

CIDI Urges Appropriate Response to Haiti Earthquake Americans Should Send Cash Donations to Best Aid Victims of Devastating Earthquake

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WASHINGTON, DC - The Center for International Disaster Information (CIDI) encourages Americans to respond appropriately and responsibly to today's earthquake in Haiti. Those who wish to best help the victims in Haiti are asked to donate cash as an alternative to in-kind donations such as clothing and canned goods. Cash donations are widely recognized as the most efficient and effective means of relief, a policy supported by CIDI's funding partner, the United States Agency for International Development's Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance, and those in the established international disaster response community.

The earthquake registered 7.0 on the Richter scale and was centered approximately 14 miles west of the capital city, Port-au-Prince. Early news stories report widespread devastation as severe aftershocks continue through the evening.

Haiti is the western hemisphere's poorest nation and 80 percent of the population lives below the poverty line. This disaster will increase the already difficult situation for the people of Haiti. Many aid organizations are already on the ground in Haiti and will be able to put Americans' generosity to use to best help the victims of the earthquake. Cash donations can be used to buy the supplies, clothing and emergency items needed on the ground, without the delay of collecting, packing, shipping and distributing in-kind items, which may be inappropriate for the victims.

"Americans can help the most by donating cash to an established relief agency," says Suzanne H. Brooks, Director of CIDI. "Haitians have suffered greatly in recent years and desperately need Americans to respond appropriately. Helping the efforts of professional humanitarian relief agencies is the absolute best way to aid the victims in Haiti."

Those interested in making contributions to help the victims in Haiti can get more information by visiting CIDI's Web site at www.cidi.org. Additionally, interested donors can visit www.interaction.org to obtain a list of credible responding agencies for international emergencies and www.give.org to get valuable information on making informed decisions when supporting charities. In addition, donors can visit www.globalgiving.org.

About CIDI

CIDI is based in Washington, DC and was created in 1988. The Center is funded by the United States Agency for International Development's Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance. CIDI provides individuals, groups, embassies and corporations with information and guidance in support of appropriate international disaster relief efforts. The organization works with a variety of partners to channel the public's energy and desire to help to achieve maximum impact. By reaching out to the American public and the private sector, CIDI helps to promote activities and donations that will do the most good for disaster victims around the world. For more information about CIDI and helping international victims, please visit www.cidi.org.