

Dominican Republic

Country Overview



Language: Spanish

Religion: Roman Catholic 95%, other 5%

Capital: Santo Domingo

Currency: Dominican Peso

Government: Representative Democracy

President: Danilo Medina

Population below poverty line: 30.5%

GDP: Agriculture (5%), industry (33%), & services (61%)

Willow Creek Partner: The Holistic Vision Association (AVI)

Location: Santa Domingo

Environment: Urban and rural

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www.willowcreek.org/globalinfo

Background

Historically, the country primarily exported coffee, tobacco, and sugar, but recently the service sector has dominated the economy through tourism, construction, and free trade zones. However, the country suffers from significant income inequality; the poorest half of the population receives less than one fifth of GDP. The economy in Dominican Republic has had one of the strongest growth rates in Latin America and the Caribbean over the past 25 years which has helped decrease poverty. The environment faces challenges of water shortage, deforestation, and soil erosion that pose significant threats to the communities. Additionally, the country is prone to natural disasters such as flooding, earthquakes, and hurricanes.

Education & Vulnerable Children

- ◆ The priority problems affecting boys and girls between the ages of 6-14 are those related to the rights of the child to quality education, protection against violence, child labor, abuse and commercial sexual exploitation.
- ◆ There is inequality in access to education between the urban and rural areas. The rural areas are at a disadvantage due to the distances at which schools are located.
- ◆ Child labor is a major concern because many children are exploited in an agricultural environment and some are victims of human trafficking

About Willow's Partner: AVI

AVI is a Christ centered church network organization that works all throughout Dominican Republic. Their focus is on identifying and coaching pastors in their local communities. Through their holistic mindset the organization seeks to meet the spiritual and physical needs of the people. The main initiatives that Willow partners with them on is in areas of education, pastoral and leadership development, and clean water.