

DÓCHAS

The Irish Association of Non-Governmental Development Organisations

14 January 2010

MEDIA BRIEFING

Haiti earthquake

Irish Aid Agencies Launch Public Information Website:

www.HowYouCanHelp.ie

In the aftermath of the devastating earthquake that hit Haiti on Monday last, the Irish aid agencies, working together through Dóchas, launched an information website, showing how the general public can assist victims of major disasters.

“Disasters such as this earthquake often occur when people least expect them. And they invariably affect the poorest people most. Over the years, the Irish people have shown that they understand that when such disasters strike, immediate action is needed to save lives. But sometimes people’s wish to act swiftly interferes with the need to act effectively.”

*“The **How-You-Can-Help** website sets out the principles of good emergency relief, and the many ways in which members of the public can assist the Irish aid agencies to do their work”* said Hans Zomer, spokesperson for the national umbrella of Irish aid agencies, Dóchas.

The website, which is called www.HowYouCanHelp.ie, was developed in order to enhance the provision of information about aid coordination. It sets out how Irish aid agencies and the Irish government respond to emergencies, and it presents some of the basic principles of Irish aid.

The site describes how aid organisations identify needs and coordinate their work, and provides suggestions on how people in Ireland can help aid agencies to continue to give the right kind of aid. It has been developed in order to inform everyone - from staff working in aid agencies to members of the public - about how best to lend support in a time of emergency.

The website was developed by Dóchas, and sponsored by Irish Aid, the government’s aid arm.

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NOTES:

- For more details of how professional emergency aid organisations work together, see www.HowYouCanHelp.ie
- See also the Dóchas briefing paper on NGO cooperation: www.dochas.ie/Shared/Files/2/Development_ngos_working_together_for_greater_impact.pdf