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Haiti, Conflict

Haiti: A Multifaceted Analysis of Food Insecurity

Introduction

The issue of food insecurity has been approached under many different circumstances as the severity of the idea has fluctuated over time. Currently, in Haiti, 4.5 million people are experiencing extreme food insecurity (Rouzier, Georges Harry 2022). The disparity that has resulted from this consistent food deprivation is specifically displayed in the 2008 Global Food Crisis. This was a result of increased prices of cereal crops, such as wheat and rice, nearly doubling and having a significantly notable impact on developing nations. Among the most affected nations is Haiti with nearly 35 percent requiring emergency food assistance in 2019 (Mullin, E. 2019). While food insecurity is a continuing issue among many nations globally, developing nations such as Haiti suffer at a severe level due to political and environmental conflicts internally.

Country and Family

The life surrounding the Haitian residents consists of extreme amounts of poverty and social instability. This is largely due to the nation's vulnerability to environmental disasters which creates destruction and poor living conditions for those whose homes are destroyed and lack ample funds to recover, sending mass amounts of the Haitian population into rural poverty and a spiral of political and social instability. A 2009 report from the International Crisis Group explains that "Over 70 percent of Haitians live on less than $2 per day, and 56 percent barely survive on less than $1" (International Crisis Group. 2009). This further emphasizes the depth of disparity that the majority of the nation endures on a daily basis, creating an effect of social and political resentment further worsening the existing conflicts of environmental conflicts. According to a novel written by David Himmelgreen the root of Haiti's vulnerability to food, the crisis is the high cost of living, specifically in lavichè in Haitian Creole (Himmelgreen, David 2009). Rural farmers making up a large portion of Haiti have indefinitely suffered as a result of their dependence on the marketplace for business and income. In addition to this factor, a major contributor to Haitian challenges and internal conflict is the influx of migrants into already dysfunctional urban areas. Haiti is affected by consistent economic poverty and environmental disaster which results in conflict that is severely worsened by new migrants to worsen the already critical social tensions and disparity. With a combination of increasing immigration and overall population growth, gang activity has become extremely prevalent specifically in the younger population which has led to an immediate increase in the criminal activity rates and overall extremity of social relations in the nation. As the population steadily grew, so did the occurrence of internal conflict. According to a 2015 report published by the University of Chicago Press, "each wave of major political or social crisis leads to major displacement of the urban population to the surrounding rural areas…this was the case with the earthquake in January 2010, the violence of 2004–6, the years of violence resulting from the 1992 military coup" (Marcelin, L. H. 2015). As explained by the report, not only does a reoccurring domino effect of political instability and social uprising result from the poor living conditions experienced in Haiti, but this also plays a major role in the presence of food insecurity throughout the nation, which has persisted and continues to evade the nation to present.

Challenge and Impact

The nation of Haiti has prevailed against various environmental challenges and the resulting effects of food insecurity and political unrest nationwide. As the nation's economic struggle continues, the flow of

goods being traded and profits being made systematically decreases, which furthermore negatively affects political appeasement. This has created an ongoing cycle lacking once plentiful materials, goods, and crops among the Haitian population. This ongoing cycle is explained in relation to the current circumstances in Haiti has created "the intersection of problems on the supply side and the distribution side leaves most Haitians facing food insecurity" (Baro, M. 2002). The political struggles endured in Haiti not only circulate insufficient agricultural industrial exchange but have also served as a major contributing factor to the issue of food insecurity plaguing the country. It was noted that many families had to rely on isolated rural origins for economic support and exchange, making access to food and resources more difficult for families (Marcelin, L. H. 2015). This factor is only one of the many challenges faced by Haitians as the nation lies between the Caribbean and North American continental plates, indicating its close proximity to water. This highlights the extreme vulnerability to disasters such as flash flooding, earthquakes, or hurricanes to worsen the economic struggle of Haiti regularly. After the regular occurrence of such disasters, governments and private businesses are slow to assist the agricultural industries (Project, Borgen. 2020). This highlights the cycle of economic disparity, as even the government and core financial hubs of the nation are delayed in their recovery and this disparity is further worsened as the financial crisis continues to negatively affect the population socially. It was specifically noted that the source of most violence stems from men frustrated with unemployment, gang violence, and manipulation of desperate citizens, as well as sexual assault (Marcelin, L. H. 2015). Examples of such disasters that affected Haiti, in particular, were hurricanes, Isaac and Sandy of 2012.

