



Progress report on Haiti relief, reconstruction,
and development work since 12 January 2010

Centre for International Studies and Cooperation
(CECI)



PHOTO: Jean-François Lemire

When the earthquake hit Haiti, CECI was one of the first organizations to swing into action on behalf of the victims. Forty years of experience in Haiti has taught us that it was important for us to take on aspects of the humanitarian relief work that are closely related to the goals of our longer-term development projects.

We were able to marshal an effective response to the crisis on the strength of our in-depth knowledge of Haitian realities and our ability to engage in a serious collaborative effort with the local population with a view to optimizing the results of every initiative undertaken.

Since the first day of the Urgence Haïti campaign, over \$21 million in cash and in kind has been collected. This is additional to the \$18 million invested in Haiti by CECI in 2009–10 as part of our regular programming. To date, some 750,000 Haitians have benefited from our humanitarian relief work. In total, across all our development projects, CECI reaches 4 million people in Haiti.

The following are the primary areas of CECI's work in Haiti since the earthquake, with descriptions of the different operations and projects:

I) HUMANITARIAN RELIEF – INITIAL PHASE

During the initial humanitarian relief phase running from January to April 2010, the main goal was to **save lives**. Given the nature and magnitude of the disaster, priority was accorded to fortifying the health services provided by hospitals outside Port-au-Prince. CECI mobilized health professionals and supplied these hospitals with medical supplies and equipment. Other measures taken to support the victims included distribution of water, food, and survival kits as well as building of temporary shelters.

CECI, which already had well-established operations in the affected areas, responded immediately to the victims' distress call. Our field team composed of Haitian nationals promptly went into action on January 13. Meanwhile in Canada, CECI employees and a team of volunteers worked tirelessly for several weeks to support the humanitarian relief operation taking place in the field.

Health and crisis response volunteers



CECI mobilized more than 100 volunteers from a range of professions, including doctors, nurses, logistics experts, communication specialists, crisis responders, psychiatrists, and psychologists. Most of them were from the Haitian diaspora.

Consistent with CECI's broader development approach, the involvement of the Haitian diaspora had the effect of humanizing the humanitarian aid effort (same language, culture, customs, etc.) and maximizing the effectiveness of our operations.

Food and drinking water



CECI proceeded to distribute large quantities of food and water (150,000 food kits in total). With a view to stimulating the resumption of economic activity, we put a priority on purchasing food staples on the local markets in Artibonite and Bas Plateau Central. Local purchasing accounted for 80% of the staple items distributed, compared with 20% from Canada. Since

12 January 2010, some 450,000 people have benefited from 600 tons of food products distributed by CECI. In total, \$1.2 million was invested in the local economy.

The food was distributed working hand in hand with the national Civil Protection Branch, the city and town councils, and the neighbourhood committees along the Port-au-Prince-Carrefour-Gressier-Léogane-Grand Goâve-Petit Goâve axis, as well as in the communes of Saint-Marc, Gonaïves, Anse Rouge, Petite Rivière de l'Artibonite, Gros Morne, and Grande Saline (Artibonite department).

Health



CECI distributed stocks of medicines and medical supplies worth over \$1.3 million, helping to keep the delivery of health services flowing in several of the country's hospitals. This support was decisive given that health services in the capital had been heavily compromised and thousands of survivors had gone to seek care elsewhere. The following health facilities received this support:

- Diquini Hospital
- Centre pour le développement de la santé
- Hinche Hospital
- Wesleyenne de la Gonâve Hospital
- Quisqueya University Mobile Clinic'
- Civil Protection Branch
- Roche-à-Bateau Hospital
- Hôpital du Nord
- St. Marc Hospital
- Cardinal Léger Hospital

The Cardinal Léger Hospital, based in Léogane and directed by the Sœurs Missionnaires de Christ-Roi congregation, received earmarked support from CECI to help them restore health services, which were completely interrupted after the earthquake. Thanks to this support, the severely damaged outpatient clinic was refurbished and temporary shelters were set up for the nuns who operate the facility. CECI also provided medicines, medical supplies, and core funding to pay six months of medical staff salaries.

