

HAITI ADVOCACY WORKING GROUP (HAWG)

HAWG is a working group of international development, faith-based, human rights and social justice organizations advocating on issues related to U.S.-Haiti policy.

Donor Principles, the Haiti Reconstruction Fund, and Interim Haiti Recovery Commission

Several international mechanisms have been established to help ensure that aid delivered to Haiti is transparent and consistent with the priorities identified by the Government of Haiti (GOH). In addition to the Interim Haiti Recovery Commission (IHRC), which monitors all recovery funding, the GOH and international community established a multi-donor fund, the Haitian Reconstruction Fund (HRF), at the March 31, 2010 donors' conference. These international mechanisms are aimed at increasing donor coordination, transparency and accountability.

International Mechanisms

The HRF is administered by the World Bank to (1) encourage much-needed direct budgetary support that is aligned with the Haitian national plan rather than dictated by donor priorities, (2) provide one central body with which the GOH and its Ministries can interface to facilitate transparency and accountability, and (3) improve coordination of development projects. Many donors, including the United States, have begun to deliver funds to the HRF; the United States has committed to give \$120 million in assistance through the HRF. The HRF Steering Committee¹ is tasked with approving all multi-donor fund projects for funding and ensuring project coordination and alignment with the GOH reconstruction plan.² The HRF Steering Committee held its first meeting on June 17, 2010 in Port-au-Prince.

The Interim Haiti Recovery Commission (IHRC) is a separate body responsible for the overall coordination of Haiti's reconstruction. It is co-chaired by Prime Minister Bellerive and UN Special Envoy to Haiti, President Bill Clinton. The 26-member Board will include representatives from a broad spectrum of society.³ The IHRC held its first meeting on June 17, 2010 where it announced its first approved projects. The IHRC is responsible for the oversight and planning of all international assistance to ensure it is delivered in coordination with the GOH plan. The IHRC Co-Chairs will monitor and encourage timely pledge disbursement. There are concerns that donors will slow the disbursement process while debating guidelines and procedures for the IHRC.

Publicly available websites will track donor funds and the activities of the IHRC and HRF.⁴ A parallel mechanism to share this information at the community level and solicit feedback from the ground does not currently exist.

¹ The Steering Committee is comprised of GOH Prime Minister Jean-Max Bellerive as Chair; representatives of donors contributing at least \$30 million to the fund, or donors that pool their contributions to total \$30 million may rotate the seat on the Steering Committee; representatives from partner entities; and observing members as approved by the Steering Committee (possibly from NGOs, the private sector, and local government).

² Action Plan for National Recovery and Development of Haiti available at http://www.haiticonference.org/Haiti_Action_Plan_ENG.pdf

³ The IHRC will include two representatives from the Executive Branch, two designated by the Judicial Branch; two designated by local authorities; one designated by the Senate; one designated by the Chamber of Deputies; one CARICOM representative, one representative of unions and one from the private sector; and a representative from each donor that contributes over \$100 million in 2010 and 2011. The Organization of American States, one representative from national NGOs, one from international NGOs, and a representative from the Diaspora will be non-voting observers.

⁴ See <http://www.refondation.ht/>; www.haitireconstructionfund.org; <http://www.cirh.ht/>.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

IAN SCHWAB, American Jewish World Service at ischwab@ajws.org - VICKI GASS, Washington Office on Latin America at vgass@wola.org

Multiple organizations contribute on a case by case basis to issue or sector specific recommendations and positions expressed in HAWG materials. These materials are not designed to be consensus positions and have not been explicitly endorsed by each organization active in the HAWG.

U.S. Assistance to Haiti

The U.S. government has also made a commitment to work in partnership with the GOH and Haitian communities to deliver accountable, transparent aid that will have a sustainable impact.⁵ To date, mechanisms have not been created to allow for transparent access to information about the United States' funds to projects in Haiti.

RECOMMENDATIONS

U.S. assistance should be allocated and committed to Haiti immediately and the IHRC should be encouraged and supported to ensure prompt project approval. Capacity-building, transparency, empowerment, and accountability should guide all rebuilding efforts, in accordance with the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and Accra Agenda for Action.

- 1) **Strengthen the capacity of the Haitian government to ensure the rights of its people.** To support the Haitian government's capacity to provide basic services to its people, the United States should partner directly with the government throughout the planning, implementation and evaluation stages of recovery projects, and provide training in technical capacities, such as budget development and monitoring.
- 2) **Ensure transparency of assistance.** The United States should act with full transparency and accountability, making information about its plans and projects available through local and international platforms. The United States should work with the Haitian government to set up widely accessible public monitoring and reporting mechanisms.
- 3) **Empower the Haitian people.** The United States should encourage the participation and input of Haitian civil society and community-based groups in all stages of recovery assistance – from project design to implementation. USAID should encourage implementing organizations in Haiti to coordinate with the GOH and other agencies and report their activities to the GOH, the IHRC, and Haitian people. Wherever possible, the United States should work with Haitian-owned businesses and community groups, as well as employ Haitian personnel.
- 4) **Require avenues for accountability.** Recipient communities must have an avenue to provide input and, if necessary, complaints regarding development projects designed to benefit them. The United States should support and fund complaint mechanisms for assistance projects to facilitate feedback from local communities and protect against potential harm to these communities.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

- **Center for Human Rights and Global Justice at New York University School of Law**, Margaret Satterthwaite, satterth@exchange.law.nyu.edu
- **Partners in Health**, Donna Barry, dbarry@pih.org
- **Robert F. Kennedy Center for Justice & Human Rights**, Monika Kalra Varma, monikak@rfkcenter.org
- **Zanmi Lasante**, Loune Viaud, lounehaiti@aol.com

⁵ See, e.g. Statement Of Secretary of State Clinton at Haiti International Donors Conference: Towards a New Future for Haiti, United Nations Headquarters, New York City, March 31, 2010. Available at: <http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2010/03/139313.htm>; Lois Romano, State Department's Cheryl Mills on Rebuilding Haiti, Washington Post, May 10, 2010. Available at: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/05/09/AR2010050903009.html>.