



General Country Information:

The Republic of Haiti is located in the western part of the island of Hispaniola, in the Greater Antillean archipelago. It shares border with the Dominican Republic located in the Eastern part of the island. Haiti is divided in 10 departments further divided into 41 arrondissements. Port-au-Prince the capital, is the largest city of Haiti.

The natives of Hispaniola known as Taino were invaded by Spanish settlers after the discovery of the island by Christopher Columbus in 1492. The French established a presence in the beginning of the 17th century.

In 1697, the western part of the island (which later became Haiti) was given to the French by Spain. The French colony quickly became wealthy due to profits from the sugar-related and coffee industries. Many African slaves were brought and significant environment degradation occurred during that time.

Haiti gained its independence from France in 1804 after a revolt from the slaves. It was the first independent nation in Latin America.

Haiti politics have gone through a lot of turmoil in the past 200 years. The country suffered 32 coups and has a long history of oppression by dictators. Long years of political instability left the country with huge social and economic problems. In January 2010, a magnitude 7.0 earthquake struck Haiti with an epicentre about 15 km southwest of the capital, Port-au-Prince leading to 220 000 deaths and the destruction of most of the infrastructure.

Before the earthquake, many Haitian households lacked running water and lived in inadequate housing and unsanitary conditions. This situation aggravated after the earthquake. A large majority of the population are at a high risk for major infectious diseases and only a few have access to basic health care. The chronic shortage of health care personnel, and hospitals lack of resources, became even more so apparent after the earthquake.

Cholera history in the region:

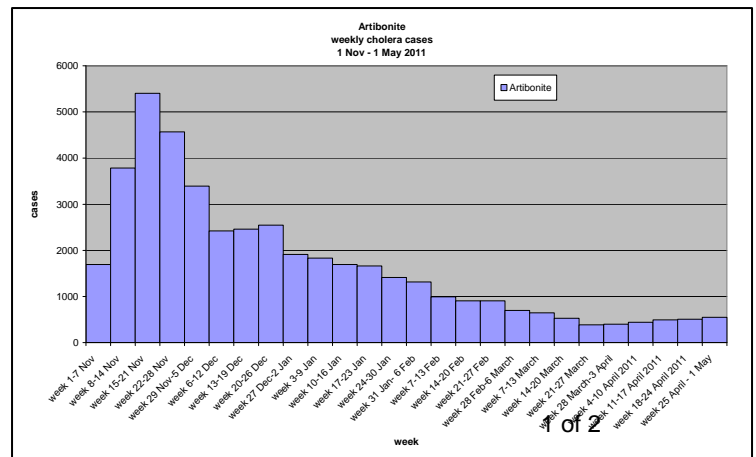
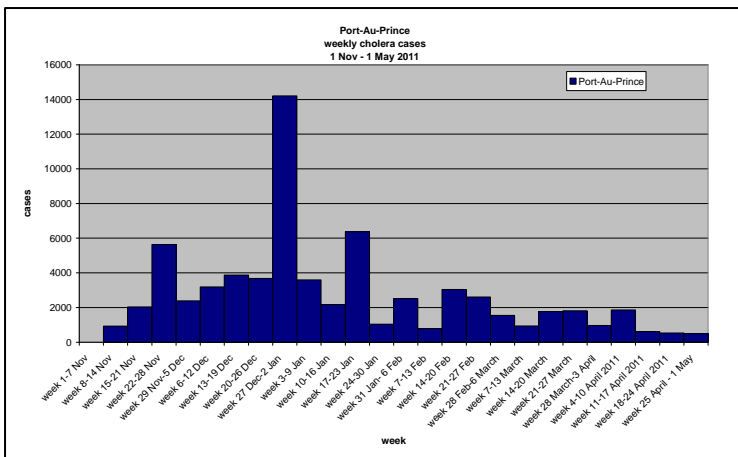
The last major cholera outbreak in Latin America started in Peru in 1991 when the continent was hit by the 7th pandemic. The outbreak spread to many neighbouring countries. However Haiti and the Caribbean did not record any case during that phase of the current 7th pandemic.

