

**Report on**

**Knowledge Capitalization for the project** **“****Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) to Protect Mangroves in Bondeau, Nippes, Haiti.”**

**Implemented by J/P Haitian Relief Organization and funded Caribbean Biodiversity Fund (CBF) within the program Ecosystem-based Adaption (EbA)**

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**Acronyms and abbreviations**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| J/P HRO | J/P Haitian Relief Organization |  | |
| HTR | Haiti Takes Root |  | |
| PES | Payment for Ecosystem Services |  | |
| EbA | Ecosystem-based Adaptation |  | |
| CBF | Caribbean Biodiversity Fund |  |

# Introduction

J/P Haitian Relief Organization (J/P HRO) through the Haiti Take Roots (HTR) initiative has implemented the project titled: Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) to Protect Mangroves in Bondeau, Nippes, Haiti, for the last 24 months. Funded by Caribbean Biodiversity Fund in the context of the Ecosystem-Based Adaptation (EbA) Program, the project aimed to “protect mangrove ecosystems in Bondeau, Nippes through concrete support to improve fishing and agricultural livelihoods, local capacity building, and a dynamic environmental stewardship campaign”.

It was established that more than 70% of the tropical coastline is covered by mangrove forests (Raven et al., 2009). In the Tropical and Subtropical region, mangrove areas are used for salt marshes, and they are home for many species such as Pelicans, Herons, Crabs, Egret and so on. They serve as nurseries for different species thriving in the sea and feed them when needed. They are good nesting sites for birds. In addition, mangrove ecosystems play an important role in protecting coastline against erosion and inundation (MARIO et al. 2015). They help stabilize and protect the coastline against natural hazards such as Tsunami. Mangroves ecosystems help filtering water going down into the deep sea and stop the pollutants from going further. By providing food, materials, and protection to humans through its numerous ecosystem services the importance of mangroves seems undeniable. However, its global coverage is seriously decreasing in the last decades.

Human activities such as farming in the adjacent mountain of watershed environments are among the most common factors that cause continuous degradation of downstream mangrove ecosystems. Adding to those factors, climate change is making things even worse. That is the situation of most mangrove ecosystems in Haiti where mangrove forests are destroyed for charcoal production, usage of wood as energy source, salt pans construction, beach, and urbanization projects, etc. The Bondeau mangroves is part of a watershed where the effects of bad use of land upstream combined with climate change effects are evident for decades. Due to uncontrolled erosion reducing soil productivity and causing continual decrease in harvests, the population of Surrounding Mountain of Bondeau move down to the sea level to find economic opportunities increasing pressure on the existing yet limited resources of the area. On the other hand, fishers are facing challenges as uncontrolled sedimentation chokes mangroves, changing the coastal ecosystem etc.

The most important factor to take into consideration in managing mountain lands is the human element. Therefore, many experiences have proven that “mechanical structures, reforestation, and other conservation practices will not achieve many benefits unless the inhabitants of these upland catchment areas are persuaded and given incentives to change from their present ecologically destructive practices such as shifting cultivation to more suitable land use” (Joshi, n.d.). Thus, the Payment for Ecosystems Services (PES) programs are incentive-based that compensate individuals or communities for undertaking actions that increase the provision of ecosystems services. Therefore, the PES to Protect Mangroves in Bondeau had articulated its intervention on an integrated approach from ridge to reef to address climate risks, to improve farming techniques in Paillant which has a direct effect on the mangrove and fish population in the seaside. This approach assumed that with support to improve climate-adapted fishing and agricultural livelihoods, and the mobilization of youth in an environmental stewardship campaign, coastal mangroves in Bondeau that are critical to marine ecosystems and climate resilience would be protected.

This document reports on the endline evaluation conducted at the project end-term. It provides comparative values for the project outcome indicators such that its impact can be appreciated.

## Background – Capitalisation Project

On October 4, 2016, Hurricane Matthew hit Haiti at a time when agricultural production was very low (compared to the annual average) due to repeated drought crises since 2014. The IPC (Integrated Food Security Classification) for the period February to May 2017 revealed that some 2.35 million people or 22% of the total population experienced severely acute food insecurity; of these 1.7 million people (16%) were classified in the IPC “crisis phase” (CPI 3) with more than 650,000 (6%) classified in the IPC “emergency phase” (CPI 4).

