



HAITI ELECTIONS ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION SUPPORT

Background:

Many of the most serious challenges to democracy in Haiti lie in the realm of political party development, political competition, and consensus-building on the rules that govern political change. Effective management of the electoral process and democratic political party development are both essential benchmarks in a peaceful political transition process and essential components of the democratic transition process in Haiti. Moreover, citizens need to have confidence in the political process and be able to hold elected officials accountable in order for the cycle of political turmoil and unstable government to end. For these reasons, USAID support focuses on building stronger electoral institutions to increase transparency in the electoral process and build capacity for future elections.



Citizens show their voter identification cards

Objectives:

In order to ensure that the administration of the 2009 Senate elections in Haiti is transparent, efficient, and effective, USAID is providing support to the International Foundation for Election Systems (IFES), the Organization for American States (OAS) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to strengthen the organizational capacity of the Provisional Electoral Council (CEP) at the national and local levels. Programs will strengthen the CEP's internal election administration systems to manage credible elections, foster decentralization of political parties, expand grassroots involvement, and engage a broader range of civil society actors in the political process. Support will also be provided for future elections administration in order to contribute to a peaceful transfer of power from one government administration to another.

Activities:

International Foundation for Electoral System: USAID support to IFES focuses on providing targeted technical and financial assistance to the CEP. Specifically, IFES' program assists in developing and implementing procedures for the recruitment of all electoral staff, drafting and printing procedural and training manuals, assisting in training all electoral staff and assisting in developing and implementing a CEP national voter education campaign and domestic observer accreditation process.

Organization of American States (OAS): The USAID – OAS partnership strengthens Haiti's Electoral Council by providing Council members with the technological capacity to raise public awareness and increase citizens' participation in elections. Specific activities focus on the transfer of information technology systems to the CEP, including upgraded systems to facilitate voter registration and management systems for political party and candidate registration. Corresponding civic education activities are also conducted to instruct the public on elections and encourage citizen participation.

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP): USAID is contributing \$3 million to the UNDP Trust Fund for 2009 Senatorial elections. The Trust Fund tasks UNDP to administer and manage donor contributions to the electoral budget and aims to reinforce the capacity of democratic institutions and the consolidation of democratic governance in Haiti.

USAID Support: IFES: \$1,000,000; OAS: \$496,673; UNDP: \$3,000,000

Life of Program: IFES: February 29, 2008 to July 31, 2009; OAS: March 2007 to April 2009; UNDP: February 2009 to September 2009.

Geographic Focus: Nationwide

Implementing Mechanism & Partners:

Cooperative Agreement implemented by IFES; Grants implemented by OAS and UNDP. The GOH stakeholder is the Provisional Electoral Council (CEP).

FY 2008 Program Results:

In FY 2008, USAID concentrated on strengthening the CEP's organizational capacity at the national and local levels. USAID assistance included training for key personnel, development of civic education tools and information technology. Key results included a civic education guide for electoral management bodies, enhanced CEP training capacity, and procedures to improve communication between actors in the electoral process.



Consultants to the Electoral Council receive training

Expected Results Over Life of Project:

In the run-up to partial senatorial elections in 2009, USAID's support will reinforce government capacity to administer elections in a transparent manner, and will help ensure that the elections are efficient and effective and meet Haitian Constitutional requirements. Specific achievements will include improvement of the CEP's technology department; improved mechanisms to inform citizens, political parties, and civil society organizations about the electoral process; development of electoral procedures for the recruitment of all electoral staff; development of electoral management body training manuals and training of more than 30,000 electoral officials; development of a nationwide voter education campaign; and development of procedures for domestic observation accreditation. USAID support over the life of the project will concentrate on helping the CEP formalize its organization nationally and at the local level in order to support transparent elections at all levels. The long-term goal is to improve the credibility, transparency and accuracy of elections by enhancing the CEP's capacity to act as an effective communicator and primary source for election information and results. The ultimate result targeted is a successful round of transparent, credible elections considered so by both the international community and domestic observers. USAID support will help consolidate the important democratic institution of the CEP by professionalizing processes in a way that increases transparency and builds the capacity for future elections.