

Assistance to mutual assistance



Blue Shield

Mission to Port-au-Prince, 11-16th April 2010

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Summary

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The authors of this report would like first to thank Blue Shield's founding organizations, especially ICA and IFLA, which led to the planning and funding of this mission.

Of course we want to thank at the same time our colleagues in Port-au-Prince, including Françoise Thybulle and all other colleagues mentioned in this report, without whom we couldn't achieve the goals we set ourselves. They have made incredible efforts to help us understand the situation there and to make this mission a great human and professional adventure. We learned a lot from them.

Background and objectives of this mission

Since January, the International Blue Shield and all its component organizations are working together to track the damages caused by the earthquake on Haitian cultural properties. According to the information collected from our colleagues there, we have put online a directory of institutions affected by this disaster¹. Its purpose is also to be updated and enriched by all the organizations who sent assessment missions there in the months following the disaster.

The action plan of the Blue Shield International relied on this tool and the demands of our Haitian colleagues, widely relayed among heritage professionals. The entire community has therefore get mobilized to build a treatment center of damaged cultural heritage. We have proposed this plan to the Haitian authorities as early as February, during the preparatory meeting of the International Coordinating Committee, organized at UNESCO.

Issues related to the reconstruction of this country are important; they have also a strategic dimension while considering the cultural and archival fields. Beyond the financial aspects, they are also governance issues that are raised by the rescue of vital records and restoration operation of government such as marital status. The Haitian authorities have also drawn our attention to the very large number of organizations (governmental or not) involved in Haiti and the lack of coordination of their efforts. This has been the case during the assessment phase where many missions were dispatched to the area without consulting the previous reports.

The mission organized by the Blue Shield International has had the main aim of taking all the necessary information to the establishment of this center for treatment of cultural disaster. This was also the opportunity to complete the assessments made previously to quantify the affected collections and various types of treatments which will be offered in our center.

You will find in this report additional inventory by institution or administrative function. From the visits we made during this week, we were able to collect this information and set some action plans in the short term. Another part will be dedicated to the treatment center itself. You'll find all the information about the progress of this project and how we can implement this project with our Haitian colleagues.

¹ <http://haiti2010.blueshield-international.org/directory>

The situation of cultural institutions in Haiti

Here we provide you with the latest updated information we could gather, whether for information relating to a particular type of collection or a cultural institution. Each description is completed with photographs and key figures to understand the current situation.

- National Library of Haiti
- Library St. Louis de Gonzague
- National network of public libraries
- Civil status Administration Haiti
- National Archives of Haiti
- Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Haiti
- Public and private museum collections

April 2010 Mon. 12 th			
	<i>National Library of Haiti</i>		

The building has suffered little despite the neighbouring buildings totally collapsed, but needs work that will begin around April 20. The shelves are fully destroyed the 45,000 volumes have been put in boxes by the staff of the NBH. The boxes are covered with tarpaulins. This operation is almost complete. 1200 cartons have already been filled. The documents are heavily affected by dust and some of them have experienced mechanical deformation. The entire collection is on paper strongly acidified.

We have raised the plan of the library and the measurement of sets of shelves to be replaced. We have developed with the director a plan coordinated with the repair work providing for the dispatch of racks for 15-20 May and operation of dust collection for 3-4 days will allow the library to reopen its doors in early June.

The books will be equipped with a bar code to facilitate the continued implementation of computerized loan. A volunteer Blue Shield will help to put the NL this operation in place. The layout of the site can do the work inside the building.

A deacidification of the serial publications may then be performed in the emergency treatment centre. The opening of the NL to the public is a priority because there is no more public library in Port au Prince.

The digitization of the card catalogue and bibliographical dictionary of Haitian scanning would be very useful for finishing the computerized catalogue (actually 70%) and start a union catalogue for libraries in the network.

Visit the building and inventory

The collection contains 45,000 volumes (including periodicals): the vast majority of 4to. The annual increase in collections is about 300 titles per year and about 12 to 15ml of periodicals per year.

The seizure of the computer catalogue has been 70% but there is still no ILS, the manual file is used again, which is justified in relation to frequent power cuts.

The rate of humidity found in the April 11, 2010 was 63%. The load on the ground must be verified. The collections are on highly acidic paper and weakened.

The staffs of the National Library have almost completed the cardboard stake of damaged material removed from shelves damaged. Currently, about 1,200 cartons with a forty volumes per carton have been completed and assembled in the main reading room. Books in poor condition are already placed in separate boxes that will pass to restore the unity of the processing centre of cultural disaster.

