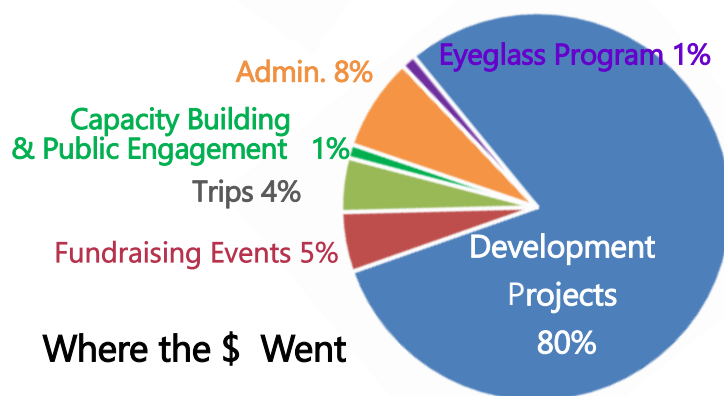
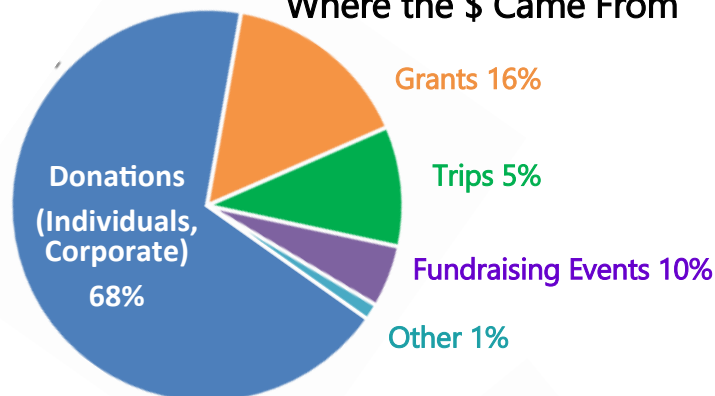
For more information about Planned Giving to support Rayjon's sustainability, please visit www.rayjon.org/donate.

Since 2021, Rayjon has been a proud partner of: Learn more at willpower.ca



For more details on our Finances, including balances for the Eyeglass Program, please see the complete official audited statements available on our website at rayjon.org/faqs

Where the \$ Came From



Where the \$ Went

STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS and FUND BALANCE

REVENUE	2023	2022
Donations	\$ 539,593	\$ 512,752
Eyeglass Program	3,894	-
Fundraising events	64,170	59,867
Hope for Haiti program	-	2,070
Investment/exchange (loss)/income	<u>8,579</u>	<u>7,659</u>
	616,236	582,348
OTHER REVENUE		
Trip Revenue	32,584	-
Trip Admin. Fee	585	-
TOTAL REVENUE	<u>649,405</u>	<u>582,348</u>

Financial Summary

For fiscal year July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023

STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS AND FUND BALANCE—CONT.

CANADIAN EXPENDITURES	2023	2022
Canadian administration	\$ 49,682	\$ 50,311
Public engagement	7,285	9,184
	<u>56,967</u>	<u>59,495</u>
OUT OF COUNTRY PROJECTS & PROGRAMS		
C-NEW-C project (Cap Haïtien, Haiti)	138,176	158,605
Scholarship Program	7,226	5,530
Consuelo Community Development Project (Dominican Republic)	116,068	76,529
Eye Glass Program	7,449	-
Hope for Haiti Program	-	2,070
Rayjon Share Care Haiti project (St. Marc, Haiti)	144,518	141,612
Project support expense	<u>113,134</u>	<u>89,067</u>
	<u>526,571</u>	<u>472, 413</u>
OTHER EXPENDITURES		
Awareness trip Expenditures	29,029	-
Amortization	1,832	2,618
Fundraising events expense	<u>32,103</u>	<u>23,888</u>
	<u>62,964</u>	<u>26,506</u>
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	<u>646,502</u>	<u>558,414</u>
EXCESS OF REVENUE OVER EXPENDITURES		
	2,903	23,934
Transfer to internally designated funds	-	10,000
Transfer from endowment funds	-	-
EXCESS OF REVENUE OVER EXPENDITURES		
	2,903	13,934
BALANCE, Start of Year	<u>170,004</u>	<u>156,070</u>
BALANCE, End of Year	<u>172,907</u>	<u>170,004</u>

STATEMENT OF RESERVE OPERATIONS & FUND BALANCE

	2023	2022
TRANSFER FROM OPERATING FUNDS	-	(10,000)
EXCESS OF REVENUE OVER EXPENDITURES	-	(10,000)
BALANCE, START OF YEAR	<u>(90,000)</u>	<u>(80,000)</u>
BALANCE, END OF YEAR	<u>\$ (90,000)</u>	<u>\$ (90,000)</u>

STATEMENT OF ENDOWMENT FUND BALANCE

	2023	2022
Transfer to operating funds	\$ -	\$ (2,506)
Excess of rev. over exp.	-	2,506

