Impact analysis of aid in Haiti: high satisfaction level despite difficult conditions

Ten years after the devastating earthquake in Haiti, which occurred on 12 January 2010, a large-scale impact analysis shows that 90% of surveyed households can meet their basic needs thanks to the aid projects funded by Swiss Solidarity, and that they have been able to re-establish their livelihoods. Up to 2018, with the huge support of the Swiss public, Swiss Solidarity was able to provide nearly CHF 63 million to 91 projects run by 21 partner NGOs. However, despite the positive impact of the support provided, the living conditions of people in Haiti have declined dramatically in recent months owing to political unrest.

An impact study on aid in Haiti run from May to October 2019 by the well-known independent consulting company Key Aid Consulting looked at project documentation and former evaluations. A quantitative survey was conducted among 525 households and a qualitative analysis drawn up in group interviews. The study looked at the way the support provided by NGOs impacted the lives of people following the devastating earthquake in 2010.

Sustainable support with a participative approach

The impact of Swiss Solidarity’s reconstruction programme can still be felt today: 92% of households surveyed said in May 2019 that the most significant change in their lives was thanks to the projects supported by Swiss Solidarity. 90% were able to meet their basic needs and re-establish their livelihoods thanks to the support they received, and 95% of those who were provided with accommodation still live in it. Furthermore, 2,700 houses were repaired or reconstructed, as well as 4,850 latrines. “We ourselves are surprised that so many people still live in the houses built nearly 10 years ago,” says Helene Juillard, co-founder of Key Aid Consulting, about this result. “But the reasons are actually clear: all of the houses are built of sustainable materials and most feel secure and protected from natural disasters in them.”

In 2016 Hurricane Matthew left a trail of destruction in the south west of the island, touching areas that were benefiting from reconstruction. The houses funded by Swiss Solidarity withstood the hurricane, something the people in Haiti had not previously experienced. Furthermore, 75% of all households are still using water pumps that were renovated or erected by Swiss Solidarity partner NGOs.   
  
The participative approach is a further positive factor that emerges from the survey: both the people and local authorities were encouraged to be involved in implementing the measures which affected them directly. This included training. A final factor in the sustainable aid funded by Swiss Solidarity is the fact that the work was left in the hands of local structures when the projects came to an end.

Difficult living conditions

Although the survey showed that people were able to re-establish their livelihoods, other projects, such as vocational training projects designed to help them improve their means of earning a living, did not have the desired effect owing to the disastrous economic situation and lack of work opportunities. The persons surveyed underlined, however, the high quality of the vocational training, even though this led to very few people being able to find permanent work.

Swiss Solidarity’s conclusion

The results of the broad-based impact analysis demonstrate that humanitarian aid provided by Swiss Solidarity's partner NGOs is highly appreciated by the families and communities who receive it, and that donations are used to good effect. Overall, the project aims were realised, confirms Roland Thomann, Swiss Solidarity’s new director. “We are delighted that the combination of emergency aid with reconstruction and development cooperation has clearly had a highly positive effect for the local people.” As a result, Swiss Solidarity will in future invest more in this type of support so that aid is provided as efficiently and as sustainably as possible.”

Unfortunately, life for the people in Haiti has again become much harder over the past year because of violent protests and unrest. Ernst Lüber, Head of Programmes Department at Swiss Solidarity, is concerned: “The precarious situation has fatal consequences for the lives of the people in Haiti, and makes it very difficult for many NGOs to continue their work. We hope, therefore, that things will return to normal very soon.”

Complete transparency

The results of the impact analysis are available to all interested parties in a report drawn up by the independent experts at Key Aid Consultant. By providing this complete transparency, Swiss Solidarity underlines that open and reliable communication is essential to create trust among donors today.

Swiss Solidarity federates the solidarity of the Swiss population in favour of victims of natural disasters and conflicts abroad. It also supports people in need and affected by severe weather in Switzerland. Independent foundation created by the SSR, it co-funds projects of 26 Swiss NGOs active abroad with donations from the public, private companies, as well as cantons and municipalities. Swiss Solidarity ensures proper use of these donations through in-depth analyses and evaluations conducted by experts in compliance with international standards for emergency aid, reconstruction and rehabilitation. In Switzerland, the foundation finances projects for people in need. In the wake of severe weather in the country, it supports individuals, communities and SMEs suffering major damage. Since 1946, Swiss Solidarity has collected more than 1.8 billion Swiss francs in donations. More information on [www.](http://www.bonheur.ch/)[swiss-solidarity.org](http://swiss-solidarity.org/) or on [media.](http://medias.bonheur.ch/)[swiss-solidarity.org](http://swiss-solidarity.org/)