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**Disaster Risk Reduction and the Action Plan for  
National Recovery and the Development of Haiti**

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Submitted to:  
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***Introduction: Port-au-Prince Reduced to Rubble***

On January 12, 2010 a devastating magnitude 7.0 earthquake rocked Haiti’s capital city, Port-au-Prince, killing an estimated 230,000, injuring 300,000, and displacing nearly 1.5 million people.<sup>1</sup> While this tragedy marks one of the country’s lowest points in its over 200 years of history, for many it presented a unique opportunity for Haiti to rise from the ashes of despair and rebuild itself anew. On March 31, 2010, the Government of Haiti announced its *Action Plan for National Recovery and Development of Haiti (Action Plan)* outlining how, with the support of the International Community, it would tackle the fundamental causes of Haiti’s overwhelming underdevelopment and vulnerability to disaster, and thus “Build Back Better.” This research project will provide an analysis of the Haitian government’s progress in keeping with the objectives of the *Action Plan*, primarily focusing on its efforts to reduce vulnerabilities to disaster while moving forward in the reconstruction process.

***Haiti’s Vulnerabilities***

For a number of observers, the devastating impact of natural hazards on Haiti, traditionally tropical storms and hurricanes, has always been understood as the result of the disturbingly high levels of vulnerability found throughout the society. That countries nearby, particularly Cuba, Jamaica, and the Dominican Republic, generally face similar hazards but experience drastically different outcomes, seems quite telling.<sup>2</sup> This was further underscored by the lack of devastation in Chile following a magnitude 8.8 temblor 500 times stronger than Haiti’s magnitude 7.0 quake only a month or so prior.<sup>3</sup> This natural foil for the Haiti disaster

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<sup>1</sup> (2011, January 5). Haiti earthquake facts and figures. *World Concern*. Retrieved from <http://reliefweb.int/node/380897>.

<sup>2</sup> (2010, January 13). Poverty is behind Haiti’s vulnerability to natural disasters. *UN Radio*. Retrieved from <http://reliefweb.int/node/340272>.

<sup>3</sup> Padgett, T. (2010, March 01). Chile and Haiti: A Tale of Two Earthquakes. *Time*. Retrieved from <http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,1968576,00.html>

## DRR and the Action Plan for National Recovery

emphasized how Haiti's specific vulnerabilities fundamentally exacerbated and amplified the impact of natural hazards. This was something immediately acknowledged in the *Action Plan*. In fact, "very soon after the earthquake it was obvious that such a toll could not be the outcome of just the force of the tremor,"<sup>4</sup> but that the magnitude of destruction was the result of the convergence of many underlying and often compounding vulnerabilities.

The *Action Plan* identified five factors that have increased the vulnerability of the Haitian people to disasters over the country's history, culminating with the tragedy of the January 12<sup>th</sup> earthquake.<sup>5</sup> The first was the excessive density of Port-au-Prince. While historically Haiti has been a predominantly agricultural society, with a rural to urban demographic ratio of 80% to 20% as late as the 1970s, today that ratio has shifted dramatically with nearly 45% of Haitians living in the country's various cities.<sup>6</sup> Port-au-Prince, in particular, has grown exponentially from about 250,000 inhabitants in the 1950s to over 2 million just before the earthquake.<sup>7</sup> Worse yet, it lies along the Enriquillo-Plantain Garden fault responsible for the recent earthquake, and is built on soft soils with much of its building stock either lying below sea level or along steep and unstable hillsides, thus making the city vulnerable to flooding, storm surge, and massive landslides during the rainy season.<sup>8</sup> A 1997 study found that 67% of the city's population lived

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<sup>4</sup> (2010). *Action plan for national recovery and development of Haiti: immediate key initiatives for the future*. Government of the Republic of Haiti. p. 5. Retrieved from <http://www.haitireconstructionfund.org/hrf/sites/haitireconstructionfund.org/files/Haiti%20Action%20Plan.pdf>.

<sup>5</sup> *Action plan*, 2010, p. 5.

<sup>6</sup> Maguire, R. (2010). *Reconstruction to Rebalance Haiti after the Earthquake*. Government of the United States of America. Retrieved from <http://www.foreign.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/MaguireTestimony100204p2.pdf> P. 2

<sup>7</sup> (2010, January 12). Haiti was 'catastrophe waiting to happen.' *CNN World*. Retrieved from [http://articles.cnn.com/2010-01-12/world/haiti.earthquake.infrastructure\\_1\\_building-poverty-line-catastrophe/2?\\_s=PM:WORLD](http://articles.cnn.com/2010-01-12/world/haiti.earthquake.infrastructure_1_building-poverty-line-catastrophe/2?_s=PM:WORLD).

<sup>8</sup> Clermont, C., Sanderson, D., Sharma, A., & Spraos, H. (2011). *Urban disasters—lessons from Haiti: study of member agencies' responses to the earthquake in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, January 2010* (p. 27). Disasters Emergency Committee. Retrieved from [http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/7DF0911A3489BB2BC125784C00374515-Full\\_Report.pdf](http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/7DF0911A3489BB2BC125784C00374515-Full_Report.pdf).; (2010). *Haiti earthquake reconstruction: knowledge notes from DRM global expert team for the government of Haiti*. The World Bank, Government of Haiti, and Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR). Retrieved from <http://reliefweb.int/node/368515>. p. 24

in spontaneous slums, half located on these unstable hillsides or at the bottom of drainage ravines and catchment zones,<sup>9</sup> essentially concentrating large numbers of the most vulnerable people in locations plagued by multiple hazards, a recipe for catastrophes of monumental proportions.

More importantly, the concentration of vulnerable people in Haiti's national capital is the result of what the *Action Plan* recognizes as the unbalanced division of economic activity. In Haiti, nearly 90 percent of total investments and formal jobs,<sup>10</sup> 85 percent of fiscal revenue,<sup>11</sup> and over 65 percent of the country's gross domestic product (GDP) is concentrated in Port-au-Prince and the *Ouest* Department, the jurisdictional seat of the capital.<sup>12</sup> This level of concentrated economic activity in a city as highly susceptible to catastrophe as Port-au-Prince, is highly problematic for the long term sustainable development of Haiti.

A third variable of vulnerability highlighted in the plan is Haiti's lack of adequate building standards. The magnitude of devastation makes that very clear. The earthquake left 105,000 homes completely destroyed, and another 208,000 severely damaged, representing about 40 percent of damages wrought by the earthquake.<sup>13</sup> On top of the destruction of housing, another 1,300 educational institutions and more than 50 hospitals and health centers either collapsed or were in near collapse.<sup>14</sup> This level of devastation, along with previous building collapses prior to the earthquake, all point to a significant failure to regulate the Haitian

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<sup>9</sup> (2010). *Haiti earthquake PDNA: assessment of damage, losses, general and sectoral needs*. Government of the Republic of Haiti. Retrieved from [http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTLAC/Resources/PDNA\\_Haiti-2010\\_Working\\_Document\\_EN.pdf](http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTLAC/Resources/PDNA_Haiti-2010_Working_Document_EN.pdf). (p. 73).

<sup>10</sup> McCoy, C. (2012). *Removing barriers to land security in Haiti*. Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars. Retrieved from <http://www.wilsoncenter.org/publication/removing-barriers-to-land-security-haiti>. p.4

<sup>11</sup> Ferris, E., Petz, D. (2010). *Haiti Six Months On*. The Brookings Institution. p 4

<sup>12</sup> *Haiti earthquake PDNA*, 2010, p. 25.

<sup>13</sup> *Action Plan*, 2010, p. 8.

<sup>14</sup> *Action Plan*, 2010, p. 7.

construction sector.<sup>15</sup> “There was an absence of modern building codes and a lack of oversight or enforcement of existing codes due to limited governance capacity.”<sup>16</sup> Economic hardships also play a role. In Haiti, construction is primarily done with poured concrete and cement blocks, but because concrete is expensive, many contractors add greater quantities of sand to their mixtures, producing structurally weaker material that crumbles easily under stress. Steel reinforcement is also often neglected as a result of costs.<sup>17</sup> This is particularly problematic in poor urban neighborhoods where housing can be up to three stories high, exposing greater proportions of the population to potential disaster.<sup>18</sup>

Fourth on the list of factors is the utter absence of a land-use planning regime. Establishing such a regime is particularly hampered by the uncertainty concerning land ownership throughout much of Haiti. Poor land administration has meant a complex and ambiguous land titling system, where titles often overlap, are invalid, or improperly documented, making land disputes a common facet of Haitian life. The heavily bureaucratized and costly process of titling made it relatively inaccessible to a significant proportion of Haiti’s population, pushing most property transactions outside the public domain.<sup>19</sup> With extensive informal settlement in Port-au-Prince over the past few decades, the land tenure issue has become even more fraught with conflict and tension.<sup>20</sup> “Given the impoverished state of the large majority of the population, people built where, how, and with what they could, with complete disregard for

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<sup>15</sup> (2010). *Disaster risk management in Latin America and the Caribbean region: GFDRR country notes*. The World Bank; Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR). Retrieved from [http://www.gfdr.org/gfdr/sites/gfdr.org/files/DRM\\_LAC\\_CountryPrograms.pdf](http://www.gfdr.org/gfdr/sites/gfdr.org/files/DRM_LAC_CountryPrograms.pdf) P.5

<sup>16</sup> (2010). *Haiti: stabilization and reconstruction after the quake*. Latin America/Caribbean Report N° 32. International Crisis Group, p. 3 Retrieved from [http://www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/latin-america/haiti/32\\_haiti\\_\\_\\_stabilisation\\_and\\_reconstruction\\_after\\_the\\_quake.ashx](http://www.crisisgroup.org/~/media/Files/latin-america/haiti/32_haiti___stabilisation_and_reconstruction_after_the_quake.ashx).

<sup>17</sup> Fountain, H. (2010, January 14). Flawed building likely a big element. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/01/14/world/americas/14construction.html?ref=world>.

<sup>18</sup> *Haiti earthquake PDNA*, 2010, p. 73.

<sup>19</sup> *Haiti earthquake reconstruction*, 2010, p. 38.

<sup>20</sup> *Haiti earthquake reconstruction*, 2010, p. 39.

safety or the environment.”<sup>21</sup> These were all symptoms of a more general problem, the lack of government capacity to regulate development.

As the population of Port-au-Prince essentially tripled between the early 1980s and the mid 1990s, the Government of Haiti was simply unable to provide the housing, infrastructure, or services necessary to match this rapid rate of urbanization. This was partly a function of how the city of Port-au-Prince was administered. Not only did the eight separate municipalities that shared responsibility for managing the city alongside various central government bodies not have clearly defined mandates, responsibilities, jurisdictions, or a coordinating mechanism, they increasingly faced competition from a parallel and more powerful Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) sector.<sup>22</sup> When the city’s growing problem was addressed between 2004 and 2007 through slum upgrading initiatives, it was mostly carried out by the NGOs, which failed to integrate local municipalities or other local governments in their activities, and thus failed to follow any urban planning or zoning regulations.<sup>23</sup>

A fifth element of Haitian vulnerability is environmental degradation. As a result of the significant deforestation that has occurred over the past century, today the country has only 2% forest coverage. In the decade 1990 to 2000 alone, Haiti lost nearly 44 percent of its forest cover.<sup>24</sup> “According to Yale University, Haiti ranks 155<sup>th</sup> out of 163 countries when it comes to general environmental degradation.”<sup>25</sup> Much of this is the product of pressures related to rapid population growth, such as overharvesting and overgrazing to meet food consumption needs, and

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<sup>21</sup> *Haiti: stabilization and reconstruction*, 2010, p. 3

<sup>22</sup> McCoy, 2012, p. 3.

<sup>23</sup> McCoy, pp. 2-3.

