

IOM Fact Sheet

Haiti Earthquake Displacement and Shelter Strategy

What is IOM's role in Haiti?

IOM is playing a central role in facilitating and promoting safe living conditions for an estimated 2.1 million people displaced by Haiti's devastating 12 January earthquake.

Under the overall leadership of the Government of Haiti, IOM is working closely with many other humanitarian and development organizations, including the UN country team, to ensure safe living locations and adequate shelter, as well as tracking population movements and informing on conditions at displacement sites.

The earthquake represents an enormous challenge, and has involved an unprecedented amount of cooperation between hundreds of organizations – often with different backgrounds and operational cultures – in order to ensure an efficient and successful humanitarian response.

Camp Coordination and Management

IOM is the lead agency in the global 'cluster system' – designed to ensure organized responses to natural disasters - for camp coordination and camp management (CCCM). It assumed responsibility in the aftermath of the Haiti earthquake for assisting displaced people living in spontaneous sites.

This means that IOM gives strategic direction and provides organizational support to 189 partners involved in looking after the needs of displaced Haitians, who have gathered in almost 1400 temporary settlements in Port-au-Prince and other affected areas. IOM is also leading efforts to register all camp residents, and has itself registered more than 260,000 Haitians, collating and mapping that information to promote solutions for the displaced.

The Haitian government, alongside the US military, the UN peacekeeping mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) and the humanitarian community, is currently engaged in a large-scale effort to improve conditions for those currently located in unsafe settlements ahead of the rainy season.

A settlement, or part of a settlement, is deemed unsafe if at risk of flooding or other life-threatening possibilities. The response includes the immediate realization of mitigation measures to improve physical conditions at displacement sites, or potential relocation for those whose environment cannot be improved in situ.

Haitians who are living in settlements deemed unsafe are presented with a series of voluntary options, each of which needs the involvement of a number of key actors to succeed.

As IOM supports the front line of this strategy (and plays a major part in its development and formulation) it is also taking a central role in ensuring that information reaches affected populations, and in ensuring that the humanitarian community is listening to and responding to their concerns.

This is done through a range of activities, from site visits to community group workshops, the establishment of information points, public address, sound trucks, bulletin boards and simple graphic materials.

IOM is also playing a supportive role to other agencies taking the lead in informing specific communities to ensure consistency in messaging.

An important aspect of IOM's work is to ensure that essential parts of the process – such as identification of service providers – are developed in accordance with international humanitarian principles.

What are the options available to those living in unsafe areas?

Five options have been identified, which may be more or less appropriate depending on the precise situation.

Option 1: The first, most preferable option, is for people to return to their homes, where deemed safe. This option is led by the Government of Haiti, working with UN partners, which is carrying out structural assessments of houses and buildings and communicating which houses are safe, as well as answering community concerns and responding to their needs.

Option 2: People may also wish return to their home area if their houses are destroyed. This might involve building a temporary shelter on a plot of land, or moving to a 'proximity site'. This option involves the removal of rubble from

affected areas by engineers from the Government of Haiti, the US army and a number of international organizations.

Option 3: Where they cannot go home, people may find a family to host them – perhaps relatives or friends. Numerous humanitarian actors are involved in supporting host communities.

Option 4: Where people cannot go home, or find a host family, they might be able to remain in the temporary settlement where they already are. IOM and its partners in CCCM and other clusters will ensure that basic services are provided and that the settlements are healthy and safe.

Option 5: It may be that none of these first four options is available. In that case, IOM is part of a group of organizations working with the Government of Haiti to establish a series of new sites on the outskirts of Port-au-Prince. IOM can provide technical expertise on the organization and running of camps, and is acting as a manager of last resort.

The Government of Haiti has responsibility for identifying new land and brokering agreements.

IOM is working with engineers including from the military to plan and develop sites, once land is identified, while MINUSTAH is providing transport for the displaced being relocated. IOM is also working with a wide range of humanitarian delivery organizations to provide minimum living standards in the temporary relocation sites.

IOM has already established a new site in Santo 17, and assisted approximately 200 families to relocate there. It is also working closely with partners on the Corail Cesselesse Site, which is being prepared for the voluntary relocation of as many as 6,000 individuals currently living in the Petionville Golf Club. IOM is organizing the potential relocation of at risk populations from Vallée de Bourdon to a new site at Tabarre Issa, as well.

Shelter

IOM is a major player within the ‘shelter cluster’, which is helping Haitians find a safe structure to live in, as well as the provision of ‘non-food items’ such as hygiene kits, jerry-can and kitchen tools. This is done on an operational rather than a coordinating basis.

To date IOM has moved more than 1.6 million items through its logistics pipeline, supporting the delivery of relief assistance to some 1, 5 million people in affected areas of Haiti, including the distribution of shelter to more than 761,500 people.

