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HAITI + 10 IMPACT EVALUATION – SUMMARY



On 12 and 20 January 2010, two high magnitudes earthquakes hit Haiti, the poorest country in North America. These earthquakes destroyed more than 80% of the capital Port-au-Prince, but also affected, elsewhere in the country, the cities of Gressier, Jacmel and Léogâne. Nearly a fifth of the population – about 2.3 million people – were displaced, with 1.5 million seeking refuge in makeshift camps¹. The magnitude of the crisis coupled with significant media attention and Haiti's proximity to North America resulted in a large number of actors intervening, which posed major challenges to the coordination of the emergency response.

Following the earthquakes, Swiss Solidarity, a Swiss donor for humanitarian aid, launched an appeal to raise money from the Swiss population. This appeal received 66.2 million Swiss francs, of which 95% was used to finance projects to help victims in Haiti. The funds were disbursed in two phases: 1) emergency relief and 2) rehabilitation/reconstruction. During the two phases from 2010-2018, Swiss Solidarity financed 91 projects, carried out by 21 Swiss NGOs. These projects targeted the most vulnerable groups amongst the earthquakes' victims. The vast majority of projects were implemented in the Ouest (West) and Sud-Est (Southeast) Departments. The Swiss Solidarity partners' response was multi-sectoral, focusing on livelihoods; shelter; and water, hygiene and sanitation, as well as the protection of vulnerable people and the management of risks and disasters. Protection was at the heart of most of the funded projects.

Ten years later, Swiss Solidarity commissioned this evaluation for the purposes of accountability and learning. In terms of accountability, the aim of the evaluation is to inform the Swiss population, Swiss businesses and public authorities who strongly mobilised

to raise funds, on how funds were allocated and their impact on beneficiaries (summative evaluation). With regards to learning, the lessons learned are intended to inform Swiss Solidarity's future guidelines in the event of further earthquakes (formative evaluation). This evaluation covers 30 of 91 projects that Swiss Solidarity supported, which were implemented by 9 NGOs².

Methodology

The evaluation is based on a mixed-methods approach comprised of both qualitative and quantitative elements. Following the desk review, the evaluation began with a learning workshop in Port-au-Prince on 8 May 2019 with representatives of the 9 NGO partners. In-country data collection occurred from 8-23 May, and included **87 Key Informant Interviews, 52 Focus Group Discussions with beneficiaries and 9 life stories. In parallel, a quantitative survey was conducted with 525 households.** After the analysis and triangulation of this data, the main results of the evaluation are presented below.

¹ Simon Levine & Al, Sept. 2012, Faire fi des réalités ! Problématiques foncières, institutions locales et action humanitaire après les tremblements de terre en Haïti, ODI..

² Croix-Rouge suisse, Fondation Terre des hommes Lausanne, (Tdh-L), Caritas Suisse, Medair, l'Entraide Protestante Suisse (EPER), Helvetas, Fédération Handicap International (nouveau nom d'usage Humanité et Inclusion, HI), Terre des hommes Suisse (Genève, TDH-S), Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA).

1. Relevance and effectiveness of the response

Appropriateness for beneficiaries' needs

- The projects Swiss Solidarity financed were implemented in rural zones that were the most affected by the earthquakes. Swiss Solidarity partners sought to move away from the agglomeration of Port-au-Prince, where a large number of humanitarian actors were already present. This approach proved to be appropriate, as it helped reduce the duplication of assistance and improved the coverage of needs nationally, particularly as rural areas were less covered than urban centres. In addition, this approach is in line with Swiss Solidarity partners' expertise, who have more experience implementing in rural areas than in urban ones.
- Household targeting was based on vulnerability criteria that were either directly or indirectly related to the earthquakes. This allowed for a holistic management of socio-economic vulnerability.
- The projects Swiss Solidarity financed responded to the majority of documented urgent needs (e.g. housing, water, hygiene and sanitation, livelihoods). Food security and education needs were covered by other international actors, and did not rank as priorities among Swiss Solidarity partners.

Appropriateness of housing construction projects:

- All the houses the Swiss Solidarity partners built in Ouest (West) Department are permanent shelters, i.e. real houses that were constructed in compliance with anti-seismic standards. All the consulted stakeholders and beneficiaries considered this approach to be very relevant. It was also part of the project's approach to ensure sustainability.

Appropriateness of WASH projects:

- Rehabilitated or constructed water points and water tanks were considered relevant, although their design may not have been appropriate for the context (e.g. a water point fuelled by a generator in an area far away from a fuel pump). The large-scale water network reconstructed in a valley of Grand-Goâve (in Dano) is functional, but more limited than initially planned.

