

Dear Friends,

Gwenael Apollon, General Secretary of the Haiti YMCA, reports that the badly damaged infrastructure continues to impact daily life in Port-au-Prince with no working water or sanitation services, heavy congestion on the only main road through the city and a complete shut-down of the education system at all levels. Dr. Stephen Ray Smith, a U.S. YMCA volunteer, arrived safely and began working with Gwenael on the immediate and short-term needs of the Haiti YMCA. Gwenael and Ray went door-to-door to offer support to those impacted as well as an assurance that the YMCA is committed to helping families and communities rebuild.

Gwenael further reports:

- The Haiti YMCA secured an office space, and is holding staff meetings and planning sessions.
- Thirty Port-au-Prince YMCA volunteers are available to support programming and the YMCA will collaborate with the local university to recruit more volunteers.
- The YMCA is working to procure large tents to serve as the temporary “YMCA facility” so that programs and services can be resumed immediately. The YMCA plans to offer critical services such as psycho-social counseling and education and hopes to collaborate with other organizations to provide on-site medical services and food distribution on a larger scale.
- Plans to reach a greater number of injured and displaced are under development to serve those unable to travel to the YMCA. The YMCA will focus efforts on bringing programs and services to the children and families living in the “tent cities” that are housing so many of the homeless.
- The Dominican Republic YMCA, in coordination with global YMCA partners, is delivering a second convoy to the Haiti YMCA with urgent supplies and resources to serve up to 5,000 people.
- In general, looting has not been an issue and people have been lining up in an orderly manner to receive supplies. Families in the community have expressed their gratitude for the YMCA’s efforts.



Below are excerpts from the latest Mission Report drafted by Gwenael Apollon, the General Secretary of the Haiti YMCA, detailing the Haiti YMCA’s relief efforts as well as short-term operating strategy.

Twenty days after the tragedy, the overall situation in Haiti remains chaotic for the poorest. The earth has not shaken for the last two days. Everybody sleeps, eats and does everything else outside. Those fortunate enough to sleep in their yard or in their friends’ yard live uncomfortably but with decency whereas the others invade the streets, the parks and every other open space. The migration movement is estimated at 1.5 million from which 1.2 million leave Port-au-Prince to other cities within Haiti and the remaining 300,000 have left the country. Food is starting to be rare and expensive in small regions that have no capacity to absorb large population.

*The **Haiti YMCA** has distinguished itself in the community by giving eight years of service for the advancement of youth, by helping thousands of happy, informed and educated youth, by putting hundreds of youth in high school, by building a library of 20,000 books in French and in English in three communities, by building an excellent after-school program and a leadership program, by doing 10 summer camps, three youth centers, four football (soccer) teams and many other programs and activities.*

Gwenael Apollon
General Secretary, Haiti YMCA

*This two-day journey to the **Haiti YMCA Camp-Perrin** was a blessing. The village is 99% intact, even if people were heavily shaken. I think the distance from the epicenter and the nature of the soil which is rocky added to the abundance of the vegetation puts together with only small residential constructions and not heavy ones might have helped.*

We distributed 50 boxes of food at Camp-Perrin from the load received from Dominican Republic YMCA to staff and members and this went well. One of the performers of the show was a student who survived from the collapse

of the University from which he was studying in Port-au-Prince. He recited a 10 minute-poetry that he wrote on the occasion without hesitation, with proper grammar and syntax, alternating between Creole, French and English.

Y-USA would like to thank the local YMCAs and individuals across the U.S. who have provided valuable technical and financial support to the Haiti YMCA. In this time of need, cash donations are the most efficient and effective way to support the Haiti YMCA.

If you would like to help, please make a donation to **YMCA World Service** at www.ymca.net/worldservice or by calling (800) 872-9622. Please be sure to specify that your contribution is for "Haiti Earthquake Support." (Note: per the **Haiti Tax Deduction Bill**, a taxpayer may deduct a qualifying contribution made after January 11, 2010, and before March 1, 2010, on their 2009 tax return instead of taking the deduction on their 2010 tax return.) At this time, Y-USA will not coordinate the collection/distribution of supplies due to the extreme logistical challenges - including transport, distribution and storage - on the ground in Haiti.

We will continue to post information on YMCAexchange as it becomes available. **You can find previous updates on YMCAexchange** at <http://www.ymcaexchange.org>. Please feel free to contact me with any questions or comments.

Selma A. Zaidi
Vice President, International Group
YMCA of the USA



In Port-au-Prince, what is left of the **Haiti YMCA** main office and Youth Center remains under the debris.



Residents of one of the many tent cities throughout Haiti where thousands of homeless people have taken refuge.

