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Haiti, Governance and Policy

**Haiti: Governance and Policy**

Rich in culture and history, Haiti is a stunning tropical island. Justice, human rights, democracy, and development are issues that Haitians must currently fight for. The nation's government officials need more guidance, security, and leadership. Lower-class individuals cannot take advantage of even the most fundamental necessities of life, while the elite enjoy absolute power. To regain a state of prosperity and tranquility, Haitians must restore normalcy to their society.

Haiti is a country located in the Caribbean. As of 2021, Haiti has an estimated population of 11.45 million people (Haiti Population, n.d.). About 40.2% of residents live in rural areas, and about 59.8% live in urban areas of Haiti (Haiti Population, n.d.). Haiti is located on the Caribbean Sea and the North Atlantic Ocean, making Haiti very susceptible to tropical storms. The Northern dialect is predominantly spoken in Cap-Haïtien, Central in Port-au-Prince, and Southern in the Cayes area, Haitian Creole (Anne, 2019). Haitians cultivate about 65.13% of their land with what they can harvest, such as corn, tomatoes, rice, and sweet potatoes, rice being their most significant export. They raise their livestock, such as creole pigs, cattle, Guinea pigs, goats, and chickens. The Haitian farm is 2.5 acres per family, which compares to 300 acres in Mississippi. The climate in Haiti is hot and humid. The daily temperatures in Haiti during summer can be between 71 degrees Fahrenheit to 91 degrees Fahrenheit; winter temperatures are between 66 degrees Fahrenheit and 82 degrees Fahrenheit (Haiti-Climate Change, n.d.). The wet season is long, particularly in the northern and southern regions of the island, with two pronounced peaks occurring between March and November (Haiti-Climate Change, n.d.).

The Haitian family size can be averaged to three to five people per household, depending on the household's income. The family usually eats what they can harvest and raises their livestock. Depending on their economic status, the wealthy families shop at markets and the lower class must shop at open food markets. Since Haitians often grow their own food, it is found that only one-fifth of the land is considered suitable for agriculture, and more than two-fifths is under cultivation.

Haiti is among the poorest nations; however, Haitian towns continue to increase as eight million people move from rural areas to seek better employment opportunities. Haiti attracted tourists in 2021. About 148,000 tourists were recorded, making it the 108th ranked in the world (WorldData.info, n.d.). In 2021, Haiti generated around 80.00 million U.S. dollars in the tourism sector alone. This corresponds to 0.39 percent of its gross domestic product and approximately 0 percent of all international tourism receipts in the Caribbean (WorldData.info, n.d.). Haiti suffers from a significant unemployment rate; approximately two-thirds of the workforce lacks stable employment or income. Haiti's primary industry is agriculture, and around half of the country's working population is employed. Haiti's national gross income per capita increased by 170 U.S. dollars since the previous year, 2021 (Gross national income per capita in Haiti from 2013 to 2022, n.d.). Therefore, Haiti's national gross income peaked in 2022 with 1,610 U.S. dollars (Gross national income per capita in Haiti from 2013 to 2022, n.d.).

Stable employment, affordable shelter, and education are distant to millions in Haiti. With only 300 dentists nationwide, an even more significant individuals lack access to routine dental care (Remote Area Medical, n.d.). Several people have limited access to even the most fundamental health and dental care options because of the above factors and the country's vulnerability to devastating natural disasters. This results in an uncertain outlook and premature demise for many individuals. Haiti has a 57% primary school enrollment rate and an even lower 30% 6th grade rate. 20% of eligible kids attend secondary school (Facts about Haiti, 2022). The literacy rate in Haiti is 52.9%. Education spending in Haiti ranks 177th out of 186 worldwide (Facts about Haiti, 2022). The Haitian government has promoted free public and universal education system for all primary school-age students. However, there needs to be a current or planned financial program to support this. Ninety percent of international students attend American and Canadian mission and church-funded private schools (Facts about Haiti, 2022).

Haiti faces a wide range of economic, political, social, demographic, and climatic issues. These issues are not new; they are the result of historical tendencies indicated above, as well as external events that complicate the governance framework. In response, it is critical to develop robust and effective public governance in the face of increasingly uncertain conditions. Considering these comments, the Public Governance Review focuses on coordination among various government actors as well as technical and financial partners (TFPs) to support the implementation of public governance initiatives and objectives (OECD logoOECD Public Governance Reviews: Haiti : Strengthening Public Administration for Resilient and Sustainable Governance, 2021). The widespread view is that great progress has been made in some areas of reform, particularly in boosting the public sector's human resources and adopting a decentralization program. However, a lack of coordination and clarity of major reform areas makes meeting the government's objectives impossible. It is critical to promote a clear and unified view of the goals of Haiti's reform participants, as outlined in framework papers such as the PME-2023 and PSDH (OECD logoOECD Public Governance Reviews: Haiti : Strengthening Public Administration for Resilient and Sustainable Governance, 2021).

