

# CRS FIGHTS FOOD INSECURITY IN HAITI AFTER HURRICANE MATTHEW



Photo by Gabrielle Viat, CRS

## DONORS

For this project, CRS received **\$9 million dollars** from USAID/OFDA/FFP.

In 2016, Hurricane Matthew devastated the South of Haiti, wiping out food supplies and livelihoods for an already vulnerable population. Funded by USAID/OFDA/FFP, CRS responded with the Emergency Food Security Project, a market-based intervention that supported the recovery of agricultural livelihoods while addressing immediate food needs and local economies. Building on the organization's 60+ years of experience in Haiti, CRS provided farmers with the necessary inputs for the March and July planting seasons, and provided cash assistance allowing them to support their families in the critical "lean period" before harvest. Because of CRS, families were able to get back on their feet and start building more resilient lives.

The Emergency Food Security Project was implemented for a total of \$9 million dollars, touching 32,982 people in 11 communes in the South of Haiti. Critical towards achieving the project's goals and objectives were the following interventions:

## COMMUNES

Coteaux  
Roche a Bateau  
Roseaux  
Abricots  
Bonbon  
Dame Marie  
Anse d'Hainault  
Les Irois  
Beaumont  
Corail  
Pestel

## MARKET-BASED AGRICULTURAL RECOVERY

### SEED AND TOOL VOUCHERS:

When Hurricane Matthew devastated the South of Haiti in 2016, the Ministry of Agriculture (MARNDP) reported that 90% of crops were wiped out in the southern plateau. To restart growth, CRS distributed \$1,913,000 worth of vouchers; the initial vouchers were used to purchase seeds and tools by 16,819 farmers for the March planting season in 8 communes. CRS Staff trained and contracted nearly 200 local vendors to accept these vouchers. By using the existing market, CRS supported the local economy and strengthened the existing supply chain. Farmers also benefited as they were able to purchase locally-adapted, familiar seeds, from vendors they trusted.

### SEED FAIRS:

For the July planting season, CRS conducted 30 seed fairs in 3 communes. Nearly 3,000 farmers received electronic vouchers which were used to purchase seeds on-site from approved vendors with agronomists present to ensure quality control. Twenty-one local vendors trained on quality seed reproduction by FAO, DDA, and USAID were engaged in these seed fairs which further supported local markets.



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### SEED STUDIES

CRS engaged a Seed Specialist who worked with the Seed Division (SSR) of the Ministry of Agriculture (MARNDR) to collect samples from the local vendors and conduct laboratory testing on seed quality. Results were shared with key local authorities in each Department (regional division) and subsequently with farmers and vendors in each commune to educate them on the types and quality of seeds available in the market.

### EMERGENCY FOOD ASSISTANCE

#### UNCONDITIONAL CASH TRANSFERS

To meet immediate needs, CRS initiated unconditional cash transfers totaling \$4,255,741 to assist 32,982 families in 8 communes. Each family received a cash transfer in May and a second one in June. This allowed families to purchase the needed necessities to survive the lean season until the harvest came in. By using direct cash transfers, families were able to determine which critical items they needed the most. Injecting cash into the local economy created a multiplier effect as local merchants used their profits in the community. Using cash instead of distributing imported commodities supported the stability and growth of markets post-Hurricane.

#### NUTRITION PROMOTION:

CRS worked with the Haitian Ministry of Health (MSPP) to station agents at each cash distribution site in order to share key nutrition messages; this encouraged the purchase of diverse and nutrient-dense foods by vulnerable families.

### ACCOUNTABILITY

#### 514 HOTLINE CALLS • + 39 COMMUNITY BASED PROJECT OFFICERS • 11 COMMUNES

Accountability to beneficiaries was a key component to ensure a real-time feedback loop that encouraged local participation and ownership. A free hotline which received more than 20 calls/day and an accountability table at each distribution allowed for families to discuss their needs and concerns. This feedback was rapidly shared with project leaders so adjustments could be made in real-time.

## Map of Emergency Food Security Project



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