

Debris Management



The UNDP cash-for-work programme. Workers removing rubble from the streets of Martissant, a suburb of Port-au-Prince near the epicenter of the earthquake.

Photo: Adam Rogers/UNDP

The urgent need to manage 20 million cubic metres of debris

The town of Leogane was the epicentre of the earthquake of 12 January 2010, which caused extensive and severe damage to the areas of Port-au-Prince as well as to Grand Goave, Gressier, Jacmel, Leogane and Petit Goave and other communities located south of the metropolitan area. Damage to the buildings and infrastructure created an estimated 20 million cubic metres of debris, which requires disposal before any reconstruction can commence. A tri-partite Debris Management Task Force, co-chaired by the Government of Haiti, the United Nations and USAID, was established to develop an action plan for tackling the debris which resulted from the earthquake damage.

Action Plan for Debris Management

The Action Plan has identified a number of priority actions that need to be carried out. These include the need to strengthen the capacity of the Government of Haiti to coordinate debris management efforts, as well as the need for establishing regional stockpiling and crushing sites that are near



enough to the damaged areas to allow for the transportation of the rubble but that are far enough away from heavily populated areas.

Currently, no facilities to receive and process such large quantities of debris exist in the affected areas cited above. For example, it is estimated that there is more than 1.4 million cubic metres of debris in Leogane, 300,000 cubic metres in Jacmel and 700,000 cubic metres in Petit Goave and more than 10 million cubic metres of debris in Port-au-Prince, meaning that there is a risk that large quantities of mixed debris will be dumped in an uncontrolled manner throughout the region if no centralized sites are established. As the accumulated debris also contains several hazardous materials mixed in with the rubble, uncontrolled dumping of debris materials on roadsides and open areas could cause significant environmental damage as well as being hazardous to public health. Debris also continues to block roads and hinder the access for the provision of humanitarian aid to displaced persons living in camps in these areas. When the removal of debris has been achieved, the displaced persons will be in a better position to return from the displacement camps, which means that reconstruction can start.

UNDP's Response

UNDP will work with both the Government of Haiti and other actors on implementing two components of the Action Plan for Debris Management. This will be coordinated with other actors that will take the lead on addressing the other priorities indicated in the plan.

Programme Components

Institutional Support to Debris Management

This dimension of the programme will provide institutional and technical support to the Government of Haiti's authorities responsible for the management of earthquake created debris. It will be designed in order to foster improved capacities to plan activities and direct all international and national stakeholders engaged in the removal, recycling and disposal of the debris from affected areas as a result of the earthquake of 12 January 2010. An estimated 20 million cubic meters of debris was generated; this debris blocks drainage canals, impedes travel on roads and confines areas that have been settled by displaced families. Debris removal is an initial and apparent prerequisite for Haiti's reconstruction. The programme will, therefore, target the priority gaps in

debris management capacity that have been identified, addressing each with coordinated interventions, through a partnership between UNDP and MSB, a specialized agency of the Government of Sweden. The lead Government institution will be the Ministry of Public Works, Transportation and Communications with support provided by UNDP and the United States.

Debris Management

The Debris Management component of the programme aims at establishing three central stockpiling and debris processing sites in the earthquake damaged areas. Three initial sites are currently being identified in Leogane, Petit Goave, and Jacmel. It is anticipated that the programme will be expanded to other localities over the medium term.

These three sites have been identified by the Government of Haiti as official sites for the transportation and processing of rubble concrete and have a combined capacity to accommodate more than two million cubic metres of construction debris. The project activities will support the preparation of the sites, including the implementation of the security and environmental measures necessary to handle the processing of rubble concrete. Only concrete-based building materials will be sent to the processing sites, while any material of value will be recovered, with those which cannot be recovered sent to landfill sites. The project will be directly implemented by UNDP through the recruitment of local contractors.

These debris central stockpiling and processing sites will provide authorized locations to which debris can be transported, instead of it being dumped randomly in unsuitable landfill sites. These facilities will also help improve the reuse of concrete debris and thus reduce the use of raw materials during the reconstruction phase.

Budget

The overall budget for the Debris Management components of UNDP's programme for the 2010–2012 period is \$20.7 million. Of this, \$6.5 million is to be allocated to institutional support to Debris Management.