

# Haiti

## *Executive Summary*

Long identified as the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere, Haiti has been plagued by violence and lawlessness since 2004, when President Aristide fled into exile. Political instability in the last years have contributed to further deterioration in the social and economic well being of Haiti's citizens, increased the vulnerabilities created by widespread poverty and environmental degradation, and poor performance of its governance institutions, hampering basic services and preventing humanitarian assistance from reaching the vulnerable.

Extreme poverty, combined with political, social and economic instability and recurrent natural disasters have exacerbated vulnerability to food insecurity for large sectors of the population in Haiti. Young children, pregnant mothers and lactating women are at particular risk. Diarrhoea, respiratory infections, malaria, tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS are the leading causes of death.

A significant part of the population, some 60 percent of people, primarily in rural areas, lack access to basic services and therefore remain highly exposed to risks. Less than 50% of the total population has access to potable water in both rural and urban areas; access to sanitary facilities is available to only 28 percent of the population. There is one doctor for every 1,000 inhabitants. Haiti's maternal and infant mortality rates - two of the most sensitive health development indicators - are the highest in the region and among the highest in the world. Haiti has the largest number of TB patients in the Caribbean, and the highest HIV/AIDS prevalence in the hemisphere, although the infection rate appears to be slowly declining. The latest figures (from 2004 by the Ministry of Health accompanied by independent institutions) pointed to a 3.44 per cent prevalence rate, based on tests of pregnant women. At least 200,000 children have lost one or both parents to AIDS. An estimated 19,000 children are living with HIV/AIDS.

An estimated 65% of children age six to twelve attend primary school. Only one quarter of these complete grade six. Forty percent of schools in Haiti have no actual buildings and 48% of Haitians are illiterate. Numerous schools and hospitals have closed because teachers, social workers and health providers could not go to work for fear of violence.

Because of Haiti's high population density and its decaying infrastructure, the country is particularly vulnerable to the effects of natural disasters. Degradation of the natural resource base continues unabated with extensive deforestation and soil erosion resulting in increasingly devastating destruction following natural disasters.

The ensuing chronic humanitarian crisis demanded substantial efforts, both by the Haitian government and the international community, to provide tangible solutions to Haiti's problems.

Following the Presidential election early February 2006, armed groups (gangs) in shantytowns moved quickly to support the new government by enabling it to make high profile improvements in Cité Soleil and other poor communities that had very few, if any, public services and economic opportunities. These marginalized communities were susceptible to gang activity and political manipulation. As a result, they had high rates of crime and unemployment.

Given that Cité Soleil - a very densely populated slum on the Northern edge of Port-au-Prince, generally regarded as one of the poorest, roughest and most dangerous areas of the capital - had proven its capacity to destabilize the capital, with a ceasefire declared by gangs after the election, it seemed that there was greater potential to make significant progress towards stability. The Haiti's newly elected government has promised "quick wins" in the area of social

development and employment in an attempt to bring about greater stability, outlined priorities that will set the country firmly on the path of reconstruction and development, and requested the support of the international community to implement programmes with a specific focus to establish and/or maintain stability.

The geographical position of Cité Soleil, which is the largest slum in Haiti, puts this zone in a very vulnerable position. Its population, approximately 200,000 inhabitants, leaves in high vulnerability and most of its residents are children and young adults. For more than two years the area has been left to its own, with no external support except from health organisations like ICRC and MSF. This long isolation has generated an extreme bight of the living conditions of the population especially in regards of access to potable water and general sanitation.

The access to water is inadequate, only some 25 per cent have access to drinking water. Around 63 percent of the population in Cité Soleil was exposed at high risks of water borne diseases and 60 percent of the population attended in health centres suffered from diarrhoea.

