

Committee Members:

- Terry Miller -chairperson
- Keisa Brooks-Bacote
- Terrence Charles
- Anne George
- Cynthia Smith
- April Kitchens

What is inside?

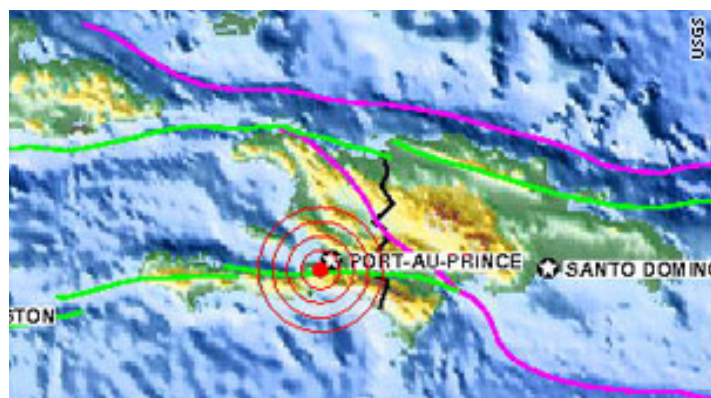
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Tragedy in Haiti

After its recent tragedy, the world turned its eyes to the utter devastation that took place on the western part of the land of Hispaniola. Most know it as Haiti. On January 12, 2010 a 7.0-magnitude earthquake struck 14 miles west of Haiti, destroying most of the capital of Port-au-Prince. On January 13, 2010 the Red Cross estimated that the quake would affect at least 3 million Haitians. An earthquake of this magnitude compares with 32 megatons of TNT which is more than the [Nagasaki atomic bomb](#) which only had the strength of 32 Kilotons of TNT. There are about 18 earthquakes of this magnitude each year. Many people have difficulty grasping the full impact of a disaster until it

reaches their back yard. Many remember the 2005 train collision that exposed Graniteville residents to chlorine gas. With the deaths, injuries, evacuations and economic cost, there was a huge impact on this community. Most were able to recover and move on with their lives with the assistance, coordination of services, and supports that were provided. As an agency we played an active role in aiding the victims of this accident. We provided counselors at the various shelters to help the victims through this traumatic experience. Just imagine the impact a major natural disaster has in a place like Haiti, with a dismantled government and limited supports.

-Terrence Charles



Haiti



In 1994 President Clinton sent a delegation to Haiti in hopes of avoiding a military conflict. Former President Carter, Colin L. Powell and Sen. Sam Nunn were among the delegation.

Geography

- Haiti is a country in the West Indies.
- The Dominican Republic covers eastern Hispaniola.
- Most Haiti is almost 11,000 square miles and is often compared to the state of Maryland.
- Most of Haiti is mountainous, and the country's name comes from an Indian word that means high ground.

Government

- A president serves as Haiti's head of state.
- The people elect the president to a five-year term.
- The president appoints a prime minister to serve as head of the government.
- A parliament called the National Assembly makes the country's laws.
- The upper house, called the Senate, has 27 members, elected by the people to six-year terms.
- The lower house, called the Chamber of Deputies, has 83 members, elected to four-year terms.

