



SNAPSHOT

“Rebirth” for Cap Haitien

USAID rolls out secondary city strategy for Haiti’s second city.



The lead singer of ALEZ performs at the Cap Haitien cultural festival.

USAID/Haiti

December 2010 – In the wake of January’s earthquake, Haitians sought shelter in areas that were spared the damage that the Port-au-Prince region experienced. For example, Cap Haitien, in the north, absorbed an estimated 100,000 displaced residents.

The coastal city of 600,000, however, was ill prepared to handle such large influx of people. And over the ensuing months, a lack of supportive services and employment opportunities led nearly 75 percent of Cap Haitien’s quake-displaced visitors to return to Port-au-Prince, further burdening a city with insufficient housing and resources to manage the ongoing crisis.

To encourage Haitians to relocate from over-populated, earthquake-ravaged Port-au-Prince, USAID developed a secondary city strategy that targets the Cap Haitien region, among other areas, as a key corridor for economic growth. And USAID and Cap Haitien’s mayor co-sponsored a two-day cultural festival titled “Rebirth” to kick off the campaign promoting the region as an attractive place to pursue new opportunities.

The event provided a platform to publicize USAID development projects aimed at promoting Cap Haitien as a viable secondary city. Follow-on activities include rehabilitation projects at four schools and three sport facilities, management training for women that own microbusinesses, and a host-family assistance program.

The October 8–9 festival filled Cap Haitien’s public square with a community pride and unity celebration that coincided with a local holiday that recognizes the city’s heritage as the original capitol of Haiti as well as the historical figure King Henri Christophe. Several world-renowned Haitian artists participated and more than 5,000 people enjoyed performances by traditional dance troupes, poets, bands, and comedians.

Additional projects to stimulate the local economy are under development, including efforts to provide short-term employment opportunities, promote community stabilization, and enhance dialogue between local authorities and their constituents.

Telling Our Story
U.S. Agency for International Development
Washington, DC 20523-1000
<http://stories.usaid.gov>

Contact: Anita Sachariah, Program Manager
e-mail: asachariah@usaid.gov; telephone: (202) 712-5181
Web: www.usaid.gov – Keyword: OTI