



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Haitian government risks ignoring earthquake survivors, ActionAid says**

Friday April 9, 2010 – Three months on from the earthquake that devastated Haiti, the government is at risk of ignoring survivors in its plans to re-house hundreds of thousands of people, ActionAid said today.

More than a million people are still homeless in Haiti, including 250,000 people whose shelters in camps in Port-au-Prince are at high risk of flooding during the rainy season that begins in earnest in May.

The government has identified a huge piece of land to the north of the capital that it wants to make into a temporary relocation site. However many of those who lost their homes are living in temporary shelters miles away from the site and do not want to or are unable to move.

Jean Claude Figiolé, ActionAid's Haiti Country Director, said: **“The rains have already started and this is leaving thousands of earthquake survivors in a dire situation. Three months on from the earthquake the most urgent task is for the Haitian government to identify appropriate land for shelters before May when the rainy season will be well underway.**

**“But the government has not taken people’s needs into account in its relocation plans. Ordinary people and local authorities have not been consulted. The government should also identify smaller sites in different locations around the city which are appropriate for the homeless.”**

The massive challenge of relocation in Haiti could be even more problematic if a planned new recovery commission is not accountable to the Haitian people. The commission, to be led by US President Bill Clinton and Haitian Prime Minister Jean-Max Bellerive, will be in total control of the \$5.5 billion pledged by the international community last month to rebuild the country, but will not be accountable to parliament or to the people.

**“The funds that international donors have pledged for Haiti must be spent in a way that benefits the Haitian population. In order for this to happen there needs to be accountability to the people of Haiti,”** Jean Claude Figiolé said.

Since the earthquake struck on January 12, ActionAid working with local partner organizations and volunteers has so far reached out to over 20,000 of the most vulnerable earthquake survivors and will be reaching 100,000 people by July.

ActionAid has provided food supplies, emergency relief items and trained community volunteers in how to help with emotional care and is now moving to longer term projects such as getting people back to work and rebuilding schools.

ActionAid is an international agency working in 50 countries alongside 25 million poor people to end poverty and the injustices that cause it. ActionAid has been working in Haiti since 1996 and has focused on promoting the right to food security, women's rights, rights to quality education for all, rights to just and democratic governance, rights to a life of dignity in the face of HIV/AIDS, and rights to security during emergencies.

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