

HELP HAITI

From Kevin Powell and April R. Silver • January 14, 2010

How To “HELP HAITI”

Our deepest condolences and most heartfelt prayers go to the people of Haiti, both there and abroad. With the rest of the world, we remain terribly saddened by Tuesday’s catastrophic earthquake. We are as deeply moved as you to learn that some experts have marked this earthquake as the worst the world has ever seen (in terms of human lives lost and devastating impact). In less than 48 hours, estimates from Haitian officials project that hundreds of thousands of people may have died. We remain prayerful as we embrace the fact that the relief, repair, and recovery of this country are going to take years.

For the past 48 hours, we have been in around the clock communication and meetings with some of the country’s most resourceful and dedicated leaders and influencers of all races and backgrounds, from congress, to celebrities, to civic organizations, and others. We have both been inundated with hundreds of inquiries from people looking for ways to help. Even as we navigate this whirlwind of information and emotion, we firmly believe that we must support Haiti in a way that powerfully respects this great island nation.

We have prepared this HELP HAITI document as a basic, but informative resource tool for how to offer your support TODAY. This list is not complete, we know, but it’s a start for those who have asked us “How can I help?” or “Who is going to make sure that my donation gets directly to the people?”

Our communication with these leaders has included Haitian and Haitian-American activists. They are deeply grateful for the outpouring of support that the world has shown. With great passion and clarity of thought, however, they also remind Americans to please direct their cash donations and supplies to ground-level organizations that are respected as capacity-building organizations that are in touch with the people of Haiti. They remind us that the most recognizable disaster relief organizations that people tend to turn to in times like these are the ones who have a little known history of profiting off the pain of the people of Haiti. In sobering tones, they told us that Haitians, sadly, have come to expect to be exploited in times like this. The level of corruption is real and scandalous, but it doesn’t exist in every organization. There are truly caring people and organizations who have been working *on the ground* and who will remain there helping the people long after the cameras have left and long after the world starts to suffer from “Haiti fatigue.” Our Haitian friends remind us to not be caught up in the aid industry (where non-profit relief corporations often block, withhold, or sell your donated supplies to the people). Instead, they remind us to give support to capacity-building organizations who are genuinely interested in helping Haiti to be self-reliant, self-determining, and independent.

You can help make a meaningful difference by utilizing the information in this document. There are always three stages in dealing with natural and human-made tragedies: RESCUE, then RELIEF, and finally REBUILD. We are asking all concerned human beings to participate and volunteer as much time and energy as possible to all three stages to HELP HAITI.

In unity,

Kevin Powell (contact@kevinpowell.net)
and April R. Silver (frontdesk@akilaworksongs.com)

ASSITANCE FOR HAITIANS IN AMERICA

Contact the Haitian Embassy at 202.332.4090

or the nearest Haitian Consulate office in your area to locate your loved ones.

ASSISTANCE FOR AMERICAN CITIZENS ABROAD

(How to trace family members in Haiti)

Call 888.407.4747 Department of State (US)

ORGANIZATIONS TO SUPPORT WITH MONEY & RESOURCES

I. Yele, founded by famed Haitian-American GRAMMY Award winning rapper/musician **Wyclef Jean** (formerly of The Fugees). Visit www.yele.org for more information. **Text "501501" then type "Yele" to make a \$5 donation ASAP.**

II. Haiti Support Project

Founded by Dr. Ron Daniels (President of the Institute of the Black World 21st Century) this relief fund will collect your cash donations and send it to grassroots organization.

III. Haitian Women for Haitian Refugees

Haitian Women for Haitian Refugees, Lakou New York, and MUDHA Movement of Dominican Haitian Women are organizing an immediate delivery of first aid relief. MUDHA is traveling to the Dominican/Haitian border, looking at how to reach affected areas. See first aid list of needs below and bring items to.

HAITIAN WOMEN FOR HAITIAN REFUGEES

335 Maple Street, 2nd Floor

Brooklyn, NY (this is not a mailing address)

718.735.4660

EVENING DROP-OFF HOURS ARE MON. & WED. 6:30-8:30 P.M.

