



Haiti Earthquake Response

Evelyn Hockstein/CARE

Population Affected

Number of people affected:	3 million
Number of people dead:	222,517
Number of people injured:	300,600
Number of people displaced:	1.2 million
Residences destroyed:	97,000
Residences damaged:	188,000

CARE's Response

Total people helped:	265,877
Health:	1,116
Shelter:	26,515
Emergency supplies:	86,655
Water and sanitation:	31,700
Food:	119,891

Sources: Government of Haiti (Feb. 22, 2010), UN OCHA

In the late afternoon of Tuesday, January 12th, 2010, a magnitude 7.0 earthquake struck Ouest Province around an epicentre 17 km southwest of Haiti's capital, Port-au-Prince. Buildings across the city collapsed, leaving hundreds of thousands homeless, injured and dead. The nearby towns of Carrefour and Jacmel and other areas to the west and south of Port-au-Prince were also affected, with the town of Léogâne reported to be 80-percent destroyed. The exact number of people killed will probably never be known, but the most recent estimates from the Government of Haiti Feb. 22 place the figure at 222,517, and some 300,600 wounded.

Early estimates are that more than 97,000 residences were destroyed, more than 188,000 damaged to some degree, and more than 30,000 commercial buildings destroyed. Three million people have been directly affected, of whom the government estimates 1.2 million have lost their homes, causing a mass migration of close to 600,000 away from the affected cities. Host families and communities in outside communities are bearing much of the burden of supporting displaced people.

The CCCM (camp cluster coordination management) has identified more than 300 spontaneous sites in and around Port-au-Prince, housing more than 110,260 families (562,900 individuals) who will continue to rely on the assistance of the international community and direct intervention of approximately 1,000 humanitarian organizations currently on the ground.

Immediate Priorities and Cluster Response

The United Nations has identified hygiene, sanitation and emergency shelter as critical needs, especially in the context of the approaching rainy season. Addressing drainage and solid waste management is also an urgent priority.

Shelter: Efforts are ongoing to register and identify the home areas of people living in prioritized spontaneous settlement sites. A key challenge is to remove debris from those areas so that people can return to their home areas, and to identify suitable land to build transitional shelter for those whose houses are uninhabitable. To date, more than 66,000 families (330,000 people) have received emergency shelter materials, about 30 percent of the estimated 1.2 million in need of shelter. The aim is to have all needs covered by the end of May at the latest.

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Water: The city's water system has sustained serious damage. As of 21 February, water and sanitation partners trucked some 6,558 m³ of safe water to more than 340 storage and distribution points in Port-au-Prince and surrounding communities, under the direction of the national water authority (DINEPA). This volume of water has reached approximately 1,311,600 persons with 5 litres of water per day, representing 119 percent of the interim water and sanitation target.

Hygiene and Sanitation: The WASH (Water, Sanitation and Hygiene) cluster has recently worked on an acceleration plan for latrine construction before end of March - the beginning of the rainy season - erecting 12,950 latrines along with hand-washing facilities. The second phase (April – end of June) will see the construction of 21,180 more latrines. As of February 22, WASH cluster partners have completed the construction of more than 2,605 latrines, currently servicing 130,250 persons.

CARE's Three-phased Approach to the Emergency Response

Given the extent of the damage to Haiti's infrastructure, much of which had not yet been repaired after the 2008 hurricane season, it will take months before basic services (access to water, sanitation, and health services), particularly in poorer areas of the city, are functional and accessible by the city's population. It will take even more time to rebuild Haiti. CARE is here for the long term and is in the process of refining its emergency response strategy, which stretches out over five years. It is broken down into the following three phases:

Phase I – Immediate Relief (months 0-3)

Providing immediate, lifesaving assistance to survivors in Port-au-Prince, and the areas they are moving to, is critical to prevent further loss of life. CARE is working hard to ensure our response is integrated and that beneficiaries receive quality assistance in a range of services that complement one another. Our immediate emergency response to the Haiti earthquake is currently focused in three areas – Pétionville, Carrefour, Léogâne – three of the hardest hit areas. To date, CARE has reached close to 270,000 beneficiaries through the distribution of food, water purification packets, jerry cans, hygiene and kitchen kits, tarps, tents, mattresses, blankets, clean delivery kits, and newborn kits.