A special reproductive (prenatal and postpartum) health project was rolled out by CECI in conjunction with a local organization, Solidarité des Femmes Haïtiennes (SOFA), with the aim of providing support for pregnant women living in the refugee camps. Surveys by the two organizations showed that birthing in the camps was unsafe, since access to medicines was limited and essential prenatal and postpartum supplies were not widely available.

CECI deployed reproductive health professionals (doctors, nurses, and social workers) to the camps; offered medical consultations from mobile clinics; distributed medicines,

nutritional supplements, and food; distributed kits for pregnant women containing supplies to facilitate safer birthing; distributed kits for newborns, and set up temporary shelters (tents, tarps, etc.) for pregnant and nursing women.

This initiative afforded welcome reassurance to many pregnant women, particularly those in the late stages of their pregnancy. Many of them stated subsequently that they felt valued because their specific needs had been provided for, giving them what they needed to protect themselves and their babies.

Temporary shelter



In the weeks following the quake, CECI provided temporary shelters (tents, tarps, and blankets) worth a total of \$239,000. Given the immense numbers of people in need, CECI prioritized the most vulnerable: pregnant and nursing women, seniors, children living in orphanages, people with disabilities, and the injured and the sick.

A group of young Haitian volunteers did much of the work of setting up the shelters, for which they deserve all our thanks.

Hygiene and survival kits

In the initial weeks, access to non-food (e.g., personal hygiene) items and other essentials was an absolute necessity for the majority of the victims, who had just lost everything.

CECI prepared and distributed more than 18,000 hygiene kits and about 7000 survival kits, with special attention to the needs of women and children. These kits, worth a total of \$2.2 million, were composed largely of non-food items: towels, sanitary napkins, diapers, soap, laundry soap, shampoo, cookware, flashlights, covered buckets, toothpaste, toothbrushes, water purification supplies, sandals, etc.

In-kind donations accounted for 10% of the total value of the products. The remaining \$2 million in purchases were made 60% in Canada, where CECI took advantage of special discounts offered by Canadian suppliers in response to the crisis. Thanks to these programs, CECI achieved substantial savings (over \$100,000), meaning that we could reach a larger number of beneficiaries.

Recapitalization of women's small businesses



While women's specific needs are a cross-cutting concern in all CECI projects, we also developed a specific women's component of the relief work in cooperation with certain women's organizations. One important component was recapitalization of women-owned small businesses. The goal was to provide for a resumption of economic activity through recapitalization of small businesses which had lost everything in the quake. As at November 30, some 4000 women had benefited from the recapitalization program, representing a total investment of \$1.6 million.

The program, though implemented in an emergency relief context, is part and parcel of a longer-term development vision in that it relies on the key role played by women in the Haitian economy and as breadwinners in general. The role of the partner women's organizations involved in the project is to help identify beneficiaries based on their knowledge of the local context; the organizations also take part in coordination and direct assistance to the beneficiaries. Furthermore, in the areas covered by the project (Port-au-Prince, Jacmel, Nord, Artibonite, Plateau Central), CECI works with representatives of the Ministry of the Status of Women and Women's Rights (MCFDF) and with local elected officials.

Thanks to the resumption of their economic activities, the women will now be able to meet their own and their children's needs, an obvious imperative for them. Some of the beneficiaries have recounted how the ability to find new housing lifted their mood and given them a new lease on life. This aid will make a significant contribution to improving the lives of the people it reaches.

Another crucial consideration is that recapitalization is an important factor in opening lenders' doors to these businesses. Their renewed commercial activity, however limited, is an essential qualification for them to obtain a loan. The initial results of a June 2010 survey of 30% of the program beneficiaries in Port-au-Prince and Jacmel shows that a large number have managed to increase their working capital by half while eliminating certain of their own daily household expenditures.

II) HUMANITARIAN RELIEF – SECOND PHASE

The second phase of CECI's emergency relief program has the goal of improving the victims' economic status so as to favour their long-term survival.

This phase, which began on 1 May 2010, dovetails with our long-term development approach. The emphasis is on prevention and mitigation of risks and natural disasters, and on economic improvement through massive job creation initiatives and recapitalization of women-owned businesses.

