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PLANTING NOW (2ND EDITION)

Revitalizing agriculture for reconstruction and development in Haiti

Agriculture in Haiti has suffered three decades of crisis and institutional neglect. Nevertheless, almost 60 percent of Haitians live in rural areas and rely on farming for their livelihoods.

For that reason, agriculture must play a central role in post-earthquake reconstruction. However, the plans and programs of the Haitian government and the international community have proven insufficient to revitalize the sector and improve conditions for small-scale farmers, and have failed to recognize the important roles of women in agriculture.

The Haitian government and the main actors in agriculture should continue to prioritize agricultural development, while putting greater emphasis on long-term programs to assist Haitians to get back on their feet and improve their living conditions with dignity.

SUMMARY

The devastating earthquake that struck Haiti on January 12, 2010 exacerbated the country's grinding poverty and serious development problems, while at the same time worsening Haitian living conditions. The tremor killed over 250,000 people and injured 300,000. It crippled the economy, causing losses estimated at almost 120 percent of gross domestic product (GDP). Nevertheless, economic growth is expected to rise between 7 and 9 percent in 2012,¹ largely owing to reconstruction efforts. The population in internally displaced persons camps has decreased from 1.5 million to around 390,000 (according to the June 2012 report of the International Organization for Migration),² and the country's hurricane preparedness capacity has increased.

Nevertheless, it is ever more difficult for Haitian farmers to earn a living and to meet the needs of their families. Agricultural trade liberalization, which former President Jean-Claude Duvalier introduced in 1983, and which his successors all supported to varying degrees, has heavily contributed to stagnant farm production, falling exports, the upsurge in food imports, reduced support for domestic food production, and cutbacks in public investment and technical assistance. All of which has led to reduced productivity, national production, and farm incomes. Land tenure insecurity and increasing dependence on imported food and food aid complete an already bleak portrait of the challenges facing Haitian agriculture.

However, over 90 percent of the people interviewed for this report (including representatives of the Haitian government, the international community, and Haitian civil society organizations) continue to stress that agriculture is the country's main production sector.

Yet the current approaches to agricultural development in Haiti are problematic. The greatest challenges lie, on the one hand, in the failure to implement an agricultural policy that responds to real needs and the limited funding allocated to the sector; and, on the other hand, in a methodology that favors a project approach over a program approach to development. The program approach emphasizes the long-term organization and development of the sector, and could have positive impacts, provided that the Haitian state demonstrates responsible leadership. In contrast, the project approach has a palliative effect, but fails to provide lasting solutions to the various problems facing agriculture.

Both aid donors and the government have made considerable efforts to develop Haitian agriculture, but they need to redouble these with more substantial investment using a better framework for their actions.

In implementing the National Agricultural Investment Plan (NAIP), and in accordance with the aid-effectiveness principle of ownership, donors should continue to support national plans established in collaboration with the Haitian people.

Although it contains some inherent design weaknesses, the NAIP has the potential to reenergize agriculture, as the sector requires additional resources to strengthen and democratize access to services, agricultural inputs, and infrastructure. These are the main levers to improve productivity, national production, and farmers' quality of life, with a high probability of significantly boosting rural incomes. The Haitian government and donors must take all necessary steps to ensure the NAIP's effective implementation.

To accomplish this, the government should:

- Prioritize the NAIP and take the appropriate measures to ensure its implementation;
- Establish coherence between “Aba Grangou” (the presidential anti-hunger initiative) and agricultural policy based on the NAIP, under the leadership of the Ministry of Agriculture;
- Strengthen decentralized governance bodies, such as departmental agricultural directorates (DDAs) and the communal agricultural offices, to better coordinate actions and implement the general agricultural policy guidelines on the ground;
- Put into operation the local development model provided for in the 1987 Constitution, and employ a legal framework for the decentralization and deconcentration of state services provision for all local and regional authorities, in order to improve local agricultural planning and management;
- Put land tenure security high on the agricultural policy agenda. The Haitian judicial system should operate in the two official languages, both French and Creole, and provide farmers with legal assistance for resolving land disputes;
- Establish mechanisms to strengthen farmers’ organizations so that small-scale farmers—women as well as men—can assert their rights in negotiations that concern them, particularly in the implementation of a trade policy that balances the interests of both farmers and consumers;
- Ensure that agricultural policy enhances women’s roles in marketing farm inputs and products. Moreover, agricultural policy must recognize the gender division of labor, in order to promote gender justice;³
- Promote agro-ecology, which requires fewer external inputs, and at the same time subsidize fertilizers (without providing them completely free of charge) to make them available at an affordable price to farmers nationwide, while avoiding any suspicion of corruption in their distribution;
- Put unused farmland into production, and strengthen farm productivity through research and experimentation;
- Prioritize the program approach to agricultural development, in order to strengthen the sector’s long-term development. Emphasize agricultural entrepreneurship (agroprocessing) and deconcentrated service provision (job creation, education, health, etc.) to promote rural development and stem outmigration from the countryside;
- Create a national environmental service corps in all schools that will carry out reforestation and soil and water conservation projects and foster awareness of the need for environmental protection; and
- Make increased national production the centerpiece of agricultural policy and progressively establish tariffs to protect Haitian farmers.

Donors should:

- Work to strengthen civil society by including local organizations in program design and management. This will build organizations’ capacity to demand effective and efficient programs and engage in long-term program monitoring;
- Work to strengthen the Ministries of Agriculture and the Environment so that they can play leading roles in agricultural development;
- Continue to prioritize good agricultural governance and food security in their development aid, while aligning their strategies with the NAIP and providing financial resources for its implementation;

- Establish a monitoring mechanism that will not only ensure the evaluation of the effectiveness of their aid, but also compliance with their commitments to funding the NAIP made at Punta Cana;
- Focus on financing locally procured food aid, while taking into account the reality of local markets;
- Ensure coherence between aid and trade policies; and
- Reform rice subsidies in exporting countries in order to eliminate dumping that harms Haitian producers.

