



## SUCCESS STORY

### Bringing Hope to Baillergeau

Cash-for-work projects are cleaning up communities.



Photo by USAID/Haiti

*Mesidor Chassagne, a team leader with USAID's cash-for-work project in Baillergeau, is ready to clean the rubble and debris from his community.*

**March 2010** – While many communities are still reeling from the earthquake that laid waste to Haiti's capital, Port-au-Prince, on January 12, 2010, the neighborhood of Baillergeau has begun to see the first signs of recovery.

In February, the first cash-for-work laborers began clearing rubble from Corridor Madan Parrain, a 150-meter road in the densely populated community. Although the road is relatively short, the heavily used corridor was rendered impassable by the massive volume of debris.

Mesidor Chassagne, a 33-year-old Baillergeau resident who lost everything in the earthquake, including five family members and his computer service business, is leading a cleanup team in the community. "After the earthquake," he said, "I felt alone, depressed. I would run into the street like a madman because I lost my mother, two sisters, and two children."

Mesidor supervises 91 workers from Baillergeau in the USAID-supported effort, and the early benefits are showing. Workers and their families have income for the first time in over a month. The infusion of cash is helping people rebuild their lives, providing them with the means to buy food, medicine, clothing, and supplies for their temporary shelters.

"This is a very good project for me," Mesidor said. "The people are happy because the majority of young people did nothing, but now they are working."

Most of Mesidor's team members lost family members during the quake. "So this work increases people's morale and helps them forget the bad times experienced during the earthquake," he said. "USAID helps us a lot and has stimulated much work for the progress of the area."

People are returning to their destroyed homes to salvage personal items and valued possessions. Some are beginning to clear lots as the first step to rebuilding. And since people have earnings, vendors are returning to sell goods and services. The neighborhood and its economy are being rejuvenated.

"I'll save some money from this work to prepare for the birth of my child in June," Mesidor beamed. "If the project lasts longer," he said, "I'll raise money to restart my business."