

# The Haiti Earthquake: An Urban Solution



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## Background

On 12th of January 2010, an earthquake measuring 7 on the Richter scale struck Haiti. Approximately 3.5 million people lived in areas directly affected by the earthquake. An estimated 220,000 people died during and immediately after the earthquake and a further 1.5 million people were displaced. The earthquake dramatically increased the levels of unemployment, with productive assets lost or damaged and infrastructure shattered. The earthquake resulted in a significant increase in household food insecurity and loss of livelihoods.

As a result of the earthquake, poverty levels were estimated to have risen by 30-50% in Port au Prince (PaP) and by 80% in the commune of Carrefour. Across the city, people struggled to afford to eat, as food became less affordable and less accessible. Early assessments have indicated that people resorted to a range of coping strategies, from reducing the number of meals and borrowing money, to selling assets and engaging in sex work.

## Assessments

In the aftermath of the earthquake, several different assessments were used to design the programme.

## Rapid Oxfam Emergency Food Security and Livelihoods (EFSL) assessment

This assessment used household information from 2009 as a baseline to analyse wealth groups, using indicators such as access to food and income. This information was then used to determine vulnerability criteria. The response design was influenced by these household surveys and requests for assistance in the form of community canteens and livelihood support programmes.

## Emergency Food Security Assessment (EFSA)

coordinated by the CNSA (Coordination Nationale de la Sécurité Alimentaire). This study concluded that the earthquake exacerbated the already high levels of food insecurity in PaP. As a result of the devastation, over 1.2 million people in Haiti were found to be food insecure. This represents over 10% of the total population. Nearly half of these live in Port au Prince, Delmas and Carrefour. Spending on food went from an average of 35% to 85%, leaving little room for livelihood recovery. Households with poor or borderline food consumption increased from 17% to 30% after the earthquake. Furthermore, the assessment found that female-headed household and single parent households were more vulnerable to food insecurity.



Food cooked by Marie Carole Boursiquot, canteen owner, Carrefour Feuilles. Photo: Oxfam.



One of Oxfam's 157 canteens which provides a daily hot meal to local people. Photo: Oxfam.

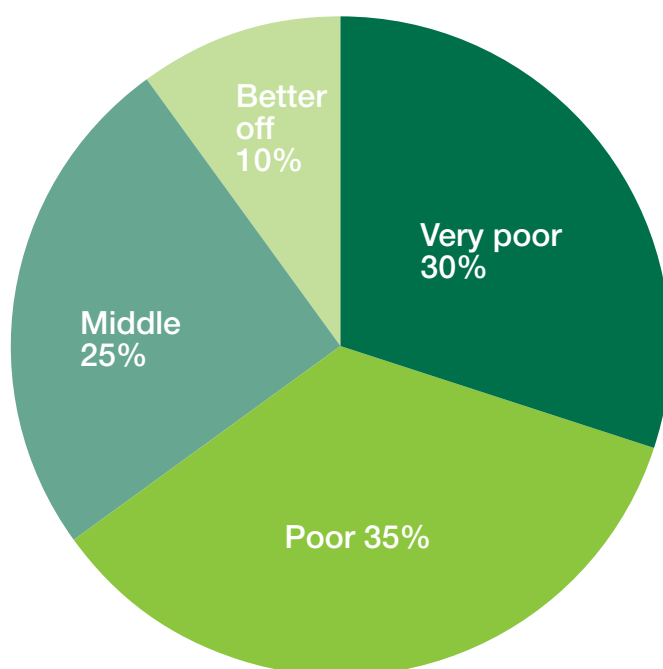
### An interagency Emergency Market Mapping and Analysis (EMMA)

The interagency EMMA assessment was conducted over a two-week period. The study focused on the markets for rice, beans, labour and corrugated iron. The PaP earthquake affected residents were the target population for all four of the market chains analysed. The findings showed that there was a breakdown in the market chain particularly around storage, security, and access to formal and informal credit. Small retailers and middlemen were badly affected in the supply chain with major losses to their productive assets. The results of the labour survey showed that there was a shortage of skilled labour in Haiti, and moreover, many of the skilled labourers had lost their tools or equipment in the earthquake.