Short-term action plan

The reopening of the library is scheduled for 1 June 2010; the repairs should begin this week for a period of fifteen days. The delivery the shelves of the EPFL library (Switzerland) should take place between 15 and 20 May. This issue will also include all the material useful in cleaning and monitoring of collections during this operation. A tutorial for dust control method to use will be sent.

The documents badly damaged and the precious collections will be sent in the acid treatment centre since it's opening in late June.

The National Library and National Archives may propose to the Ministry of Culture as a guideline for the Haitian press and the basic documents of the State are made on acid-free permanent paper, guaranteeing a longer life.

The NBH, the Directorate of Books and Fokal will establish a network of libraries jointly with the support of IFLA to ensure quick access to the reading public.

Mid-term action plan

The digitization of the NBH file manual and the scan of the bibliographical dictionary of Haitian Max Bissainthe (Washington, Scarecrow Press, 1973) can be an excellent starting point to a union catalogue of the Haiti libraries.

In brief...

Dimensions

45000 volumes

annual increase of
the collections :
300 titles et 15
linear meters of
periodicals

inside hygrometry
rate, on
11.04.2010 : 63%,
26°C

Projects

dusting and
reopening of the
BNH

Bibliobusses

Collective catalog

network building
between historical
libraries

Other documents

plans of the library

see also: § *national
network of public
libraries*

Snapshots...



BNH Reading room

View of a courtyard at the BNH

Damaged shelves

Mechanical damages on a bound periodic

April 2010 Mon. 12 th			
	<i>Library St. Louis de Gonzague</i>		

The library building has survived while the nearby school collapsed. The temporary classrooms were installed in wooden shacks with tin roof suited to the climate.

In the library, the shelves have fallen and Father Eugene assisted by personnel of the NL just opposite put 80% of the books in cartons with a detailed inventory of the contents of cartons.

This library contains 13,000 books and has computerized catalogue on a database (Access). The old journals are listed on an Excel list. The restoration of the building was estimated at U.S. \$ 20,000. The collections require a big cleaning and some works of restoration. The shelves should be replaced.

The dust removal will be organized after one of the NL with the assistance of staff of the NL.

We have, like in the NL, took the measures and established the precise list of equipment.

Visit and inventory

The collection represents about 700ml for about 13,000 books including the oldest dating back to the 16th century. The collection has a computerized catalogue in Access for monographs and in Excel for periodicals.

During the reorganisation of the library in 1994, the air conditioning was considered but proved too costly. Previously vents under the roof allowed a circular release of air but they were blocked to prevent pigeon droppings.

The 80% of the collection are on paper with high acid and weak.

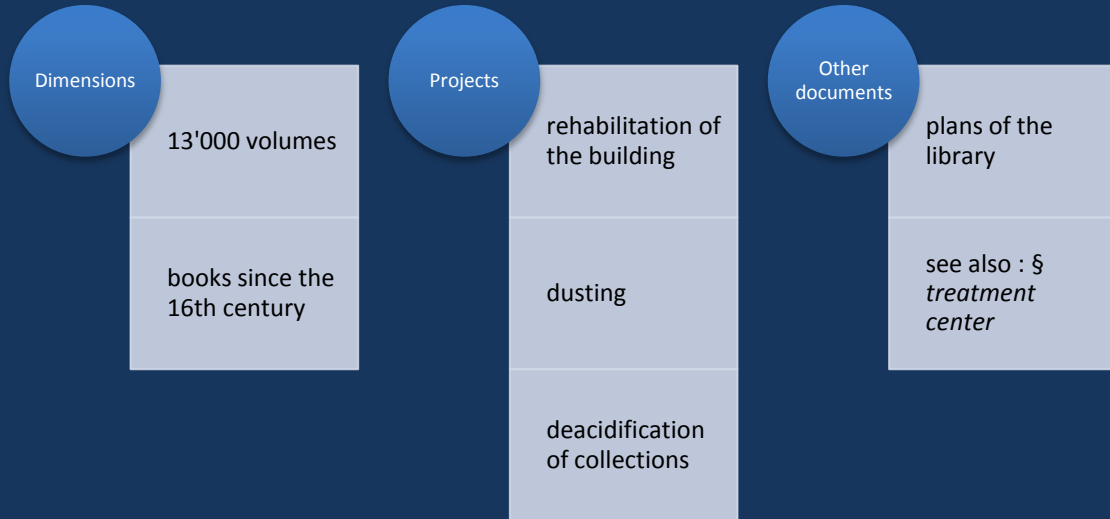
Short-Term Action

Once the building restored, 700ml of shelving will be installed.

A complete dust removal of the collection will be made in the wake of dust from the National Library before the reinstallation of the collections during June.

In a second step, the deacidification will be conducted in the treatment centre.

In brief...



Snapshots...



