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It has been more than five years since the devastating 7.0 magnitude earthquake decimated the island nation of Haiti. While the country still strives to rebuild and regain its socioeconomic footing, one company has made a commitment to aiding more than 450 children who live in an [orphanage](#) five hours' drive from Port-au-Prince.

[On Call Communications](#) established its presence in Haiti in 1995 for a project with AT&T and the U.S. Department of Defense. On Call is a customer of Intelsat, providing IP based mobile satellite solutions to customers in the U.S., Caribbean, Latin America, Europe and Africa, expanding to Asia, Oceania and the Pacific Rim. Within 48 hours of the 2010 earthquake, On Call was in country facilitating transmission for a broadcasting client. Shortly after that, Jim Gilbert, the CEO of On Call, visited Haiti and the orphanage to see how the company could make a difference.

While there, Gilbert said, "I had discussions with Father Marc, who runs the orphanage, and his staff regarding their operation. There is a school, but the curriculum was outdated and the staff under qualified. The most glaring problem was that they were cut off from the rest of the world. I knew we were in a position to help make a difference.

"That difference would be in the form of a satellite link on Intelsat's Galaxy 25 and a wireless network throughout the campus which would provide free voice circuits, Internet access to provide current lesson plans for the school along with high definition video conferencing to be used between the clinic and teaching hospitals here in the U.S. and abroad."

This is a prime example of how satellite continues to play an irreplaceable role in the global communications infrastructure, especially with respect to providing critical connectivity to remote communities. This is also a testament to the importance of C-band in providing vital communications.

In fact, the video connection that Intelsat and On Call provide to this orphanage makes a tremendous impact on the otherwise isolated community as well as on school children in some unexpected locations in the U.S.

Children and adults at the orphanage use the connection to download distance learning programs. The video connection is also used for critical teacher training to the adults that serve the orphanage. Schools and benefactors are able to provide instruction and coaching via video conference from within the U.S.

Gilbert has implemented a virtual exchange program, whereby the students in the orphanage join together with U.S. students via video conference. So far, three schools in California have participated in these virtual shared classroom experiences for exchange and interaction. Gilbert notes that the program gives the U.S. children an opportunity to "see the other side of the spectrum," while enabling the Haitian students a window into a part of the world they otherwise would not see. Gilbert says demand is high with more schools in the United States interested in having similar exchanges. What's more, one

social justice class in California participated in a fundraising program that yielded a \$1,000 donation to the orphanage.

The program continues because, as Gilbert says, “It connects this community to the world.” In another application of video conference via satellite, he explains, “Father Marc is able to speak directly with benefactors anywhere in the world, easing the financial burden that would come with him having to travel.”

And Jim isn’t done yet. “I want to expand, particularly with the virtual exchange program. There are 15-20 schools throughout the U.S. that want to interact with the children in Haiti for cultural exchange, social justice, and fundraising.”

In addition to the school, the orphanage has a medical clinic on its complex. However, the medical staff's capabilities are limited, and Gilbert also hopes to set up a [telemedicine](#) program with the clinic, similar to the telemedicine project that Intelsat enables via satellite video conference between the Children’s National Medical Center in Washington, D.C., and the Kingdom of Morocco.

In 2013, On Call was recognized for their work in Haiti as the first ever [Excellence Award winner for humanitarian efforts](#) by *Satellite Today*.

With an estimated 4 billion people worldwide yet to be connected to the Internet, there is tremendous need for fast, reliable, ubiquitous connectivity. The connectivity that Intelsat is enabling in Haiti is just one example of how satellite continues to provide a critical link for communities and businesses around the world.