Out of the many problems that the Cité is facing regarding sanitation, one of the most urgent and dramatic is the critical state of its open-air canals network. The role of these infrastructures is to collect the waters coming from the rains and the sewers and evacuate them to the sea. The Cité Soleil canals' network is composed of small drains spread out inside the urban zones and two major canals crossing the Cité all the way to the shore. Due to lack of maintenance and cleaning over the past years, these canals have become immediate health hazards to a large part of the population living in their surroundings. The accumulated rubbishes inside these canals impede the sewage disposal causing frequent flooding and the proliferation of stagnant contaminated water areas.

As deprived as the population of Cité Soleil, also the population of two other shantytowns of Port-au-Prince, Mariani and Savanne Pistache, faced an imminent humanitarian crisis of huge proportions. With an estimated population at some 50,000, Mariani and Savanne Pistache were built by squatters over years of uncontrolled construction.

Owing to the deforestation and anarchic construction on the mountains surrounding Port-au-Prince, this overpopulated city faces the inevitable scenario that the regular under-publicized small-scale landslides and houses that are swept down denuded hills, causing injury and death, will culminate in a massive disaster that will cause huge sections of the mountain (Morne Hôpital) to slide, cover and wash away thousands of the houses on an unthinkable scale and result in displacement and loss of life.

For several years, Mariani and to a lesser extent, Savanne Pistache (both located at various points on the Morne Hôpital mountain range), moved towards a humanitarian and ecological catastrophe in an atmosphere of almost total indifference. The sides of this mountain range are littered with thousands of uncontrolled concrete dwellings that have been erected with no control from the urban planning authorities. During the cyclonic period water from the downpours was not naturally brought to gutters and sewers, which were practically non-existent, and flow into the into the streets blocking the main road that connects the capital to the four administrative departments in the South of Haiti.

In early 2006 around 500 families of Mariani had to evacuate the area to avoid becoming victim to massive flooding and landslides. With the onset of the 2006 hurricane season, which promised to be more active than usual, there was ever more urgent need to work on mitigating the risks of displacement and loss of life. The imminence of an humanitarian disaster in the area made front page headlines on May (The Nouvelliste, May 3).

Total amount of humanitarian funding required (per reporting year):	US\$ 1,000,000
Total amount of CERF funding received by window (rapid response/underfunded):	Underfunded: US\$ 1,000,000
Total amount of CERF funding for direct UN/IOM implementation and total amount forwarded to implementing partners Note: This total must equal the total CERF funding allocated	US\$ 1,000,000
Total number of beneficiaries targeted and reached with CERF funding (disaggregated by sex/age):	250,000 persons Women – 132,500 Children <5 – 31,250
Geographic areas of implementation:	Slum areas of Port-au-Prince: Cité Soleil, Mariani and Savanne Pistache.

### ***Decision-making***

In response to requests made by the Government of Haiti that extended the Interim Cooperation Framework (ICF) to September 2007 and announced the creation of a Social Appeasement Programme (PAS) for each of the country's communes, partly funded by the ICF, and designed to respond to the pressing needs of Haiti's poorest citizens in the short term, the UN System and the international community agreed to support the Government in implementing projects aiming at strengthening the authorities' national and local capacities to better identify vulnerable groups, to provide them with assistance, and to ensure the monitoring of social conditions along with identifying the humanitarian needs not yet covered.

The Interim Cooperation Framework (ICF) was initiated by the previous transitional government to be implemented from July 2004 to September 2006. The ICF aimed to frame external assistance on the basis of a joint Government and donors realistic identification of the needs and programmes for the transition period and, going forward, to trigger a broader partnership for the preparation of a Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper.

As Cité Soleil is considered an emblematic site, like a barometer, from which depends national political and social stailisation, UN agencies and NGOs agreed to expand activities and unhindered/direct assess to Cité Soleil and other similar areas of the capital Port-au-Prince, thus contributing to population stabilisation, while also serving to reduce political tensions.