Sanitation continues to be the most pressing concern. The removal of human waste from sites where it's not possible to install emergency trench latrines is top priority. To meet this need, CARE has purchased 10 vacuum tanks. Additionally, CARE is building 3,000 latrines along with hand-washing stations to meet basic sanitation requirements. CARE is also providing access to clean water through the installation of water bladders and tankers.

Rehabilitating the affected areas is not only key in preventing further deaths and intercepting a food crisis, but also in rebuilding a once flourishing market economy that fed large communities, as was the case with Léogâne (one of Haiti's breadbaskets).

While CARE's priorities focus on meeting the most critical needs, we are at the same time working towards strengthening and refining our integrated long-term strategy to ensure our projects have shelf life beyond the initial emergency response phase. Initiatives like cash-for-work, finding long-lasting solutions to food insecurity, and developing agricultural practices all come with a long-term vision that sees the re-emergence of sustainable economic hubs within, and outside of, the affected zones. Returning a sense of normalcy to the lives of children through the distribution of recreation and education kits will also expand into longer-term initiatives.

Phase II – Transitional Relief (months 4-12)

CARE is in the process of developing and refining an integrated emergency response strategy that will include a phase for transitional relief. This phase will see the decongestion of overcrowded sites and the movement of affected populations



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towards open spaces identified by the various clusters and the government. Transitional shelters will serve as a more stable home base for families waiting to rebuild on their original home sites. WASH and Health clusters will remain critical partners, ensuring an integrated approach that achieves maximum quality results. Additionally, CARE will continue to deliver recreation and education kits to children and, moving beyond the first phase, will initiate the training of teachers and implementation of psychosocial activities within, and outside of, the affected zones.

Phase III – Reconstruction (years 2-5)

Details on this phase will be laid out in CARE Haiti’s five-year emergency response strategy.

Coordination and Advocacy

CARE is a member of the local Inter-Agency Standing Committee (Comité Permanent Inter-ONG - CPIO) that plays an important role in the development of strategic coordination efforts. While operational coordination began immediately after the earthquake, it was CARE and other members of the CPIO who took the lead in advocacy during the visit of John Holmes (UN Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator) to ensure that the high-profile visitors were well informed vis-à-vis the overall coordination efforts of NGOs and the sector strengths of the various NGOs and UN agencies. The group illustrated the importance of strategic decision-making and setting clear and manageable objectives, while taking into consideration the question of landownership and the role of the government of Haiti.

Engaging Civil Society

As a member of CLIO (Cadre de Liaison Inter-ONG), a group that unites international and national NGOs in Haiti, CARE is working on advocacy to include Haiti’s civil society in the coordination and planning of long-term reconstruction efforts in joint effort with the government of Haiti. CARE was involved in this type of advocacy before the earthquake and recognizes its increased importance in the aftermath. Strengthening governance by working with local authorities and community groups, and increasing participation of vulnerable populations in decision-making, is critical in ensuring community empowerment.

In partnership with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), CARE sent out a press release on the importance of not forgetting the hidden crisis – the indirect impact the earthquake had on the regions outside the affected zone. The large exodus of populations has increased the risk of food insecurity and overburdening of host families.

Quality and Accountability

While CARE is continuously in the process of refining its response, we have set up a reporting system that allows beneficiaries to share their satisfaction or dissatisfaction after each distribution. This helps us adjust and refine our approach to ensure we respond to the most pressing needs of the people we serve. It is also CARE’s goal to put an end to a top-down approach that has excluded the most vulnerable populations from claiming their rights. To this end, we have approached a telecommunications company with the request to set up a toll-free number that allows beneficiaries to report abuse and injustice.

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