



A brief history of *Haiti*



Haiti occupies the western third of the island of Hispaniola, just across the Windward Passage from Cuba. The name 'Haiti' comes from the indigenous word for 'mountains', and indeed, only 20% of the country lies below 600 feet in altitude.

Even before the earthquake, Haiti was the poorest country in the western hemisphere, a legacy of past colonial and more recent economic exploitation. Much power continues to lie in the hands of international interests and a small Haitian elite. Its geographical location means that Haiti remains vulnerable to severe weather systems, whose strength is intensified by climate change. The damage to the country's infrastructure caused by the earthquake was so extensive that it is only gradually being repaired.

A Kreyol proverb says: MEN ANPIL CHAY PA LOU – Many hands make the load lighter. People working together can address the causes of poverty, and build communities that are more just and sustainable.

The 2014 Appeal seeks continuing support for our Haitian partners who are creating longer-term, sustainable responses to the issues they face. GARR (Support Group for Returnees and Refugees) works on the construction of quality housing, and the building of communities whose people know their civic rights and duties. MISSEH (Social Mission of Haitian Churches) concentrates on agricultural training and gender equality through its network of evangelical missions and churches, seeking to make God's love visible to others in this way.



How can you *help*?

Learn

Please use the resources provided by World Development available online at www.presbyterianireland.org/world-development to find out more and to learn how hope is being built through local church-supported sustainable development projects.

Pray

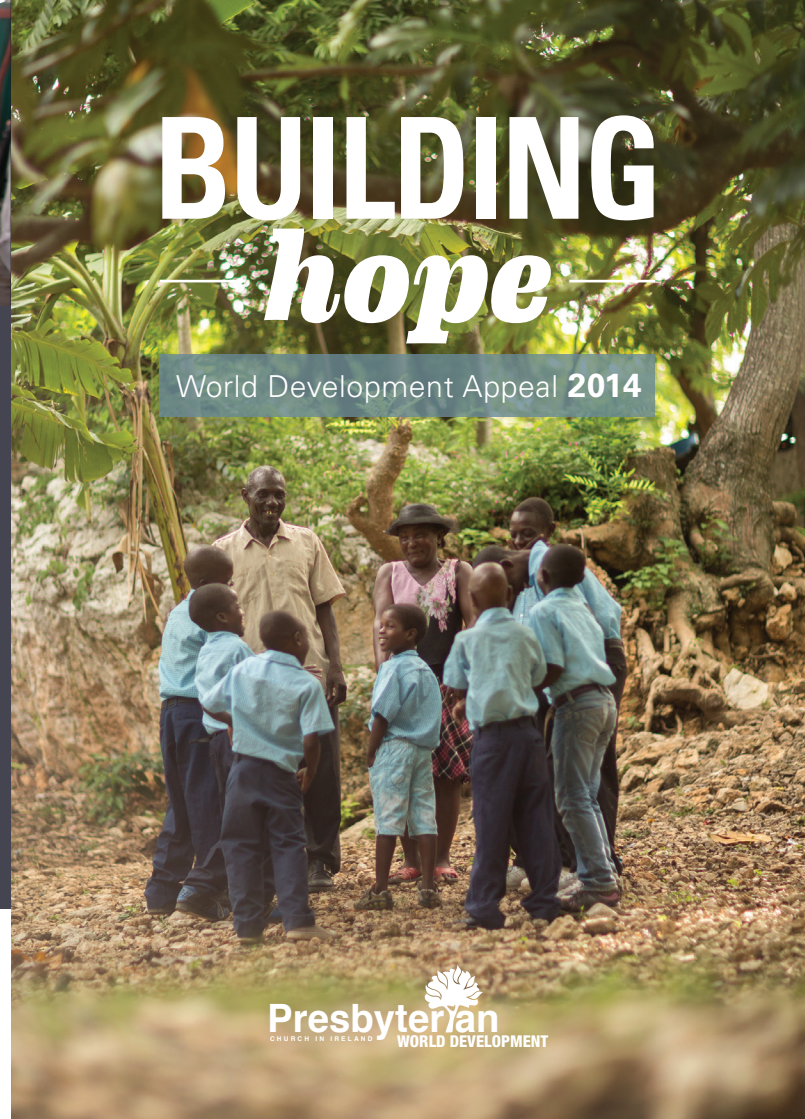
Prayer is a vital activity in the communities where Tearfund and Christian Aid work and partner. Use the information available through this World Development Appeal to pray knowledgeably for their work and the people involved.

Give

The 2014 World Development Appeal highlights projects in Haiti, and in Burma/Myanmar (see web page). The emphasis is on local people helping themselves, but access to training and support can make all the difference. Your giving will strengthen organisations like GARR and MISSEH to support some of the world's poorest people in building a way out of poverty and into a life of dignity and greater freedom.



For further information:
World Development, Assembly Buildings, Belfast BT1 6DW
www.presbyterianireland.org/world-development



BUILDING *hope*

World Development Appeal **2014**





12 JANUARY 2010

A day that started like any other. But for the people of Haiti, a day that would turn to shock, trauma and grief, as a magnitude 7.0 earthquake devastated their world.



TODAY

Haitians have another story to tell. Theirs is not only a story of destruction and loss, but a story of resilience, courage, and hope. In this year's World Development Appeal, we hear how our Haitian partners are continuing to build, not just houses but whole new communities, resilient, sustainable communities. This is their story, the story of how hope is rebuilt from the ground up.

You have to climb a steep, rocky path to reach the village of Decoville, in Haiti's Central Plateau. Once a cluster of makeshift shelters, today it is a busy village, with 25 new houses and garden plots nestled in among the trees. It is also the home of Fede and Elise Dunois and their nine boys (six of their own and three they took in).

In the chaos which followed the earthquake, Fede and his family were able to find temporary shelter in a church, and it was there they met GARR (Support Group for Returnees and Refugees). GARR provided immediate assistance, and then stayed to work alongside Fede and the others, as they began the long process of rebuilding their lives.

Two years later, Fede, Elise, and their boys moved into their new house. "In comparison to my old house," Fede says, "I don't call it a house; I call it a palace!" Fede himself helped to prepare the land during the construction process, and he stresses that at every stage, he and his family were consulted. Now, the boys have beds with mosquito nets and can sleep through the night.

Even before the house had been completed, Fede and Elise were already receiving small business training from GARR. Fede now has two small garden plots and a cow.

Elise, meanwhile, has a fridge and is developing a small business selling ice, cold water and soft drinks at a nearby market town. GARR has also provided training in the prevention of gender-based violence and Elise reports that relationships are stronger as a result.



On this hillside, hope is indeed being rebuilt, from the ground up.

Gerard Desserne works with GARR, both in Decoville and in the new community of Village Solidarite. When it comes to the dignity of the people he works with, he is uncompromising:

"Just because something has four walls and a roof," he says, "doesn't mean it's a house anyone should be expected to live in." Building in a way that lasts is not just about better construction methods. It's also about building resilience and self-respect.

Prosperity Raymond, Christian Aid country manager for Haiti, acknowledges groups like GARR can't rebuild Haiti on their own. But GARR and others can provide models for building both houses and hope. When they do, they become signs of the mission of God in the world.

Fede, meanwhile, has begun training in pastoral work and has taken on new responsibilities in the church in Decoville, which he himself helped to build. On this hillside, hope is indeed being rebuilt, from the ground up.

