

# UPDATE FROM **Haiti** A 6-MONTH REPORT

JULY 2010

## From Our Leadership

The strength of the human spirit always inspires me. Earlier this year, I met with earthquake survivors in Port-au-Prince who, even in the tragedy of losing so many and so much, were hopeful for a new Haiti.

I am also amazed by people like you. When the January 12 earthquake struck, you dropped everything to help. You sent donations. You set up fundraisers. You held vigils. And still, you continue to stay involved to ensure Haiti emerges from this disaster.

With your support, our Haiti team continues to help families and set longer-term recovery in motion. We're improving camp conditions, providing water and giving survivors temporary jobs. We're giving teachers and parents healthy ways to address children's emotional needs and restore their sense of well-being. In the impoverished Central Plateau, we're working with communities to build a viable economy that supports everyone, including thousands of displaced earthquake survivors.

We offer you this six-month report as part of our commitment to keep you updated on our work. Thanks to the resources you have entrusted to us, we continue to bring our unwavering dedication, best ideas and 30 years of experience to help Haitians rebuild their country.



Neal Keny-Guyer  
Chief Executive Officer

## Emergency Relief to Port-au-Prince Camps



Tents fill every open space in Port-au-Prince: public parks, empty lots, even traffic medians. For thousands of earthquake survivors, these crowded camps are the only housing option.

More than 1,500 families live in a camp called Carradeux. "Life is not easy in Carradeux, but people get by any way they can," says resident Etzer Dumond, 30. "Thousands of us have had to set up camp here because our homes have been destroyed. We've lost loved ones, jobs ... and it's hard to know where to begin."

Every day, Mercy Corps is working at Carradeux and 27 other camps to improve conditions and offer survivors a way to begin again. In all, we have provided water, hygiene and sanitation services to 22,000 people. We've distributed 3,450 hygiene kits, each containing a month's worth of household cleaning supplies and toiletries. We're teaching good hygiene practices like hand-washing and treating water so people can stay healthy even in crowded conditions.

For months, our priority has been to help families in the camps prepare for – and survive – Haiti's rainy season, which began May 1. Our engineers created flood-mitigation plans to protect Carradeux and other camps. Residents continue to work

(continued...)



Etzer Dumond (above) is one of 1,500 people employed by Mercy Corps' cash-for-work program at Carradeux camp.



*(continued from front page)*

to prevent flooding by digging trenches and building retaining walls through Mercy Corps' cash-for-work program. Our cash-for-work program gives survivors temporary jobs for four weeks to complete clean-up and infrastructure projects.

"Before we started the cash-for-work program, Carradeux was covered with debris and trash, and had not received much help since January 12," says Etzer, who has been employed in the program. "We've cleaned up debris and covered stagnant puddles that could breed mosquitoes. For better drainage, we cleared out existing ditches and dug new ones. Mercy Corps has helped us create a safer environment for everyone living here, and most importantly they put some money in our pockets to help us get by."

For many families, cash-for-work has been the first opportunity they've had since the earthquake to earn income.

Mercy Corps prefers cash-for-work over traditional emergency distributions because it allows families to make their own decisions about what food and supplies they need. Also, their spending then directly benefits the local economy. Useful work boosts morale in camps and also offers families a reprieve from the daily stress of figuring out how to get their next meal, so they can begin to plan for their future.

*“ Mercy Corps has helped us create a safer environment for everyone living here, and most importantly they put some money in our pockets to help us get by. ”*