DAYTIME DROP-OFF HOURS ARE MON. - FRI. 11:00-4:00 P.M.

Please use rear entrance on Lincoln Road between Nostrand and New York Avenue. Enter through St. Francis Church parking lot.

To make a financial tax-deductible donation to *Haitian Women for Haitian Refugees, Lakou New York, and MUDHA Movement of Dominican Haitian Women*, so that they may take supplies to Haiti, please mail donations to:

IFCO/Haiti Relief

418 West 145th Street

New York NY 10031

You may also make a credit card donation designated for Haiti Relief at www.pastorsforpeace.org or by calling IFCO at 212.926.5757

IV. The Global Syndicate's Haiti Project

Give any financial support you can by donating to

http://www.theglobalsyndicate.org/get_involved.html. All proceeds will be used to support relief efforts of **Project Medishare** and **Yele** (two of our partner organizations that have robust structures that offer direct support).

V. S.H.A.D. (Soin Humanité Amour Dévouement)

“S.H.A.D.” translated into English means *Care Humanity Love Devotement*. It is a non-profit organization (with 501c3 status) that is dedicated to enhancing the quality of life, while providing education, medical, emotional, and social support services unavailable to low-income Haitian women from 14-45 years old. Their work includes servicing pregnant women and those who live under poverty level who are affected and infected by the HIV/AIDS virus. All monetary donations are being collected via PayPal at donation: https://www.paypal.com/cgi-bin/webscr?cmd=_s-click&hosted_button_id=10554585

WHAT HAITI NEEDS

Americans and concerned citizens in the entire global community should ask friends, neighbors, religious institutions, social, cultural, or political organizations, local businesses, or your coworkers to begin to gather the following for the people of Haiti. MORE INFORMATION on how to get them to Haiti will be coming soon:

I. Nonperishable foods

WATER

Canned goods

Bags of rice, bags of beans

II. Clothing

New/clean underwear for women, men, girls, and boys

Sneakers/tennis shoes and socks of all sizes for women, men, girls, and boys

Shoes of all sizes for women, men, girls, and boys

Shirts and tee-shirts of all sizes for men and boys

Blouses and dresses of all sizes for women and girls

Jeans, pants, and slacks of all sizes for women, men, girls, and boys

Bras of all sizes for women and girls

III. Supplies

MEDICAL SUPPLIES

Blankets

First-aid kits

Diarrhea medication

Eye drops

Insect repellent

Hydrogen peroxide

Skin disinfectant spray

Flashlights, Candles, Matches

Batteries of all sizes

Tents (sold at Walmart and K-Mart)

Scissors

Book-bags and knapsacks and purses

Tape (both scotch tape, and thick electrical tape)

Hammers, nails, screwdrivers, pliers

Thick outdoor garbage bags

Water pails, pots, and pans

Paper towels

Cleaning liquids

Disposable utensils (plates, forks, spoons, knives, cups, napkins)

IV. Toiletries

Toilet paper

Soap

Shampoo

Conditioner

Body lotion

Toothpaste

Toothbrushes
Deodorant
Hair combs
Hair brushes
Rubbing alcohol
Hydrogen peroxide

Sanitary napkins
Tampons
Cotton balls and cotton swabs
Wash cloths
Bath towels

RECOMMENDED HAITIAN & HAITI EXPERTS (For Media Interviews)

I. MARGUERITE LAURENT, ESQ.

A foremost Haitian activist, Ms. Laurent's daily online newsletter, *Eli Danto*, provides all kinds of info about Haiti. Contact her at erzilidanto@yahoo.com. Visit her website at www.ezilidanto.com. Follow her on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/Ezilidanto>

II. DR. RON DANIELS

Scholar, historian, activist, and the most Haiti-involved African American in our country. He is the founder of the Haiti Support Project. Contact Dr. Daniels at ronmae@aol.com or visit his website at www.ibw21.org

