American Red Cross

Talking Points

International Services

Haiti Earthquake – February 3, 2010

The humanitarian aid pipeline is opening wider and wider and logistical problems are getting smaller and smaller, but the needs in Haiti are still immense. Red Cross teams are on the ground assessing ways to not only meet the immediate needs but also provide long-term recovery assistance, such as restarting the local market economy and addressing housing needs.

- Four Red Cross warehouses (two in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic and two in Port-au-Prince, Haiti) are open and operating at full capacity.
- The Red Cross is now producing 1 million liters of water per day, enough for 185,000 people to receive 5.4 liters per person per day. In addition, Red Cross teams are working to scale up latrine construction as quickly as possible.
- To date, Red Cross distributions of food and relief items (blankets, kitchen sets, hygiene kits, buckets, water containers, laundry soap/detergent, and mosquito nets) have reached nearly 20,000 families (or 100,000 people).
- To date, more than 64 flights carrying Red Cross aid from around the world have arrived in Santo Domingo and Haiti.
- Shelter remains an urgent need. The Red Cross is working to provide a range of immediate shelter assistance, and we also 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 nearly $78 million to meet the most urgent needs of earthquake survivors.

- To meet urgent needs, 71 percent of the funds spent or committed by the American Red Cross have been for food and water; 20 percent have been for shelter; and the rest are for health and family services.

The Red Cross is working to help survivors with needed health care to address community health needs and the emerging threat of the spread of infectious disease.

- A major vaccination program will begin this Friday to vaccinate 150,000 children, ages 0 – 7, against measles, mumps, rubella, diphtheria, pertussis (whooping cough) and tetanus. Local and international Red Cross teams will join UNICEF and the World Health Organization (WHO) to visit settlements throughout the city to vaccinate children. Along with vaccinations, the Red Cross will be teaching basic health skills, such as proper hand washing, waste disposal and safe food and water storage. Red Cross emotional support teams will also be on hand to help children with their emotional trauma caused by the earthquake.
- At the combined six Red Cross health facilities, an average of 1,200 patients are being treated per day.

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

- The American Red Cross has more than 100 relief specialists and volunteers helping with the relief efforts in Haiti (including Creole interpreters on the USNS Comfort hospital ship). In total, more than 500 Red Cross and Red Crescent workers from at least 30 countries around the world are in Haiti working with thousands of Haitian Red Cross volunteers in areas such as health, logistics, relief supply distribution.
- Each Red Cross society team has its own roles and expertise on the ground. Working together, the global Red Cross network provides a very powerful engine for relief and recovery.
- This is already the largest single-country relief operation in global Red Cross history in terms of emergency response teams deployed. The number of teams in 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 $231 million (as of 4:00 p.m. Wednesday, February 3) 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 would provide a first aid kit equipped with enough ointment and bandages for a Red Cross responder to treat 15-20 injured earthquake survivors. A $10 donation also can provide a family with two water cans to store clean drinking water, basic first aid supplies or a blanket appropriate to the climate.