

## LOCAL FIRM INSTALLS STRUCTURES SO KIDS CAN GO TO SCHOOL

An Ottawa company is bringing comfort and joy to dozens of people in small villages in Haiti.



While in Haiti to oversee the installation of their structures, Miles Kennedy, chairman of HousAll Systems, left, and Richard Mahoney, president and CEO of HousAll, right, have a chat with former U.S. president Bill Clinton.

HousAll Systems Corporation manufactures shelters that can easily be shipped abroad and set up within a day. The 4.8 by 7.2 metre structures are made of metal frames and rigid corrugated polypropylene that can withstand the heavy rains and strong winds of tropical climates.

Six structures were recently installed in three villages and are being used both as classrooms and temporary homes for Haitian students and families. The project was co-ordinated with both the U.S. and Canadian chapters of Save the Children.

“The structures are designed to last for 10-plus years,” said Miles Kennedy, HousAll’s chief technical officer, who was in Haiti in September to oversee the installation.

The structures serve as temporary homes and were originally designed to replace the canvas tents that house UN refugees.

“To keep someone living in a canvas tent for 10 years is not appropriate. This is substantially better,” said Kennedy, adding that representatives from international charitable organizations have been impressed by the structure’s flexibility, convenience and the basic shelter it provides to people.

In Haiti, “the reaction was absolute joy,” said Kennedy. He said before the structures were erected none of the children in the mountainous village of Macary, southeast of Port-au-Prince, had been able to attend school because there was no building in which to hold classes.

He said in a country of 11 million people, about half a million children are not able to attend school because there are no facilities for them.

Kennedy said while in Haiti he met former U. S. president Bill Clinton, who was there in his role as UN Special Envoy in Haiti and is actively involved in the humanitarian efforts in the country.

“He’s an amazing fellow, very intelligent and extremely well spoken. He’s very magnetic,” said Kennedy.

HousAll structures are currently being built in a plant in Windsor but the company wants to build thousands more and is considering opening a plant in Haiti and hiring local people.

“The need in Haiti and the surrounding area is so great,” he said