

W&A HAITI RELIEF EFFORTS 2016



On November 11, 2016 a Word and Action (W&A) team travelled to Port-Salut, Southern Haiti for a preliminary assessment trip. The main purpose of this trip was to explore ways to organize our upcoming Humanitarian/ Healthcare trip while bringing needed relief to the people who have been affected by hurricane Mathew. This plan falls within the W&A Haiti Relief Efforts of 2016 that was launched the day after hurricane Matthew devastated the southern region of Haiti.

W&A was able to receive full collaboration and logistical support from a southern Senator Fritz Carlos Lebon and his wife, Claire Lebon. The support and hospitality

W&A relief efforts at Port-Salut, Boucan, and Arniquet. More 500 families have received a kit that included oil, rice, soap, milk powder, toothbrush, and aquatab.

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offered enabled us to coordinate and distribute the acquired donations to the Port-Salut residents.

Upon arrival to Port-Salut on November 12th, the W&A Team went straight to work with the senator's wife and her team. Our first task was to compile hundreds of hygiene kits for distribution. The next day W&A participated in relief distribution, which occurred in three distinct areas in Port-Salut, which included Boukan and Arniquet.

We were able to provide more than 500 families with a combination of hygiene, school, and food kits. The hygiene kits consisted of soaps, toothbrushes, toothpastes, deodorants, shampoos, wipes, baby bottles, and baby clothes. The school kits included crayons, pens, pencils, and school bags. The food kits contained baby foods, oil, rice, milk powder, and aquatab.

The collaboration with Mr. and Mrs. Lebon and their crew was productive for it enabled W&A to join and contribute to the efforts already in place to avoid any chaos and mismanagement. This concerted type of collaboration has shown its usefulness in supporting the infrastructure reconstructing efforts of Port-Salut.

PRELIMINARY NEED ASSESSMENT

Based on our preliminary assessment and observations of the Port-Salut area, the needs are excessive as thousands of people lost their homes and livelihood. Port-Salut is a coastal town where the fishing industry is the economic hub of this area. Consequently, Hurricane Matthew and its aftermath has left this industry in ruins. For example, at one of the places that we've visited a young man was asking for a fishnet in order for him to resume his fishing activity. Such seemingly basic request has enormous impact in how well this young man and his family recovers and thrive from this devastating climactic event.

The feedback from the Port-Salut community was positive and receptive of our presence and support. However, they were more eager to receive sustainable supports to help them regain their way of life. For instance, they have requested help in

agriculture, education, and reconstruction. They want to be empowered in a way that could make them less dependable after such disasters.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, our preliminary need assessment trip was successful, as we've accomplished our goals. We were able to explore avenues to organize our next Humanitarian/ Healthcare trip and bring relief to the victims of hurricane Mathew. Aside from the socio-economic need, there is a major need for psychological support, especially for those who are more at risk of post-traumatic stress issues. Due to the current lack of basic infrastructure, many residents are being placed at risks of further psychological and physical abuse. Based on collateral information from stakeholders in the Port-Salut area, there are greater risks of financial exploitation and sexual abused due to the hardships experienced by individuals impacted by the devastation of natural disasters. As an organization committed to supporting the psychological adaptation of individuals impacted by trauma, the hope is that W&A could be an ideal partner/ collaborator in the Behavioral Health infrastructure of Port-Salut.

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