



# Integrated Country Strategy

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**HAITI**

**FOR PUBLIC RELEASE**

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## 1. Chief of Mission Priorities

The United States stands firmly with Haiti amid its ongoing struggles with insecurity, political instability, economic stagnation, and sluggish development. The U.S. Mission partners with Haiti to support a Haitian-led process to combat gang violence and regional security threats, resolve a long-standing political and constitutional crisis, revive a moribund economy, and address the root causes of irregular migration from Haiti to the United States. Moreover, the COVID 19 pandemic remains a health threat, and the resurgence of cholera after three years without confirmed cases further stretched the fragile health system creating systemic stressors for effective health service delivery. Since the July 2021 assassination of President Jovenel Moïse, public confidence in Haitian institutions has further eroded. Rebuilding the confidence of the Haitian people in their government will depend in large part on the ability of all sectors of Haitian society to secure agreement on a political path forward and set out a timeline leading to presidential and legislative elections and the restoration of democratic governance in Haiti. Free and fair elections with broad popular participation are but one of the broad challenges the government of Haiti will face. It will also need to restore citizen security, fight corruption, increase domestic resource mobilization, and rebuild dangerously weak institutions delivering basic services such as healthcare, education, utilities, security, and justice, while being held accountable to the public they govern.

Haiti's long-term development requires a foundation of basic security, political stability, functioning democratic institutions, economic growth, and adherence to the rule of law. An accountable, responsive government and a strong legal system are vital to achieving these goals. Through a Haitian-led process, the United States will work with the Government of Haiti (GoH) to strengthen the country's governing institutions in order to increase government revenue 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. To

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advance political reforms, the United States will vigorously promote free press and media in Haiti. The U.S. Mission will support Haitian efforts to carry out constitutional reforms -- if Haitians so choose -- and hold presidential and legislative elections when conditions permit, to allow for a return to democratic governance. The goal is to create the opportunity to conduct elections with international assistance and in accordance with the country's current or revised constitution and relevant laws.

With U.S. assistance, the Haitian National Police's (HNP) performance has improved, notably in crowd control capabilities and investigative capacity. However, the increase and spread of gang violence and kidnappings have exposed the HNP's, planning, tactical, and operational deficiencies. Its lack of equipment, manpower, and intelligence capacity impede an effective response to progressively brutal gang violence and crime. The HNP require continued robust U.S. and international support to increase its force size, competency, and professionalism and to help make it more accountable, apolitical, gender-diverse, human-rights focused, and free from corruption. The HNP also needs to increase the capability of its specialized units, including community police, to re-establish police presence and increase citizen security, with an initial emphasis on at-risk and underserved communities. Despite significant material support and training by the United States and international partners, the Haitian Coast Guard (HCG) has regressed over the past decade. The HCG resembles a professional force, but due to institutional limitations it lacks the capacity to maintain effective domain awareness over their maritime approaches, offering no deterrence to illicit smuggling and dangerous maritime migration. Additionally, the inability of the HCG to respond to Search and Rescue (SAR) cases within its Search and Rescue Region (SRR), as required by international SAR conventions, shifts the burden onto regional partners.

The U.S Mission will 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 and trafficking of persons, drugs, weapons, and goods. The United States will encourage Haiti to join with regional partners to combat the deterioration of

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democracy in the region and promote increased security for their populations. Prolonged pre-trial detention of criminal suspects contributes to an increased sense of lawlessness.

Detentions generally exceed the legal maximums. Enhancing rule of law is vital to ensuring citizens are invested in their country.

