



Correcting Film@11's Errors and Distortions on the Haiti Response

Film@11 Claim

Truth/Fact

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| <p>“The money was raised quickly and the clear implication is that it would be spent quickly.”</p> | <p>False. The American Red Cross repeatedly informed the public and donors <i>in writing</i> that its relief and recovery efforts in Haiti would last three to five years. Our three-month report released in April 2010 is one example. Our current program planning extends until December 2014, still in that window. Film@11 provides no evidence or basis for its claim that the American Red Cross implied that the money would be spent quickly. The key is to spend it wisely.</p> |
| <p>The piece made a broad allegation that NGOs in Haiti charged for relief supplies.</p> | <p>The Red Cross has not and never will charge for disaster relief services on any occasion, in Haiti or any other disaster. Our programs and supplies in Haiti are funded by generous donations by the American people.</p> |
| <p>“We see tarps but they are torn. We did see pots, but many were being sold for food.”</p> | <p>The global Red Cross network distributed more than 1 million relief items such as tarps, tents and kitchen sets in Haiti. We continued to distribute tarps to camps up until the fall of 2011. The American Red Cross also partnered with Habitat for Humanity to provide 70,000 people with emergency shelter kits. In addition, the so-called documentary made no effort to show the new homes built that have enabled hundreds of thousands to leave the camps. The American Red Cross partnered with the World Food Program to fund the provision of food to camp residents and it also provided pre-cooked food from its own warehouses. Food distribution ended at the request of the Government of Haiti.</p> |
| <p>“We did see water but most wasn’t clean enough to drink.”</p> | <p>For well over a year, the Red Cross provided clean water and sanitation – at its height more than 317,000 people received daily supplies of clean water. Today, the Red Cross works with the Haitian water and sanitation authority to rehabilitate water kiosks, purchase new water trucks and maintain a water distribution network. According to WHO/UNICEF, prior to the earthquake only 63% of the Haitian population had access to an improved water source. All in all, the global Red Cross network has distributed close to 2.5 million liters of safe water in Haiti.</p> <p>The American Red Cross has never received a report – substantiated or unsubstantiated – that “most” of the water “wasn’t clean enough to drink.” What is the basis for this broad statement?</p> <p>In addition, in the new transitional shelter developments built by the Red Cross clean water is readily available and many of the houses have individual water tanks.</p> |
| <p>“No one knows how credible or effective NGOs are because they don’t report to anyone.”</p> | <p>False. The American Red Cross is congressionally chartered, is audited, must file annual tax returns with the IRS, is monitored by watchdog groups and is transparent with the public and donors who entrust their contributions with us.</p> <p>We are audited yearly by KPMG. Our operation in Haiti is part of this audit and</p> |