<sup>24</sup> (2009). *Haiti: ‘a gathering storm’: climate change and poverty*. Oxfam International. Retrieved from <http://www.oxfam.org/en/policy/haiti-gathering-storm>. p. 18.

<sup>25</sup> Crane, K., Dobbins, J., Miller, L.E., Ries, C.P., Chivvis, C.S., Haims, M.C., Overhaus, M., Schwartz, H.L., Wilke, E. (2010). *Building a More Resilient Haitian State*. The Rand Corporation. Retrieved from <http://www.rand.org/pubs/monographs/MG1039.html>. P. 14

the felling of trees for charcoal production to meet rising energy demands.<sup>26</sup> This reduction in wooded land has led to drastic soil erosion throughout the country, increasing the frequency and magnitude of floods and mudflows, which disproportionately affect the most vulnerable, populations living along the unstable hillsides of Port-au-Prince or the water catchments of Gonaives.<sup>27</sup> These environmental vulnerabilities are further exacerbated by climate change, experienced notably through a particularly extensive and tragic history of hydrometeorological disasters. Haiti is classified as one of the 10 global climate change hotspots,<sup>28</sup> with 20 major disasters in the twentieth century, four in the past decade alone, and 96% of the population facing 2 or more climate-related risks.<sup>29</sup> Scientists have noted significant increases in the wind speeds and precipitation intensities of Atlantic hurricanes over the past three decades as a result of rising ocean temperatures, and predict more destructive storms in the future as climate change persists.<sup>30</sup> Any plans to build Haiti “back better” must acknowledge these outlined risks and incorporate measures to comprehensively reduce them.

### ***Plans to Build Back Better***

According to the Government of Haiti’s *Action Plan*, “rebuilding Haiti does not mean returning to the situation that prevailed before the earthquake. It means addressing all these areas of vulnerability, so that the vagaries of nature or natural disasters never again inflict such suffering or cause so much damage and loss.”<sup>31</sup> Rebuilding Haiti means building Haiti “back better” than it was prior to the earthquake. The *Action Plan* presents a number of solutions to

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<sup>26</sup> *Disaster risk management in Latin America*, 2010, p. 6.

<sup>27</sup> *Action Plan*, 2010, p. 22.

<sup>28</sup> *Disaster risk management in Latin America*, 2010, p. 7.

<sup>29</sup> *Haiti earthquake PDNA*, 2010, p. 25.

<sup>30</sup> *Haiti: 'a gathering storm'*, 2009, p. 17.

<sup>31</sup> *Action Plan*, 2010, p. 5.



move towards this objective. The first is a strong commitment to de-concentration and decentralization<sup>32</sup> in order to reduce the excessive population density and concentration of economic activity in Port-au-Prince. This is to be done through the economic revitalization of potential development centers throughout Haiti, identified as Cap Haïtien, Gonaïves, St-Marc, Hinche, Port-au-Prince, and Les Cayes.<sup>33</sup> This calls for the establishment of local development infrastructures and regional development strategies.<sup>34</sup> The Government of Haiti is particularly focused on channeling investments towards developing infrastructure for production, which entails building and upgrading seaports and airports, along with energy and telecommunications infrastructures throughout these various regions. According to the document, the Haitian government plans on actively fostering a relationship between the public sector and private sector in order to generate industrial and business free trade zones throughout Haiti, thus spreading development across the country.<sup>35</sup>

The *Action Plan*'s shelter strategy will focus predominantly on redistributing population more evenly throughout the country, particularly moving communities away from at-risk regions while still acknowledging the links between location and access to economic opportunities and services. It calls for the provision of support to secondary towns receiving populations displaced from Port-au-Prince and the surrounding areas affected by the 2010 earthquake. Through the development of temporary and permanent housing strategies around the efforts to expand economic development in these secondary regions, the plan hopes to keep new residents in these regions and to attract more from an overpopulated Port-au-Prince.<sup>36</sup> Thus the shelter strategy is tied to the plan for industrial and business development. The *Action Plan* specifically states that

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<sup>32</sup> *Action Plan*, 2010, p. 8.

<sup>33</sup> *Action Plan*, 2010, p. 17.

<sup>34</sup> *Action Plan*, 2010, p. 18.

<sup>35</sup> *Action Plan*, 2010, p. 17.

<sup>36</sup> *Haiti earthquake PDNA*, 2010, p. 75.

100,000 inhabitants of Port-au-Prince are to be transferred to five sites identified by the government as safe areas for future development. “It is planned for these sites to become new, permanent neighborhoods in which shelters are gradually replaced by permanent housing along with sustainable infrastructures and basic services” (*Action Plan*, 32).

The second priority of the *Action Plan*'s recovery strategy is focused on the professionalization of Haiti's construction sector, and the establishment of building standards and zoning regulations that promote the use of earthquake and hurricane-resistant materials and construction methods.<sup>37</sup> This means setting up mechanisms for monitoring construction and development more broadly. The document believes that municipalities have a central role in this process and thus must receive the adequate resources, in terms of personnel, equipment, and money, to partake in the regulation of construction and development.<sup>38</sup> It also calls for the establishment of centers that will provide standardized training for major stakeholders in the construction process. Such training will focus on construction techniques that account for the various forms of risk facing Haiti, local building materials, quality control of building materials, and culturally appropriate measures for improving housing. Another component of the government's efforts will be an information campaign focused on how critical it is to build with high-quality construction materials and to use hurricane and earthquake-resistant designs.<sup>39</sup>

A third component of the Government of Haiti's recovery plan addresses the country's progressive environmental devastation. The theme of environmental rehabilitation and sustainability runs throughout the *Action Plan*, particularly in its discussion of intended interventions in farming, watershed management, and regional development.<sup>40</sup> The *Action Plan*

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<sup>37</sup> *Action Plan*, 2010, p. 8.

<sup>38</sup> *Action Plan*, 2010, p. 13.

<sup>39</sup> *Haiti earthquake PDNA*, 2010, p. 75.

<sup>40</sup> *Action Plan*, 2010, p. 10.

## DRR and the Action Plan for National Recovery

states that a major component of disaster risk management for Haiti involves reducing the deterioration of the environment and increasing the resilience of the country's eco-systems (*Action Plan*, 15). One of the priorities is to address the link between the country's water resources, environmental deterioration, and disasters through the sustainable management of river basins, sites where these factors often intersect. Their administration is to be incorporated within the framework of national planning and risk management. This will entail addressing flood risks through river basin development projects, corrections to ravines and riverbanks, construction of dykes and hill retaining walls to control the flow of water, and other measures to protect populations, facilities, and infrastructures downstream. It also means working with rural communities on reforestation and soil conservation projects, addressing agricultural needs while ensuring environmental sustainability. This involves moving the population away from farming practices that overload ecosystems, towards practices and techniques that promote sustainable development.<sup>41</sup>

A fourth central plank of the plan focuses on addressing long-standing land management and land tenure issues found throughout Haiti.<sup>42</sup> "The State wants to assert its leadership in [the territorial rebuilding] to avoid reconstruction that thwarts urban planning," examining land to ensure its use aligns with long-term sustainable development and disaster risk reduction objectives.<sup>43</sup> A decree was issued on March 19, 2010 after the earthquake declaring certain areas of public interest. This included the metropolitan area of Port au Prince, Croix de Bouquets, and Léogâne. While in the short term this will be vital for requesting land to relocate families affected by the earthquake, in the long term this will be a vital component in new territorial planning initiatives. According to the *Action Plan*, this decree is an illustration of the State's

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<sup>41</sup> *Action Plan*, 2010, p. 19.

<sup>42</sup> *Action Plan*, 2010, p. 8.

<sup>43</sup> *Action Plan*, 2010, p. 12.

determination to be the major actor in implementing the rational reconstruction of Haiti.<sup>44</sup> Another significant objective of the Haitian government is the regularization of property ownership through the development of a land and property registry.<sup>45</sup> This will involve the central government helping local authorities improve their capacity to manage the rebuilding process in a way that fosters sustainable development and reduces vulnerabilities. Technical assistance will be provided to these local authorities, particularly for planning, land tenure, and quality control of construction.<sup>46</sup>

The *Action Plan* also seeks to ensure that infrastructure is not neglected in the process of rebuilding. It places critical attention on developing basic infrastructure as part of the process of improving land-use management in Haiti. This means developing a land-use plan that addresses rainwater drainage, wastewater treatment, sanitation, drinking water, and an electricity network as critical components of the rebuilding process.<sup>47</sup> Many of the barriers to an effective response involved the failure of many vital transportation, power, and communication infrastructures. After the earthquake, the cities main seaports and the Toussaint Louverture International airport were inaccessible, many highways and roads were blocked and damaged due to fallen debris, much of the country was without power, telephone and cell phone services were not functioning, and the country's radio stations went silent.<sup>48</sup> Had these structures been built with risks to natural hazards in mind, they would have been secured from damage during the earthquake and thus contributed greatly to the response and recovery effort. While the *Action Plan* produced by the Government of Haiti outlines steps to address the country's vulnerabilities to disaster, a critical

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<sup>44</sup> *Action Plan*, 2010, p. 12.

<sup>45</sup> *Haiti earthquake PDNA*, 2010, p. 75.

<sup>46</sup> *Action Plan*, 2010, p. 32.

<sup>47</sup> *Action Plan*, 2010, p. 12.

<sup>48</sup> Kovacs, P. (2010). *Reducing the risk of earthquake damage in Canada: Lessons from Haiti and Chile*. Institute for Catastrophic Loss Reduction. Retrieved from <http://www.davidhyde.ca/admin/pdf/73.pdf>.

variable that cannot be ignored in the reconstruction process is the fundamental weakness of the Haitian state. Without addressing the incapacity of the Haitian state, ‘building back better’ simply cannot occur.

### ***The Absent Haitian State***

While the earthquake was at the center of the devastation of Port-au-Prince, the disaster itself cannot be understood as having natural causes. It is important to acknowledge many of the Haitian state’s well-recognized limitations prior to the earthquake and how these have not only impacted the capacity of the Haitian government to respond to the earthquake, but also negatively affecting reconstruction and recovery processes. The Haitian state’s long history of fragility is a central component of the spectacular destruction of lives and infrastructure wrought by the earthquake. States are “expressions of collective action in response to contingencies, which, left unattended, tend to destabilize social order.” They are thus expected to protect citizens against adverse conditions that cannot readily be protected against through individual action.<sup>49</sup> These contingencies include economic collapse, epidemics, internal instability, external attack, and disaster. The calamity produced by the 2010 earthquake was directly related to the failure of the Haitian state and its institutions to address the various risks plaguing the country, and Port-au-Prince most specifically. The poor quality of construction in the city, the various impediments to a more effective response (poor roads, poor ports, and poor airports) are all related to the inability of the Haitian state to regulate and manage the country’s development processes in a sustainable manner.<sup>50</sup> While Haiti is plagued by various natural hazards, it is the states’ failures to address these hazards as the country attempts to undergo development that

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<sup>49</sup> Gros, J.G. (2011). Anatomy of a Haitian tragedy: when the fury of nature meets the debility of the state. *Journal of Black Studies*, XX (X), 1-27. P. 6

<sup>50</sup> *Building a More Resilient Haitian State*, 2010, p. 1.

caused the magnitude of the disaster. “The precariousness of Haitian life cannot be attributed to bad geography alone; it is also due to how the risks imposed by geography are managed by Haitian institutions.”<sup>51</sup>

The weakness of the Haitian state is a consequence of an extended history of political instability and economic deterioration. Born of a slave revolution in 1804, Haiti suffered both from internal strife and external assaults on its newfound independence. During its first few decades of existence, Haiti became a highly militarized society as a means of staving off potential invasion by any one of the major slave-holding powers, including its former colonial master, France. The United States inevitably invaded and occupied the country from 1915 to 1934, not so much to reestablish slavery, but to ensure its particular conception of political stability. During the occupation, the U.S. marines created the Haitian Constabulary that would later become the Haitian Army, and succeeded in centralizing power in Port-au-Prince. These developments would be the basis for the emergence of the Duvalier family dictatorship that began in 1957 and finally fell in 1986.