Hurricane Matthew had a profound negative impact on the agricultural sector, which provides much of household income in the affected areas. Affected households, also heavily dependent on markets for their food and income sources, were forced to seek alternative, less sustainable, and less remunerative sources of income. The humanitarian community mobilized to support the Government of Haiti which is making efforts to assist affected populations with health, food and nutrition security, and WASH interventions.

For more than five years, national and sub-national coordination of the food security sector has been carried out by CNSA. During the response of Hurricane Matthew, operational coordination of the sector was provided by the CNSA with support from WFP and FAO.

To identify good practices and lessons learned with respect to these food security interventions in Haiti, CNSA, in collaboration with WFP and FAO, organized three workshops that focused on the successes and challenges of efforts to coordinate responses to Hurricane Matthew and the drought that Haiti has experienced over the past year. The workshops have produced a set of recommendations to improve the coordination of these interventions in the future.

## Objectives

The three lessons learned workshops focused on the role of the food security sector in preparedness and response - including coordination, engagement of partners and communication to ensure effective coordination. The specific objectives of the workshops were:

* Exchange experiences and identify good practices and lessons learned with regard to emergency preparedness and coordination between partners and actors in planning and implementing food security responses to emergencies and disasters in Haiti
* Provide an overview of the challenges to, and opportunities and prospects for, food security interventions in Haiti
* Based on workshop findings, develop a roadmap that considers preparedness for future emergencies, integration and engagement of local authorities and partners, and capacity building of departmental operational coordination to be better prepared for the next crisis

## Methodology

To ensure that workshop outcomes reflected the reality on the ground, the capitalization and learning exercise included two workshops at the department level prior to the final workshop in the capital city of Port-au-Prince. This approach allowed for participation of those directly involved in local responses to the emergencies, and an understanding of how emergency management policies and procedures - and coordination practices in particular – were implemented at the local level.

Following a series of consultations with partners, CNSA, WFP and FAO agreed to carry out the exercise as follows:

* Phase 1: in Cayes, Haiti with participation of local authorities and partners from the South, Grand Anse and Nippes.
* Phase 2: in Gonaives, Haiti, with participation of local authorities and partners from the North, Artibonite, North and Northeast
* Phase 3: in Port au Prince, with participation of national government authorities and partners who intervening in the above-noted regions.

## Participation :

38 people were invited to participate in each workshop. Participants represented different organizations from national and local governments, donors, and international and national partners, including:

* CNSA
* Government Party
* Ministry of Planning
* Ministry of Agriculture
* Ministry of Health
* Ministry of Social Affairs
* Civil Protection
* DINEPA
* OCHA

* WFP
* FAO
* National NGOs
* International NGOs
* ECHO, USAID, Canada, Switzerland, Spain
* Nutrition Sector
* Early Recovery Sector
* Cash Working Group

# Principal Findings

## 1. Coordination Structure and Process

Assignment of responsibility to the CNSA to coordinate emergency preparedness and response activities related to food security is entirely appropriate. However, at present, CNSA has little or no representation at the commune or commune-section levels. Without CNSA representation on the ground, its ability to coordinate activities locally - where response activities are actually carried out - is severely limited. At best, such coordination efforts are undertaken by other local government entities (the mayor's office, Departmental Agricultural Directorate (DDA), CPD, etc.) whose officials have little or no experience or training in food security or in emergency coordination. Thus, coordination between food security actors at the grassroots level is at best sporadic; when it does occur, it seems to result from the goodwill of the other actors and not from a systematic process.

## 2. Leadership

Conducting a coordination process requires different skills than those that are generally applied in situations where a manager has direct control over organizational resources. Rather than resorting to a command and control style, a coordinator must have the skills of a group process facilitator: enable effective communication, encourage active participation of partners, provide opportunities for information-sharing, and show flexibility while keeping the process on track. These are skills that can be learned but generally require well-targeted training.

