



# Integrated Country Strategy

---

---

Haiti

FOR PUBLIC RELEASE

**Table of Contents**

1. Chief of Mission Priorities	2
2. Mission Strategic Framework	4
3. Mission Goals and Objectives	5
4. Management Objectives	10

## 1. Chief of Mission Priorities

Haiti continues to struggle with long-term political stability, economic growth, security, and development. The United States partners with Haiti to support a Haitian-led process to consolidate political and economic gains, as well as to address the root causes of irregular migration from Haiti to the United States. As international donor resources decrease, it is vital that Haiti combat corruption, increase domestic resource mobilization, and invest in basic services for the Haitian people. The COVID-19 pandemic has stressed existing service delivery and added significant additional problems to an already challenging situation. The confidence of the Haitian people in their government will depend in large part on the government's ability to deliver basic services such as healthcare, education, and electricity, as well as the degree to which Haiti's elected officials are accountable to the public they govern.

Haiti's long-term development requires a foundation of political stability, fully functioning democratic institutions, economic growth, and adherence to the rule of law. An accountable, responsive government and a strong legal foundation are vital to achieving this goal and fighting impunity. Through a Haitian-led process, the United States will work with the Government of Haiti (GoH) to strengthen Haiti's governing institutions in order to increase government revenue streams so that Haitians can one day design, finance, and lead their own development. This increased revenue will benefit both Haiti and the United States by decreasing the country's reliance on international donor assistance and reducing irregular migration. The United States will support efforts to increase government transparency, accountability, and service delivery through the implementation of needed institutional, judicial, and economic reforms. The United States will also hold the GoH to its commitment to hold long overdue legislative elections in 2021 in order to exit the irregular period of rule by presidential decree. Those elections, along with the 2021 presidential elections, present an opportunity for Haiti to conduct elections without significant international assistance and in accordance with the country's relevant laws. The U.S. government will continue to focus on promoting free, fair, and credible elections.

With U.S. assistance, the Haitian National Police's (HNP) performance has improved, most notably in crowd control capabilities. However, the recent spike in kidnappings has exposed the HNP's investigative weaknesses and called into question its ability to adequately respond. As a result, the HNP requires continued robust U.S. support to build its capacity and professionalism and to ensure it remains apolitical, human-rights focused, and free from corruption. The HNP also needs U.S. assistance to properly address the proliferation of gangs throughout the country. Haiti requires a professional police force of increased size and capability. The United States will also continue to promote positive and mutually beneficial relations between Haiti and its neighbors in the region. Through a Haitian-led process, the United States will encourage Haiti to work with the Dominican Republic and Jamaica to increase efforts to combat cross border smuggling of persons,

drugs, arms, and goods. The United States will continue to encourage Haiti to join with regional partners to combat the deterioration of democracy in the region and promote increased security for their populations.

To achieve sustainable, long-term economic development, including increased rural and urban employment, economic and food security, and environmental sustainability, Haiti requires a growing and dynamic private sector, working in agricultural and non-agricultural value-chains. To increase foreign investment, the Haitian government needs to improve the ease of doing business in Haiti, notably by strengthening contract enforcement and inviolability, including adhering to its own contracts. The United States coordinates with other donors to promote domestic and foreign direct investment, as well as increased exports of key agricultural and non-agricultural products. Energy scarcity, water access issues, and a poorly managed fuel importation process also continue to plague citizens and constrain growth. More needs to be done for economic growth to stay ahead of population growth. The U.S. government will work in partnership with private/financial sector stakeholders to increase access to financing to encourage investment. Advances in contract enforcement, energy, infrastructure, and security would strengthen investor confidence in the economy and significantly improve Haiti's business climate.

The greatest of Haiti's assets is its people. A strong education system is thus paramount to Haiti's development. To complement the GoH's commitment to provide free and universal education, the U.S. government is focused on strengthening the capacity of the Ministry of Education (MoE) to respond to students' needs. The United States will continue to provide technical support and engagement in education policy dialogues; professional development in target skill areas for teachers and educators; a phonics-based scripted, bilingual, and rigorous reading curriculum to promote literacy reform in schools, and effective engagement with private sector actors and donors to maximize their contributions to the system. To strengthen the MoE's resilience, response, and adaptability, the U.S. government will build the capacity of diverse stakeholders (schools, students, families, and communities) to deliver and use distance learning to enable these actors to engage in high-quality learning opportunities that strengthen essential skills for Haitian students.

