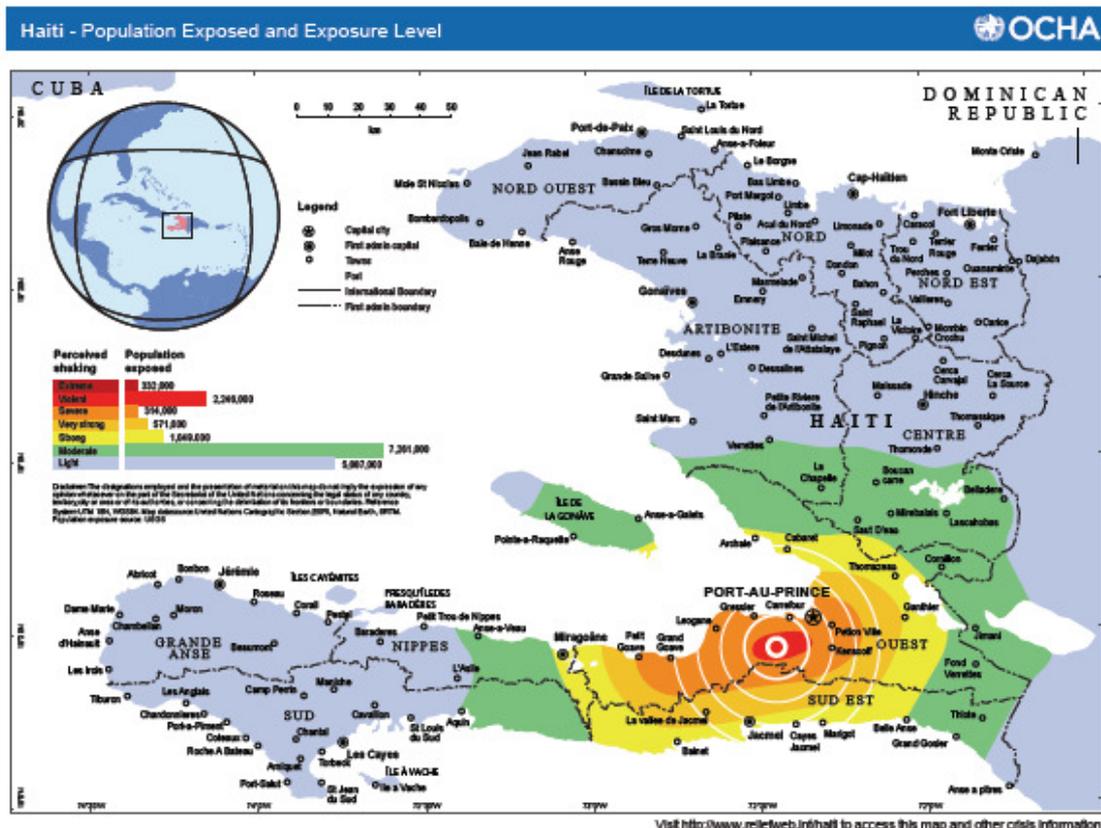


Haiti: Earthquake relief

I. Overall Situation

The strongest earthquake in Haiti in more than 200 years, measuring 7.0 on the Richter scale, rocked the impoverished Caribbean nation on 12 January at 4.53 p.m. (local time). The earthquake struck Ouest Province (population 2.2 million), with the epicentre some 17km south-west of Haiti's capital, Port-au-Prince. The nearby cities of Carrefour and Jacmel, as well as other areas to the west and south of Port-au-Prince, were also affected. Powerful aftershocks shook a desperately poor country where many buildings are flimsy. Thousands are feared dead, many more are injured, and unknown numbers are still buried under the rubble. The streets of Port-au-Prince are filled with people too scared to go back into their damaged homes, sleeping in the open at night amidst the bodies of those killed in the disaster.



Source: www.reliefweb.int

The level of casualties sustained by civil servants and the damage to public buildings and services have significantly reduced the capacity of national authorities to lead and coordinate the response. Damage to buildings and infrastructure is widespread and severe. Port-au-Prince's critical infrastructure such as electricity and water is still disabled. The airport in Port-au-Prince is operational (currently for earthquake-related operational flights only), but roads to and within the capital are partly blocked. Communications remain widely disrupted, making it difficult to obtain a full picture of the situation. The damage to infrastructure – such as damaged or destroyed roads, bridges, water systems, and electrical and communications systems – will inevitably affect the speed and scale of the relief effort.