Reading room of the library from the mezzanine

Collections of the library are stored into boxes

Damaged shelves

Françoise Thybulle and frère Ernest

April 2010 Tues. 13 th			
	<i>National network of public libraries</i>		

Public libraries are managed by the National Library, the Directorate of book (CLAC) and Fokal for the entire Haitian territory.

Because of the damages, the rapid establishment of a network of libraries, in parallel with the provisional reconstruction of the destroyed libraries, allow the resumption of the public reading in the country.

To do this we explored the two main roads to put in place over Port-au-Prince and the road centre.

Bookmobile Northern Circuit

On this road damage is lighter. Shortly before Arcahaie, a cultural centre of the CLAC must be totally rebuilt. On the other hand, the library of Arcahaie is in good condition and works to accommodate the larger audience than usual.

Bookmobile Southern Circuit

It is the road leading to the epicentre of the earthquake. It is passable only with a 4x4 if we want to ensure a regular service.

Léogane Library

The building of this library, in the city most affected, must be demolished but the collections have been saved. It will be located temporarily in tents to resume service as quickly as possible home loan and provide the entertainment before the construction of a wooden structure. A biweekly bicycle distribution is planned. A temporary wooden building as temporary schools is scheduled today. Such a construction cost about U.S. \$ 12,000 each.

Petit Goave Library

The building was totally destroyed and razed but the collections put in cardboard and stored in a room in the building of the local police. An agreement was reached to allow the library to locate and return to duty within the precincts of the college in a temporary building the model of temporary schools. The site has made available has been measured (20m/25m)

Visit the Fokal Library in Port-au-Prince

The Library is in working condition. Only the youth section and the bridge who drive to it must be repaired. The work will be undertaken quickly.

Short-term projects

During a working session with the NL, the Directorate for books and Fokal about libraries situation, bookmobiles circuits were determined (one north, one south, one centre and two for Port-au-Prince with Internet access). These libraries will be equipped with the 14,000 volumes received by Fokal from BSF.

Installing and running the system will be achieved through cooperation between the Directorate of the book (CLAC Centre Reading and Cultural Activities), National Library and Fokal with the assistance of a librarian for the bookmobile from abroad. These libraries also contain an exhibition of graphic art museums. A local sponsor (Digicel) could be found. A shipment of comic books in high demand and dictionaries Robert would be necessary.

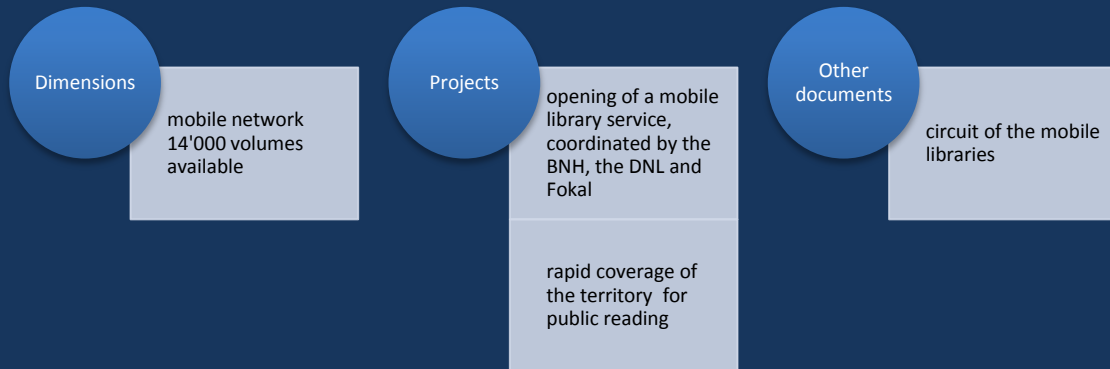
Help ACURIL - IFLA LAC

After our mission to Haiti, during our stay, we met in Santo Domingo on April 17 a delegation ACURIL and IFLA LAC who presented his program to support libraries in Haiti and the public reading (campaign donations of books and books for babies, campaign pairing with Haitian libraries ACURIL June 10 day of support for Haiti, raising campaign comics, home of librarians in libraries Haitian Caribbean for training).

When ACURIL Congress to be held in Santo Domingo in early June, a special place is devoted to supporting Haiti. Financial support will be obtained by including the sale of t-shirts specially created for this purpose.

ACURIL assured the Blue Shield of support especially promising to provide price lists of library materials that could develop in the Caribbean.

In brief...



Snapshots...