The UN Country Team (UNCT) created a Task Force in which NGOs, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and donors actively participated, and after several joint integrated assessment of needs it was decided to give priority to projects aiming to promote early action and response to reduce loss of life. All selected projects also aimed to promote community-level stability in key crisis spots, this being achieved with a strategy of concentrating community labour. Implementing agencies for the under-funded CERF projects have also been selected by the referred Task Force.

Furthermore, and considering that Haiti is prone to natural disasters, the UNCT also decided that besides two projects in Cité Soleil it would be also important to give special attention to the two areas of the capital most vulnerable to flooding and mudslides.

Discussions of priorities with NGOs were also undertaken on the bi-weekly humanitarian coordination forum, with a broad participation of NGOs.

On both field assessments and identification of priorities government institutions, MINUSTAH sections and community groups have also participated.

## ***Implementation***

### **UNOPS – Cite Soleil Canal Cleaning Project**

The objectives of the CERF/UNOPS project were to conduct the following activities:

- Dredging a 1.2 km long section of the most important canal in Cité Soleil: Canal St-George;
- Dredging a 900 m long section of the most important peripheral canal of St-George canal: Canal Lumiere;
- Cleaning of the streets gutters in the different neighborhoods next to Canal St-George;
- Disposal of all the extracted materials to the Truitier landfill outside Cité Soleil.

UNOPS key partnerships were implemented with the local NGO Fondation MARTIN Luther Jules (MLJ), in charge of all the recruitment, training, supervision and payroll management of the local workforce . The execution of the works has been handled by a local organization COREM (Coalition des Organisations pour le Respect et l'Encadrement des Masses) and four (4) private contractors. (Please see Table1, Annex 1)

Due to the unstable security situation prevailing in Cité Soleil from November 2006 to February 2007, the implementation of the project would not have been possible without the involvement of local partners. They were able to mobilized rapidly all the local labor as well as to provide the security guarantees necessary to conduct such works. Furthermore, the local NGO was able to provide training resources with expertise in high intensity labor project.

The two main local partners: Février Consulting and Fondation MLJ provided on a daily basis status reports on their respective works with dated pictures. On a weekly basis, financial reports where presented with all the expensed related to: labor, fuel, and rental.

### **IOM - Ravine Control and Dry Wall Construction in Mariani and Savanne Pistache**

IOM conducted in the project in close partnership with the Ministry of Environment (MoE) and the NGO Organization Nationale des Jeunes Professionnels pour Sauver Haiti (ONJPSH). (Please see Table 2, Annex 1)

Meetings with representatives of the MoE were held regularly to inform of the progress of the project and officials from the Ministry conducted two monitoring visits to the project sites. Effective collaboration was achieved with ONJPSH. Three project supervisors were recruited from this organization and supervised daily activities on both project sites. They organized frequent meetings with team leaders and overseers in order to plan the work to be done and measure results attained according to established indicators; the project management structure proved effective and the pace of construction was on target. A significant level of community motivation and participation was observed as a result.

Involvement of the community at each targeted area was assured through the recruitment of 10 community members at each project site who were trained in the techniques of conducting information and sensitization campaigns and in the content of campaign messages, including project objectives and activities. The trainees then conducted a week-long information campaign at each project site, through discussions with community groups, community leaders and the

wider population to raise awareness on project objectives and activities as well as conservation of dry rock walls. As a result of these activities, many community members became interested in participating in and working on this project: 200 unskilled labourers, 20 team leaders and 10 overseers worked in Savanne Pistache, while 800 unskilled labourers, 40 team leaders and 20 overseers worked in Mariani. Overall, 1,075 individuals (with an average of 26% of work teams composed of women) were employed for a period of 10 weeks (6 working days per week). This represented a total of 64,500 person days.