– camp resident  
Etzer Dumond

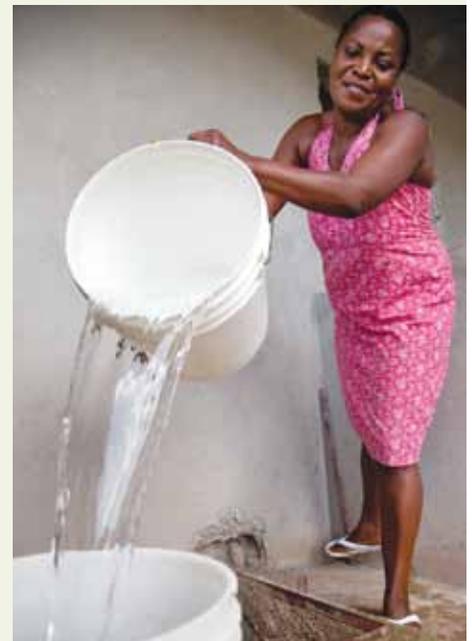
## A New Way to Deliver Water

Water is available to families living in camps, but it can take 30 minutes on foot to reach a vendor – and often they sell water that is not clean. To address this issue, Mercy Corps has helped set up vendors to provide water to 12 camps and we're distributing vouchers that families can redeem there. This voucher system is an improvement over delivering water to camps by truck because it reinforces economic structures already in place and, in some cases, helps form a water market where there wasn't one before.

Here's how it works: Mercy Corps identifies a water vendor near the camp and ensures that the vendor can sell enough clean water to meet the camp's needs. In some cases where there isn't already a vendor, we find a nearby household that has access to water and is interested in starting their own business.

Mercy Corps gives every family in the camp vouchers to exchange for 10 gallons of water a day. Vouchers are distributed weekly. At the end of the week, Mercy Corps pays the vendor for all the vouchers redeemed.

The voucher program's strength is in its sustainability – we're creating a market-based system to distribute water. And it's a system that will stay in place after Mercy Corps leaves.





## Providing a Lifeline

Elianne Lazard supervises her cash-for-work team at the Carradeux camp as they clear a drainage ditch under a glaring sun. Like many other survivors, she is grateful to have work to do together. “We help each other through the day,” says Elianne, 34.

Everyone here is struggling to start over. “Before January 12, we weren’t rich, but we were doing okay,” Elianne says of her family. “Life is very different now. I’ve lost my home and my husband. My five children have lost their father. Sometimes I feel like getting angry, but all we can do is accept the challenges life brings and move forward. We’re still here – we have to be thankful for that.”

Before the quake, Elianne sold foods like canned milk and rice to support her family. Today, her cash-for-work wages will go first toward feeding her children. Then, she says, “The number-one thing I plan to do is to start my small business again. I have to think ahead and somehow make this money grow. It’s the first lifeline I’ve been blessed with since that tragic day. Thank you to everyone who supported Mercy Corps to make this happen.”

## EMERGENCY RELIEF DISTRIBUTIONS

(AS OF JUNE 20, 2010)

### WATER

- 862,500 gallons of clean water, approximately a one-month supply for 7,255 people (ongoing).

### FOOD

- One-month food supply to 5,500 families. In all, 315 tons of food, benefiting 33,000 individuals.
- Two-week rations of rice for 5,000 families, benefiting 25,000 individuals.
- One-month supply of food for 1,000 patients and personnel at Port-au-Prince General Hospital.
- 68,000 packages of high-energy biscuits.

### SHELTER

- Tarps to 1,535 families to improve camp shelters.

### EMERGENCY INCOME

- Income to 5,960 families through cash-for-work. Our goal by September is to employ 12,000 families.

### HEALTH/SANITATION

- Hygiene kits to 3,450 families, including a one-month supply of laundry detergent, soap and other toiletries.
- 114 temporary latrines in 25 camps (ongoing).

### TOOLS

- 9,660 tools – such as wheelbarrows, shovels, and sledgehammers – to camps for site improvements (ongoing).



## Microfinance Partner Fonkoze

Mercy Corps has partnered with Fonkoze, Haiti’s largest microfinance institution, to help build a stronger economy in Haiti. To date, Mercy Corps has provided:

- 500 Fonkoze clients with catastrophic insurance, retroactive to January 12, granting them \$128 to use for emergency needs and clearing the balance on their loans. With this assistance, 335 clients have already applied for a new loan.
- Start-up funding to Zafèn (zafen.org), an online microfinance program that connects lenders with small- and medium-sized enterprises in Haiti. Already, 200 entrepreneurs have lined up loans for their business ventures.



