

Statement on behalf of the Humanitarian Coordinator in Haiti Nigel Fisher

(Port-au-Prince/27 March 2012) - The Government of Haiti and its humanitarian partners express their deep concern over the lack of financial resources at their disposal for continued humanitarian operations and for sudden onset disaster response. This scarcity of resources is curtailing their ability to fully provide frontline services to the most vulnerable population affected by a series of shocks, including the 12 January 2010 earthquake, the ongoing cholera epidemic, food insecurity and predictable rainy season damage and losses.

Although the camp population has declined dramatically since 2010, almost half a million people still live in camps, exposed to cholera outbreaks and risks of flooding that will be exacerbated by the upcoming rainy and hurricane season from May to November. The nationwide cholera epidemic, officially diagnosed on 20 October 2010, has already killed more than 7,000 people and sickened some 500,000 Haitians.

The US\$ 382 million funding request made in 2011 by the humanitarian community through the Consolidated Appeal Process (CAP) only received 55 per cent of funding required, resulting in the progressive – and continuing – withdrawal of many partners providing critical services in camps and cholera-affected areas. Today, the 2012 CAP of US\$ 231 million is funded at 8.5 per cent.

Due to this funding shortfall, Haiti was selected to receive an emergency allocation of US\$ 8 million dollars through the United Nations Central Emergency Fund (CERF) window for underfunded crises. This grant will enable partners to address urgent priority needs, but it will not be sufficient to match the many challenges faced by humanitarian actors in 2012.

The humanitarian community is urgently requesting US\$ 53.9 million for the April-June period. This will allow the Haitian government, UN agencies and partners to:

- guarantee services for those who will not be able to move out of camps before the rainy season;
- protect camps vulnerable to flooding and respond to damage caused by climatic hazards;
- protect the most vulnerable from sexual abuse and violence perpetuated in camps;
- coordinate and respond to cholera outbreaks;
- provide potable water, solid waste management and hygiene promotion activities in targeted isolated camps where the displaced are not able to access water, hygiene and sanitation services from nearby neighborhoods;
- increase the pace of return and relocation initiatives for camp residents via the construction of transitional shelters and the provision of rental subsidies;
- continue the preparations currently under way ahead of the next rainy and hurricane season, which aim, inter alia, to ensure that enough stocks of relief items will be available and that schools used as evacuation shelters can sustain heavy rains and strong winds.

Underfunding threatens to stunt growing relocation initiatives to safe housing that already benefited hundreds of thousands of IDPs. It threatens to reverse gains achieved in the fight against cholera through the promotion of sanitary and hygiene practices. It threatens the very existence of hundreds of thousands of IDPs still living in camps.

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