In the health sector, nearly half of all Haitians have access to basic health services at U.S.-supported health facilities. Haiti has significantly improved basic health indicators in recent years. Infant mortality rates have dropped over the past 15 years from 80 to 59 deaths per 1,000 live births, and mortality for children under five decreased from 119 deaths to 81 deaths per 1,000 live births. Additionally, 98 percent of all pregnant women seen at a PEPFAR-supported health facility were tested for HIV to ensure the virus will not pass to their children. These and other across-the-board improvements in health outcomes, however, will not be sustainable if health services continue to be heavily subsidized by external sources and dependent on international technical assistance. The long-term objective of the U.S. government is to support the Ministry of Public Health to strengthen the national public health system and institutionalize the provision of

essential services. With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the GoH, donors, and providers now face additional challenges to the provision of needed services.

Proximity and history have combined to create strong ties between Haiti and the United States. The dynamic Haitian-American diaspora community and a sizeable U.S. expatriate community in Haiti underpin the growing exchanges between the two countries. At the same time, these ties also bring unusual and serious challenges, particularly with respect to our ability to protect U.S. citizens in Haiti. U.S. engagement in Haiti must also include a strategic, whole-of-Mission plan to combat irregular migration and a practicable approach to facilitating lawful travel. Haiti's continuous security and governance challenges highlight the importance of a sound strategic plan for delivering consular services. In sum, over the next two years, the U.S. government seeks to work closely with the GoH, the private sector, and other partners to build on past joint achievements and to strive toward a more stable, prosperous, and democratic future for the people of Haiti.

## **2. Mission Strategic Framework**

**Mission Goal 1:** Support Haitian-led efforts to strengthen democratic governance.

**Mission Objective 1.1:** Assist the Haitian government in strengthening institutions that enhance transparency and accountability, reinforce the rule of law, enable peaceful democratic transitions, mobilize domestic resources, and protect fundamental freedoms. (Incorporates USAID D01)

**Mission Objective 1.2:** Support an independent media and a representative civil society that increase the Haitian government's accountability to the Haitian people.

**Mission Goal 2:** Improve inclusive economic and educational opportunities in Haiti to drive growth, reduce poverty, limit irregular migration, and increase national self-reliance.

**Mission Objective 2.1:** Enhance economic and food security. (Incorporates USAID D02)

**Mission Objective 2.2:** Improve educational outcomes. (Incorporates USAID D04)

**Mission Goal 3:** Working with the Government of Haiti (GoH), partners, and civil society, to create a strong health system that delivers quality services that are appropriately financed and staffed to improve health outcomes and mitigate the risk of global health threats.

**Mission Objective 3.1:** Increase access to and utilization of quality health systems.  
(Incorporates USAID DO3)

**Mission Objective 3.2:** Strengthen GoH capacity to sustainably govern, finance, and staff the Haitian health system.

**Mission Goal 4:** Protect U.S. borders and citizens; combat transnational crime.

**Mission Objective 4.1:** Strengthen Haitian security capabilities to promote regional security.

**Mission Objective 4.2:** Improve Haiti's preparedness and ability to respond to disasters to reduce reliance on international partners and deter irregular migration.

**Mission Objective 4.3:** Protect and serve U.S. citizens in Haiti and facilitate legitimate travel and immigration to the United States.

**Management Objective 1:** Manage the transition to the Stecher-Roumain housing compound to ensure that all potential cost savings are rapidly achieved.

