



Fast Facts on the
U.S. Government's work in

HAITI

SHELTER AND HOUSING

The Challenge

The U.N. and other aid agencies have characterized the January 12, 2010, earthquake in Haiti as the largest urban disaster in modern history. The earthquake affected an estimated 3 million people, including 1.5 million people displaced to 1,300 settlement sites throughout Port-au-Prince.

One of the biggest challenges has been to provide shelter to those who lost their homes. The earthquake created more than 10 million cubic meters of debris, hindering reconstruction. The loss of critical records in the earthquake has made identifying the rightful owners of land extremely difficult, and this has exacerbated the problem of identifying land for housing.

Despite these challenges, in support of Government of Haiti priorities, the international community has made significant contributions in the shelter sector. More than two years after the earthquake, approximately 357,700 of the original 1.5 million people remain displaced in camps—approximately 24 percent of those displaced. Repairing damaged houses and replacing completely destroyed houses will provide opportunities for both ownership and rentals for earthquake victims. The U.S. Government, through the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), has been a key leader in the shelter sector response, both during the emergency response and in the longer-term reconstruction effort, and USAID is helping earthquake-affected families reclaim and rebuild their lives.

Emergency and Transitional Response

Emergency Shelter Provision, Transitional Shelter, and Repair Solutions: In the immediate aftermath of the earthquake, USAID worked with the Government of Haiti, international community, and with non-governmental organization partners to provide emergency shelter to 1.5 million displaced persons. In total, USAID has provided approximately \$135.7 million for emergency shelter activities and provision of shelter solutions in Haiti since the earthquake.

Following the emergency phase, USAID provided shelter solutions—including transitional shelters (t-shelters), repairs to damaged houses, support to host families housing people displaced after the earthquake, and rental vouchers—to more than 65,700 households. As of September 2012, USAID partners had constructed over 29,100 t-shelters, repaired more than 5,800 “yellow” structures to shelter over 8,100 households, and provided hosting support to over 27,200 households and rental vouchers to roughly 1,200 households, thereby housing more than 328,000 individuals.

Neighborhood-Based Resettlement Approach: USAID supports a neighborhood-based approach—involving extensive community participation and close coordination between and among the community members, the Government of Haiti, donors, and implementing partners—to facilitate returns to areas of origin and help re-establish pre-earthquake social and economic structures. While this approach is more time consuming than simply constructing shelters, it serves as an opportunity to improve neighborhoods from their pre-earthquake conditions.

For example, in the Ravine Pintade neighborhood of Port-au-Prince, USAID support encompasses rubble removal, “yellow” house repairs, and the construction of footpaths, drainage lines, retaining walls, and t-shelters, including innovative two-story t-shelters. Furthermore, USAID has upgraded and repaired key public and community facilities, including community libraries, cultural centers, vocational training centers, public and private schools, and solar street lights, as well as secured scholarships for returning and resettled internally displaced students and young adults. The World Bank is also initiating a \$95 million neighborhood upgrading project—\$65 million of which is funded through the U.S. Government contribution to the Haiti Reconstruction Fund.

USAID is also providing families with options to resettle out of camps. USAID provided housing options for camp residents in Place St. Pierre and Place Boyer, two prominent public parks in Petionville, a Port-au-Prince suburb, where internally displaced persons (IDPs) lived in tents for nearly two years. Under priorities identified by the Martelly administration, USAID worked with the local municipality, Government of Haiti officials, and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) to resettle more than 1,300 families residing in these areas. After registering for the program, residents chose which resettlement option was best for their family: repair of their “yellow” house, demolition of a “red” house with the construction of a t-shelter, or a one-year rental assistance grant.

Reconstruction

Enumeration: An impediment to the returns process is land tenure, which was largely undocumented in official records prior to the earthquake. While the Government of Haiti develops more long-term solutions to land tenure issues, USAID is supporting a participatory community enumeration process, which serves as a fast-track transitional measure to facilitate returns to neighborhoods and reconstruction efforts. The enumeration process consists of speaking with IDPs to collect information regarding tenure and occupancy, which the community then validates to confirm its accuracy. As of May 2012, IOM had collected, recorded, and validated land tenure and occupancy status of more than 10,600 plots/buildings with USAID support. IOM and the Government of Haiti will now scale up this pilot methodology through a Haiti Reconstruction Fund project that will record tenure and occupancy information for every single household in the earthquake-affected zone.



Kendra Helmer / USAID

The Final Phase—Permanent Shelter Solutions: Replacing housing stock lost as a result of the earthquake and providing ownership opportunities for identified beneficiaries is the final phase of U.S. Government post-earthquake reconstruction and recovery support for housing. To meet this Government of Haiti priority, USAID aims to provide housing in new settlements near employment opportunities in the Port-au-Prince, St. Marc, and Cap-Haitien Development Corridors. The housing, being developed in conjunction with development partners, provides opportunities for earthquake victims and other eligible households. USAID is also exploring opportunities to increase access to housing finance as well as providing community development support to ensure sustainability of these settlements.