Place where the municipal library was build, it was 100% destroyed by the Earthquake

View inside the municipal library of Léogane, the building has to be destroyed

Obstacle on the road between Port-au-Prince and Léogane because of the collapse of a bridge

Place outside the library of Léogane, where a tent for animations will be installed

April 2010 Thurs. 15 th			
	<i>Civil status Administration Haiti</i>		

Our visit to the National Archives began in a building loan in emergency since January this year to deal with countless requests for issuance of vital records that arrived at the National Archives. In Haiti, in fact, the civil status is managed by the National Archives for all the country. The Director of the National Archives has taken measures to protect civil status records and to handle the influx of applications.

Jean-Wilfrid Bertrand, with the help of his colleagues, found a building that was equipped for emergency preservation storage to house the civil status registries of all departments of Haiti. All efforts are being turned to meet this emergency: more staff, opening of new spaces for users, etc. The National Archives have not spared efforts to cope with some 3,000 applications for issuing copies of civil status records they receive daily.

The building, therefore, is located in the district of Delmas. Here are the workspaces, the preservation storage, digitization units and servers dedicated only to the civil status application.

Progress of a request for copies of civil status records

The public may submit a request to post offices across the country or come directly at the desks of the National Archives located in the Bicentenaire quarter. There, three offices, dedicated to filing applications, have been installed in premises made available to the Archives, in front of their own building slightly weakened by the earthquake. Two new offices should open in the coming weeks: the development works and wiring of these rooms are in progress.

Opposite this building, a long queue on the pavement: people waiting for issuing certified copies. This room is very noisy and crowded. A security service is to contain the crowd. Of the two new rooms mentioned above, one should also be devoted to the delivery of requested documents.

Facilities and staffing

Since the earthquake, the National Archives works with 180 people. They have to treat every day 3,000 requests for acts over a period from 1950 to today.

Civil status is about 17 linear km records. There are also nine departmental deposits. Faced with this challenge, Mr. Bertrand has decided to launch a partnership between local administrations; employees of the pension administration for example, currently without offices, are assigned to the Archives to build teams that deal with these documents requests.

When transferring the records of the Bicentennial in Delmas, they had to reclassify the collection arrived in bulk.

The CIGEC - a management application civil status record

Computerized Management System of the State Civil (in French CIGEC) is an application designed by the Archives and supported by the Association internationale des Maires Francophones (AIMF). It allows managing collections, to analyze the records, to include digital reproductions of instruments issued and digitized. Finally, this application enables centralized management of all these documents which are of vital importance for a country. During our visit, the AIMF mission was going to reestablish the network between all archives sites so that the civil status can take place in good conditions. Public infrastructure is strongly affected, while this work takes strategic dimensions and is of an urgent nature. Some personal of the archives who had lost their computers have to reuse old typewriters that luckily survived.

Needs and recommendations

- Packaging of civil status records: adapted to current use but also a long-term preservation
- Restore most used registers

In brief...

Key figures

17 linear km

180 persons
affected to this
service

2 monthes only to
restart the activity
and reopen National
Archives

Projects

digitization of acts
and manual tagging

opening of new
reading rooms to
accommodate
public

networking of all
sites to share the
SIGEC application
(on progress)

Other documents

see also: § *National
Archives of Haiti*

Snapshots...



Jean-Wilfrid Bertrand in the new building where civil status registries are now stored

Digitization units

Queue of people waiting for the delivery of their certified copies of acts

Counters where the documents are delivered (from the staff space)

April 2010 Thurs. 15 th			
	<i>National Archives of Haiti</i>		

Our visit to the National Archives, as said beforehand, began with the dedicated local management of civil status. Jean Wilfred Bertrand then allowed us to visit the historic building known as the National Archives located at Poste-Marchand.

This section will therefore focus more on the description of the activity of management of historical archives of the country and the current records of public institutions.

Visit Poste-Marchand

This historic building dates from the 1930s and was originally intended to house a market hall. Its architecture has been subsequently modified to meet the needs of its new function: the national archives. Walls have been erected, a slab added to create additional floors and roofing of the building has been isolated.

After the earthquake, the only structural damage observed refer to a portion of the surrounding wall that collapsed. It is being rebuilt. Inside, a part of the insulation of the roof fell and ten lines of shelvers were overturned like dominoes. Following the fall of the wall, looters broke into the building: a few thefts of materials have been identified.

The building is already the subject of ongoing internal consolidation: resurfacing stairs, workshops and restoration of binding and construction of an extension of a few meters on the right side of the building.

During our visit, we discovered the workspaces, but also those dedicated to the preservation of documents. Collections generally require a large-scale dust operation. On the first floor, shelves' fall caused significant mechanical damages to the documents and records. Finally, many boxes were placed in the emergency on the first floor waiting to be identified, sorted and reconditioned. The showroom has been refurbished to accommodate civil status registration and act workshop.

