

**BUREAU FOR DEMOCRACY, CONFLICT, AND HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE (DCHA)
OFFICE OF U.S. FOREIGN DISASTER ASSISTANCE (OFDA)**

USAID/OFDA HAITI ONE-YEAR PROTECTION PROGRAM OVERVIEW – JANUARY 12, 2011

The January 12, 2010, earthquake in Haiti caused large-scale internal displacement and disrupted social structures, generating risks of harm, exploitation, and abuse for the affected population. In the year following the disaster, USAID/OFDA has used a two-part approach to address those risks. First, USAID/OFDA worked with grantees to understand and mitigate protection risks within the multi-sectoral earthquake response. Partners mainstreamed protection by designing humanitarian interventions that reduced risks and promoted equitable access to assistance for vulnerable groups within the earthquake-affected population. For example, in the water, sanitation, and hygiene sector, protection mainstreaming included considering women's and children's safety in the placement of latrines and water points. In addition, USAID/OFDA supported stand-alone protection programs that focused on reducing risks and addressing specific protection issues, such as family separation, gender-based violence, psychosocial distress, and support for persons with injuries and disabilities. As of January 12, 2011, USAID/OFDA had provided nearly \$12 million for programs designed to protect the most vulnerable persons affected by the earthquake, including through the activities highlighted below.



Earthquake-affected children engage in a group activity at a USAID/OFDA-funded child-friendly space in Jacmel. (Anita Malley, USAID)

EMERGENCY SUPPORT FOR CHILDREN

In response to the earthquake, USAID/OFDA supported a variety of emergency child protection activities. Child protection agencies identified and registered more than 4,000 children who were separated from their families; within six months of the earthquake, agencies had identified the majority of children separated from their caregivers and begun family tracing and reunification efforts. USAID/OFDA also funded more than 130 safe spaces for children to play, engage with peers, and receive care from responsible adults in camp and community settings—activities that reduce the risks for abuse and exploitation and provide psychosocial support for both children and caregivers. USAID/OFDA responded to emergency needs in more than 175 residential care facilities for children, promoting the physical safety and psychosocial well-being of children through caregiver training in child development and protection principles, as well as through targeted infrastructure repairs for earthquake damage.

PREVENTING AND RESPONDING TO GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE (GBV)

USAID/OFDA funded programs to support survivors of GBV in earthquake-affected areas and raise community awareness for GBV prevention. The programs strengthened referral systems that help survivors of violence access appropriate medical, psychosocial, and community services and support. As a result of USAID/OFDA assistance, trained GBV focal points now serve as resources for survivors and advocates for prevention in camp and community settings. USAID/OFDA grantees worked with communities for GBV prevention through information campaigns, concerts and theater activities designed to engage men and boys, and the formation of protection committees to organize local prevention measures, such as community watches or patrols. USAID/OFDA also sought to reduce risks for GBV in spontaneous settlements by providing lighting units in high risk camps and incorporating other protective measures in the assistance and services provided in the majority of displacement camps where USAID/OFDA grantees work, including locking doors for latrine and bathing facilities.

For more information on USAID/OFDA protection sector activities, please visit:

http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/humanitarian_assistance/disaster_assistance/sectors/protection.html

PROMOTING INCLUSION FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Persons with earthquake-related injuries, as well as those with pre-existing disabilities, represented an especially vulnerable population in the aftermath of the earthquake in Haiti. In addition to support for physical rehabilitative care through the health sector, USAID/OFDA supported psychosocial activities designed to strengthen the adaptation and coping mechanisms of more than 11,000 persons with disabilities and their families and promote the full inclusion of persons with disabilities in family and community life.

PROTECTION MONITORING AND COORDINATION

To ensure that humanitarian assistance providers remained aware of the risks for harm, exploitation, and abuse faced by the affected population—risks which are often not easily visible—USAID/OFDA also supported protection monitoring and coordination. For example, during planned relocations of displaced persons vulnerable to flooding, USAID/OFDA partners participated in information campaigns to educate the affected population about their options and monitored the movement of families to help prevent family separation. Additionally, USAID/OFDA assistance included basic legal aid for displaced populations, assisting people to recover identity documents that may have been lost in the earthquake.

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