



## SUCCESS STORY

### Reviving Hope at College Canapé Vert

Cleaning rubble from destroyed institution revives educational dreams.



Photos by USAID/Haiti

*A temporary classroom building goes up on the College Canapé Vert campus following USAID-supported cleanup efforts.*



*Mrs. Frank Paul's efforts to educate young Haitians were interrupted, not ended, by the earthquake.*

**March 2010** – On January 12, Mrs. Frank Paul saw 35 years of her life's work disappear in seconds. When the earthquake struck, the College of Canapé Vert, an institution she founded in 1974, was destroyed. Mrs. Paul believes that 150 of the approximately 300 people inside the school building perished.

In spite of her grief, and with the world around her shattered, Mrs. Paul remained determined to find a way to rebuild the school, not only for the individuals who survived the collapse but also as a tribute to the students and teachers who died. She never lost hope that her school would quickly reopen. "I must restart the school for the sake of the children," she said. "They cannot be left to wander in public parks, living in such a promiscuous environment."

The College of Canapé Vert was one of the first sites targeted by USAID's Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI) in its cash-for-work effort. The cleanup project began just a few weeks after the earthquake destroyed key public infrastructure, schools, and private homes and took the lives of more than 200,000 Haitians. OTI worked through the Port-au-Prince Mayor's Office to clean up and remove debris from the site, and the project provided much-needed temporary employment for 108 workers and paved the way for the school reconstruction effort.

Mrs. Paul's hopes will soon be fulfilled. Impressed with the cleanup work at the college site, the Ministry of Education identified a private contractor to fence the compound and erect a temporary school building. It is one step forward on Haiti's arduous path to recovery.

With construction on the temporary structure going forward, the school is slated to reopen on April 5, 2010, and Mrs. Paul will be able to continue the work that was so abruptly interrupted. Paraphrasing a favorite maxim by Rudyard Kipling, Mrs. Paul said, "If you can see the work of a lifetime destroyed without saying a word, without a sigh and a gesture, rebuild; you will be a man, my son."

What seemed to be an impossible task in the days following the earthquake has become reality thanks to the combined efforts of USAID and the Government of Haiti.