

Haiti

One Year after the Quake



Photo by Kristie van de Wetering



On January 12, 2010 a 7.0 earthquake rocked the country of Haiti. The 35-second quake killed over 230,000 people and displaced 1.5 million more. Virtually the entire country came to a halt as schools, churches, hospitals, government buildings, homes, and entire neighborhoods crumbled to the ground.

The international community responded quickly and generously to the needs of quake survivors, the Christian Reformed Church of North America included. To date, the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee (CRWRC) has received \$11.5 million in donations and grants, enabling CRWRC to respond quickly to immediate survival needs as well as longer-term needs created by the earthquake.

In the immediate weeks and months following the quake, CRWRC provided hygiene kits and

cash for severely affected families in our target communities, provided tarps for immediate shelter and distributed tools for rubble and debris removal.

As moving people out of tents and temporary shelter and into proper housing is not only a question of human dignity but also a question of human safety and security, CRWRC is building earthquake- and hurricane-resistant wood-frame houses. Drilling of water wells and construction of latrines along with psycho-social trauma counseling activities complete the integrated approach to CRWRC's earthquake response.

Here is a brief synopsis of some additional impacts that CRWRC's ministry has been able to make in Haiti in the past year.

Through psychosocial support from CRWRC, Gislène Consolé can smile again despite the trauma she experienced in the earthquake.

Haiti's Reconstruction: More Than Removing the Physical Rubble

by Kristie van de Wetering

"It felt like the world was being turned upside down. I thought it was the end of the world. People were telling me that Leogane had been completely destroyed. They said there was not a house left standing. I thought, 'my kids are dead'. I started to cry," recalls Gislène Consolé, "But then I started to pray and I had faith in God that he had spared them."

Consolé's children were spared, but she lost her home and all of the merchandise she had in storage for running her small business.

"I thought my life was over. I became very, very sick. I could not eat, I could not sleep, I was vomiting and had diarrhea all the time. I would shake from fear and I had nightmares, too. I developed diabetes and high blood pressure," says the 49-year-old single mother of five and grandmother of five of the days that followed.

For those who have not lived through a nightmare like this, it is virtually impossible to convey the extent of the trauma and stress — conscious and subconscious

— that this earthquake caused on those that survived. On some level, these effects are almost as difficult to remove as the physical rubble.

"It is a mistake to see the reconstruction of Haiti as a purely physical issue," emphasizes Cleeford Dalcé, CRWRC's Community Liaison responsible for managing psycho-social support activities. "It's also about psychological, emotional, and spiritual reconstruction as well."

CRWRC's response reflects this philosophy, designed to combine physical, spiritual, psychological, and social reconstruction with short-term and long-term development activities. In addition to providing people with tarps, food, and cash, CRWRC started training community leaders on ways to support their communities in dealing with the emotional aftershocks.

Nine men and nine women were trained to lead psycho-social activities in their communities. To date 1,686 people have participated in a variety of activities and sessions carried out in the five target

communities, including Consolé. She began learning how to deal with the physical symptoms of the emotional trauma that she had experienced.

"[CRWRC] taught us exercises that we can do to loosen up our bodies, to make us more flexible, to release tension. We shook our bodies like an earthquake — like this," she laughs as she demonstrates. "We were taught a little about how the brain works when something stressful happens, to help us understand and manage better. We practiced how to breathe, and how to use our bodies to relax our minds."

Now, 11 months after the earthquake, she can reflect back on how she was and how she is today.

"Before I was always thinking about the earthquake, now I have almost forgotten about 12 January. The last time I went to the doctor, he told me that my blood

pressure is way down and so is my sugar level! I am able to sleep now, too."

Not only has the psycho-social support helped Consolé to deal with past trauma but it is also helping her to manage with new stressors in her life. As news of the cholera outbreak reaches Leogane, a new source of panic has started to stir in the communities. But Consolé is using her newly acquired stress management techniques to remain calm.

"Now with the cholera situation, I started to feel stressed again", she shares. "I was lying awake at night. I could not sleep. But I used the techniques that I was taught — how to breathe — and about how my brain is reacting to the stress. I was able to calm myself and soon, I fell asleep."