NGOs should:

- Invest more in strengthening civil society organizations so that they can influence other agricultural development stakeholders;
- Focus on gender justice in their interventions, in order to reduce glaring social inequalities;
- Establish partnerships with national universities to promote research and ensure its application in the agricultural sector; and
- Increase awareness among all actors in the sector of the need to protect the environment and adapt to climate change.

1. INTRODUCTION

The devastating earthquake that struck Haiti on January 12, 2010 exacerbated the country's grinding poverty and serious development problems, while at the same time worsening Haitian living conditions. The tremor killed over 250,000 people and injured 300,000. It crippled the economy, causing losses estimated at almost 120 percent of gross domestic product (GDP). Nevertheless, economic growth is expected to rise between 7 and 9 percent in 2012,⁴ largely owing to reconstruction efforts. The population of internally displaced persons camps has decreased from 1.5 million to around 390,000 (according to the June 2012 report of the International Organization for Migration), and the country's hurricane preparedness capacity has increased.

Nevertheless, it is ever more difficult for Haitian farmers to earn a living and to meet the needs of their families. Agricultural trade liberalization, which former President Jean-Claude Duvalier introduced in 1983, and which his successors all supported in varying degrees, has heavily contributed to stagnant farm production, falling exports, the upsurge in food imports, reduced support for domestic food production, and cutbacks in public investment and technical assistance. Moreover, land tenure insecurity, poor bad governance (corruption, lack of access to the justice system for rural people, absence of basic services in rural areas), and increasing dependence on imported food and food aid fill in an already bleak portrait of the challenges facing Haitian agriculture.

However, over 90 percent of the people interviewed for this report (including representatives of the Haitian government, the international community, and Haitian civil society organizations) continue to stress that agriculture is the country's main production sector. It provides almost 60 percent of all employment and generates over a quarter of the GDP.⁵

After the earthquake, the Haitian government and the international community developed a National Agricultural Investment Plan (NAIP),⁶ in order to ensure a coherent agricultural reconstruction effort. Over two years later, what progress has been made in implementing this plan?

2. CONTINUITY AND CHANGE IN GOVERNMENT POLICY

According to a March 2012 survey by Haiti's National Food Security Coordination Agency (CNSA),⁷ food insecurity remains very high and affects 38 percent of the population (around 3.8 million people), distributed as follows: 29.9 percent (2,993,557 people) are moderately food insecure; 8.1 percent (810,969 people) are affected by high transitory food insecurity; while 1.5 percent (150,179 people) suffer from high chronic food insecurity. This represents a significant decrease of 7 percent (900,000 people) from the findings of surveys conducted in September 2011. However, owing to the progressive decline in farm size, soil erosion, insufficient investment in irrigation and agricultural inputs, and the growing impact of climate change, the agricultural sector declined by 4 percent between 2000 and 2010.

The 2010 earthquake helped raise awareness of the role of the agricultural sector in the country's economic life. Under the former administration, the minister of agriculture succeeded in raising the share of the budget allocated to agriculture from 4 percent in 2008 to six percent in 2009, and then nine percent in 2010-2011 (when it reached 106 billion Haitian gourdes, or \$238.5 million). However, given the importance of agriculture in terms of job creation and its contribution to GDP, and in light of the real need to revive production, this budget remained quite insufficient, even if the increases demonstrated some level of commitment to revitalizing agriculture.

The Haitian parliament has finally voted on the 2011-2012 amended agricultural budget of 121 billion gourdes. In absolute terms, it might appear to indicate an increase in agricultural investment. However, this figure represents only six percent of the national budget, well below the previous year's share. Moreover, when exchange rate adjustments are taken into account, the current agricultural budget totals \$178 million, or 25 percent less than the 2010-2011 allocation.

In addition, the budget treats the *environment*, which is closely related to agriculture and is one of the four strategic E's of the government's program (together with education, employment, and *état de droit*, or rule of law), as the poor cousin, receiving just 0.6 percent of the resources.

The following table illustrates the agricultural budget allocation trends:

National budget allocation for the agricultural sector⁸

Year	National budget (gourdes)	% allocated to agricultural sector	Total (\$ US)	Inflation rate (%)
Former administration (2010-2011)	106 billion	9	240 million	7
Current administration (2011-2012)	121 billion	6	178 million	13

In terms of macroeconomics, the Boniface-Latortue administration succeeded in reducing inflation from 37 percent in 2004 (inherited from President Aristide) to 16 percent in 2006, with foreign exchange reserves exceeding \$200 million and an exchange rate around 42 gourdes to the dollar. The Préval government (2006-2011)

stabilized the exchange rate at around 40 gourdes per dollar, while maintaining inflation below 10 percent and at times near a negative level. Moreover, the rise in inflation to 7 percent in 2011⁹ may be attributed more to the increased cost of imports than to the state of the Haitian economy. Préval's Minister of Economy and Finance, Ronald Baudin, told Oxfam, "Despite the rather disastrous political management of our economy, the growth rate is close to 7 percent," with foreign exchange reserves of around \$800 million.

Currently, the government's priorities are: a) stimulating national agricultural production; b) security of persons and property; c) education and training for all; d) repositioning Haiti on the world map; e) tourism and culture; f) preventive health care and health services for all; and g) revitalizing the economy and the private sector.

The new administration cannot ignore the considerable progress already made on revitalizing national agricultural production because it has to keep to the state's solemn commitments. These are embodied in such documents as the Agricultural Development Policy (PDA) for 2010–2025, the NAIP (2010–2016), the National Plan for Food and Nutrition Security (NPFNS) for 2010–2025,¹⁰ and the Agricultural Extension Master Plan (PDVA). All of these share the same goal: a hunger-free Haiti by 2025.

During the four months of the Martelly-Conille administration (November 2011 to February 2012), a number of donors promised to assist the agricultural sector, and, to some extent, they have respected these pledges. In particular, the World Bank has directed 10 percent of its aid to Haiti toward the agricultural sector and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) has channeled 20 percent of its assistance to agriculture.