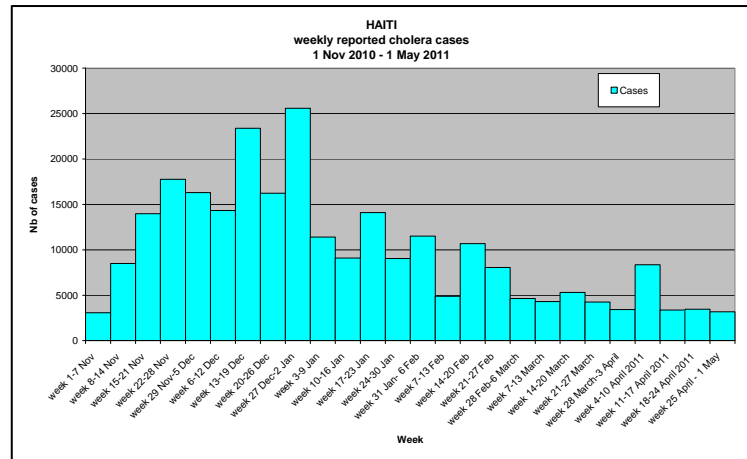
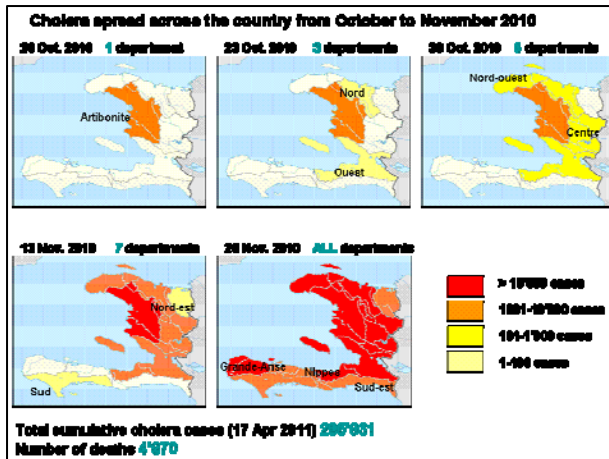
Cholera Outbreak in 2010/2011:

The first cholera cases in Haiti started to be reported on 14 October 2010 in the department of Artibonite from where the outbreak rapidly spread along the Artibonite river affecting several departments. Within one month, all departments reported cases (see map) with a high case fatality rate in remote rural areas and areas with difficult access to health services. On 20 October 2010, *Vibrio cholerae* O1 Ogawa was laboratory confirmed. The identified variant strain is also present in several countries in South East Asia and Africa.

As of 31 December 2010, a total of 179'379 cases including 3'990 deaths (CFR 2.2%) were reported in all 10 departments including Port au Prince. This represents 61% of all cases reported as of 3 May 2011 and 80% of all deaths. In the beginning of November 2010 the overall case fatality rate (CFR) in hospitals was 3.8%. This high CFR reflects the lack of experience of the healthcare system to deal with case management as well as the fact that patients reached the health facilities too late.

The rapid spread of the disease was mainly due to the lack of immunity and the very limited access of the population to safe water and basic sanitation in a context of internal migrations after the January 2010 earthquake. A limited spread was observed in internal displaced persons camps with access to water and sanitation. In November 2010 the first cases were detected in the neighbouring country Dominican Republic which reported in some areas a local transmission with a total of 191 lab confirmed cases in 2010.





WHO Support Actions in 2010/2011 include among others:

- As health cluster lead, ensured coordination of emergency activities and developed together with partners (Ministry of Health and Population, Cuban Medical Brigade, Centres for Disease Control, NGOs and others, a contingency plan for next steps (surveillance, alert & response, and departmental coordination). A plan for deployment of staff and supplies during the early phase of the outbreak into areas that are difficult to access was also developed.
- Deployment of staff (epidemiologist, field coordinator, logisticians, communication specialists)
- Distribution of large amount of medicines and supplies
- Distribution of cholera-related posters and pamphlets; training of health workers in cholera diagnosis, case management and prevention at health centres
- Developed training sessions with engineers from the MSPP, focusing on setting-up of CTCs and CTUs, management of infection control and hygiene

Demographic and Socio-Economic Data:

Geography	Total surface Capital Provinces	27, 750 m2 (coastline of 1'771km) Port au Prince (population: 704'776 in 2003) 10 departments
Environment	Climate Rainy season Floods and droughts Desertification Natural resources	Tropical; semiarid in mountains Summer, and mid-winter (February) Lies in the middle of the hurricane belt and subject to severe storms from June to October; occasional flooding and earthquakes ; periodic droughts Extensive deforestation (much of the remaining forested land is being cleared for agriculture); soil erosion; inadequate supplies of potable water Bauxite, copper, calcium carbonate, gold, marble, hydropower
Demographics	Population Religions Ethnic groups Official Language	9,446,0001 (annual population growth rate: 0.787%) Catholic 80%, Protestant 16%, none 1%, other 3% African 95%, Mulatto and Caucasian 5% French and Haitian Creole
Economy	Industry Farming	Textiles, sugar refining, flour milling, cement, light assembly based on imported parts coffee, mangoes, sugarcane, rice, corn, sorghum; wood
Health Indicators	Per capita total expenditure on health (int!\$) Life expectancy birth (yrs) Under 5 mortality (per 1000) Access to healthcare	96 (2006) Males: 59 Females: 63 Males: 83 Females: 77 (2006)
Communicable Diseases	Hepatitis A and E, typhoid fever, diarrheal diseases, dengue fever, malaria, leptospirosis (2009) HIV prevalence (2005): 3.37%	
Risk Factors for Cholera	Population with sustainable access to improved drinking water sources Population with sustainable access to improved sanitation Prevalence of undernourishment in total population (% of population)	58% (2006) 19% (2006) 58% (2006)

Sources for Document: WHO, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNDP