Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance

DISASTER CASE REPORT

Agency for International Development
Washington D.C. 20523

HAITI - Civil Strife
FY 1989

Date: The rebellion began on April 2, 1989

Location: Port-au-Prince

No. Dead: 12

No. Affected: Not reported

Summary of Assistance:

USG	$25,000
U.S. Voluntary Agencies	None reported
International Community	$6,430
TOTAL	**$31,430**

The Disaster

The unrest began on April 2, 1989, when a rebellious army unit, the Leopard battalion, kidnapped Haiti's President General Prosper Avril. The mutinous troops attempted to deport him, but Avril was rescued by his presidential guards as he was being driven to the airport.

Fighting broke out between the Leopard battalion and the presidential troops. Avril declared a state of emergency and tried to suppress his enemies. This move prompted about 400 soldiers of the Dessaline battalion to join the revolt. Heavy artillery and machine-gun fire were reported; unofficial reports estimated that 12 people were killed and more than 75 were wounded.

In Haiti the level of frustration is high. Ninety percent of the population suffers from extreme poverty, and violence has become for many the only form of political expression. There seems to be no end in sight for these frequent military revolts. According to numerous reports, at least 400 soldiers from the Dessaline battalion went into hiding after the failed coup, and they took all their weapons with them.

Four presidents since 1986 have tried to lead Haiti; three are in exile (including Avril, as of this writing) and the current transitional government is plagued by its predecessors' floundering social and economic policies.

Action Taken by The Government of Haiti (GOH) and Non-Governmental Organizations

On April 10, President Avril held a news conference in which he tried to calm and reassure Haitians that he was still committed to democratic principles. He requested medical assistance from the United States and also indicated that the Haitian Red Cross was providing medical assistance to the wounded.

Assistance Provided by the U.S. Government

On April 8, 1989, following a survey of domestic reports and contact with the Haitian government the U.S. Ambassador Brunson McKinley declared the unrest a disaster. He allocated $25,000 to the Haitian Red Cross for the procurement of medicine.

TOTAL **$25,000**

Assistance Provided by U.S. Voluntary Agencies

None reported

Assistance Provided By the International Community

LRCS - donated $6,430 for the purchase of bandages and sutures.

TOTAL **$6,430**