The new administration's most ambitious relevant project is without a doubt the "*Aba Grangou*" ("Alliance against Hunger") program, which has the dual objectives of: 1) halving the number of people suffering from hunger by 2016; and 2) eradicating hunger and malnutrition in Haiti by 2020.¹¹

Aba Grangou is a huge initiative comprising several subprograms: a) a social safety net program designed to improve the most vulnerable populations' access to food; b) agricultural investment programs to increase national food production; and c) programs to improve basic service provision. Taken together, the purpose of these subprograms is to revitalize the agricultural sector by focusing on the need to boost national production.

Aba Grangou, which will be implemented in all communes (that is, at the district level) nationwide, has the following objectives for 2012–2016: 2.2 million school children to receive school meals; 1 million mothers and vulnerable people to receive money and food transfers; 1 million children under five years of age to benefit from nutrition programs; 1 million small-scale food-crop producers to benefit from agricultural programs, crop storage facilities, and water tanks; and 200 medium-scale private investors to develop agricultural value chains on idle state-owned land.

The *Aba Grangou* program, designed as a tool in the fight against food insecurity and malnutrition in any form, is in fact an agricultural policy launched by the president's office and led by First Lady Sophia Martelly. Evidence suggests that many documents from the Ministry of Agriculture shaped the theoretical side of the program, including the NPFNS, the NAIP, and the Agricultural Development Policy, as well as Haiti's Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP). However, responsibility for *Aba Grangou* falls between the president's office and the Ministry of Agriculture, and this could weaken the program rather than strengthen it.

In any case, the budget allocation for the agricultural sector is not commensurate with the government's ambitious agriculture and food security policy. Despite efforts to revitalize agriculture, socioeconomic indicators remain alarming (see box). Clearly, the sector needs a substantial boost in budgetary resources.

Socioeconomic indicators¹²

- 80% of Haiti's population lives in poverty.
- 38% of the population is food-insecure.
- 29.9% of households are malnourished (2.9 million people).
- 45% of women are anemic.
- 25% of children suffer from malnutrition.

GENDER JUSTICE ON HAITI'S FARMS

Women head almost 40 percent of rural households¹³ and are active in all aspects of agriculture, but in practice, they do not have equal inheritance rights.

There is a clear gender division of labor in rural Haiti; in households where men are present, they are always considered the head of the household. Men engage in heavy agricultural labor, such as land clearing and plowing, production of export crops (coffee, mangoes, etc.), and large livestock husbandry; they also have wage jobs. Women, on the other hand, produce food for local markets, plant and weed crops, and ensure household food security, including the supply of drinking water. They purchase basic necessities with the money they earn from selling produce.

The work of women farmworkers is often undervalued, and they tend to suffer wage discrimination.¹⁴ Gender justice is crucial to overcoming Haiti's severe inequality.

3. THE NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL INVESTMENT PLAN AND MAJOR DONORS' AID TO AGRICULTURE

Although the Haitian state did not officially launch the NAIP, multiple stakeholders have undertaken significant efforts to advance it. The plan envisages \$790 million in agricultural investments over a five-year period, focusing on three main pillars: agricultural infrastructure, productivity, and services. Donors and key Haitian agricultural stakeholders approved the NAIP at a high-level meeting in Punta Cana, Dominican Republic on June 2, 2010. So far, the main donors have disbursed \$369 million dollars, accounting for 46.7 percent of their pledges for implementing the plan.¹⁵

Donors must respect their commitments and ensure that they result in the transfer of real resources.

The NAIP envisions agricultural growth based on the development of value chains. Activities undertaken on the basis of the NAIP have fostered an agricultural policy; however, although the policy exists, it has not yet been widely disseminated among the Haitian public.

The major multilateral and bilateral donors to the agricultural sector are the IDB, the World Bank, the European Union (EU), the United States, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). With a few exceptions, they have honored their commitments to the NAIP. However, several factors continue to hinder agricultural development: the absence of a legal framework for decentralization; lack of access to credit and technical training; limited mechanization (although mechanization alone cannot solve productivity problems, since the fragmentation of land holdings and mountainous terrain limit the surfaces suitable for mechanized cultivation); soil erosion; deforestation and degradation of 90 percent of the watersheds; and the growing impact of climate change.

The **World Bank's** strategy for Haiti¹⁶ prioritizes agriculture as a pillar for economic development. The Bank supported the Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Rural Development (MARNDR) in preparing the NAIP and designed its own investment program in line with the plan's priorities and strategies. These priorities are reflected in the resources that the Bank is providing to agriculture, which account for 10 percent of the Bank's total assistance to Haiti, over \$60 million.¹⁷

The World Bank Group pledged a total of \$479 million to help Haiti respond to 2010 earthquake. This includes debt relief already approved by the Bank. By November 2011, the World Bank had disbursed \$426 million (89 percent) of this commitment in the form of new funding, disbursements, private sector support, and debt relief. On average, the World Bank provided Haiti with almost \$10 million dollars a month between February 2010 and December 2011.

For the period 2011–2015, agriculture is one of the **IDB**'s six strategic pillars for assistance to Haiti, and its agricultural sector strategy is based on the NAIP. The IDB has made more than \$200 million available to the sector, mainly on components 1 and 3: watershed management and irrigation, land management, and basic agricultural services.¹⁸

Speaking on the condition of anonymity, an IDB spokesperson informed Oxfam that the Bank had more than \$240 million in cash to disburse once the government presented viable programs. However, even though this money is readily available and in grant form, the Haitian state has found it very difficult to access the funds since it cannot present balanced and timely programs and projects.

CIDA focuses on three main areas of agriculture: a) food security; b) agricultural finance and insurance; and c) local development. Between 2009 and 2011, food security programs focused on technical assistance, agricultural infrastructure, environmental protection, increased agricultural production, improved productivity, and higher farm incomes.

