



Haiti Earthquake Emergency Report

January 2010 – December 2012



A new generation of Haitians is growing up in a country forever changed by the earthquake of January 2010.

Introduction

Three years after the worst earthquake in Haiti's history, on January 12, 2010, the massive task of recovery and reconstruction continues in the face of sometimes daunting challenges including political gridlock, donor fatigue and chaotic property laws. Despite the odds, CARE's five-year, \$100-million plan for immediate and longer-term relief and recovery continues to make progress toward helping Haitian families rebuild their lives and livelihoods.

In all our efforts, CARE places a special focus on addressing the particular needs of women and girls in both short- and longer-term activities, from the delivery of vaccinations and reproductive health services to the creation of economic opportunity through village savings and loans associations. Against a backdrop of all-too-frequent sexual violence and exploitation – even worse in the aftermath of a disaster – we have launched a large-scale program that helps Haitians strengthen their own institutions and community efforts to protect women and girls from domestic violence and abuse. A key element of our efforts to counter gender-based violence is the recruitment of men as advocates.

Basic housing remains a major challenge in Haiti's capital, Port-au-Prince. Some 350,000 people still live in 496 camps scattered around the city. CARE has taken a new approach to reducing those numbers in the capital's Carrefour area, offering to repair houses for homeowners who are willing to host a camp family for one year, rent-free. To support long-term improvement in urban development, we engage local master construction workers and provide training in durable, disaster-resistant building techniques that meet the Haitian Ministry of Public Works' post-earthquake building code standards. We continue to integrate efforts aimed at disaster and risk reduction, as well as good governance, across the spectrum of our programming in Haiti.

For all our progress, recovery in Haiti will inevitably face setbacks, including fragile government institutions, a weak educational infrastructure and future natural disasters. As both a cause and consequence of poverty, the country is extremely vulnerable to floods and mudslides associated with climate change. Since the earthquake, the island has suffered no fewer than three hurricanes. The most recent, Sandy, posed a widespread threat to food security by destroying 42 percent of Haiti's corn, 30 percent of its rice and 20 percent of its bean crop. Catastrophes like these only strengthen CARE's determination to stand with our Haitian partners over the long haul, as they seek to become more resilient and better prepared for whatever challenges lie ahead.

CARE's work in Haiti over the three years since the earthquake has been made possible thanks to many donors. We have reached tens of thousands of Haitians with crucial assistance as they work to rebuild their lives. On their behalf, we offer our sincere thanks for your generosity.

CARE's Response

In the initial weeks and months after the earthquake struck on January 12, 2010, CARE's emergency response team delivered lifesaving food, water, shelter and other vital services to 290,000 Haitians. We also built 2,550 transitional shelters to house approximately 13,400 people and built and rehabilitated 2,500 latrines and showers. Today, the majority of our post-quake programming is focused on sustainable recovery and reconstruction – while we are as always prepared to offer immediate emergency relief where needed, as for example in the case of a food crisis in the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy.

Below we detail highlights of our longer-term programming in several sectors supported in part by generous donations to CARE.

Shelter

CARE supports the return of earthquake survivors whenever possible to their neighborhoods of origin, and is committed to assisting those communities to achieve long-term resilience and self-reliance. Our *Neighborhoods of Return – Neighborhoods Improvement* project works to build a base for reconstruction and recovery based on social links and local capacity that allow neighborhoods to organize and make their own development decisions. We include the municipality throughout the process, to improve links between residents and authorities, build the capacity of government to provide services – including in informal, previously unrecognized settlements such as shantytowns – and improve long-term impact. A key objective is to help residents of informal settlements, many of which are poorly built or on marginal land, to improve their resilience in the face of future disasters.



Mélianie Bernèche, 37 (center), a single mother with six children, is a participant in CARE's Neighborhoods Improvement Program. After the quake she was eventually able to move back into her badly damaged home, but it needed repairs. In exchange for materials and technical support from CARE, Mélianie agreed to take in another single mother with two children for a year.

Our strategy for the project includes identifying existing community groups, or forming new ones, and empowering them to take the lead on decision-making and implementing neighborhood development plans. We deploy technical teams, in coordination with municipal authorities, to improve living conditions and reduce risks for entire neighborhoods, including designing and preparing materials for public works projects and training community and local authorities on disaster risk reduction strategies.

