

Haiti Update 2
January 28, 2010

A Southern Baptist Disaster Relief strategy-planning meeting for Haiti relief was held in Florida Tuesday, January 26, 2010. Representatives from the Florida Baptist Convention, IMB, BGR, and NAMB met with the assessment teams. Four medical teams are being mobilized over the next week with additional plans underway to secure warehouse space for a rice shipment, housing and transportation for volunteers, and supplies to support a larger mobilization of SBDR resources in the coming weeks.

Kentucky and Mississippi medical teams will fly into Santo Domingo in the Dominican Republic on Sunday (31st). They will then transfer to a charter bus and make the long, difficult journey to Port-au-Prince in Haiti. The teams will be staying at the Florida Mission House and will minister in clinics. Additionally, Florida and South Carolina medical teams will be traveling to Haiti via Santo Domingo this coming Wednesday, February 3, 2010.

Plans are underway to transport large quantities of rice into Haiti where it will be distributed by Haitian Baptists to those in need. Food distribution has been a large part of the ministry of Florida Baptists and their Haitian ministry partners following hurricanes in recent years. Pray for the logistics of getting the rice into the country and transporting it to the churches where it can be distributed to those who need it most.

While it is difficult for church volunteer teams to respond to the needs in Haiti, some individual efforts have been successful in reaching Haiti. Rev. Bill Howard, pastor of Willow Ridge Church, was able to enter Haiti on Friday (2/22). Willow Ridge has an ongoing ministry relationship with three Haitian pastors. One of them was killed when his friend's house collapsed. Rev. Howard was able to minister to the deceased pastor's family. Pastor Howard was able to transport some anti-biotic and drinkable water to Haiti and was able to distribute those items through the two surviving pastors. The Lexington Baptist Association will continue looking for opportunity to support and partner with any credible relief effort on the grounds of Haiti.

There seems to be stronger coordination amongst large relief organizations that are on the ground. US AID (Agency on International Development) is holding daily coordination calls for nonprofits and faith based organizations that are responding and active in Haiti.

According to the health cluster, as of January 23, there are 43 hospitals functioning in the Port-au-Prince area, 12 field hospitals (half of which are military hospitals) and two hospital ships from the U.S. and Mexico.

Approximately 40,000 tents are either in Haiti or en route. However, to meet extensive needs additional shelter solutions are required, including support for host families and transitional shelter. There has been news that the US National Response Coordination Center (NRCC) may attempt to relocate and treat some of the injured victims and their family in the United States. Columbia, SC has been put on alert to treat these Haitian patients and receive their accompanying family members. The Lexington Baptist Association will keep you informed when such ministry opportunity should become available.

What can LBA churches do at this moment?

First, help people understand the magnitude of the need. **Second**, mobilize the churches to pray. **Third**, make financial gifts. In addition to the generous individual contributions, others have creatively raise funds (golf tournament, free hair cuts etc.) and solicit corporate funding.

Where can I donate?

International Mission Board and the North American Mission Board, as well as our South Carolina Baptist Convention are receiving donations designated for Haiti relief.

The Lexington Baptist Association is also set up to receive donations.

Checks can be mailed to Lexington Baptist Association, 255 Two Notch Road, Lexington, SC 29073. Please make it payable to Lexington Baptist Association for "Haiti Disaster Relief."

What would LBA do with my donation?

A 100% of the contribution earmark for Haiti will be used for relief, recovery and rebuilding Haiti. Some example use of the funds will be to purchase medicine and food during the recovery phase. During the rebuilding phase in the next few years, these funds can be used to purchase construction material to rebuild homes.