CIDA is providing considerable but insufficient funding for tackling climate change through soil conservation and watershed management.¹⁹ Given the severe impacts of climate change on the environment and agriculture, CIDA should increase aid substantially if it wants to achieve sustainable results that improve the quality of life of small-scale farmers, who are key actors in agricultural development.

CIDA is still redefining its program strategy in Haiti, which has two priorities: sustainable economic growth (food security, business development) on the one hand, and young and elderly people (education and health) on the other. Democratic governance cuts across both priorities.²⁰ The environment is always present in the execution of all CIDA projects related to agriculture, which augurs well for the country.

Observers have noted that CIDA works with international NGOs and Haitian civil society organizations to strengthen MARNDP, but it does not provide direct budget support aimed at strengthening the ministry.

Furthermore, while CIDA's assistance to the design and implementation of local development plans is to be encouraged, the agency should also foster closer collaboration among the various actors in the agricultural sector so as to enhance problem solving. CIDA should try to involve local partners and the private sector as much as possible in project design in order to enhance ownership and beneficiary involvement in post-project monitoring.

Credit and insurance are vitally important to encourage farmers to invest more, and to reenergize the agricultural sector by making it more competitive and attractive to outside investors. CIDA, in conjunction with Canadian partners, is a major actor in agricultural finance. CIDA aligns its programs and projects with government plans and thereby contributes to the poverty reduction objectives of the PRSP.

Although 28 percent of **US** emergency food aid after the earthquake consisted of local products, the majority (\$125 million) was US-produced food. Agricultural development assistance only amounted to \$45 million in 2011 and \$50 million in 2012.

Moreover, there is a significant incoherence between US aid and trade policies. US rice producers received \$400 million from their government in 2010. This subsidized US rice—called *diri Miami* in Creole—dominates the Haitian market: in 2010–2011, Haiti was the largest consumer of exported US rice after Mexico.

The big Haitian food importers make a fortune from these imports at the expense of national production and want to maintain the status quo at any price. One example is the Haitian sales representation of Riceland, which sells “Tchako” rice—a very popular brand in Haiti; this US cooperative received half a billion dollars from the US government between 1995 and 2010.²¹

On March 10, 2010, former US President Bill Clinton reminded the US Senate Committee on Foreign Relations of his administration’s role in expanding exports of subsidized US-produced food to Haiti.²² These actions took advantage of the conditions attached to International Monetary Fund and World Bank loans, which required reduced tariffs.

US rice is cheaper than varieties grown in Haiti, and imports have contributed directly to the collapse of the national rice industry: in 1998, Haiti produced 47 percent of the rice consumed, while in 2008, the figure had plummeted to 15 percent.

The influx of foreign food aid in response to humanitarian crises has also undermined Haitian agricultural capacity. “It was a mistake.... I have to live everyday with the consequences of the lost capacity to produce a rice crop in Haiti to feed those people, because of what I did. Nobody else,” said Clinton.²³

The Haitian tariff on rice imports is only 3 percent, while the average rate in the Caribbean Community, CARICOM, to which Haiti belongs, is 25 percent; in the Dominican Republic, it is 20 percent.

France bases its development cooperation in Haiti (2008–2012) on the Partnership Framework Document (PFD); agriculture is central in this agreement. In addition, the French government has allowed Franco-Haitian NGOs to directly support sister organizations in Haiti, as well as families living in especially vulnerable conditions.

French cooperation has traditionally played an active role in the areas of agronomy and rural development. The support takes the following forms: strengthening MARNDR’s capacity, support for development research and agricultural training, assistance to agricultural professional organizations, funding for field projects implemented by Haitian and French NGOs, and financing for projects implemented by French regional authorities involved in decentralized cooperation with Haitian counterparts.

Since 2009, France has supported agricultural research in Haiti through The International Center for Agricultural Research for Development (CIRAD).

Since 2005, the French food aid program in Haiti has had three objectives: to consolidate food security, revitalize local production, and provide food rations to vulnerable groups. This local procurement program is carried out in partnership with MARNDR, agricultural producers’ associations (OPA), the World Food Programme (WFP), and the FAO. It not only stimulates local production by supporting OPAs, which in turn boost the income of rural households significantly, but it also helps in the fight against malnutrition by distributing local food products in school cafeterias and health centers.

The EU, through the Strengthening of Civil Society Support Programme (PARSCH), makes an important contribution to civil society organizations working in agriculture.

Brazil²⁴ has proven that it is a world agricultural leader, and it has relatively recent experience in transforming small-scale subsistence farming into modern production. The Brazilian government signed a tripartite agricultural cooperation agreement with the US

and Haitian governments on April 9, 2012. It foresees collaboration among the US Agency for International Development, the Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation (Embrapa), and MARNDR on promoting cultivation of improved varieties of rice, maize, beans, and mangoes in a number of regions of Haiti.²⁵

However, the same incoherence between aid to agriculture and trade policy is evident in Brazil's approach to Haiti. Brazil has become the second largest exporter of rice to Haiti (after the United States) and the Brazilian government subsidizes those exports. .

PROJECTS OR PROGRAMS?

Current approaches to agricultural development in Haiti are problematic. The greatest challenges lie, on the one hand, in the failure to implement an agricultural policy that responds to real needs and the limited funding allocated to the sector; and, on the other hand, in a methodology that favors a project approach over a program approach to development. The program approach emphasizes the long-term organization and development of the sector, and could have positive impacts, provided that the Haitian state demonstrates responsible leadership.

In contrast, the project approach has a palliative effect, but fails to provide lasting solutions to the various problems facing agriculture. Even when the projects are well designed and executed, the scale is limited. Yet almost all donors prefer this approach, which excludes budgetary support for the government, as the money goes to international NGOs and consultancy firms.