It has been 11 months since the earthquake and two months since Consolé moved into her new home provided by CRWRC. "It is smaller than my other house — my house was very big with five rooms," she shares. "But it is a good start!"

The earthquake is a part of her past and it will always, to some extent, be part of her present and her future. But today, Consolé is a happier woman, with a future to look forward to.

Earthquake Response At A Glance

CRWRC's Disaster Response Team is focused on five target communities near Leogane, Haiti:

- Masson
- Luitor
- Macombe
- Croix des Peres
- Flon

To date, CRWRC has provided:

- food to 4,603 households (approx. 23,000 people), including distributions in Port au Prince
- emergency funds to 2,331 households
- toolkits to 1,400 households
- 3,500 tarps to provide immediate shelter until homes can be rebuilt
- 22 temporary community latrines
- 19 wells
- 831 wood-framed homes
- two water filtration units installed at two hospitals
- training in leading psycho-social trauma-counseling to nine men and nine women
- 33 psycho-social sessions and trauma-counseling activities, which benefitted 1,686 people (691 women, 550 men, 445 children)
- \$361,650 to help Haitian partner agencies rebuild

Videos of CRWRC's work in the Leogane area are online at www.crwrc.org/haiti. Contact CRWRC to request a DVD copy.

Six year-old Trou, of Leogane, enjoys a drink from the new well that CRWRC installed in her community.



Marie Marthe Consolé and the other members of Community Advisory Committees play a key role in the reconstruction process.



Servant Leadership in Leogane

by Kristie van de Wetering

Who would have thought owning a cow could be the catalyst for a life-changing experience. The idea certainly did not cross Marie Marthe Consolé's mind.

"One day I was in the field with one of my cows. They asked me who the cow belonged to and I told them it was mine. I thought people would make fun of me for being in a field taking care of a cow," she said.

In Haiti, raising and breeding cows is considered a man's job, and watching over one for someone else a servant's job. CRWRC immediately saw the innate and unique quality of a servant-leader in Consolé.

"When they heard that I had had the cow for a while, they said 'if you can raise a cow like this on your own, it means you are a strong woman. People in your community must respect you.' And then they invited me to be part of their team," recalls Consolé. "I felt proud when they asked me to be part of the committee. I felt respected and valued."

That is how the 39 year-old mother of three became one of the most dynamic members of CRWRC's Community Advisory Committee (CAC) for the community of Flon in the Leogane region. Each committee is made up of five members from one of the areas where CRWRC is implementing its earthquake response program.

"When there is a new organization in town, people don't know who they are, what they represent, or what they do. They need someone to be a mediator, to facilitate communication between the two groups," Consolé explained.

This is one of the primary roles of the CACs. The committee members serve as bridges between CRWRC and their home communities. They know their neighbors and villages — the needs and desires, the challenges and opportunities that naturally exist in all communities. As a committee, they guide strategy and explain projects. They facilitate beneficiary selection, oversee implementation and actively participate in activities.

"Haiti needs more leaders, leaders who put their communities' needs above their own," shared Willys Geffrard, CRWRC's Earthquake Response Program Manager about the value he's seen in the CACs. "The people are here, many just need to be mentored and given the opportunity to develop their leadership skills."

CRWRC is providing this opportunity for Consolé and the others. It is a win-win situation.

"Marie Marthe Consolé has the spirit of a true servant-leader. Her dedication and selflessness is remarkable, especially when she has so much need

herself,” Geffrard continued. “Facilitating her personal development as a community leader along with the others is a key part of our reconstruction effort.”

And Consolé does model servant leadership. Her house, like so many others, was severely damaged in the earthquake. It was assessed by CRWRC engineers and deemed unable to be repaired. Consolé is on the list to get a new home from CRWRC, yet she keeps putting off having the work started.

“When you are a leader in your community, you cannot be the first person to receive the benefits,” she explained. “There are others in my community who are waiting for homes, so they need to get their homes first. And then I should get mine.”

While she waits, Consolé remains busy. She works at a local mango exportation company, raises her children, maintains her home, and is actively involved in CRWRC’s ongoing psycho-social activities and the recent cholera prevention activities.

