

What about older people?

While hundreds of thousands of Haitians are in need of medical care, food, water, and shelter ...

The current crisis poses immense challenges for seniors.

Elderly people are physically weaker.

They have difficulty travelling to different locations to receive food.

They are often the last to be given medical attention.

They are particularly vulnerable to violence.

The elderly are often the forgotten people in aid programs.

Help us to ensure the elderly receive what they need and deserve.

Let's not forget vulnerable seniors.

Donate now.



Demand Increasing Daily

BY DAN SYNDER

The Dessalines Hospital is located 90 miles north of the quake-ravaged capital of Haiti, Port-au-Prince. It currently has 50 beds, 87 staff, and five doctors led by Medical Director Dr. Johnny Fequière. Fortunately the hospital was not damaged by the January 12 earthquake. Now beds are full and our staff is working around the clock to help the people who have been displaced by the earthquake – many of whom have nothing left. The number of patients has increased 40 per cent and the demand is expected to increase daily.

The hospital is a joint-run facility with the Haitian Department of Health and the local Free Methodist Mission organization, with 60 per cent of its operating costs covered, with the remainder coming from outside sources such as Help the Aged. With the majority of the patients unable to pay for their care, the need for greater funding to stay operational is paramount.

In response to the devastation caused by the 2004 Hurricane Jeanne, we spent \$120,000 over six months to care for the displaced and injured. We believe this effort will take significantly more funding to keep the hospital open as the damage is wider spread and has affected far more people. God has continued to provide and we are still open despite all

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Older Persons in the Haiti Crisis

BY JACQUES BERTRAND
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The devastating earthquake in Haiti is having a special impact on the elderly. Older persons do not have the same physical strength as other people. They cannot run, carry heavy loads, or push their way through a crowd of hungry people when food is distributed. Thus, it is very easy to forget that they have their own needs. In reality, relief programs often neglect the elderly.

Currently, there are very few organizations that have a focus on assisting the elderly population. In Haiti, only 800,000 people are aged over 60 (7 percent of the population). When one realizes this striking fact, that 60 years is Haiti's life expectancy, the definition of being an "older person" starts a lot earlier than in developed countries.

Hundreds of thousands of Haitians have left Port-au-Prince, hoping to find a way to survive in other towns. **Many older persons are staying behind and it is not clear how they will receive help. HelpAge International, a sister organization, is active in the capital, supporting the Municipal Nursing Home to assess food supplies and other needs, visiting camp sites, talking to families in order to identify vulnerable people.** This is done not in isolation, but in close collaboration with other local and international organizations.

The partners and friends of Help the Aged Canada (HTAC) across Haiti are also greatly affected by the impact of the earthquake. In Bombardopolis, our partners indicate that they are running out of food, mainly due to the great number of hungry people arriving from Port-au-Prince. We also received similar reports from the northern towns of Delaire and Bonneau as well as Dessalines in central Haiti and Camp Perrin in the south. The local parishes and religious communities who participate in our sponsorship programs for the elderly are requesting additional help and are hoping that HTAC will support their broader efforts.

In many places the situation is chaotic, and it is literally a question of life or death. Thus, it is crucial to develop programs that place an emphasis on not



only children and women, but also older people. Emergency nutrition programs rarely address the needs of an older person— for example, hard grains can be inedible because of dental problems.

Psychologically, it is clear that millions of Haitians are now traumatized by the earthquake and the devastation, but these situations are especially damaging to older persons. The loss of family members and the isolation from the

community add to their special needs.

We cannot assume that the extended family is taking care of their older members. In fact, there are many situations where the opposite is true: the grand-parents now feed their grand-children who have lost their parents.

And it is worth noting that no United Nations agency and very few international NGOs are dedicated to older

people. That is why non-government organizations such as Help the Aged Canada contribute to the current relief effort, but they also need to raise awareness on the special needs of older persons. And all of this would not be possible without the support of Canadians.



Demand Increasing Daily ... *continued from page 1*

of the social, political and economic instability Haiti has experienced over the years and for that we want to thank you for your past and present support.

The vision of the hospital is to treat all comers in the name of Christ, regardless of their ability to pay. From an outreach standpoint, this is golden, but from a business standpoint, in these circumstances it poses a problem. **We need your support. Better stated, "The indigent, injured and needy need your help".**

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www.helptheaged.ca

A Potential to Rebuild in Broken Times

BY MAE KOBIA MCCRAE

Some people are faced with sacrifice very rarely in their lives. For others, like Doctor Jacques Ménard, sacrifice is a fact of life.

Dr. Ménard is a volunteer in a Haitian clinic in Fond Jean Noel, east of Jacmel and north of Marigot. He has experienced many obstacles while working in the Haitian mountains, not the least of which being the recent 7.0 earthquake in Haiti's capital city, Port-au-Prince.

Dr. Ménard has been going to Haiti since 1984. After finding out last summer that Help the Aged had just assisted in building a clinic in Fond Jean Noel, as a doctor he decided it would be good for him to go and volunteer there.

In Haiti, Dr. Ménard brought medicine and saw patients. He also taught the personnel through discussions about different medications available at the clinic. The donated medication and materials he brought for the clinic included antibiotics, pain medicine, gloves, and gauze.