A week-long technical training event was held, with two days of practical exercises conducted at the construction sites, at which 75 persons were trained in the methods of building dry rock walls for ravine control. All necessary tools (picks, diggers, awls, wheelbarrows, ribbons metric, levels of masonry, level A with plumb line, strings for masonry, etc.) were bought, transported to the project sites and distributed to the 50 construction teams. Regarding construction work, all activities at both locations began on the 3rd of July. Dry rock walls were built throughout the ravines over a period of 10 weeks. By the end of the project, a total of 2 ravines in Savanne Pistache and 7 ravines in Mariani were adequately equipped and controlled. During the first week of project implementation, 10 community members at each project site were selected and trained in the techniques of conducting information and sensitization campaigns and in the content of campaign messages, including project objectives and activities and conservation of dry rock walls. The trainees then conducted a week-long information campaign at each project site, through discussions with community groups, community leaders and the wider population to raise-awareness on project objectives and activities.

### **PAHO/WHO – Water for all in Cite Soleil**

To implement its project and in order to facilitate an inclusive partnership PAHO (Pan-American Health Organization)/WHO set-up a Project Management Commission, in which participated representatives of all non-profit public and international organisations. The Ministry of Health (Ministère de la Santé Publique et la Population, MSPP, in French), the CAMEP (Centrale Autonome Métropolitaine d'Eau Potable, which is the public entity responsible for water), ICRC, MSF, the University of Haiti and PAHO/WHO were the members of the referred Commission. PAHO/WHO was in charge of general planning and guidance, identification of strategies, contacts with Government and donor (CERF), and administrative procedures. A technical team composed by the Ministry of Health, CAMEP and ICRC was in charge of planning and coordinating all electric and hydraulic activities. The University of Haiti and MSF both coordinated epidemiological research and studies on quality of water and on the impact of the project. CAMEP, the local committee for water and community representatives assumed responsibilities for training, sensitization, social mobilisation and communication. Each of the referred working groups held several meetings with its members.

The division of responsibilities according the different domains of intervention facilitated the planning and the implementation of activities.

### **Results**

#### **UNOPS – Cite Soleil Canal Cleaning Project**

While taking into account the budgetary and time constraints, two (2) objectives were aimed at during the design of the project:

- To remove as much rubbish as possible; and
- To create as many jobs as possible.

As a result, it was decided to undertake the large cleaning activities in the Canal St-George stretch with machineries and to use unskilled local labor for the cleaning of Canal Lumière and the streets clusters.

As an integrated approach, the manual interventions have been supported by machineries for the removal and transport of the rubbish to the landfill.

Due to the unstable security situation prevailing in Cité Soleil from November 2006 to February 2007, the option of having access to MINUSTAH's heavy equipments on a permanent basis had to be set aside and all the machineries necessary for the cleaning works had to be rented from local private companies. In spite of the fact that this option put pressure on the budget it guaranteed a continuous execution of the works.

The mechanical cleaning activities were conducted during fifteen (15) working days from December 4th to the 22nd. One (1) excavator and fifteen (15) trucks were rented during this period. Luckily, only one (1) day of work was lost during the fifteen (15) days due to insecurity.

The small width and depth of the canal Lumiere that pours forth in the Canal St-George allowed the utilization of local unskilled workers for its dredging. Enlargement works of the canal in certain location were also realized with the use of a backhoe loader.

In order to maximize de number of beneficiaries within the community four (4) teams of three hundred and eight (308) workers each were composed; each team working for a period of two (2) full weeks. In addition, twenty height (28) local people were employed as foremen and team leaders. Thus, one thousand two hundred sixty (1,260) local residents have been involved in this project.

Every day, groups of ten (10) to twenty (20) workers were created and dispatched in the different work zones of the project. All workers were equipped with safety equipments (rubber boots, gloves and dust masks) and had access to cleaning tools (shovels, picks, wheelbarrows and brooms).

Once a week, all the manually extracted materials (between 400 to 600m<sup>3</sup>) were collected by a backhoe loader and transported by trucks to the Truitier landfill.

