

EVALUATION DEPARTMENT

REPORT 3/2018 COUNTRY EVALUATION BRIEF



Haiti



CONTENT

Main findings
Key facts
Map
Key events

1 Introduction

2 Methodology

3 Country
context

4 Donor engage-
ment in Haiti

5 Evaluations
of aid

6 Lessons learnt

References
Acronyms



The purpose of this **Country Evaluation Brief** is to present relevant knowledge about donors' development efforts in Haiti. The brief systematises relevant findings from existing evaluations of development interventions in the country. The idea is to present the findings to the reader in a succinct and easily accessible format.

Readers who want to explore key issues in depth can access the underlying reports through the reference list. At our website, you can also find a set of short “Evaluation Portraits” summarising the key contents of those documents.

The Country Evaluation Brief was researched and produced by Particip GmbH in consortium with Menon Economics.

Oslo, February 2018
Per Øyvind Bastøe, Evaluation Director

A loaded truck in Cap-Haitien, Département du Nord, 2012. PHOTO: ALEX PROIMOS/FICKR

Main findings

 **INTERNATIONAL AID TO HAITI**, having risen steadily since 2004, surged after the 2010 earthquake. While the principles of Good Humanitarian Donorship prescribe needs assessment prior to funding, in Haiti, some of the evaluated actors seemed to identify needs to match the inflow of funds. A further challenge was to distinguish humanitarian response needs from extensive and chronic development needs.

 **WHILE LONG-TERM ENGAGEMENT** is recommended for fragile states, donors seem to be turning away from Haiti. With few signs of progress, donor “fatigue” is on the rise. When Hurricane Matthew struck Haiti in 2016, many donors had already frozen parts of their funding due to corruption and political uncertainty. Aid is seen as slow and ineffective, leaving targeted communities dissatisfied.

 **INTERNATIONAL AID ACTORS** in Haiti find it difficult to identify examples of lasting impact. With some exceptions, successes tend to be localised, limited to output level, or with

questionable sustainability. While Haiti has registered modest improvements in disaster preparedness, healthcare, education and governance (i.e. universal suffrage), gains in telecommunications, water and sanitation, and agricultural reform have been limited.

 **THE IMPACT OF INTERNATIONAL AID** in Haiti at national level has only been measured to a limited extent. While process indicators across the spectrum show some signs of improvement, achieving and documenting progress towards transformational change remains a challenge, further exacerbated by the government’s weakness.

 **A KEY CHALLENGE** in aid effectiveness in Haiti is design, given the absence of a well-tuned strategy or clear road map to navigate a complex context. Furthermore, some of the monitoring and evaluation systems identified in the evaluation reports on Haiti appear unsuited to capturing non-linear and gradual pathways to development.

 **THE DEVASTATING IMPACT** of Hurricane Matthew in 2016 seriously tested newly tailored disaster preparedness systems. While still inadequate, they appear to have partially succeeded. The humanitarian response was effective in terms of speed and coverage, and donors succeeded in coupling tangible or infrastructure aid (i.e. hardware) with social awareness and systems (i.e. software) that lead to sustainability and ownership. To reduce long-term risk, investments in all sectors – from agriculture to construction – need to target and reduce vulnerability.



HAITI

Estimated population: 10,485,800
(CIA 2017; 2016 est.)

Population under the age of 15: 33.39%
(CIA 2017; 2016 est.)

Urban population: 58.6% (CIA 2017; 2015 data)

Annual urbanisation rate (average rate of change of the size of the urban population): 3.78%
(CIA 2017; 2010-15 est.)

Human Development Index (HDI): 163 (of 188)
(UNDP 2017b; 2015 data)

Gender Inequality Index (GII): 142 (of 159)
(UNDP 2017b; 2015 data)

Poverty Rate (below \$ 1.90 per day): 53.9%
(World Bank 2017; 2015 data)

Adult literacy rate: 64.7% (UNDP 2017b; 2015 data)

Life expectancy at birth (male/female):
63 (61/65) (World Bank 2017a; 2015 data)

Child mortality rate (under 5, per 1000 live births):
69.0 (World Bank 2017a; 2015 data)

Net ODA received (% of GNI): 11.9% (World Bank 2017a; 2015 data)

Corruption Perception Index rank: 159 (of 176)
(Transparency International 2017; 2016 data)

Internally Displaced Persons (new displacements in 2016 due to disasters): 180,000 (IDMC 2017; 2016 data)

Mean years of schooling: 5.2 (UNDP 2017b; 2015 data)

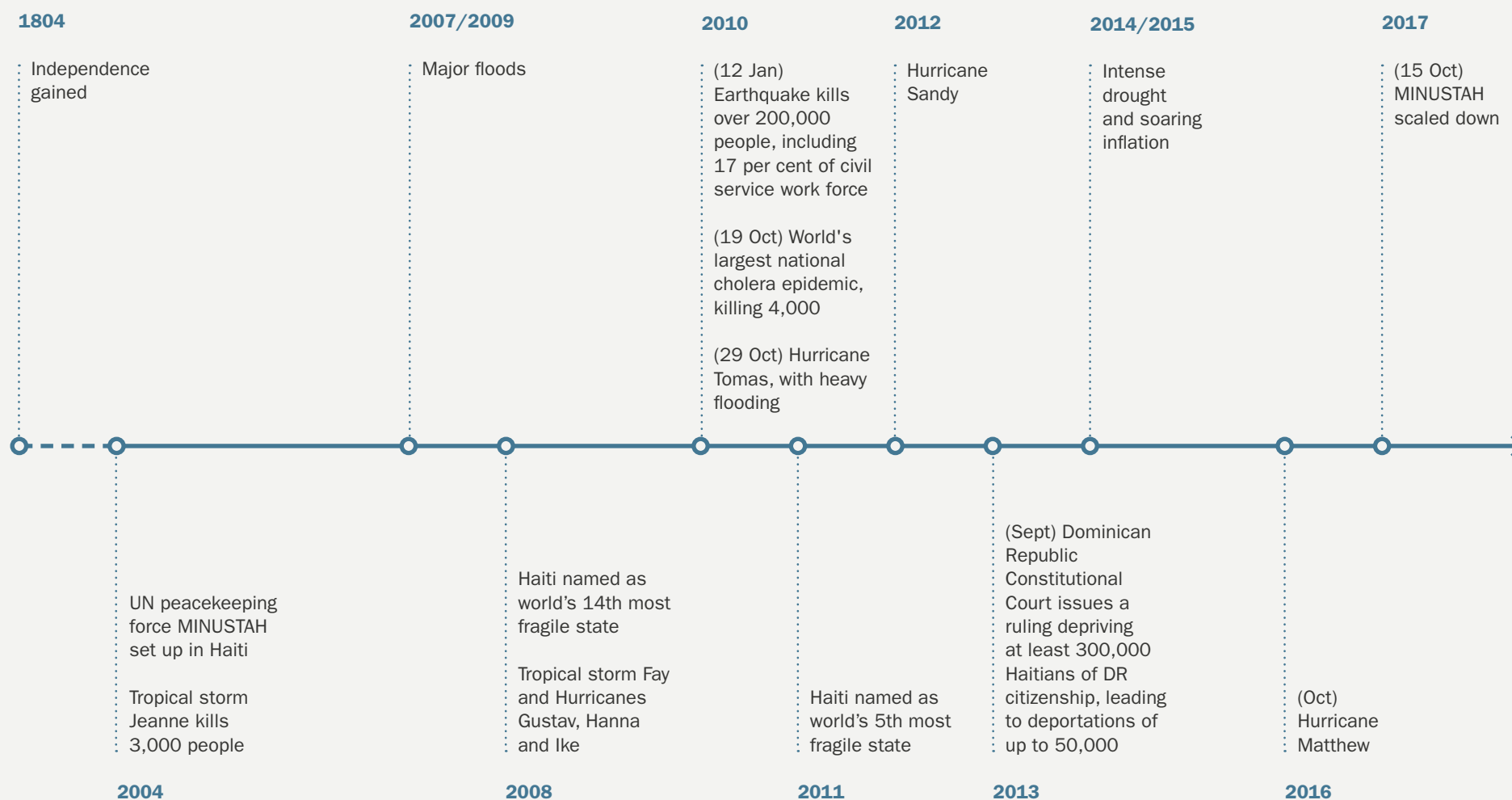
Gross National Income (GNI) per capita, PPP (current international \$): 1,770 (World Bank 2017a; 2015 data)



