Editorial

Groupe URD had carried out numerous evaluations in Haiti since 2004 and a team was on the island three months before the earthquake in connection with the Cluster II evaluation. Less than a month after the earthquake, we were back for an initial real-time evaluation. Since then, we have carried out a number of evaluations, whether of the overall response (Real time evaluation for the IASC three months on), of strategic issues for certain organisations (ACF, UNFPA, French Red Cross, CaLP), or as part of learning and accountability exercises for donors (ECHO, Fondation de France, Swiss Solidarity). Following on from these evaluations we have now set up a learning and evaluation support mechanism, in connection with the Haiti Working Group on Evaluations created by the OECD, the United Nations Evaluation Group and ALNAP. Building on our experience in Central America after Hurricane Mitch, in Afghanistan and in Chad, the Haiti Observatory has three objectives:

- To support learning mechanisms through the analysis and sharing of lessons highlighted in evaluations;
- To strengthen the capacity of Haitian state and civil society organizations to commission, carry out, supervise and use evaluations;
- To carry out specific studies on topics and issues highlighted in evaluations.

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Contents

Haiti Observatory News ........................................ 2
First issue of "Learning through Evaluation", the Haiti Observatory Newsletter ........................................ 2
Evaluation of projects funded by Swiss Solidarity in Haiti (September 2010 – June 2012) ............................ 2
Training course on Programme Evaluation from 23 to 27 April in Port-au-Prince ........................................ 3
Review of Cash Transfer Programmes in Haiti (February – March 2012) .................................................. 3

Lessons learnt .......................................................... 3
Does humanitarian coordination exclude local actors and weaken their capacity? ........................................ 3
Marginalisation & Sexual Vulnerability in the IDP camps of Port-au-Prince ............................................. 4
Eviction & Rehousing of Displaced People in Port-au-Prince ................................................................. 5
Rehabilitation & Reconstruction: Progress and Issues ................................................................. 7
First issue of ‘Learning through Evaluation’, the Haiti Observatory Newsletter

‘Learning through Evaluation’, the Haiti Observatory Newsletter is published every two months by the Haiti Observatory to disseminate lessons and good practices which have emerged from evaluations and research in Haiti.

The Observatory uses the Newsletter to inform aid agencies and help them share their results and recommendations. The objective is therefore to increase the impact of studies and evaluations and contribute to the implementation of recommendations so that there is a genuine change in practices.

‘Learning through Evaluation’ is available in French, English and Creole in two formats: a paper format which can be downloaded and an electronic version which can be consulted online. The choice of disseminating via Internet means that a very wide readership can be reached: national and international, public and private, humanitarian and development organizations.

‘Learning Through Evaluation’ has 2 sections:
- The Haiti Observatory News section provides information about evaluations and research being carried out by the Observatory and about upcoming training courses and experience-sharing workshops and conferences.
- The Lessons Learnt section is made up of articles with compiled and summarised content, produced by the Observatory team or by external authors. At the end of each article, references are given for further reading on the topic.

If you would like to share the results of evaluations or research in the Haiti Observatory Newsletter, please contact Caroline Broudic – cbroudic@urd.org.

Evaluation of projects funded by Swiss Solidarity in Haiti (September 2010 – June 2012)

Groupe URD is conducting a 2-year iterative evaluation of projects implemented in Haiti by the Swiss partners of Swiss Solidarity, following the disaster of 12 January 2010. After having carried out a cross-sector analysis of the context, the progress made on projects will be evaluated in order to improve monitoring, identify possible areas which need to be adjusted and create synergies between partners, by encouraging shared learning.

A two-year multi-project iterative evaluation process
This iterative evaluation project is due to take place over a period of two years, with field visits every 6 months, in order to be able to submit real time recommendations and to monitor the effects these have on the evolution of programmes and contexts. The evaluation will focus on 5 or 6 large-scale projects, mainly involving the reconstruction of permanent housing in rural environments, but also the (re)construction of infrastructure, water and sanitation and economic recovery. This will involve a cross-sector analysis of the context and progress made on the projects (context, management, degree of realization, of potential for adaptation over time, etc.), in order to improve the monitoring of projects, identify whether any adjustments need to be made and ensure that resources are used effectively and efficiently within the Haiti earthquake fund.
• Training course on Programme Evaluation from 23 to 27 April in Port-au-Prince

This training course will take place in Port-au-Prince from 23 to 27 April 2012 and will be aimed at staff from public institutions, universities, national NGOs and international NGOs. More sessions will be organized throughout 2012.

