

DPHSWD in Haiti



Accomplishments in Haiti

- Established a tiered FETP less than a year after the 2010 earthquake, within the Direction d'Épidémiologie de Laboratoire et de Recherche (DELRL) of MSPP.
- In 2011, trained 53 Haitian public health professionals on surveillance, biostatistics and outbreak response.
- SMDP and LSDB used project management to mentor laboratory managers from human health and veterinary health sectors to implement QMS training in their agencies.
- Graduated the first cohort of 12 intermediate (1-year program) residents June 2012.
- FETP placed a project coordinator and 2 advanced (2-year program) residents to support the National Epidemiology Program in Port-au-Prince.
- The KAP survey, conducted by the intermediate cohort, evaluated motorcycle safety and the attitudes around helmet use and safety.

Overview and Goals

The Division of Public Health Systems and Workforce Development (DPHSWD) at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in collaboration with CDC's Health Systems Reconstruction Office (HSRO), has been working in Haiti since 2010 in response to the urgent public health needs resulting from the devastating earthquake of January 2010. DPHSWD is working to reduce the burden of major public health problems through capacity building and strengthening public health systems. DPHSWD supports the Ministère de la Santé Publique et de la Population (MSPP) by improving disease surveillance and outbreak response through the Field Epidemiology Training Program (FETP). The Haiti FETP is a tiered applied epidemiology program training public health professionals at the local, departmental, and national level. During training, the residents support MSPP priorities such as field investigations at the national and sub-national levels.

Program Description

Building Workforce Capacity

The Haiti FETP currently supports 14 residents. These residents and other MSPP partners participated in specialized trainings to improve the capacity of Haitian public health leaders to respond to emergencies, better understand the situation of water and foodborne diseases in Haiti, perform nutrition assessments in the field, and conduct case investigations in conjunction with national immunization activities.

Strengthening Public Health Infrastructure and Institutions

The Haiti FETP has received national support and all graduates of the one year intermediate FETP will receive a nationally recognized certificate from MSPP. Through the FETP, DPHSWD is engaged in activities that will improve surveillance systems within the country. For example, residents are expected to participate in weekly MSSPP surveillance activities. Graduates of the first cohort will either be reassigned to positions that will allow them to use their field epidemiology skills; moved to Port-au-Prince to work at Direction d'Épidémiologie de Laboratoire et de Recherche (DELRL) and augment the field epidemiology capacity at the national level; or moved from local (commune/institution) to regional (departmental) positions thereby increasing sub-national epidemiology capacity. In addition, all Haiti FETP residents and graduates are connected to specific CDC subject matter experts that can mentor and assist with specialized projects.

Future Plans

In 2012, the Haiti FETP selected the second cohort for the intermediate one-year program. Recent intermediate graduates will have increased responsibilities within MSPP related to public health response and some will become FETP mentors for the new residents at the basic and intermediate levels.

The overall goal of the program is to increase the number of trained epidemiologists at the local, departmental, and national levels of MSPP. The program aims to train a total of 200 people in the next 5 years so that each of the 10 departments will have a critical mass of personnel trained to provide regular epidemiologic support through the regular collection and review of surveillance data. In addition, the program hopes to increase the epidemiologic capacity of



Two Haiti FETP residents practice using Epi Info during summer training program, 2011.



Natael Fenelon from the Central American FETP facilitating a group exercise with Haiti FETP residents, 2011.



Haiti FETP residents work in small groups on epidemiological case study during screening course, 2011.

MSPP by empowering the staff in each of the departments to conduct field investigations and to respond to outbreaks as needed. This will support MSPP's rebuilding efforts and increase their ability to respond to new and emerging health concerns.

In reaching this goal, DPHSWD will continue to provide support for the Haiti FETP by:

- Providing technical assistance to DELR/MSPP through the Resident Advisor
- Continuing the 3 levels of the Haiti FETP
- Providing additional workshops, specifically in management and leadership, that will address gaps within the Ministry
- Refining strategies for public health systems strengthening and workforce development in Haiti
- Seeking opportunities to collaborate on activities at the sub-national level to improve the quality of disease detection, reporting, and response at all levels

As the capacity of the program increases, Haiti FETP will continue to improve the quality and increase the quantity of scientific communications in Haiti, thus more effectively translating surveillance and field epidemiology into action that improves the health of the Haitian people.

Key Partners

- Ministère de la Santé Publique et de la Population (MSPP)
- CDC Country office – U.S. Embassy, Port-au-Prince
- Haiti – Unité De Gestion de Projets
- Pan American Health Organization (PAHO)

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