



SUCCESS STORY

USAID INVITES PUBLIC TO DISCOVER COMPONENTS OF ITS ENVIRONMENTAL PROJECT IN HAITI'S WATERSHEDS AND TO GAGE ITS IMPACT ON COMMUNITIES



Photo: DAI

Producer groups such as AJTAPP (above with honey hives) were very successful at showcasing their goods and marketing them to the public.



Photo: DAI

US ambassador Janet A. Sanderson (to the right) and DEED agronomist Lochard Narcisse (middle right) exchanging a few words with yam and fruit producers from KOREPA.

USAID's Economic Development for a Sustainable Environment (DEED) project focuses on environmentally sound economic development in two endangered watersheds in Haiti: Limbé, in the north, and Montrouis in the west. DEED held its first public event on May 20th: an Open Door forum attended by the US Ambassador and the USAID Deputy Mission Director, along with several Haitian government dignitaries and local authorities. The event's dual purpose was to introduce DEED to the general public and to share its accomplishments to date with beneficiary groups and multi-sector partners.

While the main event featured speeches by various officials, producer groups showed off their different products to the press, to visitors and to public participants throughout the day. Representatives from DEED supported associations KOREPA, CUPEC, CML, OPD-8, APWOLEM and AJTAPP proudly showcased products from their yam farming, vegetable gardening, cacao farming, milk production, bamboo handicrafts and honey production. Visuals and documentation from prominent project activities in the field were also displayed, grouped under the following themes: biodiversity conservation, agricultural production, enterprise development, and mapping for land-use planning.

The forum took place at a hotel in Montrouis, at close proximity to DEED's regional office. Towards the end, VIP guests and press members were accompanied to a site visit in "Etang Bois Neuf". There, the Secretary of State for Animal Production and the US Ambassador both publicly addressed the importance of protecting this lake for all the resources it holds and provides.

Within the framework of a potential collaboration with *Fondation Rose & Blanc*, representatives of this foundation then took part in a community meeting initiated by DEED in Bois Neuf. At last, Sweet Mickey, Haiti's best-know contemporary *compas* singer who is a founder of *Fondation Rose & Blanc*, used his crowd appeal to convince community members that the lake needs to be managed collaboratively by the different stakeholders.