

Prosperity Catalyst develops and strengthens women-led businesses in distressed regions, providing business and technical training, creating opportunities for women to achieve economic and social empowerment.

Investing in Women Changes Everything!

Haiti: Beekeeping Value Chain

Despite **difficult working conditions** due to ongoing civil unrest and fuel shortages, our team in Haiti did not slow down in their work with artisans and beekeepers in and around Port au Prince.

Over the past year we have established 8 new **beekeeping demonstration sites**, bringing the total to 16 sites currently in operation, with more under development. To date we have trained **431 new beekeepers**, 64% of whom are women. Demonstration sites also act as **plant nurseries** for pollinating plants like citrus, mango, and moringa, which makes the bees happy and helps fight deforestation.



Trainees at a demonstration site and plant nursery



Women learning carpentry to help meet the demand for locally made hives.

After training, beekeepers access special micro-loans through our Haitian lending partner, Fonkoze/ Zafen, to purchase hives and equipment. As part of PCat's innovative **value chain approach**, beehives, suits, and veils are now being made locally by PCat artisans, so the money stays with women in the local community. PCat purchases the beeswax for our artisan-made candles, and is conducting a market study to evaluate the best way to sell pure Haitian honey to low-income urban families in Port au Prince.

A beekeeper in Haiti can make up to \$137 per beehive each year. Most beekeepers start with 2 hives and split them annually. Beekeeping takes very little space and time, and is done on top of farming and other income-generating activities. In a country where an estimated 80% of the population lives in poverty and 25% live on less than \$1.25 a day, **the additional income from beekeeping can be life-changing...** especially in the hands of women!

Iraq: Artisan Value Chain

In January, we launched a new project that will enable us to expand to **three new regions in southern Iraq**, while continuing field work in Erbil and Dohuk and adding communities around Mosul to the north. Our Iraq program continues to serve vulnerable women, including **widows/female heads of households and internally displaced people (IDPs) living in camps**, with artisan and business training.



PCat's expanded footprint in Iraq



Artisan value chain assessment training

The design for the new project incorporates lessons learned from our past work in both Iraq and Haiti: the promise of bringing our unique value chain approach to Iraq. In March, PCat's Executive Director Catherine Gibbons joined our Iraq program staff in Erbil to launch an **artisan value chain assessment**. Through a series of training sessions, we engaged 60 energetic young people, many of whom are IDPs, to help gather data to identify the most promising artisan industries with potential for women to earn income and access leadership opportunities.

Some of the biggest challenges for women in Iraq are **lack of opportunity** and **socio-psychological trauma**. Many of the women we work with are living in temporary camps after fleeing ISIS. Others are struggling to support children alone within restrictive gender norms. The artisan women we work with are becoming leaders in their own communities, **challenging gender norms**, and showing themselves, their children, and their communities what women can do.

Cambridge: Board of Directors Retreat

Prosperity Catalyst is a **lean, program-focused organization**, with an overhead rate under 10%. Careful evaluation and planning allows us to do a lot with a little. In May, our board and staff came together in Cambridge for our annual **Board of Directors Retreat**. We spent 2 days together taking stock of our progress to date and work ahead, refining our sales and marketing strategy for artisan products, and updating our strategic plan for the next 3 years. We are excited for what the future holds for PCat, our friends and partners, and most importantly, the women of Iraq and Haiti, who inspire us every day.

Questions? Comments? We love hearing from you!
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