At the same time, Haiti’s small but highly reactionary political and economic elite continued the colonial tradition of excluding Haiti’s majority from politics and the benefits of the nation’s wealth, mostly fighting amongst themselves for control over the state. “The Haitian state has [historically] served as an apparatus by which elites extract rents from the impoverished population, not as a means of serving Haiti’s citizens.”<sup>52</sup> The nearly 30-year Duvalier dictatorships were the height of political predation, built on the back of the centralizing effects of the U.S. occupation. Still to this day, corruption is a significant barrier to progress in Haiti,

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<sup>51</sup> Anatomy of a Haitian tragedy, 2011, p. 5.

<sup>52</sup> *Building a More Resilient Haitian State*, 2010, p. 16.

ranked the second-most corrupt country in the world in 2002 by the World Bank,<sup>53</sup> and 168 of 180 in Transparency International's *Corruption Perceptions Index* in 2008.<sup>54</sup> In Haiti, those who ascend to political power see control of the state as an opportunity to enrich themselves, and thus rarely give it up voluntarily.

Jean-Bertrand Aristide's election in 1991 was the first time a historically disenfranchised people were allowed to fully participate in the politics of Haiti. The subsequent election of René Préval in 1996 was equally important, being the first transition between two democratically elected presidents in Haiti's close to 200 years of history.<sup>55</sup> Despite these tepid steps towards democracy, the past twenty or so years have been witness to a deterioration of the state's capacity to sustain the conditions for democracy. Per capita gross domestic product (GDP) has declined by more than one-third during this period, as has nearly all other basic development indicators.<sup>56</sup> Political instability has also been chronic. After reelection in 2001, Aristide was forced out of power in 2004 by an armed insurrection, leading to the establishment of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti, also known by the French acronym MINUSTAH, which became responsible for maintaining security throughout the country.<sup>57</sup> As tensions between Aristide and segments of the domestic and international community escalated, donors shifted aid from the Haitian government towards non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Many sited corruption and mismanagement of aid as the primary reasons for this transition.<sup>58</sup> Just prior to the earthquake, it was believed that Haiti had at least 10,000 NGOs, second in the world only to Afghanistan. Though these NGOs have stepped in to provide many desperately needed services

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<sup>53</sup> *Building a More Resilient Haitian State*, 2010, p. 11.

<sup>54</sup> *Building a More Resilient Haitian State*, 2010, p. 16.

<sup>55</sup> Margesson, R., Taft-Morales, M. (2010). *Haiti earthquake: crisis and response*. Congressional Research Service. Retrieved from <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/R41023.pdf>. 19.

<sup>56</sup> *Building a More Resilient Haitian State*, 2010, p. 13.

<sup>57</sup> *Building a More Resilient Haitian State*, 2010, p. 2.

<sup>58</sup> *Building a More Resilient Haitian State*, 2010, p. 17.

to a distressed Haitian population, they simultaneously exaggerate one of the signature factors in the society's underdevelopment, the absence of a functioning state. NGOs "function independently of local control...essentially operate as parallel bureaucracies, rather than in support of the agencies of the Haitian government...with little coordination among them."<sup>59</sup> It is argued by some that the disaster was partly the result of international donors essentially subcontracting the management of risks to the NGO sector, a sector without the capacity to address risk in the systematic and comprehensive way that states have been able to do historically.<sup>60</sup>

The pervasiveness of NGOs throughout Haiti is one facet of a larger trend, Haiti's near total dependency on outside assistance. According to data gathered from the UN Office of the Special Envoy for Haiti, bilateral and multilateral aid accounted for over half of the Haitian government's total revenues for 2009. The January quake exacerbated this trend, with aid as a percentage of government revenues climbing to approximately eighty percent.<sup>61</sup> On top of the government's heavy dependence on international aid, "a United Nations analysis showed that...almost all the money [donated following the earthquake] has gone to nongovernmental organizations and private contractors,"<sup>62</sup> continuing the process of delegitimizing Haitian state. Beyond the economic debility of the Haitian state, a lack of human capital is also evident. While it has been a tradition for over half a century for university graduates and skilled professionals to leave Haiti for better wages and working conditions abroad,<sup>63</sup> the loss of this critical population was greatly aggravated by the earthquake. According to the United Nations Development

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<sup>59</sup> Anatomy of a Haitian tragedy, 2011, p. 16-17.

<sup>60</sup> Anatomy of a Haitian tragedy, 2011, p. 18.

<sup>61</sup> (2011). *Haiti reconstruction: factors contributing to delays in USAID infrastructure construction*. United States Government Accountability Office. Retrieved from <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-12-68>. p. 23.

<sup>62</sup> (2012, January 8). Haiti's slow recovery. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/01/09/opinion/haitis-slow-recovery.html>.

<sup>63</sup> *Building a More Resilient Haitian State*, 2010, p. 31.



Program, the Haitian government's workforce has decreased by a third with over 16,000 civil servants dying in the quake while another significant proportion left the country in fear.<sup>64</sup> The disaster also greatly impacted the University of the State of Haiti (Université d'Etat d'Haïti or UEH), the oldest and most important institution of higher learning in the country, destroying nine of eleven of its facilities in the capital, and killing three hundred and eighty students and more than 50 professors and administrative staff. More broadly, at least 2,000 students and 130 professors died from all institutions of higher learning combined.<sup>65</sup> The earthquake also left many of the most visible symbols of the Haitian state, the Presidential Palace, Parliament, courts, along with ministerial and public administration buildings, completely decimated.<sup>66</sup>

Even more troubling, the President of Haiti at the time, René Préval, seemed completely unprepared to provide the leadership needed for an effective response to the devastation. "In the immediate aftermath of the quake, Mr. Préval seemed to wander around in a daze, lapsing into moments of disorientation...Privately, United Nations and American officials said they did not believe he was up to the task."<sup>67</sup> Many Haitians complained that they had neither heard nor seen much of the president following the quake.<sup>68</sup> Though Haiti's seismic risks had been known, nothing had been done by the Haitian state prior to the earthquake to reduce such risks, or develop the capacity to respond adequately should such a disaster occur. "The inability to provide a timely and adequate response to the desperation and chaos that followed the quake

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<sup>64</sup> *Haiti Reconstruction-Factors Contributing to Delays*, 2011, p. 23.

<sup>65</sup> (2012, February 22). The non-reconstruction of the State University. *Haiti Grassroots Watch*. Retrieved from <http://haitigrassrootswatch.squarespace.com/haiti-grassroots-watch-engli/2012/2/21/the-non-reconstruction-of-the-state-university.html>.

<sup>66</sup> *Action Plan*, 2010, p. 7.

<sup>67</sup> Thompson, G., Lacey, M. (2010, January 31). In Quake's Wake, Haiti Faces Leadership Void. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/02/01/world/americas/01haiti.html?ref=renePréval>.

<sup>68</sup> *Haiti earthquake: crisis and response*, 21.

was, therefore, no surprise. For decades, governments had been barely capable of providing minimum basic services to the population in normal times.”<sup>69</sup>

Compounding the lack of state capacity to respond to the devastation of the January 2010 earthquake was the crisis of legitimacy facing the Préval administration both prior to the disaster and after. The quake occurred while Préval’s government was entering its final year in power and was dealing with serious condemnation by the opposition. His administration was on its third prime minister in two years, and the current prime minister, only in office for three months, was completing a six-hour interrogation session before the senate just hours prior to the quake.<sup>70/71</sup> Much of the conflict between the Préval administration and opposition parties revolved around what they perceived as Préval’s manipulation of the *Conseil Electoral Provisoire* (CEP), the electoral body set to decide the rules of the upcoming presidential, parliamentary, and local elections. The electoral council had disqualified a dozen or so opposition parties, preventing them from taking part in the upcoming Parliamentary elections scheduled for February 28 and March 3, 2010, a move many believed would pave the way for candidates of Préval’s newly formed party, INITE,<sup>72</sup> to take control of Parliament. After which constitutional amendments could be pushed through to allow him to run for a third term, currently forbidden under the Haitian constitution of 1987.<sup>73</sup> Others believed that if he could not secure his own reelection, he was using the CEP as a means to manipulate the election so as to retain his influence over Haitian politics after his mandate ended.<sup>74</sup> The CEP itself is not viewed as particularly legitimate.

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<sup>69</sup> *Haiti, Stabilization and Reconstruction after the Quake*, 2010, p. 2.

<sup>70</sup> *Haiti, Stabilization and Reconstruction After the Quake*, 2010, p. 6.

<sup>71</sup> *Haiti earthquake: crisis and response*, 2010, p. 19.

<sup>72</sup> *Haiti earthquake: crisis and response*, 2010, 19.

<sup>73</sup> Thompson, G., Lacey, M. (2010, January 31). In Quake’s Wake, Haiti Faces Leadership Void. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/02/01/world/americas/01haiti.html?ref=renePréval>.

<sup>74</sup> (2010). *Haiti: the stakes of the post-quake elections*. Latin America/Caribbean Report N° 35. International Crisis Group. Retrieved from <http://www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/latin-america/haiti/35%20Haiti%20-%20The%20Stakes%20of%20the%20Post-Quake%20Elections.ashx>. P. 3.

While the Haitian Constitution of 1987 calls for a Permanent Electoral Council, the current CEP members were all hand-picked by Préval during his term, which is particularly problematic considering the CEP excluded opponents of his INITE coalition from running in the upcoming elections.<sup>75</sup>

Soon after the quake, conflicts emerged around the question of holding elections. While lawmakers in the lower house of Haiti's Parliament called for President Préval to postpone the upcoming elections and extend their terms past the constitutional deadline by two years,<sup>76</sup> members of the senate felt otherwise.<sup>77</sup> On January 23<sup>rd</sup> Préval made the decision to postpone the February legislative elections indefinitely.<sup>78</sup> While having credible elections would be imperative for the reconstruction process, providing the government in power with the legitimacy necessary to lead the recovery process,<sup>79</sup> elections in Haiti have never been a straightforward affair. "Haiti has held thirteen elections since the 1987 constitution, the majority of which have been marred by delays, suspensions, widespread irregularities, fraud or accusations of fraud, boycotts, unrest, violence and post-electoral instability."<sup>80</sup> The earthquake made certain that Haiti's tradition of flawed elections would continue. The central elections office was in rubble; United Nations workers in Haiti to support the electoral process had died in the quake; voting machines and voter records were beneath collapsed buildings; and hundreds of thousands of registered voters

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<sup>75</sup> (2010, March 18). Coverage of elections overlooks serious flaws in postponed election. *Center for Economic and Policy*. Retrieved from <http://www.cepr.net/index.php/blogs/relief-and-reconstruction-watch/coverage-of-elections-overlooks-serious-flaws-in-postponed-election>.

<sup>76</sup> Cave, D. (2010, January 29). Haitian Lawmakers Seek to Delay Elections. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/01/30/world/americas/30haiti.html?ref=renePréval>.

<sup>77</sup> *Haiti: stabilization and reconstruction after the quake*, 2010, p. 7.

<sup>78</sup> *Haiti: stabilization and reconstruction after the quake*, 2010, p. 12.

<sup>79</sup> *Haiti: the stakes of the post-quake elections*, 2010, p. 4.

