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Earthquake in Haiti: Aquassistance with the support of the Fondation SUEZ in a mission to support the NGO ACTED in its emergency intervention

On August 14th, an earthquake of magnitude 7.2 struck Haiti, specifically the departments of South, Grand'Anse and Nippes. The earthquake caused the collapse and destruction of many infrastructures and homes and resulted in more than 2,200 deaths and more than 12,000 injured.

137,000 families were affected by the earthquake in the departments of South, Grand'Anse and Nippes. Approximately 500,000 people are in need of emergency humanitarian assistance, and the Tropical Depression Grace (August 16 and 17) triggered flooding and therefore created additional safety risks for damaged homes and people already left homeless by the earthquake. Many public buildings such as hospitals, schools, and churches suffered extensive damage or collapsed completely.

Aquassistance, a SUEZ NGO led by employees and retirees, mobilized an emergency mission with ACTED, already an Aquassistance and Fondation SUEZ partner, which provided emergency support for access to drinking water and hygiene. ACTED has been present in Haiti since 2004 and has extensive knowledge of the Grand'Anse and the South due to the various projects and interventions carried out in the area over the past 10 years, as well as real expertise in emergency management following climatic disasters.

Aquassistance's mission focuses on refining the water and sanitation needs' assessment in the three departments of Grand'Anse, Sud and Nippes, reinforcing ACTED's Water, Hygiene and Sanitation mobile teams, establishing an inventory of the water supply facilities managed by the National Directorate of Drinking Water and Sanitation (DINEPA) in the disaster areas in order to establish, if necessary, a program of repairing, rehabilitating and/or reactivating as an emergency service in the medium term. This mission, carried out by two volunteers who are familiar with Haiti, should allow for the evaluation of the needs for mobile stations (UTE) and the feasibility study, if necessary, of a second Aquassistance mission.

The Fondation SUEZ's support to ACTED will allow the continuation and expansion of existing and planned water access activities: installing reservoirs in order for the affected populations to have access to drinking water for their personal use; daily feeding the reservoirs through water distributions via water trucking and installing 5 water treatment units. These treatment units have already filled 1,000 one-liter bags of water, which were then distributed to the populations of Camp-Perrin and Cavaillon; distribution of hygiene kits with more than 4,500 water purification tablets (Aquatap) already distributed in the city of Jérémie, and approximately 500 hygiene kits pre-positioned in the city in conjunction with UNICEF; continuing the first interventions to repair the water supply and distribution networks and the water collection systems, which have begun with the repair of the distribution lines in the town of Cavaillon.

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About Aquassistance

Aquassistance is the international solidarity association of active and retired SUEZ Group employees, mobilized to help populations in difficulty in the fields of water and the environment. Born out of an emergency in 1994, at the time of the civil war in Rwanda, Aquassistance has carried out more than 350 projects in 60 emerging countries, benefiting more than 2 million inhabitants in terms of access to drinking water and 500,000 people in terms of improved hygiene conditions and access to liquid and solid sanitation.

The SUEZ corporate Foundation supports concrete actions to develop sustainable access to essential services (water, sanitation and waste) for disadvantaged populations in emerging countries, and to promote the integration of vulnerable people through employment and training in France. The SUEZ Foundation has been endowed with €4 million each year since its creation and participates in the projects it supports through the skills sponsorship of Group experts. In 2020, the Foundation's Board of Directors mobilized for the creation of a Covid Fund.

About SUEZ:

Since the end of the 19th century, SUEZ has built expertise aimed at helping people to constantly improve their quality of life by protecting their health and supporting economic growth. With an active presence on five continents, SUEZ and its 90,000 employees strive to preserve our environment's natural capital: water, soil, and air. SUEZ provides innovative and resilient solutions in water management, waste recovery, site remediation and air treatment, optimizing municipalities' and industries' resource management through "smart" cities and improving their environmental and economic performance. The Group delivers sanitation services to 64 million people and produces 7.1 billion m³ of drinking water. SUEZ is also a contributor to economic growth, with more than 200,000 jobs created directly and indirectly on an annual basis, and a provider of new resources, with 4.2 million tons of secondary raw materials produced. By 2030, the Group is targeting 100% sustainable solutions, with a positive impact on our environment, health and climate. SUEZ generated total revenue of €17,2 billion in 2020.

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