

# HAITI TOOLKIT

Tools and Practices for the Sustainable Rebuilding of Haiti



**O**n January 12, 2010, a devastating earthquake struck Haiti about 17 kilometers from its densely populated capitol. More than 300,000 people lost their lives and hundreds of thousands were injured. The quake directly affected 1.5 million people. It destroyed 105,000 homes and damaged 208,000 others. More than 1,300 schools and 50 hospitals and healthcare facilities collapsed or became unusable. The damage and destruction caused by the earthquake was exacerbated by Haiti's dense population and the country's lack of adequate building standards. The loss of life was tragic, but the global outreach and the strength of the Haitian people offer a great opportunity for the renewal and rebirth of Haiti.

Immediately following the report of the earthquake and the extensive destruction of the nation's infrastructure, representatives from the United States building community came together to provide support and expertise to the Haitian people.

With a diversity of climates and myriad potential natural hazards, the United States building community has had the opportunity to develop standards and codes and conduct research and development activities to support a robust building industry. Given this strong history of advancement in the building sciences and the desire to share this knowledge

with others, the United States is poised to assist the people of Haiti to assure that the loss of life and destruction of property in the recent earthquake is not repeated.

As part of this assistance, the U.S. building community is developing a toolkit of best practices and resources through an open solicitation to its members. The National Institute of Building Sciences is coordinating the toolkit's formation. Participants in the toolkit effort are identifying resources and best practices for review and potential adoption by the Haitian government. Such guidelines need to be simplified to ensure that residential

structures are properly constructed. Education and training will also need to be made available to ensure newly established building requirements are properly enforced.

In recognition of the immediate opportunity and need to implement robust requirements and the training, enforcement, and processes that go along with such a program, the Haitian government should not be hampered by the need to gather and/or develop possible solutions. The toolkit will provide a single outlet to the knowledge developed by the diversity of participants in the U.S. building community.

The National Institute of Building Sciences and participants in the toolkit effort are working with key representatives from the disaster relief non-governmental organization (NGO) community and the U.S. government to assure that the toolkit is being presented to appropriate officials and entities engaged in the long-term redevelopment of Haiti. In addition to providing resources within the toolkit, numerous organizations have indicated an interest in providing further technical assistance, training and other actions.

Facilitated by the National Institute of Building Sciences with participation from across the U.S. Building Community

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