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| | <p>the financial statement is posted on our website.</p> <p>We file IRS Form 990 which discloses our revenues, expenses and all other important financial information, and that can be accessed from public websites such as Guidestar.</p> <p>In addition to publishing its independently audited financial statements, posting its IRS Form 990 and Form 990-T, the American Red Cross has its finances reviewed by the US Army Audit Agency each year and these are reported to Congress; that letter is also made available to the public.</p> <p>With respect to reporting regarding our activities in Haiti, the American Red Cross published reports in English, Spanish and Haitian Creole at the three, six, 12 and 24-month anniversaries. In addition, the American Red Cross has regularly responded to questions from members of Congress, the Executive Branch, the Haitian-American community, the American public and print, television and radio media.</p> <p>The American Red Cross has a 4-Star rating from Charity Navigator, its highest rating. In December, 2011, a Guidestar panel of international disaster relief experts recognized the American Red Cross as the “top-recommended high-impact nonprofit working in emergency response at the international level.”</p> |
| <p>The piece had a graphic that implies that the Red Cross is diverting interest from Haiti donations into the general operating fund.</p> | <p>For a short period in 2010, the American Red Cross said the interest on the donations received for Haiti would go to our general fund. However, more than a year ago, we made the decision that all of the interest on the money donated to support Haiti would go back into our Haiti operating budget. We would have been happy to clarify this with Film@11, but we were not asked about the matter.</p> |
| <p>Claim that “the Red Cross is the decision maker” in Camp Caradeux</p> | <p>Red Cross has not and does not manage camps. Camp Caradeux is managed by the International Organization of Migration and Dirección de la Protección Civil (the government Civil Protection Agency), not the Red Cross. No basis for the false conclusion that the Red Cross is the decision maker in this camp is provided.</p> |
| <p>“So what can be done about all of this? Well, the American Red Cross is chartered by Congress. And no fewer than 10 congressional committees have oversight authority. While congressional hearings to force transparency are rare, they do happen, usually after the public starts demanding action.”</p> | <p>The American Red Cross fully embraces the oversight role of Congress. Over the last five years, the Red Cross has testified before Congress more than a dozen times on a number of important issues including disaster preparedness and response. Our government relation activities are robust, we frequently engage with Members of Congress and their staff and in the spirit of transparency we regularly look for opportunities to share the Red Cross story with federal and state officials.</p> |
| <p>Most of the money donated for Haiti stayed in the U.S. and didn’t go to Haiti</p> | <p>Donations made to the American Red Cross for Haiti earthquake relief and recovery are being used for that effort. In general, an average of 91 cents of every dollar the American Red Cross spends is invested in humanitarian services and programs. The other 9 cents supports the general infrastructure of the Red</p> |

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| | <p>Cross, such as the human resources, information technology and other support services needed to keep the organization running.</p> <p>We have publicly stated our plans to spend the Haiti donations in Haiti—as our donors intended—hundreds of times since the earthquake, yet the producer of this film chose to ignore this.</p> <p>In addition, the American Red Cross and partners that we fund work with 74 local Haitian business and local organizations to facilitate our programs. Our most significant local partner is the Haitian Red Cross, an organization that has been working in Haiti for decades with thousands of staff and volunteers across the country. Other local partners the Red Cross is funding in Haiti include Fonkoze (a leading Haitian microfinance organization) and HOPE. Our Livelihoods programs injected over \$26 million directly into the Haitian economy; we directly employ between 300-400 Haitian nationals to work on our Haiti programs, and many more are employed by our partners in both skilled and unskilled positions. We are committed to buying goods and services in Haiti when they are available.</p> |
| <p>NGOs effectively shut out the overwhelming majority of the public by holding meetings and discussions in English and French, not Creole, the language of the people of Haiti.</p> | <p>The Red Cross sent out millions of cholera and hurricane preparedness texts in Creole for exactly this reason. Numerous signs and printed materials were similarly distributed in Haitian Creole and the Red Cross utilizes hundreds of Haitians to meet with tens of thousands of Haitians to disseminate life-saving information regarding cholera prevention and treatment, disaster preparedness, and numerous recovery projects. The Red Cross believes it is critical to communicate in the language of the people for the most effective impact and progress.</p> |
| <p>NGOs did nothing but tell people to get out of the camps in response to Hurricane Tomas</p> | <p>False. The American Red Cross did a lot of work in the camps prior to, and in response to, Hurricane Tomas. The American Red Cross began working in camps and communities to prepare for the 2010 hurricane season months before Tomas hit. Project activities included flood mitigation measures such as reinforcing embankments, creating drainage channels and establishing evacuations routes. In addition, the Red Cross trained resident volunteers to serve on camp-based disaster response teams, helping to create evacuation routes and establish early warning systems. At the time Tomas hit, there were 53 of these teams, each of which had received emergency disaster kits which include radios, megaphones, first aid kits, a stretcher, whistles and flashlights, and all 53 teams were activated and on standby to respond to the storm. The Red Cross also placed signs in many of the camps telling people what to do during weather emergencies.</p> <p>The global Red Cross network sent out millions of text messages in the days leading up to Hurricane Tomas providing information on how to prepare, conducted rapid assessments before and after the storms landfall, and distributed relief supplies to several hundred families who were ultimately affected by the storm.</p> |