<sup>80</sup> *Haiti: the stakes of the post-quake elections*, 2010, p. 1.

were strewn across Port-au-Prince's streets and the Haitian countryside, in no condition to participate in elections.<sup>81</sup>

After the first round of the Presidential elections, eventually held on November 28, 2010, a number of conflicts emerged around Préval's supposedly handpicked successor, Jude Celestin, and which candidate had qualified to participate in the second-round runoff. According to international observers, the Préval-controlled CEP placed Jude Celestin in the second position over Michel Martelly, a popular musician-turned-politician. The Organization of American States (OAS) found the CEP's results not to be credible, pointing to a number of irregularities. They called for the disqualification of Celestin, and his replacement by Martelly, whom they believed had won the second most votes in the first round behind Mirlande Manigat. Protests by what were believed to be Martelly supporters,<sup>82</sup> as well as pressure from the international community, led to Celestin's withdraw from the presidential race, allowing the second round of elections to proceed with Manigat and Martelly.<sup>83</sup> Michel Martelly eventually won the election with 67.6 percent of the vote to Manigat's 31.5 percent. Despite this seemingly decisive victory, the legitimacy of Martelly's mandate can be placed into question considering that only 16.7 percent of registered voters were able to participate, and thus Martelly only received 716,986 votes in a country of over 9 million.<sup>84</sup> Nevertheless, Joseph Michel Martelly was declared President of Haiti on April 4, 2011.

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<sup>81</sup> Cave, D. (2010, January 29). Haitian Lawmakers Seek to Delay Elections. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/01/30/world/americas/30haiti.html?ref=renePréval>.

<sup>82</sup> Wilkinson, T. (2011 January, 16). Standoff over presidential runoff seen as threat to Haiti. *The Los Angeles Times*. Retrieved from <http://articles.latimes.com/2011/jan/16/world/la-fg-haiti-stalemate-20110116>.

<sup>83</sup> (2011, January 25). Jude Celestin 'to quit' Haiti presidential election. *BBC News*. Retrieved from <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-latin-america-12283202>.

<sup>84</sup> (2011, April 5). Martelly's historically weak mandate. *Center for Economic and Policy Research*. Retrieved from <http://www.cepr.net/index.php/blogs/relief-and-reconstruction-watch/martellys-historically-weak-mandate>. (2011, April 4). Haiti-flash elections: it's official, Michel Martelly won the second round. *Haiti Libre*. Retrieved from <http://www.haitilibre.com/en/news-2677-haiti-flash-electionsit-s-official-michel-martelly-won-the-second-round.html>.

### ***Political Roadblocks to Reconstruction***

Even before Martelly took office, his administration would face a number of challenges regarding the reconstruction effort. For starters, none of the candidates running for election, including Martelly, outlined a coherent and concrete plan concerning the management of the reconstruction and recovery efforts that would be the primary focus of their mandate.<sup>85</sup> Inevitably Martelly would come out in support of the *Action Plan* established nearly a year before his presidency on March 31, 2010. But there were a number of criticisms regarding how the *Action Plan* came to be. Many felt that there had been little real consultation with important Haitian stakeholders.<sup>86</sup> In fact, the process excluded parliament, opposition parties,<sup>87</sup> civil society, and community grassroots organizations. The only persons that actively participated alongside major international donors were influential members of the domestic and international business communities, which were quick to form a private sector economic forum and roadmap for their inclusion in the reconstruction process.<sup>88</sup> Over 26 organizations representing Haitian civil society issued a formal statement decrying the process as exclusionary.<sup>89</sup> The *Action Plan* simply did not represent the social and political consensus needed for a reconstruction process based on sustainable development.<sup>90</sup> So, the Martelly government was beginning the reconstruction effort with a plan that lacked broad-based legitimacy.

Another major problem facing the Martelly administration was the political conflicts that would arise around the renewal of the Interim Haiti Recovery Commission's (IHRC) mandate.

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<sup>85</sup> *Haiti: the stakes of the post-quake elections*, 2010, p. 20.

<sup>86</sup> Ferris, E. (2010). *Burning issues for Haiti's recovery*. The Brookings Institution. Retrieved from [http://www.brookings.edu/~media/research/files/speeches/2010/9/09%20haiti%20recovery%20ferris/0909\\_haiti\\_recovery\\_ferris.pdf](http://www.brookings.edu/~media/research/files/speeches/2010/9/09%20haiti%20recovery%20ferris/0909_haiti_recovery_ferris.pdf). p. 3

<sup>87</sup> *Haiti: stabilization and reconstruction after the quake*, 2010, p. 7.

<sup>88</sup> *Haiti: stabilization and reconstruction after the quake*, 2010, p. 15.

<sup>89</sup> (2010, March 19). Haitian NGOs decry total exclusion from donors conferences on Haitian reconstruction. *Center for Economic and Policy Research*. Retrieved from <http://www.cepr.net/index.php/blogs/relief-and-reconstruction-watch/qhaitian-ngos-decry-total-exclusion-from-donors-conferences-on-haitian-reconstructionq>.

<sup>90</sup> *Haiti: stabilization and reconstruction after the quake*, 2010, p. 15.

## DRR and the Action Plan for National Recovery

The term of the IHRC, a body established after the earthquake by former United States President Bill Clinton and Préval's Prime Minister, Jean-Max Bellerive, to manage the reconstruction effort, was set to expire in less than a year after Martelly's election.<sup>91</sup> The IHRC was a critical institution in terms of providing the legitimacy that many international donors needed to feel secure in releasing aid to the Haiti reconstruction and recovery effort. Many questions emerged regarding whether its term should be extended, whether its functions should be transferred to the prime minister's office or the planning and external cooperation ministry, whether the Haiti Reconstruction Fund (HRF) connected to the IHRC should be maintained as part of it, or housed separately in the finance and economy ministry, the Central Bank, or operate mostly independently.<sup>92</sup>

When Martelly came to power, political conflict between his administration and the opposition-controlled legislature was particularly problematic. Both the upper and lower houses of Parliament were controlled by INITE, Préval's newly created political party. They rejected Martelly's first two selections for prime minister, thus preventing the Haitian state from taking an active leadership role in the reconstruction process.<sup>93</sup> Eventually Garry Conille was approved in October of 2011, but after four months in the post, resigned as tensions with Martelly and his cabinet ministers mounted.<sup>94</sup> This stalemate has had a major impact on the Clinton-led IHRC. Its mandate was allowed to expire on October 21, 2011, as President Martelly was unable to resolve political tensions with the Parliament. It ceased accepting project proposals for review and

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<sup>91</sup> *Haiti: the stakes of the post-quake elections*, 2010, p. 20.

<sup>92</sup> *Haiti: the stakes of the post-quake elections*, 2010, p. 20.

<sup>93</sup> Cohen, M.J. (2012). *Haiti—the slow road to reconstruction*. Oxfam International. Retrieved from <http://www.oxfam.org/en/policy/haiti-slow-road-reconstruction>. p. 6

<sup>94</sup> Delva, J.G. (2012, February 24). Haiti's prime minister resigns after four months. *Reuters*. Retrieved from <http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/02/25/us-haiti-politics-idUSTRE81N1GP20120225>.

approval,<sup>95</sup> prompting donors to withhold the release of aid promised to Haiti in the immediate aftermath of the tremor. Only recently in May 2012 has the Haitian Parliament approved President Martelly's new choice for prime minister, Laurent Lamonthe, previously a special adviser to the President before being named foreign affairs minister and co-chairman of an economic advisory panel with former U.S. President Bill Clinton.<sup>96</sup>

On top of these political tensions, the Martelly government was still faced with having to meet the basic needs of a Haitian population still dependent on the international community for food, bottled water, tarps, and other forms of aid, more than seven months after the earthquake.<sup>97</sup> The previous administration had fundamentally failed to establish a clear policy for dealing with the large internally displaced population (IDP). When Martelly became president, nearly half-a-million Haitians were still living under horrid conditions within camps.<sup>98</sup> Essentially the emergency phase of the response seemed to be extending into perpetuity. The Martelly government has thus been presented with the task of moving the country forward towards development that systematically addresses the previously identified vulnerabilities facing most Haitians.

### ***Building, But Not Necessarily Better***

#### *Deconcentration*

The devastating earthquake that struck the struggling country of Haiti in the early part of 2010 provided an opportunity to 'build back better'; a window of opportunity to address many of the vulnerabilities and risks that characterized the reality of Port-au-Prince and the country more

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<sup>95</sup> (2012, January 8). Haiti's slow recovery. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/01/09/opinion/haitis-slow-recovery.html>.

<sup>96</sup> Daniel, T. (2012, May 4). Haitian lawmakers approve new prime minister. *The Miami Herald*. Retrieved from <http://www.miamiherald.com/2012/05/04/2782890/haitian-lawmakers-approve-new.html>.

<sup>97</sup> Anatomy of a Haitian tragedy, 2011, p. 18.

<sup>98</sup> (2011, May 20). Haiti's president Martelly. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from [http://www.nytimes.com/2011/05/21/opinion/21sat3.html?\\_r=1&ref=micelmartelly](http://www.nytimes.com/2011/05/21/opinion/21sat3.html?_r=1&ref=micelmartelly).

broadly. Reconstruction and recovery would not be conducted in an ad hoc and unplanned manner, but would instead systematically address the five vulnerabilities and risks outlined in the *Action Plan*, seeking to mitigate them moving forward. But has the Martelly government worked steadfastly towards reducing the congestion and concentration of economic resources in Port-au-Prince? Has his administration sought to professionalize the Haitian construction sector, or ensure that reconstruction is following guidelines that take hurricane and earthquake risks into account? Are policies being established and implemented to reduce environmental degradation, and promote environmental sustainability? Is land use management and urban planning a central element of the reconstruction process? Considering the debilitating condition of the Haitian state, it is to be expected that this process is fraught with many problems.

In terms of dealing with Port-au-Prince's unsustainable population problem, the Martelly administration has focused mostly on championing investments in Haiti's other regional centers. The belief is that economic development in these locations will draw those whom the earthquake has displaced away from Port-au-Prince permanently. So far, it is believed that at least six Free Trade Zones and industrial parks are being planned.<sup>99</sup> In November 2011 the \$257m Caracol industrial park, formally known as the Parc Industriel du Region Nord (PIRN), was officially inaugurated near Cap Haïtien, the country's second city. With a South Korean apparel manufacturer as a key partner, it is believed that the park will create 80,000 jobs.<sup>100</sup> Caracol is also expected to have a multiplier effect on the Northeast Department region, particularly with the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) financing programs to foster a friendly environment for the growth of local small and medium-sized enterprises expected to supply

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<sup>99</sup> (2011, December 20). Open for business—part 2. *Inter Press Service*. Retrieved from <http://ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=106270>.

<sup>100</sup> (2012, January 7). Open for business. *The Economist*. Retrieved from <http://www.economist.com/node/21542407>.



## DRR and the Action Plan for National Recovery

goods and services to the industrial park's tenants and workers.<sup>101</sup> In addition to the industrial park, the Haitian government has secured a \$33 million donation from the Venezuelan government to expand the capacity of the Cap Haïtien airport, to be finished by February 2013.<sup>102</sup> The U.S. government has itself committed more than \$124 million to increase electrical power generation in the region, improve health services, modernize port facilities, and build 5,000 housing units.<sup>103</sup> According to Oxford University economist, Paul Collier, who worked on a United Nations development plan for Haiti prior to the earthquake, Caracol's location away from the devastated capital city would assist in decentralizing development in Haiti,<sup>104</sup> a key objective of the *Action Plan*.

In connection with plans to attract investment to Haiti's various regional hubs, the Martelly government, through the Ministry of the Interior, has established a comprehensive community decentralization program called *Katye Pam Poze* (KPP). The first phase of this program involves what the administration calls Community Cafes, participatory dialogue sessions between the central government, local officials, and citizens, focused on identifying local needs and developing solutions. These sessions will outline priority areas for asset-based community development research, which will feed into detailed development blueprints for communities. So far, these Community Cafes have been held in Jacmel in the Southeast Department, Léogâne in the West Department, and Port-de-Paix in the Northwest. Seven

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<sup>101</sup> (2011, November 28). Haiti and its partners lay the foundation stone for the Caracol Industrial Park. *Inter-American Development Bank*. Retrieved from <http://www.iadb.org/en/news/news-releases/2011-11-28/caracol-industrial-park-in-haiti,9724.html>.

