



USAID/OTI Haiti Annual Report

January - September 2010

Program Description

As part of the response to the January 12, 2010, earthquake, USAID's Office of Transition Initiatives (USAID/OTI) is implementing a program of short- and medium-term activities aimed at stabilizing Haiti through community revitalization and restoring basic government functions, focusing on building the Government of Haiti's (GOH) operational and outreach capacity. USAID/OTI is also working to mitigate instability at the community level in vulnerable and insecure areas.

Activities

Enabling the Government of Haiti to Function – In collaboration with international partners, USAID/OTI is supporting key local and national government entities in rebuilding operations, strengthening capacity, and increasing GOH legitimacy through greater responsiveness to the needs of Haitians. USAID/OTI temporary infrastructure assistance includes providing office facilities, basic equipment, computers, and communications equipment for the Offices of the President, the Prime Minister, and key ministries. Additionally, USAID/OTI is providing short-term technical advisors to the Interim Haiti Recovery Commission, the Ministry of Culture and Communications, and other ministries.

Community Stabilization – More than one million displaced people are living in congested camps, gangs are re-forming, and there is growing discontent with the pace of the GOH's response to the disaster. In coordination with the USAID Mission, the GOH, and the international community, USAID/OTI's large-scale temporary employment program aims to counter the destabilizing effects of mass unemployment. Program activities focus on removing rubble, clearing debris and trash from drainage canals, managing watersheds, and repairing roads and other public infrastructure. The activities inject much-needed cash into some of the hardest hit communities in Port-au-Prince and surrounding areas. Partnering with local authorities and community leaders, these programs also engage youth to work with their leaders and make positive contributions toward cleanup and recovery in their neighborhoods. Each temporary worker is provided with a yellow T-shirt with the slogan *An'n Leve Kanpe!* (Let's stand up together!) to promote solidarity and represent the GOH's response efforts. As an operating principle, women make up at least 40 percent of every work team.

USAID/OTI-led stabilization activities also support positive evening activities for idle youth, security enhancements in and around IDP camps, including the installation of solar-powered lighting, and small infrastructure improvements to schools.

Supporting Dialogue on Relief and Recovery – USAID/OTI is supporting activities that foster greater dialogue and information exchange between Haitians, civil society, media, and the GOH. In addition, USAID/OTI is helping the GOH restore its public outreach and intergovernmental communications capacity by providing infrastructure and short-term technical assistance to the Ministry of Culture and Communications, increasing the quality and quantity of humanitarian assistance news and information broadcast by Haitian media outlets, and providing forums for dialogue between and among Haitians and the GOH. OTI programming is establishing and improving platforms (e.g., press conferences, public meetings) through which citizens, civil society, and government officials discuss Haiti's reconstruction.

Country Situation

While more than eight months have passed since the January 12 earthquake, over a million Haitians remain in temporary housing. The hurricane season that began in June brought with it the possibility of flash floods, mudslides, and high winds that place tents and plastic-sheeted shelters at risk. A number of passing tropical storms and microbursts have wreaked havoc on camps for internally displaced persons (IDPs), ripping down shelters and creating torrents that have washed people away. [The worst day of the hurricane season came November 5 when Hurricane Tomas brushed past Haiti. The heavy rains caused flash floods and mudslides that left 20 dead. In addition, the hurricane exacerbated an ongoing cholera epidemic that has killed more than 500 people since October.] Even under these conditions, Port-au-Prince residents have remained calm and worked hard to return to normal daily routines.

National elections are planned for November and students are returning to schools where possible. The GOH is building its operational capacity and has started to take a more active role in coordinating reconstruction efforts and in the management of the Haiti Reconstruction Fund—the multi-donor trust fund for Haiti.

