

The Adventist Foundation for Education

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The Adventist Foundation for Education, an institution of the Haitian Union Mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, promotes and supports the overall development of the Adventist schools network in Haiti and the Haitian community's schools in general.

Developments Leading to the Creation of the Adventist Foundation for Education

In 2001, the Education department of the Mission of Seventh-day Adventists in Haiti¹ assessed the schools' needs. A 13-page questionnaire was sent to 221 schools of the network, of which 112 were returned. This number represented a sample of 51 percent of the 221 schools identified in the sector. The results pointed to several issues, including the low qualification of the teaching population (23 percent), the lack of appropriate physical infrastructure (90 percent could not rely on their own appropriate building), the absence of basic facilities and the lack of teaching materials (80 percent of the sample), and the low salaries (the lowest was US\$5 per month).

These few figures exposed the immense, then-unsuspected needs of the mission's education sector and the extreme financial precariousness in which it was languishing. The basic conditions needed to be improved and strengthened, and an action was necessary to change the situation. Only an institution that can bring financial means to the church could do it. What was at stake was too important to be left without a valid solution—the Church relies on the school system for the physical, mental, social, and spiritual education of its children and adolescents and even for its survival. The *Statuts et Règlements* state, "Il y a un ensemble de connaissances, de valeurs, et d'idéaux particuliers à l'église qui doit être transmis aux générations plus jeunes afin d'assurer la survivance de l'église." (There is a body of church-specific knowledge, values, and ideals that must be passed on to younger generations to ensure the church's survival.)²

In addition, quality education is needed in the development of a community, but the church budget for education in Haiti was declining. Something had to be done to upgrade the schools to the highest levels and assist them in achieving their mission. To this end, the Adventist Foundation for Education (AFE) was designed

and created.

To assist in the development of this important project, a team of Haitian Adventist educators³ committed themselves to help the mission Education department plan a supporting program for the schools and finalized the statutes developed by the Education department director, Jean Josué Pierre, inspired by Pastor Elie S. Henry.⁴

Founders

The final version of the statutes was sent to the Executive Committee of the Adventist Mission of Haiti, which adopted it by a vote on November 20, 2001.⁵ At that working session, according to the statutes of the mission, all the national representatives of the Adventist organization in Haiti were present;⁶ the administration of the union, the four missions, and the four institutions, as well as some laypeople from the missions who were chosen to be members of that committee.

After the vote, the church administration in Haiti delayed the implementation and submitted the project to the Inter-American Division (IAD) for consultation on the important matter of creating an institution that was new in Haiti, new in the Adventist world. It was “out of the box.” However, an open-minded committee at that level expressed a positive opinion and voted to support this project. The IAD administration pledged to be present at the inauguration and, in fact, was represented by Dr. Carlos Archbold, director of the division Education department, and Dr. Elie Henry, vice president and supervisor of the Education department. It is confirmed in the Adventist Foundation for Education statutes voted on November 20 that the founders are those committee members who took the initiative to create it and signed the minutes.⁷

Administrative and Technical Supervision

Like any other institution, the new structure was chaired and supervised by the administrators of the Mission of Seventh-day Adventists in Haiti, according to the worldwide model. That is the administrative supervision. Another level of supervision came from the Inter-American Division Education department. The Adventist Foundation for Education was added, for technical guidance, to the duties of the IAD Education department director.

Location

According to the AFE statutes, the director of the Mission of Seventh-day Adventists in Haiti Education department is also in charge of the AFE. This provision, adopted for administrative reasons, explains the subsequent logistical choices made. For convenience, as a first step, the Education office was also the office for the AFE. When it became apparent that the new institution needed a better logistical endowment, a space was made available at the southwest corner of the mission office near the main entrance. This choice would facilitate

the dual coordination of the department of Education and this nascent administrative entity.

Having both offices in the same location was convenient for management because the director of the Education department would need to go back and forth between the AFE office and the Education department. Moreover, it allows the AFE to benefit from the strategic position of the mission's office, which is located near the center of Port-au-Prince, near the International Airport of Port-au-Prince. Finally, from the beginning, the positive image conveyed by the imposing Seventh-day Adventist Mission building was counted as an asset to the AFE.