RECOMMENDED MEDIA (Books and Films)

Many people following the earthquake are new to Haiti, its people, and its culture. Many people are being introduced to this great nation for the first time as the "poorest country in the Western Hemisphere." The list below is our humble attempt to reframe the conversation and the context. Our first thoughts of Haiti are as the first independent majority-Black nation in the Western Hemisphere. We know it as a country that is *rich* with history and beauty. Their heroes and human rights activists, Toussaint L'ouverture and Jean-Jacques Dessalines, are our heroes and models of resistance. January 1, 1804 is the official declaration of Haitian independence and we celebrate that victory, too. We have compiled some background info about this Caribbean island that has long been tied to American history. In fact it was a Haitian immigrant, Jean Baptiste Point du Sable, who founded the American city of Chicago.

BOOKS ABOUT HAITI

Danticat, Edwidge. *Breath, Eyes, Memory* and *Krik? Krak!*
Lawless, Robert. *Haiti's Bad Press*
Metraux, Alfred. *Voodoo In Haiti*
Ridgeway, James, Ed. *The Haiti Files: Decoding the Crisis*
Thompson, Ian. *Bonjour Blanc: A Journey through Haiti*

FILMS ABOUT HAITI

The Agronomist is about Jean Leopold Dominique who hosted Radio Haiti-Inter, Haiti's first independent radio station. Jonathan Demme puts together this documentary with

historical footage and interviews. The result is a serious recount of Haiti during its numerous regimes.

Radio Haiti-Inter was Radio Haiti in 1960 and in 1969, it became Radio Haiti-Inter. It finally ended its broadcast three years after the assassination of Jean Dominique. His broadcasts were primarily for the struggle of democracy and he was able to capture the feelings of those who were poor and powerless.

The documentary starts with an interview where Jean Dominique recounts a day when he was able to broadcast gunfire outside Radio Haiti-Inter. Visit this site for ordering details: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Websitehttp://www.thinkfilmcompany.com>

Haiti: The Untold Story by Kevin Pina, chronicles the brutal daily human rights violations committed against democracy supporters in Haiti since the February 2004 coup d'etat. The film focuses on abuses in poor urban neighborhoods by the Haitian National Police and United Nations Stabilization Mission (MINUSTAH) troops in Haiti, especially the July 6, 2005 Cite Soleil massacre. It was produced at great personal risk by journalist/filmmaker Pina, who has covered the grassroots democracy movement in Haiti for the past ten years. It contains stunning footage not available elsewhere. For more information, or to view a trailer, see www.teledyol.net/KP/HUS/HUS.html

Aristide and the Endless Revolution by Nicolas Rossier (Baraka Productions): An hour south of Miami, the elected president of the Western Hemisphere's poorest nation has twice been forced from office with the complicity of the international community. *Aristide and the Endless Revolution* investigates the tragic events that led to the second violent expulsion of Jean Bertrand Aristide from Haiti. This documentary reveals the tangled web of hope, deceit, and political violence that has brought the world's first black republic to its knees. For more information or to view a trailer, see <http://www.aristidethefilm.com>

Pote Mak Sonje: the Raboteau Massacre Trial (Christine Cynn and Harriet Hirshorn) is a few years old, but is an important reminder of the possibilities of democracy in Haiti. The film chronicles the tenacious, non-violent and ultimately (but temporarily) successful fight for justice by the victims of the 1994 Raboteau Massacre. The victims took risks for justice, because they saw it as a way of breaking Haiti's cycle of violence and transforming the justice system from an instrument of repression into an instrument of liberation. They succeeded in convicting the top paramilitary and military leadership of murder in a trial hailed as a landmark in the fight against impunity. After the film's release, all those convicted were freed following the February 2004 coup d'etat. For more information, see http://www.ijdh.org/articles/article_raboteau-4.htm.

TIMELINE OF HAITIAN HISTORY

To get a quick and general sense of 500 years of Haitian history over the past 500 years, please visit http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Timeline_of_Haitian_history