### **IOM - Ravine Control and Dry Wall Construction in Mariani and Savanne Pistache**

The main results of the IOM CERF funded project are as following:

- 75 persons trained in the construction of dry rock walls;
- 940 linear meters of ravines protected and controlled in Savanne Pistache through the construction of 94 dry rock walls, spaced 10 meters apart from one another, using 5,736 cubic meters of rocks;
- A total of 18,590 linear meters of ravines protected and controlled in Mariani and Savanne Pistache through the construction of 1,859 dry rock walls, spaced 10 meters apart from one another, using 36,248 cubic meters of rocks.
- Inhabitants of Mariani instructed on maintenance of dry rock walls, through a two-week sensitization campaign undertaken by 10 trained community members by the end of the project;
- Inhabitants of Mariani and Savanne Pistache informed of project objectives and activities, through a one-week awareness-raising campaign conducted at each project site by 20 trained community members.

## **PAHO/WHO – Water for all in Cite Soleil**

The PAHO/WHO project aimed at the rehabilitation of the water conveyance system in order to increase the quantity and the quality of water provided to the population in Cité Soleil ; to re-organise the water management model to include the community ; and to create local employment opportunities.

Project included: i) setting-up a water treatment system ; ii) evaluation of household water needs ; iii) distribution of reactants and disinfecting for water physico-chimiques and microbiologiques analysis ; iv) equipment for a water well ; v) electric and hydraulic material and equipment, such as generator, water pumps, etc.; and vi) buildings for equipment and security.

### ***Lessons Learned***

#### **UNOPS – Cite Soleil Canal Cleaning Project**

Project funds were made available to UNOPS on July 25 2006, however, works could not be launched before mid-November 2006 because of the prevalent insecurity situation in Cité Soleil during the second half of 2006. This situation prevented the mobilization of military or civil machineries required for the large dredging activities. Furthermore, the approach of the peak of the hurricane season (September-October) put additional pressure on UNOPS to postpone the beginning of the works in November.

The project was officially launched on November 13, 2006 and ended on February 3, 2007, with a two weeks break during the holiday season in December.

The UNOPS CERF funded project was very well welcomed by the population leaving in the neighborhood of the canals, especially at the approach of the holiday season. The results of the project were immediate – improvement of the leaving and sanitation conditions, injection of new money in the area and direct community sensitization on sanitation measures.

However, even if the short/medium term benefits are undeniable, it is clear that such project is not enough to have a strong effect on the improvement of the sanitation conditions of the population living in the area adjacent of the canal St-George. Sooner or later, the canal will be replenished if no actions are taken on its upstream catchment area and its downstream section joining the sea.

In order to maximize the impact of the project on a longer base, all the project's tools and safety equipments have been handed over to the local organization COREM. COREM, who has been responsible of the execution of the manual works, has agreed, by taking ownership of these tools, to manage their utilization and to conduct community cleaning works on a regular basis

#### **IOM - Ravine Control and Dry Wall Construction in Mariani and Savanne Pistache**

The implementation of the IOM project was not impeded by any major constraints. Local communities took an active part in the project and the workers performed according to instructions. The structure established to manage project activities proved effective.

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## **PAHO/WHO – Water for all in Cite Soleil**

The PAHO/WHO project started in July 2006 and about seventy-six percent of the CERF approved funds have been spent from early July up to the end of 2006. The majority of the activities have been implemented as planned. However some constraints as the security situation in the area, heavy administrative procedures and the in-country availability of hydraulic equipments resulted on some delay on the implementation of PAHO/WHO project. Working with the community in order to increase the participation required constant tolerance and flexibility. During the implementation of the PAHO/WHO project security constraints related with illegal armed created serious access difficulties, as for large periods private companies refused to work in Cité Soleil. Moreover the inexistence of hydraulic material at country contributed to some delays. Conflicts within the government institution in charge of water provision have also affected both the beginning of the project and the general coordination.