<sup>102</sup> (2012, April 28). Haiti-reconstruction: the airport of Cap Haïtien requires expropriations. *Haiti Libre*. Retrieved from <http://www.haitilibre.com/en/news-5519-haiti-reconstruction-the-airport-of-cap-haitien-requires-expropriations.html>.

<sup>103</sup> (2011, November 28). Haiti and its partners lay the foundation stone for the Caracol Industrial Park. *Inter-American Development Bank*. Retrieved from <http://www.iadb.org/en/news/news-releases/2011-11-28/caracol-industrial-park-in-haiti,9724.html>.

<sup>104</sup> Córdoba, J. (2011, January 11). Planned Haitian textile park provides hope for jobs. *The Wall Street Journal*. Retrieved from <http://www.ute.gouv.ht/caracol/fr/wall-street-journal/148-planned-haitian-textile-park-provides-hope-for-jobs>.

## DRR and the Action Plan for National Recovery

additional Cafes are slated to take place in order to cover all ten of the country's departments.<sup>105</sup>

The Minister of the Interior has also sought to incorporate the National Federation of Mayors of Haiti (FENAMH) in the new decentralization program.<sup>106</sup>

In April 2012 the Minister of Planning and External Cooperation (MPCE) launched a two-day Strategic Planning of Secondary Cities workshop in Petit-Goave that focused on the region of Palmes in Southeast Haiti. This workshop included mayors of Petit-Goave and Grand-Goave, representatives of the Town Halls of Léogâne and Gressier, members of civil society, different social and professional organizations, delegations from other municipalities of the region, and the Administrative and Technical Directorate of the Intercommunity of Palmes (DATIP), an inter-municipal structure established after January 12, 2010 in order to create an effective administration at the level of the region of Palmes. Several drafts were presented of urban development plans, part of an overall development program called 'Vil nou vle a/Haiti emerging 2030.' The objectives of the development program were to make the Palmes region a model for decentralization and good governance, and an attractive tourist destination for potential domestic and international investors. It also championed development in each of the municipal zones of the Palmes region, with tourism being the main potential for Gressier and Grand-Goave, agriculture and agro-industry in Léogâne, along with commerce and public services in Petit-Goave.<sup>107</sup> Initiatives such as *Katye Pam Poze* and this Strategic Planning of Secondary Cities workshop are focused primarily on stimulating development at the local level,

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<sup>105</sup> (2012, April 6). Haiti-politic: decentralization, the KPP already in action in 3 cities of the country. *Haiti Libre*. Retrieved from <http://www.haitilibre.com/en/news-5341-haiti-politic-decentralization-the-kpp-already-in-action-in-3-cities-of-the-country.html>.

<sup>106</sup> (2012, April 13). Haiti-politics: positive meetings around the decentralization program KPP. *Haiti Libre*. Retrieved from <http://www.haitilibre.com/en/news-5393-haiti-politic-positive-meetings-around-the-decentralization-program-kpp.html>.

<sup>107</sup> (2012, April 13). Haiti-reconstruction: strategic planning workshop in the region of Palmes. *Haiti Libre*. Retrieved from <http://www.haitilibre.com/en/news-5394-haiti-reconstruction-strategic-planning-workshop-in-the-region-of-palmes.html>.

## DRR and the Action Plan for National Recovery

so as to ensure that investments are not concentrated in one city, principally Port-au-Prince, but are instead spread out throughout the country.

Where some have been critical of Martelly's de-concentration plans is in their disproportionate focus on investments in the light industry sector and urban economic expansion to the neglect of agriculture, whose dramatic decline over the past two to three decades fueled the rapid and overwhelming migration out of the countryside into Port-au-Prince. A study on the internal displacement caused by the earthquake done by the Karolinka Institute with Columbia University between January and March 2010 using information from Digicel, found that by January 31<sup>st</sup> over half-a-million people had fled the capital into mainly the Sud, Ouest, and Artibonite Departments, mostly into the rural areas. But, by the middle of March, around 41 percent of that population had already returned back to the capital. They believe that this was because the rapid influx of people to the Haitian countryside placed much too great a stress on the food supplies of an already weak agricultural sector not well suited to meet the new demand. Previous presidential candidate, Charles Henri Baker, believed that though the textile sector might add 100,000 to 200,000 jobs in Haiti, investment in Haiti's agricultural sector could lead to millions of jobs, effectively becoming the foundation for the decentralization of Port-au-Prince. Not only would Haiti's development be dispersed throughout the country, it would reduce Haiti's dependence on food imports and allow it to become a major exporter of agricultural goods again. Despite these predictions, the UN Humanitarian Appeal for agriculture is just 40 percent funded.<sup>108</sup>

In fact, a number of peasant and social organizations have organized to launch the *Kaba Grangou* (Stop Hunger) campaign that calls for making the revival of Haitian agriculture a

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<sup>108</sup> (2010, June 7). Tracking the displaced: how agricultural support can aid the decentralization process. *Center for Economic and Policy Research*. Retrieved from <http://www.cepr.net/index.php/blogs/relief-and-reconstruction-watch/tracking-the-displaced-how-agricultural-support-can-aid-the-decentralization-process>.

## DRR and the Action Plan for National Recovery

central part of reconstruction, linking it with vulnerability reduction and climate change adaptation.<sup>109</sup> On April 29, 2012, on the eve of the National Day of Agriculture and Labor, they called on the Martelly government to provide 25 percent of the national budget to agriculture and the environment.<sup>110</sup> This was specifically to challenge the National Programme for the Fight Against Hunger and Malnutrition, *Aba Grangou*, launched earlier in the year by the president's wife, Sophia Martelly, which plans on mobilizing 10,000 development officers throughout the country to assist 100 families in gaining access to money transfers, agricultural programs, as well as access to facilities for crop and water storage.<sup>111</sup> They argue that despite this national program, the government's finance bill for 2011-2012 paints a different picture, allocating less than 7 billion gourdes (around 167 million dollars) for domestic agriculture, which they believe is nowhere near enough to revitalize an agriculture sector faced with massive invasions of foreign agriculture into the Haitian market. *Kaba Grangou* also denounces the Caracol Industrial Park as particularly the type of project that shows the governments neglect, if not open disdain, for Haiti's domestic agriculture.<sup>112</sup> Located between the northern cities of Cap-Haïtien and Ouanaminthe, the Caracol Industrial Park is being built on some of Haiti's most fertile land in the Northeast Department. A September 2010 study by a U.S.-based consulting firm hired by the Ministry of Economy and Finances (MEF) recommended the 243-hectare site as ideal partly because it supposedly 'was devoid of habitation and intensive cultivation.' In reality, it was the site of 300 farming plots, where peasant families had leased land from the state for decades.

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<sup>109</sup> (2010, November 19). Kaba grangou: au sommet mondial sur les changements climatiques. *Le Nouvelliste*. Retrieved from <http://www.lenouvelliste.com/article.php?PubID=&ArticleID=85817>.

<sup>110</sup> (2012, May 2). Haïti-souveraineté alimentaire: supporter l'agriculture, rebâtir l'environnement. *AlterPresse*. Retrieved from <http://www.alterpresse.org/spip.php?article12790>.

<sup>111</sup> (2012, January 25). Haiti-social: The couple Martelly officially launched the program, *Aba Grangou*. *Haiti Libre*. Retrieved from <http://www.haitilibre.com/en/news-4803-haiti-social-the-couple-martelly-officially-launched-the-program-aba-grangou-speech.html>.

<sup>112</sup> (2012, May 2). Haïti-souveraineté alimentaire: supporter l'agriculture, rebâtir l'environnement. *AlterPresse*. Retrieved from <http://www.alterpresse.org/spip.php?article12790>.

They argue that establishing an industrial park that will attract nearly 200,000 new residents to the most fertile land in the area, essentially removing that land from agricultural production, is not likely to be the best path towards sustainable development.<sup>113</sup>

A second significant issue surrounding the industrial park is its possible environmental implications. The Caracol Industrial Park is being built in the middle of one of Haiti's major watersheds, the Trou du Nord River watershed, only five kilometers from the Caracol Bay, home to some of the country's last mangrove forests and coral reefs, vital to potential ecotourism development and protection from storm surge.<sup>114</sup> In fact, a critical aspect of the site selection process was the availability of abundant water sources. The new textile mill is expected to use the Trou du Nord River that runs into the Caracol Bay as its waste waterway, potentially contaminating the surrounding ecosystem with the toxic dyes often used in these operations.<sup>115</sup> The planned electrical plant, likely to use heavy fuel oil in its operations, will demand massive amounts of water for cooling processes, and thus presents another potential environmental hazard. The influx of workers, staff, and general population likely to be attracted by this industrial development will also require significant amounts of water to meet drinking, cleaning, and waste treatment needs, potentially exposing the Trou du Nord River and the Caracol Bay to human waste.<sup>116</sup>

Even more unsettling, the firm that recommended the site for industrial development admitted to never considering the potential environmental hazards being created by this massive

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<sup>113</sup> (2011, November 29). Haiti-open for business. *Haiti Grassroots Watch*. Retrieved from <http://haitigrassrootswatch.squarespace.com/haiti-grassroots-watch-engli/2011/11/29/haiti-open-for-business.html>.

<sup>114</sup> (2011, December 20). Open for business—part 2. *Inter Press Service*. Retrieved from <http://ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=106270>.

<sup>115</sup> (2011, November 29). Haiti-open for business. *Haiti Grassroots Watch*. Retrieved from <http://haitigrassrootswatch.squarespace.com/haiti-grassroots-watch-engli/2011/11/29/haiti-open-for-business.html>.

<sup>116</sup> (2012, May 9-15). Martelly government betting on sweatshops: Haiti: 'open for business,'—the third of three articles. *Haiti Liberté*, Vol. 5, No. 43. Retrieved from <http://www.haiti-liberte.com/archives/volume5-22/Martelly%20government.asp>.

development initiative, stating clearly that its selection process did not include extensive environmental, hydrologic, or topographic research, nor consultation with Haiti's Ministry of the Environment. It even claims that it was not aware of the environmental sensitivity of the Caracol Bay ecosystem,<sup>117</sup> despite numerous international efforts to preserve the area. In fact, the public record is clear on the importance that the international community placed on the Caracol Bay's environmental sustainability. In 2009, an Organization of American States (OAS) and Inter-American Biodiversity Information Network (IABIN) study placed the value of ecosystem services of the mangroves and coral reefs in the bay at nearly US\$ 110 million a year. The Caracol Bay lies in the Caribbean Biological Corridor (CBC), an area designated for protection by the Dominican Republic, Haiti, and Cuba in 2009, supported by the Interim Haiti Recovery Commission (IHRC) co-headed by Bill Clinton. In 2010 the UN Development Program and the Haitian Ministry of the Environment sought to establish the Caracol Bay as one of the primary areas of an emerging National System of Protected Areas (SNAP).<sup>118</sup> This level of disregard for the environmental integrity of this ecologically sensitive region by the Haitian government and the international community contravenes the stated objective of reversing environmental degradation outlined in the *Action Plan*.

Beyond increasing environmental vulnerabilities, some believe that the free trade zone model of development being implemented in the Northeast Department will concentrate social vulnerabilities in the region, just as the same model of development had done in Port-au-Prince decades earlier. The first of these export-manufacturing zones began under the dictatorship of François Duvalier, expanding rapidly in the 1970s and 80s during the period of his son's rule,

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<sup>117</sup> (2011, December 20). Open for business—part 2. *Inter Press Service*. Retrieved from <http://ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=106270>.

