

Donates Stationery to 4,700 Children in Haiti

Written by Tzu Chi Foundation
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Volunteers returned to Haiti to deliver 200,000 items of stationery to 4,700 children in two cities. They found the country little changed since they left at the start of April, with most of the reconstruction work still to do.

The volunteers, from Canada and the United States, went to the Caribbean island to carry out eight distributions between May 19 and 22 at four schools in Port-au-Prince and two in Petion-Ville. The supplies included crayons, pencils, erasers, notebooks and pencil sharpeners donated by Tzu Chi academies in the U.S. The foundation invited volunteers from among the residents living in tents in the national soccer stadium to help pack the 200,000 items individually.

Haitian volunteer Pierrot Joseph said that it was good to make a distribution for children. “Tzu Chi helps a lot of Haitian families.” Preparing the supplies was hot, sticky work, in temperatures of up to 90 degrees Fahrenheit. “Last year we were transporting rice and corn powder,” said volunteer Xing Min. “Now we are packing stationery and it is just as hot.” At a distribution at one school in Port-au-Prince, local volunteer Jean Denis read out a letter of support from [Master Cheng Yen](#)



Originally, the volunteers planned to give out food and blankets at the same time as the stationery, but the shipment was held up in the Dominican Republic, which borders Haiti. This followed a change in Haitian government policy the day before. “The distribution of rice, instant rice, corn powder and blankets was held up, because the seven containers did not arrive,” said Xing Min, one of the volunteers at a distribution on May 19 at the Guatemala and Uruguay elementary schools and for children at a local tent camp. Dealing with such red tape was not the only problem for the volunteers; they also had a difficult situation at one of the schools. “From the name list to the site arrangement and flow plan – everything is difficult,” said volunteer Huang Hankui. “This area is not big and the lighting not good.” Nonetheless, in three short hours, they managed to give aid packages to 1,257 children from the elementary schools and the tent camp. They did not forget to offer Tzu Chi’s bamboo coin banks, to allow students to make a donation, and give out copies of Master Cheng Yen’s [Jing Si Aphorism](#) .

Four months since the devastating earthquake in January, little has changed in Haiti. Tens of thousands of people live on the streets and in tents and the airport was as crowded as ever with relief goods. The first phase of Tzu Chi’s help to Haiti lasted for nearly three months, from January 12 when the earthquake struck until April 3. During this period, it delivered food, blankets, medicines and tarpaulin sheets to 175,000 people in 38,000 households.

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