OTHER PROBLEMS WITH AID TO AGRICULTURE

There are other problems with aid to agriculture. Several donors, including the World Bank and the United States, emphasize export crops (coffee, cocoa, vetiver) as well as food production. Both are important, but reducing the dependence on imported food is urgent because of high international prices and Haiti's trade deficit.

In addition, several NGOs and donors still focus on emergency assistance even though it is essential, especially in Haiti, to ensure a transition from relief to development, in order to address the complex issues facing the country.

4. PROMISING INITIATIVES

AGRICULTURAL CENSUS

In September 2007, the MARNDR launched a nationwide comprehensive survey of agriculture, with financial support from the EU (€4,500,000) and the Haitian national budget, and with technical assistance from the FAO, the Haitian Institute of Statistics and Information (IHSI), the National Center of Geospatial Information, and the departmental (provincial) agricultural directorates (DDAs). So far, the ministry has only made results from this survey available for four departments: Artibonite, Centre, Nippes, and Sud-Est. Nevertheless, the census will eventually provide accurate information for each department, commune, and communal section on: the number of farms, their size and status (rented, privately owned, leased, etc.), type of crops, presence or absence of irrigation, equipment and tools, and number of animals per species (including the number of males and females), as well as the type and number of fruit trees and whether they are producing. Findings will also indicate the farmers' age, income, level of schooling and training, type of services from which they benefit, the role of women in each agricultural activity, etc. This information will be essential for decision making and resolving the problems facing the population.²⁶



Farmers in central Haiti prepare their land. ©2010 Ami Vitale/Oxfam America

Once finalized, the census results will enable agricultural stakeholders to better coordinate their activities, under the direction of MARNDR. Everyone will have the means for a better understanding of the country's social and economic reality, and this will facilitate evidence-based and effective action to address the full range of Haiti's agricultural problems.

CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS

The Haitian state is responsible for setting policy guidelines on development and basic service provision for the population. Moreover, it is the main guarantor of citizens'

wellbeing. Civil society organizations can play an important role as stakeholders through advocacy efforts, holding policy makers accountable, ensuring transparency, and monitoring the implementation of public policies and development innovations.

PAPDA

The Haitian Platform to Advocate Alternative Development (PAPDA) lobbies on the major issues confronting Haiti and is one of the most effective civil society organizations. It advocates on behalf of Haitian farmers and promotes agricultural development based on responsible food sovereignty, under the leadership of the Haitian state.²⁷

“Madame Sarah”

“Madame Sarah”²⁸ is the name given to women who are the mainstay of domestic agricultural commerce: they contribute to the sector by establishing information networks; providing credit for small farmers in more remote areas; and helping to develop all sorts of value chains through their investments. In a country where the trading system is not regulated, they offer the chance to sell local products nationwide. Unlike the big food importers, they promote local procurement.

RACPABA

In the Artibonite valley, the Network of Marketing and Agricultural Production Cooperative Associations of the Lower Artibonite (RACPABA) runs a program supporting rice production. This development initiative contributes significantly to the fight against food dependence and extreme poverty. The program consists of: technical operations (such as seed production and grain milling) to enhance productivity and competitiveness; risk management, in response to the region’s vulnerability; and public policy advocacy. This strategic change program is designed to improve the socioeconomic conditions of small producers—women and men alike—in the valley.

Oxfam has supported RACPABA in buying seeds and agricultural machinery, and in the application of new technologies, including the system of rice intensification (SRI, an agroecological approach that requires less fertilizer and water), helping yields to more than double, from 2.5 to 5.5 tons per hectare, thus improving the living conditions of smallholder rice farmers.

MPP and gender equality in the Central Plateau

The Peasant Movement of Papaye (MPP) considers small-scale farming as the foundation for sustainable development. The organization seeks to guarantee food sovereignty and environmental protection (soil conservation, reforestation, etc.). MPP also focuses on water resource management and the development of water storage infrastructure: water distribution, wells, irrigation systems, hill reservoirs, etc.

Furthermore, MPP emphasizes organizing and strengthening women’s groups: “We ensure that women play an active role in decision making within MPP. We are committed to women assuming their responsibilities,” says MPP Executive Director Chavannes Jean-Baptiste.²⁹

SOFA and gender justice in Saint-Michel de l'Attalaye

Solidarity with Haitian Women (SOFA) is a national organization promoting women's rights (seeking, in particular, better laws against domestic violence) and an improved economic situation for rural women in most of the country's departments. In Saint-Michel de l'Attalaye, for example, SOFA and other women's organizations have helped boost rural women's incomes by training them in beekeeping and agricultural processing.



Women in Saint-Michel de l'Attalaye milling flour. ©2010 Ami Vitale/Oxfam America

Oxfam's interventions in the agricultural sector

Oxfam works to strengthen the capacity of rice producers in six communes of the Artibonite valley—Petite Rivière, Desdunes, Estère, Verrettes, March, and Dessalines—as well as in the Maribahoux Plain, in the Nord-Est department. Oxfam seeks to facilitate increased rice production through: a) extension of rice-growing technology, including SRI; b) supporting quality seed production; c) improving access to tillage services; d) risk mitigation actions; and e) access to agricultural credit. In addition, Oxfam is committed to supporting the public policy advocacy of the National Federation of Rice Producers of Haiti (FENAPRIH), which seeks to put the problems of the rice sector squarely on the government's agenda.

In the departments of Nord, Nord-Est, and Sud, Oxfam works on improving the living conditions of coffee cooperative members and rural communities through intensified coffee cultivation, as well as increased income from other cash crops planted alongside coffee shrubs. Beneficiary incomes have increased considerably, so parents are able to spend more on their children's education than neighbors who are not cooperative members.

Oxfam also works to increase food availability for families in the areas where it intervenes by developing and diversifying value chains, such as cassava, sugar cane, bananas, peanuts, and livestock. In addition, Oxfam promotes niche markets for organic fruit.

