



Haiti Earthquake Update 1 – January 18th 2010

Pastor Luckner Stimpfil (director of WorldShare's Haitian partner, HCIM) is now in Haiti. It is already known that some of his pastors have been killed and some churches destroyed.

Pastor Luckner is working to: -

- *assess how much of HCIM's network still exists*—who lost their lives, and who survived.
- *obtain photographic evidence of the impact on HCIM's activity (this primarily being away from the Port-au-Prince area where the focus of media coverage has been).*
- report back to WorldShare and our Partnership Alliance affiliates on the critical needs – practical and spiritual – that they have at this stage.

Based on Luckner's findings, WorldShare will post further updates summarising how funds will be used and targeted to help those in greatest need. To further strengthen our response, a link will be established between Luckner and a leading expert in disaster response, who has coordinated the efforts of WorldShare/Partnership Alliance after major disasters such as the Asian tsunami.

Our expert will go into Haiti as soon as this is possible. Further strategic projects will be developed and shared with our donors based on his recommendations.

'Why donate to WorldShare?' The situation in Haiti, now and in the future

The impact of the earthquake on Haiti has been described as being worse than the impact of the Asian tsunami on the countries involved there. A death toll of up to 200,000 people would represent a huge percentage of the population of a country of just 9 million people.

In disasters like the tsunami, the governments and armed forces of the countries involved played a major role in helping their people. In Haiti, the earthquake struck at the heart of government and other services which, even prior to the quake, were largely dysfunctional. The presidential palace was destroyed, and the government has relocated to a police station on the airport perimeter. The USA has taken control of air traffic control at Port au Prince airport and is sending a large number of troops into Haiti.

Unlike other disaster regions, resources do not exist within the Haitian economy to respond adequately to this disaster. Sufficient food and medical supplies do not exist locally and will have to be shipped in. With air space saturated by planes bringing international aid and others requiring vital access to the country at this time, and Haiti's main sea port also badly damaged, this is already proving a logistical nightmare.

The world's media has not only portrayed graphically this grim tragedy on the streets of Port-au-Prince, it has increasingly depicted the chaotic scenes, increased lawlessness and looting taking place in what was already a volatile and sometimes violent society. It is feared the security situation may worsen still further. Ambushing of aid convoys and personnel by people desperate for food, water and medical help may become an acute risk.

All the above serves to accentuate the acute difficulties of expediting the secure distribution of aid once it arrives into Haiti. WorldShare's help for Haiti will take into account these difficult realities of the situation on the ground. Together with our Partnership Alliance affiliates, our response will have the following characteristics: -

- Prioritising people who are being missed out by the large-scale aid effort.
- A strong focus on medium to longer-term recovery and rebuilding of lives and livelihoods once the major disaster response and aid agencies have vacated Haiti.
- Secure financial links, accountability and reporting.
- Working with established Haitian partners who are proven, trustworthy Christian leaders, and with regional experts.

Please stand with us in support of our partners in Haiti, and pray with us that out of tragedy will come renewed hope for the future in this traumatised country.