Appropriateness of livelihood projects:

- The vocational training, which allowed participants a complete business apprenticeship, was considered to be of high quality. However, few apprentices were able to find a stable job at the end of the training, notably due to a gap between the initial market analysis and actual demand.
- The training courses for people who were already active in fishing, livestock farming or agriculture were considered to be very relevant because they were adapted to the context and skills of the targeted people. On many occasions, local people noted that the introduction of new farming techniques (including crop diversification and soil conservation) were particularly appropriate and highly appreciated.

Appropriateness of risk and disaster management projects:

- Households, local authorities and Swiss Solidarity partners deemed projects focused on longer-term needs and disaster risk preparedness and prevention relevant. Given the frequency of hurricanes, storms and torrential rains in the country, projects that focus on watershed stabilisation and environmental management around spring water catchments are clearly justified.

1. Relevance and effectiveness of the response

Appropriateness of protection projects focusing on the most vulnerable persons:

- Protection projects were designed based on studies that looked at the specific needs of children, young people and people with disabilities. They were considered relevant to both the context and the specific needs of these different groups.

Effectiveness of the response

Timeliness of the response

- **Conformity with the calendar:** The difficulties in accessing beneficiaries and the time needed to recruit the teams during the first months of the response delayed the launch of several projects. These projects did however, make up the lost time and met their schedules. Climate hazards (e.g. Hurricane Matthew) also caused occasional delays in the implementation of post-earthquake projects that were still occurring at that time.
- **Duration of projects:** The duration of most projects proved to be adequate in relation to their stated objectives, even though they were often considered too short to allow for an effective transfer of skills to local organisations. However, the duration of some of the vocational training projects proved to be too short (two years) when compared to their objectives (professional reintegration).

Most of the time, there was a discernible tension between NGOs' willingness to implement sustainable projects with long-term goals of capacity building and behavioural change, and the traditional duration of emergency and early recovery projects. Swiss Solidarity's guidelines have since been adapted to put more emphasis on long-term projects in the first phase of the response; this has been favourably received by

humanitarian actors.

Achievement of indicators and results chain

- All projects achieved the objectives described in their respective logical frameworks. In addition, training and awareness-raising actions reached more beneficiaries than expected.
- All interviewed project managers were able to clearly explain the results chains of their projects. Two trends emerge in terms of intervention logic: first, the desire to adopt integrated approaches, and second, the aim for interventions to be sustainable.

The factors that contributed to achieving results are: Swiss Solidarity's flexibility so that projects could adapt to the population's changing needs, the monitoring and technical support provided by URD Group between 2010-2014, and communities' strong involvement and participation during phase two.

Effectiveness of the beneficiary selection process

- Beyond the geographical criteria, all the examined projects used selection criteria related to the level of economic vulnerability of the person or family, and the damage they suffered. Some protection and training projects also included a gender dimension and thus targeted more women.
- Some of the targeting criteria emanating from international humanitarian standards were difficult to meet in the Haitian context. One example is the possession of title deeds for projects related to house construction.
- In some projects (e.g. savings groups), NGOs worked with community leaders, thus relying on the principles of trickle-down and community solidarity.

1. Relevance and effectiveness of the response

- Most projects required beneficiaries to contribute and actively participate. As such, one of the first criterion to being a beneficiary of an aid project was acceptance. In other words, they had to want to receive the project, which was not always the case*.
- Overall, beneficiaries expressed their satisfaction with the assistance they received, and stated that it enabled them to cover their basic needs and recover their livelihoods following the earthquakes. In particular, households reported that they felt safe in their new houses and were able to access drinking water more easily.
- In terms of livelihoods, beneficiaries stated that they most appreciated the trainings in agronomy and livestock farming, as well as those related to soil protection and water maintenance.
- For construction projects, beneficiaries' satisfaction appears to have progressed over the project phases. Beneficiaries expressed a higher satisfaction with the houses built during the second phase of the project, since the model of house had improved compared to those built in the first phase. The sense that satisfaction changed over time is also due to the fact that expectations evolve as more time passes after the disaster (for example, pre-fabricated shelters were considered very useful during their installation but are perceived in a more nuanced manner today).

Effectiveness of complaint mechanisms

- Swiss Solidarity's NGO partners had an organisational responsibility to implement an accessible complaint and feedback mechanism. Although the NGOs made efforts to communicate with communities, only one of the observed NGOs had an accessible and functional complaints mechanism. This remains an area for improvement.

Relative importance of the response

Out of the 525 households surveyed, 92% attributed the most significant change in their lives since the earthquakes to projects funded by Swiss Solidarity.