Throughout our shelter work, CARE prioritizes the most vulnerable families in retrofitting or repairing structures. To encourage families to move out of camps and into permanent neighborhoods, an innovative strategy enables established homeowners to provide space for a displaced family in exchange for project support and help expanding living space.

CARE's recent activities in neighborhood improvement include:

- Supervised 64 construction projects including 719 meters of improved walkways to ease accessibility in previously hazardous locations;
- Trained 323 construction workers in improved building techniques following national construction standards;
- Educated 264 homeowners on improved construction, raising demand for quality construction;
- Retrofitted homes for 521 people, now living in safe spaces;
- Allowed 162 people to move out of camps into hosting homes; and
- Rehabilitated 10 pilot homes to serve as model homes for future improvement sites.

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)

Among Haiti's population of more than 10 million, more than 4 million lack access to safe water, and 7 million have no access to a toilet. The earthquake severely damaged existing water supplies, leaving many survivors reliant on unsafe sources and at risk of a second wave of deaths due to water-borne disease. The situation was compounded by a devastating cholera epidemic which swept Haiti beginning in late 2010. Increasing access to safe water, sanitation and hygiene has been a central objective of both CARE's emergency response and our long-term recovery strategy in Haiti.

Immediately following the earthquake, CARE's WASH team ensured access to safe water in 23 camps. WASH teams also monitored vulnerable sites and organized the distribution of water purification tablets (Aquatabs®) to prevent diarrhea and other waterborne diseases. After the cholera outbreak of October 2010, CARE extended WASH activities to the departments of Upper Artibonite, Northwest and Grande Anse, improving access to safe water through Aquatab distributions, water trucking and chlorination of well water. CARE has transitioned from emergency water delivery to longer-term solutions led by communities and local leaders. CARE's WASH team works with communities in the rehabilitation and construction of water sources at the local level, in schools and health centers. Most importantly, we work to establish management structures and train community members in the maintenance of water and sanitation facilities, thus working to ensure sustained access to safe water and improved sanitation.

To prevent the spread of disease and improve basic hygiene in crowded regions of Port-au-Prince, CARE is constructing latrines, hand-washing facilities and public showers in neighborhoods of return. CARE's sanitation activities have since expanded into the construction of shared household latrines as well as sanitation facilities at schools and health centers in the West and Grande Anse regions.

Improving access to facilities is only the beginning. CARE's hygiene promotion teams work with communities to promote good hygiene practices such as hand-washing with soap to prevent the spread of waterborne diseases including cholera. CARE works with community members to improve understanding of the connection between improved hygiene and disease prevention, thus improving quality of life. We also work with communities in properly disposing of solid waste; train teachers to provide hygiene promotion in schools; improve the hygiene promotion skills of professionals in health centers; conduct household visits; and conduct other public outreach such as radio announcements and hygiene workshops.

Sexual and Reproductive Health

Women are disproportionately affected in emergencies, and thus CARE places women and girls at the center of our community-based response to health needs. Pregnant women and new mothers face difficult circumstances in a crisis situation. In Haiti, 75 percent of births take place at home, and maternal and infant mortality rates were already the highest in the Western hemisphere before the disaster. Furthermore, the incidence of sexual violence – including rape, sexual exploitation and child trafficking – was already disproportionately high in Haiti, and has soared since the emergency.



CARE is reaching women in earthquake-affected communities with services including reproductive health, family planning and awareness and prevention of gender-based violence.

Since January 2010, CARE's *Lifesaving Interventions for Women and Girls in Haiti* project has worked to counter gender-based violence (GBV) and reduce illness and loss of life among female survivors. The program aims to improve sexual and reproductive health (SRH) using a community-based approach and partnerships with local health facilities. We develop and work with community organizations, such as fathers' clubs to engage men, peer educators to reach youth, community committees to prevent GBV, and projects that help women nourish small enterprises as sources of income.

Key objectives of our health interventions, both among earthquake survivors and in the general population, include:

- Train community health workers and traditional birth attendants (midwives) on birth preparedness and planning;
- Raise awareness about SRH and establish a referral system for reproductive health care including the facilitation of emergency transportation; and
- Improve dialogue and promote greater social equality between women and men.