<sup>118</sup> (2012, May 9-15). Martelly government betting on sweatshops: Haiti: 'open for business,'—the third of three articles. *Haiti Liberté*, Vol. 5, No. 43. Retrieved from <http://www.haiti-liberte.com/archives/volume5-22/Martelly%20government.asp>.

## DRR and the Action Plan for National Recovery

Jean-Claude Duvalier.<sup>119</sup> While exports from the sector grew at an average annual rate of 40 percent during the 1970s, the number of companies in the sector increased from 13 in 1966, to nearly 240 by the early 1980s, and Haiti became ninth in the world in the assembly of goods for US consumption,<sup>120</sup> the population of Port-au-Prince, particularly its slum population, grew at an unsustainable rate as people left a countryside in rapid economic decline in hopes of getting jobs in these industries. This mass exodus from the countryside often meant decreased food production, and thus rising food costs in cities like Port-au-Prince. Those that found work in the manufacturing sector did not make enough to meet the challenges of rising food and housing costs, while many others simply could not be absorbed by the sector, and were thus forced to live in the informal settlements that emerged on insecure hillsides and ravines around the capital, exposing themselves to periodic mudslides and flooding. Cité Soleil, previously named Cité Simone after the elder Duvalier's wife, began as a planned housing development for 52 families that worked for the former Hasco sugar complex in 1958,<sup>121</sup> later housing those who came searching for work in the nearby Export Processing Zone. Today Cité Soleil is the largest slum of Port-au-Prince, with nearly 200,000 residents living without piped water, sewer services, or solid waste services,<sup>122</sup> plagued by gang violence, kidnappings, shootings, and robbery.<sup>123</sup> “In sum, the export assembly industry of the 1980s (coupled with a complete neglect of the rural

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<sup>119</sup> Shamsie, Y. (2011). *Time for a 'high-road approach to EPZ development in Haiti*. Social Science Research Council. Retrieved from <http://www.ssrc.org/publications/view/03C92980-9E49-E011-9A1B-001CC477EC84/>. P.7

<sup>120</sup> Shamsie, 2011, p. 5.

<sup>121</sup> (1984). Urban health and community development-phase II. United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Retrieved from [http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf\\_docs/PDAAT248.pdf](http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PDAAT248.pdf).

<sup>122</sup> Rosensweig, F., McGahey, C., Noth, R., Shafritz, L., Gottert, P. (1996). A Plan for CDS to establish a water and sanitation district in Cité Soleil, Haiti and monitoring visit report. United States Agency for International Development. Retrieved from [http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf\\_docs/PNABY701.pdf](http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PNABY701.pdf).

<sup>123</sup> Haviv, R. (2006, February 2). Glimmers of hope in Cite Soleil. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from [http://blog.washingtonpost.com/haitisstruggle/2006/02/glimmers\\_of\\_hope\\_in\\_cite\\_solei\\_1.html](http://blog.washingtonpost.com/haitisstruggle/2006/02/glimmers_of_hope_in_cite_solei_1.html).

hinterland by both the government and international donors) led to an uneven or unbalanced development pattern.”<sup>124</sup>

Some believe that similar patterns could develop around the Caracol Industrial Park. Even the addition of 10,000 jobs, likely to increase the general population five times this number as workers bring their families along, would have a great impact on regional resources. It is projected that the industrial park may create 80,000 jobs.<sup>125</sup> Currently there are only 250,000 people in the region, mostly farmers and fishermen. Without clearly established and enforced zoning laws and urban planning, population growth could lead to a new region of slum growth. “The sudden arrival of thousands can have numerous negative impacts—more waste, uncontrolled use of water and trees (for cooking needs), and squatter settlements on farmland or in environmentally fragile areas.”<sup>126</sup> These are some of the issues that the government is only beginning to address well after the construction of the industrial park has been set into motion. Supposedly, donors will support housing development along with complementary services, such as healthcare clinics and schools, in an effort to prevent the types of slum conditions that emerged in the past around export processing free trade zones.<sup>127</sup>

In February of 2012 the Minister of Environment arranged a meeting with representatives from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), USAID, the IDB, and the Fund for the Global Environment Facility (GEF) to discuss reconciling the economic incentives around the development of the Caracol Industrial Park with environmental interests in preserving the region’s natural heritage. The Ministry proposed developing an environmental management plan

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<sup>124</sup> Shamsie, 2011, p. 5-6.

<sup>125</sup> (2012, January 7). Open for business. *The Economist*. Retrieved from <http://www.economist.com/node/21542407>.

<sup>126</sup> (2012, May 9-15). Martelly government betting on sweatshops: Haiti: ‘open for business,’—the third of three articles. *Haiti Liberté*, Vol. 5, No. 43. Retrieved from <http://www.haiti-liberte.com/archives/volume5-22/Martelly%20government.asp>.

<sup>127</sup> Shamsie, 2011, p. 2.



to preserve the natural and cultural capital of the Northeast, the creation of a protected marine park, along with a land use management plan for the Trou du Nord watershed. Though more than fifty million U.S. dollars is needed to support these initiatives, only 4.2 million has been identified.<sup>128</sup>

While the Martelly government has seemed to focus more aggressively on promoting the light industry sector, there have been some efforts of late to begin investing in the long neglected agricultural sector. The administration seems to be looking at the export-processing zone success stories, such as Mauritius and Costa Rica, which employed light industry development as one pillar of a broader plan to diversify their economies, as potential models for Haiti in its own quest to ‘build back better.’ It seems that unlike the 1970s and 80s, where investments in light manufacturing was incentivized to the neglect of agriculture, the Haitian government and international donors are tweaking the development model, stating that such industrialization is to be complemented with support for regional agriculture production, a move away from enclave development.<sup>129</sup> On April 25, 2012, the Haitian Minister of Foreign Affairs signed an agreement of cooperation with the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Venezuela and the Ambassador of Argentina, which involves a donation of equipment equivalent to \$US15 million and technical assistance, to modernize the Haitian agriculture sector and promote domestic food production. The donated equipment will include plows, seeders, fertilizer spreaders, irrigation pumps, equipment for drip irrigation, water tanks, spare parts for maintenance and repair of machinery, along with silos for storing crops and seeds. Regular exchanges between the Haitian Ministry of Agriculture, experts from the National Institute of Agricultural Technology (INTA) of

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<sup>128</sup> (2010, February 10). Haiti-environment: environmental guidelines for the Industrial Park North. *Haiti Libre*. Retrieved from <http://www.haitilibre.com/en/news-4927-haiti-environment-environmental-guidelines-for-the-industrial-park-north.html>.

<sup>129</sup> Shamsie, 2011, p. 2.

## DRR and the Action Plan for National Recovery

Argentina, and similar experts from Venezuela, will be arranged to facilitate training on sustainable agricultural practices. The establishment of a state agency responsible for research on agricultural extension is also in the works.<sup>130</sup> The Minister of Agriculture has also made statements regarding investments to support Haitian producers, such as the establishment of a land bank, crop insurance, liberalization of trade regarding fertilizer to lower its price, and greater efforts to reduce the smuggling of agricultural products into Haiti.<sup>131</sup>

While these efforts will likely give those in the countryside a reason not to migrate to urban centers like Port-au-Prince, they are also significant in reducing environmental degradation related to poor farming practices. On May 1, 2012, Labor and Agriculture Day, President Martelly specifically discussed reducing risks and hazards related to poor agricultural practices. “We can not talk about agriculture without talking about our deteriorating environment; the recent rains continued to carry all our arable land,” stated Martelly, continuing on to link efforts to establish sustainable agricultural practices throughout the Haitian countryside with efforts at sustainable watershed management and preventing development in such sensitive areas.<sup>132</sup> These statements alluded to the recent deal between Haiti’s Agriculture Ministry and the IDB, whereby \$27 million will be granted for pilot programs focused on land security in two regions of the country, the Grand Riviere du Nord watershed in the north and the Ravine du Sud and Cavallion watersheds in the south. Emphasis will be placed on registering all lands into a land registry, identifying public lands as well as private owners and occupants. These programs are intended to strengthen the capacity of the implementing agency, the Executive Secretariat of the

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<sup>130</sup> (2012, April 26). Haiti-social: good news for farmers and the population. *Haiti Libre*. Retrieved from <http://www.haitilibre.com/en/news-5495-haiti-social-good-news-for-farmers-and-the-population.html>.

<sup>131</sup> (2012, April 23). Haiti-agriculture: measures to encourage the agricultural sector. *Haiti Libre*. Retrieved from <http://www.haitilibre.com/en/news-5475-haiti-agriculture-measures-to-encourage-the-agricultural-sector.html>.

<sup>132</sup> (2012, May 2). Haiti-agriculture: the urgency can not be an option. *Haiti Libre*. Retrieved from <http://www.haitilibre.com/en/news-5542-haiti-agriculture-the-urgency-can-not-be-an-option.html>.

Interministerial Committee for Territorial Planning (CIAT), to manage issues related to land tenure and security, as well as natural resource management.<sup>133</sup>

### *Housing*

While de-concentration was one of the major elements of Martelly's first year in office, perhaps even more important, particularly to victims of the January 2010 earthquake, has been the government's attempts to assert leadership in the territorial rebuilding of Port-au-Prince. No other issue has been more central to this process than determining how to provide housing for Haiti's large number of internally displaced persons. Such large-scale housing in a context like post-earthquake Port-au-Prince is both complex and expensive, requiring strong state governance. It requires the most detailed planning and execution, clearly established criteria regarding potential beneficiaries, consultation with affected communities, established building standards, as well as answering questions regarding land rights, where to rebuild, risks, along with livelihoods and services.<sup>134</sup> These are all issues which past Haitian government's have failed to address in any systematic and comprehensive way.

Due to the complexity of large-scale permanent housing reconstruction and numerous political upheavals revolving around the transition from a Préval to a Martelly administration, Haiti has failed to establish a clearly outlined national housing resettlement and reintegration strategy, one of the Haitian government's most glaring failures of the past year.<sup>135</sup> There is a vacuum in terms of leadership, strategic management, policy development, and coordination

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<sup>133</sup> (2012, April 26). Haiti-social: IDB approves \$27 million for Haiti rural land tenure program. *Haiti Libre*. Retrieved from [http://www.haitilibre.com/en/news-5499-haiti-social-idb-approves-\\$27-million-for-haiti-rural-land-tenure-program.html](http://www.haitilibre.com/en/news-5499-haiti-social-idb-approves-$27-million-for-haiti-rural-land-tenure-program.html).

<sup>134</sup> *Burning Issues for Haiti's Recovery*, 2010, p. 5-6.