- **Housing construction:** Unsurprisingly, households who received shelter assistance have seen a significant and lasting improvement in their living conditions. Proper housing allowed them to return to a normal life and feel safe at night as they no longer had to live on the street or in tents. Housing facilitated economic recovery by creating a more stable situation for beneficiaries, which allowed them to resume an economic activity and regain their dignity. Thus, the projects' shelter support was a catalyst for beneficiaries to return to normal life.
- **Water, Sanitation and Hygiene:** The population appreciated the construction of water tanks and water points as it has allowed them to access water more easily (less effort and time). However, the National Directorate of Drinking Water and Sanitation's framework perceives the provision of drinking water that requires a financial contribution from users as having a negative effect on households' living conditions, and particularly on their ability to cover their basic needs.
- **Livelihoods:** According to the household survey, the projects' livelihoods and integrated trainings had a positive impact, as they have allowed beneficiaries to regain some autonomy and hope for their future. Many positive behavioural changes have also been observed (e.g. in risk prevention).

During FGDs some beneficiaries noted that they were not always able to cover their households' basic needs over the last decade. The vast

* Quality of the assistance.

1. Relevance and effectiveness of the response

majority of these examples however were not directly related to Swiss Solidarity's projects, but rather to persistent structural problems in Haiti including a lack of job opportunities, lack of work and/or reduced purchasing power.

Coordination and operational model

Swiss Solidarity allowed its partners to decide on the operational model they wanted to adopt: direct implementation, partnering with a local NGO, consortium, etc. Swiss Solidarity's method of financing (funding quotas fixed by organisation) made it possible to limit the competition between the partners; giving them medium-term visibility on the available financing favoured the development of projects by all partners, without the risk that one or two organisations would absorb the majority of available funds. This resulted in fluid and transparent communication between the partner NGOs. Key informants cited several examples of operational collaboration, and unanimously emphasised that Swiss NGOs have a good level of cooperation.

The actual operational coordination occurred at the level of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) that was present in the country, and particularly via the Swiss Reconstruction Competence Centre that was set up in 2012. This helped standardise the reconstruction approaches and techniques. Swiss Solidarity concentrated on monitoring and controlling proper project implementation, as well as on sharing information via, for example, the support the URD Group provided (iterative project monitoring). This support allowed the partners to exchange on technical issues and improve their activities.

Swiss Solidarity's guidelines are viewed as a relevant tool that mainly serves to limit the scope of projects, rather than to prescribe specific projects. According to some key informants, the guidelines did not sufficiently encourage projects with longer-term goals.



2. The projects' sustainable effects

Housing construction projects

Swiss Solidarity and its partners favoured a sustainable housing approach rather than temporary shelter construction, in alignment with current humanitarian standards. The constructed houses' sustainability was clearly observed and considered very positive - 95% of survey respondents who received shelter support during the projects still live in those houses. Concerning the constructions' quality, of this 95%, three out of four inhabitants feel safe in their home, and 84% feel completely or largely protected from climatical hazards.

Livelihood projects

Half of the surveyed households received one or several training courses (covering all sectors, including training in reforestation, hygiene best practices, child protection, fishing, risk management, etc.). The majority still use these lessons and judged them as being useful, with little distinction between geographic areas. The savings groups have had a lasting effect in the communities where they were established, and have even multiplied.

On the other hand, interventions that aimed to set up income-generating activities for youth associations and to transform them into cooperatives have, for the most part, been unsuccessful.

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene projects

According to the household survey, the majority of households (85%) still use the latrines they received. For the remaining 15%, the latrines were either destroyed by Hurricane Matthew or are no longer functional (most often because they are full).

75% of households still use the water points Swiss Solidarity partners rehabilitated or constructed.

The stone water tanks that the projects installed have proven to be weather resistant and are still in operation.

Protection projects

People from the Office of Occupational Accident Insurance, Sickness and Maternity (OFATMA), formed by one of the organisations, are still in their roles and the online trainings that were set up are still accessible today. Some of the equipment donated to OFATMA is still used, although some may need to be replaced.

The work done by Swiss Solidarity's partners has had a lasting impact on national child protection policies. These include: the signing of a moratorium on international adoptions in times of crisis, followed by the government's adoption of The Hague Convention on the same subject and the establishment of a system of scoring children's homes.

Risk and disaster management projects

The teachers in the schools Swiss Solidarity partners targeted continue to replicate the projects' awareness and training sessions on risk and disaster management. A network of 10 schools has been created at Les Petits Frères in Palmiste-à-Vin, where directors work together to prepare risk and disaster management courses for students and the community.

