

**FASHION'S  
BIG NIGHT OUT**  
Stars! Shopping! Parties!

# VOGUE

SEP

**"I HAVE A  
NEW FOCUS"**

## Halle Berry

On How  
Motherhood  
Changed  
Her Life

**WHAT  
TO WEAR  
NOW**

# 726

**PAGES OF  
Sumptuous  
FALL  
FASHION  
at Every Price**

**ENGULFED!**  
Living with the Oil Spill

**THE BEST  
RESTAURANT  
IN THE  
WORLD**

**MOMS ON THE FRONT LINE**  
And the Children Left Behind



# A PLACE CALLED HOPE

Activist Ophelia Dahl remains committed to helping Haiti, the country that inspired her life's work.  
By Marcia DeSanctis

**RESPONSE TIME**  
PARTNERS IN  
HEALTH EXECUTIVE  
DIRECTOR  
OPHELIA DAHL IN  
CANGE, HAITI.



In a crowded hospital ward in Cange, Haiti, **Ophelia Dahl** chats with 25-year-old **Shelove**, who lost her entire family, her home, and a leg in the earthquake that devastated Port-au-Prince. It is Dahl's third visit since January, and though the trauma injuries have been largely treated, she understands that the real human cost of the disaster is just emerging. Their broken bones now healed, victims will need rehabilitation, housing, mental health services, prosthetics, jobs, and protection from infectious diseases. "Everyone here has a similar story," says Dahl. "But it's hard to get sadder than hers."

For Dahl, 46, it's simple: No one should have to endure the inhumanity she has witnessed, especially because

her work has proved time and again that change is eminently possible. "What drives me," she explains, "is the knowledge that such inequality exists in this day and age, in spite of all we have and all we can do. Often, we feel inured to it or flummoxed by it. I'm lucky enough to be part of a group that doesn't feel that way and, in spite of the immense complexities, can do something about it."

That group is Partners in Health (PIH), which Dahl cofounded in 1987 with **Paul Farmer**, M.D., Ph.D., and **Jim Kim**, M.D., Ph.D., businessman **Tom White**, and friend **Todd McCormack**, who banded together to redress disparities in health care throughout the world. PIH didn't just parachute into the disaster zone; they have spent years planting roots and building hospitals in

destitute rural communities and nurturing relationships with the Haitian state, hiring 5,000 locals along the way. They were well situated to help handle the broken limbs, organ failures, and spiraling public-health crisis that followed, both in the provinces, where their facilities stood intact, and in the capital. They set up mobile clinics in the resettlement camps and the General Hospital, and dispatched planeloads of supplies, doctors, and nurses who volunteered to bolster their Haitian colleagues. Within six months, Dahl helped PIH raise \$85 million for the recovery effort.

As executive director since 2001, Dahl is widely lauded for maintaining the organization's soul as it grew to employ 11,000 people in twelve countries. She lives near PIH *flash* >450

RON HAVIV

headquarters in Boston with her partner of eleven years, **Lisa Frantzis**, a consultant in renewable energy, and their toddler, **Luke**. Dahl travels about one week per month, most frequently to Haiti, the country that inspired her life's work.

The soft-spoken but wickedly funny Englishwoman is a daughter of author **Roald Dahl** and his first wife, Oscar-winning actress **Patricia Neal**. She first visited Haiti in 1983, when her father helped her secure a position at a rural eye clinic there. "I think I knew I was, in some lovely way, being humored," Dahl recalls. "But I came to realize my job was to witness things I had not seen before. Of course I didn't know then how it would change my life or, as **Tracy Kidder** puts it, 'rearrange the cosmos.' But that's really what happened." Kidder's book *Mountains Beyond Mountains* follows the work of Farmer as well as the story of how Farmer, then 23, found a soul mate in this daughter of literary and Hollywood royalty. By the time the couple parted ways romantically, PIH was fast becoming a force in global health. The two remain collaborators and close friends.

In Haiti, Dahl is viewed as both a selfless ally and a world-class activist with the ability to allocate financial resources

to make things happen. At the crumbling remains of the General Hospital in Port-au-Prince, she moves past the now-vacant lot where the national nursing school collapsed, killing 150 students. She tours the semi-outdoor operating rooms where flies zoom around oxygen tanks. She converses with the sick and the people who care for them, shifting effortlessly between Creole and the

**“ I CAME TO REALIZE MY JOB WAS TO WITNESS THINGS I HAD NOT SEEN BEFORE. I DIDN'T KNOW THEN HOW IT WOULD CHANGE MY LIFE ”**

queen's English. She meets with the clearly beleaguered hospital director, **Alix Lassegue**, M.D., and **Evan Lyon**, M.D., an American physician and PIH volunteer. Haitian health officials asked PIH to help bring the hospital back to life. Dahl and Lyon are eager to explain how the medical services the organization provides are buttressed with training via relationships with Harvard Medical School and Boston's

Brigham and Women's Hospital to raise Haiti's level of medical education and ultimately, patient care.

Three hours into the country's Central Plateau is Cange, the point of origin for PIH and its local counterpart, Zamni Lasante. It is a vast complex, encompassing a modern hospital, schools, feeding programs, churches, a women's-health clinic, and job and agricultural initiatives. Dahl discusses the bottomless caseload with medical professionals, commiserates with mothers in the pediatrics wing, and accompanies a community health worker on her rounds to nearby AIDS patients. In the quarantined tuberculosis ward, she notes they could use a radio. She writes nothing down but later will follow up on every detail.

Dahl doesn't question her commitment to the Haitian people and the poor, wherever they are. She is motivated in part by the resilience of the people she has grown to love. "The Haitians have been dealt blow after blow. And the absolute saddest thing for me is that they're still getting knocked down," she says. "It's too much of a luxury to give up hope. The Haitians don't. They never have." Given that, she asks, how could she? □ *flash >455*



## TALKING FASHION LACED UP



FROM CHANTILLY ACCENTS TO A GUIPURE DRESS TO A BRODERIE ANGLAISE JACKET, LACE WAS THE FABRIC DU MOMENT AT PARIS COUTURE.

**FROM LEFT:** CAROLINE SIEBER IN VALENTINO; ELISA SEDNAOUI IN CHANEL HAUTE COUTURE; CARINE ROITFELD IN A JUNYA WATANABE JACKET.

SEE THE TEN BEST DRESSED WOMEN OF THE WEEK AT [VOGUE.COM](http://VOGUE.COM).