



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

HAITI – Complex Emergency

Fact Sheet #4, Fiscal Year (FY) 2004

March 5, 2004

Note: The last fact sheet was dated March 1, 2004.

BACKGROUND

- Haiti's 200-year history has been marked by political instability and weak institutional capacity, resulting in a severely debilitated economy and an impoverished population. The current complex emergency is rooted in the country's inability to resolve a four-year political impasse. Following a military coup that ousted elected President Jean-Bertrand Aristide in 1991, the international community intervened militarily to restore Aristide to power in 1994. In May 2000, Aristide's party, Lavalas Family, claimed an overall victory in disputed legislative and municipal elections. In November 2000, the opposition boycotted the presidential election that Aristide won unopposed with low voter turnout. On December 17, 2001, the crisis escalated as armed commandos stormed the presidential palace in Port-au-Prince in an assault that the Government of Haiti (GOH) characterized as an attempted coup d'état.
- The electoral controversy paralyzed the Aristide administration, and Aristide lost popular support due to the inability of the government to attract investment to the country, create jobs, or reduce poverty. As a result, growing lawlessness, instability, and politically-motivated violence began to overwhelm the country in 2002.
- In late 2003, anti-government demonstrations in Port-au-Prince, Gonaïves, Petit-Goâve, and other towns began to increase in size, frequency, and violence. The most recent surge in conflict and violence began on February 5, 2004, when members of armed opposition groups seized control of Gonaïves, Haiti's fourth-largest city. Armed groups opposed to former President Aristide expanded their control throughout parts of the Central, North, Artibonite, Northeast, and South departments. The democratic opposition has distanced itself from the armed groups. Since the takeover of Gonaïves, approximately 130 people have been killed in the violence.

SITUATION OVERVIEW

- Structural and institutional weaknesses in Haiti, closely linked to the country's historical, socio-economic, and agricultural development, have had long-term effects on numerous aspects of Haiti's development, such as food security, water and sanitation, health, and nutrition. For many years, Haiti has been the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere, and is currently the only Least Developed Country in the Western Hemisphere. The country was ranked 150th out of 173 countries in the 2003 United Nations (U.N.) Development Program Human Development Report.
- Due to the ongoing and chronic nature of Haiti's underdevelopment, the country is vulnerable to rapid deterioration of humanitarian indicators in a complex emergency. However, certain impacts of a complex emergency, such as malnutrition, are not sudden-onset situations and typically require several months to develop. Two important factors may contribute to food insecurity in Haiti: rising or unstable prices, and a drop in remittances. Haiti is heavily dependent on remittances, receiving an estimated \$800 million on average annually. In addition to food insecurity, the rising incidence of disease and displacement may also contribute to a humanitarian crisis. USAID and its implementing partners are monitoring all of these indicators as closely as possible.
- The U.S. Government (USG), through USAID, is Haiti's largest bilateral donor. In FY 2003, USAID contributed \$71 million. From FY 1995 to 2003, USAID provided a total of \$850 million in direct bilateral assistance. For FY 2004, USAID has planned \$52 million in assistance for programs including health, democracy and governance, education, and economic growth. To ensure the provision of assistance to Haitians most in need, USAID assistance is channeled principally through non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The USG provides food and food-related assistance directly and indirectly to 640,000 Haitians.

CURRENT SITUATION

Security/Political

- On February 29, Jean-Bertrand Aristide resigned from the presidency. In accordance with the Haitian constitution, Supreme Court Chief Justice Boniface Alexandre was sworn in as President of an interim government. Prime Minister Yvon Neptune will retain his post until a new Prime Minister is selected.
- On February 29, the U.N. Security Council authorized the immediate deployment of an international military force to restore order in Haiti. The U.S. has assumed initial control of the multinational force. Troops from other countries will support the military force, followed by a longer-term U.N. peacekeeping mission. There are approximately 1,150 U.S. troops, 600 French troops, 250 Chilean troops, and a small contingent of Canadian troops in Haiti. The

troops have spread out throughout Port-au-Prince to secure key areas and facilities, including the presidential palace, the airport, and foreign embassies.