These assessments helped determine the profiles of the different wealth groups as well as the needs of those affected by the earthquake. This understanding enabled Oxfam GB to design targeted programmes to deal with immediate needs and to, from the outset, lay plans for the reconstruction process.

### Livelihood and wealth groups

Baseline date from 2009, (PaP Urban Baseline, 2009) analysed the profiles of the wealth groups in PaP, prior to the earthquake.



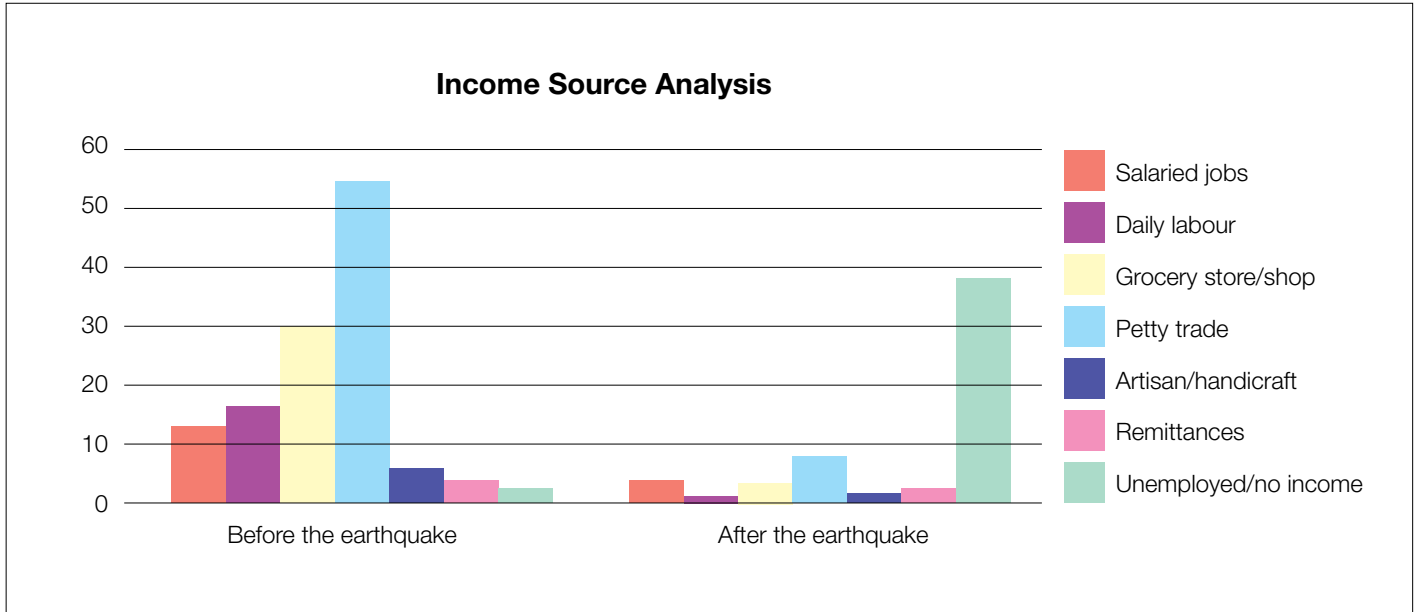
**Very Poor** (30% of bidonville): street hawking, casual labour, petty trade, small businesses, and remittances. Typically no productive assets. Average monthly income of \$236-310 United States Dollars (USD)

**Poor** (35% of bidonville): street hawking, casual labour, petty trade, small businesses, and remittances. Typically own either a bicycle or a wheelbarrow. Average monthly income of \$310-435 USD

**Middle** (25% of bidonville): casual labour, salaried employment, petty trade, small businesses and remittances. Typically own either a bicycle or a motorcycle. Average monthly income \$435-621 USD

**Better Off:** (10% of bidonville): salaried employment, larger businesses and remittances. Average monthly income \$621 plus





Household Economy Approach (HEA) analysis from 2009 identified six basic income sources for a majority of households in PaP bidonvilles. Data from collated assessments demonstrated the effect of the earthquake on the livelihoods of the poorest in PaP. The impact of the earthquake was spread across wealth groups and livelihoods.

