

Karlsruhe, 28 October 2016

Emergency Pedagogy Crisis Intervention in Haiti **“Like a second January 12th, 2010”**

On October 4th, Hurricane Matthew swept across Haiti with winds up to 230 kilometres an hour and brought suffering and death once again to the island. From October 29th to November 13th, 2016, a ten person team from the emergency pedagogy department will travel to Haiti to offer aid for children who were traumatised and re-traumatised by the renewed destruction.

“The situation is dramatic! For many people, it is like a second January 12th, when the earthquake devastated Haiti,” reported Florence, one of our contact persons in Haiti. The people experienced terrible things and have been subjected to re-traumatisation: Emotional wounds, which were caused by the earthquake 6 years ago and had just healed, were reopened by the storm. Stabilisation as a foundation for coping with their experiences is therefore essential for psycho-social healing.

“Harvests and food reserves have been destroyed and many schools damaged. Some cities and towns have been almost entirely wiped off the map,” reported UN-General Secretary Ban Ki Moon. The death toll has risen to around 1000 and at least 1.4 million people urgently require aid. The UN has called for a “robust response” to support Haiti after the destruction.

Especially the south-west region of the island is largely destroyed and partially cut-off from the rest of the country. The volunteer team members will mostly work in this region during their mission and help the children there to cope with their experiences. Children need safe spaces in order to be able to process their traumatic experiences. Many schools, which before the natural catastrophe were a place of joy for the children, are now destroyed or function as homeless camps. Among them is also the Waldorf school in Les Cayes. Nearly 130 children went to school or kindergarten here, including children with learning difficulties and some former child slaves. The school operation should be started up again as soon as possible to provide children with meals and to give them a safe place.

In two further schools, which currently serve as emergency shelters, the team would like to offer emergency pedagogy in cooperation with local partner organisations, in order to provide age appropriate methods for coping with trauma. Traumatised children would then be provided with safety, structure, and continuity and the building-up of new trust in oneself and in the environment would be made possible.

Like during our previous mission 6 years ago, we will once again work together with the German organisation “Our little brothers and sisters” (“Unsere kleinen Brüder und Schwestern”), which is a part of the internationally active children aid association nph-“ Nuestrros Pequeños Hermanos”.

Emergency pedagogy for (re-)traumatised children

With emergency and trauma pedagogical methods, children and adolescents can process their experiences and their trauma caused torpor can be resolved. The introduction of a rhythmised daily structure with set meal times and alternating movement and rest phases within the created protected space gives them stability and safety. In painting and drawing, experiences can be expressed without words, during exercises from experiential pedagogy trust in oneself and others is

strengthened. Movement games help to resolve torpor and movement disorders. These experiences of self-efficacy and self-control can activate and strengthen self-healing powers. Additionally, trauma related disorders can thus possibly be prevented.

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*The **Friends of Waldorf Education** are worldwide sponsors of a free education system. Since 1971 they have advocated for Waldorf education and the freedom of education systems. Since 1993 the office in Karlsruhe has organized and supervised international volunteer services worldwide and has to date made it possible for over 7,000 people to complete a social service in over 350 projects in more than 60 countries. Now around 600 young people annually take part in the programme. Since the summer of 2011 it has also been possible to complete a 12-month civil service in anthroposophic institutions in Germany through the association.*

Since 2006 the Friends of Waldorf Education have been active in the area of emergency pedagogy. Following the outbreak of a war or a natural disaster, they worked with psychologically traumatized children and adolescents in Lebanon (2006), China (2008 and 2013); Indonesia (2009), Haiti (2010), Kyrgyzstan (2010), Japan (2011), and Kenya (2012-2013), Bosnia and Herzegovina (2014), Greece (2015), Slovenia (2015), Nepal (2015-2016), Ecuador (2016), Gaza (2009-2016) the Philippines (2013-2016), Germany (2014-2016), Paris (2016), Brussels (2016), and Kurdistan-Iraq (2013-2016).



Freunde der Erziehungskunst is a member of Germany's Relief Coalition, a union of German relief organisations that can provide rapid and effective aid in the case of large catastrophes and emergency situations abroad.