

RELEASE IN FULL

To: Dad, Mom  
Cc: Cheryl, Doug, Justin

There is a context section at the bottom, which is longer than I would like, but I think it is important to articulate what I saw and whom I spoke with (and what I didn't see and whom I didn't meet) so that you understand my data set and its clear limitations. To say I was profoundly disturbed by what I saw – and didn't see – would be an understatement. The incompetence is mind numbing. Not incidentally, it rained twice while I was there. If we do not quickly change the organization, management, accountability and delivery paradigm on the ground, we could quite conceivably confront tens of thousands of children's deaths by diarrhea, dysentery, typhoid and other water-related diseases in the near future. Below are my major takeaways and a few nascent/early thoughts on what we (however we define we) could do drive significant and incremental improvements on the ground in the near and longer term. As is often said, if I had more time – and less emotion – I would have written a shorter letter. I hope this mini-behemoth is not rife with grammatical errors or inadvertent gaps; I am sorry if either true. Please do not forward this in whole or in part attributed to me without asking me first – happy to be an invisible soldier. Mainly hope this is even marginally helpful.

Thanks,  
Chelsea

**Takeaways** are below, with illustrative examples, in a logical flow, not order of importance. **Bolded** what I think most important:

- **Haitians want to help themselves** and want the international community to help them help themselves – this sounds obvious but wasn't to some of the UN and International NGO (INGO) folks I ran across. The UN people I encountered were frequently out of touch (e.g., would not have been off Logbase in days – or ever), anachronistic at best and arrogant and incompetent at worst (e.g., one woman from the UN – UNDP I think - told me she was waiting for the Haitians to “demand their political rights” – when they're asking for tents, latrines, soap, food and not getting that....)
- In fact, **Haitians in the settlements** are very much **organizing themselves, in part to help define their needs and then articulate them to the UN/ INGO community. Fairly nuanced settlement governance structures have already developed.** The largest settlement I visited in Parc Jean Marie Vincent (40k and counting) had an overall governing committee with a head of the governing committee (voted on by the governing committee); a women's committee; a security committee; a sanitation committee (with a soap subcommittee), etc. Women comprised 50% of each committee. **One of the most illuminating anecdotes** from my trip was talking with the head of the security committee and a few other settlement residents, including 2 women from the governing committee. The security committee wanted 100 tshirts – at least though I think they'll need at least 2-3x that – so that the security volunteers could wear them when patrolling so that people,

particularly women, would feel safe when they saw them approach in groups of 2 or 3. They also ideally wanted flashlights to also use on night patrol. Finally, they wanted to be able to pay the security team (though this was less important than the first two 'asks'). IF that option were not feasible, their second choice was for the US Army to come into the settlement and patrol at night. Not the Haitian police (unreliable) and not the UN (dismissed). They wanted to help themselves, and they wanted reliability and accountability.

- **The settlements' governing bodies – as they shared with me - are beginning to experience UN/ INGO fatigue** given how often they articulate their needs, willingness to work – and how little is coming their way. **Tents and latrines / sanitation remain the largest urgent needs – obvious to anyone with a minimum knowledge of public health and the settlement residents themselves**
- **The Haitian government appears to have an emergent, albeit still largely lacking in specifics, plan of action** (detailed below), **for both the near** (to get through the next 6-12 months) **and longer term** (while rebuilding over next ~5 years)
- **The Haitian government's inability to articulate its plan** quickly enough or in sufficient terms to the UN/ INGO community has **lead to a proliferation of ad hoc efforts by the UN and INGOs to 'help,' some of which have helped** (e.g., we met no one who was worried about water supplies in camps even though it's a motley crue of French Red Cross, Oxfam, IMO/IOM, etc that have achieved that), **some of which have hurt** (e.g., the largest settlement we visited had 1 latrine to every 1,000 people or 40 for ~40k though given the settlements' growth rate its probably 40 for ~45k today; there should be 1 for every 50 people or 800+ latrines) and **some which have not happened at all** (e.g., the only settlements with lights at night are those in areas that had lights before that continue to work; settlement at the Petionville Golf Club, for instance, has some lights at night while most sit in darkness)
- **This disorganization across the UN/ INGOs has had a variety of effects on the Haitian government, including that it it has now visibly distanced itself from the UN Cluster process** (e.g., instead of going to a meeting a day the Haitian Minister of Health is now going once a week – because it was "such a waste of time" and he said that is representative of the government's current modus operandi); though we heard the cluster process was improving – when I asked for a concrete example of how, I was told meetings were "more efficient." This lack of efficiency – not to mention lack of visible consistent progress - has also **lead to a further distrust of the UN/ INGOs by the Haitian government and Haitian people in the settlements. The former feels like it shows up to no effect – and the latter feels like very few actor(s) reliably show up**
- Again, the UN seemed at best chaotic and at worst absent as I travelled around in an action-oriented sense – I saw few IOM/IMO tents in settlements or workers or evidence of work; no evidence of WHO; no evidence of OSHA; no evidence of... You get the picture. I did see lots of UN peacekeepers riding