Polluted waters in Cap-Haitien, Département du Nord, September 2012. PHOTO: ALEX PROIMOS/Flickr



TIMELINE OF KEY EVENTS



1. Introduction

Suffering from weak governments and an incessant battery of natural hazards, the fragile state of Haiti is a place where the impact of international aid at national level has escaped measurement for the last 10 years or more.



A boy takes a shower outside his tent in Cité L'Eternel, a poor neighbourhood of Port-au-Prince, November 2010. PHOTO: UN PHOTO/UNICEF/MARCO DORMINO/FICKR

Haiti occupies the western portion of the Caribbean island of Hispaniola, sharing its only border with the Dominican Republic to the east. The small island-nation, which gained independence from its French colonisers in 1804, has a history of turbulent governments and is incessantly battered by natural hazards.

International aid to Haiti, which had risen steadily since 2004, surged following the 2010 earthquake – often referred to as the greatest humanitarian crisis in the 21st century – but has since waned. Haiti in 2017 is still one of the world's most fragile and at-risk states, and international aid actors find it nearly impossible to identify stories of lasting success. Those found are very localised – reflecting outputs, rather than genuine change – or are simply unsustainable. While indicators of progress across the spectrum show faint signs of improving, donors and communities seem to have reached an impasse, with the government still not in the driver's seat.

2. Methodology

The assessment is based on 26 evaluations, spanning the widest possible range on the disaster-to-development continuum, with a good balance of different types of sources and actors. Due to their strong presence and profile in Haiti, a good number of the programme evaluations are authored by the UN and NGOs, a majority of them humanitarian actors.



Children jump rope in a rubble-strewn street in the Delmas 32 neighbourhood of Port-au-Prince, August 2010. PHOTO: UN PHOTO/MARCO DORMINO/FLICKR

The 26 evaluations, reviews and studies, each published in 2010 or later, cover international aid investment in Haiti – mainly since 2010, but with a few exceptions that span longer periods, starting in 2003. The evaluations reviewed were identified through a systematic search of global development co-operation databases (e.g. the OECD/DAC Evaluation Resource Centre database), websites and report databases of individual multilateral and bilateral donors and non-governmental organisations (NGOs). The final selection was a diverse sample drawn from a larger set of 50 reports, based on their contribution to issues spanning the widest possible range on the disaster-to-development continuum, with a good balance of different types of actors (donor governments, NGOs/ United Nations and international financial institutions). Emphasis was put on evaluations of types of aid frequently used in fragile contexts, such as support to state building and governance, humanitarian assistance, and pooled funds. The final sample also includes evaluations of cross-cutting issues – mainly gender equality and environment.

The evaluations form a useful, but inevitably imperfect, resource to help understand the development and aid context in Haiti. While the selection approach resulted in a balanced sample, use of evaluations alone comprises a



The Haitian National Palace, heavily damaged after the earthquake on January 12th 2010. PHOTO: MARCO DORMINO/UN PHOTO/FLICKR

limitation as available reports do not always cover all crucial areas of development co-operation. Furthermore, although many donors and implementing agencies publish the evaluations of their programmes and projects, not all reports are in the public domain (i.e. some are kept confidential, and thus not included here). While the efforts of at least eight donor governments were included (Canada, the European Union, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, Switzerland, UK, US), evaluations for France – also a prominent donor – were not found to be publicly available.

Given Haiti's exposure to a panoply of hazards, and the magnitude of the 2010 earthquake, it was little surprise that evaluations of humanitarian action were more readily available than evaluations of development. Of these, all but a few evaluations aimed to explore efforts that had some relation to the 2010 earthquake (a 2016 evaluation described the humanitarian response to Hurricane Matthew). At least three of the evaluations, however, deliberately examine both humanitarian and development aid and, when relevant, the links between them.

3. Country context

On top of destructive natural hazards such as the 2010 earthquake, chronic poverty, inequality and a general lack of economic opportunity in Haiti have contributed to the growth of gang violence, drug trafficking and organised crime. While the United Nations' stabilisation mission (MINUSTAH, established in 2004) has started to scale down, tensions with the Dominican Republic are mounting.



Scene from Les Cayes in the aftermath of Hurricane Matthew, a category 4 storm, which made landfall on 4 October, 2016. PHOTO: UN PHOTO/LOGAN ABASSI/Flickr

Haiti occupies the western portion of the island of Hispaniola (shared with the Dominican Republic), in the middle of the Caribbean Sea. Under French rule in the 19th century, its population consisted mainly of slaves brought from Africa to work on the sugarcane plantations. It fought for and gained independence from France in 1804, but then endured a period of US occupation in the 20th century.

Haiti continues to be plagued by turbulent governments and outbreaks of violence, as well as being exposed to a fierce battery of natural hazards, all of which have limited its growth.

With a Gross Domestic Product of USD 1,784, and ranked 163 out of 188 countries on the Human Development Index, Haiti is often referred to as the “poorest country in Latin America”. The poverty generated by inequality and a general lack of economic opportunity has, in turn, contributed to the growth of gang violence, drug trafficking and organised crime.

Haiti’s domestic resources are derived mainly from the petrol and textile industries, as well as from various taxes (World Bank Group 2015), reduced by layers of corruption. While Haiti measures systematically worse on development indices than any of its neighbours, the nation is roughly on a par with other countries at the



Peanut harvesting, 2012. PHOTO: ALEX PROIMOS/FLICKR

same economic level. Major reconstruction efforts were promoted by the international community following the 2010 earthquake that devastated Haiti’s capital city, Port-au-Prince, and Haiti’s gross domestic product grew by 5.5 per cent in 2011 and by 4.2 per cent in 2013. However, economic growth took a turn for the worse thereafter. Haiti’s status on the Human Development Index has fallen gradually since 1990, and from 145th place in 2009 (before the earthquake) to 163rd in 2016.