Inauguration

The AFE was inaugurated on July 13, 2003. The delay from the creation in November 2001 was necessary to receive the IAD's formal opinion (IAD letter of support: 2001), develop the basic structures, write the first projects, design the capital creation programs in order to make it credible to nongovernmental organizations and donors, and, finally, to convince the mission's leadership of its viability. After the inauguration, the AFE was added to the Adventist Church institutions in Haiti.

First Sources of Funding or Grants

The AFE was not just a fund-raising agency. Her mission was to assist the schools in achieving the purpose of their existence: education. To fulfill its mission, it had to generate or obtain contributions, grants, and other funding. The first grant, symbolic in many aspects, came from the Inter-American Division, due to the dedication of its Education director, Dr. Carlos Archbold. Second, the AFE partnered with a nongovernmental organization, the World Concern, to offer a financial assistance program for primary school students. Third, the Temple Salem Seventh-day Adventist Church in Boston, Massachusetts, United States of America, as part of the AFE adoption program, sent a check for US\$1,000 to the AFE with Adventist College "Mahanaim" as beneficiary. Fourth, individual donors pledged and, with their financial contributions, supported the first steps of the institution.

Initial Status and Orientations

The Adventist Foundation for Education is a Seventh-day Adventist Church institution in Haiti that is educational, scientific, technical, philanthropic, and nonprofit. Its vision was to generate income and gather expertise and technical services through a national structure with international ramifications. It aimed to involve Adventist and non-Adventist institutions and Adventist and non-Adventist individuals, and to develop overseas representations, creating its own financial resources and mobilizing financial means from individual or institutional donors as well as gaining technical expertise from private persons to support its mission.

It aimed to support all aspects of education: school building, professional development, training programs, education materials or equipment, acquisition or production of quality didactic tools, community involvement in

school development, individual or institutional sponsorship, literacy, and income-generating programs.

Mission

The AFE's mission is to develop, improve, and consolidate quality education in line with the standards and ideals of the Haitian community in general and the Adventist Church in particular. It also wants, through the development and implementation of appropriate projects, to contribute to facilitating access to education.

Target Group

The AFE extends its action to the main actors of schools: learners, teachers, and parents. To the learners, it wants to bring a better education environment, didactic material, and financial support. To teachers, it wants to facilitate access to quality initial or continuing education until all the teachers are qualified. To parents, it wants to provide enlightened assistance and investment activities.

Summary of the History of the AFE

The AFE has existed since 2003. However, frequent leadership changes have slowed down its development. Stability is vital for an institution.

The different stages of its progression are as follows:

1. January 2001: diagnosis of the Adventist schools network
2. Creation of a team of reflection and elaboration, which conceived, elaborated, and executed the creation of the AFE.
3. November 20, 2001: Authorization vote of the project by the mission
4. July 13, 2003: Inauguration of the AFE
5. July 2003 to September 2005: Implementation of financial support project, beginning of the adoption program, obtaining the authorization of establishment of representative in the churches of the capital, process of recognition by the Haitian government, creation of an annex in New York, developing a literacy project, convention established between the Secretary of State of Literacy, training program for primary, secondary school teachers and principals.
6. Saint-Louis Pierre and Antonine Bastien, respectively second and third directors of the AFE, focus their activities on materials collection and fund-raising to support students with financial difficulties.

Fields of Intervention

School construction and restoration

Sponsorship of children in financial difficulties

In service and professional training of teachers and pedagogical teams of the schools' members

Distribution of textbooks and setting up of mini-libraries and mini-laboratories of physics, natural sciences, and information science in both private and public schools

Water, electricity, teaching aids, and food supplies program

Adult literacy program and education of the overaged

Parents' involvement in school activities

Socioeconomic development of parents

First Projects

2003: Adoption Project: Grant from Salem Adventist Church of Boston to "Mahanaim" Adventist College

2003: First steps in the establishment of the Foundation Branch in New York

2004: Scholarship in partnership with World Concern

2004: Cement purchase for the courtyard of La Gonâve school

2004: Training seminar for primary and secondary school teachers

2004: Donation of didactic equipment to Cap-Haïtien Adventist College

2004: AFE representation project in the churches of the Central Mission with the authorization of the mission administration.

