



A Progress Report



Desina Fortuna, 60, at New Jerusalem camp outside Léogâne. She is one of many attendants trained and supported by CARE to maintain tidy latrines and hand-washing stations, a vital link in protecting health and combating the spread of cholera.

Haiti Earthquake Emergency Response Fund

January – December 2010

Background

For Haiti, 2010 began in horror, with the January 12 earthquake that caused unimaginable destruction to a desperately poor nation. A year later, Haitians look back in mourning, but also in solidarity, at how this worst of tragedies brought out the best in people. Survivors with next to nothing came together to help those even worse off than themselves. The international community responded with unprecedented generosity and rescuers from around the world put their own lives in danger and worked to exhaustion to save lives and relieve suffering.

The road to recovery is a long one. After a year of hard work, Haiti has made important progress – but much remains to be done. Clearing the incalculable amount of debris from the streets is a painstaking

process. The spontaneous camps now resemble villages whose residents are seeking to build more permanent shelters. The economic devastation is extreme, and people who have depended on aid for months need a foothold on a sustainable livelihood. Election violence has shaken the nation's security, and a deadly cholera outbreak has added another layer of suffering for those who have already endured so much.

And yet, a great deal has been accomplished. Thanks to the generosity of donors like you, who supported CARE's **Haiti Earthquake Emergency Response Fund**, pregnant women and new mothers have help to give birth safely and care properly for their children. Access to safe water and sanitation has greatly improved. Children whose schools were destroyed have opportunities to learn and play, and support as they deal with trauma. Families have secure shelter in the medium term as they plan for the future. And communities are benefiting from paid work that contributes to the cleanup and recovery effort.

Deep wounds heal with difficulty but, despite crises and misfortune, Haitians have faith in the future – greatly because of the generosity and concern shown by supporters like you from around the world. As one Haitian CARE staff member put it, “We know that today will never be worse than yesterday, because we are not alone.”

CARE's Response

With a 56-year history in Haiti and staff experienced in emergencies including the aftermath of major tropical storms, CARE was well positioned to launch an immediate relief effort. To direct our resources where they would be most effective, we chose to focus our response on three of the hardest-hit districts: Léogâne, the community closest to the epicenter, where more than 80 percent of homes were destroyed; Carrefour, a hard-hit neighborhood near central Port-au-Prince; and Pétionville, a close suburb where many spontaneous settlements sprang up.

The relief effort was extremely challenging due to the staggering damage to Haiti's infrastructure and the losses suffered by government, international agencies and the United Nations. But CARE and our partner agencies were able to deliver lifesaving aid almost immediately. Our staff of 130, most of them Haitian citizens, worked tirelessly despite their own deep personal losses. Thanks to their round-the-clock efforts and those of many others, Haiti avoided a food security crisis, and virtually all displaced people had some form of shelter within weeks.

CARE continues to build the strength and expertise of our staff in Haiti, who now number 507 – well over 90 percent of them Haitians with deep roots in the communities we serve. We have cultivated a vast network of dedicated local volunteers, including more than 300 who support our health programs, and innumerable community members working with our shelter team. And we are striving to help Haitians better prepare for and mitigate the severity of future challenges, including the inevitable natural disasters.

From the earliest hours, CARE considered the enormous needs Haiti will face in its medium- and long-term recovery – in many ways larger in scale, and more expensive, than the initial response – as we developed our five-year response and fundraising strategy. We continue to monitor and adjust our work to changing circumstances, including the cholera outbreak, movements of displaced people and their choices about shelter and water usage.

In the following pages we detail some of CARE's earthquake response work over the past year in sectors including: shelter; water, sanitation and hygiene; education and psychosocial support; reproductive health and prevention of gender-based violence; livelihoods and food security. All of these achievements and more have been made possible thanks to the generous support of institutional and private donors large and small, including contributors to the **Haiti Emergency Response Fund**.

Immediate and Medium-term Response:

Immediately after the earthquake, CARE mobilized existing resources in Port-au-Prince and the rest of Haiti, while summoning support from our worldwide disaster response network. We supplied emergency shelter and household items, as well as food and safe water, to people forced to leave damaged, destroyed or dangerously unstable homes. Our **initial response** reached 290,000 beneficiaries through the distribution of tarps, tents, shelter kits, ropes, mattresses, blankets, kitchen sets, jerry cans, hygiene, safe delivery kits, newborn kits and food.

