



ORPHANED IN HAITI

The confirmed earthquake death toll in Haiti is now well over 200,000. With countless collapsed buildings still unmoved, that number will rise. That means there are thousands of orphans, children who lost one or both parents as a result of this catastrophe.

Placing children in orphanages has been the primary mechanism of orphan care in Haiti for some time. But these orphanages are now overwhelmed with children. But as the Haiti Orphan Relief Team (HORT) saw during their initial deployment in February, many of the children orphaned by the earthquake have been taken in by extended families, friends and neighbors. Orphans are being cared for in families!

The challenge before us is to support these families as they care for the orphans, preventing them from being abandoned as resources continue to be stretched thin and families struggle to make ends meet.

Through church-to-church partnerships the U.S. partner church will provide resources and support so that the Haitian church can implement an Orphan and Vulnerable Child (OVC) program.

ORPHAN AND VULNERABLE CHILD PROGRAM DETAILS

Under the Haiti OVC program, each Haitian church will care for 20 orphans and vulnerable children by:

- Forming an OVC committee of 4-5 church members
- Providing education (most churches run private schools, 20 more students would require an additional teacher)
- Providing a meal for each of the children during the school day
- Assigning committee members to visit each family every other week to provide ongoing support, encouragement and monitoring of the 20 families
- Providing medical care as needed, including quarterly check-ups
- Providing trauma counseling (as able and appropriate) to the orphans and families
- Teaching the families the biblical example of adoption, that as we are co-heirs with Christ, so too these children are equals in their new families

World Orphans is providing management of these church-to-church partnerships and will work with various Haitian denominational structures, network partnerships and in-country staff to provide financial accountability. We will also work with other HORT partner ministries to leverage their core competencies such as biblical training, holistic care, and trauma counseling.

Through church-to-church partnership churches in Haiti will empower families to stay together. U.S. churches will petition God with the needs of these families, children and churches as He, in His goodness and grace, provides the comfort, care, restoration, and healing they desperately need. When the time is right, the U.S. church will be able to send short-term teams to serve with the church in Haiti as they lead the way in rebuilding their country.

NEXT STEPS

To date 24 churches in Haiti have been identified for the Haiti OVC initiative. World Orphans is looking for U.S. churches that can partner with them, providing the \$750 to \$1000 a month they need to begin this important ministry (exact budget being finalized).

For more information on how your church can be a part of this tangible, ongoing restoration effort in Haiti, contact your existing World Orphans representative or Mark Gumm at mark@worldorphans.org or 623-326-2924.

