

Cash transfer programme fact sheet

Haiti Red Cross Society

Earthquake response: Return and relocation programme 2010–2013

Humanitarian context



- January 2010 ■ Earthquake
- June 2010 ■ Recovery assessment
- August 2010 ■ First registration activities
- October 2010 ■ First income generation disbursements
- October 2010 – December 2013 ■ On-going registration and income generation disbursements
- March 2011 ■ Second income generation disbursements
- December 2013 ■ Projected programme completion



Project details

National Society	Haiti Red Cross Society
Appeal code	MDRHT008
Objective	Earthquake affected households living in the camps in Port-au-Prince have relocated to safe and secure housing and are supported with economic recovery activities ¹
Duration	August 2010 – December 2013
Location	Port-au-Prince
Cost	9 million Swiss francs (CHF) (396 million Haitian gourde (HTG)) ²
Main sectors	Shelter and livelihoods support
Number of households	13,000 households (planned) 13,616 households (reached by June 2013)
Selection criteria	Displaced households living in camps in Port-au-Prince following the earthquake
Main activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop information and beneficiary communication strategy • Select and train project teams • Register camps residents • Facilitate shelter solutions • Disburse resettlement grants • Help grantees plan their expenses and start income generating activities • Disburse cash grants • Monitor grant use • Conduct final household visits
Key outcome(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Displaced households have left the camps and can conduct income generating activities • Camp sites are returned to communities • Displaced households receive a basic training in small business planning • Displaced households receive and utilize grants to strengthen their income generating activities
Number of staff involved	Total: International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC): 40 staff, Haiti Red Cross Society: 45 volunteers
Other Red Cross Red Crescent Movement involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical support: IFRC • Funding: American Red Cross, British Red Cross, French Red Cross, The Canadian Red Cross Society and The Republic of Korea National Red Cross
Assessment information used	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment (VCA) and household registrations by Haiti Red Cross Society and IFRC

1. IFRC Revised Plan of Action for Recovery 25 February 2013

2. Average exchange rate from August 2010 to October 2013: CHF 1 = HTG 44 (www.oanda.com)

Project description

Context and programme choice

The 7.0 magnitude earthquake which struck Haiti on 12 January 2010 took lives, destroyed homes and businesses and paralyzed the country's capital city Port-au-Prince, adversely impacting and permanently altering the lives of millions already living in precarious social and economic conditions.

The earthquake destroyed the homes of an estimated 2 million people. Among them, 1.3 million people found shelter in camps that were established in the affected regions during the months following the disaster.

The earthquake also dealt a massive blow to Haiti's fragile economy. Businesses, equipment, materials and stocks were destroyed and households lost their breadwinners, savings and homes, leaving many with no source of income.

In reaction to the devastating disaster, the IFRC and Haiti Red Cross Society launched a multi-faceted relief and recovery operation aiming to provide assistance to displaced populations in Port-au-Prince and affected provinces. This included a return and relocation programme which was designed to follow up on the relief response to earthquake affected households and aimed at meeting their recovery needs.

Assessment and programme design

The return and relocation programme was designed knowing that successful camp decongestion requires more than just providing households with a shelter solution and assuring that their tent is removed. The assistance must include livelihood incentives in order for households to live within new communities and empower them to provide for their needs in the longer term. Accordingly, the programme put



The Haiti Red Cross Society convey the programme process and resettlement options to registered households in the camps.

households at the very centre of the assistance and gave them the choice to support their own recovery process based on a variety of options.

Each household received a conditional grant of HTG 20,000 (CHF 455) to find appropriate shelter solutions outside the camp. This conditional grant was to be spent on relocation or rental costs only. Once a household found an appropriate shelter solution, they were given a second 'resettlement' cash grant of HTG 20,000 (CHF 455). The value of each of the two grants was established with respect to the average annual rental cost in Port-au-Prince. However, unlike the first, the second cash grant was unconditional and was intended to meet the households' individual needs. The first and second grant were given in the form of cash through the banking system. The second grant was disbursed in two instalments: the first instalment was

disbursed upon resettlement and the second instalment three months later.

Given that livelihoods was a priority need voiced by the households, the unconditional grant was complemented by a training that focused on basic business management and planning allowing households to plan their expenses and set-up their income generating activity. The Haiti Red Cross Society and IFRC monitored the activities periodically to assess progress and to provide households with any additional technical support.