While Haiti’s overall risk ranking (weighing hazard exposure, vulnerability and institutional/infrastructural capacity) has been stable over the last three years (INFORM 2017), vulnerability and relative hazard exposure are on the rise. Vulnerability of the population is exacerbated by massive deforestation, poor



Peanut harvesting, 2012. PHOTO: ALEX PROIMOS/FLICKR

land planning (especially urban), weak access to public services (especially health), high levels of food insecurity, and accentuated inequalities (economic and gender) that are often the catalyst for conflict. The United Nations Stabilisation Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) was set up in 2004 in the aftermath of armed conflict (following President Aristide’s exile), with both a military and civil mandate.

There are vast challenges with democratic processes in Haiti, and the institutional capacity for policymaking was affected by the absence of a stable government for one year, leading to the election of Jovenel Moïse as president in February 2017. The effectiveness of public finance was severely undermined by political volatility that further weakened an already fragile rule of law situation. While the political

situation in Haiti has been less violent in 2017 than in 2016, security incidents and clashes between police and protesters regularly occur. Regional tensions with the Dominican Republic were also mounting, at a time when MINUSTAH was scaling down its presence and handing over (on 15 October, 2017) to a six-month United Nations Mission for Justice Support in Haiti (MINUJUSTH).

While no evaluation provided an explicit assessment of development aid through the filter of border relations, an unprecedented Dominican Republic court ruling in 2013 questioned the right of 200,000 individuals from immigrant families to remain in the country. The Dominican legislature followed the ruling with the Naturalisation Law (169-14), which put the burden of proof on those living in the country to provide records of their birth in the Dominican Republic – a burden that fewer than 7,000 tried to meet before the June 2016 deadline. This led to the deportation of up to 50,000 Haitians.



Making aluminium cooking pots in Cité Soleil. This small family business can produce up to ten pots a week, depending on what scrap aluminium can be collected.
PHOTO: UN PHOTO/LOGAN ABASSI/FLICKR

4. Donor engagement in Haiti

Although rising steadily since 2004 and surging following the 2010 earthquake, foreign aid to Haiti has steadily decreased since 2011. Development co-operation has had a strong emphasis on health, social infrastructure and services, and humanitarian aid with a strong reliance on NGOs and budget support relatively rare.

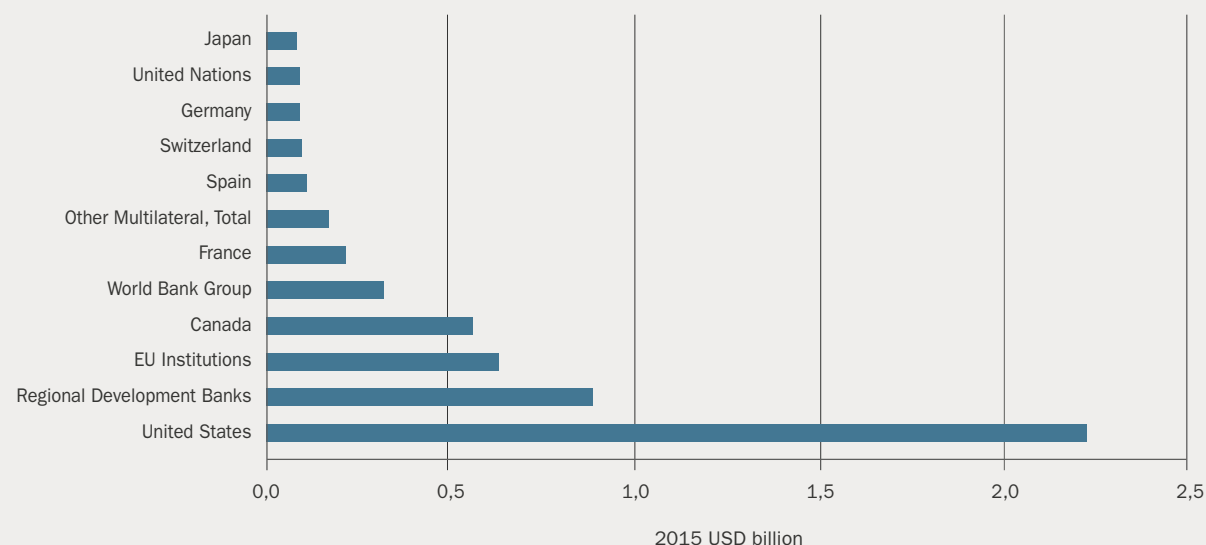


Two men in Grand Dessalines walk towards a health centre to receive re-hydration medical kits after a severe cholera outbreak in Haiti, October 2010. The town was isolated by flooding from the Artibonite River. PHOTO: UN PHOTO/UNICEF/MARCO DORMINO/FICKER

International assistance to Haiti, while rising steadily since 2004, surged following the 2010 earthquake, before decreasing after 2011. Humanitarian funding was voluminous – OCHA's Financial Tracking Service (FTS) reported a figure of USD 1.5 billion for 2010 alone - but fell to USD 480 million in 2011, USD 238 million the following year and USD 115 million in 2015. While the principles of Good Humanitarian Donorship promote needs assessment prior to funding, in Haiti it seemed to work the other way round, in that evaluated actors identified needs to match the large volume of funds. As in most fragile states, the challenge was to distinguish humanitarian needs from chronic development needs.

Some donors who had planned to scale down their assistance made the decision to stay after the earthquake, and newcomers such as Brazil arrived on the scene. In addition, there were suddenly “thousands of charities and individuals” (Dara/Hilton Foundation 2015: 1). Following the earthquake, DG ECHO and Norway were among the donors that very quickly decided to divert large portions of their funding to areas outside Port-au-Prince, targeting other affected cities and areas hosting Haitian survivors who had fled the capital. Many donors started to focus a majority of their investment in one geographical area, such as Département

FIGURE 1 // TOP 12 DONORS OF GROSS ODA, 2011-2015



SOURCE: OECD CRS AID ACTIVITY DATABASE DATA 2017

du Sud for Norway or the Northern region for USAID.

Since 2010, overall development co-operation has had a strong emphasis on health, social infrastructure and services, and humanitarian aid. Programmes featured by the evaluations studied also include urban development and shelter, livelihoods, governance, communication with affected populations, education, food

security, and natural resources. Despite recurrent hazards, funding provided by donors for disaster preparedness efforts is still seen as insufficient since the 2010 earthquake.

