



HAITI EARTHQUAKE 2010: tectonic event that has been hazardous for people

CAUSE

LOCATION: North America, in the Caribbean. Haiti is west of the Dominican Republic.

It is an LIDC country with a HDI of <0.4

- 12th January 2010
- Magnitude 7.0 earthquake
- Conservative plate margin between the North American plate and Caribbean plate. Fault has been locked from 250 years leading to build up of pressure.
- Focus was at a depth of only 13km—shallow meaning seismic waves reached the surface quickly.
- Epicentre only 10km from Port-au-Prince—capital city.

CONSEQUENCES

- 200,000 died during initial earthquake; Death toll rose to 230,000;
- 1.5 million Haitians displaced, including homelessness.
- Over 300,000 people injured during initial earthquake.
- Many buildings collapsed, inc. presidential palace and over 8 hospitals. Led to loss of governance, and healthcare as medical supplies also ran out.
- Port was destroyed and transport network—critical aid supplies were prevented from being distributed easily.
- Landslide dammed Riviere de Grand Goave
- Tourist industry declined significantly.
- 3 million needed emergency aid.
- Police force collapsed leading to looting and violence breaking out across the country.
- Medical supplies ran out.

RESPONSES

- State of emergency declared across the country. Medical teams from Iceland and China were first to arrive.
- Red Cross despatched relief team to co-ordinate response.
- USA citizens donated over \$3million via text messaging donations within 24 hours to support immediate food and water aid.
- UN world food programme flew in emergency aid.
- US helicopters distributed aid to remote and isolated areas.
- Oxfam provided clean water for washing in the days following the event to prevent spread of disease.
- Haitian farmers put together food baskets for the homeless.
- Mass graves created to bury dead dug from rubble
- 3 years later rubble still not rebuilt. Many people still living in camps and poor living conditions. Led to a cholera outbreak 6 months later.
- Short-term responses quite effective in managing the disaster. Long-term responses were unsuccessful and hindered by poor levels of development in the country.

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Global hazards topic