The EMMA analysis and our understanding of the breakdown of wealth groups and livelihood options enabled us to target specific beneficiaries across the board, in order to effectively deliver assistance and begin to move from response to reconstruction. A better understanding of crucial market chains can help lead to a more effective distribution of humanitarian resources, faster economic recovery and less risk of long term dependency on external assistance<sup>1</sup>. This was a crucial and fairly novel aspect of humanitarian programming, in that wealth group targeting, market analysis and long term development considerations were integrated from the beginning of the emergency response.

Whilst the very poor and poor wealth groups were targeted as the most vulnerable, middle wealth groups were also included in the beneficiary selection process. This was for two reasons: first, the middle groups were also badly affected by the earthquake and secondly, the services and activities carried out by the middle groups play a vital role in the recovery in the economy.

## Project details

### Goals and objectives

This project was part of a broader programme whose goal was to contribute to the economic and livelihoods recovery of vulnerable households in PaP.

This project's specific objective was to improve the food security situation for vulnerable households through the rehabilitation of livelihoods and improved access to basic services. This would happen through:

- Improved income and employment opportunities for households in and around PaP
- Supported income generation activities for 10,000 households in and around PaP to boost livelihood recovery
- Improved access to basic goods and services in selected areas of PaP's four communes by the end of December
- Increased capacity of key financial institutions supporting Oxfam's programming

Based on the assessments carried out and wealth group and market analysis, Oxfam planned a range of projects to meet a variety of needs.





**The First Phase projects**, to be implemented over six months were:

- **Basic needs grants.** An unconditional one-off grant of 8,000 Haitian Gourdes (approximately \$50USD) to support households to cover their basic needs. There were 3,677 **beneficiary households**.
- **Community canteens.** This was a five-month project to provide lunch for vulnerable families, thereby releasing resources for livelihood rehabilitation. There were 195 canteens, with each canteen providing meals to 80 people for eight weeks (Monday to Friday). In addition, the canteens provided work to small restaurant owners who lost resources in the earthquake, and were not in a position to restart their businesses. There were a total of 3,662 households for the community canteens.
- Beneficiary family household heads were also provided with unconditional grants of 7,000 Haitian Gourdes (approx \$174 USD) to support asset recuperation.
- Restaurant owners were supported in their recovery through livelihoods grants and the provision of double fuel-efficient stoves (36 already provided). Training on fuel-efficient cooking, to reduce production costs, is planned for phase two.

- **Cash for work (CFW).** These projects provided very poor or poor households with no skills with a source of income. Oxfam has worked with 5,931 households. The CFW schemes centred on Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) improvements, such as canal drainage, flood mitigation, ravine and gully clearance.
- **Livelihoods recovery grants.** These were grants of 5,000 Haitian Gourdes (approximately \$125 USD) to enable beneficiaries to rebuild or start small businesses. Grants have been provided to 10,083 households so far.
- **Business Support Programmes:** Business management training for Restaurant owners (involved in the canteen programmes as well as local street vendors), targeted trade people, and grocery storekeepers will support their income generation capacity. To date 1,602 people have been trained.
- **Fuel-efficient stoves** were provided to the most vulnerable 750 households to reduce their expenditures on fuel, one of the main expenses linked with food.

