

# **USAID Administrator Raj Shah Launches "Helping Shelter Haiti" Exhibit**

## **Paul Weisenfeld Announces Formation Of Haiti Task Team**

### **Display Illustrates Agency's Strategy To Shelter Displaced; Plan For Rainy Season**

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Press Office: 202-712-4320

Public Information: 202-712-4810

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**WASHINGTON, D.C. - TODAY, U.S.** Agency for International Development (USAID) Administrator Rajiv Shah announced the launch of "Helping Shelter Haiti," an interactive, first-of-its kind exhibit that illustrates the agency's plans for sheltering those displaced by the January 12th earthquake. Haiti Task Team Coordinator Paul Weisenfeld also announced the formation of the Haiti Task Team to continue inter-agency coordination of the reconstruction efforts that are underway, and to replace the Response Management Team formed at the onset of the crisis. Led by USAID, the HTT includes representatives from the Department of State, Department of Homeland Security, the U.S. Armed Forces, the Department of Health and Human Services, and others. CHF Regional Director for the Americas Randy Lyness also spoke at the event.

"The United States is committed to supporting the Government of Haiti every step of the way in delivering shelter to the tens of thousands of Haitians displaced by the quake," said USAID Administrator Rajiv Shah. "Here at USAID, our teams are applying best practices developed over years of international disaster assistance and are actively providing shelter assistance and planning for contingencies related to the rainy season, hurricanes, sanitation, health, and other issues."

The display invites visitors to walk through two representations of shelters currently being built in Haiti as well as view a series of panels that break down the strategies deployed by USAID to comprehensively address the shelter, food, and health needs of Haitians and others USAID has helped recover from natural disasters around the world.

"Helping Shelter Haiti not only illustrates what we do, but also demonstrates how we do it," said Paul Weisenfeld. "This installation is designed to tell the story of immediate assistance provided in the form of emergency food, medical and water relief. Most importantly it shows how we learn as an organization so we can be maximize the benefits of our work for the Haitian people and Government."

USAID partner CHF International constructed the innovative shelters that reflect best practices jointly developed over decades of response work to humanitarian crises. The first shelter consists

of a wooden structure covered by plastic sheeting that can be built quickly to rapidly address basic shelter needs. The second structure reflects USAID's longer-term strategy to protect Haitians: it is made of a larger wooden structure with a tin roof that allows for privacy, security, and can sustain winds up to 160 miles per hour. USAID is working with CHF International and other partners on the ground to build these structures as quickly as possible in advance of the upcoming hurricane season.

It takes approximately four skilled people and three to four community helpers to build such a shelter. The building has a slanted roof with a gutter so that rain water can be recycled for drinking-plans are also underway to include solar lamps that will light the structures at night.

The exhibit is open to the public and can be viewed during normal business hours for the next several weeks at the USAID Public Information Center on the Mezzanine Level of the Ronald Reagan Building in Washington, DC.