



DEMOCRACY, HUMAN RIGHTS & GOVERNANCE FACT SHEET

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BACKGROUND

To achieve long-term stability and economic growth, Haiti must establish representative and accountable governance institutions as well as ensure access to justice. While many of Haiti's governance challenges pre-date the 2010 earthquake, that catastrophe further highlighted the need for an increased focus on governance and government accountability.

KEY CHALLENGES

Haiti has experienced a series of political set-backs in recent history that continue to detract from efforts to improve governance institutions and enforceable legal norms. Although the country has the formal structures of a democracy, many of these have yet to become fully functional, as evidenced by recurring periods of political and institutional instability. Haiti's state institutions are under-resourced, and provide limited services to only a small percentage of the population. Despite these challenges, some progress has been made in recent years to advance the functioning of national and local government, civic engagement, voter education, access to justice services, and protection of human rights.

USAID STRATEGY & ACTIVITIES

SUPPORTING CREDIBLE POLITICAL AND ELECTORAL PROCESSES

- **Building the capacity** of Haitian electoral authorities to conduct elections.
- **Strengthening the capacity of election observers** – domestic and international – to provide credible and impartial assessments of election processes.
- **Increasing civic and voter education** as well as ensuring that women and persons with disabilities can fully participate in the electoral process.
- **Training women candidates** to improve their campaigning and political participation skills.

STRENGTHENING NATIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNANCE

- **Promoting transparency and government accountability** through an Integrated Financial Management System, which provides automated financial functions, enhanced control of revenues and expenditures, and facilitation of investigations. This program is also facilitating exchange of high volumes of data efficiently and securely between 13 government institutions through the Unified Data Exchange Platform.
- **Supporting decentralization** by building the capacity of nine targeted municipal governments to more effectively and transparently plan, collect, and manage revenues, deliver basic services, and coordinate emergency relief efforts.
- **Modernizing civil service** by improving government human resource management, including introducing competitive hiring in the public sector through a partnership between USAID and the Haitian government's Office of Management and Human Resource.

IMPROVING ACCESS TO JUSTICE AND LEGAL ASSISTANCE

- **Addressing pretrial detention** through the provision of equipment, technical assistance, and improved case management in targeted jurisdictions. USAID deployed Haiti's first computerized case management information system in Fort-Liberté, Saint-Marc, and Port-au-Prince.
- **Providing legal assistance** to underserved residents of Port-au-Prince, Saint-Marc, Croix des Bouquets, Cap-Haïtien, and Fort Liberté.
- **Assisting the High Judicial Council** to provide independent oversight of the judiciary, including to the Judicial Inspection Unit and the vetting committee for judges.
- **Supporting the reform of the Penal Code and Criminal Procedure Code** through assistance to the Ministry of Justice's Criminal Code Reform Commission.

PROTECTING HUMAN RIGHTS AND VULNERABLE POPULATIONS

- Addressing **gender-based violence** through advocacy on improved legislation and services for survivors.
- Combatting **trafficking-in-persons** through support for implementation of legislation, the inter-ministerial commission, and monitoring prosecutions.
- Assisting **at-risk, institutionalized children** as well as children in domesticity ("restaveks") through the strengthening of child welfare and protection systems.
- Reducing **discrimination against vulnerable populations** by supporting awareness raising and advocacy.

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Supporting credible electoral processes: More than 200 election officials received training to strengthen their ability to effectively manage the electoral process in Haiti. USAID also supported logistics and transportation services for election materials and commodities. With USAID support, the Citizen Observatory for the Institutionalization of Democracy in Haiti, a civil society coalition, deployed over 1,500 domestic observers for each round of elections, which were held in August and October 2015, November 2016, and January 2017. Nearly 5.6 million individuals received civic and voter education training across the country.

Strengthening national and local government: With USAID assistance, nine target municipalities began to hold regular public hearings/meetings on municipal activities and priorities, and adopted local development plans. In one example, USAID supported the Haitian General Directorate of Taxes (DGI) and the Municipality of Saint Marc to conduct a census of taxable businesses. This contributed to an increase in the commune's tax rolls of over 1,700 businesses – an increase of approximately 90 percent - resulting in a doubling of business license revenues.

Strengthening Local Organizations in Haiti: USAID distributed grants to 15 local organizations and launched a \$7.5 million capacity development project, which provides management, administrative, and financial capacity building services to current and potential local USAID partners.

Access to Justice and Legal Aid: USAID supported the installation of an electronic Case Management Information System (CMIS) in four jurisdictions, resulting in procedural advancement of cases for 7,435 detainees, and provided legal aid for 24,627 individuals since 2011. After the introduction of CMIS in Fort Liberté, the prolonged pretrial detention rate fell to 21 percent, compared to the national average of 72 percent.

Human Rights and Vulnerable Populations: In partnership with the Haitian government child welfare agency, USAID launched an innovative three-year alliance for the Protection of Children to reduce violence against children; mitigate trafficking and forced labor; protect unaccompanied and separated children; and explore alternative care and protection services through research and pilot interventions. The project, awarded to American Institutes for Research (AIR), partners USAID, Lumos Foundation, Zanmi Lasante, Kombite pour la Paix et le Développement, Restavek Freedom/OPREH, and Université d'Etat d'Haïti.