History

- Explored by Columbus on Dec. 6, 1492, Haiti's native Arawaks fell victim to Spanish rule.
- In 1697, Haiti became the French colony of Saint-Dominique, which became a leading sugarcane producer dependent on slaves.
- In 1791, an insurrection erupted among the slave population of 480,000, resulting in a declaration of independence by Pierre-Dominique Toussaint l'Ouverture in 1801.
- Napoléon Bonaparte suppressed the independence movement, but it eventually triumphed in 1804 under Jean-Jacques Dessalines, who gave the new nation the Arawak name *Haiti*.
- The revolution wrecked Haiti's economy. Years of strife continued to hurt the nation's development.
- After a succession of dictatorships, a bankrupt Haiti accepted a U.S. customs receivership from 1905 to 1941.
- After four years of democratic rule by President Dumarsais Estimé, dictatorship returned under Gen. Paul Magloire, who was succeeded by François Duvalier in 1957.
- After Duvalier's death in 1971, his son Jean Claude declared himself president and used a secret police force called Tontons Macoutes (bogeymen) to enforce his policies
- The country's first elected chief executive, Jean-Bertrand Aristide, a leftist Roman Catholic priest who seemed to promise a new era in Haiti, took office in 1991.
- The military, however, took control in a coup nine months later. many Haitians try to flee to the U.S. but are forced back to Haiti; later the refugees were sent to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.
- A UN peacekeeping force, led by the U.S. arrived in 1994. Aristide was restored to office and René Preval was his successor in 1996. UN peacekeepers left in 2000.
- In 2004 U.S.-led international force of 2,300 entered the country to attempt to restore order and an interim government took over. It was not effective in many areas.
- In September, Hurricane Jeanne ravaged Haiti, killing more than 2,400 people.
- In 2006 Haiti held elections, backed by 9,000 UN troops. They were seen as a crucial step in returning Haiti to some semblance of stability.

Haitian Culture

The People and Economy

Life is hard for the Haitian people. Unemployment is very high. 6 out of 10 people are illiterate and more than a quarter of the children suffer from malnutrition. The average household income in Haiti is only 250 American dollars a year.

Although farmland is sparse in Haiti, agriculture is the mainstay of the economy. Farming is labor-intensive, as farmers usually work their small plots of land with picks, hoes and shovels. The farms produce maize, millet, bananas, plantains, beans, yams and sweet potatoes. Other crops in Haiti include sugar, coffee, cacao, indigo, sisal and cotton.

In recent years, tourism has declined as the political stability of the country has declined. Exportation of Haitian goods is also down

due to trade sanctions. These factors have led to a further loss of income for the country and the people.

Education

More than half of Haitian children do not attend school and most of the people are illiterate. Going to school in Haiti is very expensive because more than 90% of the schools are private. The state-run schools are rapidly deteriorating as the number of children continues to outgrow the funding.

Health

Haitians suffer from poor health as there is a serious lack of safe drinking water, the sanitation is inadequate and the nutrition is very poor. There is private health care for those able to afford it, but very few Haitians can. International organizations try to provide the care necessary for treatment to those that cannot afford private health care. However, 13% of children

die before reaching the age of 5 and a full quarter of all Haitians die before they reach the age of 40. Despite charity efforts, the poor living conditions in Haiti continue to worsen.

Arts and Crafts

The Haitian people are very artistic and creative and possess very colorful folk art which is world famous. The crafts include basketry, embroidery, needlework, leather goods, pottery, papier-mâché, and metal work. Sequin Flag-making is an art form unique to Haiti. The colorful flags were originally created only for religious ceremonies, but in recent times have been sold as pieces of art to international buyers.

Music

The drum is the most important Haitian instrument, with its roots tied to Africa's Voodoo system of beliefs.

About Haiti

- Population: 9,035,536
- Capital: [Port-au-Prince](#)
- Ethnic groups: 95 percent black
- Religion: Roman Catholic -- 80 percent
- Gross domestic product: \$11.53 billion (2008 estimate)
- Language: French (official)
- Leaders: Prime Minister Jean-Max Bellerive, President Rene Preval
- [Haiti](#) is one of the most densely populated and least developed countries in the Western Hemisphere



What Next?

Now the world has finally heard the cries for help that has been coming from this land since the time of its birth. Ask yourself this question: if all you know is what you have been exposed to, experienced and taught, then what do you know? This is a time of uncertainty and many ponder what to do, but imagine you have lost everything. How would you cope? Many throughout the world have come together to aid the victims of this disaster. However, the help needed to repair this catastrophe is unprecedented and more is needed to help in the recovery. Thank you for reading this informative piece. Now what are you going to do?