Needs and recommendations

- Roof insulation
- Replacement of damaged shelves

- Dust and full reconditioning collections
- Deacidifying collections
- Classification and packing of archives saved
- Training in handling documents and intensification of the summary binding of registers (records)

The current archives and history departments and public institutions

Lacks of capacity to receive documents in the building Poste-Marchand, the archives of central government have not been the subject of deposits since the 1950s. The disaster of 12 January has been very damaging to the current records of many departments and institutions whose buildings have collapsed, but also to the historical archives that they still stored.

In the days and weeks that followed the earthquake, some departments have been targeted by deliberate destruction of documents. The media have made the echoes of such abuses such as those of the Department of Justice, according to them, committed by prisoners who found themselves in freedom. The National Archives have assured us that many sites had already been the subjects of rescues of documents that have been stored away. We ignore for now the volume of those rescued collections. These institutions include the Ministry of Justice, the Palais de Justice, and the Ministry of the Interior, Teleco, DGI and the BNC.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has been given special treatment that we present later in this report.

Needs and recommendations

- Processing and reprocessing of archives collected in the centre of treatment of cultural disaster
- Return of current records to the Ministries who produced them, to ensure the recovery of their activity and help to guarantee the continuity of public service of the State

- Continuation of the recovery of documents on sites which are still subject to excavation; warning the authorities in charge of these operations to ensure properly recover the remaining documents
- Preparation of progress payments of historical archives department at the National Archives

Projects of National Archives

Our interview with Mr. Bertrand and his staff was also an opportunity to discuss projects that were ongoing for several months on the Archives of Haiti and, most of them were in the process of reaching after sometimes long process to get them to accept authorities. As we stated in our introduction, it is important, in our view, to take into account these projects in the reconstruction programs and aid.

Archives City

They are building a real heritage center for the country, bringing together the historical archives, but also other heritage collections, including some to constitute, such as audiovisual collections. This place will be a place from which also "will start the first cultural industries of the country" according to the Director of Archives. The site on which would be implemented this city has been chosen and the architectural competition was launched when the disaster occurred.

In the reconstruction plans, Jean-Wilfrid Bertrand will revisit this project in terms of what will be retained for the development of other ministries and public buildings. It is therefore possible that this project be subject to some adjustments, but considering the rate of occupancy of buildings of Archives, it appears that the construction of a new building to be a priority in the reconstruction plans. This building could be dedicated to the conservation of archives as well as intermediate records or semi-permanent public institutions.

Administrative Records Management Programme (PGDA)

This programme aims to establish a real integrated policy of records management within the public institutions of the country. The National Archives will be responsible for facilitating the programme and make it operational for the information and administrative documents will be better managed and public services optimized.

As we were told by Mr Bertrand, this programme cannot be implemented without some changes to the legislation and by-laws.

Revision and updating of legislation and regulation archival

The current archival legislation should be revised to take into account, for example, electronic records, the cadastre or the notarial archives. These documents do not have yet specific management rules.

The Archives will also initiate a phase of decentralization. Some deposits already exist in departments where the double records of clerk's office, hospital records and decentralized government agencies records are kept. The new rules will ensure the sharing of responsibilities for the management of these archives.

We also invite all donors who will provide in the future of bilateral or multilateral projects to support capacity building of selected public institutions to take into account the requirements for archive management in the long term archival regulations in force in this country and ensure the necessary coherence of sustainable production and management of documents and information produced by the Haitian public organizations.

Sound and Audiovisual Archives

As Jean Wilfrid Bertrand confirmed, this country is overwhelmingly a country of oral tradition. For the moment there is no initiative for developing an audiovisual memory of this country, or even to collect oral history. There are some collections of photographic archives: they are essentially private. This will constitute one of the challenges of this reconstruction phase.

Initial and continuing training in the field of document engineering

All these projects will require the recruitment of qualified professionals to ensure their implementation. However, a major problem in Haiti, is not really training for its staff: number of institutions willing to send people abroad for training, while continuing to receive their salaries sometimes. The real problem is that, proportionately speaking, few trainees do not end up on Haitian labour market after such training.

In Haiti, to date, there are occasional trainings for archiving in business schools (e.g. INAGHEI - National Institute of Administration and Management - International Studies) and some training for professionals working.

The project already under study, which was approved by the rector, is the creation of a training school in Port-au-Prince, at the university in the field of *document engineering*. It will provide a common initial training and a course of specialization depending on whether students wish to move to the archive, documentation, libraries or audiovisual sector.

The school will also develop continuing training for staff in function.

The curricula of this school are to be defined. This project is fundamental to ensure initial and continuing training of professionals who will be able of coordinating a network of archives and documentary institutions in the country, besides the attractiveness of such training for surrounding countries.