**In total, there have been 124,590 beneficiaries in 25,253 households.**



Livelihoods recovery grants of 125 USD enabled beneficiaries to restart or start small businesses. Photo: Oxfam.





Marie Carole Boursiquot, canteen owner, in carrefour feuilles. Photo: Oxfam





**The Second Phase** of the project is scheduled to begin in August 2010 and is planned to include:

- **Support to skilled workers.** An average grant of \$500 USD will be provided to 780 skilled workers, mainly from the middle-income wealth group (for example, plumbers, bakers and builders). The grant is to assist in the rebuilding of their trade and to purchase tools and resources lost in the earthquake. Where possible, Oxfam will employ these service providers, through, for example, WASH work. Oxfam will create a database of those workers who have used their grants effectively to share with other NGOs.
- **Support to grocery stores.** This activity will target 88 grocery storekeepers, to support their business recovery/restart and as a contribution to economic recovery. The support will consist of the provision of a grant of over \$1000 USD and will potentially be linked to a loan issued by local micro-finance institutions.

**The Third Phase** of the project for 2011 to 2012, Oxfam plans to focus:

- **Employment development** through the continuation of cash for work projects
- **Increased capacity of micro-enterprises** for beneficiaries with sound entrepreneurial skills. These beneficiaries will be supported to create employment opportunities for others and to provide basic goods and services to the community.
- **Social protection and livelihoods support** for the most vulnerable.

### Intervention areas

The response is focused on four communes of Delmas, Carrefour, PaP and Croix des Bouquets. These are urban and peri-urban areas. The selected areas are the most vulnerable areas of these communes as decided with local partners and authorities. In each commune, vulnerability mapping was carried out to identify the worst-off areas with partners and authorities.

## Who was targeted?

### Beneficiaries

The selection criteria for the beneficiaries varied with activity and area. Generally speaking, the selection criteria for basic needs grants, canteen, cash for work and livelihood recovery grant activities sought to select the very poor and poor. **Criteria included households that had lost their source of income and/or had elderly, disabled, young children, single parent households, or a high dependency ratio.**

The selection criteria for the grocery storekeepers sought to **target small business owners that were established in the area previously, had shops/assets damaged during the earthquake, and are willing to re-establish their businesses.**

Skilled workers targeted were those who have more than **5 to 10 years' experience, were operating in the area prior to the earthquake, had lost their capital and equipment, and were willing to restart their activity.**

**Female-headed households** were targeted in all of the activities, as they were identified as being especially vulnerable.

Targeting in the urban context used socio-economic classification tailored to urban sources of income and factors of wealth. Urban vulnerability selection criteria are more complex and tend to be less visible or verifiable than in a rural context. This made it very difficult to identify those who suffered directly as a consequence of the earthquake and those who were chronically poor. The use of local partners was essential in the beneficiary selection process.

### Partners

Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) were key partners. In the commune of Port-au-Prince, in the area of Carrefour Feuilles, CRAD, Friendship Club, Cozepam, MJC and Pejefe played a central role in vulnerability areas mapping, selection criteria definition and beneficiary identification.

Oxfam is today working with more than 250 Community Based Organisations (CBOs), over all 4 communes. They are key in beneficiary selection, management, monitoring, distribution and accountability.

### Donors

Funding has come from large number of sources. These include appeals from all Oxfam affiliates and numerous institutional donors, including DEC, ECHO, ACCD, Spanish regional governments, AusAID, Belgium Government, Flemish Government, DFID, Government of Quebec, Canadian Government, UN, Canadian Humanitarian Coalition, and Dutch SHO.

## Coordination

The Cash Learning Partnership (CaLP) set up a cash coordination group and was a key coordinating body for all agencies involved in the response. This group worked to standardise acceptable daily work rates, that had been proposed by the government. These groups enabled the share of information, evaluations and lessons learnt.

