



October 1, 2023

Dear Friend,

As a faithful supporter of Overture International's work in southern Haiti, you know the challenges and obstacles we face each day — violence, hunger, inadequate housing, limited access to medical care and more. But today, I'm writing to make you aware of a heightened crisis in Haiti — the orphanage system and the incredible harm it is causing for thousands of children — and to invite you to help us save some of the most vulnerable children in the country. This crisis has escalated now because Haitian gangs are attacking orphanages because they are vulnerable targets and often have stores of food, supplies and other assets the gangs can use as they seek to control more and more territories. Currently, 80% of Haiti's capital area is controlled by gangs. These attacks on orphanages have resulted in traumatized children and adults, as well as deaths, **as the heartless gangs have no qualms about taking the life of a child or staff member.** In fact, they use these deaths for intimidation and extortion. Many orphanage owners are being forced to evacuate their respective areas, creating significant risks for children as they are sent to homes without support or are abandoned by staff members. And in some cases, orphanages are trying to relocate children to other countries where they will be separated from their families and communities forever.

Because of our trusted position in Haiti, Overture has been called on to help evacuate and care for dozens of these children. Today, I am personally urging you to join us in our specific efforts to **provide life-giving care and assistance to 25 special needs children** with whom we've been entrusted (most of them with HIV, and many of them with learning disabilities). And while these 25 kids represent only a small fraction of the thousands in Haitian orphanages today, they are precious in God's eyes, and as it is written in Luke 12:48 — **"To whom much is given, much will be expected in return. And from him to whom much is entrusted, even more will be required."** This crisis demands urgent action, and because of your past support and prayers, Overture is in a position to rescue and support some of the most vulnerable children in Haiti. And your continued generosity will make the difference in whether or not we're able to continue helping and transforming the futures for these children. Please continue reading to learn more about these amazing children and how you can invest in their lives and futures, enabling us to do what is required and right.

The Rescue

In April of this year, Overture responded to an orphanage in crisis after gang members shot and killed two of the older youth from the orphanage. The gang then threatened the other children and adults at the orphanage telling them if they said anything to authorities, the gang would return and kill them. Fearing for their lives, several staff members abandoned their roles, and those who remained in place sought help from Overture because of our history of helping reunify and place children from orphanages with their families and foster families.

Without hesitation, Overture immediately joined forces with Legacy Relief Project's security task force and safely evacuated all 25 children. After securing air transportation, the children were relocated to our ESPWA campus for **crisis care**, all within a matter of seven days from initial contact. The children arrived with only the clothes on their backs and whatever personal items they could fit into a small backpack. Our social workers, along with psychologists from a partner organization, quickly began to help the children adjust. And our medical team

evaluated their health conditions, finding many of them to be sick from their unsanitary living conditions prior to their rescue. **Thankfully, the children remain safe at ESPWA and are receiving much-needed love, care and attention.** However, this is only the beginning. There is much left to do to provide these kids the medical care they will need, to place them with a family, to enroll them in school and to get them integrated into the community.

The Heartbreak

One of the children, a 9-year-old girl named Denise, presented significant behavior problems after arriving at ESPWA. She tried to run away and was aggressive toward those caring for her. As our professional staff worked to help Denise, they learned that she had experienced significant neglect, abandonment and physical and sexual abuse from the moment she was first turned over to the orphanage at the young age of three. By God's grace, because of the resources and support we have in place at ESPWA, we've been able to help Denise begin to heal from her painful past and move toward a safer, more secure future with a family and community to care for her. This has only been made possible because of the support of our generous donors. But Denise is just one of the 25 children we've committed to helping, and the cost of caring for these children with special needs is considerable.

The Cost of Caring, The Power of Hope

The heart of Overture is child protection. Our commitment to assisting these children in their escape from life-threatening circumstances to the relative safety of our ESPWA campus is not one we take lightly. These children had nowhere else to turn to for help. So we helped and will continue to respond to children in crisis. And now, we need your help! Today, we humbly and emphatically invite you to join us in helping Denise and the 24 other children with whom we've been entrusted to continue receiving the care and support they desperately need to begin the healing process from their acute trauma.

Your investment will also ensure the children's long-term success by facilitating reunification with their families or a permanent foster family and a customized three-year support plan for each child. All children deserve to experience safety, security, and most importantly, the love and care of a family and community. And these children are no different. It is critical that we **immediately raise nearly \$100,000** to place these 25 children with families and allow us to provide basic supports and empowerment services over the next twelve months. **Your investment will make a huge difference in the trajectory of their lives.**

We know you have invested generously in Overture's work and we are so thankful for you! We do not take your support for granted, and we know we can turn to you in situations like these where immediate financial support is needed. We hope you will prayerfully consider responding to this urgent request to help these special children who have already been through so much. Please donate today by giving online at overture.international/donate-overture or by mailing a check via the enclosed remittance envelope.

God bless you and keep you,



Lisa Hyatt

Executive Director, Overture International

**EMPOWERING HAITI'S
MOST VULNERABLE**