Please contact us if you are interested in taking part.

• Review of Cash Transfer Programmes in Haiti (February – March 2012)

Cash transfer programmes (cash-for-work, direct cash transfer, coupons) were an important part of the humanitarian response to the January 2012 earthquake, implemented on a large scale to cover the immediate needs of the disaster victims. Inter-agency coordination, initiated by members of the CaLP, was very rapidly organized in parallel, in order to share experiences and good practices.

Two years after the earthquake, Groupe URD has been chosen by the CaLP to carry out a review of this coordination mechanism and its interaction with the other coordination systems in order to learn lessons for future emergencies. The project will also aim to support the CaLP’s advocacy work to improve organisations’ understanding, preparation and coordination of cash transfer programmes.

Lessons learnt

Does humanitarian coordination exclude local actors and weaken their capacity?

(Below are extracts from an article by Andréanne Martel; the text in full is at http://www.urd.org/haiti)

Many reasons have been given to justify the exclusion of local actors from the humanitarian response in Haiti, such as the weakness of local institutions, human losses caused by the earthquake, the Presidential election, the cholera crisis and the partisan nature of Haitian organisations. The idea here is not to deny the importance of these factors, but there is a danger that, by concentrating on these, other essential issues are being overlooked which could explain why Haitians were marginalized during the emergency phase and why there have been difficulties in making the transition to reconstruction.

The issue of coordination in Haiti, and more specifically that of the clusters mechanism, is too often seen only in terms of efficiency (the speed of decision-making, the exchange of information, the mapping of needs, the capacity of actors, etc.) rather than in terms of the quality and the source of the information exchanged, the actors who take part in the coordination or the existence of strategies to hand back control to the beneficiary state over one of its essential prerogatives: that of coordinating the influx of aid and actors on its territory.

Exit strategies for the clusters are at the centre of current debates in Haiti. In April 2010, during the turmoil of the post-earthquake period, the evaluation carried out by Groupe URD and GPPi (Binder and Grünewald, 2010) already underlined the risks of the clusters continuing to meet without the involvement of local actors. The cluster system was rolled out in Haiti without taking into account the Haitian context or the coordination mechanisms which existed before the earthquake. As a result, there was a risk that the transition to sectoral tables would be held up or even difficult to implement.
In Haiti, coordination meetings, which are often considered to be strictly technical and operational, are also strategic. The creation of Strategic Advisor Groups, which operate in parallel to clusters, are evidence of this desire to meet with ‘effective operational actors’ in order to agree on shared norms, establish the priorities and needs of the population and implement an operational strategic framework. These objectives are of course laudable in a context where efficiency is synonymous with saving lives against cholera, getting families out of camps and beginning the reconstruction. The proximity that this creates between international actors with major capacities and resources helps to create common practices and knowledge. On the other hand, this accentuates the included/excluded division between local and international actors. Most of all, it accentuates the knowledge gap between them.

It is clear that in addition to having an impact on the quality of the response in the short term, the most damaging effects of exclusion are in the long term. An MSPP representative described these: “It is a real struggle to get the NGOs to register (with the government). The MSPP told them that they had to register to inform the government that they were in the area, but [...] they did not do it. Can you imagine being the MSPP representative of the area and on the first day, you have just arrived [...] You see that this person is not registered. It is very difficult to sit down with this person.”

The architecture of the coordination system, cultural biases and the specialisation of international organisation have limited the appropriation of clusters by Haitian actors. However, certain sectors appear to have been able to remove themselves from an emergency mindset and engage in coordination with the local authorities. The WASH sector is emblematic of this success. The National Directorate for Water Supply and Sanitation (DINEPA) has been cited many times as having had a genuine role in coordinating the sector. In addition to the efforts made by certain actors from this sector to re-appropriate coordination mechanisms, certain factors no doubt had a positive influence. The presence of a strong local counterpart undoubtedly contributed to strengthening the sector in contrast to certain emergency sectors where there was no obvious local counterpart (e.g. Shelter). But this does not account fully for what happened because the Health sector, which has a Haitian counterpart in the MSPP, was not as successful.

Finally, Building Back Better in Haiti means taking Haitian actors into account from the beginning by establishing a co-lead between the clusters and government as soon as the crisis takes place. It is also important to be aware of the fact that local and international capacities cannot always be calculated in similar terms. In addition, intervention phases should be decompartmentalised to prevent actors going against the tide and maintaining different or even opposing operational methods depending on whether they are working in emergency relief, reconstruction or development.

