

HAITI EARTHQUAKE 2010

The earthquake struck in January 2010 and it measured 7.2 on the Richter scale. It struck near the capital city of Port au Prince at a depth of 10km and lasted for 30-40 seconds.

The earthquake caused 250,000 deaths. The cost of the earthquake damage was \$ 12 billion.

80% of the schools in Port au Prince were destroyed and 86% of the slums in Port au Prince which were poorly built and had no earthquake resistance were also destroyed.

The impact was worsened by the fact that the country also suffered from other problems and disasters including deforestation, desertification and flooding.

Haiti is a LIC (LOW INCOME COUNTRY). Adult literacy (the ability to read and write) was only about 50% in 2010 and 80% of households were below the poverty line.

Buildings in this country are very poorly built, almost none are constructed to withstand the impact of earthquakes and most collapse easily due to shaking. Therefore a smaller earthquake had a much greater impact.

Haiti had no disaster management systems or strategies. The country is so poor that it was unable to respond rapidly in the search and rescue phase and depended greatly on foreign help. The country has no seismometer stations and no earthquake prediction strategies.

The many dead bodies lying around and poor sanitation caused diseases such as cholera to become a problem that health services found difficult to deal with.

1 in 5 people lost their jobs as businesses and factories were destroyed and it took many years for the economy to recover.

6 months after the earthquake 98% of the rubble remained uncleared and some vital access roads were still blocked.

JAPAN EARTHQUAKE AND TSUNAMI 2011

The earthquake struck in March 2011 at around 3pm and it measured 8.9 to 9.0 on the Richter scale. It struck 65 km east of Tohoku at a depth of 30km and lasted for 6 minutes.

The earthquake caused 16,000 deaths, 90% of them were by drowning. The cost of the earthquake was \$ 235 billion due to the advanced nature of the economy.

The coastal zone was flooded by the tsunami as it breached the defences and spread 10 km inland. The Fukushima nuclear power station was flooded which caused a meltdown. This, and damage to other power stations caused blackouts.

Japan is a HIC (HIGH INCOME COUNTRY). Adult literacy is around 100% and approximately 0.7% of the population of this country was below the poverty line in 2011.

Most of the buildings in this country are well built and more modern ones are earthquake proof and are unlikely to be badly affected by earthquakes.

The country has trained teams of rescue services and armed forces that respond rapidly. The country has annual earthquake and tsunami drills for the population to improve the overall response. Trained healthcare personnel and resources were moved quickly from other areas to help with the aftermath.

Shelter was provided immediately for the homeless. Early warning and earthquake/tsunami monitoring systems are amongst the best in the world in Japan and warnings were transmitted by TV, phone and text messaging.

The rebuilding of the worst affected areas began almost immediately. The government set up a Reconstruction Design Council which had a budget of over 23 trillion Yen to rebuild houses.

Construction teams were employed to raise the tsunami barriers from 12m to 18m.

