



## REPUBLIC OF HAITI

A STRATEGIC PRAYER GUIDE FOR HAITI AND THE RESOUNDING HOPE INITIATIVE WITH EXCERPTS FROM *OPERATION WORLD*

**Area:** 27,400 sq km; western third of the island of Hispaniola; shared with the Dominican Republic.

**One of the most densely populated countries in the Americas.**

	Population*	Ann Gr	Density
2010	10,188,175	1.60%	372/sq km
2020	11,722,392	1.36%	428/sq km
2030	13,195,567	1.13%	482/sq km

\*Hundreds of thousands of Haitians have fled/emigrated.

These figures do not reflect the loss of life from the January 2010 earthquake and subsequent emigration.



### COUNTRY OVERVIEW

Capital: Port-au-Prince

Urbanites: 49.6%

Pop under 15 yrs: 36%

Life Expectancy: 61 years

**Ethnic Diversity:** African Caribbean 94.3%; Mulatto (Eurafrican) 5.4%; Other 0.3%.

**Literacy:** 51.9%; Functional literacy may be as low as 20%.

**Official language:** French (10% speak it)

**Common languages:** Haitian Creole, English and Spanish (increasingly used as a second language)



## ABOUT HAITI

The poorest state in the Western Hemisphere, aggravated by overpopulation, deforestation (only 2% of original forests remain), soil erosion, pollution and hurricanes.

**Around 75% live on less than \$2/day, and two-thirds are under- or unemployed.**

Political instability and violence prevent proper aid distribution and long-term investment.

The 2010 earthquake devastated much of what little economic infrastructure did exist. After this disaster, it will take billions of dollars and many years of stability, coupled with sustained redevelopment, to see any long-term economic progress. Major sources of income include remittances from expatriate Haitians, and now, aid, relief and development funds earmarked for earthquake recovery.



Public debt 33% of GDP

Income/person \$790 (2% of USA)

Unemployment 32.7%

## RELIGION

The Roman Catholic Church's role as the state church ended in 1987.

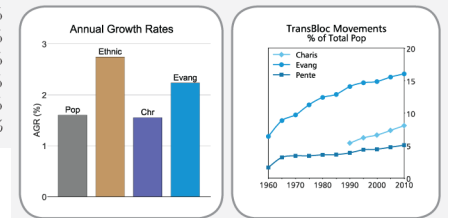
**An estimated 75% of Christians are also actively involved in voodoo, a development of West African Spiritism and witchcraft.**

But religious sentiment is strong, and almost all Haitians primarily identify themselves as Christian. There is freedom of religion.

Religions	Pop %	Population	Ann Gr	TransBloc	Pop %	Population	Ann Gr
Christian	95.12	9,690,992	1.6%	<b>Evangelicals</b>			
Ethnoreligionist	2.78	283,231	2.7%	Evangelicals	16.0	1,633,193	2.2%
Non-religious	1.95	198,669	2.7%	<b>Renewalists</b>			
Baha'i	0.10	10,188	1.6%	Charismatics	8.1	821,505	3.6%
Muslim	0.05	5,094	6.2%	Pentecostals	5.1	515,150	2.9%

Christians	Denoms	Pop %	Affiliates	Ann Gr
Protestant	32	15.37	1,566,000	1.9%
Independent	236	3.37	344,000	3.4%
Anglican	1	1.21	123,000	1.4%
Catholic	1	69.31	7,062,000	0.9%
Marginal	2	0.49	50,000	2.6%
Unaffiliated		15.90	1,617,000	-0.6%
Doubly affiliated		-10.50	-1,070,000	0.0%



## CHALLENGES FOR PRAYER

**1. The earthquake of 2010 was a disaster on many levels.** But it also offers hope out of tragedy. It is believed that 230,000 lost their lives, 300,000 were injured and over one million were rendered homeless. Hundreds of thousands of homes and buildings were also destroyed, including some major government buildings. Aid arrived from around the world, but coordination was difficult in the aftermath of the earthquake, and assistance will be needed for a long time to come. For a host of reasons, Haiti struggled as a nation from its very inception.