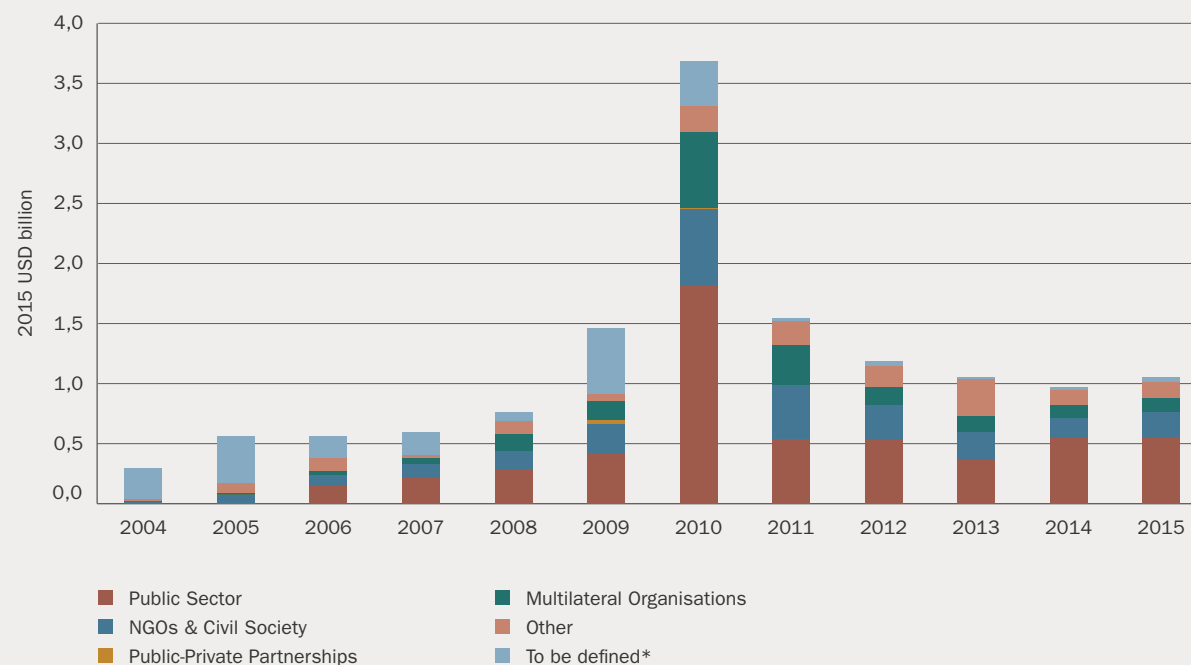
While budget support is contributed by only a few donors, it made up 25 per cent of EU DG DEVCO's financial support in the country (European Commission 2014). The Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) also

financed operational expenditures at ministries and governmental agencies. Actions to reduce debt made up 10 per cent of Haiti's overall aid portfolio (IDB 2013). The IDB wrote off Haiti's debt and transferred resources to the Grant Facility to approve grants beyond the previously established amount (e.g. USD 231.6 million in 2010).

The main donors investing in Haiti overall since 2011 include (in order of decreasing volume) the United States, regional development banks, the European Union, Canada, the World Bank, and France.

The major funding channels since 2004 are public sector (39 per cent) and NGOs and civil society (19 per cent). Multilateral organisations, such as the United Nations, received only 13 per cent in the same period. Indeed, Haiti has often been referred to as a 'Republic of NGOs'. Reacting to the absence of commitment for government service delivery, as early as the 1980s, development and humanitarian aid was channelled by donors through NGOs and, to a lesser extent, to the United Nations. While these entities are often considered a substitute for the government, they are seen by many to deliver needed aid (Norad 2012). During heightened humanitarian responses, many donors also felt it was essential in Haiti

FIGURE 2 // TOTAL ODA BY CHANNEL, 2004-2015



* The category "To be defined" is related to the fact that the OECD's mapping exercise to apply CRS categories retrospectively is still ongoing. Aid flows that have not been mapped yet are marked as "To be defined". In contrast, the category "Other" applies to aid flows that have already been mapped, but which could not be placed in another channel category. SOURCE: OECD CRS AID ACTIVITY DATABASE DATA 2017

to preserve a diversity of partners so as to be able to supply and sustain aid on a large scale.

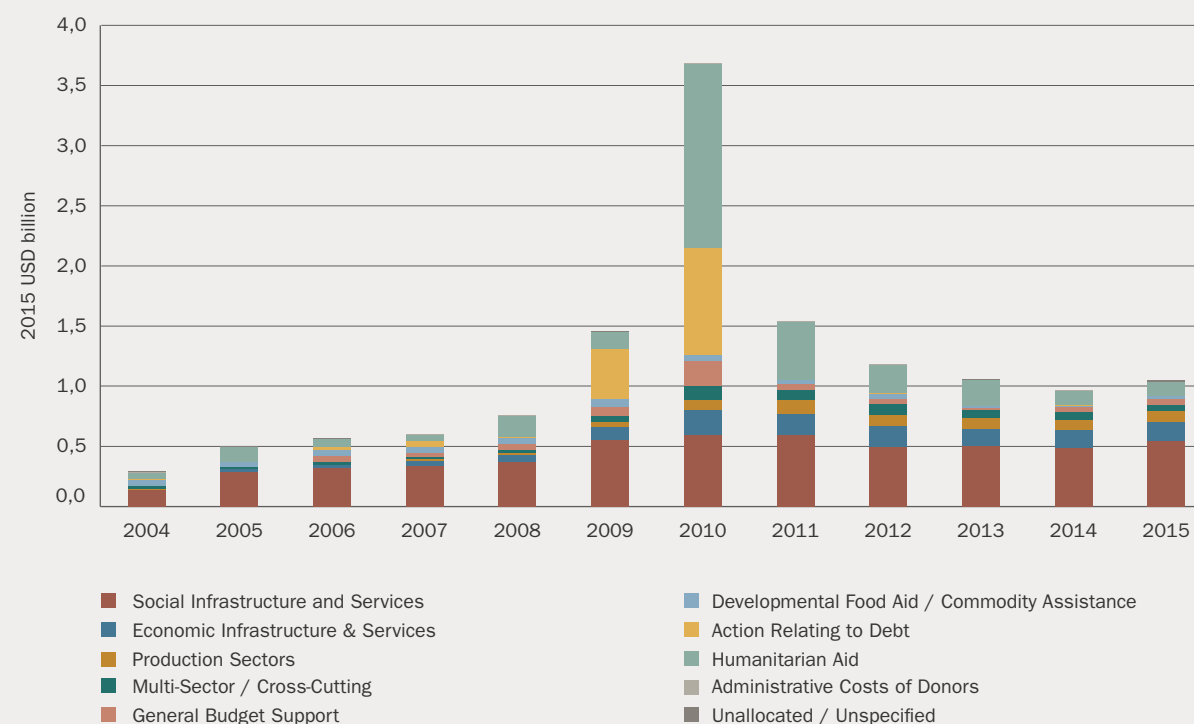
In terms of thematic areas, donor investment in Haiti is diverse and varied; the visible overall patterns indicate that 37 per cent of donor investment between 2004 and 2015 targeted

social infrastructure and services, and 22 per cent were directed at humanitarian aid. Actions relating to debt attracted nearly 10 per cent of the overall investment in economic infrastructure and services. Humanitarian aid in 2010 was seven to eight times more than in other years.