Even while conducting our urgent actions, we were planning efforts to find more durable shelter solutions for displaced people, to launch activities to spur economic recovery, to address ongoing reproductive health and gender issues, and to ensure sustainable supplies of safe water and sanitation services.

In all of our work, CARE places a strong priority on working with community leaders, religious and civic groups, and volunteer administrators elected by camp residents. By cooperating with, supporting and strengthening these groups, we not only ensure the efficient delivery of aid to those most in need, but also help lay the groundwork for self-sufficiency and sustainability in Haiti's long-term recovery.

Our immediate and medium-term response activities over the course of the year included the following:

Shelter

To meet immediate needs for protection from the elements, CARE distributed emergency shelter materials including **14,902 plastic tarps, 20,641 mattresses and 44,826 blankets**, in conjunction with other non-food items such as hygiene kits and jerry cans for water collection. We prioritized tarps over tents because of their flexibility in tight areas, need for less ground space, reusability and lower cost. CARE provided illustrated instructions in Creole on proper installation to resist wind and rain. Through workshops, training for local master carpenters, and pilot shelters to serve as public models, we spread expertise on good building practices throughout the settlement areas.



Volunteers carried wood at a CARE distribution of shelter reinforcement materials.

CARE quickly moved into the transitional shelter phase, helping secure more durable protection against the elements. For those able to modify and strengthen temporary structures already in place, CARE provided **17,402 reinforcement kits** containing wooden panels, tarps, iron sheets, nails, metal bars, straps and instructions on repairs, plus 414 repair kits specially tailored for wooden homes. These materials are designed so that many of them can be re-used when families move and rebuild outside the camps.

Meanwhile, CARE completed nearly **1,000 durable transitional shelters**, or an average of 20 to 30 per week, and we continue to construct shelters as quickly as possible, given constraints such as unclear land titles. These structures were carefully designed for dignity and privacy, in consultation with their future occupants, and were

tested for hazard resistance by the United Nations. They are intended to last for several years and in some cases can be moved, adapted or used as the core frame for an expanded dwelling.

CARE's objective is to provide incentives to support people as they leave the spontaneous settlements and move back to communities. We have made good progress, as some 500,000 people have left the camps since July, when the population peaked at 1.5 million. However, given the reality that many will have to stay in the camps for the time being, CARE continues to work for better and safer shelter options.

CARE's shelter team has invested considerable time and effort in community engagement, training and sensitization. Many other humanitarian organizations now look to CARE as a leader in understanding the complex social aspects of working with displaced communities in need of shelter.



Delicia Duval and her brother in front of their new transitional shelter in Astek, Carrefour. CARE provides the dwellings in partially pre-fabricated panels, which families then assemble.

Water

The lack of consistent, safe water supplies is one of the most critical dangers after a disaster, and CARE and other humanitarian organizations moved quickly to address the needs. Our efforts were successful in staving off the immediate threat of water-borne epidemics in the Port-au-Prince region – though tragically, cholera later emerged separately in a non-quake-affected area of the country.

From the earliest days, CARE worked to bolster the government's capacity to supply water and sanitation services. We installed 18 temporary water points and contracted for the trucking of safe water, serving an estimated **44,550 displaced people with safe water on a daily basis**. We also distributed water purification products along with careful instruction about proper usage, to supplement supplies in areas not otherwise served. We **provided 14,167 families with jerry cans** to collect and store water supplies.

Our ongoing work in water, sanitation and hygiene serves residents in **51 camps**.

Sanitation

The need for proper sanitation facilities was, and continues to be, a pressing concern. We have constructed **more than 1,000 latrines** at spontaneous settlement sites. These public facilities are kept clean and tidy by latrine attendants who are trained, equipped and supported by CARE. We have purchased **10 vacuum trucks** for "de-sludging," to assist with the emptying of CARE-constructed latrine sites and other emergency sanitation facilities in the greater Port-au-Prince area.