Parents in a Comfort for Kids workshop learn how to best respond to their children's post-earthquake emotional and physical needs.

## A Youthful Vision for a New Haiti

Harnessing the energy of young people is instrumental in rebuilding a stronger Haiti. Our youth programs put that belief into action by addressing young people's unique psychosocial needs and investing in their development.

### Comfort for Kids

Immediately after the earthquake, Mercy Corps began Comfort for Kids trainings for parents, teachers, pediatricians, psychologists, social workers and other childcare professionals. These workshops offer practical ways to help kids heal from the psychological trauma they experienced, so they can go on to lead healthy lives.

The workshops have immediate impact, says Mercy Corps psychologist Murielle Volcy. "Parents tell us, 'I didn't know this information. I didn't know why my child always had a stomachache or bad dreams. Now I know it is stress from the earthquake and that I can help them with their feelings.'"

Mercy Corps will train a total of 3,150 parents and professionals in Comfort for Kids. They, in turn, will help some 63,000 children. Next, Mercy Corps is launching Moving Forward, a program that will train 50 youth workers and coaches at 25 organizations to use sports and play with 1,500 kids to restore their self-confidence and sense of normalcy.

Mercy Corps has used Comfort for Kids and Moving Forward to help children recover from many other disasters, including September 11 (2001), Hurricanes Katrina and Rita (2005), as well as earthquakes in Peru (2007), China (2008) and Chile (2010).

### Re-imagining Haiti

Even before January 12, Haiti struggled with a weak economy, limited educational opportunities and severe environmental degradation. The destruction caused

by the earthquake only added to those challenges. But many Haitians agree that if there were ever a time to start over, it's now.

Mercy Corps is working with Haitian youth to become active participants in what many are calling the "re-imagining of Haiti." This fall, our youth program plans to bring together 100 Haitian artists and educators to offer arts workshops to 1,500 youth and cultural events to more than 5,000 young people. Through photography and storytelling, these youth will learn to communicate their personal vision for change. Their artistic self-expression is a powerful first step to taking ownership of the challenges their communities face.

Mercy Corps is also bringing Cinema Under the Stars (*Sinema Anba Zetwal* in Creole) to communities across Haiti. Cinema Under the Stars is a series of multimedia street events that use short films, skits and music to share positive, educational messages – including those in our Comfort for Kids program – with the public. These interactive events will reach 100,000 people over two months, building morale and strengthening their community bonds.



Fleurismus Valine, 10, who attends the art therapy program Children's Place, is just one of the many children we've helped through Comfort for Kids.

### Youth Program Accomplishments to Date:

- 1,230 caregivers trained through Comfort for Kids to offer psychosocial support to 24,600 children. In all, we'll train 3,150 adults, assisting some 63,000 children.
- 3,000 Comfort Kits delivered (containing a blanket, toys, and toiletries).

### Upcoming Distributions:

- 5,000 copies of the Comfort for Kids facilitators' guide "What Happened to Our World" to hospitals, schools and other organizations.
- 10,000 copies of the "My Earthquake Story" children's workbook to local organizations.
- 1,000 Sesame Street DVDs to local organizations in partnership with Sesame Workshop, featuring original content that addresses the needs of Haitian children.



## Bringing Help to Haiti's Rural Economy

An estimated 90,000 earthquake survivors fled Port-au-Prince to Haiti's Central Plateau. Even before the quake, this was one of the country's poorest regions. Its agricultural economy has suffered from environmental degradation and poor infrastructure. Many families lack access to a latrine and walk great distances for water.

Yet, following the earthquake, these households opened their doors to homeless friends and family from Port-au-Prince — even, in some cases, to strangers. At times, there is nothing they can offer except a blanket and a spot on the floor.

To ease the hardships in the Central Plateau, Mercy Corps is providing immediate financial assistance through cash-for-work programs for both the displaced earthquake survivors and the families who took them in.

The strategy behind all our activities in the Central Plateau, however, is long-term: To revitalize the rural economy so people can make a living. If there are jobs, people can choose to stay, rather

than returning to the crowded conditions in Port-au-Prince.