Oxfam has a number of initiatives in the Palmes region, which consists of Léogâne, Petit-Goâve, Grand-Goâve, and Gressier (in the Ouest department). These include dissemination of technology packages (distribution of agricultural inputs, training, and

advisory support); small livestock rearing (providing laying hens, broilers, goats, rabbits, and fish for farming); upgrading and rehabilitation of agricultural infrastructure; and agroprocessing (rehabilitation and building of processing units, training, and marketing). Oxfam also supports watershed management, including restoration of river banks and soil conservation, in order to reduce the risk of flooding.

Moreover, Oxfam works in Artibonite (Verrettes, Saint-Michel de l'Attalaye, and on the Haitian-Dominican border) toward integrated watershed management, so as to ensure concerted and sustainable natural resource management and flood risk reduction. The agency always works with MARNDR, so its actions are integrated with the ministry's defined priorities in a particular intervention area. The ministry participates directly in Oxfam's choice of strategies to implement, guaranteeing the alignment of all of Oxfam's projects with the government's objectives and priorities. The ministry also monitors Oxfam's activities and offers recommendations.

5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Haitian government and the main actors in the agricultural sector should continue to prioritize agricultural development so as to successfully implement the NAIP. The national budget should reflect this commitment, and the international community should fulfill its resource pledges.

Although the NAIP has some inherent design weaknesses, it has the potential to reenergize agriculture, as the sector needs additional resources to strengthen and democratize access to services, agricultural inputs, and infrastructure. These are the main levers to improve productivity, national production, and farmers' quality of life, with a high probability of significantly boosting rural incomes.

The Haitian government and donors must take all necessary steps to ensure the NAIP's effective implementation. The following recommendations are directed toward the Haitian government, donors, and international, national, and local NGOs involved in agriculture.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE GOVERNMENT

Governance

The Haitian government should:

- Prioritize NAIP and take the appropriate measures to ensure its implementation;
- Establish coherence between *Aba Grangou* and agricultural policy based on the NAIP, under the leadership of MARNDR;
- Strengthen decentralized governance bodies, such as the DDAs and the communal agricultural offices, to better coordinate actions and implement the general agricultural policy guidelines on the ground;
- Put into operation the local development model provided for in the 1987 Constitution, and employ a legal framework for the decentralization and deconcentration of state services provision for all local and regional authorities, in order to improve local agricultural planning and management;
- Put land tenure security high on the agricultural policy agenda. The Haitian judicial system should operate in the two official languages, both French and Creole, and provide farmers with legal assistance for resolving land disputes; and
- Promote a culture of transparency and accountability, and modernize the system to fight against corruption at all levels of government. To achieve this it could be useful to count on the decentralized services of the Unit for Combating Corruption (ULCC) and the High Court of Auditors and Administrative Disputes, or even to appeal to an independent audit company.

Technical support for farmers and agricultural sector development

The government should:

- Establish mechanisms to strengthen farmers' organizations so that small-scale farmers—women as well as men—can assert their rights in negotiations that concern them, particularly in the implementation of a trade policy that balances the interests of both farmers and consumers;
- Provide a database of clear, balanced programs responding to donor expectations, directed toward not only long-term agricultural growth but also the improved living conditions for men and women farmers;
- Ensure that agricultural policy enhances women's roles in marketing farm inputs and products. Moreover, agricultural policy must recognize the gender division of labor, in order to promote gender justice;
- Promote agro-ecology, which requires fewer external inputs, and at the same time subsidize fertilizers (without providing them completely free of charge) to make them available at an affordable price to farmers nationwide, while avoiding any suspicion of corruption in their distribution;
- Put unused farmland into production, and strengthen farm productivity through research and experimentation;
- Prioritize the program approach to agricultural development, in order to strengthen the sector's long-term development. Emphasize agricultural entrepreneurship (agroprocessing) and deconcentrated service provision (job creation, education, health, etc.) to promote rural development and stem outmigration from the countryside;
- Provide the Ministry of the Environment with more resources, both human and financial, to strengthen environmental policy and combat environmental degradation more effectively. The Ministries of Agriculture and the Environment should combine efforts to ensure the sustainable protection of natural resources;
- Create a national environmental service corps in all schools that will carry out reforestation and soil and water conservation projects and foster awareness of the need for environmental protection; and
- Make increased national production the centerpiece of agricultural policy and progressively establish tariffs to protect Haitian farmers.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO BILATERAL AND MULTILATERAL DONORS

Donors should:

- Work to strengthen civil society by including local organizations in program design and management. This will build organizations' capacity to demand effective and efficient programs and engage in long-term program monitoring;
- Work to strengthen the Ministries of Agriculture and the Environment so they can play leading roles in the agriculture development;
- Continue to prioritize good agricultural governance and food security in their development aid, while aligning their strategies with the NAIP and providing financial

resources for its implementation;

- Establish a monitoring mechanism that will not only ensure the evaluation of the effectiveness of their aid, but also compliance with their commitments on funding the NAIP made at Punta Cana;
- Focus on financing locally procured food aid, while taking into account the reality of local markets;
- Ensure coherence between aid and trade policies; and
- Reform rice subsidies in exporting countries in order to eliminate predatory pricing that harms Haitian producers.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO NGOS IN THE AGRICULTURE SECTOR

NGOs should:

- Invest more in strengthening civil society organizations so that they can influence other agricultural development stakeholders;
- Focus on gender justice in their interventions, in order to reduce glaring social inequalities;
- Establish partnerships with national universities to promote research and ensure its application in the agricultural sector; and
- Increase awareness among all actors in the sector of the need to protect the environment and adapt to climate change.

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ANNEX

CONTRIBUTIONS OF MAJOR DONORS TO AGRICULTURE

The **International Development Association** (IDA), a **World Bank** fund supporting anti-poverty programs in the poorest developing countries, has awarded an exceptional grant of \$530 million to Haiti as part of its crisis response strategy for 2012–2014. Having committed about 10 percent of these funds, IDA is one of Haiti's top five donors.