- On March 1, USAID/Haiti reported that security at the Port-au-Prince port remains a concern due to sporadic police presence. Looters have stolen approximately five percent of the food commodities stored in the areas where USG-funded stocks are located. On March 3, a U.S. Marine Fleet Anti-Terrorist Team (FAST) entered the Port-au-Prince port that Aristide supporters have continued to loot intermittently since February 29.
- Although civil unrest in Port-au-Prince abated somewhat after Aristide's departure, violence and insecurity have continued in some areas of Port-au-Prince and in other areas of the country. On March 2, Aristide supporters killed seven people and burned several buildings in the town of Petit-Goâve, located southwest of Port-au-Prince. On March 3, fighting erupted between armed opposition groups and *chimères*, or armed Aristide supporters, in the Port-au-Prince neighborhood of La Saline and a nearby street market. On the same day, U.S. Marines guarding the Port-au-Prince airport prevented a group of armed opposition combatants from chasing dozens of Lavalas party officials taking refuge in the airport. According to the U.N. Security Coordinator (UNSECOORD), prisoners have taken control of the town of Fort Liberté in northwest Haiti, and the situation remains insecure. In Gonaïves, looting and the burning of houses reportedly increased following the departure of some armed opposition groups.
- On the evening of March 3, Prime Minister Neptune declared a state of emergency and announced the formation of a commission to oversee security in Haiti. The GOH reported on March 4 that the cost of damage caused by looting and pillaging over the month-long unrest is approximately \$300 million, roughly the equivalent of the annual budget.
- On March 4, Guy Philippe, a leader of the armed opposition groups, stated that the armed opposition groups will disarm, discontinue patrols in Port-au-Prince, and return to Cap-Haïtien in the coming days. Armed combatants have abandoned the former army headquarters in Port-au-Prince that they had occupied since March 1. International security forces have also begun to disarm Aristide supporters and are conducting regular patrols of the capital.
- On March 4, the Organization of American States (OAS) announced the establishment of the Tripartite Council, appointed by the GOH, the Democratic Platform coalition, and the international community. Council members include Leslie Voltaire, the Minister of Haitians Living Abroad; former Senator Paul Denis, a member of the Democratic Platform coalition; and Adama Guindo, the U.N. Resident Representative in Haiti. The Tripartite Council will select the seven members of the Council of Wise Men, which in turn will propose a new Prime Minister to President Alexandre.

Food

- USAID's NGO development food aid partners and the U.N. World Food Program (WFP) currently have nearly 15,000 metric tons (MT) of food stocks in country. The European Union (EU) has 2,500 MT of food at a warehouse and 600 MT at the port in Port-au-Prince. Other donors have an estimated 2,000 MT available. Thus, the total amount of food assistance available from all donors is approximately 20,000 MT.
- According to WFP, there is no food shortage in Haiti at present. Transport of food commodities to areas of need continues to be the primary obstacle to food assistance. WFP is preparing a six-month Emergency Operation (EMOP) to provide assistance to the most affected people in the North. WFP's assistance, in partnership with other agencies, aims to ensure that children and their families meet daily nutritional needs in order to prevent a decline in their nutritional status. A Special Operation (SO) is also under preparation to restore and strengthen WFP and its partners' capacity to resume assistance through logistical and communications support. WFP recently transported one month's supply of food to an orphanage in the northwest town of Bombardopolis.
- Action Contre la Faim (ACF) conducted a rapid food security assessment during the week of February 23 in Gonaïves. Based on preliminary results of the assessment, ACF concluded that there is no major humanitarian crisis in Gonaïves at this time, although the population's vulnerability has increased.
- The USAID Agricultural Officer is preparing a July 2003/December 2003/March 2004 commodity price comparison for Port-au-Prince with USAID's outside partners. The comparison is currently in draft form, and indicates an average variation of under 18 percent.

Humanitarian Assessments

- On March 3, a team comprised of USAID/OFDA, USAID/Haiti, WVI, and Save the Children Foundation-U.S. (SCF-U.S.) representatives traveled to Hinche and Maïssade in the Central Plateau Department to conduct a general assessment of humanitarian conditions. In Maïssade, there does not appear to be a serious food shortage at present, and fuel is available, though costly. Since the takeover of Maïssade by armed opposition groups on February 6, SCF-U.S. has suspended its food distribution program in the area. According to an SCF-U.S. market study, price increases for most goods range from 15 to 70 percent. The closure of the border with the Dominican Republic has blocked the usual movement of people and funds between both countries, resulting in increased stress on households' economies. There is concern that commodity shortages could increase should the border remain closed. The health center in Maïssade, operated by SCF-U.S., is open and operating normally. No increase in diseases has been reported.