To achieve sustainable, long-term economic development that includes increased rural and urban employment, economic and food security, and environmental sustainability, Haiti requires a growing and dynamic private sector that is working in both agricultural and non-agricultural value-chains. Haiti could increase investment in its agricultural sector to help decrease reliance on imports and improve financial independence and resilience to external economic shocks, such as “imported inflation.” To promote foreign investment, the GoH needs to improve the ease of doing business, notably by strengthening contract enforcement and inviolability, including adhering to its own contracts, combating corruption, and improving the country’s security situation. To avoid any action by a Financial Asset Task Force to resolve deficiencies and any resulting de-risking of its banking system, the Haitian government must take steps to strengthen anti-money-laundering and anti-terrorist financing regulations. The U.S. Mission coordinates with 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 and retail process also continue to plague citizens and constrain growth. More needs to be done for economic growth to recover from a multi-year economic contraction and to accelerate it to stay ahead of population growth. The U.S. Mission will partner with private/financial sector stakeholders to increase access to financing to encourage investment. Advances in contract enforcement, combating corruption, energy, infrastructure, Customs management, and security would strengthen investor confidence in the economy and significantly improve Haiti’s business climate. New policies or regulations to increase financial inclusion and literacy would help ensure the significant inflow of currency via remittances is invested in Haiti’s economy and not spent on imported consumer goods.

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Haiti's greatest asset is its people. A strong education system is thus paramount to Haiti's development. To complement the GoH's commitment to providing 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 U.S. Mission will 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, responsiveness, and adaptability, the U.S. government will build the capacity of diverse Haitian stakeholders (schools, students, families, and communities) to deliver and use distance learning to enable these actors to continuously engage in high-quality learning opportunities despite any environmental, economic, or political shocks. The U.S. Mission will promote robust professional and academic exchanges, as well as STEM subject teaching, English learning programs, and teacher certification initiatives in support of this effort.

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, but significant gaps continue to threaten the lives of mothers, newborns, and children. Approximately 60 percent of births still occur outside of a health facility and without a skilled provider, and while 91 percent of pregnant women visit a skilled health care provider at least once during their pregnancy, only 67 percent attend four or more antenatal care visits, and 69 percent of women do not seek postnatal care. Neonatal mortality has remained the same over the past five years, at 32 deaths per 1,000 live births. Infant mortality rates, however, have dropped over the past 20 years from 77 to 59 deaths per 1,000 live births, and mortality for children under five decreased from 31 to 24 deaths per 1,000 live births.

These and other moderate gains in health outcomes, will not be sustainable if health services continue to be heavily subsidized by external sources and dependent on international technical assistance. A recent USAID-supported fiscal analysis revealed that external donors funded upwards of 83% of the national health expenditures from 2016-2019, with the U.S. government

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(CDC, DOD, and USAID) being the largest bilateral funder followed by the World Bank as the second largest health investor. The long-term objective of the U.S. government is to support the Ministry of Public Health and Population to strengthen the national public health system and institutionalize the provision of essential services. With the persistence of COVID-19 and the re-emergence of cholera, the GoH, donors, and providers continue to face compounded 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 an active U.S. expatriate community in Haiti underpin the long history of exchanges between the two countries. At the same time, these ties 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, conduct joint repatriation operations, and create 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, particularly given the prolonged operational difficulties caused by the ongoing insecurity, including significant consular resource challenges. In sum, over the next two years, the U.S. Mission seeks to work closely with the GoH, the private sector, civil society, communities, and other international partners to build on past joint achievements and to strive toward a more stable, prosperous, and democratic future for the people of Haiti. These mission goals are closely aligned with the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs Joint Regional Strategy, the State-USAID Joint Strategic Plan, the National Security Strategy, the National Defense Strategy, the United States Strategy to Prevent Conflict and Promote Stability, the U.S. Strategy on Countering Corruption, and Executive Orders on diversity, equity, and inclusion.

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## 2. Mission Strategic Framework

**Mission Goal 1:** Support Haitian-led efforts to restore and maintain security.

- **Mission Objective 1.1:** Strengthen Haitian capabilities to promote internal security and stability, with special emphasis on reducing gang violence, and combating regional security threats, while simultaneously working at the community level to improve security and resilience. (DO3)
- **Mission Objective 1.2:** Improve Haiti's preparedness and crisis management capacity for disaster response and its resilience to shocks and stresses, reduce reliance on international partners and deter irregular migration. (DO1)
- **Mission Objective 1.3:** Enhance the Embassy's ability to protect and serve U.S. citizens in Haiti and facilitate legitimate travel and immigration to the United States.