Furthermore, the World Bank, together with the IDB and the Global Agriculture and Food Security Program (GAFSP), and in partnership with MARNDR, has agreed to establish an Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) for the new project Strengthening Agriculture Public Services II (RESEPAG II).³⁰ The project aims to identify the risks facing agriculture and the environment and define mitigation mechanisms to reverse the environmental degradation threatening the country. The framework has been designed as a screening mechanism to identify the environmental and social impacts of project activities. It will facilitate comprehensive and proactive assessment of each component of the MARNDR's environmental and social actions, and the project will use an evaluation grid as well as mitigation and compensation measures.

Technology transfer projects for farmers in the Nord and Nord-Est departments and RESEPAG II were launched in Cap-Haitien on February 2, 2012. These projects have five components, some of which cover all areas of the country, and they include: strengthening the national seed service; agriculture sector emergency response; and market support measures such as local agricultural extension and innovation services. The total cost of these two World Bank projects is estimated at \$90 million. These grant resources are provided by the GAFSP, a multi-donor trust fund, and total \$35 million, with grants of \$15 million from the IDB and \$40 million from the World Bank.

The Haitian government has received a \$30 million grant from the **IDB**, which is being complemented by Norwegian co-funding of \$9 million, to implement a Natural Disaster Mitigation Program (NDMP) in three watersheds: Grande Rivière du Nord, Cayes (Ravine du Sud and the Acul River), and Cavaillon, with a total area of 165,000 hectares. The program's long-term goal is to reduce the environmental and socioeconomic vulnerability of populations living in the target watersheds. The program will finance mitigating actions under three headings: a) investment in protection infrastructure, b) direct support to promote sustainable agriculture in the watersheds, and c) institutional strengthening to achieve sustainable watershed management.

The Agriculture Finance and Insurance System (SYFAAH) is a new \$20 million, seven-year project (2011–2018) financed by **CIDA** and conducted in two phases. The objective of the first four-year phase is to develop agricultural products such as bananas and livestock, and to promote vegetable crops and rice. This project will be developed in the Artibonite and Ouest departments, and will provide technical support for small producers as well as setting up a guarantee fund and crop insurance for men and women farmers.

This project aims to combat food insecurity by increasing profits in Haiti's agricultural sector. It supports provision of agricultural credit and insurance, which encourages commercial banks and credit cooperatives to provide loans to viable agricultural businesses and help farmers manage risks and uncertainties. The project will also help the Haitian government and the country's financial institutions to adopt legal and regulatory frameworks so the Agricultural Credit Bureau can administer a credit and insurance system aimed at small and medium-sized agricultural producers. In the second phase, the project will be extended to all areas of Haiti.

Local development programs in Haiti (LDPH), which received \$20 million from CIDA, are spread over a seven-year period; they help local and regional authorities to improve local governance through social and economic development and wealth creation. The programs' purpose is to consolidate decentralization by: a) strengthening the Ministries of the Interior and Planning, b) supporting local development processes and endogenous development projects, c) offering training in research and local development, and d) providing business support. Eleven business or income generating projects are being implemented, including sugar cane, dairying, mangoes, guinea fowl, etc.

The **US government**, through USAID, has developed a \$110 million program for 2011–2016 under the presidential “Feed the Future” initiative.³¹ The program's goal is to boost agricultural productivity, strengthen civil society organizations, support environmental protection, and reinvigorate agricultural markets.

USAID's “Watershed Initiative for National Natural Environmental Resources” (WINNER) focuses on increasing productivity through an agreement signed in April 2011 with MARNDR. It provides 10,000 farmers with mechanized plowing services, and distributes certified seeds and fertilizers adapted to local conditions. The agreement also covers irrigation of plots and technical support to improve planting success rates. With funds totaling \$126 million, WINNER is a five-year project (2010-2015) that aims to rehabilitate rural infrastructure and strengthen agricultural productivity and capacity, while supporting good governance of natural resources. WINNER specifically supports vegetable growing, including rice, and currently promotes SRI.³²

France is presently conducting four regional research projects which involve: a) animal health epidemio-surveillance, b) promotion of agro-ecology in growing fruit and vegetable crops, c) the hydrological functioning of two watersheds, and d) a project on improving yields of irrigated banana crops in collaboration with the Institute for Research and Development (INURED) and CIRAD, financed by **the French Development Agency** (AFD). AFD also finances a sectoral irrigation project (€9.6 million), as well as a project strengthening trade capacities in the coffee industry with funds of around €900,000.³³ The agency is currently developing a project on food security and agricultural production in the Sud department that will be implemented in 2012.

Food aid program: local procurement.³⁴ Almost 40 percent of the households that benefit from the French food aid program are affected by food insecurity. It is estimated that 2.4 million people do not have access to the minimum required daily calorie intake (2,240 calories). In 2010, France's food aid rose to €3.4 million: €2 million supported post-earthquake actions by WFP and the NGO Action against Hunger (ACF), and €1.4 million went to the local procurement program, including the delivery of 1,000 metric tons of cereals (rice and maize meal) to WFP. Producers' organizations, who are program partners, have also received funding to improve their infrastructure and to modernize their equipment (warehouses, drying surfaces, electric mills, etc.) so that they can respond to the demand for quality and quantity. France and Brazil are essential partners

in the National School Canteens Program (PNCS), which promotes local produce in public schools.

The **EU**, through the Strengthening of Civil Society Support Programme (PARSCH), makes an important contribution to civil society organizations working in agriculture. The overall goal of the program is to organize and consolidate effective governance at the communal, regional, and national levels. The aim is to strengthen democracy through establishing a genuine dialogue between the state and civil society. The specific objective is to strengthen civil society so that it becomes a real partner in the dialogue with the state and proactive in the country's development. This program receives €7,800,000 in funding.