Further reading on this topic:

- Andréanne Martel: “Does humanitarian coordination exclude local actors and weaken their capacity?” February 2012.

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Marginalisation & Sexual Vulnerability in the IDP camps of Port-au-Prince

The number of people still living in IDP camps more than two years after the earthquake was estimated by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) to be a little under 500 000 in February 2012. Though the Haitian government’s strategy is to provide the displaced with long-term housing solutions, it is none the less true that the gradual withdrawal of humanitarian aid without the arrival of development aid on a massive scale will increase the risks that the displaced currently face. The recent study by the Center for Human Rights and Global Justice (CHRGJ), “Yon Je Louvri” ¹, gives an idea of the close correlation between access to vital resources and basic services and vulnerability to all forms of exploitation, including sexual violence. The absence of reliable data about the pre-earthquake situation means that it is impossible to compare the situation before and after the earthquake, but the post-January 12 figures speak for themselves. 14% of the families interviewed for this study admitted that at least one member of the family had been a victim of sexual violence since the earthquake. Knowing that this remains a taboo subject, it is commonly accepted that this is lower than the actual figure and that it minimizes problems of “sexual exploitation” and “survival sex”. These phenomena characterize the close links between humanitarian aid and

¹ CHRGJ: « Yon Je Louvri : Reducing vulnerability to sexual violence in Haiti’s IDP camps”, 2012
vulnerability to sexual violence on at least two levels: 1) Survival sex is an adaptation mechanism caused by the breakup of family and community structures, the loss of safety nets and a lack of effective economic opportunities; 2) Sexual exploitation is the practice by which members of camp committees and those in charge of the distribution of goods and services, or of evaluating eligibility for humanitarian aid demand sexual relations in exchange for basic survival resources, money or housing. These phenomena, though neither new, nor specific to Haiti, have been exacerbated by the consequences of the earthquake.

This has been confirmed by a UNHCR study which cites women who admitted to having frequently exchanged sexual acts for food or other goods which were necessary for their survival, including aid distribution coupons, access to Cash for Work programmes or even for a meal.

The CHRGJ report highlights the risks of the phenomenon getting worse due to new pressures: the threats linked to forced evictions and the cost of basic services (access to water and health). It also makes a certain number of recommendations addressed to the Haitian government as well as international and national organizations. Three main issues emerge from these recommendations, based on the different evaluations carried out in Haiti by Groupe URD:

1) The financial autonomy of women needs to be strengthened via support for income-generating activities;
2) Care needs to be taken to make sure that the passage from humanitarian assistance, which is often free, to a viable economic system, which is necessarily paying, does not create new vulnerabilities which force vulnerable households or individuals to adopt at risk strategies, including the selling of sex;
3) The forced evictions of IDPs must stop and safe access to housing needs to be ensured;

Better understanding of the correlation between access to humanitarian aid and this abuse of power should also allow these risks to be integrated into the design and implementation of all programmes in Haiti in areas such as the identification and selection of beneficiaries, the composition of committees, the application of a participatory approach, control and monitoring tools and exit strategies. The link between the violation of economic and social rights and sexual vulnerability needs therefore to be taken into account not only in the current context of the withdrawal of humanitarian aid, but also in the case of future crises.

Further reading on this topic:

Eviction & Rehousing of Displaced People in Port-au-Prince

The number of people living in camps in Metropolitan Port-au-Prince at the beginning of 2012 is estimated to be 490 545, spread over 660 sites (470 on private land, 178 on public land) 2. According to the predictions of the IASC3 and on the premise that commitments made for 2012 are respected, by the end of the year there will still be no less than 74 405 families for whom no rehousing solution will have been found. Based on the analysis that living conditions in IDP camps will continue to decline due to the reduction of basic services (water, health and sanitation), alternative strategies are being considered and integrated into the strategies of different actors involved in relocation programmes. The implicit objective of the Haitian government’s strategy is that by the end of 2012 long-term housing solutions will have been proposed to all the people currently still living in camps. Two initiatives are currently being

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2 Source IOM, IASC : Displacement tracking matrix, February 2012
3 Inter-Agency Standing Committee
implemented as part of this rehousing policy. The first of these is focused on houses and buildings and has three main parts: repair or construction of permanent housing, construction of temporary shelters and rent subsidies. The second aims to integrate buildings into the urban fabric, the housing-neighbourhood approach, developed by UN Habitat and adopted by a large number of organizations, including the World Bank.

