



## Global Voices Information Sheet

### Haiti – One Year Later



Courtesy of [www.unicef.org](http://www.unicef.org)

#### The Year in Reflection

- On January 12, 2010, Haiti, one of the world's poorest countries was hit by a devastating earthquake that destroyed lives and livelihoods.
- The country was gradually recovering from the aftermath of the earthquake, when ten months later, in October 2010, there was a severe cholera outbreak in the capital city of Port-au-Prince. The disease has killed more than 2,500 people.
- In the midst of the cholera epidemic, Haiti witnessed controversial elections, which caused violence and political turmoil.
- Even before the earthquake, Haiti was heavily dependent on foreign aid. Little of this aid went towards job creation, infrastructure development, or education – all things that could lift Haiti out of poverty in the long-run.
- At this time, the country also faced a major barrier to any development efforts – centralization. This meant that cheaper imports of food products from the international community caused local farmers to close down their farms and move to the city in search of jobs.
- Most people lived in slums around the city that had lacked clean water and sanitation. Homes were not built to withstand an earthquake.
- Post-earthquake, many people returned to the rural towns and villages where they grew up. The farms are still shut down, but it is safer there than in the destroyed city.
- Many aid groups want to help people rebuild their lives in these regions rather than Port-au-Prince through a strategy of decentralization.
- With assistance, they hope families can build homes around existing ones and start up local farms again to feed themselves. Once those farms start producing more food, they can set up local markets and sell their goods. This will strengthen the local economy and attract more people with skills to offer.
- This will create a series of small but strong communities. If another natural disaster happens, not everyone will be trapped in one area and the effects could be lessened.
- This will also help Haiti break its cycle of dependency on aid because people will be able to create a source of income for themselves and their families.

#### Key Terms

- **internally displaced persons (IDP)** - are people forced to flee their homes but who, unlike refugees, remain within their country's borders
- **centralize** – to come together at or gather about a centre
- **dependency** – relying on somebody or something to function
- **decentralize** – to distribute powers or functions over a less central area
- **infrastructure** – the fundamental facilities and systems that serve a country like roads, schools or communication systems
- **sustainability** – able to be sustained for an indefinite period without damaging the environment; renewable; helping right now while teaching skills that can be used in the long-term

## Global Voices Secondary Educator Resources

### Note to Educators:

The following activities are designed to stimulate a current events discussion. Generative in nature, these questions can be a launching point for additional assignments or research projects. Teachers are encouraged to adapt these activities to meet the contextual needs of their classroom.

In some cases, reading the article with students may be appropriate, coupled with reviewing the information sheet to further explore the concepts and contexts being discussed. From here, teachers can select from the questions provided below. Activities are structured to introduce students to the issues, then allow them to explore and apply their learnings. Extension and conclusion activities are included to challenge students and finally, encourage them to reflect on the issues at hand.

Since these activities are designed as discussions rather than formal lessons, assessment strategies are not included.

### Themes and Course Connections

- Course Connections: The Arts, Business Studies, Canadian and World Studies, English, Health and Physical Education, Mathematics, Science, Social Sciences and Humanities, Technological Education.

### Materials

- Chart paper
- Blackboard
- Computers and internet
- Global Voices column

### Specific Expectations and Learning Goals

Students will:

- Develop and express responses to issues and problems.
- Reassess their responses to issues on the basis of new information.
- Participate in active group work and class discussions.
- Communicate effectively in written and spoken language or other forms of expression.
- Demonstrate the ability to think critically.
- Develop, express, and defend a position on an issue and explain how to put the ideas into action.

### Knowledge and Understanding

1. The Haiti Earthquake (estimated time: 45 minutes)
  - a. Divide students into groups of four; this will be their research group.
  - b. Explain to students that they will begin by revisiting the Haiti earthquake that took place on January 12, 2010.
  - c. Looking back to the time of the earthquake, groups must research the following questions:
    - i. What particular industries, regions and locations were devastated by the effects of the earthquake that struck Haiti on January 12, 2010?

- ii. What is the geography of the country? Why were some areas more affected by the earthquake than others? How has this caused difficulties in communications before and in the aftermath of the earthquake?
  - iii. Were people living in rural areas affected differently by the earthquake than those living in urban areas? Why?
  - iv. How can the Haitian government implement realistic programs to prevent such a large loss of life in the event of a future disaster such as this?
  - v. What was the quality of infrastructure such as roads, public transportation, and communication immediately after the earthquake?
  - vi. What immediate provisions were needed for the survivors? Where did they come from?
  - vii. What limitations were there in reaching the people most in need?
- d. When groups have completed their research, join groups together and discuss each question as a class.