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

OPERATING ACTIVITES	2023	2022
Excess of revenue over expenditures	\$ 2,903	\$ 23,934
Amortization on capital assets	1,832	2,618
Changes in non-cash working capital balances related to operations		
Accounts receivable	(1,178)	387
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	(7)	(7)
Funds held for designated projects	<u>1,368</u>	<u>17,389</u>
	<u>4,918</u>	<u>44,321</u>
INVESTING ACTIVITIES		
Purchase of endowment fund	2,513	-
CHANGES IN CASH & INVESTMENTS		
	7,431	44,321
CASH & INVESTMENTS, Start of year	<u>436,382</u>	<u>392,061</u>
CASH & INVESTMENTS, End of year	<u>\$ 443,813</u>	<u>\$ 436,382</u>
Cash & equivalents represented by:		
Cash	\$ 90,999	\$ 179,895
Short term investment	<u>352,814</u>	<u>256,487</u>
	<u>\$ 443,813</u>	<u>\$ 436,382</u>

In Canada



OUTREACH

Rayjon volunteers in Canada had no shortage of work—or excitement—this year! Volunteers worked with community partners to:



[Co-host Chef Roza Barnes (centre) with Rising Moon Bellydancers]

- Organize a massive **Used Book Sale** raising **\$5,329**
- Co-host **Culture & Cuisine—1,001 Nights: An Evening in the Middle East**, with new Pay-It-Forward, equitable fundraising model
- Welcome **131** runners and walkers from across SW Ontario to our 3rd Annual **Trail & Ale** fundraiser, raising **\$5,970**
- Celebrate the 14th Annual **Rayjon-DeGroot's plant sale**, raising **\$14,378**

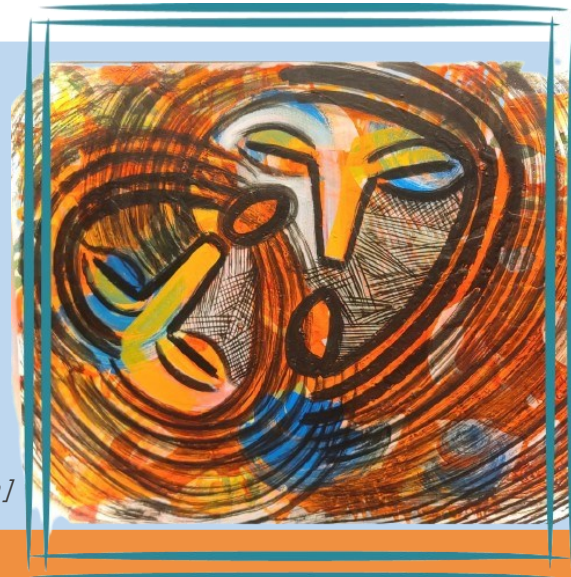
In February we released the first episode of our independent podcast, *Reimagining with Rayjon*



**THE RIGHT TO A NAME AND A NATIONALITY:
THE REALITY OF STATELESSNESS IN THE
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC**

Listen on our [website](#) and wherever podcasts are found

[Artwork by Samuel Augustin]



As they waited for the possibility of safe travel, Eyeglass Team volunteers worked hard all through the pandemic, receiving, sorting, cleaning and cataloguing glasses so they would be ready for the first post-Covid Eyeglass Clinic which took place in April 2023.

Since 1993, the Eyeglass Team has dispensed **21,950** pairs of prescription glasses in **9** countries!

Looking Forward

Letter from the Executive Director

Dear Friends,

I chose this photo to accompany my annual letter not just because I was having a reasonably good hair day, but because it's a photo that makes me smile as I remember some of the very special partners I have been privileged to meet in my work with Rayjon. People I've not only met, but actually learned something about, as individuals, as members of their communities, as *people*. You might say that I *know* them, even just a little bit. I know that Georges carefully tends a tiny garden of seedlings and succulents behind his home, as lovingly as he tends the children in the PLADESCULBA preschool. I know that Dianny is a gifted teacher who loves to bring art into the classroom. I know that Jesús is an insanely talented artist who refurbishes discarded treasures to decorate his unique home.



*Georges, Dianny, Heather, Jesús
Santo Domingo, DR, 2023*

At the core of Rayjon's work is relationship building—both in Canada and abroad. At our very best, we tend to those relationships with care; listening, learning, listening some more. And then, hopefully, responding in action with the best of ourselves.

I'm not a perfect leader. Sometimes I talk more than I listen. Sometimes I make assumptions about people and their intentions. I misunderstand, get lost in translation. But if I'm proud of anything in my time with Rayjon, it's the way that we are learning to listen to our partners, and to ensure our actions support their leadership (not the other way around).

Join us as we aim for the exciting goals outlined in our new **Strategic Plan**, tuning your ear to the many voices of Rayjon: voices of our partners, our volunteers, our donors, our communities, our staff, our friends. **They are calling us to listen.**

In collaboration, **an kolaborasyon, en colaboración,**

Heather Smith
Executive Director



Thank
you

for your
support