

Success Story/Lessons Learned

Operating Unit: USAID/Haiti

Headline:

Haiti's Emerges from Disasters with Plan to Meet "Education for All" Goals

Earlier this year, prior to the onset of the successive disasters that beset Haiti in 2008 -- sharply escalating food, fuel and education costs; four hurricanes and tropical storms; and the structural collapse of two schools killing over 90 students -- the donor community and Haitian Ministry of Education officials had worked tirelessly to develop a final framework and implementation plan to address Haiti's Millennium Development goal of Universal Primary Education by 2015. With a net primary school enrollment rate of less than 60%, building up the educational system to provide critical education services remains the central challenge for Haiti's broader national development goals.

Haiti's education system has been in crisis for decades due primarily to weak state capacity to ensure the provision of quality education services. The Ministry of Education has watched its role and mandate shrink with a declining national budget for education and the proliferation of private schools which now make up over 85% of the total number of schools in Haiti. Presently, over 500,000 children aged 6-11 are still not attending school, and considerably more families, with the recent hurricane damage and economic hardship, will find themselves unable to meet the burden of school fees and the associated costs of sending children to school. Because uneducated and unemployed youth are a core destabilizing element in any society, failure to address the education realities in Haiti will lead to further civil instability.

Government of Haiti (GOH) officials in collaboration with education sector donors have now advanced Haiti's education sector goals by developing a focused plan to increase access to quality primary education for schoolchildren and out-of-school youth. Led by USAID and the education sector donor group, this collaborative engagement galvanized efforts to develop sound education policies and strategies that became recognized and endorsed by the internationally funded Education for All Fast-Track Initiative (EFA-FTI) partnership. This recognition and Haiti's institutional efforts in laying out a viable plan to rejuvenate its education sector is expected to attract new international funding through the EFA/FTI partnership and funding mechanism. The education sector implementation plan, with new, anticipated funding, will enable the GOH to make informed education sector investments and advance Haiti's top educational priorities. Teacher training, licensing of non-public schools, scholarships and back to school programs are among those FTI-sponsored priorities that USAID and other donors will support as part of Haiti's national education plan.

USAID's new \$28 million basic education project, known locally as PHARE, is at the core of this systematic overhaul of the Haitian education system and is specifically

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designed to support and advance Haiti's larger EFA/FTI effort. The new USAID basic education project includes innovative and essential initiatives such as a concentrated and concerted effort to reach out and involve the Haitian private sector and the Haitian Diaspora in supporting education outcomes so that Haitian youth have a more promising future. USAID's response to the emergency scenario posed by hurricane devastation, the recent school collapses along with the PHARE scholarship program will provide up to 88,000 scholarships that will guarantee access to quality education for the most vulnerable of Haiti's population. Such efforts coupled with robust international coordination and funding gives Haiti not only a way forward, but a way up and out of a series of disasters that have captured the world's attention over the last year.

Pullout Quote (Optional): *Please provide a quote that represents and summarizes the story.*

Background Information: This activity is under the Investing In People Objective, Program Area Education, program Element Basic.

Contact Information:

Robert Wick Powers, % USAID/Haiti, rpowers@usaid.gov , 509-2-2229-8566

Photographs (optional, but recommended).