Hygiene

Ensuring hygiene and healthy practices, especially among people living in crowded conditions such as camps, requires supplies and infrastructure, as well as public outreach. CARE has intervened in both of these areas. As an early priority, CARE distributed **37,378 hygiene kits**, including items such as soap, towels, toothbrushes and sanitary napkins. We quickly moved on to construct **89 hand-washing stations** and **342 showers**, in all cases taking into account the particular needs for privacy and security for women.

CARE takes a multi-faceted approach to encouraging good practices in areas such as safe water handling and keeping settlement sites and latrines clean. Our staff and volunteer hygiene promoters, going from shelter to shelter at 130 spontaneous settlements, have conducted **3,077 hygiene promotion sessions** and

established **32 children's clubs and 33 mothers' clubs** to promote hygiene. The clubs are key partners, advising CARE on issues such as where to place latrines and waste bins.

In Léogâne, CARE's "child-to-child" methodology encourages peer promotion of good hand-washing practices. Special promotional events for International Women's Day in March reached some 4,300 mothers and children with hygiene information. On October 15, CARE helped celebrate Hand Washing Day with organized public events in both Léogâne and Carrefour. More than 2,800 people attended and went home with a bar of soap and the necessary knowledge to protect their families' health.



Jocelin Evica uses a hand-washing station built by CARE at Camp Aujecad. Evica is a member of a mothers' club taught by CARE to promote good practices for hygiene and cholera prevention.

Using another effective tactic, CARE and the camp health committee designate an attendant who keeps latrines tidy and supplies hand-washing stations with soap. These attendants earn \$5 per day, a significant sum by local standards, and CARE provides brooms, masks, gloves and detergent.

Waste Management

We are proud of our success working with residents to keep spontaneous settlements clean and free of debris. CARE's hygiene team has established volunteer cleaning and waste management committees at 119 camps. Equipped with training, cleaning tools and supplies from CARE, committee members and other site residents were paid to do an initial thorough cleaning day. On an ongoing, volunteer basis, the committees promote key hygiene and health education messages and oversee waste collection and disposal.

In addition to volunteers, paid participants in our cash-for-work programs have performed important cleanup work and received salaries, which helps them support the local economy. In one phase, CARE provided **5,000 people in 39 camps in Carrefour with temporary jobs**, removing more than 1,000 cubic meters of waste.

In total, **CARE's camp waste management activities served an estimated 165,305 displaced people.** Surrounding communities also benefited from improved sanitation and better management of solid waste.

Food Security, Livelihoods and Economic Development

In the first days and weeks following the disaster, CARE participated in the distribution of immediate food aid to earthquake survivors. We delivered **rice to 12,951 families** in cooperation with the United Nations World Food Program, helping stave off a serious food security crisis. Our priority, however, has always been to support sustainable livelihoods for survivors, including job creation and income-generating opportunities. With 50 percent of the population younger than 18 years old, this will become even more crucial in the future.

CARE seeks to promote economic development not just in areas directly affected by the quake, but in parts of rural Haiti where survivors have sought refuge – often with extended family who can scarcely afford to support them. We have chosen to direct some of our support to the community of Bassin-Bleu in northwestern Haiti, which serves as host to many displaced urbanites.

To provide earning opportunities in the shortest possible time, CARE implements cash-for-work programs, allowing people to earn an income while completing urgently needed repair and removal tasks. In addition to the 5,000 waste-removal workers mentioned above, more than **7,000 other cash-for-work participants** have benefited in Léogâne, Bassin-Bleu and Carrefour, working an average of 36 days at a salary of \$5 to \$8 per day. Among other accomplishments, these workers have cleaned many kilometers of roads, rehabilitated irrigation canals, repaired drainage ditches and built soil-conservation installations, such as retaining walls.

We strive to provide 50 percent of cash-for-work opportunities to women, and many other income-generation activities, such as micro-credit initiatives and the distribution of **garden seeds or seedlings to more than 2,100 families**, have focused on women beneficiaries, while also involving men in decision making. Cash-for-work opportunities were created at nurseries on community-donated land in Léogâne, where we provided on-the-job training in how to grow vegetables for sale or family consumption.