Immediately following the quake, CARE responded with large-scale distribution of clean delivery kits, newborn kits, bed sheets, condoms and other necessary SRH items.

In our more recent phase, focusing on longer-term recovery, progress includes:

- Constructed two community centers with five additional centers underway to support vaccinations, family planning, GBV awareness and prevention services;
- Created and trained community committees, with management protocols put in place to assure ongoing, sustainable programs and services are provided to the community;
- Trained staff at key community institutions on rape management and emergency obstetric care, with counseling provided to GBV survivors, both in communities and institutions;
- Trained 172 peer educators who work with youth in target communities to address responsible sexual behavior, family planning and violence prevention;
- Created 161 community clubs – such as mothers' and youth clubs, lactating women's clubs and fathers' clubs – to raise awareness and promote key messages within their communities; and
- Engaged men in SRH/GBV issues with male participants taking an important role in ensuring the health of women and girls.

Food Security, Livelihoods and Economic Development

Haiti has long been characterized by high levels of unemployment, food insecurity and environmental degradation. The country faces unique cultural and economic conditions that hamper development: small and fragmented investments, dispersed populations, disconnected markets and an inadequate banking infrastructure. The situation is exacerbated by severe environmental degradation; much of Haiti's once productive forest has been destroyed, and today only 2 percent of the country's land mass remains forested.

The 2010 earthquake had a significant impact on livelihoods and added some 600,000 people to the ranks of the food insecure – already estimated at nearly 1.9 million before the quake. Outside the capital region, many families already living a marginal existence have been severely burdened by taking in displaced relatives.



Jean Ginette Lovis, 44, participates in CARE's village savings and loan program. To set an example for her three-year-old son, she puts aside 50 gourdes (about \$2.50) every week.

CARE's *Relief to Reconstruction* strategy includes our sustainable economic development programs and reinforces our long-term humanitarian objectives in Haiti. Community-based approaches are at the heart of our work in this area, as exemplified by the innovative village savings and loan association (VSLA) program launched in November 2011. Known as *Jar*, from the Creole for savings, the VSLA program is designed to reach 300,000 people – mostly women – within five years. Participants, who might otherwise have no access to financial services other than loan sharks, come together in groups of about 30 to save and loan each other money, allowing members to start small businesses, save for home construction or make other investments. Unlike many microfinance models, CARE's savings-led approach does not involve outside loans.

Since November 2011, the VSLA program has accomplished:

- 176 VSLA groups established representing 4,953 members, 81 percent of whom are women;
- \$179,646 in mobilized savings;
- \$91,620 in current loans;
- 98.7 percent repayment rate; and
- 51 percent of funds used for loans.

While our longer-term objectives are directed at self-sufficiency, CARE recognizes that interim nutritional support will continue to be needed in some places, both those immediately affected by the earthquake and parts of the country burdened by an influx of displaced families. CARE administers a food voucher program in the Grand Anse region supporting the Haitian Government's *Aba Grangou* (Stop Hunger) program. An electronic voucher provides vulnerable families with nutritionally balanced foods and supports local economic development.



Marie Dophine Derosier, 65, a mother of eight and grandmother of 14, lost her home in the earthquake. She credits CARE's VSLA program with helping her start a small business selling sheet metal. She says if the program had come earlier, "We would have been rich already."

Achievements include:

- Provided nutritionally balanced food for 12,000 needy families (ongoing);
- Piloted an innovative electronic voucher system that can be activated and scaled up in response to future emergencies as well as contribute to longer-term development programs;
- Created new or reinforced market linkages, incorporating more local produce into formal commercial outlets and increasing the demand for local products; and
- Extended the project for a minimum of eight months to help address potential food shortages in 2013.

As part of a further economic development initiative in the community of Dame Marie in northwestern Haiti, CARE supports emergency relief and sustainable development in land use, housing, economic activity and employment. Activities center on the development of fishing, agriculture, environment, culture, youth and sports, health, infrastructure and training, and the project seeks to strengthen links between towns in the region.

Related to livelihoods and food security are CARE's objectives in **social protection**, particularly of children, youth and women. Violence, economic exploitation and sexual abuse are unfortunate realities in

the lives of Haitian women and young people. Addressing them is essential, not just as a matter of basic rights but also to enable marginalized people to contribute fully to the development of their country.