Coordination of International Recovery Efforts – The Interim Haiti Reconstruction Commission (IHRC), co-chaired by former U.S. President Bill Clinton and Haitian Prime Minister Jean-Max Bellerive, was established in April 2010 to "conduct strategic planning and coordination and implement resources from bilateral and multilateral donors, nongovernmental organizations, and the business sector, with all necessary transparency and accountability." While the IHRC has held meetings with international delegations every six weeks and made some progress in appointing a director, authorizing projects, and building up its staff and resources, it is not yet fully prepared to lead the international community in the reconstruction effort.

Shelter and Settlements – Shelter and resettlement remain top priorities of the relief effort while also posing an ongoing challenge. Resettlement efforts have been hindered by competing land tenure and property rights claims. A pre-quake deficit of adequate housing and the loss of property records during the earthquake have exacerbated the problems. Some owners have left their land and squatters have taken up residence in abandoned properties. In addition, displaced citizens and speculators are homesteading on private and public lands in the foothills on the outskirts of Port-au-Prince. The question of how to dispose of property owned by those who perished in the earthquake remains unresolved. In addition, the lack of clarity on a comprehensive housing and resettlement plan has led to rumors—purporting available housing and land—that are drawing people from rural areas to the city.

Security – Security continues to be a concern, both within IDP camps and in the greater Port-au-Prince area. In the camps, reports of rape and violence against women and children are increasing. There are also signs that gangs have reorganized, re-armed, and are gaining strength. Tensions are growing as the nine month anniversary of the earthquake in October and national elections in November approach. The relative calm the city has experienced since the quake may be beginning to dissipate.

Government – The GOH continues to struggle to overcome the massive loss of life and infrastructure that decimated its capacity to operate. The government remains constrained by a lack of key policies and comprehensive plans that would allow it to more effectively lead the recovery effort. The GOH is also struggling to provide the Haitian people with information on reconstruction efforts. Local government authorities have proven valuable partners in efforts to address some of these challenges at a neighborhood level.

Elections – National elections for the executive and legislative branches are scheduled for November 28, 2010, and the Provisional Electoral Council (CEP) has sanctioned 19 candidates. The voter registration process and preparations for the ballot are well underway. The National Identification Office recently gave over 300,000 registrations to the CEP for voters needing new ID cards. While representative of a return to normalcy, the election-planning process has proved a distraction to some key stakeholders, diverting their attention from the ongoing relief and recovery effort.



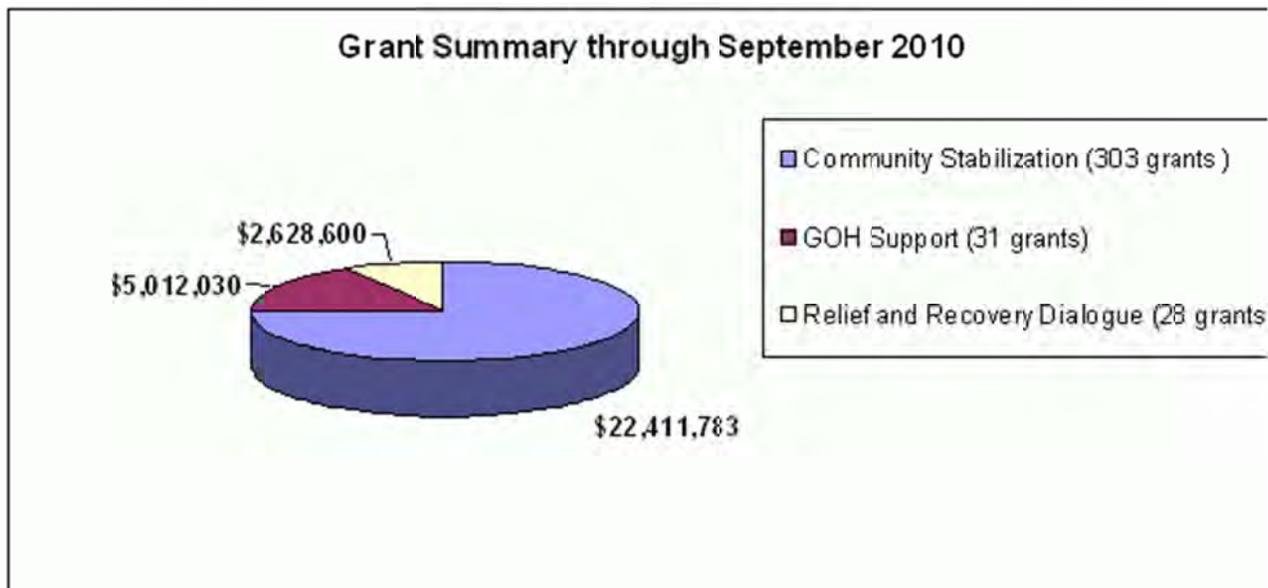
A team leader starts the morning roll call for an OTI project employing locals to assist with rubble removal in Port-au-Prince.