around however in their vans, humvees, etc. Though on the point of trucks, **I asked how many trucks were in the country – including the non-Port Au Prince UN ‘bases’ – and no one could tell me. There appears to be NO accessible and usable UN inventory system or logistics operation.** WFP, for instance, is largely piggy backing on the US Army/ SOUTHCOM but the “UN” / OSHA could not tell me how many trucks WFP had, much less how many the UN itself had. I counted – I kid you not – hundreds of trucks and cars at the UN logbase and other UN bases we drove by

- **UNICEF was the only UN agency that seemed to be universally acknowledged to be doing a good job by settlements’ residents, by Haitian doctors and by INGO partners,** perhaps in part because of its narrowly defined agenda currently in Haiti (vaccinations) and that its reliable – i.e., it shows up when it says it will in the settlements and other central locations
- There is **NO accountability in the UN system or international humanitarian system (including for/ among INGOs),** this is not new news but it is one area that the Cluster approach had aimed to remedy – e.g., there is no feedback mechanism for when the British Red Cross dug the 34 of the 40 above latrines only 3 feet deep and didn’t tell the residents when they would come and extract the latrines or properly train people to take care of the latrines, etc. – that malpractice continuum is appalling and the British Red Cross should know better—at the least, the British Red Cross subsequently should not be allowed to dig elsewhere/ ‘do’ latrines
- The **cash-for-work program the UN heralds is not working optimally, to put it mildly.** It currently focuses – perhaps solely - on debris cleaning – important no doubt – but **it has not extended its work into the settlements or helped set standardized, and differentiated wages, for settlement work.** For instance, the UN cash for work program should have already started to pay people in the more organized camps – to clean latrines; ‘guard’ latrines, including insuring kids use soap; be teachers; be on security patrol; be on evacuation duty; work with the WFP during the XYZ drop times, etc.... NONE of this is happening as far as I can tell. When we were there the cash for work program head was still focused only – it appeared – on rubble cleaning.
- **Re: education in the settlements and beyond:** This is theoretically the responsibility of UNICEF and Save the Children – I heard they’re starting to work on this but that is all I know. Ad hoc schools have begun in some of the camps. We met a woman – our host in fact – who working with the Israeli Agency for International Development Cooperation – had started schools in 4 settlements for at least the next month.
- The **World Food Program continues to NOT buy locally** – which is probably now a moot point as it appears that the dairy, fruit, vegetable and grain stores have all spoiled. The WFP also seems to have been rather erratic in the early days but most people I spoke to **said WFP is now more systematic and reliable in its food delivery.** However, it had not yet

started to deliver cooking and eating utensils though these are promised for next week.

- In contrast to the UN, **there appears to be respect for the US Military on the ground** – for the Army particularly as that is the branch people see guarding the hospital – and it is a negative comment on the UN forces given their effective absence. I saw no anti-US graffiti though the walls now are covered in parts of downtown with anti ‘ONG’ (NGO) and anti-UN graffiti. (Also, not only graffiti writers with the above sentiments; one of the Haitian doctors I met said, “We must be so poor we can’t tell them [UN and INGOs] what to do – or kick them out and use the money ourselves.”). **There is also great fear – at least from the Haitian and ex-pat medical community – that the Army is leaving soon largely because of the security and total organization vacuum that would then be left around the hospital.** The UN community, in contrast, did not seem to be perturbed by this prospect.
- On an unrelated note, **the absence of the Catholic Church’s efforts is notable**, particularly given the high death toll among priests, nuns and seminarians. Catholic Relief Services is present.

