



**American  
Red Cross**

## HAITI: EARTHQUAKES

January 21, 2010



On January 12, a series of earthquakes ranging from magnitude 6.5 to 7.3 struck Haiti. Since then, survivors have lived in daily fear of aftershocks, the most severe occurring yesterday. Urgent needs of survivors are emergency medical care, food, water and shelter, but logistics bottlenecks continue to hinder relief operations. Although the Red Cross and other relief agencies are reaching new earthquake survivors daily, the needs continue to outweigh available resources on the ground. The American Red Cross is working with our partners in the global Red Cross network to overcome these challenges.

### KEY DEVELOPMENTS

- An additional Relief Emergency Response Unit (ERU) was activated which brings the total number of Red Cross ERUs to 19. Eleven have arrived and are fully operational, delivering medical care, clean water, logistics and telecommunications support.
- On January 20, Red Cross Relief ERUs on the ground provided family kits including tarpaulins, blankets, kitchen sets and hygiene kits to 2,700 people. In total, an estimated 25,000 people were expected to receive relief supplies through the humanitarian community yesterday.
- To date, 22 Red Cross flights have landed in either Santo Domingo or Port-au-Prince, carrying 100 tons of relief supplies.

### CURRENT SITUATION

- **Health** – The newly established National Commission for the Management of the Crisis, which includes the Health Ministry, is supporting the following national priorities: establishing mobile clinics in all spontaneous settlements; ensuring the availability of obstetric care and delivery kits; and coordinating healthcare service delivery. Multiple Red Cross medical teams continue to meet urgent needs; a third field Red Cross field hospital is scheduled to arrive in Port-au-Prince on January 22.
- **Shelter and Relief Items** – The Red Cross is focusing on providing shelter and relief items to the homeless and host families housing displaced earthquake survivors. A third Relief Shelter ERU and two Red Cross shelter experts are en route. The Red Cross is working to mobilize and train additional local volunteers to assist in relief distributions. The government of Haiti has requested that food assistance programs take into account regions not directly affected by the earthquake due to price hikes and food shortages reported across the country.
- **Water and Sanitation** – There is still a major need for clean water. Approximately 82 water distribution sites are operational in the Port-au-Prince metropolitan area. Two Red Cross Water and Sanitation ERUs are working to reach 200,000 people through mobile distribution. Two Red Cross Mass Sanitation ERUs and one additional Red Cross Water and Sanitation ERU are en route.



Samilia Joseph waits in a line of hundreds to receive supplies distributed by the American Red Cross in Croix Desprez.

Talia Frenkel/American Red Cross

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- **Access** – Repairs to the south pier of the port at Port-au-Prince enabled the first shipload of supplies to arrive. The port is expected to reopen completely by the end of next week. There is still an 18-hour average travel time for the majority of relief supplies and equipment routed along the Santo Domingo–Port-au-Prince road.
- **Search and Rescue** – Search and rescue teams are conducting secondary reconnaissance missions following yesterday's aftershock. Search and rescue activities will continue until the Haiti government officially decides to cease operations.
- **Security** – The security situation remains precarious, but there have been no reports of serious incidents. The American Red Cross Relief ERU is working closely with the Haitian National Red Cross Society to defuse tensions. In addition, the Red Cross has a security coordinator in place to coordinate security issues for the Red Cross response.



American Red Cross worker Alex Latour with Lamothe Nadia at a distribution site in Croix Desprez, where blankets, tarps, kitchen kits and hygiene kits were distributed by the American Red Cross.

Talia Frenkel/American Red Cross

## THE AMERICAN RED CROSS RESPONSE

Thousands of Red Cross workers representing 30 countries are currently assisting with relief efforts in the region. The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (International Federation) is coordinating the global Red Cross network response with the UN and other relief agencies on the ground.

The American Red Cross continues to respond to the ongoing situation and act in coordination with the International Federation and other members of the global Red Cross network. Relief agencies continue to work toward procuring sufficient tents for the planned temporary shelter sites. Of these, the Red Cross is working to provide 10,000 tents, including 2,900 from the American Red Cross.

American Red Cross chapters have begun to provide support to Haitian-American citizens arriving in the United States. At least 600 evacuees received support upon arrival in Florida. As of January 20, nearly 24,000 people had registered with the International Committee of the Red Cross family linking website. Almost all of the registrations were from people searching for news about their relatives; 1,800 of these people have so far used the site to say they are safe and well.

## THE SUPPORT OF DONORS

The American Red Cross can accept gifts designated to the ongoing response to the earthquakes in Haiti, but asks that donors consider making a gift to the International Response Fund. Donors can help the victims of countless crises around the world each year by making a financial gift to the American Red Cross International Response Fund, which will provide immediate relief and long-term support through supplies, technical assistance and other support to help those in need. Donations to the International Response Fund can be sent to the American Red Cross, P.O. Box 37243, Washington, D.C. 20013 or made by phone at 1-800-REDCROSS or 1-800-257-7575 (Spanish). Internet users can make a secure online contribution by visiting [redcross.org](http://redcross.org).

To learn more about the work of American Red Cross in the U.S. and around the world, please visit [redcross.org](http://redcross.org).