Upcoming Events

28 November 2010 -	National elections
January 2011	- Possible presidential runoff election
1 January 2011	- Haitian Independence Day
12 January 2011 -	One-year anniversary of earthquake
February 2011	- President's term of office ends

Grants Summary

Since program inception, USAID/OTI has awarded 362 grants worth \$30,052,413. Funding breaks down as detailed in the chart below.



Highlights

Media and Perceptions Survey – USAID/OTI sponsored two local Haitian organizations to conduct a comprehensive quarterly media and perceptions survey. The organizations interviewed more than 3,000 Haitians in greater Port-au-Prince, collecting information on media consumption habits and assessing the reach and market share of radio and television outlets and Internet usage trends. The survey also measured citizen perceptions of the government's and the international community's response to the earthquake. Results from the survey were widely shared with Haitian media outlets, the GOH, and the international community. The findings will assist Haitian media outlets to produce better targeted and more effective programming and help advertisers, the GOH, and the international community convey their messages to the greatest number of Haitians. In addition, the project has helped build the two companies' capacity to conduct surveys and analyze the data. OTI will support two additional quarterly surveys and assist the firms with efforts to develop a strategy for continuing the survey activity with support from local media and marketing organizations.



Soil conservation projects are stabilizing many hillsides throughout greater Port-au-Prince.

Daily Humanitarian News Show – Since the first "News You Can Use" radio show aired on January 21, USAID/OTI has worked extensively with local journalists, media houses, humanitarian organizations, and the GOH to produce and distribute fact-based news and information features on humanitarian assistance and other issues critical to citizen survival. The "News You Can Use" programs focus on topics essential to people affected by the hurricane, such as where they can obtain various types of assistance, and also provide instruction on subjects such as how to protect oneself during an earthquake or hurricane, how to properly set up a tent or tarp for maximum protection against the elements, how to prevent malaria with mosquito netting and by eliminating standing water, and how to prevent diarrheal diseases through regular hand washing and by ensuring that drinking water is contaminant free. The 15-minute radio show, produced by Internews with

USAID/OTI support, is now broadcast daily on 32 radio stations.

Decisions about which topics the "News You Can Use" shows will cover and program design are driven by data collected by an Internews-Haiti research team via a text-messaging information line, focus groups, and face-to-face surveys. Topics have paralleled the Haitian population's changing information needs in the months following the earthquake, and the shows provide timely, relevant, and accurate information that is important to Haitians and increases opportunities for citizen participation in the recovery and reconstruction process.

Infrastructure Support to the Government of Haiti – In partnership with the World Bank, USAID/OTI provided modular units—including furniture, office equipment, and computers—on the Presidential Palace grounds to house a Crisis Command Center, the Office of the President, and the newly formed Resettlement Bureau. Renovations have been completed on the former U.S. Embassy; the building has been furnished and now houses the Office of the Prime Minister and the Ministry of Planning. Work is nearly complete on the former USAID building, which will house courts as well as a few key offices of the Ministry of Justice. The refurbished building is slated to open the first week of October. In addition, OTI has committed to building a temporary structure for the Haitian Parliament on the grounds of the former Parliament building. The target opening date for the temporary structure is spring 2011. To date, OTI has provided infrastructure support totaling more than \$5 million to 11 government entities.