Fortunately, areas beyond the capital appear to be less affected, if not unaffected, by the earthquake.

At the moment there is no way to be certain of the numbers of people killed, wounded, trapped, missing or homeless. However, plotting the earthquake's zones of intensity against population densities in this part of Haiti shows that 3 million people were in areas of 'very strong' to 'extreme' shaking, where structures



Photo: Reuters

would have suffered moderate to very heavy damage. According to latest estimations, about 3 million people are severely affected, in the sense of injury and/or loss of access to essentials such as food, water, health care, shelter, plus livelihoods, education and other basic needs, and on restoring and strengthening state capacities. In addition, much of the affected population will have been displaced, heightening the vulnerabilities. Because of the concentration of displaced people in Port-au-Prince, it is likely that some inhabitants will travel to areas outside the capital in search for shelter, food, medical care, etc. This would add demographic pressure on rural areas and other urban centres.

Assessments are now under way in Port-au-Prince to map comprehensively the consequences of earthquake. National and international efforts are expected to evolve and increase in the coming days and weeks. Initial international effort has focused on urban search and rescue, plus improving logistics and starting to provide large-scale aid including medical assistance and evacuation, water, food, tents and blankets. Logistics resources are paramount to ensuring delivery of relief items, and to establishing and managing camps/areas for the displaced. They will also be necessary to allow aid agencies to re-establish and scale up their capacities quickly.

For further up-to-date information, please visit: www.reliefweb.int

II. Malteser International activities

On Friday night, 15 January 2010, the Malteser International team with two French, four Haitian and four German staff members, finally reached Port-au-Prince. “The border crossings are completely blocked”, Dr. Georg Nothelle, Malteser International emergency relief coordinator and head of the team, reports. “Numerous teams of helpers want to get in, Haitian people want to get out. We had to wait more than two hours at the border.” He continues, “The hospitals in the border region in the Dominican Republic meanwhile are overcrowded with injured people from Haiti.” As a result of these observations Malteser International is also planning to support these hospitals.

The local Malteser team in Haiti has provided accommodation for the team in a district of Port-au-Prince that has not been damaged. Many other helpers, however, in the evening have to return to the airport area in order to spend the night there. The Malteser International team will now split up into smaller groups in order to assess the needs and provide first aid in the different districts of the town. The groups will also try to reach towns and villages to the west and south of Port-au-Prince that were also severely damaged and provide assistance

there. “Help is needed urgently in so many places but the search and rescue teams cannot be everywhere at the same time”, Nothelle continues. “There are dead bodies everywhere. It seems as if they were sleeping, people are just passing by. It’s really terrible.”

On Sunday, 17 January, a second Malteser International team will be sent into the crisis region via Punta Cana (Dominican Republic); they are expected to arrive in Santo Domingo in the evening. Annette Waechter-Schneider and Beate Maass will reinforce the medical team on the ground. They are already in continuous contact with their partners on the ground.

On Monday, 18 January, Cesar Russo, the Malteser International chief logistician in Myanmar after cyclone Nargis hit the country in 2008, at 7 p.m. CET will start from Oostende/Belgium to Haiti. He will take with him two emergency health kits containing urgently needed medicines.

Furthermore, Malteser teams in the USA are preparing to send medicines that are purchased on the regional market.



French team members leaving for Haiti
(Photo: Ordre de Malte France)

III. Appeal for donations

Malteser International is extremely grateful for the donations that have already been sent by the Canadian Association of the Order (10,000 Canadian Dollars) or announced. the Embassy of the Order of Malta in the Dominican Republic (10,000 US Dollars). Furthermore, the associations and/or embassies in Austria, Belgium, Chile, France, Germany, Great Britain, Portugal, Spain and the United States have launched donation appeals or will do so within short notice.

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”

For further enquiries, please contact Mr. Sid Johann Peruvemba.
Phone: + 49-221-9822-170
Cell: + 49-171-30 44 983
<mailto:peruvemba@malteser-international.org>

We shall keep you informed about all further developments.

Yours sincerely

Ingo Radtke
Secretary General



Santo Domingo: German team members with H. Exc. Hans Rothe, Ambassador of the Order of Malta to Haiti