**Mission Goal 2:** Support Haitian-led efforts to strengthen democratic governance.

- **Mission Objective 2.1:** Assist the Haitian government in strengthening institutions that reinforce the rule of law, enable peaceful democratic transitions, mobilize domestic resources, and protect fundamental freedoms. (DO 3)
- **Mission Objective 2.2:** Support an independent media and a representative civil society that increase the Haitian government's accountability to the Haitian people. (DO 3)
- **Mission Objective 2.3:** Promote governance that is more inclusive, transparent, accountable, and responsive to citizens' needs. (DO 3)

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**Mission Goal 3:** Promote inclusive economic growth, educational opportunities, and healthcare to drive economic growth, reduce poverty, reduce irregular migration, and increase national self-reliance.

- **Mission Objective 3.1:** Promote more inclusive, locally driven economic growth, economic and food security, and social development advancement. (DO 2)
- **Mission Objective 3.2:** Improve educational opportunities and outcomes. (DO 2)
- **Mission Objective 3.3:** Work with partners to create a strong health care system that delivers quality services, improves health outcomes, and mitigates the risk of global health threats. (DO1)

**Management Objective 1:** Reduce Embassy reliance on external fuel sources.

**Management Objective 2:** Promote a diverse and appropriately-sized USDH staffing footprint at Embassy Port-au-Prince that is commensurate with post's limited office space, security environment, and seismically-approved housing.

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### 3. Mission Goals and Objectives

**Mission Goal 1** | Support Haitian-led efforts to restore and maintain security.

**Description** | 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 U.S. Mission provides training and equipment to Haitian security personnel and facilitates their participation in regional and international security exchanges to strengthen Haitian police capabilities both in the land and maritime domains and to reinforce Caribbean security cooperation to protect U.S. citizens, deter irregular migration, and combat transnational crime. Building Haitian disaster preparedness and response capabilities also help mitigate the impact of a potential disaster on security and stability.

**Objective 1.1** | Strengthen Haitian capabilities to promote internal security and stability, with special emphasis on reducing gang violence, and combating regional security threats, while simultaneously working at the community level to improve security and resilience.

- **Justification** | The continued development of an effective and independent HNP is 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, provide equipment, 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 threats to the continued development of the police.

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- **Linkages** | This objective draws from the White House’s October 2022 National Security Strategy, the 2022 National Defense Strategy, the 2020 United States Strategy to Prevent Conflict and Promote Stability, as well as the U.S. Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM) 2020-2024 Theater Campaign Plan (TCP). This goal also aligns with the draft State-USAID 2022-2026 Joint Strategic Plan, USAID/Haiti 2020-2024 Strategic Framework Development Objective 1, Western Hemisphere Affairs (WHA) Joint Regional Strategy (JRS), the INL Functional Bureau Strategy (FBS).
- **Risks** | The failure to meet this goal would seriously hamper Haiti’s ability to effectively address its current political impasse and economic crisis resulting in political instability, slow economic growth and increased violence and irregular migration.

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**Objective 1.2** | Improve Haiti's preparedness and crisis management capacity for disaster response and its resilience to shocks and stresses, 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 Latin America combined. Considering that the General Directorate for Civil Protection (DGPC) has a legal mandate to function as the response agency within the Ministry of Interior, it is necessary to encourage strong leadership within DGPC, as well as other supporting agencies, and develop a basic, sustainable disaster response capacity to increase the country's ability to respond to natural and man-made disasters. Continued U.S.-funded training and exercises will build DGPC capabilities to coordinate disaster response with all stakeholders. Through USAID, the USG advocates that more funding go toward disaster risk reduction programming to mitigate the potential impacts of disasters, as DGPC builds the capacity to respond.
- **Linkages** | This objective draws from the White House's October 2022 National Security Strategy, the 2022 National Defense Strategy, and the 2020 United States Strategy to Prevent Conflict and Promote Stability, as well as the U.S. Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM) 2020-2024 Theater Campaign Plan (TCP). This goal also aligns with the draft State-USAID 2022-2026 Joint Strategic Plan, USAID/Haiti 2020-2024 Strategic Framework Development Objective 1, Western Hemisphere Affairs (WHA) Joint Regional Strategy (JRS), the INL Functional Bureau Strategy (FBS).
- **Risks** | As Haiti is subject to major natural disasters such as earthquakes and flooding and highly susceptible to political and economic shocks, the failure to meet this objective will hinder the country's ability to effectively respond to these crises and result in a detrimental impact on the lives of the citizens, greater poverty, and hardship especially for the most vulnerable population groups and an increased impetus for irregular migration.