Rubble Removal and Clearance of Key Vital Spaces – The major focus of USAID/OTI's temporary employment program has been removing debris and rubble from public spaces and key infrastructure. Program activities have contributed to the removal of over 530,000 cubic meters of rubble, primarily from roadways and public spaces. Rubble has also been cleared from 33 schools, enabling classes to resume. Over 30 activities have focused on clearing canals, which facilitate drainage during heavy rains and prevent flash floods and loss of life. In addition, debris has been cleared from the grounds of three hospitals.

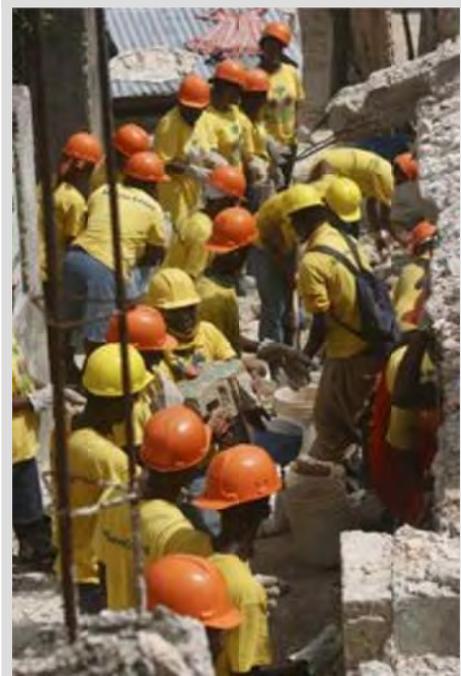
Assistance to the Haitian Resettlement Bureau – The Resettlement Bureau has begun coordinating efforts to clear debris from the Fort National neighborhood. The Bureau, which was formed by President Preval, has announced plans to resettle Fort National residents, many of whom are living in the Champs de Mar IDP camp, in their former neighborhood. Within a week of the Bureau's announcement, USAID/OTI launched a temporary employment activity to clear debris from the area, bringing together more than 1,200 Haitians from the Fort National neighborhood and the Champ de Mars camp for the project. Additionally, USAID/OTI has provided three staff members to the Resettlement Bureau (a project manager, a project assistant, and a civil engineer) and is recruiting staff for additional positions to assist the Bureau with the monumental challenge it faces.

Saint Marc – Combining post-quake recovery goals with support to USAID's long-term development and economic growth strategy, OTI in mid-September opened an office in Saint Marc, a port city two hours north of Port-au-Prince. The opening grant supported a cultural fair and cash-for-work cleanup of the main town square, aiming to employ many new residents who had been displaced from Port-au-Prince. An estimated 40,000 IDPs came to Saint Marc in the aftermath of the earthquake, and a number of organizations see the mass displacement as an opportunity to create growth centers outside of the capital and have expressed interest in assisting the GOH to offer incentives to the IDP community to facilitate relocation and recovery.

The Expressions St. Marcoises fair was originally scheduled for April, but was canceled shortly after the earthquake. The rescheduled fair included talent contests, children's activities, performances by Clowns Without Borders and other artists, and a horse parade. The fair and the cleanup of the town square mobilized local government authorities, representatives from the Direction de la Protection Civile, and artistic groups in an attempt to bring together local residents and IDPs around a festive event, giving them a sense of pride and community cohesiveness.

Cap Haitien – In September, OTI opened an office in Cap Haitien, which is Haiti's second largest city and home to approximately 600,000 people. Cap Haitien's infrastructure was not directly affected by the earthquake, so its operational port is an ideal site for economic development that can provide displaced Haitians with a viable alternative to living in Port-au-Prince. According to the Cap Haitien Mayor's office, approximately 100,000 people sought refuge in the city following the earthquake. Current estimates suggest that about 25,000 quake-displaced Haitians reside in Cap Haitien.