Having seen few signs of genuine progress, there are increasing signs of donor “fatigue”. External transfers (grants), which in 2013 accounted for 9 per cent of Haiti’s gross domestic product, decreased to 7 per cent in 2014 and an estimated 5 per cent in 2015 (IDB 2016). More recently, when Hurricane Matthew struck Haiti, many donors had already frozen at least parts of their long-term funding due to instability, corruption and a highly uncertain political situation. Aid is increasingly seen as becoming inefficient, with deliveries taking more time and targeted communities left unsatisfied (European Commission 2011). While long-term solutions are highly recommended for fragile states, donors with a long-term perspective seem increasingly rare.

Aid recipients are also largely disenchanted and impatient. Generally, the relationship between operational agencies and donors, and affected populations, has led to widespread “hostility against international organisations”. This is driven in part by donors asking Haitians more and more often about their needs, without having a solid and flexible system in place through which their answers can influence programming (Dara/Hilton Foundation 2015: 8). Nonetheless, one evaluation asking affected individuals to rate the contributions of various aid actors revealed that international NGOs and

FIGURE 3 // TOTAL ODA BY SECTOR, 2004-2015



SOURCE: OECD CRS AID ACTIVITY DATABASE DATA 2017

foreign governments received more favourable ratings nationally than Haiti’s own government. International NGOs received 40 percent and foreign governments 33 percent good ratings, with camp residents more satisfied than non-camp residents (Tulane University 2012).

The Haitian diaspora accounts for approximately four million, scattered throughout the world. This is equivalent to roughly 40 percent of the current population of Haiti. A majority of the diaspora represent the Haitian intelligentsia, who left their homeland during the 1964-1986

dictatorship or during later political instability. While over 80 per cent of the diaspora are located in North America, many entire households survive as irregular migrants there and across the Caribbean region. To curb the rapidly increasing number of Haitian migrants to the Dominican Republic, Dominican authorities have taken strong regulatory measures (Oxfam 2015). Remittances into Haiti provide up to a third of its Gross Domestic Product, steadily increasing each year, and migration remains one of the major coping strategies for Haitians faced with the absence of economic opportunity. The restoration of remittance services to Haiti was seen for the first time as “a critical part of disaster...response” (Government of Canada 2015).

By the end of 2011, the Haiti Emergency Relief and Response Fund (ERRF) had disbursed at least USD 74.8 million to 51 implementing partners to roll out 80 projects, responding to three discrete disaster events: the hurricanes of 2008/9, the earthquake in January 2010, and cholera (OCHA 2011: 58). The ERRF portfolio in Haiti made history as the largest emergency response fund ever managed prior to 2012.



The United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) works to deliver election materials and to deploy security personnel ahead of the parliamentary elections in Haiti in January, 2017. PHOTO: UN PHOTO/LOGAN ABASSI/FLICKR

5. Evaluations of aid

The ensemble of evaluations of international aid to Haiti describe above all humanitarian action followed by the provision of physical and social infrastructure and services. The evaluations regularly describe naïve efforts, disappointment and frustration in the attempt to bring development and risk management to fruition in a fragile state.



Doing homework in Delmas 32, Haiti. PHOTO: DOMINIC CHAVEZ/WORLD BANK/FLICKR

The following sections first describe **humanitarian response**, given its prominence in the period studied, followed by **disaster risk reduction and management** as the sector mandated to lessen the need for response, and then a few of the most visible sectors: **physical infrastructure and shelter** and **social infrastructure and services (health, education and water, sanitation and hygiene)**. Lastly, insights gleaned from evaluations concerning **governance and state-building** and **cross-cutting issues** are presented.

HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE

The magnitude of devastation after the 2010 earthquake was a brutal confirmation of both government neglect and international aid failure in Haiti. The lack of aid effectiveness stemmed from a multitude of factors: an excess of organisations; underestimation of the complexity of this fragile state; absent or decrepit state institutions; and the rush of many donors to satisfy their constituencies back home. Humanitarian earthquake assistance reportedly made insignificant positive contributions towards all seven resilience dimensions developed by one evaluation to rate the response. Even two years after the earthquake, more than a third of households in the areas directly affected and half of the households living in camps

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had not recovered their basic physical assets (Tulane University 2012).

While objectives were generally well formulated after the earthquake, the monitoring and evaluation frameworks of most interventions reviewed were inadequate, striving more for outputs than for higher-level objectives (outcomes or impact). Design flaws characterising the humanitarian portfolio included the “failure to adopt a predictable and strategic vision, and to link up with wider efforts in the relevant areas/sectors, both vertically and horizontally” (Norad 2015a: xix). Disturbingly, Haitian voices were rarely if ever prioritised, either before or after the earthquake, and the lack of accountability to affected Haitians hampered the entire

aid effort, increasing conflict and insecurity (Dara/Hilton Foundation 2015). On the other hand, the humanitarian response to the Haiti earthquake was also characterised by an unprecedented application of new and innovative crowd-mapping platforms, mobile technology, and call-in radio shows that provided information in real time and feedback mechanisms (ALNAP, MFA Germany, IFRC 2014).

ODA reporting registered USD 3.3 billion of humanitarian aid between 2002 and 2015 (22 per cent of total ODA to Haiti, without counting FTS figures). FTS¹ figures for 2016 and 2017 to date total USD 232 million and USD 91 million, respectively (FTS 2017).

DISASTER RISK REDUCTION AND MANAGEMENT

The 2010 earthquake reactivated a system-wide consciousness of the need for reform. While significant work on risk management had taken place in Haiti before the earthquake, the urgent need for institutional strengthening became crystal clear in its wake. Disaster risk reduction and management – a critical part of the aid focus in Haiti – was therefore

1. Managed by UN OCHA, the Financial Tracking Service (FTS) captures international humanitarian aid contributions from across a range of actors, including but not limited to ODA donors. While ODA reporting does include humanitarian sector spending, FTS is used here to provide a fuller picture.

jump-started as a priority. A number of preparedness measures – including alerts, the pre-positioning of stocks, awareness raising, and contingency plans – started to bear fruit only recently, following years of investment. Progress was also made in strengthening the capacities of risk governance structures at the national departmental and communal levels through civil protection mechanisms (GFDRR 2016).

Hurricane Matthew in 2016 tested national disaster preparedness and resilience-building efforts, which appear to have paid off (DFID/URD 2017: 10). Trained national-level staff facilitated a rapid start to the humanitarian response, even before they could re-establish communication with the affected areas. Without the backing of recognised national disaster law, national leadership and co-ordination under the Haitian Civil Protection Agency was quickly activated. Other disaster preparedness efforts that seem to have paid off include pre-positioned stocks, greater support to local and national responders, improved joint and impartial needs assessments, increased use and co-ordination of cash-based programming, and an attempt to involve affected people and communities.

While Haiti also established a number of good disaster risk reduction (DRR) practices through

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recovery processes, most of them are not yet codified in national policies or regulations. Furthermore, the enforcement of DRR policy remains project-related, left to agencies to define or apply within their interventions. Even if based on good international standards, they were often “product driven, not holistic, and [benefiting] only a small percentage of the affected population” (GFDRR 2016: 123).