- In Hinche, some stores have opened, although banks, wire transfer agencies, and schools remain closed. Due to insecurity, WVI suspended some activities, including food distribution programs, for two weeks. The population reportedly fears the transport of products because of a perceived lack of security, as well as the high cost of transportation and limited financial resources resulting from the closure of banks. Few people are able to buy local produce due to lack of funds and increased prices, exacerbated by the closure of the border with the Dominican Republic. Prior to the takeover of Hinche by armed opposition groups on February 6, water was available to residents for two hours every day. At present, water is available every other day in some parts of town, and even less frequently in other areas. WVI nurses are reporting cases of typhoid fever due to lack of clean water.

Fuel

- Access to fuel continues to be a concern for both humanitarian and general consumption. Further exacerbating the situation is the destruction of at least one fuel station in Port-au-Prince as part of the general unrest. Fuel is vital not only for transport, but also for the continued operation of facilities and equipment such as hospitals, bakeries, and forklifts at ports.
- On March 2 and 3, fuel companies and distributors conducted assessments of fuel stations, and indicated that a total of 28 stations were damaged in Port-au-Prince. While the damage to fuel stations was considerable and is expected to cause inconveniences, there should be no major disruption in fuel availability unless further insecurity erupts in Haiti.

Health

- On March 2, the USAID/OFDA team and USAID/Haiti staff visited four hospitals, two orphanages, and one health center in Port-au-Prince. The François de Salle Hospital currently faces a fuel shortage for its generator, which is only activated for surgeries and oxygen. The University Hospital is experiencing medical staffing concerns, as no doctors and few nurses are currently working. On February 27, negotiations between the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the GOH regarding the expansion of ICRC operations in the Canapé Vert hospital in Port-au-Prince ended without agreement. ICRC subsequently reported direct threats against expatriates and decided to evacuate all but two expatriate staff. Canapé Vert Hospital urgently needs medical staff, oxygen, fuel, and a generator. The Hospital Communauté Haïtienne also needs a blood bank to transfuse patients.
- According to assessments by the USAID/OFDA team, the current health situation in Haiti is not at an emergency level. However, the health care system is experiencing a rupture in supplies, due to the insecure environment that exists for drug deliveries and a lack of health staff reporting to work due to the insecurity in Port-au-Prince. The poor public health infrastructure is a chronic problem that needs to be addressed as soon as possible.
- According to the USAID/OFDA team in Haiti, reports from remote areas, such as Jeremié in the Grand Anse Department, indicate that supplies in health facilities are precariously low due to access problems.
- On March 3, a U.N. Children's Fund (UNICEF) airlift of emergency supplies arrived at the Port-au-Prince airport. The cargo included medical, surgical, and obstetric supplies, water, and nutritional, sanitation, and educational materials to assist 30,000 vulnerable children for three months. UNICEF indicated that security remains a concern when conducting assessments and distributing emergency assistance.
- According to OXFAM, approximately 80,000 people in Port-de-Paix and 60,000 people in Cap-Haïtien lack access to potable water.
- The Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) manages PROMESS, Haiti's Central Procurement Agency for drugs and medical supplies. PROMESS, which was founded in 1992, supplies drugs at low cost to public health institutions, NGOs, and non-profit organizations. PROMESS also stores and distributes drugs, including vaccines, contraceptives, and tuberculosis drugs, related to health programs subsidized by donor agencies. The PROMESS system reports some rupture of certain medical stocks, and limited quantity (enough for 12 months) of other stocks, such as contraceptives. On average there is a three-month supply of essential medicines.

Displaced Populations

- USAID and its NGO partners continue to report very limited displacement and no "sites" with concentrations of internally displaced persons (IDPs). According to the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA), numbers of IDPs cannot be accurately assessed at present. However, UN OCHA notes that significant numbers of residents are moving from insecure cities toward other areas or returning to their native villages in the mountains. Movements have also been reported from rural areas to main cities.
- On March 2, CONCERN reported migration between Saint-Marc and Île de la Gonâve, an island located off the coast of western Haiti. The majority of migrants are reportedly chimères, and the situation on the island is tense. Although there is currently no shortage of food and the migrants are staying with relatives, the increase in population may deplete the food stocks of the host population.