- **The rebuilding efforts will take years.** Haiti's infrastructure was never good, and Port-au-Prince's was especially weak due to rapid urbanization from poorer rural areas. Pray for the best long-term development for the city and nation, rather than quick fixes. Pray for generous assistance from wealthier neighbors, nations and agencies from further abroad.





- **The human suffering was immense** in the immediate aftermath and will continue for years. The shared emotional trauma of the events, the massive loss of life and the long-term injuries will all leave major scars on the Haitian population. Healing from such hurts needs time, care and the love of God.

- **Haiti was a financial and social mess** even before the earthquake. Repairing all the damage, however, will not create a healthy economy. Haiti must rebuild beyond its previous state and develop long-term plans and policies that are shaped with wisdom and justice.

**2. Haiti must find release from the bondages of its past.** The Spanish genocide against the indigenous Arawaks and the cruel slavery instituted and maintained by the Spanish, then the French, form a tragic background. The tyrannies, cruelties and use of voodoo as a means of control have fostered a spirit of fear that permeates every level of society. More recent interventions by foreign powers have not banished the endemic problems. Pray that:

- **The powerful spirits underlying voodooism might be bound in the name of Jesus.** Pray that the ubiquitous influence and enduring legacy of voodoo might be made subordinate to the authority of Christ – especially in the lives of Christians.
- **Haitians who call themselves Christian might experience the transforming nature** of a personal relationship with Christ. Only through the regeneration and power of the Holy Spirit will the heritage of voodoo be overcome.
- **This nation might enjoy stability, safety and sustained development** by removing the systemic evils holding it back and by instilling biblical values and practices on every level of society.



A woman seeks healing at a Voodoo ceremony.

**3. Haiti needs godly leaders** who will prioritize the good of the nation and address its massive problems. Two centuries of misrule, tyranny and recent flawed democratic attempts have brought hopelessness and despair. Corruption is rampant, and robberies and kidnappings commonplace. The economic plight of most Haitians deepens each year, exacerbated by the events of 2010. Many seek to escape, some physically, by fleeing the country in unsafe and leaky boats, others emotionally through taking drugs. Pray that men and women may be raised up that will reverse these trends and establish justice, righteousness and long-term stability.

**4. The spiritual outpouring of faith in God in the aftermath of the earthquake** also shook the nation and moved the entire world. When the president called for three days of prayer and fasting during Mardi Gras – traditionally a time of partying and excess – no one expected one million people to turn out. Throughout the country, churches were filled to overflowing, and services were held amid rubble and in the ruined streets. Numerous traditions allege that Haiti was dedicated to Satan through its voodoo past; pray that today it might be known as a nation wholly dedicated to the Lord Jesus.



**5. Haitians overwhelmingly identify themselves as “Christian,”** but many (if not most) Catholics have also dabbled in voodoo (although many others actively oppose it). Haiti is often referred to as “90 percent Catholic and 100 percent Voodoo.” The credibility and impact of the Catholic Church are sorely compromised. Pray for renewal, reformation and the cleansing work of the Holy Spirit to sweep through this massive and influential denomination.

**6. Leadership training is too limited** because of the poverty of churches. A rigid traditionalism of imported theologies and systems is widespread. Many pastors have little training; some are barely literate. Pray for the 20 or so Bible schools/seminaries and the many TEE (theological education by extension) programs that seek to meet the need. Pray for Haitian leaders to be men of faith and spiritual authority who are not diverted by material inducements. Pray for resources in Creole that will foster lay training and leadership development.

- **Bibles and Christian literature** are in short supply; there is a clear need for more Scripture and discipleship material. The Creole Bible has a significant impact on the understanding and application of God’s Word. The Bible Society, the Bible League and others distribute what they can. Pray also for effective literacy programs to be maintained.
- **Christian radio** is possibly the most effective tool for reaching and discipling Haitians. A high proportion of the population listens to Radio Lumière in the south and center and Radio 4VEH in the north. Radio 4VEH also streams over the Internet, reaching the Haitian diaspora.



Information for this prayer guide has been obtained from *Operation World: Mandryk, Jason. (2010) Operation World Completely Revised 7th Edition. Colorado Springs, Colorado: Biblica Publishing.*

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