Mercy Corps is now hiring the first of 20,000 families for cash-for-work projects in Central Plateau. These projects give a member of each household 30 days of employment on a community-selected project geared at improving infrastructure or agricultural production, such as rehabilitating roads, farmland or irrigation. We are also giving cash grants of \$128 to 7,000 host families to take care of their urgent needs for food and household supplies.

In the next 12 months, Mercy Corps also plans to provide materials to 10,000 displaced and host families to improve their homes and temporary shelters in the cities of Mirebalais, Hinche and Saint-Marc. Families will receive a voucher they can redeem from local vendors for tools, building supplies, mattresses, or additional cookware. During that time, we also plan to give vouchers to another 5,000 families for supplies that will help them begin a new trade or business, such as sewing machines or beehives.

### CENTRAL PLATEAU RESPONSE

#### By December 2010

- Cash-for-work for 20,000 households of displaced earthquake survivors and host families.
- Cash grants of \$128 to 7,000 host families to meet the urgent needs of their expanded households.

## Voices of Hope & Resolve

One of the first groups that Mercy Corps assisted in the Central Plateau was displaced students who left Port-au-Prince after their universities collapsed. We gave them temporary cash-for-work employment surveying local families to find out how many displaced people they were hosting and what their needs were.



### Moïse Mackendy, 23

"Everyone is suffering. When a host receives a displaced person, both live with a little more difficulty. But at the same time, the hosts are doing it wholeheartedly. Some are selling possessions or livestock to help these people. And they do it with a smile. Before the earthquake I was disappointed with how things were going in Haiti, but now I understand I must take a position and be one of the people who will make Haiti different."



### Cassandra Augustin Georges, 22

"One woman I spoke to said that she lost all three of her kids on January 12. No goodbyes. These kids had been taking care of her by sending money from the city. So now she has nothing, no way to get by. I gave her some of my own money, I was so touched by her situation. The experience changed me. I understand the necessity to do good to others. If I have something more, I must share it."



### Buldrine Pierre, 24

"I came upon several poor farmers who had received a lot of family from Port-au-Prince, but really did not have any means to feed them. The drought is hard. They can't plant. They can't find water. It saddens me when I see that people don't have any way to make a living. Before January 12, I studied agronomy in Port-au-Prince. I hope to help put this land to productive use so it feeds people. I want to be a leader for development in Haiti."

With the wages they earned, the students bought food and other necessities. Some sent a portion to family members living elsewhere. The students valued the work — as well as what they learned about their country and neighbors in the process.

## CRISIS TO OPPORTUNITY

Mercy Corps helps people in the world's toughest places turn the crises of natural disaster, poverty and conflict into opportunities for progress. After meeting the most urgent needs, we begin working to help families recover and gain long-term stability and prosperity. Driven by local needs, our programs provide communities with the tools and support they need to transform their own lives. Our worldwide team of 3,700 professionals is improving the lives of 16.7 million people in more than 40 countries. For more information, visit [mercycorps.org](http://mercycorps.org).

> To learn more about Mercy Corps' work in Haiti please visit [mercycorps.org/Haiti](http://mercycorps.org/Haiti)

## Update from Haiti

© 2010 Mercy Corps – All rights reserved.

Writer/Editor: Lisa Hoashi

Production: Jennifer Dillan

Design: Geena Min

Mercy Corps is a tax-exempt agency, IRS Code 501(c)3.

### Photo Credits

Cover: Miguel Samper for Mercy Corps

Page 2: Fabiola Coupet/Mercy Corps, Miguel Samper for

Mercy Corps, Nancy Farese for Mercy Corps

Page 3: Fabiola Coupet/Mercy Corps, Cassandra Nelson/Mercy Corps

Page 4: Nancy Farese for Mercy Corps

Page 5: Fabiola Coupet/Mercy Corps

Back cover: Fabiola Coupet/Mercy Corps



45 SW Ankeny Street  
Portland, OR 97204

888.842.0842  
[mercycorps.org](http://mercycorps.org)