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**Objective 1.3** | Enhance the Embassy's ability to protect and serve U.S. citizens in Haiti and facilitate legitimate travel and immigration to the United States.

- **Justification** | The protection of U.S. citizens abroad is the USG's top priority in Haiti, especially given the rash of kidnappings, high crime rates, civil unrest, and the country's acutely inadequate infrastructure. Despite a Level 4 "Do Not Travel" advisory, U.S. citizens continue to travel to Haiti, requiring ever stronger consular preparation and intervention for crime, natural disasters, and day-to-day emergencies. These risks to U.S. citizens in Haiti received world-wide attention October 16, 2021, when a gang kidnapped 16 U.S. missionaries, including five children, who remained in Haiti despite the USG travel advisories. Overall, 38 U.S. citizens were kidnapped in 2022. Facilitating legitimate travel is increasingly challenging given the substantial backlog of visa cases created by chronic instability which impacts the ability of local staff to make it to work, and long-term staffing gaps due to staff departing in greater numbers. Extreme poverty, crime, civil unrest, and systemic corruption continue to drive irregular migration to the U.S.
- **Linkages** | This objective aligns with the White House's October 2022 National Security Strategy, the draft State-USAID 2022-2026 Joint Strategic Plan, NSSM-1, The U.S. Strategy on Countering Corruption, and the Western Hemisphere Affairs (WHA) Joint Regional Strategy (JRS).
- **Risks** | Insecurity and corruption will also continue to challenge the U.S. Mission's American Citizens Services capacity, given the large numbers of U.S. expatriates and dual citizens in Haiti who are subject to harm (both physical and to their property). Increasing gang violence, the absence of host government services in at-risk communities, and the volatile political situation, which leads to sometimes violent protests and infrastructure disruptions (such as the availability of fuel, electricity, etc.), will negatively affect our ability to provide routine consular services.

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**Mission Goal 2** | Support Haitian-led efforts to strengthen democratic governance.

**Description** | Improving the economic and educational opportunities available to Haitians is fundamental to Haiti's political stability and resilience, 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, the U.S. Mission can help the GoH accelerate job creation and growth while mobilizing additional resources for its own development priorities. In turn, the U.S. Mission can support the GoH 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.

**Objective 2.1** | Assist the Haitian government in strengthening institutions that 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 support a Haitian-led process to return to democratic governance and rebuild institutions. Efforts will focus on Haitian-identified priorities of electoral and constitutional reform, good governance through transparency and accountability and combating corruption, which hinder Haiti's development. Post will continue to support GoH efforts to strengthen the rule of law, which remains weak and susceptible to political influence. Post will assist Haiti implement constitutional reforms and hold presidential and legislative elections as soon as conditions allow in order to re-establish democratic governance. Once there is a broadly supported Haitian vision for the political path forward, the U.S. government will support timely, free, and fair elections and encourage wide popular participation in the vote. Finally, the U.S. Mission will work alongside the Haitian government, the Haitian diaspora, civil society, and faith-based organizations to ensure that all Haitians enjoy fundamental freedoms and respect for

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human rights. To advance this political reform process, the U.S. government will continue to vigorously promote a free press and media in Haiti.

- **Linkages** | This goal reflects the 2022 U.S. National Security Strategy's priority on good governance and democratic institutions. It supports the draft State-USAID 2022-2026 Joint Strategic Plan Strategic Objective 3.3, NSSM-1, The U.S. Strategy on Countering Corruption, the Western Hemisphere Affairs (WHA) Joint Regional Strategy (JRS), the 2020 United States Strategy to Prevent Conflict and Promote Stability, and USAID/Haiti 2020-2024 Strategic Framework Development Objective 3.
- **Risks** | Haiti's long-term political stability and economic development require a foundation of fully functioning and accountable democratic institutions. Failure to meet this objective would diminish the efficacy of critical institutions and functions and jeopardize peaceful democratic transitions and fundamental freedoms.

