American Red Cross

Talking Points

International Services

Haiti Earthquake – February 1, 2010

Red Cross relief supplies continue to arrive, and more food, water and relief supplies are reaching survivors in the capital city and outlying areas, although the needs remain great.

- The American Red Cross and its partners are now producing almost 1 million litres of water per day, enough for 185,000 people to receive 5.4 litres per person per day. To date, the global Red Cross network has distributed nearly 4.2 million litres of water in 115 sites. In addition, Red Cross teams are working to scale up latrine construction as quickly as possible.
- Approximately 600 patients are being seen per day, and the psychological impact of the disaster is becoming more apparent.
- As of January 29, more than 56 flights carrying Red Cross aid from around the world have arrived in Haiti.
- Shelter remains an urgent need. While the Red Cross works to provide a range of assistance, we are assessing needs and developing a strategy to meet long-term housing reconstruction needs.
- REACTIVE ONLY: The deep community presence of the Haitian Red Cross has allowed Red Cross responders to distribute aid in an orderly and efficient manner. They visit the community in advance to alert them that aid is coming and vouchers are then handed out. Then the Red Cross returns to hand out supplies at a pre-determined location to recipients who wait in line to receive them.

The American Red Cross has spent or committed more than $67 million to meet the most urgent needs of earthquake survivors.

- During this phase of the relief operation, the American Red Cross is focusing on three areas – food, clean drinking water and other relief items such as hygiene kits, blankets, tarps, sleeping mats, tents and water containers. The relief items are helping more than 10,000 families (50,000 people) to date – with plans to increase this number.
- The American Red Cross is also meeting the health needs of Haitian survivors and providing support to Haitian families in Haiti and the U.S. This includes providing relief supplies, shipment of blood products, family linking services and providing Red Cross volunteers as Creole-speaking interpreters on the USNS Comfort hospital ship.
- To meet urgent needs, 79 percent of the funds spent or committed by the American Red Cross have been for food and water; 18 percent have been for shelter; and the rest have been for health and family services.
- REACTIVE ONLY: A pre-recovery assessment team from the global Red Cross network met in Panama this weekend. The team is meeting with the Haitian government and key development partners like the World Bank, Inter American Development Bank and the UN in order to develop a recovery plan for the medium and long-term.

The American Red Cross is in Haiti as a part of the broader and coordinated Red Cross and Red Crescent network.

- More than 500 Red Cross and Red Crescent workers from at least 22 countries

around the world are in Haiti supporting thousands of local Red Cross volunteers. More than 100 of these workers are representing the American Red Cross (including the Creole interpreters on the USNS Comfort).

- Each Red Cross society team has its own roles and expertise, and working together, we are a very powerful engine for relief and recovery.
- Emergency health kits for 30,000 people have also been distributed across the capital city by Haitian Red Cross volunteers.
- Local volunteers are providing first aid support and emotional support for traumatized survivors. A special area has been established at each medical center where volunteers are comforting children, including many too young to understand what happened.
- This is already the largest single-country relief operation in global Red Cross history in terms of emergency relief teams deployed. The number of teams in or en route to Haiti is greater than the number that responded to the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, which spanned 14 countries.

Because of the generosity of donors, people in Haiti will receive more than immediate relief — they will receive resources, support and training from the Red Cross that will help them recover and rebuild in the years ahead.

- It is clear that what took minutes to destroy will take many years and the collective support from governments and relief agencies across the world to help mend. The American Red Cross is working in close coordination with other responding organizations and will undoubtedly collaborate on and support long-term recovery projects.
- The American Red Cross is applying experience gained following the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami. For the past five years, we have been working with partners to construct water and sanitation systems, providing emotional support and healthcare, building shelters, restoring livelihoods, and preparing communities for the next disaster. We plan to offer a similar level of support in close collaboration with Red Cross partners and other international and local aid organizations in Haiti.
- REACTIVE ONLY: Since the earthquake struck in Haiti on January 12, the American Red Cross has raised approximately $203 million (as of 4:00 p.m. Monday, February 1) for the Haiti relief and recovery efforts. More than $31 million has been pledged through mobile giving.
- People can donate in support of the relief effort in Haiti at www.redcross.org or by calling 1-800-REDCROSS. Mobile donors can text "Haiti" to 90999 to make a $10 contribution.
- A $10 donation made through mobile giving would provide a first aid kit equipped with enough ointment and bandages for a Red Cross responder to treat 15-20 injured earthquake survivors.
- Alternatively, $10 can provide a family with two water cans to store clean drinking water, basic first aid supplies or a blanket appropriate to the climate.