This same approach is used to help people who fled the Port-au-Prince metropolitan area for places inland. To stabilize these displaced persons in the host communes and dissuade them from effecting a premature return to the capital, CECI developed a specific job creation program for them, which revolves around farm infrastructure rehabilitation, watershed management, and creation of women's economic opportunities. This strategy also aims to support the members of the host families of these displaced people, consolidate their food security, and support local food production.

During this second phase of relief work, major support is being provided for resumption and reinforcement of social and municipal services as well as rebuilding or improvement of habitat. As well, support for vulnerable people is continuing.

Distribution

Mass distribution was discontinued on 1 May 2010 to concentrate on distribution to the most vulnerable. CECI channels this support through hospitals, schools, orphanages, senior citizens' centres, and other similar facilities. CECI makes every effort to stimulate

and support the local economy, and we continue to source what we distribute from Haiti's rural markets insofar as possible.

Help for displaced persons and host families

In May 2010 CECI set up a project to help the displaced and host families survive by offering them paid work designed to produce immediate positive impacts. The jobs consisted of watershed management, riverbed correction, refurbishment of social and farm infrastructure, municipal sanitation, and women's recapitalization (see under "Recapitalization of women's small businesses" for more about this aspect). This project has a total budget of over \$7 million. Nearly half of this amount had been invested as at 30 November 2010, resulting in the creation of over 10,000 temporary jobs (50% held by women) in Artibonite. On-the-ground results included rehabilitation of farm infrastructure (dams, irrigation ditches) and building of watershed protection structures.

Risk and natural disaster mitigation

CECI works on capacity building for the local resident-run civil protection committees. We provide training, supplies, and equipment (motorcycles, generators, etc.), and help build and set up work spaces for the employees. Risk mitigation is operationalized through watershed management, soil conservation, and similar projects. These activities are carried out in synergy with the job creation project for the victims and their host families.

For CECI, reducing the Haitian population's vulnerability to future natural disasters is fundamentally a matter of strengthening local governance, which entails support for municipalities, local civil protection officials, and civil society.

Reconstruction

In partnership with Development and Peace, CECI is supporting the Institut des Sœurs Missionnaires de l'Immaculée Conception. The project comprises the rebuilding of a primary school, a secondary school, and a preschool. About 850 children from disadvantaged backgrounds attend these schools each year. A total of \$700,000 was invested in the project.

Included in the work that CECI has undertaken to alleviate the damage caused by the earthquake is the rehabilitation of 640 host family homes in the department of Artibonite. In synergy with our risk mitigation program, and in close cooperation with the local authorities, CECI is also participating in the construction of two evacuation centres in Gonaïves and Grande Saline. These two Artibonite communes are among the most vulnerable to flooding. In total, \$2.4 million is earmarked for these two initiatives.

Response to the cholera epidemic

CECI was among the first organizations to take action on the cholera epidemic declared on October 19. The work done so far has helped 11 communes in the department of Artibonite. It has included distribution of soap, oral rehydration salts (ORS), and water purification tablets; training and demonstrations on hand washing, oral serum preparation, and water purification techniques; as well as promotion and public education on hygiene measures. To date, 30,000 households have benefited from the materials and over 190,000 people have been educated on cholera prevention.

In addition to the purchases made, CECI was entrusted by the Haitian authorities with large stocks of supplies (purification tablets, soap, ORS) to support and strengthen the campaign.

CECI has just obtained \$400,000 in new funding from USAID to extend our cholera prevention campaign to the entire Artibonite department, considered the primary centre of the epidemic. An additional 50,000 families, the majority of them from rural areas, are covered by this new project. Added to this, a critical mass of 1000 hygiene multipliers, the majority of them from community organizations, will be given community-based training.

Faced with the magnitude of the crisis, CECI is continuing its fundraising campaign so that it will be able to extend the work to other departments of the country.

III) SUCCESS FACTORS

Wherever we operate, CECI's chief strength is always to gear our strategy towards helping society's most vulnerable people. CECI's mission is to combat poverty and social exclusion around the world.