**Thoughts on what is needed** – and what we could do below. (I know much of this is familiar.):

- **The Office of Special Envoy** – i.e., you Dad – **needs authority over the UN and all its myriad parts** – which I do believe would give you effective authority over much of then INGO sphere given how persistently the collective humanitarian community holding onto cluster approach. I know you know this and are working on it. OSHA clearly is failing on the ground, otherwise it could be “empowered” to do this but it ostensibly already is.
- However, regardless of the attachment to clusters, **there needs to be a single point of authority either over UN / INGO efforts on the ground organized in one of two principle ways: either expertise areas** (e.g., latrines, lights) **or by settlements/ Port Au Prince regions** with constituent settlements, with full structures – e.g., finance, procurement, project management etc., understanding certain functional areas would be cross-cutting (e.g., pay for work)
- There needs to be a **coordinated logistics effort which should follow from the above with an urgency on procurement and deployment of latrines, tents and lights** – and what is needed to support installment, servicing, maintenance, etc of each. In parallel, **a new logistics center/ warehouse** coordinating facility should be built; every non-UN logistics-focused person I talked to said a need exists for a new logistic center near the major seaport.
- **A plan must be developed for the rainy season, which is already on us, particularly for the settlements** and it should include answers to questions like where can people evacuate to when it rains? How will they access food and water and latrines, at a minimum, from those spaces? Also, **could those places be multipurpose**, e.g., also schools and clinic tents/semi permanent structures (one engineer talked to me about fiberglass?)?

- On **pay for work, UN needs to expand its mandate and coordinate with relevant INGO partners** to start employing people, at differential wages, in the settlements and coordinate with the groups above to ensure consistent wages until a 'market' could develop
- The UN – IMO/IOM – or someone needs to take a **monthly census of the settlements at the minimum**
- Speaking of censuses, the UN also **needs a census of itself and its materials** in country – **including of the peacekeeper bases outside Port Au Prince**. For example, we drove by 2 bases on the way to Cange and there were collectively, I would estimate, more than a hundred trucks and buses just sitting between the two, as well as at least 800 Napali soldiers (according to locals) laying effectively fallow – and I don't think anyone expects an outbreak of violence on the Central Plateau in the near future so even if they and their colleagues are deployed under UN Charter Chapter 6, surely preserving the peace could be interpreted to work with the settlements? At the least, their hardware could be used more effectively in Port Au Prince
- **Special/ extraordinary management needed around areas that have received significant attention and offers of assistance, e.g., the general hospital in Port Au Prince** which multiple actors, including Sarkozy, have now offered to rebuild
- Holistically, **all of the above should support the Haitian government both actually and ostensibly to not undermine its authority and also to help augment and build local capacity and capabilities, where feasible**
- **The UN/ INGO should look to source locally or work with local partners whenever possible, post emergency phase at the least**. For example, work with local solar light producers, buy from local t-shirt factories (if any survived outside Port Au Prince), mandate WFP first look to local producers, etc. Now bias I think has to be on quickest production but in medium term that should accommodate a local dimension
- **Re: USNS Comfort:** for as long as it is there, at a minimum, **its mission should be expanded such that its military and civilian staff could work on the physical therapy of earthquake related victims** and ideally care for non-earthquake related cases.
- **Re: US Army:** If its mission is largely coming to an end, I hope there is a succession plan for its current tasks, e.g., the hospital security, that the Haitian government is comfortable with; currently Haitian government/ at least Haitian government people on the proverbial ground have no idea what the transfer plan is
- **Re: medical evacuations:** think this will be improved given our collectively-experienced chaos on Sunday
- **Re: mental health in settlements and beyond:** clear people are thinking about this now – largely because Dad asked about it and made it prominent – but still unclear what the action plan is
- **Re: Haitian plan:** I am not sure it's the best plan, but it is a plan and we should work with the government to flush out the details so it is robust and actionable – not sure who the we is here probably most of all