## 3. Communications and Information-Sharing

The workshops highlighted a great need to improve communication between respondents at all levels – both horizontally and vertically. There were many reasons provided for this gap: a lack of resources, a lack of competence and what was even more striking, a lack of trust between national and local actors.

## 4. Aspects of Preparedness

The need to improve emergency preparedness in Haiti was a recurring theme at all three workshops. Participants were well aware of the need to identify response roles and responsibilities in order to clarify “who will do what and where” and to determine whether they have the capacity to carry out these plans. They understood the need to improve early warning systems, identify areas of vulnerability in advance, determine which stocks of relief goods will be available for an emergency food security response, to share details of organizational tools and techniques related to evaluation and targeting, and develop realistic contingency plans. Participants noted in particular that the system used to inform CNSA partners about the details of contingency plans requires considerable improvement. Indeed, participants emphasized that the "widespread lack of knowledge" among food security partners concerning preparedness details meant that actors on the ground rarely used contingency plans to guide their response efforts.

## 5. Resource Concerns

CNSA’s lack of human, financial or logistical resources, particularly at the commune level, was cited by the participants as one of the most important barriers to effective coordination. Indeed, they noted the lack of competent human resources specializing in coordination in emergencies posed significant challenges for local coordination efforts. Participants noted several instances of organizations that could not participate in food security coordination meetings simply because of a lack of fuel for transport to the venues where coordination meetings were to be organized. The absence of these local partners in coordination meetings strongly hampers the CNSA's ability to identify who is doing what and with what resources.

## 6. Standards

CNSA is expected to encourage compliance with national standards in emergency response planning, and workshop participants noted that efforts have been made in recent emergency responses to establish various standards. However, it appears that achievement of standardization in the food security sector has been rather limited. Although participants noted that some local organizations were aware of various agreed standards – including those agreed for targeting criteria, food basket composition, food ration standards, and standards for the quality and variety of seed distributed to farmers – these standards were often not respected during distributions. Confusion over eligibility and quantity was generated, as distribution criteria and kits often varied by partner. Participants noted that each organization applied its own methods in data collection and analysis, which hampered harmonization of results. In addition, despite efforts to harmonize targeting criteria, local officials often made their own decisions about such criteria, implementing their own distribution standards without taking into account decisions agreed elsewhere.

## 7. Data Reliability

Participants from various emergency organizations in attendance at the workshops noted the great difficulty in obtaining reliable information about who was in fact an eligible recipient of an emergency distribution. Efforts to harmonize lists of beneficiaries were often frustrating due to the lack of coordination at the local level. Another major challenge in terms of data reliability was the mere fact that some areas affected by Hurricane Matthew remained inaccessible to relief providers for many weeks. This lack of accessibility meant that complete and reliable data lists were not available for organizations seeking to coordinate their efforts.

## 8. Participation in Coordination Activities

Workshop participants noted the active participation in the food security sector of several government entities (MARNDR, CNSA and CPD at the national and departmental levels), numerous NGOs (international and local), local authorities and several grassroots organizations. They also noted, however, the lack of involvement of several key ministries (MDE, MAST) and various mayors’ offices. The reasons given for this lack of involvement included insufficient contact by CNSA, lack of operational capacity, or simply insufficient understanding of their role in food security (especially city officials). Participants also highlighted the lack of involvement of beneficiaries in the intervention planning process, and the lack of involvement of Communal Agricultural Bureaux (BAC) with regard to monitoring emergency food security responses.

## 9. Use of Cash

There were a number of challenges confronting humanitarian agencies in their efforts to address food security needs using cash. Perhaps the biggest challenge was the lack of competent microfinance institutions in the affected areas to help with cash distribution. The other main challenge was the effort to target the most vulnerable; it was difficult for the simple fact that virtually everyone wished to benefit from a cash contribution regardless of his or her household status and vulnerability to food insecurity.

## 10. Links between Humanitarian and Development Efforts in the Food Security Sector

Workshop participants stressed that risk management is not considered a priority by all actors, either for short or long-term activities. Most discussions on emergency response are focused on emergency operations: food baskets, shelter kits, cash transfers, etc. Since many organizations do not apply a livelihoods approach to their analyses, the longer-term needs that continue after the emergency phase are often not adequately addressed by short-term relief actors.