In brief...



Snapshots...



Damaged shelves after the earthquake

False ceilings and damaged insulation plates

Reinforcement of roof structures in the Poste-Marchand building

Registers kept at the National Archives that need to be dust

April 2010 Sun. 11 th			
	<i>Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Haiti</i>		

The building of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has completely collapsed, leaving all the documents in the rubble. A response team was organized around Jean-Euphèle Milce, who has saved a large part of these records by transferring them to an adjoining building of the Ministry, which was spared, from total destruction. We visited it with him. He continues to handle this project and to mobilize volunteers to help in this mission.

Visit Building



1 – Building where the rescued diplomatic records are stored

During our stay, an important work of rebuilding and classification summary has been initiated. The archives are located on two floors but the climatic conditions on the ground floor as well as water leaks have forced the team of volunteers to move a maximum of collections on the first floor.

According to our measurements, the temperature and humidity rose to 11 April:

- 88°F / 59% in the first floor;
- 82°F / 63% on the ground floor.

We estimate that 2.4 km linear size of collections stored in this building, which will be treated. Some documents have suffered extensive damage and will be transferred to the treatment center. Others may be dusted, sorted and repackaged locally.

These dimensions apply to both current records and historical intermediaries records and a large typology of documents from diplomatic passports to photographic files through the library of the ministry of foreign affairs.

Some work must be undertaken quickly to secure the premises and provide acceptable working conditions:

- restore power to the building (generator) and ensure that the power pole nearby is restored or moved, the latter threatening to fall at any time;
- restore water supply to ensure that volunteers can have all the conveniences of work, even the most elementary;
- seal the windows on the ground floor;
- removals of existing toilets, to temporarily replace by chemical toilets
- provision of a container for temporary storage of records to permit the realization of interior

The building is located on the site of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; he will most likely be assigned permanently to the conservation of these documents. Facilities will therefore help to establish the service here Haitian diplomatic archives. Negotiations with the Ministry itself will determine whether they wish to dedicate solely to historical archives and / or intermediaries. This will have implications on possible construction of an extension of this building, in addition to those provided for its development. These discussions are currently underway.

Proposed Action Plan

1. Sorting and grouping of current records: identifying producers and inventorying contents of these documents to enable prompt delivery of these documents to the departments concerned;

2. Mission planning for the work ahead for the reorganization of the building and organizing the sort of historical archives
3. Books: bringing them together in one room for inventorying and treatment
4. First campaign refurbishments urgent air circulation, fluid supply and energy
5. Old shelves of the National Library when its new mobile shelves shall have been delivered: these shelves allow the provisional ordering of archives already processed
6. Send archive boxes (type DIMAB and conservation) and acid-free folders
7. Installation of a container located in the courtyard
8. Installing a dust treatment unit before the final packaging of documents. Some sets will also be decontaminated because they present insect infestations.
9. Historical Archives: reordering of existing archival boxes (already listed), sorting and filing other documents in sequential bulk. Their detailed screening will be undertaken later, when the service will have the necessary infrastructure. The sending of classification model schemes would be welcome.

In brief...



Snapshots...



Damaged document within the diplomatic archives

Room dedicated to documents processing

Jean-Euphèle Milcé, who managed the rescue operations of the diplomatic archives

Remains of the Ministry on the same site, totally destroyed

April 2010 Thurs. 15 th			
	<i>Museum collections public and private</i>		

The museum collections have not been visited during the mission because of lack of time. We met during our review meetings ICOM the head of Haiti, Mr. Harold Gaspard, with whom we were able to maintain the proposed treatment centre of cultural disaster.

In many collections, including paintings, are held by private persons. Often, these collections have been damaged and Mr. Gaspard drew our attention to the fact that the treatment centre should reflect this situation and, since it is the preservation of heritage collections in the country, to establish procedures that can guarantee the return of property once treated their owners.

The major problem is that these collections are none inventory. Then we have an inventory and probably digital reproduction of private property, which will enter the processing centre to determine the contract management of those assets. This will ensure full restitution to the owner's collections deposited in full transparency.

For more information on the state of conservation of museum collections, see the Cori Wegener (US Blue Shield) report :

http://www.uscbs.org/documents/uscbs_haiti_trip_report.pdf

The centre for treatment of cultural heritage after disaster

Update action plan with regard to information collected on site and meetings and interviews with key persons concerned, namely the heads of institutions affected or collections damaged by the earthquake.

Reminders project

The processing centre of cultural property affected is a project to salvage collections affected during the earthquake of January 2010. It will include specialized facilities for emergency treatment and some restore operations of archival documents, books and other cultural objects (paintings, museum objects, etc.) to be extracted from the rubble and damaged buildings.