## Thinking

1. Reading Comprehension: Global Voices Column (estimated time: 15 minutes)
  - a. Pre reading steps:
    - i. Introduce the topic and encourage students to discuss what they already know about the topic, making predictions around what the column is about.
  - b. Reading steps:
    - i. Read: students must read the text independently, highlighting important points throughout the column.
    - ii. Ask: students must ask themselves what the story is about, recording five questions they have after reading the column.
    - iii. Paraphrase: encourage students to write point form notes in their own words to outline what the column is about.
  - c. Post reading discussion:
    - i. What are the main points of the column?
    - ii. What emotions did this column evoke in you?
    - iii. What problem is identified in the column?
    - iv. What questions do you have about the column?
2. Media Literacy (estimated time: 10 minutes)
  - a. Ask each student to perform an OPVL on the Global Voice column.
    - i. Origin: what is the source of this column?
    - ii. Purpose: why was this column written?
    - iii. Value: what are the facts and statistics in this column that give it value?
    - iv. Limitations: what perspective is the column written from, does this cause limitations?
  - b. When this is complete, bring the class back together and discuss student answers.

## Communication

1. Centralization versus Decentralization (estimated time: 20 minutes)
  - a. In the Global Voices column, it is stated that Haiti's services remain centralized in Port-au-Prince. Ask students to join into pairs and argue on one side or another why the centralization of services is having a negative effect on the people of Haiti.
  - b. Following this debate, ask each pairs to analyze the following quote:

*“What we need are tractors, a bulldozer, a water pump for irrigation,” he says. “We need an agricultural revolution in Haiti. Make the gardens grow the food here in Hinche. Then not all the people will want to go to Port-au-Prince.”*

- c. Pairs must create the following point form notes about this quotation:
  - i. Five points about the positive consequences of these actions.
  - ii. Five points about the difficulty to mobilize this type of action.
  - iii. Five points about how this will help in the decentralization of Haiti’s services.

2. Aid distribution (estimate time: 10 minutes)

- a. Another important quote in the Global Voices column reveals that aid distribution has not been very effective in Haiti so far:

*“Of the \$5.3 billion pledged this year at the March emergency donor’s conference, only \$732 million has actually been delivered to development projects.”*

- b. As a class, discuss this quote and ask students the following questions:
  - i. What was their initial reaction to the statistic represented in the quote?
  - ii. If the money has not been delivered to the projects, what do they think happened to it?

## Application

1. Action Plan: One Year Later (estimated time: continuous project)

- a. It is important to recognize that Haiti still has a long way to go. As a class, create an action plan for how you can help Haiti one year later by following these steps:
  - i. Step 1: The problem
    1. What is the problem as you see it? Try to define it in your own words.
    2. How does the problem manifest itself locally? Nationally? Globally?
  - ii. Step 2: Brainstorm possible ways to help
    1. What are Haiti’s needs?
    2. How can the issues the country is facing be stopped?
    3. Are there any individuals or groups that are fighting against this issue that you can support? (e.g.: aid agencies)
    4. What can you do to help? (e.g.: raise money, volunteer time)
  - iii. Step 3: Choose a plan of action
    1. Based on the solutions discussed, how you are going to stand up for this issue? (e.g.: hold a garage sale to earn money that can be donated, host an awareness booth in the school)
  - iv. Step 4: Delegate roles
    1. Create roles based on what is needed to carry out a successful action plan. (e.g.: treasurer, advertiser, spokesperson, event planner)
    2. What further support is needed? (e.g.: is the custodians’ help needed to set something up in the school?)
  - v. Step 5: Act!
    1. Turn your plan into reality!
  - vi. Step 6: Reflect
    1. Celebrate the successes and reflect on the challenges your group faced. With this knowledge you will be better prepared for future events.

### Additional Resources

In addition to the above lesson plans, you may want to share some additional resources with your students. Listed below are some links to useful online resources:

- Free The Children in Haiti <http://www.freethechildren.com/donate/haiti-earthquake-relief-fund/>
- Adopt-A-Village in Haiti <http://www.freethechildren.com/whatwedo/international/countries/haiti/>
- CIA World Fact Book: Haiti - <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ha.html>
- Partners In Health – an advocacy organization that campaigns for social and medical services internationally <http://www.pih.org/pages/haiti/>
- UNICEF – an arm of the United Nations that works towards the fulfillment of children's rights around the world <http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/haiti.html>