Though the construction of temporary shelters has been the major part of the response to date, this has been of marginal benefit to those living in the camps (20% of the units distributed by the end of 2011), the majority of them having been tenants before the earthquake (78% of the IDPs in the camps were tenants and 19% owned property). The accent is therefore now being placed on providing rent aid for a sum of 500 USD per displaced family (estimate for 1 year’s rent).

The government’s “16/6” pilot project (16 neighbourhoods / 6 camps), which has a budget of 79 million USD, and the relocation programme for Champ de Mars IDPs, with funding of 20 million USD from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), principally use rent subsidies to help people to find houses. Though this option is part of a broader reconstruction response, it is none the less limited by the rental capacity of Metropolitan Port-au-Prince. Indeed, though 115 000 houses were destroyed, 14 000 seriously damaged and 160 000 moderately damaged in the towns affected by the earthquake, this only made worse an endemic shortage of housing, which was estimated to be one million units in the country as a whole (source: Massachusetts Institute of Technology / World Bank). It should also be noted that the 16/6 project has only received partial funding to date (30 million USD), which means there are not enough funds to cover the rehabilitation of neighbourhoods.

In addition to these relocation programmes, it should also be noted that there have been cases of forced evictions, which have put even more pressure on the housing stock for rent, and the risks facing the affected population. According to the IOM, since July 2010, 64 721 people have been evicted without compensation of any kind from 148 camps and this trend seems to have been increasing since the last semester. Almost 100 000 people living in 176 camps are being threatened with eviction, that is, almost 20% of the total number of people living in camps, and this, despite the fact that forced evictions are against Haitian law. 93% of these threatened evictions concern people living on private land as opposed to only 5% which concern people living on state-owned land.

In this transitional context of camp closures and the incomplete reconstruction of neighbourhoods, it is essential to have a certain number of tools to achieve the overall objective of improving the living conditions of displaced persons via community participation and to ensure that the humanitarian situation of earthquake victims (whether displaced or residents) does not become worse. Of the issues which need to be addressed in this transitional context, five strike us as being particularly important:

1) How much do we know about opportunities to rehouse displaced people in neighbourhoods? This concerns not only the availability of housing, but also access to basic services and jobs and, more broadly, the issue of acceptance/integration in neighbourhoods. The participatory listing process implemented as part of the Neighbourhood Housing approach promoted by UN Habitat may provide a partial answer to this question;

2) How much do we know about the profile and situation of the displaced people currently still living in the camps?

3) What epidemiological monitoring tools have been put in place in the camps and returnee neighbourhoods to ensure that the end of direct assistance (e.g. access to water and sanitation) does not lead to the deterioration of the health situation in the camps and neighbourhoods (risks which are all the more serious in a context where the cholera epidemic is far from being under control and, on the contrary, could spread once again during the rainy season);

4) What indicators and monitoring and evaluation tools have been put in place to check that the objective stipulated in relocation programmes of improving the living conditions of displaced persons via a participatory approach is being respected;

5) With the timetable for the withdrawal of the humanitarian response having been fixed by the Haitian government and donors, what safety net has been put in place to ensure that this does not lead to a deterioration of the humanitarian

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1 Ibid.
2 To date, five of the six camps targeted by the 16/6 programme have been closed (Place St-Pierre, Place Boyer, Maïs Gâté, Silvio Cator, Canapé Vert).
3 World Bank
situation? For example, it is conceivable that this withdrawal does not lead to an “open” crisis, but to a persistent deterioration of the situation, which would probably be imperceptible in the short term (exposure to greater environmental and social risks, insecurity, migrations, reduced access to health and education services, over-exploitation of land, etc.).

The relocation of displaced people is therefore closely linked to the reconstruction: the availability of houses and public infrastructure, access to basic services and jobs in the neighbourhoods of Metropolitan Port-au-Prince. The monitoring and evaluation of relocation programmes therefore needs to include indicators linked to urban development and needs to take into account both the difficulties that displaced people face in camps and those that are faced by neighbourhood residents. It should be part of a broader approach involving the monitoring of indicators and analysis of the impact of the reconstruction programme, which will provide a more general and holistic understanding.