<sup>135</sup> Charles, J. (2011, October 12). *The Miami Herald*. Retrieved from <http://www.miamiherald.com/2011/10/05/2442531/michel-martelly-launches-housing.html>. Schneider, M. (2011, July 21). Haiti's recovery stalled. *The Miami Herald*. Retrieved from <http://www.crisisgroup.org/en/regions/latin-america-caribbean/haiti/op-eds/schneider-haitis-recovery-stalled.aspx>.

around the issue of permanent housing reconstruction. As of the beginning of 2012, nearly two years after the earthquake, no agreement had been made on the potential size, design, costs, or methodology surrounding permanent housing reconstruction; no policy regarding the criteria for entitlement to permanent housing was established; no overall estimation of needs, costs, or timing of the reconstruction process was outlined; and no clear agreement on how much money would be set aside for reconstruction was established. This lack of clarity on these various issues are the main reasons why donors have not invested in permanent housing reconstruction.<sup>136</sup>

Since the Haitian government has not outlined a clear and comprehensive plan for permanent housing reconstruction, donors have disproportionately focused on providing temporary shelters. While the over 100,000 T-shelters provided are critical improvements over the ad hoc tents that were being put up by the internally displaced, they present a number of problems for the movement towards a comprehensive permanent housing scheme. Firstly, these t-shelters have absorbed large amounts of aid money, nearly \$500 million USD that could have gone towards permanent housing. They are often erected in densely populated areas of the city, areas where permanent housing construction needs to occur. It is also difficult to recycle their parts into the construction of more permanent structures because they are built using lightweight timber technology while typical Haitian construction requires heavy concrete. Also problematic is the failure to integrate skills training into T-Shelter construction programs, thus a missed opportunity to instill appropriate construction methods throughout the affected population. And lastly, experience from other major disaster zones shows that often these temporary shelters are not removed or upgraded into permanent shelters, but rather become more-or-less permanent

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<sup>136</sup> Davis, I. (2011). What is the vision for sheltering and housing in Haiti? Summary observations of reconstruction progress following the Haiti earthquake of January 12<sup>th</sup> 2010. Retrieved from [http://onuhabitat.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=706:l-quelle-vision-pour-les-abris-et-le-logement-en-haiti-r&catid=221:noticias&Itemid=294](http://onuhabitat.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=706:l-quelle-vision-pour-les-abris-et-le-logement-en-haiti-r&catid=221:noticias&Itemid=294). p. 7.

sub-standard dwellings, reproducing many of the vulnerabilities that led to the previous disaster.<sup>137</sup>

Where housing repair and reconstruction of permanent dwellings is occurring, these are not regulated by the government to ensure common standards, coherence, or consistency, but are instead a “series of separate projects...characterized by individual project names and agency names,”<sup>138</sup> that follow their own safety standards, if standards are applied at all. This has meant a fragmented and haphazard reconstruction process, whereby different standards are being applied in the same regions, with some receiving technical and financial resources while others may not be as fortunate, leading to social tensions due to perceptions of unequal benefits.<sup>139</sup> While the Haitian government has established the Guide for the Safe Construction of Small Buildings (*Guide de Bonnes Pratiques pour la Construction de Petits Bâtiments en Maçonnerie Chaînée en Haïti*) and the Guide for the Repair of Small Buildings (*Guide Pratique de Réparation de Petits Bâtiments en Haïti*),<sup>140</sup> its failure to enforce these guidelines,<sup>141</sup> and failure to make safe-construction training for homeowners and masons broadly available,<sup>142</sup> has meant that many families are repairing or reconstructing their homes without adequate technical advice or support, potentially reestablishing the risks that lead to the massive devastation of the January 2010 earthquake. “‘I never see any government officials visiting work sites,’ says Haitian-American

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<sup>137</sup> Davis, 2011, p. 7.

<sup>138</sup> (2012). *Support for housing rehabilitation and reconstruction: progress and issues*. ONU HABITAT. Retrieved from <http://reliefweb.int/node/490800>. p. 3.

<sup>139</sup> *Haiti earthquake reconstruction*, 2010, p. 4.

<sup>140</sup> (2012). Recently published guides for building reconstruction in Haiti are now the government standards for reconstruction. *Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR)*. Retrieved from <http://gfdrr.org/gfdrr/node/340>.

<sup>141</sup> Davis, 2011, p. 15.

<sup>142</sup> Davis, 2011, p. 14.

## DRR and the Action Plan for National Recovery

architect Yves Francois...He adds that proper soil tests often aren't being conducted, and many drawings are not being reviewed by engineers.”<sup>143</sup>

Many others are simply moving back into damaged homes without making repairs. According to a United States Agency for International Development (USAID) study, people were living in 85 percent of the houses marked yellow, and thus unsafe to inhabit but reparable, and 64 percent of the houses marked red, houses that were unsafe to enter and damaged beyond repair, placing themselves in serious danger.<sup>144</sup> The damage assessment process used to classify these buildings was developed in the United States, where assessment is attached to follow up processes that include support, advice, and compensation. In Haiti, these damage assessments were done in isolation, without such follow up. In Haiti “there is a vacuum in terms of policy for damaged houses, as well as know-how on how to retro-fit houses.”<sup>145</sup>

While the government has not outlined a clear and comprehensive plan for permanent housing reconstruction, Martelly began his administration by presenting a pilot program for closing spontaneous camps and moving the internally displaced into permanent housing called the Six-Seize Plan. The plan's name comes from Martelly's objective of clearing 6 camps within the first hundred days of his presidency, and relocating families within the 16 neighborhoods from which they came. With \$78 million pledged by the Interim Haiti Recovery Commission, the plan will involve giving the displaced subsidies to rent out new homes, or to repair or rebuild their pre-earthquake homes.<sup>146</sup>

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<sup>143</sup> Hughes, C.J. (2012, January 11). Haiti, two years after the quake: while architects report some progress, rebuilding challenges persist. *Architectural Record*. Retrieved from <http://archrecord.construction.com/news/2012/01/Haiti-two-years-after-quake.asp>.

<sup>144</sup> Phillips, N. (2011). *Haiti's housing crisis: results of a household survey on the progress of president Michel Martelly's 100-day plan to close six IDP camps*. Institute for Justice & Democracy in Haiti. Retrieved from <http://ijdh.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/100-day-report.pdf>. p. 4.

<sup>145</sup> Davis, 2011, p. 15.

<sup>146</sup> (2011, September 10). Nowhere to go: the government's housing plan faces an uphill battle. *The Economist*. Retrieved from <http://www.economist.com/node/21528627>.

Despite what seems like the beginnings of a rational step towards a comprehensive housing solution, a number of problems have emerged with Martelly's Six-Seize Plan. One problem is the condition of many of these 16 so-called 'communities of return.' They often consist of tightly packed concrete homes, either destroyed by the quake or built on unstable hills vulnerable to mudslides and floods.<sup>147</sup> Another issue is the methods used by the government to remove populations from these camps. Surveys conducted between August 3<sup>rd</sup> and August 10<sup>th</sup> 2011 in the six camps marked for closure found that residents were often being violently expelled from their tents.<sup>148</sup> These evictions often entailed police or non-uniformed armed men affiliated with the local mayor's office storming camps, beating and threatening the camp population, pushing them off camp grounds.<sup>149</sup> These expulsions make Martelly's Six-Seize plan seem more like a public relations campaign than a legitimate attempt to establish a comprehensive and sustainable solution to the housing and resettlement problem. Many within the camps believe that those in power want to remove them from the eyes of the international community; pushing them back into the hillside slums they were before. "Indeed, the encampments targeted by the Six-Seize plan are among the most visible to government and aid workers and to potential investors."<sup>150</sup>

Though the Six-Seize program offers subsidies for residents of the camps marked for closure, the US\$250 given to these evicted residents is not enough to pay for relocation or rent anywhere within Port-au-Prince. Even a twelve-by-ten foot shack with a concrete floor, plywood

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<sup>147</sup> (2011, September 10). Nowhere to go: the government's housing plan faces an uphill battle. *The Economist*. Retrieved from <http://www.economist.com/node/21528627>.

<sup>148</sup> (2011, August 2011). Haitian government's plans to close camps coming under scrutiny. *Canada Haiti Action Network*. Retrieved from <http://canadahaitiaction.ca/content/haitian-governments-plans-close-camps-coming-under-scrutiny>.

<sup>149</sup> (2011, August 2). Forced evictions continue, despite public opposition from Martelly. *Center for Economic and Public Policy Research*. Retrieved from <http://www.cepr.net/index.php/blogs/relief-and-reconstruction-watch/forced-evictions-continue-despite-public-opposition-from-martelly>.

<sup>150</sup> (2011, September 10). Nowhere to go: the government's housing plan faces an uphill battle. *The Economist*. Retrieved from <http://www.economist.com/node/21528627>.

walls, and a corrugated metal roof, costs around US\$300 to build.<sup>151</sup> “Based on the estimated cost to move just 5% of the displaced, housing all the tent cities’ residents would require \$2 billion (30% of GDP).”<sup>152</sup> Another sign that the plan may not have been about establishing a long-term housing solution was its failure to adequately address the plight of renters. A high proportion of those affected by the earthquake were renters rather than land or property owners. Thus there is a critical need to “rapidly regenerate a large stock of affordable rental accommodation.”<sup>153</sup> The government has not developed a rental reconstruction strategy focused on increasing the supply of rental housing to keep rents from rising rapidly,<sup>154</sup> something that is already occurring as landlords anticipate aid given to displaced renters.<sup>155</sup>

The one location that the government and the United Nations has sanctioned as an official disaster relief camp, Corail-Cesselesse, has a host of problems. The IDP population was promised that if they relocated from tent cities in Port-au-Prince to this 18,000 acre area of land nine miles from the capital, the government and the international community would provide them with housing, health care, schools, and most importantly, jobs in a newly created free trade zone. Instead, the nearly 100,000 people who migrated to Corail are living mostly in a state of disillusion.<sup>156</sup> There are a number of problems with the location. Firstly, it involves the uprooting of a large number of people from their social support systems, and placing them in a location that is a long distance from their primary sources of income back in Port-au-Prince. The site is also

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<sup>151</sup> (2011, August 2011). Haitian government’s plans to close camps coming under scrutiny. *Canada Haiti Action Network*. Retrieved from <http://canadahaitiaction.ca/content/haitian-governments-plans-close-camps-coming-under-scrutiny>.

<sup>152</sup> (2011, September 10). Nowhere to go: the government’s housing plan faces an uphill battle. *The Economist*. Retrieved from <http://www.economist.com/node/21528627>.

<sup>153</sup> Davis, 2011, p. 6-7.

<sup>154</sup> *Support for housing rehabilitation and reconstruction*, 2012, p. 8.

<sup>155</sup> (2011, September 10). Nowhere to go: the government’s housing plan faces an uphill battle. *The Economist*. Retrieved from <http://www.economist.com/node/21528627>.

<sup>156</sup> Baram, M. (2011, January 18). Camp Corail: Haiti’s development king defends role in site location of huge refugee camp. *The Huffington Post*. Retrieved from [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/01/18/camp-corail-haitis-develo\\_n\\_810038.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/01/18/camp-corail-haitis-develo_n_810038.html).



highly vulnerable to the possibility of flooding since it is in a location devoid of any trees and is right up against a bare mountain. And lastly, the camp lacks infrastructure, particularly water and sanitation, and there are no clear plans for future development.<sup>157</sup> Other mass migrations to the barren plains north of Port-au-Prince are occurring in places like Morne Garnier and Canaan. Some see these as the emergence of a new set of shantytowns outside the capital. These settlements are mostly unplanned, with housing quality and safety as poor as was seen in the slums of the capital.<sup>158</sup> “If anything, these refugees from the city have even less than their urban counterparts—no nearby food outlets or water sources and no sanitation.”<sup>159</sup> While these shifts of population out of Port-au-Prince can be potentially positive, reducing the density of the capital that made it a death trap, the lack of planning and poor conditions associated with these spontaneous camps does not “align with the Haitian government’s objective to build back better.”<sup>160</sup>

These emerging slums are partly due to the Haitian government’s failure to establish a standard housing model to be replicated on a mass-production scale. While the “Building Back Better Communities” Housing Expo featuring 60 prototype designs occurred in July of 2011,<sup>161</sup> with builders, architects, planners, universities, and nonprofit organizations in attendance, no steps have been taken by the Martelly government to establish a model for mass-produced

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<sup>157</sup> Davis, 2011, p.10.

<sup>158</sup> Jaberg, S. (2012, January 11). Haiti faces major challenges two years on. *Swissinfo.ch*. Retrieved from [http://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/politics/foreign\\_affairs/Haiti\\_faces\\_major\\_challenges\\_two\\_years\\_on\\_.html?cid=31889022](http://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/politics/foreign_affairs/Haiti_faces_major_challenges_two_years_on_.html?cid=31889022).

<sup>159</sup> Fletcher, P. (2010, February 22). Outside Haitian capital, survivor settlements sprout. Reuters. Retrieved from <http://www.reuters.com/article/2010/02/22/us-quake-haiti-settlements-idUSTRE61L2QG20100222>.