The official launch of the OTI program in Cap Haitien is scheduled to coincide with the October 8–9 celebration of the King Henry Christophe holiday. In collaboration with local municipal authorities, the Office of the Delegate of the Northern Department, and the local tourism association, Tour Nord, the program is supporting a cultural festival in the city's main square. The two-day festival will give Haitian artists from across the region an opportunity to showcase their talents and will provide the community with a full spectrum of culturally significant entertainment. Drawing on local history and tying into the rebuilding effort's "Let's stand up together!" motto, the event is being promoted under the theme of Rebirth, providing a cultural and social message that encourages civic pride and solidarity. The festival will be the first in a series of projects aimed at encouraging IDPs and host communities to continue efforts that reduce the number of IDPs returning to Port-au-Prince.



While heavy machinery is used where possible, large numbers of Haitian workers are clearing rubble from steep hillsides and corridors where machinery cannot go.

Program Appraisal

Nine months after the devastating earthquake, a shift in mood is discernible in Haiti. The post-quake period of shock and mourning is gradually giving way to a quotidian normalcy—Haitians peacefully enjoyed the summer's World Cup games, weddings are being celebrated again, and people are finding ways to live among the collapsed buildings, rubble, and IDP camps.



Before and After: Residents travel on a road in Carrefour that was completely blocked by rubble after the quake. Carrefour was one of a number of sites targeted for debris removal by OTI's temporary employment teams. Work began on January 28 and was completed by February 26.

The shift has been mirrored by an evolution in OTI programming. In the eight-plus months since program launch, OTI has cleared more than 300 grants totaling just over \$30 million. Building on this success, OTI is beginning to develop a strategy for expanding program activities to strategically located economic growth corridors outside of Port-au-Prince. In addition, the scope of OTI's temporary employment programs has grown, as the focus on rubble removal has expanded to include various initiatives and has catalyzed a relationship between a local government and the sanitation authority to increase trash removal and soil conservation for flood mitigation purposes. OTI support to the GOH is also shifting—away from supplying the physical infrastructure that it needs for operations (buildings, desks, chairs, and computers) to providing the human expertise needed to restore core functions and systems and to manage the recovery and reconstruction effort. Furthermore, OTI aims to extend its support to local and regional GOH authorities. As the program continues to provide the GOH with the tools it needs to communicate effectively with its constituents, it is also working to develop new ways for the Haitian people to communicate with their government.

The program's permanent country representative and deputy country representative arrived in Haiti in May and June, respectively. In late June, the new OTI team gathered with implementing partner staff at a two-day strategy review session to discuss the achievements of the program to date and to consolidate lessons learned and prepare for the pre-election period of the fall. The review process was repeated in late September to plan for the period following the November elections to May 2011.

Next Steps

OTI priorities for the next quarter include the following:

- Continue shifting program focus from providing temporary employment to facilitating skills training and creating economic opportunities that will provide Haitians with longer-term employment prospects;

- Expedite rubble removal in key neighborhoods, in close coordination with Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance partners, to facilitate the construction of transition shelters and increase IDP returns;

- Expand efforts to build capacity of key GOH ministries, in and outside of Port-au-Prince, with technical assistance;

- Support local and regional government actors and services to increase opportunities for displaced citizens to settle outside of Port-au-Prince;

- Continue to expand programming, in close coordination with the USAID Mission, to cities outside of Port-au-Prince, such as Saint Marc and Cap-Haïtien, as outlined in the U.S. Government's Five-Year Strategy; and

- Increase analysis and targeting of critical and timely programming to unstable or volatile neighborhoods in Port-au-Prince and nearby villages to secure gains made by the recovery effort.