

Water and Sanitation Program in Haiti



International Medical Corps has been working with the American Red Cross since December of 2010 to provide earthquake-affected communities in Carrefour, located in Haiti's Ouest department, with hygiene education and sustainable access to clean water. Over the program's one year of implementation, more than 435,000 beneficiaries have been reached with direct and indirect program assistance.

One of the primary goals of International Medical Corps' effort in Carrefour is the improvement of the existing hygiene infrastructure. To this end, 152 latrines have been constructed in implementation areas, with an additional 21 rehabilitated. International Medical Corps has also carried out extensive construction projects to protect and enhance two clean water sources, the Tesso Spring and Bois Dioute well development. After rehabilitation, the Tesso Spring site produces 330,000 liters of clean water every day for 15,000 beneficiaries, while the Bois Dioute well provides 7,000 people with 20,000 liters daily.

The drainage system in Haiti has been in ill repair since the earthquake crisis, contributing significantly to the proliferation of disease and the steep increase in malnutrition in affected areas. To meet this need, 861 meters of canal were emptied and cleansed, with an additional 554 meters constructed or repaired. Finally, 9,886 square meters of pockets in the drainage pattern have been filled and leveled, ensuring that water does not stagnate and become unsafe.

All of these efforts will only be effective long-term if the population is equipped with knowledge and education. International Medical Corps enacted a widespread campaign of hygiene sensitization and training to ensure that local communities are prepared to carry on healthy practices after the implementation has concluded. During the last twelve months, health promoters reached 48,632 community members with hygiene and sanitation educational messages. Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) management committees have been formed within the communities to create a system of accountability and responsibility for the ongoing maintenance and management of clean water sources. Committee meetings cover the planning, implementation, and follow up for WASH activities, and aim to facilitate agreements and collaboration on decisions for the community.



The last facet of International Medical Corps' intervention is an extensive distribution campaign of hygiene promotion items. Over the life of the program, 18,503 beneficiaries received kits that contained buckets, soap, and aquatabs for water purification. Upon receipt of the kits, beneficiaries possess not only the knowledge of how to improve their hygiene practices, but also the tools to put their education into effect.

The community's reaction to International Medical Corps' presence has been very encouraging. One beneficiary was quoted saying, "I am speechless about the things International Medical Corps – UK has done. Even a baby could see the changes." The earthquake crisis created a sense of desperation that fragmented and segregated large portions of the community, so it was especially heartening when one local told surveyors that, "International Medical Corps – UK has brought people together." This newfound sense of community and enthusiasm for the projects is essential for creating ownership and enduring change in Carrefour.

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