<sup>160</sup> Davis, 2011, p. 6.

<sup>161</sup> (2011, June 15). ‘Building back better communities’ housing expo showcases innovation in Haitian reconstruction. Retrieved from <http://en.cirh.ht/news-and-events/news/building-back-better-communities-housing-expo-showcases-innovation-in-haitian-reconstruction.html>. Mcknight, J. (2012, January 12). Haiti: a housing expo gone bad. *Architectural Record*. Retrieved from <http://archrecord.construction.com/community/blogs/HaitiDispatch.asp?plckController=Blog&plckBlogPage=BlogViewPost&newspaperUserId=ec218f36-139b-4ea2-95a3-88e6aafd36aa&plckPostId=Blog:ec218f36-139b-4ea2-95a3-88e6aafd36aaPost:ad7fd20c-b0cb-47f7-9f69-b69d893dfa1b&plckScript=blogScript&plckElementId=blogDest>

affordable housing. One of the main obstacles to progress on this issue is the landownership quagmire. A permanent housing solution for the displaced is being hampered by a lack of clarity as to who has rights to what pieces of land, which has always been a politically volatile issue throughout the country's history. This has not only kept the Martelly government from acting, it has also caused donors to avoid dedicating aid to permanent reconstruction, while focusing more on temporary housing solutions like t-shelters.<sup>162</sup> "While temporary shelters and tents can often be erected on public property or on land rented by private owners, when it comes to transitional or permanent housing, questions of ownership are key."<sup>163</sup> The Haitian government has yet to establish a land-titling program or a mechanism for land adjudication that would help to deal with this critical issue.<sup>164</sup>

The almost exclusive focus on housing to the exclusion of comprehensive infrastructure planning is also problematic. For some urban planners, it simply does not make sense to highlight innovative green housing designs like the ones showcased at the Building Back Better Communities Expo if it is not clear how critical questions regarding sustainability, such as how to get water and sanitation to these homes, are going to be answered.<sup>165</sup> Many believe that it is easier and more cost effective to deal with the infrastructure issues facing Port-au-Prince and other affected areas before initiating major housing reconstruction, rather than to build an infrastructure into a pre-existing urban landscape. They argue that the government should place the development of drainage systems, roads, sewage, potable water networks, power, telecommunications, and solid waste management infrastructures at the forefront of its

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<sup>162</sup> Charles, J. (2011, October 6). Pres. Michel Martelly launches housing plan in Haiti. *The Miami Herald*. Retrieved from <http://www.miamiherald.com/2011/10/05/2442531/michel-martelly-launches-housing.html>.

<sup>163</sup> *Burning Issues for Haiti's Recovery*, 2010, p. 5-6.

<sup>164</sup> Davis, 2011, p. 14.

<sup>165</sup> Charles, J. (2011, October 6). Pres. Michel Martelly launches housing plan in Haiti. *The Miami Herald*. Retrieved from <http://www.miamiherald.com/2011/10/05/2442531/michel-martelly-launches-housing.html>.

reconstruction planning, before traditional risks and hazards are rebuilt into a reconstructed Port-au-Prince.<sup>166</sup>

Others are critical of the Building Back Better Expo serving as a preliminary process in the government's selection of model housing. Many of the designs presented failed to meet the most elementary engineering requirements.<sup>167</sup> Others had not been tested for resistance to strong hurricane force winds, and were likely to be "torn from their foundations, or have their roof torn off, or their walls blown down, in [the event of] hurricanes."<sup>168</sup> Also, many of the prototypes presented at the expo simply do not seem economically feasible nor do they promote sustainable development for Haiti. Some were in the price range of \$20,000 to \$30,000 USD, completely oblivious to the fact that a majority of the population lives on less than \$2 USD a day.<sup>169</sup> "Even if these new pre-fabricated houses were being mass-produced, at \$5,000, tent city residents cannot afford them."<sup>170</sup> Not only would these be too expensive for the average Haitian, the construction of many of these homes would not contribute to the economic boost that such large-scale housing reconstruction could potentially provide the country. Of the 60 models on display, only seven were built by Haitian companies, while most of the models would rely heavily on imported materials for their construction rather than locally sourced materials.<sup>171</sup> Essentially, the Building

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<sup>166</sup> Davis, 2011, p. 13.

<sup>167</sup> Kijewski-Correa, T; Taflanidis, A. (2011). *The Haitian Housing Dilemma: Can Sustainability and Hazard-Resilience be Achieved?* Bulletin of Earthquake Engineering. Retrieved from [http://haiti.ce.nd.edu/Engineering2Empower/Resources\\_files/HaitiDilemma.pdf](http://haiti.ce.nd.edu/Engineering2Empower/Resources_files/HaitiDilemma.pdf). p. 6

<sup>168</sup> Macdonald, I. (2011, June 20). Disaster capitalism in Haiti leaves displaced with few good choices. *Colorlines*. Retrieved from [http://colorlines.com/archives/2011/06/disaster\\_capitalism\\_in\\_haiti\\_leaves\\_displaced\\_with\\_few\\_good\\_choices.html](http://colorlines.com/archives/2011/06/disaster_capitalism_in_haiti_leaves_displaced_with_few_good_choices.html)

<sup>169</sup> Macdonald, I. (2011, June 20). Disaster capitalism in Haiti leaves displaced with few good choices. *Colorlines*. Retrieved from [http://colorlines.com/archives/2011/06/disaster\\_capitalism\\_in\\_haiti\\_leaves\\_displaced\\_with\\_few\\_good\\_choices.html](http://colorlines.com/archives/2011/06/disaster_capitalism_in_haiti_leaves_displaced_with_few_good_choices.html)

<sup>170</sup> Presutti, C. (2011, October 31). Haiti rebuilds slowly under new government, prime minister. *Voice of America*. <http://www.voanews.com/english/news/americas/Haiti-Rebuilds-Slowly-Under-New-Government-Prime-Minister-132988083.html>.

<sup>171</sup> Macdonald, I. (2011, June 20). Disaster capitalism in Haiti leaves displaced with few good choices. *Colorlines*. Retrieved from [http://colorlines.com/archives/2011/06/disaster\\_capitalism\\_in\\_haiti\\_leaves\\_displaced\\_with\\_few\\_good\\_choices.html](http://colorlines.com/archives/2011/06/disaster_capitalism_in_haiti_leaves_displaced_with_few_good_choices.html)

## DRR and the Action Plan for National Recovery

Back Better Communities Expo failed to adequately prioritize sustainability, as well as dual hazard resilience, as criteria for selected models.<sup>172</sup>

While the Haitian government has mostly struggled with the issue of resettlement and housing reconstruction, there have been some positive, though perhaps minor, steps forward. Just recently a Unit for Construction of Housing and Public Buildings (Unité de Construction du Longement et des Bâtiments Publics) was announced, which will potentially allow the government to take a more active role in directing and coordinating reconstruction efforts.<sup>173</sup> The Ministry of Public Works, Transport and Communication (MTPTC) has begun the process of establishing a framework to improve and standardize training for safer construction throughout the country, launching an awareness campaign focused on safe construction.<sup>174</sup> And lastly, the Ministry of Interior has partnered with UN-Habitat-Haiti to push through the component of the Support Programme for the Reconstruction of Housing and Neighborhoods (PARLG) focused on increasing municipal and community capacity to guide, direct, and coordinate reconstruction within their jurisdictions. It emphasizes building the human resource capacity of municipalities by establishing Local Technical Agencies (ATL) and developing mechanisms for municipalities to participate directly in development planning, urban planning, and project management. The municipalities included in this program include Port-au-Prince, Carrefour, Petion Ville, Delmas, Cité Soleil, Croix des Bouquets, Tabarre, Jacmel, St. Marc, and Miragoâne.<sup>175</sup>

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<sup>172</sup> *The Haitian Housing Dilemma*, 2011, p. 6

<sup>173</sup> *Support for housing rehabilitation and reconstruction*, 2012, p. 3.

<sup>174</sup> *Support for housing rehabilitation and reconstruction*, 2012, p. 9.

<sup>175</sup> (2012, May 11). Haiti-reconstruction: new mechanisms for institutional strengthening of territorial collectivities. *Haiti Libre*. Retrieved from <http://www.haitilibre.com/en/news-5617-haiti-reconstruction-new-mechanism-for-institutional-strengthening-of-territorial-collectivities.html>.

### ***Conclusion***

Immediately after the tragic devastation of the January 12, 2010 Haiti earthquake, the Government of Haiti and the international community declared that Haiti must ‘build back better.’ They enshrined this objective of ‘building back better’ into the *Action Plan for National Recovery and Development of Haiti*, the document outlining both the Haitian government and the international community’s primary objectives as the reconstruction of this devastated country moves forward. Reconstruction and recovery would be focused on reducing Haiti’s principle vulnerabilities. It would decentralize development away from a Port-au-Prince now mostly reduced to rubble. It would professionalize and regulate Haiti’s construction sector so that it adhered to international practices and standards for construction in areas threatened by earthquakes and hurricanes. It would address the widespread environmental degradation that has characterized Haiti over the past century or so. And, it would establish mechanisms for urban planning, land tenure, and land use management. While these goals are praiseworthy, their accomplishment is fundamentally predicated on reforming and strengthening a Haitian state that has been endemically weak and fantastically corrupt. Failures to address the weakness of the Haitian state in an aggressive manner have affected its abilities to lead the reconstruction effort towards ‘building back better.’

Where the Martelly government seems most successful in moving towards the objectives of the *Action Plan* are in his administration’s efforts to de-concentrate economic activity away from Port-au-Prince. A major component of this effort is to promote free trade zones throughout the various regions of the country, with the Caracol Industrial Park in the Northeast Department being the first of many. He has courted investments and aid from the international community to ensure that this industrial development will be connected to improvements in corresponding

regional seaports, airports, and electrical infrastructures. The Martelly administration has also begun provisional initiatives to strengthen the capacity of Haiti's municipalities to engage in urban and development planning. It also claims that it will not focus solely on light industry development to the exclusion of agriculture, and seems to be taking preliminary steps to modernize the agricultural sector and promote the dissemination of sustainable farming practices throughout the country.

While Martelly's work to spread development throughout Haiti is where he has had the most initial success in meeting an objective of the *Action Plan*, it may also be where his government encounters its greatest failures in 'building back better.' This seems to be the case mostly because the process of economic de-concentration is being dominated by the interests of multinational corporations, the domestic private sector, and political elites, with little consultation or coordination with Haitian civil society and the Haitian people for which these initiatives are supposedly for. The decision to place an industrial park in an area that is environmentally fragile, and well suited for agricultural development, is problematic. Also troubling is the emphasis being placed on Haiti's so-called comparative advantage, its peoples' desperation for jobs and the low wages this guarantees for multinational corporations. Unless these jobs are complemented with strong state support for broad-based, public, and affordable health care, education, and other critical services, these free trade zones planned for the various departments of Haiti may simply recreate Port-au-Prince-like slum conditions throughout the country. The situation regarding the resettlement and housing of Haiti's IDPs points to what the future may look like for Haiti. People are returning to homes that are structurally unsound without government assistance to retrofit or repair them to meet safety standards for homes in earthquake zones. Others are building shanty towns on the outskirts of the capital without any

## DRR and the Action Plan for National Recovery

government planning, infrastructure, or services, just as had occurred in Port-au-Prince prior to the earthquake, except now they are further from the meager economic opportunities of the capital, and thus more vulnerable. Much of this is a product of government inability to address fundamental issues such as land titling and land rights. It is also a product of a government that is more beholden to elites than it is to the everyday Haitian man, woman, and child on the streets. Rather than building back better, we may be witnessing the reconstruction of a Port-au-Prince and a Haiti that is even more vulnerable, simply waiting for the next big disaster to come, whether from above or from below.

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