“My dream is that my community will be beautiful and healthy,” she explained. “I want for everyone to be healthy. I like talking to people about health — not just physical but also psychological health. For me, this is not extra work. It is about collaboration, for the benefit of my community. After a long day of working with the community, even if I am tired, I don’t really feel it. It is an honour for me to fill this role.”

And it is an honour for CRWRC to have her as part of the larger Leogane team.

The Christian Reformed Church in Haiti

CRWRC and other agencies of the Christian Reformed Church (including Christian Reformed World Missions and Back to God Ministries International) were already present in Haiti before the quake. They work together under the name, *Sous Espwa*, which means “source of hope.” *Sous Espwa* staff were unharmed in the quake, but some of their homes suffered damage. In addition, many of their Haitian partners and local churches suffered losses of people and buildings.

In the early hours and days after the disaster, before CRWRC’s Disaster Response Team arrived, these CRC and Haitian staff were the ones who provided support and aid to those most in need. In addition, *Sous Espwa* and their partners have been involved in the following activities over the past year:

- Replaced office equipment for three Haitian partners
- Provided temporary office space to two partners in the form of wood-framed buildings
- Provided bereavement funds to help cover funeral costs for five partner staff who lost family members
- Provided temporary housing to seven partner staff, funds for home repairs to five partner staff, and rent money to 12 partner staff
- Provided rent money to two *Sous Espwa* staff
- Provided food rations once a month for three months to all staff, and for one month to 30 volunteers in Port-au-Prince
- Provided hygiene kits and tools to all partners
- Has joined five other Christian organizations in backing STAR, a three-year trauma awareness and resilience training initiative.

- International Reformed Perspectives of Haiti (PRIHA) is preparing to broadcast messages of encouragement to make pastoral counseling available to listeners in a follow-up center.
- CRECH, trained 129 teachers from 33 schools in four municipalities on providing psycho-social and spiritual support to children. 4,958 children have benefited from these activities. Ten schools also used this training in their summer camps. CRECH also paid teacher salaries in 20 schools so students could complete the school year
- PWOFOOD, provided four latrines to a camp of earthquake survivors, gave them tools for clearing a drainage ditch, and did a food distribution for 100 families
- STEP, repaired 94 homes and a community center (used as literacy center and clinic) in their neighborhood
- MDK, distributed over 75 wheelchairs, crutches, and canes to amputees, spoke on radio programs urging society to accept those injured recently and treat them with respect and dignity, built two houses for elderly people in Badyo, and did a food distribution in Meyer
- FAJ, held psycho-social training with young people
- ECRH, hosted 14 teams composed of 83 doctors, nurses, and other medical professionals (sent in partnership with Medical Teams International and housed at the CRC Ministry Center), distributed food and tarps in four areas, and repaired four homes



Pastor Ernst Jean-Louis, a staff member of Sous Espwa's partner, PWOFOOD. The earthquake hit shortly after Pastor Ernst left his PWOFOOD office and the building collapsed. When he arrived home, he learned that his wife had been killed when the hospital where she worked had also collapsed. Despite these losses, Pastor Ernst is a source of strength in his community. Not only can he empathize with those who have lost so much, but he has also continued on in his ministry and has been a vital component of providing aid to those in need.

Stories of Strength

By Jenny LeMahieu

What do you do when you lost so much? For many Haitians, this was a question that played in their minds after January 12, 2010.

Jean Edouardnus Estivil, diaconal coordinator for the Haitian Christian Reformed Church, raced home that day to find his home destroyed, two of his sisters under the rubble and his mother dead. He also learned that his best friend, Caleb Petit-Homme, hadn't been heard from since he headed to university just before the earthquake.

Estivil dug his sisters out. One of them was only slightly injured, while the other one was non-responsive. He is the oldest in his family, so it was his job to help take care of burying his mother's body and finding a hospital to take his sister, while her life hung in balance.

It was about a month later when I was able to catch up with him at a Pastor's home. He was obviously still shaken, but able to talk about what happened and share his trust in the Lord. Little by little, Sous Espwa staff worked with Estivil and others to help them reflect on what happened and meet their daily needs.