Education/Psychosocial Support

The severe damage to Haiti's school system was greatly compounded by the weakness of the existing educational infrastructure. Before the quake, more than 500,000 children between the ages of 6 and 12 did not attend school.¹ The disaster damaged or destroyed 80 percent of schools in Port-au-Prince and 60 percent in the South and West departments.² Many schools outside the capital have been taxed by the arrival of additional students from displaced families.



A young girl does her homework in Léogâne. Resuming learning and play activities is crucial for children coping with trauma.

CARE is supporting the rehabilitation of 20 directly affected schools in Léogâne and 50 indirectly affected schools – serving displaced children – in Gonaïves, Gros-Morne and Jérémie. To enable children to resume classes in October, we distributed **8,506 school kits**.³ Each child received learning materials, notebooks, pencils, hygiene supplies and a T-shirt, packed in a nylon backpack. Meanwhile, we **equipped 79 schools with furniture**, including desks and chairs for students and teachers.

Beyond the loss of educational opportunities, children face a number of issues relating to trauma, and frequently parents and community members do not understand these issues or cannot provide

needed support. A lack of opportunities to play can make it difficult for children to regain a sense of normal life.

The psychosocial component of CARE's strategy works in tandem with other educational and recreational activities to improve the well-being of children in temporary camps in Carrefour, Pétienville and Léogâne. Our approach is twofold: distribution of recreation kits including sports equipment and

¹ Source: Post-Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA).

² Source: UNICEF. Haiti's departments are administrative units equivalent to provinces.

³ The lack of sufficient transport has slowed us in reaching our target of 20,000 school kits and recreational kits. CARE is refurbishing older vehicles to address this issue.

games; and training of caregivers on how to support earthquake-affected children. During the first 12 months, CARE established **27 sites for psychosocial support** and **provided 930 parents with training** covering topics such as psychosocial development of the child, conflict management, identification of post-traumatic stress symptoms, and psychosocial activities for children such as drawing, coloring, sports and traditional games.

CARE also distributed **7,608 recreational kits**, each including a school backpack and materials such as jacks, jump rope, a ball, drawing and writing pads, pencils, crayons and marbles. In addition, we arranged for the organization Clowns sans Frontières to provide displaced children some much-needed entertainment.

Reproductive Health and Gender-based Violence

The health risks associated with pregnancy and childbirth are extreme in Haiti, where the maternal mortality rate, even before the quake, was among the world's worst. Gender-based violence including rape, which was already pervasive, has increased with people living in crowded conditions among strangers in camps that are pitch-black at night. CARE's emergency health response takes an integrated approach to improving access to and quality of reproductive health services, as well as to addressing issues such as equality and violence. We seek to build awareness that sexual violence is not just collateral damage, but also a crime. We also aim to inform people about where to report rape and seek treatment, and how parents can protect their daughters.

CARE uses a variety of channels to disseminate reproductive health and violence-prevention information. We have formed community committees throughout Léogâne and Carrefour and are currently working closely with CARE staff to promote positive messages and build awareness. We use T-shirts, flyers and posters to promote messages such as equal rights for boys and girls, the benefits of breastfeeding, HIV/AIDS awareness, and what to do in case of sexual abuse. Over the past year, CARE held **988 education sessions** on pregnancy, reproductive health and sexual violence.

In conjunction with outreach and education, we distributed **1,904 safe delivery and newborn kits** to pregnant women and new mothers. Safe delivery kits include items such as gloves, plastic sheets, razor blades and other items to improve the sterility of a birthing environment. Newborn kits contain infant clothes, booties and a blanket. CARE teams also distributed **2,116 solar charging flashlights** for the security of women who expressed fear of using the toilets at night.

With many institutions destroyed and staff lost, access to health services remains difficult. CARE is working with traditional midwives and local hospitals to set up a referral system for prenatal care and birth services, as well as for assistance to rape survivors and people in need of reproductive health counseling.

CARE continues to work toward our objective of establishing **women's centers** as a base for reproductive health promotion outreach activities, services, counseling and referrals. Our current objective is to develop up to 20 permanent, community-based facilities (15 in Léogâne and five in



Reproductive health education sessions provide women with an opportunity to come together and share experiences.