Our emergency relief program following the earthquake enabled 750,000 people to temporarily meet their basic needs. The magnitude of the challenges posed by the reconstruction is an ever-present concern, but it remains that without our support, the families supported would now find themselves in critical situations that would have jeopardized their lives, and particularly the lives of children and the elderly. It can be said unequivocally that the program helps to preserve their health and save their lives. Indeed, for many people, life has resumed its normal course.

The progress we have achieved is essentially due to the implementation strategy used for the program, which is an amalgam of the following key factors:

Focus on the most vulnerable

In accordance with our mission, CECI chose not to manage any refugee camps. Instead, we provide aid to vulnerable groups that did not or could not move to the camps. This specifically refers to people in hospitals, schools, religious congregations and their schools where many victims took refuge, orphanages, certain households, and other forms of shelter (e.g., seniors' and women's centres).

Participation, coordination, and collaboration

The emphasis placed on cooperation with local partners yielded satisfying results. These partners are the Civil Protection Branch, the municipalities, the commune-level civil protection committees, the local camp management committees, and the international humanitarian aid organizations. In particular, support received from the Haitian government, through BMPAD, a national executing agency for development projects (provision of a free warehouse); DINEPA (provision of supplies to combat the cholera epidemic), or the General Consul of Haiti in Montreal was decisive in the program's accomplishments. A Dominican Republic (DR)-based partner, the Jesuit-run Centro Francisco Bono, assisted CECI by expediting transit for items shipped from Canada to Haiti through the DR (approximately 80% of all supplies shipped).

Finally, our close ties to the Haitian diaspora enabled numerous Haitian expatriates to put their knowledge and expertise to work for their besieged compatriots. This experience illustrates CECI's capacity to channel the solidarity expressed by a segment of the diaspora who felt excluded from humanitarian relief efforts. CECI intends to

capitalize on this experience and on the continuing momentum within the Haitian diaspora in order to make a positive contribution to the reconstruction of Haiti.

Gender equality



Gender equality is central to CECI's concerns. We made special efforts to identify vulnerable households for distribution of kits, particularly in the case of larger households and households with pregnant women. In addition, women made up 50% of the beneficiaries of our job creation program and were the prime beneficiaries of the small business recapitalization program.

Appropriate use of human resources

An important success factor has been the support of the entire CECI staff, both in Canada and in Haiti. With everyone pitching in, the resulting combination of experience in the Haitian context meant that CECI has been able to achieve the anticipated results and to consolidate its experience in humanitarian relief work.

Risk and disaster mitigation

Risk and disaster mitigation programs are an indispensable feature of any comprehensive effort to reduce the Haitian people's vulnerability and prevent new catastrophes. CECI intends to pursue its risk mitigation program, which will take over where the emergency relief program leaves off. Mitigation is deployed in synergy with the regular development program so as to magnify efforts to preserve the environment, revivify the local economy, and strengthen governance.

IV) FINANCIAL PARTNERS AND PRINCIPAL DONORS

In response to the call for solidarity put out following the quake, Canadians showed great generosity. The total amount collected from Canadians represents about 50% of the total monies donated, with the contributions from our financial partners – CIDA, USAID, the Quebec Ministry of International Relations (MRI), the decentralized CIDA fund management arm (CGF), the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie (OIF), and the Union of Quebec Municipalities (UMQ) – making up the other half. CECI additionally received \$4 million worth of donations in the form of goods and services from Canadian companies.

V) OUTLOOK

While the challenges in Haiti remain daunting, our teams are hard at work. On the ground, over 160 employees and volunteers, mainly Haitian nationals, are working in concert with the local authorities and the many actors of civil society to successfully carry out our ongoing projects. This work currently covers half the country's geographical area. Our strength is a function of our physical and institutional connections to the community. With the expertise we have developed over the years, we are convinced of the relevance of our approach to assisting the Haitian people in their development and reconstruction efforts.

CECI is involved in many humanitarian assistance, development, and volunteer cooperation projects in 18 countries around the world. In the area of humanitarian assistance, we have ongoing projects in Haiti, Pakistan, Guatemala, the Philippines, and the Sahel (response to the food crisis in Niger). Following the initial disaster relief phase,

we implement socioeconomic revitalization and reconstruction projects. At all times, we continue our longer-term development work, which does a great deal to speed the communities' return to their normal activities.