- **Re: Catholic church:** Could we reach out to the Vatican – or even Catholic groups/ prominent Catholics domestically to raise money and the necessary expertise **to rebuild the central cathedral and main seminary?** It would be a powerful symbolic statement – and put lots of people to work
- **Re: status, including mental health of workers there, both Haitian and ex-pat:** I am consciously leaving this off as I just can't process right now

**FYI: Emergent Haitian government plan of action, as I understand it:**

- o Near term/ for the next year
  - **Buttress the settlements that currently exist that are not in the lowest lying flood plans, i.e.,** get tents and latrines in place, ensure sufficient amounts of clean water flowing in or being brought, ensure food supplies sufficient, ensure security and safety (though this seems to be people-focused only); ensure medical care accessible; start schools at least for the youngest children.
  - **Move people who are in the settlements in the worst geographies for flooding or practical reasons/ other reasons (e.g., the one currently with 4000 people on the prime minister's lawn) to pre-constructed tent settlements elsewhere – they have built the first of these already with INGO Shelter Box though apparently the tents were put up too close to one another**
  - **Areas lacking in mention when I heard the above discussed:** a solution to ensure people have somewhere to go when the heavy rains come; ensure continuity of key services once the rains come; a solution to ensure people are paid how to ensure sufficient light in the camps, clearly critical to security (rapes are skyrocketing and I know there were at least 2 murders in one camp on Saturday night); what the right spec of tent is for any of the above – housing, clinic, evacuation, school and what could be multipurpose; plan for older children/young adults who may be too old for initial school plan; how to best support / help create where needed settlement governance; how to census, on a semi-regular basis, who is in the settlements
  - **Over next 6-12 months:**
    - o **Assess which homes are sufficiently safe for families to return to and subsequently encourage them to do so;** government estimates this will be ~30% of all homes/families (though this seems to be a guess, i.e., no evidence base)
    - o **Build semi-permanent settlements or augment pre-existing villages around Port Au Prince where feasible to enable the government to move people**

**out of settlements to those sites.** End goal is to move 400-1000 families to each of these as needed

- **Longer-term:**
  - Rebuilt Port Au Prince though it is unclear how/if/why people would move back or what the government's post-rebuild vision looks like
  - Build more robust health, education etc systems than existed before the earthquake
  - \*Clearly this is the less well-defined part of the "plan"

### Context

I spent the last four days in Haiti. I was with Paul Farmer (Paul) and Partners in Health (PIH) the entire time – in Port Au Prince Thursday, Friday and Sunday afternoon and at PIH sites in Laconville and Cange, in the Central Plateau region Saturday and Sunday morning. I sat in on Paul's formal meetings in Port Au Prince with: the Haitian Minister of Health Alex Larsen and his team; the Haitian government official ostensibly overseeing the reconstruction efforts/ UN liaison Leslie Voltaire; a x-UN group preparing for the PDNA (post disaster needs assessment) conference in New York at the end of March working on giving 'voice to the voiceless,' i.e., the designated 15 minutes at the conference to highlight the voices of those most affected (the 15 minutes I gather are happening at all only because of Cheryl and Paul), UNDP, UNHCR and others were represented; a group interested in building a logistics center for the reconstruction efforts, i.e., outside the UN ambit, including people from Royal Caribbean, McKinsey and the people we were traveling with, including Wes Edens, CEO of Fortress and a supporter of PIH – and the person who donated, and continues to donate the space at the Miami airport that PIH, Clinton Foundation, University of Miami Medical Center and others are using to move goods by air and sea, via transfer, to Haiti. Informally, I talked with: people in settlements and settlement committee heads, through a translator; local Haitian doctors; ex-pat PIH and other doctors in mobile clinics in settlements; doctors, nurses and US police officers I ran into on the street, at dinner, at their ad hoc residence in the abandoned Aristide Foundation; Maryse Kedar who hosted us our nights in Port Au Prince, a member of the local elite, and her ad hoc Israel volunteers (from the Israeli Agency for International Development Cooperation, ie their USAID, as mentioned above); a broad swath of people serving on the USNS Comfort, both on and off the ship; US Army enlisted and officers whenever I saw them; Louise Ivers, head of PIH in Haiti, and others we met or ran into along the way.