

Children's Forum raising money for Haiti orphanage

Tallahassee Democrat

Tallahassee, FL

November 29, 2010

When a group from the Children's Forum visited the mountainous community of Kenscoff in southwest Haiti in March, they found more than 40 children who were forced to call temporary tents their home.

These children lost their families in the January earthquake, and due to a lack of resources in the area, they have suffered from a host of life-threatening issues, including malnutrition.

"It is pretty dire," said Phyllis Kalifeh, president and CEO of the Tallahassee-based nonprofit Children's Forum. "It is amazing they are able to survive at all."

Members of the Children's Forum are back in the region hoping to help the affected children. After seeing the living accommodations, they decided to team up with Project K.I.D. and other charitable organizations to build a permanent orphanage in the community, which is located just outside of Port-au-Prince, the nation's capital.

The facility will house up to 120 children and will cost about \$60,000 to build. The group wants to raise enough funds to start the project by January or February. So far, it has received \$21,000. Donations have varied from \$100 to \$18,000.

"The bottom line is any contribution of any size is welcome," Kalifeh said. "We will patch them (the donations) all together to make the project a reality."

Kalifeh said with the holidays coming up, she hopes some schools, child-care centers and other organizations will make this a fundraising project.

The children living in the orphanage would receive all the basic needs: clothing, food, clean shelter and education.