Historical Role (in Church, Community, Nation, and the World)

The AFE is committed to the respect for Adventist identity, preserving the image of the church, and upholding the rules of the church.

The very concept of a foundation that supports school development is historic, and it has aroused and continues to inspire hope and enthusiasm within the Adventist community, particularly schools and institutions of the Adventist Church in favor of education.

Chronology of the Leaders

Presidents: Jean Josué Pierre (July 13, 2003–September 11, 2005); Saint-Louis Pierre (September 12, 2005–September 12, 2010); Antonine Bastien (September 13, 2010–December 22, 2017); Amos Tousseul (December 23, 2017–).

SOURCES

Division Interaméricaine de la Conférence Générale. *Statuts et Règlements*. 2017–2018 ed. Bogota: Panamericana formas E impresas S. A., 2017.

Extrait des Minutes du Comité Exécutif de la Mission Des Adventistes du Septième Jour d’Haiti: Projet de création de la Fondation Adventiste pour l’Education: 2001. Haitian Union Mission archives, Delmas, Haiti.

Statuts de la Fondation Adventiste pour l’Éducation, article 8, Haitian Union Mission archives, Delmas, Haiti.

NOTES

1. The legal name of the Haitian Union Mission is Mission of Seventh-day Adventists in Haiti. This denomination will be used throughout this article.
2. Division Interaméricaine de la Conférence Générale, *Statuts et Règlements*, 2017–2018 ed. (Bogota: Panamerican formas E impresas S. A., 2017).
3. Participants in the Adventist Foundation for Education’s designing and implementation: Jose Dorismar, Emmanuel Andre Jean, Brice Saintil, Dieufort Registre, Fresnel Charles, Nixon Maxime, and Jean Josue Pierre.
4. Pastor Élie S. Henry, pastor, mission executive secretary, mission president, and former union Education department director, was a mentor to Jean Josue Pierre and the principal contributor, with his advice to create a foundation.

5. Extrait des Minutes du Comité Exécutif de la Mission Des Adventistes du Septième Jour d'Haiti: Projet de création de la Fondation Adventiste pour l'Education: 2001.
6. Present: Etzer Obas (president, Haitian Mission of Seventh-day Adventists), Jacques Miguel Ambroise, Antonine Bastien (president, Adventist University of Haiti), Fritz Bissereth (director, ADRA), Sylvain Blaise (president, Central Haiti Mission), Jacqueline Chérubin (radio employee), Gabriel Vanel Chery (president, South Haiti Mission), Emilie Clotaire (administrator, Adventist Hospital of Haiti), Carmen Desvarieux (lay member), Claudel Dolce (treasurer, Haitian Mission of Seventh-day Adventists), Jean-Mari Florient (lay member), Joseph Germain (director, Ministerial Association and Stewardship, Haitian Mission of Seventh-day Adventists), Jean-Daniel Gordon Emmanuel (director, Publication department), Antonio Jacques (lay member), Abdonel Jean-Philippe (president, North Haiti Mission), Saint-Gerard Julien (treasurer, ADRA), Nicolas Joseph Leon (pastoral body representative), Monius J. Lormeus (president, Northwest Haiti Mission), Raoul M. Michel (executive secretary, Northwest Haiti Mission), Yvrose Morency (employee, Adventist Hospital of Haiti), Lumine Obas (director, Children and Women's Ministries departments of the Haitian Mission of Seventh-day Adventists), Emmanuel Paul (chaplain, Adventist Hospital of Haiti), Inestral Pierre, Jean Josue Pierre (director, Education department of the Haitian Mission of Seventh-day Adventists), Saint-Louis Pierre, Énock Saintil (director, Personal Ministries and Sabbath School departments of the Haitian Mission of Seventh-day Adventists), Théart Saint-Pierre (executive secretary, Haitian Mission of Seventh-day Adventists).
7. Statuts de la Fondation Adventiste pour l'Éducation, article 8, Haitian Union Mission archives, Delmas, Haiti.

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