



Relief Activity Report No. 5

27 January 2010

Haiti: Earthquake relief

I. Overall Situation

By now the Haitian Government estimates the death toll from the devastating earthquake on 12 January at 150,000 deaths. 194,000 persons have been injured; up to one million people are without shelter in all effected areas.

The distribution of assistance continues in Port-au-Prince and other affected areas such as Jacmel, Carrefour, Leogane and Petit Goave. Tents, food, health (post-operative care and epidemiological surveillance), sanitation and hygiene are the priorities for assistance.

The overall security situation in Port-au-Prince remains stable but there have been isolated instances of looting.



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Health: According to the latest OCHA report, the number of injured people in need of surgical interventions is diminishing. The strategy of the Ministry of Health will now shift from focusing on emergency surgical cases to primary health care and the prevention and promotion of hygiene. Jacmel, Leogane, Petit Goave and Grand Goave have been identified as priority areas for medical assistance. OCHA has established an initial field presence in Jacmel and Leogane to support coordination and information management functions.

WASH (Water, Sanitation and Hygiene): It is planned to increase water distribution in order to provide 500,000 people at 200 sites with water on a daily basis as well as with sanitation and hygiene facilities and services. Support will be expanded to unities outside of Port-au-Prince. Some 500 new latrines have already been constructed across all affected areas. With the arrival of the rainy season, sanitation will be an increasing concern.

Traffic congestion is major issue in Port-au-Prince, especially in the area of the airport, where 130 to 150 flights per day are entering. Flights should be diverted to Santo Domingo if the cargo is not carrying life-saving items required within two or three days, but even the airport in Santo Domingo is starting to experience congestion problems. Additional airports are going to be identified in the Dominican Republic and close to the Haitian border.

The port infrastructure is still weak but both tanker terminals can receive cargo. Nevertheless many of the ships arriving at the Port-au-Prince port are too large for current capacity. At present, the US military is coordinating the port repairs and arrivals of vessels.

For further information, please visit: www.reliefweb.int

II. Malteser International activities

Malteser International will strengthen Leogane as the main focus of its health activities and set up a health centre to provide basic health care. Since Friday, 22 January, a medical team with three medical doctors and three nurses – all native Haitians– has been working in a health post in Leogane and has also been assisting in the delivery of several babies. Maternity has turned out to be one of the urgent priorities in health.

Up to now, the health post had been run by the Argentine “Casca Blanca”. They will now leave on Thursday, 27 January, and will hand over the health post to Malteser International. The encounter with the Argentine medical team turned out to be a fortunate coincidence: they will leave most of their equipment



The team of Malteser International has been assisting in the delivery of several babies at the health camp in Leogane

(including several tents and diverse medical equipment) behind.

So far approximately 2,000 patients have been provided with medical assistance in the Leogane health post by the Argentine team and by Malteser International. By now, nine babies have been born in the camp. His Excellency the Grand Master of the Order of Malteser offered to sponsor a god parenthood to the first baby that was born in the health post.

From Thursday, 21 January, till Sunday, 24 January, Geoffrey Gamble, Malteser International Vice-President from the USA, visited the crisis region. After his return he describes the activities in Leogane as follows: “ ... *Back at our soon to be Leogane facility, our medical team began treating patients along side the Argentines in the basketball court. A dressing and medication table was created from old boards and a large wooden cable spindle that served as the legs. One woman had suffered from a broken pelvis for 6 days and was in agony. We erected tarps and clothes to shield patients from the sun which blazed overhead. Many children had severely infected wounds. Word began to spread that we were there and more patients and their families showed up. In addition to being sick, they were desperate for water. We shared what we had and promised to find more....*”

The French Association of the Order has sponsored four special tents à 45 m2 to be installed in Leogane. In addition, EADS sponsored a basic health unit for the health post. Both – the tents and the health unit together with the tents of the French Association this unit will be shipped to Santo Domingo this weekend. - On Tuesday, 25 January, a cargo flight departed from Frankfurt with relief goods including two water treatment plants from Malteser International and four generators for power generation for Santo Domingo.

On 26 January, Dr. Alfred Kinzelbach, public health expert from Malteser International and Beate Maass, Malteser International humanitarian coordinator in Haiti, participated in a coordination meeting of several aid organizations at the German embassy as well as in a coordination meeting in Leogane organized by OCHA. The meetings confirmed that there is a huge need for primary health care in Leogane and environments. In addition, good contacts have been established to the local disaster relief committee of Leogane who helped the Malteser International team to identify good sites for the health posts.

COTEDO, a local partner organisation of Malteser International, will send volunteers to Haiti in order to distribute food and non-food items (hygiene articles, candles, plastic sheets, blankets etc.) to 1,000 families. Next to the partnership with COTEDO, Annette Waechter-Schneider, senior desk officer Haiti, has contacted a second NGO from the Dominican Republic (MUDHA /Movimiento de Mujeres Dominicano-Haitianas) in Santo Domingo for a possible project in the fields of public health to be realised in cooperation in one of the slums of Port-au-Prince where numerous people in camps are still waiting for medical treatment.