Household selection

All households living in the registered camps in Port-au-Prince were eligible and included in the return and relocation programme as long as they were willing to start looking for a housing solution outside the camps.



Relocated beneficiary visit by the Haiti Red Cross Society.

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Cash-based programming facts

	Shelter	Livelihoods
Transfer amount per household	HTG 20,000 (CHF 455)	HTG 20,000 (CHF 455)
Number of payments	First instalment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disbursed once households left the camp and resettled in a new place 	Two equal instalments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> First instalment disbursed upon resettlement Second instalment disbursed three months later
Modality	Conditional cash grant	Unconditional cash grant
Method of setting value of cash transfer	Assessment of rental costs	Assessment of average cost of living
Payment mechanism	Cash transfer through a third party (banks and financial institutions)	
Partners/service providers	Sogebank and Unitransfer	
Service provision charges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sogebank: HTG 100 (CHF 2.30) Unitransfer Port-au-Prince: HTG 93 (CHF 2.11) Unitransfer Province: HTG133 (CHF 3.03) 	
Value of cash transfers as percentage of total project cost	70 per cent	

Programme implementation

To implement the return and relocation programme, the Haiti Red Cross Society and IFRC developed an information and beneficiary communications strategy plan to convey the project process and the resettlement options available to the registered households in the camps. Members of the return and resettlement teams were selected and trained to undertake camp registration and convey the project messages to camp residents in an effective and efficient way. Once the strategy and team were in place, the Haiti Red Cross Society and IFRC started registering the households in identified camps in Port-au-Prince using a tent-by-tent process.

In August 2010, the Haiti Red Cross Society and IFRC started registering the first households living in the camps. Once the first households had been registered, the Haiti Red Cross Society and IFRC started facilitating alternative shelter solutions for those interested in returning or relocating. After an initial assessment and cross-checking of the collected information, the households could choose from the following housing solutions:

- Construction of a shelter on their own land or land made available to them for a minimum period of two years;
- Simple repairs of the family's house to make it habitable for them to return to;
- Return to province of origin;
- One-year rental support for households wishing to stay in Port-au-Prince.

Once households had left the camp and returned to their homes or relocated to a new place, the Haiti Red Cross Society and IFRC started processing the resettlement grants.

Twelve months after their return or relocation, the Haiti Red Cross Society and IFRC visited the targeted households to track their location and to check progress.

Programme outcome

From the first registration of households in August 2010, the Haiti Red Cross Society and IFRC reached more than 13,616 households from different campsites throughout Port-au-Prince by June 2013. The programme is expected to continue until December 2013.

An impact study³ conducted in December 2012 came to the conclusion that the return and relocation programme provided households with improved personal and social security leading to a major improvement in their living conditions. Many noted having better physical and mental health. Furthermore, 98 per cent of them declared to have earned profit from the income generating activity they had set-up upon receiving their unconditional grant. Less than half of the households reported to have accumulated debt.

Nonetheless, the study also suggests that about a third of the households seemed to have the ability to cover the rent for their housing while others are waiting for further assistance or might sell their business to cover the cost. This suggests that two out of three households appear to be in an unsustainable situation and face an uncertain future. Surveys of the households revealed that less than half have invested a portion of their income into the business causing high risk of cash depletion and loss of income as time progresses. Other increasing immediate needs could also be driving them to spend whatever cash they have to meet their family needs. Consequently, the study recommends that some of the households receive further assistance in the form of additional small business management training and/or rental support. The Haiti Red Cross Society shelter team will look into ways of adding focus on job training and placement to supplement the cash grants.

³ Note: the impact study only reviewed households that opted for the one-year rental support.

Reflecting on our learning...

The key learning points from this programme for the National Society can be summarized as follows:

1. Understanding the context is essential to devising an appropriate response programme. It requires flexibility so that necessary programme changes can be made. Cash transfers introduce flexibility by providing people with choice and contributes towards building resilience.
2. Cash transfers are a way to respond systematically while providing a high degree of flexibility as it allows households to respond to their real needs.
3. Getting to know the community where the programme is being implemented is of great importance. Be careful not to rely on what has been successful in the past, but to understand and adapt to the context and specific situation and be creative in planning.



Beneficiary visit to check progress on the livelihood cash transfer.

As [a Red Cross Red Crescent Movement], we have increasing experience of cash-based programming. Looking at our combined knowledge is important. First, to write it down. But second, and more importantly, to adapt our future programmes based on what others have done and what we have learnt from each other. Learning is about taking things forward and applying it to our operational context.

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