



Institute for Justice & Democracy in Haiti
Bureau des Avocats Internationaux

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Contact:

Nicole Phillips, Esq., staff attorney, Institute for Justice & Democracy in Haiti (IJDH) and Assistant Director for Haiti Programs, University of San Francisco School of Law, Nicole@ijdh.org, 510-715-2855

Haiti's Housing Crisis: Human rights investigation finds forty-one percent of families relocated under Haitian government's housing program live in worse conditions than before the earthquake

(BOSTON, July 13, 2012) --- The Haitian government housing program is a not a durable or sustainable solution to Haitian's tent-camp housing crisis, according to a survey of residents conducted by the Institute for Justice & Democracy in Haiti (IJDH) and the *Bureau des Avocats Internationaux* (BAI). The survey interviewed 75 households that had been relocated from six internally displaced persons (IDP) camps under the government's housing program implemented by the International Organization of Migration (IOM).

The housing program (called the "16/6" Program), which was intended to relocate 5,239 families from six camps, subsidizes residents with up \$500 to pay their rent for a year. The survey results indicated some positive results in the short-term. Two-thirds of families reported that their living situation was better now than when living in the camps, and almost three-quarters said they felt safer now than they did living in the camp.

But 16/6 program did not make many earthquake victims whole, and these families fear they will be homeless again in a year's time. "The 16/6 housing program is succeeding in moving earthquake victims out of the visible camps, but is not succeeding in moving families into adequate housing," according to Nicole Phillips, who directed the study. "Based on the survey results, it would be a mistake for the international community or Government of Haiti to think that this program, which is being replicated in the private sector, is a fair or sustainable solution for earthquake victims."

The survey found that:

- 40 percent of families reported living in worse conditions than before the earthquake. Thirteen percent used 16/6 funding to move into earthquake damaged housing marked "red" for uninhabitable and three percent into housing marked yellow for unsafe.

- Two-thirds of respondents said the money offered under the 16/6 program was not enough to resettle.
- 11 percent have already been asked to leave the home they relocated to under the 16/6 program.
- Only 21 percent thought they would still live in the place they just resettled to in one year.

Camp residents were so desperate to leave due to poor conditions that they would accept any assistance at all (only 5 percent did not want to leave the camps). Many felt they had to accept the program or they would be forcefully evicted.

Survey results also indicated a lack of participation or transparency about the resettlement program, with only 26 percent of respondents having been consulted on their opinion or given a chance to give feedback on their relocation, and only 43 percent having had an opportunity to ask questions on how closure/relocation would work for them and their family. Nineteen percent reported receiving help looking for another location to move. Forty percent said that during the relocation, someone demanded they leave the camps.

IJDH and BAI urge the Haitian government to adopt and fund a comprehensive national rehousing strategy that provides affordable housing and to ensure that IDP camps are not closed until adequate housing alternatives are provided. They also recommend that the government, IOM and other NGOs providing resettlement assistance make more effort to consult with displacement communities, especially women.

Survey respondents in this study had originally been interviewed in August 2011, the results of which yielded the briefing paper titled [Haiti's Housing Crisis: Results of a Household Survey on the Progress of President Michel Martelly's 100-Day Plan to Close Six IDP Camps](#).

At the Institute for Justice & Democracy in Haiti (IJDH), we fight for the human rights of Haiti's poor in court, on the streets, and wherever decisions about Haitians' rights are made. We represent victims of injustice, including earthquake victims, victims of gender-based violence, and the unjustly imprisoned. Together with our Haitian affiliate, the Bureau des Avocats Internationaux (BAI), we have sixteen years of demonstrated success enforcing Haitians' human rights in Haiti and abroad. Visit haitijustice.org. Follow @IJDH on Twitter.