Carrefour). Initial plans to create temporary facilities close to spontaneous settlements were reconsidered due to concerns that additional camp-based services would serve as an incentive for families to remain in the settlements, and due to the high cost or unavailability of temporary construction materials.

To ensure that CARE staff know how to incorporate a positive approach to gender differences in their daily activities, CARE offers training on gender-related issues, gender-based violence, sexual exploitation and abuse. So far, 61 staff members from different projects have been trained, among them 28 women and 33 men.

The Cholera Epidemic

As if Haitians did not face enough hardships in the months following the earthquake, a deadly outbreak of cholera began in the northwestern department of Artibonite – a region unaffected by the quake – and rapidly spread through the country in late 2010, taking more than 3,000 lives as of early January.



Sherline Jetin, a CARE hygiene promotion worker, conducts a training of trainers on cholera prevention.

CARE rapidly mobilized lifesaving assistance, distributing high-energy biscuits, water purification tablets, oral rehydration salts and hygiene kits in hard-hit northwestern communities. We were also able to scale up our activities in the camps in greater Port-au-Prince, delivering clean water and emptying latrines, as well as promoting good hygiene practices, helping to reduce the impact of the epidemic there.

Haitians had no recent experience with cholera, and poor conditions in the country's health and sanitation infrastructure enabled its spread. CARE is working hard to minimize the devastation caused by the outbreak, and to address the underlying factors that made Haiti vulnerable. Although there are synergies between the earthquake response and our current work to fight the spread of cholera, funds for these efforts are solicited separately.

Looking Ahead

As circumstances evolve for the many hundreds of thousands of Haitians whose lives are still disrupted by last January's disaster, CARE continues to modify our approach and direct support where it will be most effective. But our priorities remain constant. Our work in water and sanitation, and other measures to protect the health of those still living in camps, are all the more urgent in the light of the recent cholera outbreak. We continue to ramp up efforts to ensure safe shelter for those who lost their homes, whether they remain in the camps, move to transitional housing, or – as is our top priority – return to their original communities. Addressing the health, security and human rights of women and girls, and the needs of children for a return to learning and ways to cope with loss, will remain crucial given the massive loss of institutions like clinics and schools.

The list below summarizes CARE's ongoing activities in each sector.

Shelter

Along with the Haitian government and the larger humanitarian community, CARE seeks a future in which all Haitians displaced by the earthquake can resume life in communities. The reality remains, however, that for many the most feasible and safest option in the medium term is to stay in displaced-persons camps. Our shelter strategy seeks to support families as they choose among the available options given their particular circumstances.

An important element of our medium-term strategy is to supply sturdy transitional shelters to residents with access to land. These shelters may also be an option for people who have secured permission to build on another plot away from the camps – for example, on a relative’s land or through a private rental agreement. CARE will continue the following shelter-related activities in the coming months:

- Supply kits, materials and instruction to assist families in reinforcing emergency shelters;
- Provide prefabricated transitional shelters that are designed to last several years, are resistant to rain and high wind, and can serve as a core for more permanent housing;
- Support families in assembling transitional housing by means of training, peer education and instructional materials;
- Provide tool kits to families in need;
- Serve as a leader in the broader humanitarian community to promote an effective, participatory approach to meeting the shelter needs of earthquake-displaced people; and
- Participate in disaster preparedness along with the government and other humanitarian agencies, and maintain a contingency supply of emergency shelter items.

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)

CARE will continue our activities providing safe water and sanitation and promoting hygiene among the displaced population, both within and outside of camps. Out of necessity, we are maintaining an increased vigilance and reinforcing our efforts to slow the spread of cholera. CARE’s activities will continue to focus on the municipalities of Carrefour and Léogâne, with particular emphasis on families living in spontaneous settlements. The following interventions are planned over the months to come:

- Prioritize sustainable solutions for safe water provision, in cooperation with Haitian authorities, such as repairing water mains, drilling boreholes or constructing rainwater catchment systems;
- Provide settlements with tanked water supplies until alternative solutions are feasible;
- Continue construction of pit latrines and support maintenance and cleaning of the latrines;
- Continue construction of hand-washing stations and active promotion of good hygiene practices;
- Maintain a network of camp-based attendants and volunteers who oversee cleanliness and waste management;
- Continue hygiene promotion activities via committees and volunteers at the settlements;
- Promote improved local and community governance of water and sanitation including good public policies; and
- Ensure that vulnerable rural communities have increased resilience to water-related shocks.