Brazil and Venezuela: two important actors in south-south cooperation. The tripartite agreement between Brazil, the United States, and Haiti is a five-year project based on the US Feed the Future initiative, and is designed to improve the stability of watersheds and strengthen agricultural markets. It aims to help vulnerable Haitians escape poverty and hunger and to provide children with nutritious food for their healthy development.³⁵

The three governments are committed to:

- Testing new varieties of maize, rice, beans and other crops;
- Applying new farming methods that use less water, fertilizers, and seeds;
- Improving mango production;
- Adopting technologies for storage of grains and vegetables;
- Enabling farmers to use their land to produce both food and timber sustainably; and
- Offering exchange programs and training for farmers and researchers.

The president of Haiti, Michel Martelly, and his **Venezuelan** counterpart, Hugo Chavez, signed a framework cooperation agreement on February 5, 2012 which envisages an increase in Venezuela's aid.³⁶ This agreement comprises cooperation, credits, and direct investment in agriculture, production, industrial development, and tourism, among others.

This agreement also foresees the creation of joint ventures in agriculture, job creation, and increased agricultural production: Haiti will provide the labor and land, and Venezuela the technology, equipment, and credit for farmers. In addition, Venezuela will also work with private companies to encourage them to invest in Haiti.

During the Bolivarian Alliance for the Americas (ALBA) summit, members agreed to strengthen cooperation with Haiti by means of a "special plan for Haiti." Cooperation between ALBA and Haiti will include investment, technical cooperation, and training in health, education, energy, agricultural production, and infrastructure.

NOTES

- ¹ G. Conille (2011) "Statement on General Policy by the Prime Minister at the National Assembly of the Haitian Parliament," October 2011.
- ² According to the June 2012 report of the International Organization for Migration; see <http://iomhaitidataportal.info/dtm/>.
- ³ Full equality and equity between women and men in all areas of life. Focus efforts toward gender equality in the context of a rights-based approach. Results in the participation of women, on equal terms with men, in defining policies, structures and decisions that affect their lives and society, according to their interests and priorities as women. Integrate a gender perspective in the definition and application of civil, political, economic, and social rights.
- ⁴ G. Conille (2012) "Statement on General Policy," op. cit.
- ⁵ Feed the Future (2011) *Haiti: FY 2011-2015 Multi-year Strategy*, Washington: USAID. http://www.feedthefuture.gov/sites/default/files/country/strategies/files/HaitiFeedtheFutureMultiYearStrategy_Public_FINAL.pdf
- ⁶ http://www.gafspfund.org/gafsp/sites/gafspfund.org/files/Documents/Haiti_NationalAgricultureInvestmentPlan.pdf
- ⁷ CNSA (National Food Security Coordination) (2012) "National Food Security Survey (NFSS)," March 2012.
- ⁸ Interview with the Minister of Economy and Finance, André Lemerrier Georges, February 2012.
- ⁹ Economist Kesner Pharel, as quoted in *Investir*, April 23, 2011.
- ¹⁰ The NPFNS was first issued in 1996. The updated 2010 implementation plan developed after the earthquake can be found in French at http://www.agriculture.gouv.ht/view/01/IMG/pdf/VERSION_PNSAN_12_Mars_2010.pdf.
- ¹¹ For details (in French) see <http://www.agriculture.gouv.ht/view/01/?ABA-GRANGO-Programme-National-de>.
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- ¹⁵ Interview with the Director General of MARNDR, February 2012.
- ¹⁶ Details of donors' programs can be found in the Annex to this paper.
- ¹⁷ World Bank office in Haiti, response to questionnaire circulated by Oxfam.
- ¹⁸ IDB office in Haiti, response to questionnaire circulated by Oxfam.
- ¹⁹ Canada has allocated over \$5 million for climate change and environmental protection.
- ²⁰ According to interviews with the agriculture officer in CIDA.
- ²¹ C. L. Gary (2008) "Pour un palliative à la crise du riz," *Le Nouvelliste*, April 14, 2008 ; Environmental Working Group (2012) On-line Farm Subsidy Database, <http://farm.ewg.org/>; US Agency for International Development (2010) *USAID Office of Food for Peace Haiti Market Analysis*, Washington, DC: USAID.
- ²² See video of Clinton's Congressional testimony, posted at: <http://www.foreign.senate.gov/hearings/hearing/?id=3f546a93-d363-da0b-b25f-f1c5d096ddb1>.
- ²³ Ibid.
- ²⁴ See Annex for further information on south-south cooperation.
- ²⁵ "Haïti—Agriculture : Accord tripartite Etats-Unis-Brésil-Haïti," *Haïti Libre*, April 11, 2012. <http://www.haitilibre.com/article-5379-haiti-agriculture-accord-tripartite-etats-unis-bresil-haiti.html>
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- ²⁷ For more detail (in French), see <http://www.papda.org/index.php3>.
- ²⁸ Big traders who create communication channels in the countryside that enable consumers to find local products in different places.
- ²⁹ Interview with Chavannes Jean-Baptiste, Executive Director of the Peasant Movement of Papaye, February 2012.
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- ³⁴ See <http://www.senat.fr/commission/fin/pilf2012/np/np04/np0419.html>.
- ³⁵ See <http://www.haitilibre.com/article-5379-haiti-agriculture-accord-tripartite-etats-unis-bresil-haiti.html>.
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This paper was written by Tonny Joseph. Oxfam acknowledges the assistance of all those who have contributed including Gabriela Alcaraz, Angela Bruce-Raeburn, Constantino Cassabuenas, Peleg Charles, Marc Cohen, Amélie Gauthier, Maura Hart, Lina Holguin, Christine Laliberté, Philippe Mathieu, Jon Mazliah, Yasmine Shamsie, Francisco Yermo, and many other Oxfam colleagues in Haiti, Québec, the United States, and Spain. It is part of a series of papers written to inform public debate on development and humanitarian policy issues.

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The information in this publication is correct at the time of going to press.

Published by Oxfam GB for Oxfam International under ISBN 978-1-78077-174-8 in October 2012. Oxfam GB, Oxfam House, John Smith Drive, Cowley, Oxford, OX4 2JY, UK.

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