Haiti appears to be in constant change, both politically and socially. Although many people want democracy, the political climate has long been shaped by a critical outcome of Haiti's bloody independence war: a largely mulatto elite who retreated to congested urban areas took over the government and eventually left rural areas to be divided among a scattered black farming population in the interior (Haiti: Politics, Economy, Society, n.d.). The peasantry grew to consider the government as having little importance to their lives, and this attitude has remained to the day. As a result, most people believe Haiti's formal political organization exists mainly on paper (Haiti: Politics, Economy, Society, n.d.). Rural Haitians today perceive their government as irrelevant since it still needs to provide them with security, health care, clean water, and an operational transportation system. Many people protest official elections, which they believe are corrupt.

Haiti has a history of natural disasters and political unrest. The country is now facing what may be its most significant problem in decades as its broken government, which does not have any freely elected officials, tries to figure out how to move forward in the face of gang violence and cholera.

Over a year ago, Haiti's de facto leader, Prime Minister Ariel Henry, lost his constitutional authority. Some considered this questionable from the start because he was never officially sworn in. Because Jovenel Moïse was killed in 2021, the country has not had a ruler since. Its Senate should have 30 members, and its smaller legislative chamber should have 119 (Hassan, 2022). However, none of those seats are filled. The chosen mayors of Haiti were all reappointed or replaced in 2020. However, because there was no quorum in the Senate to approve Henry's appointment, he was never sworn in officially. Haiti's constitution says that elections must be held within 120 days of a presidential vacancy ending in November 2021 (Hassan, 2022).

Now, Henry is the only leader of a broken and weak government that does not seem to be able to deal with the country's many problems, such as gang violence, cholera, and inflation. The elites run Haiti's ports, customs, and government welfare services and the rest of the millions of Haitians are poor. Gangs rule about 60% of Port-au-Prince and hold other vital ports and roads (Hassan, 2022). Over 150,000 people have had to leave their homes because of gang violence, and aid groups like Doctors Without Borders have had to close sites and move staff (Hassan, 2022). It is thought that a new wave of cholera has sickened about 25,000 Haitians since October. Gas and food prices have gone through the roof because of rampant inflation. About 40% of people need more to eat (Hassan, 2022). Many of the country's schools have been closed because of the disasters, which means that millions of Haitian children have not had a regular meal or education since the start of the pandemic.

The first possible solution for Haitians to address their challenges is to hold an election to get elected officials in power. They are to formally elect a president and fill the empty seats of their Senators. A country must have someone they can trust and obey to lead them and speak on behalf of the people. **Increasing citizen engagement through the promotion of open government and the strategic management of public communication** (OECD logoOECD Public Governance Reviews: Haiti : Strengthening Public Administration for Resilient and Sustainable Governance, 2021)**. Making it clearer how Haiti's national strategy and budget are planned will help improve policymaking and service delivery by making better use of facts in strategic and budgetary planning** (OECD logoOECD Public Governance Reviews: Haiti : Strengthening Public Administration for Resilient and Sustainable Governance, 2021)**.** The current president they have now the people do not trust and believe is corrupt. Henry stepped into the role of president despite needing to be elected by the people. Another issue is that the members of the Senate removed themselves from their political positions, or they did not run for re-election. A proper election must happen for the country to gain control before the gang's takeover officially. The functions of a government include the regulation and enforcement of societal norms, defense, foreign policy, the economy, and public services. Although the obligations of all governments are comparable, the way those obligations are carried out varies according to the form of government. Haiti has three branches of government but needs members to make and enforce the rules.

Having firm government officials helps promote democracy for all. A strong government will be able to make and enforce rules that are in the people's best interest. Another strength of a strong government is the increased amounts of foreign aid Haiti could receive from other countries. Other countries can help aid in the progress of Haiti economically and socially. Negotiating great deals with other countries to send aid can help increase education, job security, and foreign trade and boost the economy. Also, receiving aid when natural disasters hit to recover any loss the people or economy will lose. Having a government that can enforce justice on gangs and unlawful citizens is a strength of the government—making sure to hold individuals who break the law accountable for their actions, no matter their social status in the county.

The second possible solution for Haitians would be to create a robust military force. With gang violence increasing in Haiti, offering safety and security should be the next priority. Gang violence has increased, and they are fighting to control money and territory. The violence has forced healthcare officials to close or move their facilities elsewhere. This makes it harder for people in rural areas to seek healthcare if needed. With military force available, the people of Haiti can be at some ease. They are safe from dying or losing control of their human rights. The military aims to safeguard the nation and establish global security and power. With military presence, families can know they are safe in their homes, the children are safe in the schools, the doctors are safe in their facilities, and the people of Haiti are safe from outside forces that may try to invade them.

Haiti has a lot of issues to resolve but their main problem to address is the lack of leadership and protection. A country must be led by someone or a group of people that always have the best interest of every person and not just their own. Although Haiti was instituted on suffrage does not mean it has to continue to suffer. Addressing the issue of safety with military presence will save the entire country from invasion domestically and globally. With military presence the government can enforce law and order and ease the safety concerns of their citizens. Haiti is a beautiful place to visit and to not have leadership and safety the country will continue to dimmish on a global and domestic level.

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