Food Security, Livelihood and Local Development

As affected families strive to transition from dependence on short-term aid to self-sufficiency, CARE will continue to work toward increased livelihood options, improved food production and the recovery of productive assets. Activities in this sector include:

- Provide income-earning opportunities through cash-for-work activities that contribute toward recovery, including restoration of roads, irrigation systems and drainage canals to help prevent rainy-season flooding;

- Offer resources and training in vegetable cultivation to families with plots available for their own consumption and for sale;
- Provide vegetable seeds including okra, pepper, tomato and eggplant to local farmers in rural zones that host large numbers of earthquake survivors, such as Artibonite;
- Reinforce government and community initiatives in soil conservation, substitution of charcoal with alternative fuels, adoption of improved agricultural practices, marketing of agricultural produce and the promotion of other income-generating activities; and
- Support institutions that promote access to financial services for the poor, including the development of village savings and loan associations.

Reproductive Health and Protection against Gender-based Violence

Haiti continues to face large needs for better reproductive health services, predating but exacerbated by the earthquake. CARE seeks to support earthquake-affected women by promoting safe pregnancies, childbirth and nurturing of newborns; educating them on prevention of sexually transmitted disease; raising awareness on how to prevent sexual violence and provide care for survivors; and ensuring access to comprehensive and quality health services. CARE's priorities in the sector include the following:

- Facilitate staff- and volunteer-led outreach to women and girls in camps with information on reproductive health, prevention of sexually transmitted infections including HIV/AIDS, and access to family planning services;
- Reach out to pregnant women and traditional birth attendants with supplies and information to facilitate safer and more sterile conditions for childbirth;
- Promote good practices in newborn care including breastfeeding;
- Facilitate capacity-building for health facilities in Léogâne and Carrefour to provide emergency obstetric care and support services to survivors of sexual violence;
- Reinforce Haiti's Ministry of Health in implementing essential functions, as well as developing its disaster response capacity;
- Promote equal participation of women, men and youth in decision making about ongoing recovery activities through awareness-raising on gender equity directed toward CARE staff, volunteers, community members and government employees;
- Empower women to prevent gender-based and sexual violence by means of awareness-raising campaigns, including the active involvement of men; and
- Strengthen the participation of women in community and municipal decision-making.

Education/Psychosocial Support

CARE maintains a focus on improving educational opportunities for Haiti's young population and providing assistance to children in overcoming the trauma of loss suffered during the earthquake. Our activities, targeting children both in directly affected zones and in outlying areas that have received large numbers of displaced people, continue to include the following:

- Provide rehabilitation to damaged or poorly equipped schools, including furnishings, instructional material, and classroom and sports equipment;
- Distribute school kits to children with basic supplies and learning materials, enabling them to resume schooling;
- Distribute recreational kits to children including equipment for sports, games, art and learning activities, to encourage play and a sense of normalcy;
- Provide staff- and volunteer-led psychosocial support to families and children at homes and at identified sites;

- Conduct training of parents, teachers and other adults in childhood development, psychosocial activities and support for children coping with post-traumatic stress symptoms; and
- Strengthen and support children's and youth clubs, as well as community committees including parents, teachers and school officials, in planning activities to meet children's needs and facilitate their return to school.

Earthquake Recovery in Context

It may be difficult to view the tragedy of January 2010 as an opportunity. Nonetheless, CARE sees the potential for Haiti not merely to recover from this devastation, but also to address the underlying problems that made the country extremely vulnerable to disaster. To promote this process, CARE continues to cooperate with the Haitian government, institutions and individuals to bring about transformative change. CARE supports the government's national action plan for recovery and development, especially its emphasis on rebuilding in a less densely concentrated manner, as a sound foundation for the future.