With regard to the ongoing aftershocks in Haiti, an early warning system will be installed in the office and team house of Malteser International in Port-au-Prince. “LifePatron” is sponsored by the company Secty electronics that will also take care of the installation on the ground.

What we have done up to now:

Port-au-Prince:

- On 14 January 2010, Malteser International has sent an eight-headed team via the Dominican Republic to Haiti, consisting of medical staff/health experts and logisticians. Head of the mission has been the Malteser International emergency relief coordinator Dr. Georg Nothelle
- On Sunday, 17 January, the medical team have started first aid and medical treatment for the injured survivors of the earthquake at the damaged hospital “Francois de Sales”
- Setup of a cooperation with a NGO from the Dominican Republic active in Haiti, COTEDO (Comision de Trabajo Ecumenico Domenicano), to join their mission to Haiti which comprises the distribution of food and drugs at five locations outside Port-au-Prince
- Participation in assessments of the UN of several hospitals in Port-au-Prince



The medical team at work in Port-au-Prince
(Picture: Tim Freccia)

Milot:

- In the north of Haiti the Order of Malta has been supporting the hospital “Sacré Coeur” for about 15 years already. Seriously injured survivors of the quake have been brought to the hospital by helicopters and have been provided effectually with medical assistance.

Leogane:

- On 22 January the medical team left for Leogane that is located close to the epicentre of the earthquake and there from suffered great damages (up to 90 % of the town reported to be damaged). In Leogane the team has started its work in an already established Argentinean camp, giving first aid to the injured survivors, treating infections and acting as maternity clinic-
- 2 emergency health kits (WHO standard) delivered to Port-au-Prince by chief-logistician Cesar Russo with a flight from Belgium. The EHK were brought to Leogane with a convoy on Friday, 22 January. The two emergency health kits contain antibiotics, medicines and dressing material to provide emergency relief and basic medical treatment for 20,000 people for three months in Leogane

Planning

Short-term: Construction of an additional health centre in Leogane that is run by rotating national volunteer teams and led by the Malteser International Headquarter

Mid-term : Malteser International proposes an integrated common effort of all stakeholders of the Order in Haiti. The President of Malteser International, Mr. de Cock de Rameyen, has therefore proposed to H.E. the Grand Hospitaller to hold a meeting to design a “Haiti Master plan of the Order of Malta” in due time.

Long-term: Next to the emergency assistance, Malteser International is willing to ensure further aid efforts in the sectors health, WASH and – if required – shelter and income generating measures in order to support the country in reconstruction and development.

III. STAFF

Five members of the medical team working in the health post in Leogane – medical doctors and nurses, all native Haitians – will return back to the USA today, 27 January 2010. One medical doctor will still stay for some days in order to ensure handover to the new medical team – one doctor and two nurses – that will arrive today.

They will be joined by a surgeon and a nurse leaving for Haiti today for a period of four weeks. The medical doctor, Dr. Bernd Dietz, will be the head of the medical team. Next Friday, an internist will also leave for Haiti. All three of them are experienced experts and have already been working together in one team during the earthquake relief operation of Malteser International in Java, Indonesia, 2006.

To reinforce this medical team, further medical staff is requested by the Headquarters; preferably a gynaecologist and/or midwife and a nurse.

Dr. Georg Nothelle, head of the assessment team, on today, 27 January 2010, returns to Germany after having handed over the leadership of the regional activities in Haiti to Beate Maass, humanitarian coordinator on the ground. Annette Wächter Schneider, senior desk officer Haiti of Malteser International Headquarters, returned to Germany on 26 January 2010.

Beate Maass will stay in Haiti for at least three months. At present, she is supported by Cesar Russo, chief logistician, and Wanda Welker, responsible for administration.

IV. Appeal for donations

Malteser International is extremely grateful for the donations that have already been sent or announced. Malteser International needs your generosity to help the people affected by this severe earthquake. The homeless people, the injured and the hungry will need our support not only in the current disaster situation but also for the rehabilitation period – in Haiti as well as in the border region of the Dominican Republic. The extent and sustainable success of our assistance in these emergencies is largely depending on external and internal funding.

Malteser International is therefore highly appreciating all financial contributions to the benefit of the people in Haiti. Your contribution will directly support a workable and reliable relief effort based on the greatest needs of the earthquake survivors.

In order to avoid “fundraising confusion” and high bank fees, we suggest that all associations should first use their own internal system for collecting donations and afterwards transfer donations to the following Malteser International bank account:

Donation Account 2020122
Pax-Bank Köln, von-Werth-Str. 25-27, D-50670 Köln, Germany,
Sort Code 370 60 193
IBAN DE93 3706 0193 0002 0201 22
BIC GENODED1PAX
Reference: “Earthquake relief Haiti”

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We shall keep you informed about all further developments.

Yours sincerely

Ingo Radtke
Secretary General