Haiti



How Can You Help? Charitable Organizations

[Action Against Hunger](#), 877-777-1420

[Agape Flights](#), 941-584-8078

[Airline Ambassadors International](#),
866-264-3586

[American Red Cross](#), 800-733-2767

[American Refugee Committee](#),
800-875-7060

[Catholic Relief Services](#), 800-736-3467

[Childcare Worldwide](#), 800-553-2328

[Church World Services](#), 800-297-1516

[Clinton Bush Haiti Fund](#)

[Concern Worldwide](#), 212-557-8000

[Convoy of Hope](#), 417-823-8998

[Cross International](#), 800-391-8545

[CRUDEM Foundation](#), 413-642-0450

[CRWRC](#), 800-55-CRWRC

[Direct Relief International](#), 805-964-4767

[Doctors Without Borders](#), 888-392-0392

[Feed My Starving Children](#), 763-504-2919

[Food for the Poor](#), 800-427-9104

[Habitat for Humanity](#), 1-800-422-4828

[Haiti Children](#), 877-424-8454

[Haiti Foundation Against Poverty](#)

[Haiti Marycare](#), 203-675-4770

[Haitian Health Foundation](#), 860-886-4357

[Healing Hands for Haiti](#), 651-769-5846

[Hope for Haiti](#), 239-434-7183

[International Child Care](#), 800-722-4453

[International Rescue Committee](#)
877-733-8433

[International Relief Teams](#), 619-284-7979

[Lions Club International](#) 630-203-3836

[Medical Teams International](#),
800-959-4325

[Mercy Corps](#), 888-256-1900

[Mission of Hope Haiti](#), 816-246-7774

[New Life for Haiti](#), 815-436-7633

[Operation Blessing](#), 800-730-2537

[Operation USA](#), 800-678-7255

[RHEMA International](#), 248-652-9894

[Rural Haiti Project](#), 347-405-5552

[The Salvation Army](#), 800-725-2769

[Samaritan's Purse](#), 828-262-1980

[Save the Children](#), 800-728-3843

[ShelterBox](#)

[UN Central Emergency Response Fund](#)

[UNICEF](#), 800-367-5437

[World Concern](#), 800-755-5022

[World Hope International](#), 888-466-4673

[World Relief](#), 800-535-5433

ABMHC Diversity Committee

1135 Gregg Hwy
Aiken, SC 29801

PHONE:
(803) 641-7700

FAX:
(803) 641-7713

E-MAIL:
tbn37@scdmh.org
kbb14@scdmh.org

Other Ways to Help

Text the word "HAITI" to "90999" to donate \$10 to the Red Cross.

Text "QUAKE" to 20222 to donate \$10 to the Clinton Bush Haiti Fund.

Text the word "GIVE" to 25383 to donate \$10 to the MTV telethon.

Text "HAITI" to 25383 to donate \$5 to the International Rescue Committee.

Text "HAITI" to 85944 to donate \$10 to the International Medical Corps.

Text "YELE" to 501501 to donate \$5 to the Yele Haiti foundation.

Text "HAITI" to 52000 to donate \$10 to the Salvation Army.

Text "HOPE10" or "UNICEF" to 20222 to donate \$10 to UNICEF.

Text "HABITAT" to 25383 to donate \$10 to Habitat for Humanity.

Text "SAVE" or "SAFE" to 20222 to donate \$10 to the Save the Children Federation, Inc.

Text "GIVE" or "WORLD" to 20222 to donate \$10 to World Vision, Inc.

Beware of Scams

The FBI urges people who are looking for ways to help with earthquake relief to be wary of solicitations that could be from scam artists. "Past tragedies and natural disasters have prompted individuals with criminal intent to solicit contributions purportedly for a charitable organization or a good cause. The FBI provides these tips:

Ignore unsolicited e-mails, and do not click on links within those messages.

Be skeptical of individuals representing themselves as surviving victims or officials asking for donations via e-mail or social networking sites.

Be cautious of e-mails that claim to show pictures of the disaster areas in attached files, because the files may contain computer viruses. Open attachments only from known senders.

Decline to give personal or financial information to anyone who solicits contributions.

Make contributions directly to known organizations, rather than relying on others who claim in e-mails that they will channel the donation can reuse content from other marketing materials, such as press releases, market studies, and reports.

References

[Haiti Renewed: Political and Economic Prospects](#). (*Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs*)US Department of Health & Human Services

CIA World Factbook

National Geographic

CNN.com