**Objective 2.2** | Support an independent media and a representative civil society that increases 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. In 2022, gangs killed four journalists, an additional three journalists were killed in protest settings, and an eighth journalist was found shot by unknown actors in November 2022. The June 2021 and April 2,000 assassinations of two prominent Haitian reporters remain 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 to increase accountability and improve democratic governance.
- **Linkages** | This goal reflects the 2022 U.S. National Security Strategy's priority on good governance and democratic institutions. It supports the draft State-USAID 2022-2026 Joint Strategic Plan Strategic Objective 3.3, NSSM-1, The U.S. Strategy on Countering Corruption, the 2020 United States Strategy to Prevent Conflict and Promote Stability, the Western Hemisphere Affairs (WHA) Joint Regional Strategy (JRS) and USAID/Haiti 2020-2022 Strategic Framework Development Objective 3.
- **Risks** | The absence of an independent media weakens its oversight of the government and other public institutions creating an environment where corruption and violations of fundamental freedoms and rights can flourish.

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**Objective 2.3** | Promote governance that is more inclusive, transparent, accountable, and responsive to citizens' needs.

- **Justification** | Increased citizen involvement in public affairs and greater participation by women and other historically disadvantaged groups is essential for meaningful long-term and durable political reform. Widespread corruption and the lack of basic public services have resulted in cynicism, distrust of public institutions and indifference to citizen participation in public affairs. This has resulted in electoral participation rates of less than 25 percent since 2001, leading to widespread political turmoil and controversy over election results. Despite equal constitutional rights as men, discrimination against women in economic, political, social, cultural, and within family spheres continues to be a structural feature in Haitian society. Haitian women experience additional barriers to the full enjoyment of their basic rights due to predominant social beliefs that they are inferior to men and a historical pattern of discrimination and violence against them based on their sex. The political realm has traditionally been overwhelmingly dominated by men. Although the amended version of the 1987 constitution aspires for women to fill 30 percent of parliamentary seats and cabinet posts, female participation in politics remains limited. In the most recent National Assembly, only one of 30 senators was a woman and only four of 119 deputies were women. LGBTQI+ persons in Haiti continue to face social and legal challenges. An Executive Order adopted by decree in June 2020 enacted a new penal code with a two-year transition period that would, if implemented, offer specific protections to LGBTQI+ persons for the first time, including referring to LGBTQI+ persons as a protected group and imposing penalties on public agents, persons, and institutions that refuse services on the grounds of sexual orientation. This lack of inclusivity results in government institutions that are unresponsive to citizens' needs. Post supports gender equality and women's empowerment by focusing on engaging women and girls in economic growth, poverty reduction, health, resilience, and environmental initiatives. Post will also continue to raise awareness and institutionalize practices and policies that protect women and girls from gender-based violence (GBV).

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- **Linkages** | This objective is aligned with the 2022 National Security Strategy and with USAID/Haiti 2020-2024 Strategic Framework Development Objective 2, NSSM-1, the 2020 United States Strategy to Prevent Conflict and Promote Stability, and the U.S. Strategy on Countering Corruption. The objective further aligns with the Strategy's guidance to defend equal rights of all people — of women and girls, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex (LGBTQI+) individuals, indigenous communities, people with disabilities, and people of every ethnic background and religion.
- **Risks** | Haiti cannot escape the current political and economic crises until its critical institutions represent the entire population rather than simply the elite. Failure to meet this objective will threaten political stability and hamper economic development and social progress.

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**Mission Goal 3** | Promote inclusive economic growth, educational opportunities, and healthcare to drive economic growth, reduce poverty, reduce irregular migration, and increase national self-reliance.

**Description** | 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, the U.S. Mission can help the GoH accelerate job creation and growth while mobilizing additional resources for its own development priorities. In turn, the U.S. Mission 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.