Solutions and Recommendations
Though Haiti has endured inordinate conflict both politically and environmentally, there are viable solutions to realistically combat them. Such efforts have already been put into effect as improvements in Southern Haiti through food assistance (Rouzier, Georges Harry. 2022) Other actions from various small-scale organizations, such as: providing food vouchers, recruiting for vaccines, and providing material aid to those affected most severely in response to natural disasters and the rapid food insecurity that plagues the nation, have also been put into place. While these solutions present the potential to make a viable impact, this impact only benefits the nation in the short term. The efforts and organization put towards the cause benefits the nation until the next natural disaster occurs, or until the next drought and low yield season arises. Furthermore, in order to solidify a sustainable long-term solution for Haiti, it is necessary to examine the success and failures that have resulted from previous attempts to aid the nation. The aforementioned efforts in the past to relieve the nation after the occurrence of natural disasters have succeeded in the short term in local areas but have failed to maintain long-term stability throughout the entire nation. There is a presence of inconsistent and ineffective practices exhausted from the central government of Haiti, which continues to encourage unsustainable practices among society and within positions of power within their government. This leaves Haiti more vulnerable than more stable neighboring nations in similar locations. The role of any government is not only to maintain stability within the nation but to ensure that legislation is being respectfully created and enforced in order to meet the best interest of one's nation. Yet this order seems to be severely lacking in Haiti, as the government has failed to secure sociopolitical order and environmental stability. However, there was a small success in the region of Cité Solei, Haiti in which civic mitigation was achieved, and within the local context, extreme levels of poverty, conflict, and marginalization were reprimanded for a time through local efforts of food importation and environmental conservationism in response to their extreme circumstances (Marcelin, L. H. 2015). Considering that these local efforts awarded small success the goal to achieve national peace would be to expand and regionalize these efforts on a larger scale.

A solution that would best implement efforts of proven success in the past, while achieving a national and long-term impact would be a multifaceted solution, beginning with the implementation of Environmental Sustainability Programs that would be regularly offered and incentivized through the government. This

would most importantly address the lack of education on sustainable farming practices and encourage more sustainable techniques nationally. Not only would this aspect of the overall solution help to form a new view of environmental protection and its importance, but it would also allow the government to enforce a beneficial program aimed to help the nation. The government currently lacks proper enforcement of legislature that is aiding the nation's issues, leaving the population unconfident and discontent with their own governing body. This would allow the government to regain control and reinforce a program that gains sociopolitical peace and centralization in the nation's affairs. However, these programs cannot be technically enforced, but rather incentivized, leaving a margin of inefficiency in achieving national success in the long term. In order to combat this margin, the government can implement a land tenure system. With this system, Haiti can establish clear ownership rights to plots of land, which would enforce more responsibility to practice sustainable and government-approved agricultural practices and reduce the misuse of farming lands. With the implementation of an Environmental Sustainability Program and the legislation surrounding the land tenure system, national cohesion will form. The rural farmlands will be regulated through government-issued legislation through a system of the law to further suggest its importance and potential consequences of such practices are not implemented. However, in order to begin integrating these programs into the nation, some regions are facing specific issues more than others, and at differing levels of extremity. For example, the regions facing the most disparity, such as Gonaïves, Artibonite, Cabaret, and the West department should be the primary concern. The 2008 Global Food Crisis left these areas more vulnerable and less productive. The issue of violence would be expected to decrease as society regains trust within the central government and circumstances improve overall. However, for the more obscure cases that these rates do not reduce, it is important that on a local level communities are creating security groups and efforts against crime in order to reduce local levels across the nation. Realistically, these programs will not solve every issue so small, and local efforts must also continue such as food programs and importing donated goods from contributing nations.

Conclusion
The issue of food insecurity has plagued the world as a global issue for a long period of time, affecting diverse nations to various extremities. However, less-developed nations and those with pre-existing crises suffer to extreme levels that do not compare to the minor food shortages in mor4e developed regions of the world. A nation that has specifically suffered from this issue is Haiti. There have been long-lasting conflicts throughout time, but after the Global Food Crisis of 2008, the nation has spiraled into a war against hunger and a struggle to maintain stability through the nation as a result. The best way to combat this crisis is to continue the local efforts that have proven short-term success in cohesion with the implementation of Environmental Sustainability Programs and a Land Tenure System by a unified and centralized government.

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