## Cross cutting issues

### Sustainability and exit strategy

Due to the devastation caused by the earthquake, Oxfam plans to work in the effected urban areas for the longer term. Sustainability and exit strategies are critical. Two areas of focus for Oxfam's work into longer-term programming are as follows:

- **Livelihoods recovery.** Future work will seek to ensure that the livelihoods are made more resilient and more stable against future shocks.
- **Markets.** The EMMA assessments and breakdown of wealth groups feed into value chain methodology approaches for longer-term development work.

DRR Cash for work programmes have addressed DRR issues mainly through mitigation work.

**Protection and gender equity** The teams are supported by a gender-mainstreaming officer to ensure that the needs of vulnerable groups are taken into account and that rights are protected. All programmes are reviewed before implementation.

**Accountability** Oxfam has a free call 400 number for members of the community, bi-weekly accountability meetings at the community level and an accountability committee to review the programmes in PaP (PHARE). This committee is comprised of members of partner organizations and local authorities.

## Results and impact

A monitoring review in July 2010 found that the EFSL programme had successfully reached its objectives by supporting those people most adversely affected by the earthquake.

### CFW evaluation – Phase one:

Only 18% of the beneficiaries were able to start or restart their income generating activity from the income they received through CFW. The standard duration of 11 days was insufficient to support income generation recovery for the beneficiaries. 88% of the households had spent all of their income on basic household needs (28% on food).

This monitoring feedback led to an increase in the number of days to 20 days per rotation. As a result of the extension of days, 47% of beneficiaries were able to restart their income generating activities.

### Beneficiaries of the Community Canteen Programme and Grants:

Monitoring shows a substantial increase in the average income of households (HH). 52% of beneficiaries of the canteen programme invested money in income generating activities. Average income doubled from 20% to 40% of the income received prior to the earthquake. 84% of beneficiaries have used at least part of the grant received to procure goods and equipment to rebuild or strengthen a business and 87% have been able to restart an economic activity. Unemployment among this population went from 38% just after the earthquake to 3% after the programme.

The canteen programme led to the increase in the average number of meals per day from 1.6 after the earthquake to 2.1 during the programme (2.6 being the average before the earthquake). However the programme did not manage to support families to reach their intake before the earthquake. Through structured interviews, 50% of beneficiaries responded that it would have been better to have a longer programme.

### Women in charge of the canteens:

The programme was implemented through pre-existing small restaurants in key spots of the targeted areas. 64% of the women involved in canteen provision were able to restart their activity only due to Oxfam support. With assistance from Oxfam, 46% of the hot food vendors were able to acquire assets, procure equipment, increase the business or reimburse debts. 27% of them could start or rebuild another economic activity thanks to the canteen programme. 73% of canteen beneficiaries declared that they would continue working in the restaurant business after the canteen programme had finished.











## Key successes

- **Very specific targeting of each wealth group** (very poor, poor, middle) meant that there were different activities proposed for each group, tailored to their needs.
- **Combination of relief and livelihood support to vulnerable beneficiaries:** The canteen programme in combination with cash grants, for example, has enabled 87% of beneficiaries to re-start an economic enterprise.
- **Market approach:** The understanding of wealth groups and livelihoods and an analysis of market chains meant that from the outset, the programme was able to effectively deal with immediate needs while sowing the seeds for livelihood development and economic recovery.
- **Inter-agency M&E.** Oxfam took the lead in developing a tool for monitoring and evaluating cash transfer programming in collaboration with other agencies. Oxfam has conducted training in data collection and analysis using the tool for staff from GOAL, Care, HelpAge, Christian Aid, Save the Children and the Lutheran World Foundation.
- **Dynamic inter-agency coordination on cash transfer programmes was created with the recruitment of a CALP coordinator.** The coordination has ensured cross-learning, exchange on technical constraints and solutions and strategic thinking. It has also improved the position of agencies vis-à-vis donors and governments regarding the promotion of good quality Cash Transfer Programmes (CTPs).
- **Strong partner based approach:** The support of local partners contributed strongly to the general perception – expressed during the monitoring review – that the targeting and beneficiary selection was transparent, fair and reached those most in need.
- **The feedback free phone line “400” and community accountability meetings** organised with beneficiaries, local partners, and local authorities, have ensured a crucial two-way channel for communication.
- **Sectoral integration:** EFSL and public health have collaborated to provide beneficiaries with vouchers to purchase hygiene kit items of their choice, thus stimulating the local market and giving people choice.
- **Fuel-efficient stove distributions** have also resulted in **50%** reductions in charcoal consumption.