Further reading on this topic:

- UN Habitat: www.onuhabitat.org/haiti
- IOM: “Displacement tracking matrix”, February 2012

Rehabilitation & Reconstruction: Progress and Issues

(This article is based on extracts from the UN Habitat report cited below)

The 2010 earthquake damage to housing resulted in around 175,000 to be repaired and retrofitted or reconstructed according to the estimates of the Ministry of Public Works, Transport and Communication (MTPTC). In 2010, the majority of donors and implementing agencies focused on emergency shelter with less emphasis on repairs, which resulted in a large gap between objectives and results. At the end of 2011, the rate of repairs and retrofitting by agencies was 54% of the initial objective and the rate of permanent constructions was only 34% of the initial objective. Though there are many reasons for these delays, the insufficient funds available for the reconstruction certainly constitutes one of the main obstacles, a situation which was made worse by the absence of public policy in terms of reconstruction.

The lack of a strategic and institutional framework:

Activities in support for housing repair and reconstruction in Haiti may be described as a series of separate projects rather than a common programme. They are characterized by individual project names and agency names instead of a coordinated programme considering coherence or consistency. The absence of political leadership in housing reconstruction and policy directives resulted in a generally laissez-faire approach. This approach based on distinct projects means that certain areas and communities benefit from more appropriate technical and financial support than others and therefore make better progress, without the targeting of these areas having been really put into perspective in a more global planning approach. The absence of strategic framework therefore makes arbitration more difficult and can lead to geographical imbalances, with certain areas covered more effectively than others.

Imprecise estimation of the cost and risks linked to the allocation of resources:

In 2010 MTPTC carried out an extensive building habitability assessment of 400,000 buildings,

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7 13,831 houses have been repaired and retro-fitted by agencies compared to a planned total of 25,472 and 5,189 permanent constructions have been built compared to a planned total of 15,224.
tagging them as green (safe to live in), yellow (limited access due to safety issues and in need of repairs before they can be considered safe to live in), red (not safe to live in or access). The result of the assessment was 46% green, 29% yellow, and 25% red. As the safety survey was relatively comprehensive, the figures, particularly of red and yellow tagged buildings have been used a planning proxy, with red considered as collapsed or to be demolished and replaced, and yellow to be repaired or retrofitted. This proxy has been used as to inform overall shelter and housing sector planning figures. However, more detailed assessments show that there is considerable discrepancy in drawing a direct correlation between red houses and reconstruction, or yellow houses and repairs / retrofits. The detailed assessments and subsequent repair and retrofitting programmes included repair and retrofitting to a proportionately high number of red houses, along with yellow houses.

**Recommendations:**

1. **Strategic framework:** As indicated above, without a strategic framework, the repair and reconstruction projects are less efficient and equitable. Government leadership, direction and coordination are expected to move to a new phase with the establishment of the new UCLBP (Unité de Construction du Logement et des Bâtiments Publics / Unit for Construction of Housing and Public Buildings) under the Prime Minister’s Office.

2. **Institutional questions:** There are multiple institutional questions arising throughout the projects underway and under development. These include the roles of existing and new Government authorities, and the roles of area based and technical Government authorities. It will be important in the next phase of reconstruction to better define parameters for implementing agencies, including terms of engagement with authorities; municipalities and technical ministries with mutual benefits in terms of time management, clarity and consistency.

3. **Eligibility and targeting:** It is important to review strategic questions of eligibility, coverage, gaps, targeting, prioritisation including area wise, but also subsector wise, (e.g. rental reconstruction). There is to date no Government policy to confirm eligibility for housing construction or housing reconstruction. Therefore there is also no confirmation of the overall numbers (and budgets required). The Government needs to urgently review the scenario options for eligibility in order to underpin overall programming, budgeting and targeting.

4. **Participation:** Though during the emergency phase, the majority of agencies involved in the emergency shelter response operated on a direct provision approach, responsibility and decision making need to be handed over to households, landlords and communities themselves to drive the reconstruction and development process.

**Further reading on this topic:**

Groupe URD

Groupe URD (Urgence – Réhabilitation – Développement) is a non-pro’it research, evaluation and training institute. Its main objective is to help improve humanitarian practices in favour of crisis-affected populations.

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The Haiti Observatory Newsletter - ‘Learning through Evaluation’ aims to share the results of evaluations and studies on important issues currently facing the aid sector in Haiti. We regularly invite external contributors and provide links to other publications. Please contact us if you would like to propose an article.

Further reading on certain topics and full articles by the authors can be found on the Haiti Observatory website: www.urd.org/haiti

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