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**HAITI**

## SNAPSHOT

# Honoring the Earthquake Victims

**USAID-supported memorial provides a space for reflection and remembrance.**



*The Angel of the Stars, sculpted from materials salvaged from the earthquake, symbolizes rebirth.*

*“Even though the earthquake happened in Haiti, we exist in one world, one globe, as shown at the feet of the angel.”*

*—Lionel St. Eloi  
sculptor*

### Telling Our Story

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**April 2011** – A new statue in Haiti’s National Cemetery is keeping vigil over the graves of 50,000 people who died in the January 2010 earthquake and serving as a lasting memorial to all who perished in the catastrophe.

The Angel of the Stars was created from materials salvaged from earthquake debris as a way to evoke memories of beloved family members and provide solace to the grieving. The sculpture is surrounded by murals and wall engravings created by 10 Haitian artists to reinforce the sense of a shared experience.

Sculptor Lionel St. Eloi said, “Even though the earthquake happened in Haiti, we exist in one world, one globe, as shown at the feet of the angel.”

The municipality of Port-au-Prince commissioned the statue to provide visitors with a designated place to remember the lost and pay their respects. USAID’s Office of Transition Initiatives provided financial assistance for the project, including funds for laborers to clear alleys leading to the cemetery.

St. Eloi said the statue and accompanying murals symbolize rebirth and hopes “the site where the sculpture is standing can become a catalyst and a source of inspiration for a renewal of this wounded land and its people.”

St. Eloi received the commission because his work embraces traditional Haitian forms and composition as well as modern elements, and judges believed the approach would appeal to a wide segment of the populace.

Since the early 1800s, the National Cemetery of Port-au-Prince has hosted visitors who come to grieve for and celebrate the lives of lost loved ones. Following the January 12 earthquake, the cemetery took on even greater significance.

On March 18, Muscadin Jean-Yves Jason, the mayor of Port-au-Prince, led a tour of the cemetery and inaugurated the memorial. Representatives from the U.S. Embassy, the French Embassy, USAID/Haiti, and the municipality of Port-au-Prince attended the ceremony.

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