Resource Guide

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Haiti

Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) (Rebuilding in Haiti)

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International Relief & Development

Web mcc.org
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http://mcc.org/stories/news/mcc–plans–long–term–recovery–haiti

MCC plans long–term recovery in Haiti
April 14, 2010

AKRON, Pa. – After weeks of careful assessment and planning in Haiti, Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) has established priorities and plans that will guide its on–going response to the Haiti earthquake.

From food security and education to economic development and housing, the plans are designed to empower Haitians to rebuild their communities better than they were before the Jan. 12 earthquake. The rebuilding plan is intentionally holistic, focusing on multiple areas of support, said Virgil Troyer, a regional disaster management coordinator who has worked in Haiti since the earthquake.

Generous donors have given MCC about $13.09 million dollars and potential contributions from Canadian Foodgrains Bank and other sources could boost the total contributions closer to $20 million.

MCC envisions a three– to five–year expenditure of that money, initially in the Port–au–Prince area and west of the city where several MCC partners are working. However, MCC will gradually shift the focus of its work to the Artibonite Valley, about 1½ hours northeast of Port–au–Prince. MCC already has programming established in the town of Desarmes.

The Haitian government estimates that 600,000 people have fled Port–au–Prince for rural communities, 162,500 to the Artibonite Department, where the Artibonite Valley is located. The Haitian government would like them to settle outside of Port–au–Prince because the infrastructure of the capital city could not accommodate its population before the earthquake.

MCC's Haiti staff and MCC's international program development leaders established the long–range priorities when they met in Haiti in late March. They assimilated input from MCC's partners, MCC Haiti national staff and international workers and Haitian political leaders into the plan.

Priority areas in which MCC's support and finances will be focused include:
· Emergency assistance: Distribute food in the Port–au–Prince area until May when cash–for–work programs will be offered. Urban and rural distribution of relief kits, tarps and tents, first aid kits, water filters and sheets and comforters will continue through the summer.
· Economic development and food security: Support cash–for–work projects in areas damaged by the earthquake; develop income–generation projects and improve agriculture and irrigation systems in the Artibonite Valley.
· Housing: Hire one person to assess new housing arrangements for people in nine camps for internally displaced persons in Port–au–Prince, where MCC has been working from the beginning of its emergency response. This priority also includes assisting with temporary to permanent housing for displaced people in the Artibonite Valley.
· Construction techniques: Hire a structural engineer to train construction workers, engineers and architects in hazard–resistant construction techniques.
· Education: Assist the Ecumenical Foundation for Peace and Justice (FOPJ) to buy land and build a primary school in Port–au–Prince; explore ways to expand educational infrastructure in the Artibonite Valley to accommodate those who have migrated there from the capital; consider adding university or vocational education opportunities there.
· Health: Address sanitation and water needs in camps for internally displaced persons in and near Port–au–Prince; explore collaboration with other organizations and the Haitian Ministry of Health to provide expanded health services in the Artibonite Valley.
· Trauma healing: Provide resources for appropriate trauma–healing services.

The long–range plan will continue to be re–evaluated and redefined as the work progresses, Troyer said.

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Updates on website – Haiti: http://mcc.org/haitiearthquake/news/onsite

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