



World Council of Credit Unions

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January 13, 2010

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### Massive Earthquake Strikes Haiti; Credit Unions, Members Suffer

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti — In the wake of the devastating earthquake in Haiti, World Council of Credit Unions (WOCCU) is attempting to contact local authorities and its own program staff at work in Haiti to assess how to best help the estimated three million people who will be affected by the disaster.

According to reports, reverberations from the earthquake's epicenter, located 10 miles south of Port-au-Prince, have all but leveled Haiti's capital city. Hospitals have crumbled, as have the presidential palace and the United Nations peacekeepers' headquarters. The death toll continues to rise and survivors are still being dug from the rubble.

In July 2009, WOCCU launched a three-year program to extend financial services to Haiti's rural poor with funding from the United States Agency for International Development. Intermittent communications today from Greta Greathouse, chief of party for WOCCU's Haiti program, indicate that WOCCU staff members are uninjured and accounted for, but that there has been significant destruction to the island.

"The people of Haiti already had difficult lives, and it's almost impossible to imagine the devastation the earthquake has brought them," said Pete Crear, WOCCU president and CEO. "I'm thankful that our staff in Haiti is safe and we're ready to assist them in their recovery efforts."

WOCCU has fostered relief and rebuilding efforts during past international disasters, including the December 2004 Asian tsunami, the February 2006 Philippine islands landslide and earthquakes in Peru, El Salvador and Malawi. WOCCU is now accepting donations to provide similar assistance to Haiti and its people.

"We are committed to helping Haiti's citizens survive this crisis," said Brian Branch, WOCCU executive vice president and COO. "Donations to the Worldwide Foundation for Credit Unions will help us achieve this goal."

To support Haiti's credit unions and their members through the international credit union disaster relief fund, make payments via check, credit card or wire to:

Worldwide Foundation for Credit Unions, Inc., 5710 Mineral Point Road, Madison, WI 53705, USA.

Donations may be made online with a credit card at [www.woccu.org/give](http://www.woccu.org/give). For wire transfer information, contact: Valerie Breunig, Worldwide Foundation for Credit Unions, (608) 395-2055, or via email at [vbreunig@woccu.org](mailto:vbreunig@woccu.org). Please indicate that your donation is designated for the Haiti Disaster Relief Fund.

U.S. credit unions can also support WOCCU's relief efforts by donating through the National Credit Union Foundation's CUAid system at [www.CUAid.coop](http://www.CUAid.coop).

*World Council of Credit Unions (WOCCU) is the global trade association and development agency for credit unions. WOCCU promotes the sustainable development of credit unions and other financial cooperatives around the world to empower people through access to high quality and affordable financial services. WOCCU advocates on behalf of the global credit union system before international organizations and works with national governments to improve legislation and regulation. Its technical assistance programs introduce new tools and technologies to strengthen credit unions' financial performance and increase their outreach.*

*Worldwide, 54,000 credit unions in 97 countries serve 186 million people. In 2008, World Council's technical assistance programs reached 6.5 million people in 16 countries. Learn more about WOCCU's impact around the world at [www.woccu.org](http://www.woccu.org).*



An estimated three million men, women and children will be affected by the earthquake in Haiti.

**NOTE: Click on photos to view/download in high resolution.**

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