Numerous evaluations report that recent Haitian DRR leadership, in concert with the international humanitarian architecture, is increasingly successful in sharing relevant information about plans and activities with communities, and engaging with development



Removal of debris from the streets of Port-au-Prince and Léogâne in November 2011, nearly two years after the 2010 earthquake. PHOTO: UNDP/Flickr

actors for a smoother transition post-response (Croix-Rouge Haïtienne/Canadian Red Cross 2014, Oxfam 2015).

Haiti reportedly has a functional national Early Warning System (EWS) for hurricanes and flooding that is well targeted towards the most exposed areas of the country (alerts for tsunamis are also being prepared, Canadian Red Cross 2014). However, the Inter-American Development Bank claims that its efforts to contribute to the national flood early warning did not succeed in establishing a permanent system due to the “complexity of the solution proposed and insufficient institutional ownership [...] by the government” (IDB 2016: 30). National authorities developed a widespread and effective system, with alerts disseminated through decentralised structures

of the National Disaster Management entity and the mass media – joining forces with international partners to link communities to the national-level systems. However, efforts to create a synergistic multi-hazard EWS, and to adequately map risks, are fraught with a lack of co-ordination. The EWS remains fragmented, managed by parallel, often competing, institutions at different levels, and may entirely cease to exist when external funding ends. There is also no clear legal, policy or institutional mechanism to link risk mapping and EWS (Croix-Rouge Haïtienne/Canadian Red Cross 2014).

In the last five years, localised efforts – such as eco-DRR or reducing disaster risk through a focus on community restoration and management of watershed basins, mitigation activities, employment generation and agricultural development – have seen some success in the Southern Department (Norad 2012). However, older evaluations stress the detrimental impact of a lack of attention to the physical environment in Haiti (USAID 2010). Although environmental issues in rural areas appear to be generally well understood, they rarely appear in evaluations (even within the last five years), and are rarely incorporated into programmes in a meaningful manner (European Commission 2011). Logging (deforestation

and subsequent erosion) and urban sprawl are culprits in the alarming rate of environmental degradation.

Technical interventions during the last decade of humanitarian response in Haiti have seen many actors operating in silos. While efforts in sanitation and hygiene were relatively effective, shelter was largely neglected in the earthquake response, and protection received scant focus. Other weaknesses included irregular co-ordination (international, national and local authorities), and specific agencies that were not sufficiently accountable to affected populations. Sector specifics follow.

PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND SHELTER

Many evaluations described challenges in supporting physical infrastructure (public roads and energy or private homes) and the importance of linking or layering hardware (tangible, infrastructure) and software (social systems, awareness, ownership) interventions. Most of the literature on shelter relates to the 2010 earthquake, and to Hurricane Matthew of 2016. Although land tenure is a significant problem generally, few hazards damage infrastructure quite like earthquakes and hurricanes, with the former likely to cause much more irreparable damage.



A doctor from Aide Medicale Internationale (AMI) provides residents with medicines from a mobile clinic in a poor neighbourhood of Port-au-Prince, 2009.
PHOTO: UN PHOTO/MARCO DORMINO/FLICKR

Switzerland found the combination of infrastructure/rehabilitation support and quality improvements – such as vocational skills development of construction workers – to be a fruitful strategy (SDC 2015). EU support provided an intentional dual focus on economic reconstruction (rehabilitation of large infrastructure) and support for vulnerable populations (food security and local development), but synergy between the two was more complex than expected (European Commission 2014). None of the IDB's five successive planned transportation operations in 2015 were completed, due to political intransigence impeding parliamentary approval of proposed legislation (IDB 2016). Major electricity infrastructure and road construction efforts – such as the Cayes-Jérémie road

project, funded in part by Canada – may have contributed to longer-term negative environmental effects, such as deforestation, without assuring appropriate mitigation measures (Government of Canada 2015).

More localised efforts in community infrastructure, especially urban (including roads, water and sanitation and shelter), are seen as offering “the most significant, positive and widespread impact” after the earthquake (British Red Cross 2016: 4). Shelter, however, was considered a neglected sector of humanitarian response where donors struggled to adapt to, and learn from, evolving needs. One reason was inexperience: a survey conducted for the GFDRR evaluation revealed that less than a quarter of the agencies working on shelter and housing after the earthquake had experience in these sectors in Haiti beforehand (GFDRR 2016). While the emergency shelter response following the 2010 earthquake was deemed successful, the initial shelter strategy was not adjusted sufficiently as the situation evolved, nor were recovery strategies developed jointly with the government (which had no policy framework on which to base reconstruction). Fierce debates (grounded in a scarcity of data) ensued over whether to prioritise camps and relocation or to rebuild in place, and over how to deal with aid agencies’ reluctance to implement

Shelter was considered a neglected sector of humanitarian response where donors struggled to adapt to, and learn from, evolving needs.

mechanisms to distinguish those who needed support in camps from those who pitched a tent there only to profit – with “endemic opportunism and aid capture” reportedly rampant (Concern Worldwide 2016: 163).

With donors failing to learn from shelter efforts during the earthquake response, the response to Hurricane Matthew largely failed to meet urgent needs. This was reportedly the result of a lack of precise data (underestimation in needs assessments) and logistical difficulties, but also of the government's very slow decision-making process and insufficient supply management, coupled with insecurity as a major obstacle to aid delivery (DFID/URD 2017). While the official appeals indicated that shelter was the main priority (with up to 90 per

cent destruction of houses in some areas), this sector received only 10 per cent of the budget – far behind food security and water, sanitation and hygiene, despite the explicit contributions of multiple donors to shelter.

SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES

Across the international portfolio, while access indicators for health and education showed some improvement (OECD/MFA Netherlands 2011, Government of Canada 2015), no major advances were registered in services such as water and sanitation, and electricity.

International **health** indices, such as maternal and infant mortality rates, suggest that progress has been made in Haiti (IDB 2013). Maternal mortality fell from 410 to 350 per 100,000 births from 2005 to 2010, while mortality for children under five decreased from 90.5 to 75.6 per 1000 live births between 2005 and 2012 (Government of Canada 2015), and are currently at 69 (World Bank 2017). Immunisation coverage also improved between 2006 and 2013 (Government of Canada 2015).

In **education**, primary school enrolment rates increased from less than 50 per cent in 2005-2006 to 77 per cent of children (at ages 6 and 11) in 2012 (Government of Canada 2015), but only 12 per cent of the total school stock

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comes from the public education sector (SDC 2015). The quality of education remains uneven and painfully low, driving high unemployment. Educational reform has not progressed, and the Government of Haiti has been unable to leverage resources to finance a programme of free education (IDB 2016). This may be further explained by OECD/DAC data showing an increase in overall development assistance, while funds for education are on the decline. Haiti evaluations report a further reduction of funds for basic education – even inside the sector, at both national and local levels. Other progress in the sector is rare, very specific or localised, and can only be measured when carefully planned during the design. As an example, one evaluation reported that the number of children in disadvantaged areas enrolled through the provision of tuition waivers between 2010-2015 showed a partially positive or fulfilled result positively impacting “equity for



Kids from a school in Leogane playing 'Riskland', a game designed to teach children about natural hazards, April 2014. PHOTO: EU/ECHO/E. HOCKSTEIN/FLICKR

marginalised children” in Haiti (Norad 2015b: 27). Vocational training of adults (i.e. masons linked to disaster resistant construction) was reported as extremely successful (SDC 2015).

