

US Government Aid to Haiti: Recommendations for Improved Reporting and Accountability – May 2, 2012

The following recommendations are intended to strengthen aid accountability and transparency in Haiti and enhance USAID and the US State Department's recent initiatives to address aid accountability concerns. This initial list of recommendations, formulated in consultation with Haitian grassroots partners, is intended to help USAID and the US State Department deliver on their reporting requirements in a way that clarifies program goals and outcomes and follows a more inclusive consultative process. **Our ultimate recommendation is for USAID and the US State Department to create an overarching evaluative and reporting framework that corresponds to the strategic plan for US efforts in Haiti. We believe this framework should contain time-bound goals, qualitative and quantitative measurements, grassroots input, and specifies desired versus actual outcomes.** Below are helpful specific recommendations, resources and ideas about how to make such reporting changes viable.

Measurable Goals

- Develop and disclose the matrices that USAID uses to track the impact of aid programs and any additional matrices that will allow the general public to better understand the impact that key investments or programs have accomplished. Include language that helps to clarify what benchmarks are being used, such as what USAID's definition of successful capacity building might be for a government support initiative.
- Describe clearly what mechanisms exist to ensure accountability to the Haitian government, grassroots stakeholders and Haitian Diaspora in the implementation of U.S. government aid programs in Haiti. Show the process and benchmarks in place to transition project functions and ownership over to the Haitian government and non-state actors.
- Define and measure the impact of key interventions when possible by beneficiaries' region, sector and socio-economic groups through such means as measuring communities' participation in intervention strategies, changes in income levels and access to basic resources. Incorporate gender into evaluation and reporting whenever possible through such means as gender budget tracking, gender impact assessments and gender disaggregated data management.

Meaningful Consultation

- Develop and report on the processes in place to ensure effective civil society and grassroots consultation. Helpful strategies to accomplish this include providing advance notice to civil society for consultation, providing Creole translation as needed, publicizing the list of consulted civil society and

grassroots actors by region and sector, and explaining impact of these consultations on decision-making processes and programs.

- Incorporate the perspectives of representatives of Haitian government, grassroots movements and Diaspora organizations into evaluation mechanisms and report on those perspectives. This can include social and environmental auditing, budget tracking, impact assessments and evidence of how projects are not duplicative and fit into the Haiti's own country development strategy.

Increased Transparency and Accountability

- List the names and contact information of both primary and sub contractors whenever possible as well as the quantity of funds allocated to these implementing partners. Make public more detailed annual and other periodic reports by primary contractors that can include the following information: summaries of funds obligated and disbursed, grant implementation processes and outcomes, and details on sub-contracting activities. Encourage primary contractors to report on the impact of their interventions on key demographic groups with information such as the outcomes of sub-contractor capacity-building initiatives, number of Haitians employed and amount of in-country income generation.
- Ensure culturally appropriate dissemination of information with the help of civil society and grassroots input, such as using radio and community meetings as communication vehicles. Aim to include Creole and French translation of most key design and evaluation documents and make those documents accessible online, at in-person meetings and through grassroots networks.
- Report on the overall structure of and resulting outcomes of Haiti government coordination and capacity building initiatives, both at local and national levels.

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