The basis of this treatment program is to create synergy between the work of international Blue Shield volunteers and Haitian volunteers working in affected cultural institutions. This will allow a transfer of skills and know-how on disaster handling of goods and training scale that will allow cultural institutions to improve their resilience in coming years.

This mission was to take the information to the ultimate implementation of this project by going on field visits to proposed sites for this purpose and finally prepare the installation mission of this centre.

Visits

April 13th, 2010 – Haiti Habitat Field - Visit of ground made available for this project by Habitat Haiti

It is through FOKAL we had knowledge of this field and we were able to develop this project. We have visited it with Mr Frederick Mangonès, the head of Haiti Habitat, Ms Françoise Thybulle, Elizabeth Pierre-Louis and MM. Jean-Wilfrid Bertrand, Harold Gaspard and Patrick Vilaire, architect in charge of work on this site for the establishment of the center.

The aim is to equip the field with standard shipping containers equipped for temporary storage of cultural properties with all the facilities for storage in the best possible conditions. Furthermore, it is planned to install the workspace itself.

The fence of this field is being repaired: it will be reinforced by barbed wire. UNESCO provides funding for this operation. The ground has already been leveled once. Nine 20-foot containers are already on site, one has already been repaired. As a guide, after a night of heavy rain, we identified at 10:00 hrs am a relative humidity of 63% inside the container.

Patrick Vilaire made two projects of air conditioned containers that he introduced to us during our visit. The first one was to equip the container with an air conditioning system. But he preferred the other, more suitable to local conditions, which involves construction of a natural air circulation system within the containers.

This land is adapted to the needs of the emergency treatment centre for cultural heritage and storage after treatment. Because of the access road only the use of containers of 20 feet will be possible.

We have taken measures and have composed a list of material to be imported and a list of equipment that will be in Haiti for the fitting-out of such containers, together with Patrick Vilaire. Relevant materials will be sent with the containers so that they can be made and installed quickly.

Visit of a building housing offices of the United Nations

The second mission of Cori Wegener revealed an intact building still available for rent, located in the Bourdon district. We were able to visit it with Mr. Robert Taylor, a civilian working for the U.S. Navy. He was accompanied by an architect and Mr. Samir Handal, intermediate with the owner, who took us around the premises.

This building is part of a set of three buildings which itself seems intact: the others have very large cracks. It is located on a very fragile spot and is surrounded by buildings to be restored. We visited all the floors of this building and almost all its rooms. According to our findings, the premises contain asbestos in the false ceilings. No guarantee could be provided to us what the minimum loads are that can be borne by the slabs of the upper floors. It is finally noted that these places are rented at a prohibitive price: U.S. \$ 12 / m² per month, for an area of 3000 m².

April 15th, 2010 - Visit of two other buildings

Thanks to Jean Wilfrid Bertrand, we visited two other buildings which could host the treatment center. Mr. Bertrand, when looking for the fourth building of the National Archives, had already visited them.

The first is located at Delmas 19: the premises were intended to house a private clinic. Spaces are distributed in a manner to permit the organization of such a centre and the spaces needed can easily be rearranged. They are flexible and are distributed on three floors (plus basement). The premises are new. It could be used as the place of treatment and / or housing of international volunteers, but could not accommodate the number originally expected.

The second building we visited is located at Delmas 11.

It served as administrative offices and the environment is very secure. It faces the Canadian Embassy and the walls are reinforced with barbed son? Visiting the rooms inside the three-story building clearly shows that it would make an ideal candidate for housing for volunteers and international volunteers. Its proximity to the storage site would reduce travel and would enable to build the treatment centre on the same ground as that which will store the processed collections.

Arrangement processing centre

The solution adopted at the end of this mission is the installation of the centre on the ground in Haiti Habitat, which will be secured by the national armed forces. It will be built on the model of wooden shacks mounted currently in Port-au-Prince for schools and some government offices. The spaces will be developed to ensure good air circulation and reduce the effects of heat and humidity.

It would be possible to organize workspaces on the site appropriately. A solution can also be considered for its water supply and to provide meals to people who work there every day.

Coordinating treatment centre

Following the meetings with our colleagues, we have found over the days the solution that meets the challenges that will be related to the management of such a treatment centre. The difference between public and private collections, the responsibilities associated with the handling of prestigious collections, confidential documents and for current records, etc.

The coordination of this treatment center will be awarded to a consortium of partners who will have access to these facilities. The consortium will have its own legal personality and will be in the form of an association. Like our colleagues want, this association is the National Committee of the Blue Shield Haitian, Haiti correspondent Blue Shield International. This consortium form will allow both private and public partners to address their collections in this centre. This structure will, hopefully, be sustainable and will allow all players to know and be able to respond effectively in a future disaster.