Water, sanitation and hygiene: Again, the most visible successes in this sector are registered at the local level. Improving water supply and access to sanitation facilities registered clear gains, reducing exposure and incidence of disease and making their target communities visibly cleaner (British Red Cross 2016). Other evaluations were less sanguine, reporting improper (bio-hazardous) waste management and water contamination in camps, leading to an increase of vector-borne diseases and potentially negative environmental impacts caused by the inappropriate use of portable (e.g. chemical) toilets (USAID 2010).



Six-year-old Pierre at Ecole Evangelique Chrétienne of Sable Cabaret, a Save the Children-supported school located in a remote area of Jacmel, 2010. PHOTO: SUSAN WARNER/SAVE THE CHILDREN/FLICKR

The most important event related to this sector was the cholera epidemic in October 2010, which was blamed largely on the international aid community and was responsible for at least 4000 additional casualties (reportedly linked to UN peacekeepers accidentally contaminating the Artibonite River with the virulent microbe). As a result, since dependable and timely surveillance data form the foundation of public health interventions, the Haitian Ministry of Health established an important precedent for a national surveillance system, involving the collaboration of governmental and non-governmental institutions operating at multiple levels. Investments in the sentinel site system improved the overall surveillance and epidemiological capacity in Haiti, while also serving to “monitor post-earthquake efforts to reduce morbidity and mortality

associated with many preventable diseases” (Government of Canada 2015).

GOVERNANCE AND STATEBUILDING

In a fragile state, strong accompaniment of recognised government entities is required. However, what the evaluations report as lacking is a very deliberate risk analysis and a clear plan to transfer to government any parallel efforts created within a programme (Norad 2015a). Many evaluations stressed that actors routinely contributed to creating parallel structures, without clearly articulating an explicit risk analysis and plan for hand-over to the Government of Haiti (Norad 2013). In effect, most evaluations hinted at the absence of a strong state partner to co-ordinate with and hand over projects to.

Across the portfolio, the level of respect for the principles for engagement in fragile states varied considerably. While numerous initiatives aimed, at least partially, at strengthening government institutions, an “almost exclusive reliance on executing agencies” and offering “salaries and conditions that the Government of Haiti could never match” demonstrated that opportunities were missed, or that exit strategies were absent in programme design (Government of Canada 2015). On the other hand, multiple evaluations reported that

waiting for “the government to make strategic decisions” often produced negative effects on programmes and on the overall effectiveness of aid (European Commission 2011: 62).

On a more positive note, improved access to national identification cards, support for civil society organisations, and working to get central agencies, the justice system and municipalities to adopt and use internationally-recognised management represented steps towards stronger governance. In this period, Haiti produced its first ever “reports on the human rights situation, in accordance with United Nations conventions”. Strengthening the national police force and supporting MINUSTAH was also seen as having contributed to public safety and security. These initiatives, combined with support for elections, are generally believed to have led to “greater political stability” (Government of Canada 2015).

CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

Vulnerable Groups

There were very few visible efforts evaluated that focused on protection of the most vulnerable groups – for example, women, children and the disabled. Projects evaluated focused more generally on gender issues and reported that they were not always implemented effectively

Domestic violence and abuse of women are pressing gender issues.

(European Commission 2011). Despite support, little progress was made in increasing gender equity in state institutions, including Parliament (Government of Canada 2015). Across the portfolio, it emerged that the most pressing gender issues are not gender quotas but more serious daily problems, such as domestic violence and “economic and verbal abuse of Haitian women” – for example, in the border markets by Dominican soldiers (Norad 2012: 2)

As another vulnerable group, disabled people were the focus of evaluation by one humanitarian aid report. It highlighted a seized opportunity to respond to the long-term needs of the population by “building a rehabilitation sector in Haiti for the first time, including physiotherapy for new amputees, and a range of nursing, physical therapy and occupational therapy services for people with spinal cord injuries” (Christian Blind Mission/International Centre for Evidence in Disability 2012: 13).

6. Lessons learnt

Disaster preparedness

efforts have started to show positive signs, along with small improvements in health. Donorship has been maintained, however, despite fundamental design flaws, the short stays of development actors and the absence of a strong voice of the Haitian government. In terms of sectors, the most flagrant gaps in Haiti evaluations concern environment and protection.



Locals in Port-au-Prince building rock walls and planting vegetation as ways to save arable land and avoid flooding in lower-lying areas, May 2012, engaged by the MINUSTAH's Community Violence Reduction section. PHOTO: UN PHOTO/LOGAN ABASSI/FLICKR

This review of aid evaluations in Haiti discloses a few lessons that may be useful to the larger international community. They are divided into overall strengths and weaknesses of donors' development assistance, gaps not reflected in evaluations, and ideas looking forward.

STRENGTHS

One obvious strength of development co-operation is that volumes of funding were forthcoming rapidly after the 2010 earthquake in Haiti, and this clearly provided opportunities. Voices also converged to say that international financing mechanisms, such as the Emergency Response and Relief Fund, hold a pertinent place in the evolving humanitarian architecture (OCHA 2011). Focusing on a specific geographical area inside Haiti was also a strategic and generally helpful step made by some donors – especially given marked lethargy in central government, coupled with widespread need and the large volume of incoming funds.

Through such funding, disaster preparedness perspectives seem to be strengthening, and have shown significant improvement. The international humanitarian response to Hurricane Matthew – compared to earlier disasters in Haiti – is reassuring, albeit uneven. Small but visible strides are being made in health and, to a lesser extent, in education.

WEAKNESSES

Key challenges in aid effectiveness in Haiti include, above all, fundamental design flaws – the lack of an agreed, updated and regularly-adjusted road map to understand and navigate a very complex context at all levels. Nearly all of the evaluations reported challenges due to limited understanding of the Haitian context and opaque needs assessments. This practice of overestimating feasibility without a solid evidence-base should be discouraged as irresponsible for fragile states.

The overly-ambitious agenda may reflect the fact that many individuals working on development issues in Haiti stay for a very short period of time. The lack of continuous knowledge and cultural understanding endangers the outcome of many development efforts. The institutional memory within the development agencies is often weak and fraught with high turnover. The presence of neighbouring countries (i.e. the Dominican Republic, Cuba, Brazil) with diverging political interests in Haiti may challenge effective donor co-ordination.

Another critical gap highlighted by nearly all evaluations is the absence of a strong voice from within Haitian government institutions. The weak state of democratic development, governance, and state institutions and the

Key challenges in aid effectiveness in Haiti include, above all, fundamental design flaws – the lack of an agreed, updated and regularly-adjusted road map to understand and navigate a very complex context at all levels.

absence of thoughtful and enforced policy make international aid exceedingly challenging. Until international donors and implementing partners can catalyse and nurture such a driving force, development will remain an independent venture that is not co-ordinated at the highest (national) level, and that is uncontested, unchallenged and, most regrettably, with no one to whom the aid efforts can be handed over.