In both our emergency-related and our long-term work, CARE is helping Haiti address four key causes of poverty: social exclusion; poor governance; lack of access to education; and insufficient opportunities for sustainable livelihoods. We seek to build the Haitian people's long-term self-sufficiency by supporting and influencing Haitian institutions and initiatives, in addition to implementing our own direct interventions. CARE believes Haiti is not a problem to be solved, but a country of rich and diverse potential, and we seek to tap into new dynamics for transformational change, including some which have become more apparent since the earthquake, such as an increasingly mobilized and organized Diaspora.

Even with the best intentions, programs can benefit some people more than others, sometimes failing to reach marginalized groups and individuals. CARE commits to ensuring that the voices and rights of the most marginalized groups are increasingly heard and respected. Among the target groups we are prioritizing to promote lasting change are: vulnerable children (those not in school, adolescents in domestic service, street children and the displaced); young people living on less than \$1 per day; vulnerable women (those living on less than \$1 per day, young mothers and women heads of household); and populations with special needs (people with physical limitations, people living with HIV/AIDS, displaced families and people who do not own land).

As we continue to adjust and reinforce our ongoing recovery and reconstruction efforts, these principles inform the design of our initiatives, including the priority program areas described in the preceding pages. Among the lessons CARE has learned from the Haitian people during 56 years of working hand in hand are the value of hope, perseverance and flexibility. With these attributes in mind, we look forward to working together toward a time when earthquake survivors, and all Haitians, live in dignity and security.

Human Interest Story

A Caravan of Knowledge

by Sabine Wilke, CARE Media Officer

Max Charitable wears his name well. This tall, gentle 46-year-old is part of CARE's health team in heavily quake-damaged Léogâne, west of Port-au-Prince.

Max speaks in a quiet voice, but today his mission is all about making noise. A group of four CARE cars is cruising around Léogâne to spread the word about rape and sexual violence, all-too-frequent occurrences after a major disaster. Women and girls are especially vulnerable in the crowded, poorly lit



CARE's health team takes a sound truck into camps for displaced people, in a campaign against sexual violence.

spontaneous settlements where so many quake survivors live. CARE is working with the communities to address these issues and find hands-on solutions. One of these is knowledge.

Around noon, the caravan finds a shady spot at La Ferronay camp. One of the trucks blasts music from a sound system with a microphone that Max and his team have set up on the back. A crowd gathers around the truck, many of them wearing blue T-shirts that CARE has distributed, with Creole slogans against violence.

One audience member, 29-year-old Marie Michelle Chéry, holds her one-year-old daughter Abigaëlle in her lap. Timid at first, eventually she joins the

discussion, walking to the truck to say, "It is not okay to force your partner to have sex."

After her speech, Marie Michelle sits down on a creaking plastic chair. "I am most scared at night, when I walk past the gardens next to our camp," she says. "There is no light and I have heard that women have been attacked there."

She hopes little Abigaëlle and 12-year-old Kimberley grow into smart, self-reliant young women. "I am trying hard to explain to Kimberley how to protect herself. If a man talks to her on the street, she should come and see me right away. I need to know about it to be able to protect her," she says. "Sometimes my husband does not understand my fears and then he mocks me. Not every man will understand these issues, but these debates are still very important."

After a long day of noise, Max looks back on the work accomplished and the road ahead. "We encourage people to reflect on the issues and find solutions. The next step is to take action," he says. The communities in the areas where the earthquake wreaked havoc are fragile; there is a lot of trauma underneath the surface. Much too often, violence, whether against women, children or even men, is a means of coping. "This is why we need to get the community members to talk to each other and understand the dynamics," insists Max.



Marie Michelle Chéry hopes to prepare her two daughters to protect themselves and become strong women.

"You know, men have a very possessive mentality here, they are very macho," Max continues. There has been some progress, he says, but it is not enough. "Ultimately, women need to be empowered to emancipate themselves economically from men, otherwise they will always be dependent and susceptible to abuse."

There is still a long way to go to achieve equality and security for women and girls in Léogâne, and elsewhere in Haiti. But Max and his caravan are determined to go the distance.

January 2011