

(updated 1/29/10)

To donate to the Haiti relief fund, click

http://american.redcross.org/site/PageServer?pagename=ntld_main&s_src=RSG000000000&s_subsrc=RCO_FrontPagePanel

Red Cross relief supplies continue to arrive, and more aid is reaching the survivors in the capital city and outlying areas, although the needs remain great



As of January 27, more than 49 flights carrying Red Cross aid from around the world have arrived in Haiti. Additional planes, ships and trucks carrying Red Cross humanitarian assistance are en route. A new warehouse with more than 50,000 square feet of capacity is operational in Port-au-Prince, which means that relief supplies have a safe place to be stored ahead of distribution. 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; later, the Red Cross returns to hand out supplies at a pre-determined location to recipients who wait in line to receive them. Shelter remains an urgent need on the ground. 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. The American Red Cross and its partners are distributing other relief items, such as hygiene kits, blankets and water containers, for more than 1,000 families (5,000 people) each day - with plans to increase this number daily. The International Committee of the Red Cross is currently working with authorities to improve the water supply to the estimated 200,000 inhabitants of Cite Soleil, one of Port-au-Prince's largest impoverished areas.



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

During this critical phase of the relief operation, the American Red Cross is focusing on three areas through its emergency responders and nonprofit partners:

1. Sending food to those in need, including 3 million pre-packaged meals and funding for World Food Program efforts that will enable them to feed up to 1 million people for a month
2. Providing clean drinking water, including 4.2 million liters distributed to date at more than 115 sites. Each day, the Red Cross is distributing enough water for 100,000 people.
3. Distributing shelter items to thousands of people, including blankets, tarps, sleeping mats and tents.

The Red Cross is also meeting the health needs of Haitian survivors and providing support to Haitian families in Haiti and the US. This includes providing relief supplies, shipment of blood products, family linking services and providing Red Cross volunteers to the USNS Comfort, which have been in Haiti for one week. To meet urgent needs, 79 percent of the funds spent or committed have been for food and water; 18 percent have been for shelter; and the rest have been for health and family services. A pre-recovery assessment team from the global Red Cross network has been created and aims to deploy by this weekend. The team will be lead by the American Red Cross and will conduct discussions 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 around the world are in Haiti supporting thousands of local volunteers. Of that, more than 100 are representing the American Red Cross (Includes the Creole interpreters on the USNS Comfort). Each Red Cross team has its own roles and expertise, and we're all working together. That is a very powerful engine for relief and recovery. Red Cross responders now have the capacity to treat up to 1,000 people each day at medical facilities throughout the capital city. 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 as well as emotional support for traumatized survivors. A special area has been established at each medical center where volunteers are comforting children, many of who are too young to even understand what happened.

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 thrive for years to come.

The American Red Cross is applying experience gained following the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami. For the past five years, we have been constructing 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.

The Red Cross is helping reconnect families that have been separated by the earthquake.

The ICRC family links Web site (www.icrc.org/familylinks), designed to help reconnect separated families, has received 24,000 registrations since the earthquake. Approximately 500 names have been removed from the site after families were successfully reconnected. The Red Cross has set up posts, helping 900 people make international phone calls to their families to say they are safe.

This is an enormous relief operation now, but we also know it will be a massive long-term recovery effort and the Red Cross will be there throughout. This is already the largest single-country personnel deployment in global Red Cross history in terms of emergency relief teams deployed. The number of emergency response teams in or en route to Haiti is greater than the number that responded to the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami - an emergency that spanned 14 countries. 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. Terrible times like these bring out the best in people, and we are grateful for the support being given to the American Red Cross. This generosity will help thousands of survivors cope with and recover from their losses.

Countless requests have come from people wanting to help. The best way to do that is to make a donation to the American Red Cross International Response Fund at redcross.org or by calling 1-800-RED-CROSS. **Mobile donors can text “Haiti” to 90999 to make a \$10 contribution.** First Lady Michelle Obama released a Public Service Announcement asking people to join her in supporting Red Cross relief efforts in Haiti through the text messaging campaign <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OP-GuVuYC38>.

Here in Hawaii, donors can also call in donations to the Hawaii Red Cross at 739-8109, go on-line at www.hawaiiredcross.org or mail donations to American Red Cross, Hawaii State Chapter, 4155 Diamond Head Road, Honolulu, HI 96816. If you would like to donate specifically to the Haiti relief effort, please indicate so on your check or when you call, and your donor intent will be honored.