Colleagues are willing to pool their strengths to make this project possible. Moreover they obtained the consent of Ms. Magali Comeau Denis, Special Advisor to Madam Minister of Culture and Communication of the Republic of Haiti. Our attention was drawn to the need for the site itself, to have a shared management between a representative of the Ministry of Culture and Communication and a representative of the consortium.

In the framework of international cooperation and the MCC, there is still no cluster for cultural property. Mrs Magali Comeau Denis will ask the highest authorities of the Haitian State to write to Mr. Ban Ki Moon in this direction. Meanwhile, faced with this gap in the organization of international cooperation and to make sure the equipment arrives safely, it is decided by common agreement that shipments of equipment would be via St Domingo and then by road to Port-au-Prince. Transport companies regularly make trips between the two countries.

Arrivals for Blue Shield will be exempt from customs duties in Haiti. A consortium of Haitian delegation mission to Santo Domingo received the same exemption from the Dominican Republic. This agreement is being formalized. Anything that can be purchased locally will be. On the other hand, the panels for the construction of huts at the treatment centre will be imported because of the excessive deforestation of Haiti, which adds disaster risk associated with landslides.

The staff of Haitian institutions will be seconded from their institutions to collaborate and form the processing centre. These are the directions of institutions that validate these detachments. The Haitian processing center that will make a shuttle available will organize the transportation of staff.

Participants at the meeting signed an agreement in principle for the creation of the Blue Shield of Haiti. We shared the statutes of the French Blue Shield and of the COSADOCA, which serve as inspiration for their own statutes. The existence of the Blue Shield of Haiti can be validated at the Blue Shield at the international meeting of May 19th in Paris.

We will prepare a plan of steps that will be implemented after validation and additions by the Haitian consortium, which will be formed quickly.

The consortium and the state, supported by the Blue Shield International, will jointly manage the treatment centre. The state will ensure the safety of the centre.

Assembly of the Center

In terms of deadlines, we reasonably believe we can send a first mission of volunteers for the assembly of the centre in the second part of June. This team will be composed mainly of people who had to work in a similar structure to arrange the workspace and support the start of processing chains. The first training and communications skills will begin at the same time to ensure continuity of work beyond the first mission.

The first hardware necessary for the development and operation of this centre will be shipped during the month of June to be present for the installation.

Partnership Research

This project has already received support or statements of support from several partners, local and international. We are currently seeking other partners, be they financial or professional, to ensure the start and the regular activity of this centre. Any offer of help is welcome, whether sponsorship for equipment, aid to maritime transport and aviation partners to send people overseas on official business or just to support local activities.

Snapshots...



Reinforcement of the wall of the Habitat site in Haiti

Within a repaired container to be fitted for the reception of treated cultural properties

Visit of the former United Nations building in Bourdon

Building whose rental is expected for volunteers' accommodation

Visits schedule and persons met during the mission

11.04.2010	Arrival at Port-au-Prince, visit of the city with Jean-Euphèle Milcé Visit of the Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs – Jean-Euphèle Milcé
12.04.2010	Visit of the National Library – Mrs Françoise Thybulle Visit of the Saint-Louis de Gonzague Library – frère Ernest Visit of the Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs – Jean-Euphèle Milcé
13.04.2010	Visit of the Haïti Habitat site: Frédéric Mangonès, Patrick Vilaire, Françoise Thybulle, Jean-Wilfrid Bertrand, Elizabeth Pierre-Louis, Harold Gaspard. Visit of the municipal library of Arcahaie – Françoise Thybulle Visit of the former United-Nations' building in Bourdon : Robert Taylor, Samir Handal.
14.04.2010	Visit of the libraries of Léogane and Petit-Goave Visit of FOKAL's library – work meeting : Françoise Thybulle (BNH) Harold Gaspard (ICOM Haiti) Emmelie Prophete (DNL) Elizabeth Pierre-Louis (FOKAL)
15.04.2010	Visit of the National Archives' buildings : Jean-Wilfrid Bertrand, Jean-Claude Vilton Visit of the Trinity Church's site Visit of buildings for volunteers accomodation and installation

of the treatment center

Meeting with Mrs Comeau-Denis, special Representant of
Madam the Minister of Culture and Communication

Synthesis meeting: Françoise Thybulle, Jean-Wilfrid Bertrand,
Harold Gaspard, Lorraine Mangonès, Michaëlle Senatus

16.04.2010

Departure for Santo-Domingo

17.04.2010

Meeting in Santo-Domingo with ACURIL's executive board