### 3. Mission Goals and Objectives

**Mission Goal 1:** Support Haitian-led efforts to strengthen democratic governance

**Description and Linkages:** Haiti's weak institutions are broadly susceptible to politicization and corruption, which continues to impede the country's development. A more responsive government, one that protects and provides for its people, would facilitate the country's economic development and provide a promising future for the Haitian people. Post's interagency approach to strengthening democratic governance in Haiti includes multi-tracked, direct engagement with the government and efforts to empower media and civil society organizations. This Mission Goal links to the National Security Strategy, State/USAID Joint Strategic Plan, Western Hemisphere Affairs (WHA) Joint Regional Strategy (JRS), the USAID/Haiti Strategic Framework, and USAID's Democracy, Human Rights and Governance (DRG) Strategy.

**Mission Objective 1.1:** Assist the Haitian government in strengthening institutions that enhance transparency and accountability, reinforce the rule of law, enable peaceful democratic transitions, mobilize domestic resources, and protect fundamental freedoms.

**Justification:** To address Haiti's many governance challenges, Post will continue to work through a Haitian-led process to foster self-reliance and ensure the long-term sustainability of solutions. Efforts will focus on enhancing government transparency and accountability and aim to combat corruption, which has a detrimental effect on Haiti's development. To reduce Haiti's dependence on foreign aid, national and local government offices must maximize revenue collection and increase their capacity to provide much needed basic public services. Post will continue to support GoH efforts to strengthen the judiciary, which remains weak and susceptible to political influence, to hold perpetrators accountable. Post will also hold the GoH accountable to its commitment to elections in 2021. Finally, Post will work alongside the Haitian government to ensure that all Haitians enjoy fundamental freedoms and that human rights are respected.

**Mission Objective 1.2:** Support an independent media and a representative civil society that increase the Haitian government's accountability to the Haitian people.

**Justification:** A relatively weak civil society and a media facing constant political pressure render it difficult for these entities to inform and advocate for the Haitian people. Journalists have few resources and little institutional support. Some journalists admit to self-censoring and reportedly receive death threats. Meanwhile, the high-profile March 2018 murder of a photojournalist – not thought to be politically motivated – remains unsolved. To help professionalize and empower the media, Post will provide training, technical assistance, and grants, as well as advocate for policies and laws that support a free press. Civil society organizations are often perceived, real or not, to be political instruments, which weakens their authority and their ability to advocate for common causes. Post will assist civil society organizations in building partnerships and engaging the Haitian government in order to increase accountability and improve democratic governance.

**Mission Goal 2:** Improve inclusive economic and educational opportunities in Haiti to drive growth and investment, reduce poverty, limit irregular migration and increase national self-reliance.

**Description and Linkages:** Improving the economic and educational opportunities available to Haitians is fundamental to Haiti's political stability and resilience to disasters, its economic competitiveness, and its ability to finance and implement solutions to its own development challenges. By investing to create economic and educational opportunities in partnership with local and U.S. businesses, civil society organizations, and the GoH, Mission Haiti can help the GoH accelerate job creation and growth while mobilizing additional resources for its own development priorities. In turn, Mission Haiti can support the Haitian government to invest those resources with greater levels of accountability, fueling a virtuous cycle of growth that over time will diminish the push factors fueling irregular migration. Mission Haiti investments in this domain support multiple priorities of the State-USAID Joint Strategic Plan for 2018-2022, including increased engagement

with the private sector, fostering investment and innovation, and promoting market-oriented economic and governance reforms to advance U.S. economic security.

**Mission Objective 2.1:** Enhance economic and food security.

**Justification:** Haiti has one of the highest rates of inequality in the world, and the highest rate of extreme poverty in the Western hemisphere. It also has one of the highest rates of stunting (a reduced growth rate in human development) in the region, which not only causes physical distress but impedes learning outcomes and economic opportunity. Fortunately, Haiti also has important endowments that could underpin a trajectory of increased prosperity and security. These endowments include preferential trade status with the United States and close maritime proximity to several markets in the Caribbean, competitive labor costs, and a large diaspora community that has the skills and interest to support Haiti's journey to self-reliance.