The clinic, a small, four room operation, serves about 15-20 patients a day, mostly young children and elderly women. Every patient is seen whether they can afford to pay or not. For those that can pay the few cents to a dollar for treatment, their fees are collected as a source of income for much needed supplies. Most



Dr. Ménard and Fond Jean Noel Clinic Staff.

are purchased at a subsidized cost in Port-au-Prince through an organization based in Quebec City called CSI. Another source of medication comes from a donor in Port-au-Prince who has close ties to the village where the clinic is staged. The third source comes from people like the doctor who bring supplies with them when they come.

The greatest need for the people in Fond Jean Noel today is assistance

to rebuild their houses and the school that was affected by the earthquake. Ongoing needs like fresh water and food also remain a priority. The clinic is run daily with three main staff- two nurses and one doctor - so volunteers like Dr. Ménard are always a relief.

Through project manager Allen McNicoll, Help the Aged is able to give assistance to the village. They have helped to build different programs to bring revenue and give jobs to the village, and helped to build cement tanks that collect rainwater to give a water supply to the village. HTA partners with other organizations, such as Solidarity Haiti, to see that the programs are properly established.

Of Fond Jean Noel, Dr. Ménard says "Through Help the Aged and Allen McNicoll there's potential to accomplish many things and Mr. McNicholl needs the ongoing support of willing donors and sponsors everywhere."

Donate Shoppers Points to Help Grans



Please help us to send 4 suitcases to Haiti

Shoppers Drug Mart has established a program in which people can donate their Shoppers Optimum Points to Help the Aged! By donating a few or all your points to Help the Aged, this helps us buy supplies for overseas partners to assist the Grans in various countries such as Haiti.

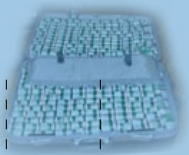
Please visit: www.shoppersdrugmart.ca/english/optimum/donate_points/ to donate your Shoppers Optimum points. We appreciate any donation small or large! Thank you!

Please call Shoppers at 1-800-746-7737 if you have any problems or wish to donate points over the telephone.

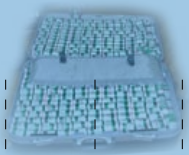
It takes 400,000 points to fill one suitcase full of medication, vitamins and medical supplies. We now have 330,000 points – enough to fill 3/4 of a suitcase. Please help us to send 4 suitcases to Haiti.



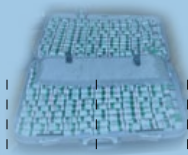
400,000



800,000



1,200,000



New Executive Director, Mr. Jacques Bertrand

The Board of Directors of Help the Aged Canada has the great pleasure to announce the appointment of its new Executive Director, Mr. Jacques Bertrand, effective December 14, 2009.

Mr. Bertrand is from the greater Montreal area, fluently bilingual and comfortable operating in both of Canada's official languages. He spent several years in Alberta and worked with volunteers from all parts of the country. He recently headed the Global Development Team of the Centre for Global Development at St. John's University, New York. Prior to that, Mr. Bertrand managed the Global Issues Department of Caritas Internationalis, a major NGO based in Rome.

The Selection Committee recruited HTAC's new executive director from over 120 applications.

Mr. Bertrand's personal and professional qualifications, especially his vast experience working with NGOs and degree of comfort in interacting with the major players involved in international development and aid programs, contributed strongly to his selection to head Help the Aged Canada.

Throughout the years, he has been very active, personally and professionally in helping victims of injustice and violence, as well as exposed to the difficulties faced by seniors in Canada and around the world.

"Too often, older people are ignored during emergencies or neglected in development programs. Many organizations focus on vulnerable groups, but very few specialize in helping older people. I am glad to have joined a team that wants to change that."

He very much looks forward to working with the Board, personnel, volunteers and stakeholders of Help the Aged Canada to help the organization fulfill its mission and its new Vision for 2018. Board members are very excited to be working with an individual of such high caliber and are confident in Mr. Bertrand's capacity and values to bring the organization to a level that matches its great potential for vulnerable older persons in Canada and abroad.

To reach Mr. Bertrand: executivedirector@helptheaged.ca He would welcome any and all discussions pertaining to the future of HTA Canada.

Jacqueline Bannister — Chair, Board of Directors, Help the Aged Canada



Adopt-A-Gran Program Update

BY BRENDA PACKER
ADOPT-A-GRAN COORDINATOR

In general, the sponsored grans are doing well. Our partners have reported that residents of Port-au-Prince are fleeing the city and are beginning to arrive in northern areas such as Cap-Haitien, Gaspard and Bombardopolis. People are coming in great numbers and the city and towns can not sustain such a great influx of people due to the lack of resources such as food, gas, electricity and water.

Fr. Chôlet from Bombardopolis has said, "We have provided food for them, but now we have run out."

In southern Haiti in Les Cayes, they experienced strong tremors in the area, but only one building in

town collapsed due to faulty construction, no victims were reported. They are also experiencing great numbers of people coming from Port au Prince. Mrs. Leonard from St. Vincent de Paul in Camp Perrin said, **"Suddenly, the prices of essential products have increased considerably. The families, whose purchasing power was already very low, are now no longer able to adequately nourish themselves.** At our Residence, there are currently no more supplies available. Feeding the elderly has become a dilemma. Currently, international efforts have started to assist Port-au-Prince. We do not yet know what is in store for the provincial towns receiving hundreds of refugees."

You can make a difference. Thank you for giving!