**Objective 3.1** | Promote more inclusive, locally-driven economic growth, economic and food security, and social development advancement.

- **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 lead to increased prosperity and security. These endowments include preferential trade status with the United States and close maritime proximity to 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.

The U.S. Mission investments over the next two years will build Haiti's capacities to be better prepared for and better able to respond to recurrent natural disasters that cause serious poverty or allow for poor and vulnerable communities to backslide into deeper poverty. Moreover, the U.S. Mission will build on existing partnerships to support the

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GoH's efforts, specifically at the municipal level, to bolster economic and food security while putting an end to extreme poverty over time. The U.S. Mission 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. The U.S. Mission will invest in associated infrastructure when appropriate, in partnership with the GoH and affected communities.

- **Linkages** | This objective aligns with the 2022 National Security Strategy Guidance, the 2020 United States Strategy to Prevent Conflict and Promote Stability, the State-USAID 2022-2026 Joint Strategic Plan, the USAID/Haiti 2020-2024 Strategic Framework Development Objective 2 and the Western Hemisphere Affairs (WHA) Joint Regional Strategy (JRS).
- **Risks** | Without more inclusive, locally driven growth, the Haitian economy will continue to stagnate reducing employment and business opportunities, keeping a large segment of the population in poverty, and driving an increase in irregular migration.

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**Objective 3.2 | Improve educational opportunities and 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, challenges persist. 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 2021 Early Grade Reading Assessment revealed that over 78 percent of children could not read a single word of text at the end of first grade.

To address these challenges, the U.S. Mission 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. The U.S. Mission will continue to help improve students' and at-risk-youths' foundational skills in first through fourth grade, despite shocks and stressors. At the same time, the Mission will continue to enhance key Haitian stakeholders' capacity to support the students' continuity of learning and participate in and promote high-quality learning opportunities that strengthen essential skills. Furthermore, the U.S. Mission will continue to work alongside its implementing and resource partners, so that Haitian learners, families, and communities can benefit from an education system that is increasingly resilient,

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responsive, and adaptive in strengthening students' foundational skills, literacy, and socio-emotional learning.

- **Linkages** | This goal reflects the 2020 United States Strategy to Prevent Conflict and Promote Stability, the State-USAID Joint Strategic Plan for 2022-2026, and the USAID/Haiti 2020-2024 Strategic Framework Development Objective 2.
- **Risks** | Failure to meet this objective to improve educational opportunities and outcome for Haitian youth will cause a severe drag on the Haitian economy and will relegate a large part of the population to poverty and dependence. More than one million youth were at risk of dropping out of school every year, 76 percent of at-risk youth repeat more than one grade of the first cycle (first through fourth grade) at least once and 58 percent of students abandon school in the first cycle. These trends have only increased because of the waves of civil unrest that began in July 2018 and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The most vulnerable segments of the population are most at risk. Less than 27 percent of women above age 25 have any secondary education and the literacy rate among Haitian women is less than 60 percent. Moreover, if budget allocations to the education sector are not sufficient, there will be a lack of relevant resources to support children with disabilities or literacy-related special education needs.

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**Objective 3.3** | Work with partners to create a strong health system that delivers quality services, improves health outcomes, and mitigates the risk of global health threats.

- **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 lacks access to essential health and nutrition services; only 41 percent of all children (12 to 23 months) are fully vaccinated, and 22 percent of children under 5 years old are stunted (DHS 2016-2017). Moderate/severe acute malnutrition (wasting) rates are rising, especially in urban areas affected by gang violence. Weak economic conditions in Haiti continue to impact the available revenue for investment in the health system, and only an estimated 4.1 percent of the national budget is allocated to the health sector in FY 2021, a drop from previous years. The inter-agency health team will continue to work with the GoH, as well as strong local partners, 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. The COVID-19 pandemic stretched an already fragile health system, requiring immediate response to bolster therapeutics and increase access to vaccines. Cholera's reemergence in Haiti in October 2022 underscores the fragility of the health system. Pneumonia, malnutrition, diarrhea, and vaccine-preventable diseases such as diphtheria are still the main killers of infants and children. While 90 percent of children seen in the 165 USAID-supported health facilities are fully vaccinated, vaccination coverage in Haiti has not been able to meet the WHO recommended target which is 95 percent of children under the age of one year as the proportion of children who received all eight essential vaccines decreased from 45.2 percent in 2012 to 41.4 percent in 2017 (DHS 2016-2017). Additionally, 98 percent of all pregnant women seen at PEPFAR-supported health facilities were tested for HIV to reduce the risk of mother to child transmission. The 2016-2017 DHS results revealed a continuous decline in the total fertility rate, while the demand for family planning increased among women married or in a union from 69.8 percent in 2012 to 72.3 percent in 2017. The expansion of family planning services did not keep pace with the increased demand, resulting in a higher unmet need (35.3