Mission Haiti investments over the next two years will build Haiti's capacities to be better prepared for and better able to respond to recurrent disasters that cause serious poverty or allow for poor and vulnerable communities to backslide into deeper poverty. Moreover, the Mission will build on existing partnerships to support the GoH's efforts to bolster economic and food security while putting an end to extreme poverty over time. Mission Haiti will focus particularly on reducing the vulnerability of disaster-prone regions and increasing their resilience to recurrent weather shocks and chronic stresses, thereby reducing the need for humanitarian assistance and addressing a major driver of irregular migration. Complementary investments to improve nutrition, increase the productivity of key agricultural value chains, create new opportunities for entrepreneurship, bolster private sector engagement, and reduce constraints to foreign and domestic investment will increase the economic opportunities available to Haitians at all levels of the income ladder while advancing U.S. prosperity. Mission Haiti will invest in associated infrastructure when appropriate, in partnership with the GoH and affected communities.

**Mission Objective 2.2:** Improve educational outcomes.

**Justification:** Without access to capital, jobs, or quality education, the poor in Haiti have little hope of advancing to the ranks of the middle class or even out of poverty. Quality education is fundamental to breaking this cycle of poverty by instilling the skills and knowledge needed to compete in the modern economy while increasing productivity and earning capacities for entire life spans. However, despite recent improvements in enrollment and the commitment of the Haitian Government to strengthen public education, persistent challenges remain. These include a lack of clear and efficient management structures, universal and high quality pre- and in-service teacher training, and inclusive access to educational opportunities of sufficient quality. With only 20 percent of schools in Haiti being public, this leaves many children out of the system because their parents cannot afford private school fees, especially if they need to choose between putting food on the table or sending their children to school. Only about 61 percent of adults are literate – the

lowest literacy rate in the Western Hemisphere – and a 2014 Early Grade Reading Assessment revealed that roughly 75 percent of children could not read two words of connected text at the end of first grade.

To address these challenges, Mission Haiti will, in partnership with the GoH, continue to invest in early grade reading reform, curriculum development, in educator training to improve literacy and learning outcomes, and in efforts to increase inclusive access to educational opportunities for disadvantaged children and youth. Mission Haiti will also offer exchange programs to strengthen our bilateral relationship, offer EdUSA advising, and enhance English language learning. Mission Haiti investments in this domain support multiple priorities of the State-USAID Joint Strategic Plan for 2018-2022, particularly promoting healthy, educated and productive populations to drive inclusive and sustainable development, open new markets and support U.S. prosperity and security objectives.

**Mission Goal 3:** Working with the Government of Haiti, partners, and civil society, to create a strong health system that delivers quality services, that is appropriately financed and staffed to improve health outcomes and mitigate the risk of global health threats.

**Description and Linkages:** Mission Goal 3 represents a strengthening of the Haitian health system to increase the capacity and resilience of Haiti. The goal of working with the government, partners and civil society is to advance the quality of health services within Haiti and support the health security of the region. Mission Goal 3 is connected to the National Security Strategy through diplomatic engagement and is reflected in USAID, CDC and PEPFAR strategies and goals for Haiti.

**Mission Objective 3.1:** Increase access to and utilization of quality health systems.

**Justification:** Haiti reports some of the world's worst health indicators, which continue to inhibit the country's development. Roughly 40 percent of the population lack access to essential health and nutrition services; only 45 percent of all children (12 to 23 months) are fully vaccinated and 22 percent of children under 5 years old are stunted. Weak economic conditions in Haiti continue to impact the available revenue for investment in the health system and only an estimated 4.4 percent of the national budget is allocated to the health sector. The interagency health team supports the Haitian health system across the portfolio from direct service delivery to technical assistance. The inter-agency health team will continue to work with the GoH to strengthen the health system. Activities related service delivery, health information systems, laboratory systems, and access to appropriate health commodities will support the utilization of health services.

**Mission Objective 3.2:** Strengthen the Government of Haiti's capacity to sustainably govern, finance, and staff the Haitian health system.

**Justification:** There is a severe shortage of human and technical capacity, as well as financial resources, to support the Haitian health system. Low retention of healthcare workers, including doctors, nurses, and public health professionals, along with gaps in services, exist across all levels of the health system. Furthermore, the country's weak health infrastructure has not kept pace with Haiti's population growth from 7.5 million people in 1993 to 10.8 million in 2017. Moreover, the country is still recovering from a number of natural disasters and health epidemics. Additionally, there is still heavy reliance on external funding to provide Haitians access to health care services while donor resources continue to diminish. Supporting the government in domestic resource mobilization and directing human resources into the health system builds the sustainability of the health system. Activities include training of personnel at the community and facility level as well as government-to-government engagement on human resource policy, management, and strategy.