IOM is also playing a key role in designing and eventually building 'transitional shelters' which will offer an interim solution for people ahead of the hurricane season. To that end, IOM coordinates with and participates in strategic direction established by the 'shelter cluster', led by IFRC.

Health

IOM's Health Unit is playing a key role in providing support to populations living in displacement sites.

IOM's psychosocial team has provided training to over 350 humanitarian workers and community representatives on psychosocial awareness and response, and has 6 multidisciplinary mobile teams providing psychosocial support activities to over 10,000 beneficiaries in 21 priority settlements.

IOM's assisted discharge and referral project has so far provided support to over 100 patients and their family members in its first 2 weeks of operation, and is helping to address the needs of vulnerable, newly homeless patients and those with special needs.

This project follows the *5-option* strategy for displaced persons and provides assistance to patients who have been treated in hospital and are medically stable, but unable to return home or need ongoing care, support and follow up.

IOM is able to provide transport, 'non food item' support, emergency and transitional shelter options, medicines and medical supplies, as well as referral to existing health services or follow up care to address ongoing healthcare needs. IOM's CCCM and Shelter units in conjunction with partners Handicap International and Help Age, are also working to allocate a proportion of transitional shelters built on new sites, to especially vulnerable patients including the elderly and those with disabilities, where ongoing care will be available.

Water/Sanitation and Hygiene (Wash)

IOM's Environmental Health/WASH unit is supporting closer interaction between the Health, WASH and CCCM clusters by setting up a community based WASH monitoring system to train camp residents as environmental health monitors to provide real-time updates on conditions in settlements.

A Rapid Response Team will respond to urgent needs allowing longer-term solutions to be formulated within the various clusters. This team is offering support to settlements with immediate environmental health/WASH concerns that can be rapidly mitigated through simple environmental techniques, such as the distribution of gravel to reduce standing water around water distribution points, and installation of showers and hygiene/hand washing stations.

Cash for Work Programmes

IOM plays a major role in ensuring employment for thousands of Haitians around the country through cash-for-work projects run by the IOM PREPEP (Programme de Revitalisation et de Promotion de l'Entente et de la Paix).

With offices in in Port-au-Prince, Cap Haitian, Gonaives, St. Marc, Petit-Goave and Les Cayes, PREPEP has been able to respond quickly to the needs of IDPs and their hosts throughout the country by providing short term jobs while also improving community infrastructure.

Beginning just days after the earthquake, these programmes have employed up to 8000 men and women per day nationwide, providing much needed income so that individuals can make their own choices about food, shelter and other basic needs.

The PREPEP initiative contributed to the capital's recovery by completing the demolition of earthquake-destroyed schools in the Port au Prince and Leogane areas. In close cooperation with the Ministry of Education, the PREPEP program cleared 50 damaged and destroyed public and state schools of rubble. The labor intensive process of clearing rubble at these sites has employed an average of 664 Port-au-Prince residents per day since work began on February 5th, 2010. With the rubble removed, temporary classrooms can be erected and schools--Haiti's biggest employer--can again begin functioning.

Many PREPEP projects focus on rural food security. Rural communities are hosting hundreds of thousands of IDPs, straining the local food supply and

putting pressure on host family incomes. Strengthening the local food supply is critical for stabilizing food prices.

PREPEP is increasing agricultural productivity by investing in irrigation and drainage canals which permit additional harvests during the dry season and control runoff during the rainy season. It is also investing in the rural road network, which provides a crucial link for the farmers and women marketers who generate income from produce: post-harvest losses in Haiti can be as high as 40% due to transportation and spoilage.

Two-thirds of Haiti's terrain is mountainous, and extensive deforestation has resulted in agricultural decline due to soil erosion, as well as increasingly devastating floods. PREPEP water and soil conservation projects in mountainous areas reduce erosion and run-off through the construction of micro-basins and stone walls reinforced by plantings of trees and grasses. These labor-intensive conservation projects are a valuable source of employment for rural families struggling to absorb additional household members that have fled Port-au-Prince.

PREPEP also employs Haitian men and women nationwide to rehabilitate schools and other urban infrastructure such as roads, marketplaces, and drainage canals. These improvements play an important role in building the capacity of regional cities to retain displaced populations, a crucial part of the overall strategy to decongest Port-au-Prince.

These projects have injected \$5.2M into local economies, focusing on critical infrastructure needs, and strengthening local grassroots community groups who are taking the lead role in determining their community's priorities.

Disaster Preparedness

IOM is working with USAID/OFDA to reassess shelter-building conditions in the most vulnerable parts of Haiti including the south, southeast, western departments, and Gonaives. The assessment is intended to collect information on post-earthquake structural conditions and to provide information on preparedness measures, such as the construction of additional hurricane shelters.