Overall, factors that supported the projects' sustainability were as follows:

- The presence of NGOs before the earthquakes (good local grounding and knowledge of the context).
- Staff stability during the emergency phase.
- Staff's physical presence at the local level, to monitor the implementation of community-led projects.

2. The projects' sustainable effects

- The NGOs' continued presence in the region 10 years later, which contributes to the infrastructure's good maintenance and the continuity of certain practices.
- Links with local authorities: the Swiss NGOs worked within existing structures and in a participatory manner to involve the local authorities from the beginning.
- The handover at the end of the projects was strong. Local structures (representatives of government services, local elected representatives, local NGO staff and community members) were able to continue certain activities at the end of the projects.
- Communities' participation in implementing interventions that concerned them, particularly through trainings.

Factors that hindered sustainability include:

- The sharp rise in food prices in Haiti, combined with a slowdown in economic activity, sharply increased the number of people living below the poverty line and has indebted half of the country's households. This macroeconomic environment has limited the livelihood projects' effects and sustainability.
- Lack of access to credit for beneficiaries of livelihood projects, and in particular fishermen and young apprentices hampered their ability to establish their own livelihood activities.
- The lack of opportunity to consolidate learning, especially the accompaniment stage between the end of professional training and hiring, hindered sustainability.
- The frustrations that result from what the population considers to be broken promises or unmet expectations.
- Structural problems such as the quality of infrastructure and access to services.



3. Improving resilience and disaster preparedness

During this evaluation, the notion of resilience, understood as a process, was defined with Swiss Solidarity's partners. A distinction was made between individual resilience and stakeholders' disaster preparedness.

Individual resilience

Ten years after the earthquakes, 57% of beneficiaries feel better prepared for future

shocks. The reasons they mentioned are largely related to the risk management and disaster projects that were implemented. The table below illustrates the individual resilience factors the evaluation identified. Although most projects' logical frameworks did not specifically mention resilience as an intended goal, they helped to reinforce one or more of these factors.



3. Improving resilience and disaster preparedness

Community organisations' and institutions' disaster preparedness

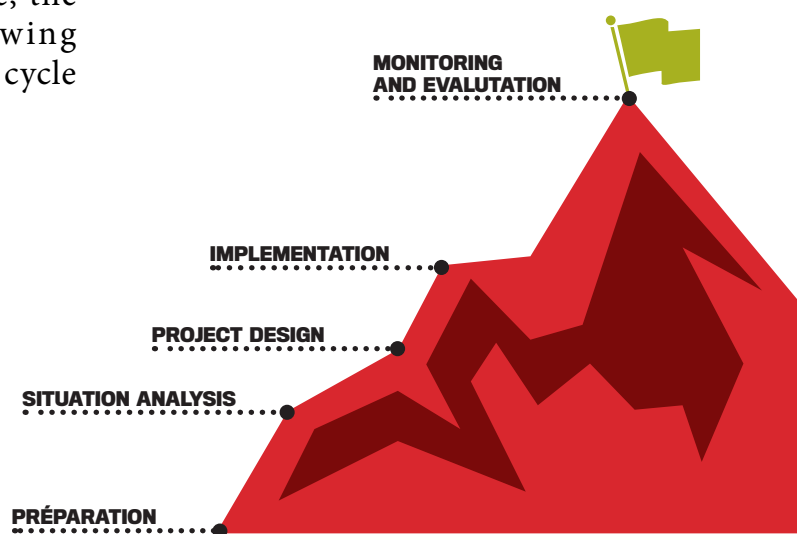
Currently, nearly 79% of the community centres the projects built are used daily. Schools' community centres are also being used, and groups of young people (especially in Grand-Goâve) continue to organise activities. With regard to houses, the chosen construction materials ensured that buildings are disaster-resistant.

In most localities where Swiss Solidarity partners implemented risk and disaster management projects, contingency plans exist, but there is often no budget to implement them.

Swiss Solidarity partners' disaster preparedness

All Swiss Solidarity partners that are active in the country have integrated the risk of natural disasters into their projects, including earthquakes. Interviewees feel better prepared for future shocks. In hindsight, programme managers felt that they would be more responsive in sending teams to the field, and that they would take more time to design projects (including housing projects). This improved preparedness for natural disasters was particularly evident during the Hurricane Matthew response, both in terms of conducting the needs assessment and having the capacity to implement the response.

Based on the findings discussed above, the evaluation team proposes the following recommendations, organised by project cycle stage.