Coming along-side Estivil, we were able to share God's love with him and give him counseling, meeting his emotional needs with David Carter a Psychologist from Canada. Between that session and another, he found it helpful to process his thoughts and find inner healing.

Shortly after that, he helped out with the Timothy Leadership Training, which he and Caleb had been learning about prior to the earthquake. He shared with the group how God had brought healing in his own life to help others deal with their grieving after losing a sibling or other loved ones. In moving forward and continuing work God gave him, he was able to help out others.

Estivil's injured sister and his other siblings now live in a temporary housing unit provided by Sous Espwa. All are doing well, and his sister has healed physically through clinical care. Estivil is now using his engineering and diaconal background to help head up one of the relief projects for the Haitian Christian Reformed Church. His commitment to helping others recover, has allowed him to press on and realize the work God still has for him to do. And Sous Espwa has continued with the Timothy Leadership Training, even without Caleb.

So what does one do when so much is lost? You look to Christ, find strength to continue, and then in turn help others.

Financials

Revenue

Through October 31, 2010 CRWRC had received over \$11.5 million for its Haiti earthquake response. This included \$6.6 million in donations from individuals and churches. These donations were leveraged through CRWRC's membership in the Canadian Foodgrains Bank and its partnerships with outside funders and aid organizations to bring in an additional \$4.9 million.

Expenses

Through October 31, CRWRC had spent nearly \$4 million (34.47%) of the funds it had received for the Haiti earthquake response. This included \$681,494 (17.09%) for food aid; \$1.3 million (34.13%) on non-food items including temporary shelter and support for Sous Espwa partners; \$401,280 (10.06%) on water, sanitation, and hygiene; \$145,772 (3.66%) on psycho-social support and education; \$1.1 million (28.57%) on home reconstruction; and \$258,748 (6.49%) for program management. The remaining \$7.5 million is available for future use as CRWRC continues its home reconstruction and livelihood restoration programs and as Sous Espwa continues its earthquake recovery work with its local partners.

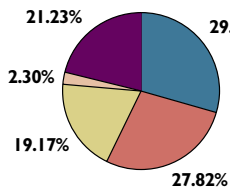
Special Thanks

CRWRC would like to thank the following funders for contributing to its Haiti Earthquake Response:

Individuals, churches, schools, and businesses across the United States and Canada

- ACT for Peace Australia*
- Canadian Baptist Ministries
- Canadian Reformed World Relief Fund
- Disciples of Christ USA*
- Canadian Foodgrains Bank
- Dorcas Aid International*
- ERDO
- ICCO en Kerke in Actie*
- Manitoba Council for International Cooperation*
- Mennonite Central Committee Canada
- Netherlands GG Woerden
- Presbyterian World Service and Development Canada*
- The Primate's World Relief and Development Fund*
- Reformed Church in America
- United Church of Canada*
- World Diaconate Relief Committee
- World Vision Canada
- YCARE – UK*
- ZOA Refugee Care*

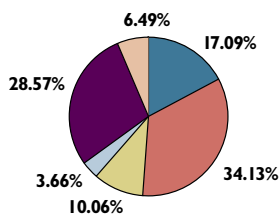
Revenue (January 12, 2010–October 31, 2010)



Private donors in the USA*	3,410,581
Private donors in Canada*	3,217,906
Organizational Donors	
In Canada	2,217,286
In the USA	266,159
In Europe & other	2,456,152
Total Income	11,568,083

*As per CRWRC Board mandate, 10% (\$736,499) of private donations was put towards CRWRC program management and administration costs. The figures above show the net amount after this deduction.

Expenses (January 12, 2010–October 31, 2010)



Food Aid	681,494
Non-Food Items and Temporary Shelter	1,360,932
Water, Sanitation, Hygiene	401,280
Psycho-social & Education	145,772
Shelter - Wood Frame Houses	1,139,434
Program Management & Communication	258,748
Total Expenses	3,987,660

actalliance

* Donated through CRWRC's appeal to the ACT Alliance



www.crwrc.org

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