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HAITI

SNAPSHOT

A Haitian-Led Recovery

Assistance empowers Haitians to rebuild a nation.



A SECCA worker installs roof framing on the new public market building in Petionville.

“USAID contracts have increased our capacity and improved our operations.”

—Erold Exilus
Executive Director
SECCA Engineering

Telling Our Story
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June 2011 – Whether they use heavy equipment or their bare hands, Haitians are taking the lead in earthquake recovery efforts. And whenever possible, USAID’s Office of Transition Initiatives is procuring goods and services for recovery efforts from Haitian firms, making use of local resources, employing local residents, and building the capacity of Haitian firms.

For example, when the U.S. Ambassador and Haitian officials praised the fit and finish of a rehabilitated compound for the Ministry of Justice at a recent inaugural ceremony, they were lauding the work of a Haitian construction company: SECCA Engineering. The company, whose operations were devastated by the earthquake, has been able to rebuild itself, and a little bit of the country, by winning three USAID competitive contracts. In addition to renovating the former USAID mission for the Justice Ministry, SECCA has rebuilt a central marketplace in Petionville and rehabilitated a vital agricultural road in Kenscoff. The contracts have allowed the company to increase staff, purchase new equipment, and provide short-term employment to more than 100 skilled workers.

In addition, when USAID sought information on Haitian media coverage of the November 2010 presidential elections, it enlisted MATRIX. The work provided the Haitian media-monitoring organization with a unique opportunity to build its capacities by providing comprehensive analyses of news reports and politically oriented talk shows, and the information helped USAID gauge the tenor of the discourse on events and issues critical to the Haitian population.

USAID has also funded projects to accelerate rubble removal from Port-au-Prince’s buried neighborhoods, finding Haitian heavy equipment operators to complete the tasks. The Agency works closely with local officials in these efforts and encourages residents to work together to clear homesites and place debris in the streets for collection. In Baillergeau, for instance, USAID scheduled twice-weekly rubble pickups to encourage residents to clear private land. The projects have sped up rebuilding activities, provided space for temporary shelters, and enabled a significant number of families to return home. And since these efforts are coordinated with local officials, they tend to raise the stature of local government in the public eye.

All in all, Haitians are showing that they are ready and willing—with a little assistance—to rebuild their communities and country.

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