Furthermore, some of the monitoring and evaluation systems identified in the evaluation reports on Haiti appear unsuited to capturing non-linear pathways to development.

Assuming it exists somewhere in each effort, systematically seeking to identify the “most meaningful change” from the perspectives of those affected may bring the international community closer to measuring success and learning from mistakes.

Evaluations also note a decreasing pace, with aid deliveries taking more time and Haitian communities growing increasingly impatient, fuelling greater insecurity in a vicious cycle of despair. Improving communication with communities should contribute to reducing discontent. It is crucial, however, to recognise that the international community is not set up, and should not in any way be set up, as a permanent replacement for Haitian government service delivery.

While Haiti’s particular situation (i.e. the 2010 earthquake) justified voluminous, direct and rapid financial support initially, sudden resources and structures set up quickly within government create institutional “asymmetries [...] as well as fiscal sustainability risks” (IDB 2016). Unstable and rushed entries into a complex context, coupled with opaque exit strategies (if any), set up international aid for uncertain impacts.

GAPS

The most flagrant gaps in the body of evaluations studied include environment and its protection and, more generally, stories of success.

Environmental degradation in Haiti is the worst in the Western Hemisphere – both a cause and result of the country’s economic decline. While there are aid projects found that promote environmentally-sustainable development, they appear to be isolated cases and not featured in many formal evaluations (the Norad-commissioned natural resource management evaluation was one of the exceptions). Progress in the area of environmental protection and climate change adaptation consisted mainly of the construction of infrastructure for flood protection and an increase in the area of irrigable land (IDB 2016).

Since 2010, millions of aid dollars have targeted **protection** activities that primarily serve vulnerable populations, such as children, women, the elderly, and the disabled. The UN and NGO communities approached protection and security issues through programmes within the Protection Cluster, which includes sub-clusters for gender-based violence, human rights, and child protection. In close co-ordination with other UN Clusters (including Education and Health), the Protection Cluster

The most flagrant gaps in the body of evaluations studied include environment and its protection and, more generally, stories of success.



has provided training and social mobilisation projects in partnership with the respective government entities. Few of these efforts appear to be the focus of formal evaluations, with the exception of the 2012 Tulane University evaluation, which covers protection as one of seven areas of focus.

While hard to find within the evaluations, **success stories** may be attainable. In 2017, the Copenhagen Consensus catalysed a set of 80 peer-reviewed analyses describing development options for Haiti. They were authored by expert economists (inside and outside of Haiti), and later classified by a panel of experts in terms of highest cost benefit, combined with “where each gourde [Haitian currency] can do the most economic, social and environmental

good” (Haiti Priorise 2017: 1). The top three options were reform to electricity utility; wheat micronutrient fortification; and early childhood stimulation (providing two years of teacher-led instruction before primary school). These three alone are expected to yield for Haiti net benefits worth over 150 billion gourdes (equal to ca. USD 2.36 billion).

LOOKING AHEAD

As stressed by the evaluation of Dutch investments, urban disasters are critically different from those occurring in rural settings. Their distinctive features include “scale, density, economic systems and livelihood strategies, resource availability, governance and public expectations, large informal settlements, likelihood for compound and complex disasters, and potential for secondary impacts on rural or regional producers” (OECD/MFA Netherlands 2011: 161). Clearly, they require an entirely different approach. Cut-and-paste interventions do not work in Haiti. It is therefore critical to examine each new context before defining approaches.

Another approach in Haiti should be to refrain from linear thinking. There is a dire need for non-linear frameworks and flexible standards that link disaster and development aid. “The context of Haiti did not allow for the application of the LRRD [Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and



90-year-old Meralia Simon talks with a staffer from Handicap International after she was left stranded by Hurricane Matthew in 2016. PHOTO: BENOIT ALMERAS/HANDICAP INTERNATIONAL/FLICKR

Development] approach in its ideal-typical, linear and phased way, as is normally done” (OECD/MFA Netherlands 2011: 80, BMZ 2011). Donors should curb funding to actors in fragile states that begin the process without having “the appropriate tools in place”, such as clear strategies, government ownership, and long-term funding commitments (European Commission 2011: 63).

Likewise, there is a need for a concerted partnership of donors focused on a shared

vision to ensure that the efforts in recurrent humanitarian phases link intricately to longer-term initiatives. Many donors have developed tools to link relief and reconstruction to development and are rallying behind the concept of resilience across the globe. While some have targeted such an effort within the country, the complex context in Haiti merits a refreshed and unified multi-donor approach, and the careful contextualisation of each effort.

For donors who dare to “insist on sustainability, Haiti may be the wrong country in which to work ”(Norad 2012: 29). Haitian survival instincts, especially in urban contexts, reportedly outweighed community spirit, and this contributed to the lack of lasting impact of humanitarian investments. The same was found to be said for development actions. Not a single major externally-funded programme was described by the evaluations as likely to continue after external funding ends. Donors should therefore lower expectations and aim, at least in Haiti, for continuity before sustainability.

Rather than fall into the trap of blaming a dysfunctional Haitian government, it may be more useful to use a systems lens and understand the country as the logical result of a democracy that emerged, in isolation, to escape slavery. The former model (i.e. of slaves at the service of the economy) was simply replicated with new actors: the people at the service of the government. While the structure of the Government of Haiti conforms to that of many Western democracies, its visible functions and behaviour for generations have “lacked the service component that most Westerners assume to be one of the essential features of a modern government” (Norad 2012: 22).

The ultimate lesson is that state building in Haiti must start by enabling all national stakeholders (communities and households, current rulers, and the diaspora) to jointly deconstruct and rebuild their own tailor-made model. Until political will allows this remodelling to happen, international donorship in Haiti may not make progress in any lasting way. Until then, evidence compiled points to a singular, country-wide donor priority: educating the youngest generation of Haitians, with the aim of catalysing a model recast from within 20 years from today.

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ALNAP	Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action	IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
BMZ	German Federal Ministry for Economic Co-operation and Development	INFORM	Index for Risk Management
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency	MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
CRS	OECD Creditor Reporting System	MINUJUSTH	United Nations Mission for Justice Support in Haiti
DFID	UK Department for International Development	MINUSTAH	United Nations Stabilisation Mission in Haiti
DG DEVCO	EU Directorate General for International Co-operation and Development	NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
DG ECHO	EU Directorate General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations	OCHA	United Nations Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs
DR	Dominican Republic	ODA	Official Development Assistance
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction	OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
ERRF	Emergency Relief and Response Fund	PPP	Purchasing Power Parity
EU	European Union	SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Co-operation
EWS	Early Warning System	UN	United Nations
FTS	Financial Tracking Service	UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
GFDRR	Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery	URD	Urgence, réhabilitation, développement (Emergency, Rehabilitation, Development)
GII	Gender Inequality Index	USAID	United States Agency for International Development
GNI	Gross National Income		
IDB	Inter-American Development Bank		
IDMC	Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre		

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