Central to CARE's approach is working with Haitians to strengthen their own institutions and community efforts that protect women and girls from domestic violence and abuse. In June 2012, CARE launched *Aksyon Kolektif pou Sekirite kont Eksplwatasyon* (Collective Action for Security against Exploitation), a five-year, \$25 million program to strengthen the protection of vulnerable women and girls, supporting efforts of the Haitian government and nongovernmental and community organizations to prevent abuses and address the needs of victims. The project has conducted initial surveys and mapping of needs and available services for protection, and is organizing and training community-based organizations to improve coordination and service delivery.

Education

Haiti's education sector has long suffered from enormous deficiencies. Although all Haitians are legally guaranteed a primary education, about 380,000 children of this age group do not attend school. Another 28 percent of children ages 7 to 18 have never attended school at all. Only 30 percent of primary school students will have access to secondary school. Furthermore, the vast majority of schools are private and of very inconsistent quality, and even public schools carry high costs for families.

This already shaky system suffered a major blow from the earthquake, which caused serious damage or total destruction to 23 percent of the country's schools. Three years later, the situation continues to be problematic, with nearly all school structures severely dilapidated and/or lacking the necessary furniture, materials and infrastructure for quality learning.

CARE's *Education and Psychosocial Support* project was undertaken to help protect schoolchildren's physical, psychosocial and cognitive well-being in the aftermath of the earthquake. The project takes a multilateral, sustainable approach to addressing child rights and educational issues including high costs and poor and inconsistent quality. The three-year initiative has now transitioned from disaster response to a longer-term approach, and our work improving educational quality has reached 32,320 children.

Progress to date includes:

- Completed emergency response activities benefiting a total of 28,775 children;
- Conducted awareness-raising activities focusing on child rights for nearly 8,500 parents, teachers and administrators;
- Engaged more than 2,000 children, 80 teachers, 20 school principals, and 87 parents in interactive events focusing on child rights and risks/vulnerabilities in the education sector;
- Created committees to enable students, parents, teachers, administrators and community member groups to participate in school management in 78 partner schools;
- Provided training and coaching in instructional techniques to 565 teachers;
- Provided small grants to key performing schools for small development projects; and
- Established a national education commission in collaboration with other international humanitarian agencies and local organizations and spearheaded a related working group to support the Ministry of Education in long-term education development.

Governance

Poor governance is an underlying cause of poverty in most developing countries. It is widely recognized that the devastation caused by the 2010 earthquake was made far worse by failures in government functions such as enforcement of construction codes, and that recovery is being made slower and more difficult due to bottlenecks in areas such as property rights.

To address these immediate and long-term challenges, CARE places a strong emphasis on developing the principles of good governance in all our program sectors in Haiti. We define governance as the effective, participatory, transparent, equitable and accountable management of public affairs. In our support of governance, both through specific community-based activities and as part of our cross-cutting initiatives across multiple sectors, CARE's objectives include:

- Strengthen capacity of local leaders in the development of their communities;
- Improve citizen participation in democratic processes from planning to implementation; and
- Raise awareness on rights and responsibilities through governance-related networks.

Our ongoing work to improve governance in several parts of the country addresses both the immediate needs exacerbated by the earthquake and longer-term, systemic gaps. Among our priorities is support of the Haitian government's strategy of strengthening the capacities of local communities in order to reduce the concentration of population and economic activity in the capital region.

Achievements in recent months in our current programming include the following:

- *National Project for Participatory Community Development*, supporting community organizations in five municipalities in northwestern Haiti
 - Events promoting public participation with an average of 56 percent women participants;
 - Community awareness on issues of HIV/AIDS, cholera and environmental degradation;
 - Capacity building with local authorities and community groups in areas such as disbursement of funds, accounting, bank accounts, and filing of legal documents;
 - Provision of \$13,687 in funding to support 28 local initiatives through previously existing projects; and
 - Provision of \$347,529 in funding to support 25 new local community sub-projects.
- *Gros-Morne Local Development Project*
 - Trained 1,025 community members (751 women) on gender equality;
 - Trained elected officials and local stakeholders on municipal, financial and project management;
 - Established and equipped the town tax department, which resulted in the collection of \$2,828 in municipal taxes within five months of the first fiscal year, increasing to \$3,016 and \$17,296 in following quarters;
 - Designated 1,587 women for assistance in small income-generating projects; and
 - Achieved 30 percent women's participation in decision-making and development activities.