## Lessons learned

- **CFW** - the number of working days was not sufficient per beneficiary to re-start their enterprises. It has been recommended that CFW programmes be run for a minimum of 2 months to give beneficiaries a chance of regaining lost income. CFW programmes need to maintain a narrow geographic focus.
- Programmes, including CFW, need to take better account of **logistical and financial delays** such as lack of availability of tools, reduced capacities of financial institutions, and processing time for payrolls and payments.
- It is difficult and even impossible in this context to **differentiate between households who are directly or indirectly affected and by the disaster and those who are chronically poor.** The challenge is that for many of the most affected groups the real “issue” is poverty and as a consequence humanitarian action should not only look at addressing the disaster but the root causes of vulnerability and poverty. In a dense urban context, it is important to have clear entry and exit criteria.
- **Beneficiary selection processes can be highly politicised** and time consuming. Systematic and transparent work with the CBOs and local representatives enabled Oxfam to implement agreed vulnerability criteria even in tense contexts with local authorities. Furthermore, working closely with local groups adds value in terms of the quality of the activities implemented and community acceptance.
- **Targeting families in areas surrounding camps has shown to be a valuable strategy** as it reduces the number of people who believe that they would be better off in camps. However, with the high vulnerability of people and declining conditions, Oxfam now plans to directly intervene in camps.
- **The “markets approach”** – was a novel approach and linked humanitarian and development programming, through the strengthening of market chains. It was too ambitious to expect that First Phase area teams, who were in charge of all other EFSL activities, to implement the market approach projects and data. The EMMA analysis is vital, however, and indicates the choice of activities, livelihoods programmes and packages and thus has a impact on targeting, implementation structure and exit strategies. This process cannot wait until phase two. The initial markets teams should be kept separate to ensure implementation of markets activities and carry out EMMA updates. EMMA should be monitored and reassessed at points throughout the programme.

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- Management structures and work division based on **geographical location** can be helpful in terms of building positive relationships. However, it can make impact comparisons or management more challenging. **Strong coordination** is key.
- **Voucher production and name verification processes** proved to be a challenge and different systems were tested. To speed up processes, standard approaches could be designed in advanced also as part of contingency planning.
- **Accountability to beneficiaries is paramount.** Despite positive feedback on the channels of communication, beneficiaries said during the monitoring review that they haven't received enough information on the projects. Oxfam wants to continue to improve its methods of sharing information and gathering feedback. Furthermore, the systems are not yet able to address all corruption issues. This should be part of the M&E feedback.
- **Monitoring and evaluation was integrated late in the implementation** which meant that strategic planning for phase two did not incorporate all of the learning from phase one. The pressure to deliver and respond to huge and urgent needs at the beginning of the response has been a serious challenge to launching early M&E. A simple and systematic M&E programme should be developed.

### Acronyms

CTP	Cash Transfer Programme
CFW	Cash for work
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
EFSA	Emergency Food Security Assessment
EFSL	Emergency Food Security and Livelihoods
EMMA	Emergency Market Mapping and Analysis
FGD	Focus group discussion
HEA	Household Economy Approach
HH	Households
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
PaP	Port-au-Prince
USD	United States Dollar







## Notes

1. EMMA Toolkit, 'What is EMMA?', [http://emma-toolkit.info/?page\\_id=83](http://emma-toolkit.info/?page_id=83)