**Mission Goal 4:** Protect U.S. borders and citizens, and combat transnational crime

**Description and Linkages:** Haiti's political volatility, weak judicial institutions, poor economic and health indicators, and vulnerability to natural disasters pose a threat to U.S. citizens, create push factors for irregular migration, and hinder efforts to curb transnational crime. The Mission provides training to and facilitates participation of Haitian security personnel in regional and international security exchanges to strengthen Haitian security capabilities and to reinforce Caribbean security cooperation to protect U.S. citizens, deter irregular migration, and combat transnational crime. Efforts to build Haitian disaster preparedness and response capabilities also help mitigate the impact of a potential disaster on security and stability. This Mission Goal links to the National Security Strategy, State/USAID Joint Strategic Plan, and Western Hemisphere Affairs (WHA) Joint Regional Strategy (JRS).

**Mission Objective 4.1:** Strengthen Haitian security capabilities to promote regional security.

**Justification:** The continued development of an effective and independent Haitian National Police (HNP) will be crucial to maintaining law and order, especially after the UN Mission for Justice Support in Haiti (MINUJUSTH) withdrew its police forces in 2019. A more capable and professional police force will promote internal security and stability and permit Haiti to work more effectively with Caribbean partners to combat regional security threats. The Embassy will facilitate bilateral training and support regional exchanges to strengthen Haitian security capabilities, emphasizing the protection of human rights. Efforts by senior government officials to politicize the HNP and insufficient funding from the Haitian government remain a threat to the continued development of the police.

**Mission Objective 4.2:** Improve Haiti's preparedness and ability to respond to disasters to reduce reliance on international partners and deter irregular migration.

**Justification:** The U.S. government, primarily through USAID, has spent twice as much emergency response money on Haiti as all of Latin America combined. It is necessary to encourage strong leadership within Haiti's Directorate of Civil Protection and develop a basic, sustainable disaster response capacity to permit sustainable growth and development. Continued U.S.-funded training and exercises will build Directorate of Civil Protection (DPC) capabilities, although the institution's lack of legal authority and insufficient funding from the government threatens progress. Through USAID, the USG advocates that more funding goes toward disaster risk reduction programming to mitigate the potential impacts of disasters as DPC builds the capacity to respond.

**Mission Objective 4.3:** Protect and serve U.S. citizens in Haiti and facilitate legitimate travel and immigration to the United States.

**Justification:** The protection of US citizens abroad is mandated by law and essential in Haiti, given the country's acutely inadequate infrastructure, high crime, and civil unrest. Despite a "do not travel" advisory, U.S. citizens continue to travel, requiring ever stronger consular preparation and intervention for both natural disasters and day-to-day emergencies. Facilitating legitimate travel is increasingly challenging given COVID restrictions, the substantial backlog of visa cases created by the year-long country shutdown, and diminished resources. Hopeless poverty and systemic corruption drive irregular migration to the U.S.

## 4. Management Objectives

**Management Objective 1:** Manage the transition to the Stecher-Roumain housing compound to ensure that all potential cost savings are rapidly achieved.

**Justification:** In late 2018, Post completed the 86-unit Stecher-Roumain housing compound, and more than 90 percent of USDH now live-in government-owned housing, compared to less than 25 percent prior to the housing compound's completion. This has had wide-ranging impacts on the management platform, particularly Facilities Management and GSO, as well as on the Local Guard Program. It is important that post manages the compound efficiently and takes full advantage of the potential cost savings. Maintaining a well-run and attractive compound also benefits post morale. Savings have been achieved primarily from the reduction of lease payments, a decrease in the size of the guard force, and a reduction in fuel costs for home-to-office shuttles. Higher costs for maintenance and for generator fuel counter these savings to some degree, but post continues to identify means of minimizing those expenses.