

Haiti Share Will Buy Your Lunch

by Dr. Betty Jean Harmsen

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What is a non-profit organization anyway? A legal entity, it is true, yet in reality it is, or should be, simply a tool for connecting the donor with the recipient, a way of organizing donor efforts to meet the needs of the recipients efficiently and effectively. A non-profit organization should be a thin membrane-like structure, not a bloated entity with many expenses of its own.

It is easy to lose sight of this and to start thinking of the organization itself as a “person”.

On a recent trip to Haiti, my Haitian Director of Operation and I took a missionary friend with us on an all day trip to town to do some errands. We stopped for a modest lunch and told her “Haiti Share will pay.” It was a good feeling, to be able to buy her lunch and to treat her as a guest of Haiti Share.

Later I thought, however, if we were using completely truthful words, we would have had to have said, “The Haiti Share *donors* will buy you lunch.” We would have then needed to explain why we felt comfortable using donor’s money for this purpose by saying, “The donors entrust us with money for the purposes of building leadership and job skills, promoting spiritual maturity and alleviating suffering. We believe that the good will established by taking you to lunch could help us establish a good working relationship that might lead toward us working together to help fulfill those purposes. We also believe the refreshment to your spirit provided by this day of fellowship will give you renewed strength to fulfill your mission, which dovetails with part of our mission. Therefore, we believe buying your lunch is an excellent use of donor’s money.”

True, but what a mouthful. We do not need to be so precise in talking to others, but we do need to understand this in our own minds in order to protect ourselves against developing a spirit of entitlement.

It is not Haiti Share, really, who pays anything. It is people. It is donors who are poor and who sacrifice to give to those even poorer. It is also donors who have enough wealth to feel a great sense of responsibility to steer their donations in the direction that will do the most good.

Haiti Share is you. Haiti Share is me. Haiti Share is the recipients of our love.