U.S. GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

- From February 9 to 11, two USAID/OFDA Regional Advisors traveled to Port-au-Prince to assist USAID/Haiti and partner organizations with contingency planning for humanitarian assistance.
- On February 18, U.S. Ambassador to Haiti James B. Foley issued a disaster declaration due to the ongoing complex emergency in Haiti. In response, USAID/OFDA has provided \$50,000 through USAID/Haiti to support the transport and distribution of emergency relief supplies, including 12 medical kits and three surgical kits, valued at approximately \$87,000. Each medical kit is equipped to serve 10,000 people for approximately three months. On February 26, the medical kits arrived in Port-au-Prince. On March 4, USAID/OFDA distributed one medical kit each to Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), Catholic Relief Services (CRS), and WVI, and nine kits to the PAHO-supported PROMESS warehouse. The PROMESS warehouse will store the nine kits on behalf of Management Sciences for Health (MSH), PAHO, and USAID/OFDA. USAID/OFDA has also approved \$400,000 in funding for PAHO to purchase additional medical supplies and to conduct emergency relief activities in Haiti. In addition, USAID/OFDA has approved \$412,287 for CRS for emergency cash grants to support local institutions and provide services for most vulnerable populations.
- On February 24, USAID/OFDA deployed a three-person team to Port-au-Prince, including a Senior Regional Advisor as Team Leader, a Health Officer, and an Information Officer.
- USAID/OFDA has provided \$340,981 to Air Serv for emergency air transport. On March 3, two light planes contracted by USAID/OFDA with Air Serv arrived in Port-au-Prince. The planes, each with capacity for nine passengers, are available to the USAID/OFDA team to conduct assessments and deliver relief supplies throughout the country as required. Various USAID implementing partners, including U.N. agencies and NGOs, may accompany the USAID/OFDA team and USAID/Haiti staff on assessment trips.
- The Department of State's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (State/PRM) has provided \$20,000 to the U.S. Embassy in Port-au-Prince for assistance to Haitian migrants. In addition, State/PRM will support the ICRC appeal for Haiti. The final amount of funding for the appeal is pending approval.

U.S. GOVERNMENT HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO HAITI

<i>Implementing Partner</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Amount</i>
USAID/OFDA ASSISTANCE¹			
USAID/Haiti	Transport and distribution of emergency relief supplies; 12 emergency medical and three surgical kits	Port-au-Prince and other affected areas	\$137,000
Pan American Health Organization	Medical equipment and emergency health activities	Nationwide	\$400,000
Catholic Relief Services	Emergency cash grants	Port-au-Prince and the southern peninsula	\$412,287
Air Serv	Emergency air transport in support of USAID/OFDA, NGOs, U.N. and other humanitarian organizations	Nationwide	\$340,981
TOTAL USAID/OFDA.....			\$1,290,268
STATE/PRM ASSISTANCE			
U.S. Embassy/Port-au-Prince	Assistance to Haitian migrants	Nationwide	\$20,000
TOTAL STATE/PRM.....			\$20,000
TOTAL USG HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO HAITI IN FY 2004 (TO DATE)			\$1,310,268

¹ USAID/OFDA funding represents committed and/or obligated amount as of **March 5, 2004**.

PUBLIC DONATION INFORMATION

The most effective way people can assist relief efforts is by making cash contributions to humanitarian organizations that are conducting relief operations. A list of humanitarian organizations that are accepting cash donations for their response efforts in Haiti can be found in the “How Can I Help” section of www.usaid.gov/haiti. USAID encourages cash donations because they: allow aid professionals to procure the exact items needed (often in the affected region); reduce the burden on scarce resources (such as transportation routes, staff time, warehouse space, etc.); can be transferred very quickly and without transportation costs; support the economy of the disaster-stricken region; ensure culturally, dietary, and environmentally appropriate assistance.

More information on making donations and volunteering services can be found at:

- USAID: www.usaid.gov → “Our Work” → “Humanitarian Assistance” → “Disaster Assistance” → “How Can I Help”
- The Center for International Disaster Information: www.cidi.org or (703) 276-1914
- InterAction: www.interaction.org → “Guide to Appropriate Giving”
- Information on relief activities of the humanitarian community can be found at www.reliefweb.int

USAID/OFDA bulletins appear on the USAID web site at http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/humanitarian_assistance/disaster_assistance/.