

Bill and Melinda Gates Fund Assessment of Haitian Aid

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Tulane University's Disaster Resilience Leadership Academy (DRLA), in partnership with the University of Haiti, will assess the impact of humanitarian aid in Haiti and whether it supports the sustainable recovery of the Haitian people. The first of its kind study will be funded through a \$762,198 grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

The assessment, which began this month and will run for 18 months, will determine how relief and recovery dollars can impact community resilience by gauging the perceptions of Haitian stakeholder groups including the Haitian people, government and relief agencies.

On Jan. 12, 2010 a 7.0 magnitude earthquake struck Haiti near the capital of Port-au-Prince. To date the government of Haiti has reported over 230,000 deaths, over two million people internally displaced and over three million affected individuals. The earthquake has further exasperated the already fragile state of Haiti. International and national partners have pledged \$9.9 billion in aid over the next three years with the U.S. alone providing more than \$1 billion.

"This unique program funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and implemented by Tulane's DRLA seeks to understand the needs, response and sustainability of humanitarian and development interventions in a complex situation such as Haiti. With New Orleans recently observing Katrina's fifth anniversary, we have come to know, first hand, the importance of immediate relief as well as issues of sustainability for our communities," Tulane University's President Scott Cowen said.

"With the needs so vast and the funding and resources being brought to bear so sizable, it is imperative to monitor the appropriateness and efficacy of the aid delivered.," Tulane University's Disaster Resilience Leadership Academy (DRLA)

Executive Director Ky Luu said. "In response to this need, the DRLA has received funding from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to undertake this novel study that will identify humanitarian aid best practices as well as assess donor financial stewardship."

This distinct approach in evaluating humanitarian assistance will guide the Haitian government, donors and implementing agencies to make programmatic decisions that will address the long term needs of the Haitian people, thus enhancing their resilience.

The DRLA is an interdisciplinary academic center that provides education and conducts research in disaster resilience leadership through an interdisciplinary program taught by expert Tulane University faculty from Tulane's School of Architecture, A.B. Freeman School of Business, School of Law, School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine, and School of Social Work.