

CERF/PAHO/WHO PROJECT REPORT I “Water for All in Cite Soleil”

Introduction

To face the severe situation of scarcity and violence in Cite Soleil the new Government of the Republic of Haiti has established a “Plan d’Apaisement Social”. To aid this initiative the UN has created a Task Force Group to identify needs and opportunities; within the task force, PAHO/WHO decided to tackle one of the most serious problems affecting the population of Cite Soleil: *the lack of potable water*. In order to save lives it was imperative to recuperate the water system of the Cité. PAHO/WHO identified financial resources from CERF and designed a project which was approved on June 2006. On 4 July funds were received by the country office, date in which the project officially started its implementation. The project’s approval process, as well as the steps following it, such as the signature of the letter of agreement, until the arrival of funds to the CO, went quite smoothly, although this was the first time that WHO received funds from CERF. The CO appreciates the effort and work in Geneva and Washington which made possible the prompt start of activities in Haiti.

Main challenges

The main challenge of this project is to develop a successful humanitarian project in the poorest neighbourhood of Haiti protecting the lives of its population against the risks associated with the lack of potable water. With an approximate population of 200,000 Cite Soleil is Haiti’s neglected city. Most of its population is extremely vulnerable, and lives under high risk conditions due to extreme poverty, (average of US\$15/month per family), social violence, and absence of adequate public services and economic opportunities.

General objective and main goals

To promote early action and response to reduce the risks of mortality and morbidity associated with the lack of potable water is a major goal of this project. To increase the production and accessibility to safe drinking water is the project main objective. The access of water (quantity, quality and distance) is inadequate (just 25% of the population has access to drinking water) due to the lack of electricity to power water generators and pumps and the precarious conditions of the distribution system. There is no free access to water, as the population has to pay around US\$ 0.25/gallon.

Management Model

The adopted mechanisms to manage this project was to create a Project Management Commission, integrated by representatives of the community and main partners: governmental and research institutions (Ministry of Health (MSPP), Central Water Commission (CAMEP), State University (UHE), NGO,s (Red Cross, Médecins sans Frontières) and obviously PAHO/WHO. Three sub groups were created to implement the project: *research*, *community participation* and *civil works*. The first component will determine the water quality before and after the project (measuring the project impacts), the second will generate income for community youths trained by the project in issues such as: water protection and disinfection, public and personal hygiene, etc The third will improve the water system by expanding water pipelines, buying generators, pumps, disinfectants and petrol for the generators. Part of the works will be done by the community, thus generating much needed income.

Preliminary Results

Even if the project is in its beginning, approximately 40% (US\$ 200,000) was disbursed. Some very important achievements have been obtained such as:

Meetings held and community's activities:

- a) Twelve meetings with participating entities, including youths.
- b) Two workshops. Topics: project description and its components: community participation in project 'activities; role of water in awareness. 103 members of the community were trained (30 % women) healthy life and in preventing illnesses; social and skill communication and community
- c) One field activity on project visibility .Activities included:: approximately 10,000 homes visited and 10,000 flyers distributed, involving 48 community's agents.

Agreements:

- d) An agreement with the Faculty of Agronomy of the State University of Haiti was signed in order to carry out a study on the water quality and a home survey (200 places) on water management and sanitation.
- e) An agreement with the CAMEP is under preparation to cover the rehabilitation of the water system distribution, engineering civil works and to train community youths in plumbing works (i.e. repair of leaking pipes and water management).

Purchases

- f) Equipments and materials: i) reagents and materials for lab water analysis, ii) power station, iii) HTH, iv) project visibility: t-shirts (55 dozens), caps (200units), flyers (10,000 units), tape recorders (3 for community information).
- g) Edition and printing of 10,000 brochures and 3 broadcasting radio announcements.
- h) A Press Conference was carried out in order to present the project to the mass media. Representatives of Cite Soleil community also participated.