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percent in 2012 to 38 percent in 2017), indicating successful efforts of the national FP campaign in creating awareness, but highlighting a gap in access to modern family planning services.

- **Linkages** | This objective is aligned with the 2022 Interim National Security Strategy, the 2020 United States Strategy to Prevent Conflict and Promote Stability, the draft State-USAID Joint Regional Strategy (11/2021) Objective 4.1, and with USAID's 2020-2022 Strategic Development Objective 1. Additionally, this objective aligns with the draft State-USAID 2022-2026 Joint Strategic Plan Goal 1.
- **Risks** | In many categories, including maternal and under-five mortality, Haiti's health indicators are among the worst in the Western Hemisphere and on par with countries in sub-Saharan Africa. High rates of health worker migration and inadequate domestic financial resources will continue to result in insufficient human resources within the health sector. Failure to meet this objective will threaten positive trends in HIV and modest gains in maternal health and child nutrition indicators that will pay social and economic dividends, though food insecurity and persistent unrest remain challenges to preserving and protecting these gains. Moreover, 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.

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## 4. Management Objectives

### Management Objective 1 | Reduce Embassy reliance on external fuel sources.

- **Justification** | Embassy Port-au-Prince's four U.S. government-owned compounds are either fully or partially dependent on diesel generators for power. Fuel is the backbone of post's life support systems and, consequently, the Mission is vulnerable to any disruptions to its single supply source. Diversifying the embassy's fuel supply chain is essential to ensuring operational continuity.
- **Linkages** | This objective is directly linked to the White House's October 2022 National Security Strategy on clean energy transformation, EO 14057 on Catalyzing Clean Energy Industries and Jobs Through Federal Sustainability and the mandate of the Bureau of Energy Resources.
- **Risks** | The Haitian government's poor management of the fuel importation process, and gang control of areas around ports and fuel storage facilities have led to disastrous disruptions in the country's gasoline and diesel supply and a failure to meet this objective will make the Embassy vulnerable to shortages and supply disruptions, potentially compromising the Embassy's ability to carry out its mission.

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**Management Objective 2** | Promote a diverse and appropriately-sized USDH staffing footprint at Embassy Port au Prince that is commensurate with post's limited office space, security environment, and seismically-approved housing.

- **Justification** | Post continues to grow in response to the many crises that plague Haiti. This growth puts a strain on office space and housing. Post must regularly review all positions at post and prioritize the hierarchy of needs in response to U.S. policy on Haiti. A diverse workforce will resonate positively with Haiti's pluralistic demographics.
- **Linkages:** E.O. 13985 on Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government, E.O. 14035 on Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility in the Federal Workforce; newly formed Office of Diversity and Inclusion (S/ODI) mandate; 13 FAM Training and Professional Development; 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA); TalentCare@state.gov and Global Talent Management's Office of Employee Relations (GTM/ER) mandates; Launch of the TalentCare Awareness Month.
- **Risks** | Failure to accomplish this would result in shortages in office space and housing and would negatively affect internal workforce development programs. Improving diversity and employment opportunities for all will enhance the team's productivity and morale. Without giving wellness, mental health and diversity, inclusion, equity, and accessibility the attention it deserves, we risk failing to meet USG requirements and mandates while not providing for the needs of all staff, both current and future. A healthy workforce is a productive workforce, and a more diverse and inclusive team promotes American values.

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