



Strengthening the Voice of People with Disabilities

USAID builds capacity to support persons with disabilities.



USAID Staff

Trained technicians repair a wheelchair in Leogone, Haiti.

USAID's support will enable persons with disabilities to participate more fully in their communities by increasing awareness and accessibility. Anticipated results include:

- Increased public awareness on the rights and needs of people with disabilities.
- Strengthened organizational capacity of DPOs, and disability service providers working in support of persons with disabilities.
- Increased knowledge and skills of DPOs to assess the accessibility of infrastructure and provide recommendations for improving access for all.

Overview

The earthquake that struck Haiti in January 2010 devastated millions of lives. The Government of Haiti (GOH) estimates that 230,000 people lost their lives and 300,000 others were injured. Prior to the earthquake, there were approximately 800,000 persons with disabilities living in Haiti. Of the estimated 300,000 injured in the earthquake, approximately one-third have some form of long term disability. Those living with disabilities in Haiti prior to the earthquake were underserved and often shunned and stigmatized. The earthquake has exacerbated the challenges of persons with disabilities, destroying many of the local hospitals, government buildings, and administrative infrastructure related to social services.

USAID has partnered with Christian Blind Mission (CBM) to turn the post-earthquake reconstruction efforts into an opportunity to assist persons with disabilities to live richer, fuller lives. USAID and CBM are focused on strengthening the capacity of Disabled People Organizations (DPOs) to provide quality support for people with disabilities and develop advocacy programs to include the needs of people with disabilities in the reconstruction of Haiti.

Objectives

USAID's program will strengthen the ability of DPOs to influence the development and implementation of public policies, and to promote the inclusion of people living with disabilities in all aspects of the reconstruction process.

Activities

1. **Develop awareness campaigns**, including production of billboards, posters, and leaflets promoting accessibility and inclusion of people with disabilities.
2. **Implement community-based activities**, such as music competitions for the creation of songs on themes related to disability, and organize sports and beauty competitions promoting people with disabilities.
3. **Advocate for policies promoting access**, such as Haiti's 1st National Building Code, which takes into account the principles of universal accessibility for people with disabilities.
4. **Support the GOH** and the Secretary of State for the Integration of Persons with Disabilities (SEIPH) by sponsoring and organizing activities such as the symposium for the inclusion of people with disabilities, and providing opportunities for DPOs to influence reconstruction efforts in Haiti, affirming the theme of universal accessibility.

Life of Project: March 2012 – March 2013

Implementing Partner: Christian Blind Mission