



DISASTER
RELIEF

CASE REPORT
Haiti—Fire
August 7, 1972

Agency for International Development
Washington, D.C. 20523

HAITI

Fire

Between 2:00 and 3:00 p.m. on Monday, August 7, 1972 a disastrous fire broke out in a slum area of Port-au-Prince, Haiti. Approximately 5,000 people were left homeless.

Value of U.S.G. Assistance \$25,000

The fire raged for three hours in the La Saline area of Port-au-Prince. This section of the city is between the main street of Port-au-Prince, Boulevard Jean-Jacques Dessalines (also known as Grand Rue), and the waterfront, flanked on one side by the residence of the Filles de la Sagesse, a religious order, and on the other by the Desmangles pharmacy. The population of the area had become very dense in recent years due to increased rates of migration from the countryside into Port-au-Prince.

An estimated 740 houses were destroyed by the fire, most were shanties. A few shops were also destroyed. The exact cause of the fire remains unknown.

ACTION TAKEN BY THE GOVERNMENT OF HAITI AND LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS:

The La Saline area was declared a disaster by the Government of Haiti (GOH), which designated a Committee for the Rehabilitation of the Disaster Area to coordinate relief efforts and help the victims of the disaster to recover from their losses.

Foreign Disaster Case Reports are publications of the Office of the Foreign Disaster Relief Coordinator, Agency for International Development. This office has responsibility for coordinating U.S. Government foreign disaster relief responses and for the further coordination of such activities with those of the U.S. private and international disaster relief communities.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Coordinator acknowledges assistance received in the preparation of this and other case reports from the many public and private organizations in the United States and abroad engaged in foreign disaster relief.



Destruction of St. Joseph Quarter (district) of Port-au-Prince as a result of the fire of August 1972.

An appeal was made to foreign nations for donations to a fund to build new housing units for the homeless to which the President of the Republic donated \$20,000.

The displaced were temporarily housed in tents and shelters provided by the Haitian Red Cross (HRC) and religious institutions. Medical services and food were also provided at these shelter areas.

The HRC gathered tents and blankets donated by Red Cross Societies of other countries during an earlier flood disaster. With the approval of the International Red Cross they were distributed to the victims of the fire. Approximately 500 people were housed in these tents.

ASSISTANCE PROVIDED BY THE U.S. GOVERNMENT AND U.S. VOLUNTARY AGENCIES:

The U.S. Ambassador exercised his disaster relief authority on August 9, 1972, in the amount of \$25,000. On the same day \$10,000 of this sum was immediately donated to the Haitian Red Cross. On September 13, 1972, the remaining \$15,000 was donated to the Rehabilitation Committee for reconstruction.

The efforts of U.S. voluntary agencies were coordinated by the acting director of Church World Service (CWS). Agencies participating, in addition to CWS, were Catholic Relief Services (CRS) and CARE. They provided cornmeal, flour, and soya-fortified wheat for an emergency feeding program. The value of this food is unknown

CRS also provided the following:

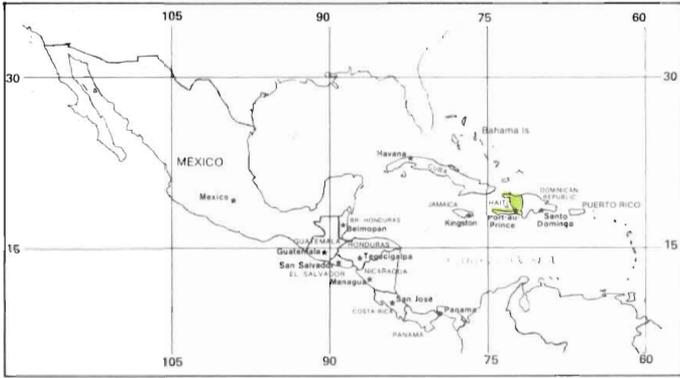
Funds for relief	\$5,000	
Hand tools and construction materials to rebuild homes destroyed by the fire	500	
Men's shirts and kitchen utensils	3,500	
		\$9,000

ASSISTANCE PROVIDED BY OTHER NATIONS:

Argentina made a cash donation to the project to build houses for the displaced. Value unknown

Nationalist China also donated cash to the housing project. Value unknown

Federal Republic of Germany—cash donation to the Haitian Red Cross for clothing and food \$5,000



HAITI