PRÉPARATION

STRENGTHEN THE CAPACITY OF SWISS SOLIDARITY PARTNERS TO IMPLEMENT PROGRAMMING IN URBAN AREAS

Swiss Solidarity partners should ensure that they have the capacity to implement in urban areas within the framework of the local emergency group and eventually the Inter-Organisations Liaison Framework.

SITUATION ANALYSIS

INTEGRATE AN ASSESSMENT OF LOCAL MARKETS' FUNCTIONALITY INTO THE SITUATION ANALYSIS, WHETHER IT BE THE LABOUR MARKET OR THE GOODS AND SERVICES USED TO IMPLEMENT PROJECTS

Such a study should make it possible to implement training projects that are more aligned with the labour market's needs, as well as with the skills of the people affected by the earthquake. Furthermore, a better understanding of local markets could improve the collaboration with the private sector in Haiti which was limited during the earthquake response.

FROM THE OUTSET, INVOLVE LOCAL IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS

Swiss Solidarity's NGO partners set up their projects with the support of local NGOs. These partners should work to implement Swiss Solidarity's new guidelines, which aim to reinforce organisations' commitment to support the localisation of the assistance.



PROJECT DESIGN

CONDUCT A SYSTEMATICALLY STUDY OF THE RELEVANCE OF USING CASH TRANSFERS

Cash transfers are not necessarily appropriate to cover all needs in all contexts; however, a feasibility study should systematically inform the selection of the modality to use.

CONDUCT A COST-BENEFIT ANALYSIS OF THE DIFFERENT HOUSING MODELS

Swiss Solidarity and its partners should continue the strategy of pursuing sustainable constructions. However, beyond a basic level (to be defined according to a standard of sustainable shelter design), it is recommended to favour the criteria of modularity and familiarity.

INTEGRATE A STRONG ACCOUNTABILITY COMPONENT FOR THE AFFECTED POPULATION FROM THE OUTSET

This is particularly pertinent with respect to complaint mechanisms.

STRENGTHEN GENDER MAINSTREAMING

To achieve this, it is recommended to:

- Adjust activity monitoring surveys so they can generate disaggregated analyses that capture the experiences of men and women separately;
- Differentiate between the beneficiaries that are female single heads of household and those that are married women or in couples with a male head of household;
- To the greatest extent possible, recruit more women as outreach workers.

ENSURE THAT ALL PERSONS MEETING VULNERABILITY CRITERIA CAN ACCESS ACTIVITIES

Swiss Solidarity partners should ensure that a wide range of groups are able to participate in the implementation of activities and that there are no social, physical or financial barriers that prevent their inclusion.

TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE ENVIRONMENTAL ASPECTS OF THE RESPONSE: 'BUILD BACK GREENER'

The reported lack of impact on the environment, either positive or negative, of a response of this magnitude tends to suggest a lack of awareness on the subject.

IMPLEMENTATION**REINFORCE THE INTERVENTIONS' FLEXIBILITY**

The integrated approach of having two phases (emergency and rehabilitation) should be reproduced. To do so, Swiss Solidarity's flexible funding should continue.

INTEGRATE EXISTING LOCAL STRUCTURES

Conducting capacity building through existing structures, rather than ones created by the NGOs, improved the communities' ownership of the project once projects ended and NGOs left.

DIVERSIFY COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES

NGOs often create a high demand for community leaders, who as a result have to play too many roles to be effective in any of them.

DEDICATE SUFFICIENT RESOURCES TO COMMUNITY COMMUNICATION EFFORTS

This is particularly important during the transition at the end of the project, which was sometimes considered insufficient or incomplete. It is important that communities clearly are aware when a project ends.

STRENGTHEN SOCIAL MARKETING ACTIVITIES ON ACCESS TO WATER

Such activities should encourage beneficiaries to pay for quality water. At the same time, it is important to clarify with committees that water points have a social and non-commercial purpose.

PROJECT DESIGN**STRENGTHEN MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF RESULTS, RATHER THAN JUST ACTIVITIES**

Monitoring a project's results rather than its activities better demonstrates its effectiveness and relevance to the stated objectives.

INTEGRATE THE CONCEPT OF RESILIENCE INTO THE DESIGN OF EACH PROJECT AND FOSTER A LINK WITH DEVELOPMENT

The inclusion of resilience and measures to manage risk and disasters is a good practice to replicate. However, it is important to first define resilience in a participatory way with local communities to identify the factors that NGOs can influence.

The bridge between humanitarian and development NGOs should be accentuated to prevent a void in assistance. Within the same structure, emergency and development teams should aim to conduct joint needs assessments and implement projects that have overlapping objectives in terms of covering needs and reducing risks and vulnerabilities.