Mireille (left) looks over the cashbox provided by the CARE VSLA program with Christine Constanne, 59, another member of the group.

Human Interest Story

Three years ago, the earthquake destroyed Mireille Henry's home in the village of Miton, killing her mother and trapping her daughter under the rubble for five hours. Mireille, a mother of four, lost everything she owned. She didn't even have a spoon to feed her children, she says, or a blanket to keep them warm. To escape the rubble, she took her family to a field

where they camped out. On the luckiest days, they got to sleep under a tree.

It's been a difficult and chaotic journey for Mireille, 44, since the earthquake that affected millions of Haitians and left hundreds of thousands in displacement camps. But Mireille has rebuilt her life, through the help of her community and CARE's innovative small-scale savings program.

In 2011, CARE introduced a village savings and loans association in Mireille's community. The program serves the poorest of the poor, people who do not otherwise have access to the types of financial services, such as banking and credit, that much of the world takes for granted. Every VSLA of about 20 to 30 women in the community receives intensive financial training. Each week, the group's members contribute a minimum of roughly \$2 to the group's savings fund. They can borrow from the group fund to invest in small businesses, pay for seeds and fertilizer before planting season, or cover important family expenses like school fees and doctor's visits. The loans are repaid quickly with interest. The interest is then shared within the group as profit, distributed as "pay-outs."

To date, there are nearly 5,000 members of CARE VSLA groups in Haiti, and 81 percent of them are women. The groups have saved a total of almost \$180,000 – a remarkable achievement in a country where the average annual income is only about \$600.

Mireille has received three loans through the VSLA program for her children's schooling. She plans to use her next pay-out to re-launch her fabric business. Before the earthquake, Mireille purchased fabric in bulk and then re-sold the materials at the market near her home. When the earthquake destroyed her home, she tried to salvage the fabric that was left. She stored some the fabric at the market, but it was all stolen, leaving her with nothing. Eager to start her business again, Mireille says the VSLA has taught her how to save funds that will bring her fabric business back to life. "Even though we don't have a lot of money, we now have a way to save," she says. "We don't have to go to a bank. I'm very proud of that, and I want to see this continue in the future."

Mireille, like many others in her community, is making strides since the dark days of three years ago. Today, she lives in a small home with walls made out of tarps and a ceiling of aluminum. Her new home sits right next to the foundation of her former home. With hope and determination, Mireille continues to participate in the VSLA in order to increase her income and strengthen her financial planning skills. She has also volunteered to serve as the group's treasurer. The group admires her strong-willed and serious nature. She is responsible for keeping track of the money and the cash box. During the weekly meetings, Mireille counts the money and verifies the accounts.

Mireille says she especially enjoys showing other women in the community, who are not part of the VSLA, how much the program has helped her. She has encouraged many of these women to participate. She finds it to be an outlet for their voices to be heard in the community. Her group has lots of big ideas, she says. They've thought about opening a bakery together or starting a sewing studio.

"I know that women can be strong leaders," she said. "I really believe that. I want to become a better leader, a stronger leader, myself."



Mireille in the doorway of her new house, next to the foundation of her old one, destroyed in the quake.

Conclusion

Haitians knew they faced a long struggle to recover after suffering the colossal blow of the earthquake of January 2010. Despite heroic efforts by the nation and its international partners, roadblocks remain – notably, a lack of clarity in land ownership, which has significantly slowed reconstruction. Further setbacks, including a deadly cholera outbreak and an ongoing series of storms, have only served to demonstrate the challenges that lie ahead and the importance of helping Haitians build resilience for the long term.

Haitians have endured great hardship in their history, and yet they continue to persevere against the odds. Women, in particular, are gaining their voices and playing an ever greater role in a society that is reinventing itself in the aftermath of an unprecedented disaster. As CARE continues to work side by side with Haitians, we offer our deep gratitude to donors, who share our vision of a better future.

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