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**Written Testimony for the Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee Hearing “Haiti: Next**  
**Steps On The International Response”**  
**Thursday, July 27, 2023**

**Intro**

Chairman Kaine, Ranking Member Rubio, distinguished members of the Subcommittee – thank you for the opportunity to testify and to speak with you today about USAID’s work in Haiti at this critical time.

**Current Situation**

When I went to Haiti earlier this year, I saw – as many of you who have visited have seen – that the situation on the ground is dire. Gang violence is on the rise and the Haitian National Police is struggling to curtail it, leaving Haitians vulnerable to heinous atrocities.

The staff at our Mission live with those day-to-day realities, especially our courageous foreign service nationals. Their neighborhoods are overrun with violent gangs. Some have been kidnapped themselves or had family members kidnapped for ransom.

But whenever I speak with them, they make it clear that “all is not lost in Haiti” – and that they are willing to face these risks because they know their work is making a difference. And it is.

Our budget of more than \$150 million a year supports economic, health and governance work – and we have continued to pivot those investments for maximum impact as the security situation changes. We have also amped up our humanitarian assistance to meet growing immediate needs.

**Impact of Humanitarian Programming**

USAID has provided more than \$110 million in life-saving humanitarian assistance to Haiti since the start of fiscal year 2023. And since the stand-up of our humanitarian Disaster Assistance Response Team, or DART, last October, USAID’s Bureau of Humanitarian Assistance has provided clean water, medicine and medical supplies to communities affected by violence. We have responded to new cholera outbreaks. We are supporting survivors of gender-based violence. And we are responding to widespread food insecurity with food assistance that reaches hundreds of thousands of people a month and has helped to bring nearly 20,000 people out of famine-like conditions.

**Building Long-Term Stability**

And we continue working to make the country more food secure long-term. USAID investments have helped over 100,000 farmers adopt new technologies over the last 10 years and generate nearly \$30 million in agricultural sales.

USAID has catalyzed equity investments in promising Haitian companies, leveraging \$28 million since 2018. For example, we provided support to Acceso Haiti which works with smallholder farmers to boost their production and aggregate their output to help them bring products like Lavi Spicy Peanut Butter to grocery stores in the US and Canada. With USAID support, Acceso is working to expand its network of farmers, double farmers' yields and incomes, and connect new crops, like mango, lime, and moringa, to new markets.

USAID has also made strides in fortifying the country's water and sanitation systems, which are foundational to making progress in every other area from health to economic growth. We've helped re-establish 22 micro-utilities, improve their technical capacity, identify leaks, install meters so they can collect and share data – including in the wake of natural disasters – and generate revenue. Three of those 22 utilities have already mobilized over \$70,000 in domestic revenues.

These types of USAID investments have helped increase access to reliable, potable water service for over 320,000 people in Haiti since 2018. And our investments in sanitation management - which help ensure waste doesn't pollute water sources - have increased sanitation services for over 78,000 people.

Improving health outcomes across the country is also a major focus for USAID. With USAID support, our partners operate more than 160 health clinics, which account for 25% of the health services provided in the country. We vaccinate 76,000 kids every year. Since 2022, one in every two fully vaccinated kids in Haiti were vaccinated with USAID support. That's critical to long-term health in the country.

The years we've spent strengthening the health system, operating public health education campaigns, bolstering data gathering capabilities and operationalizing failed water utilities proved invaluable during the most recent cholera outbreak. The 2010 outbreak saw more than 10,000 people lose their lives to cholera. The years we spent building up the Ministry of Health and public health infrastructure meant that during the most recent outbreak in October 2022, the Ministry was able to limit the number of deaths to 800. That kept this outbreak's fatality rate under the World Health Organization's standard of 1%.

### **Long-Term Solutions Require Security**

But as our staff in Haiti know, protecting those gains and making further progress toward long-term solutions will require significant improvements in security.

So, we continue to simultaneously address the urgent needs of the moment and build a path to long-term stability. Under the *Global Fragility Act* we have created a ten-year plan that allows us to better coordinate our development work with our interagency partners' efforts to meet Haiti's security goals.

USAID and the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) are more aligned than ever, designing joint programming to address gang violence. While INL provides support for the Haitian National Police, USAID is doing our part on citizen security.

Just last month, USAID signed a three-year award with an initial investment of \$12.5 million to reduce violence and strengthen security in gang-controlled neighborhoods in Port-au-Prince, focusing on: implementing community development activities and, assisting the Government of Haiti to provide social services for at-risk populations and survivors of violence. These services include supporting at-risk youth with psychosocial services, life skills, and help finding jobs and livelihoods outside of joining a gang. This approach recognizes that police can't solve this problem on their own and is based on proven models implemented across the world, from Los Angeles to San Pedro Sula.

### **Economic Security**

We recognize that we can and should work to protect livelihoods, even in the current security environment. Joblessness puts families further at risk and contributes to insecurity.

Vice President Harris has signaled the Administration's strong support for the extension of the HOPE/HELP trade preferences program, which will keep jobs in Haiti. At this critical time, producers, investors, clients, and workers in Haiti need certainty about the continuation of HOPE/HELP. Maintaining this program will be essential in preserving and growing the labor-intensive textile sector.

At USAID, our work to create economic opportunities continues across the country. For example, we recently brokered a \$4.5 million equity investment between two Haitian businesses to expand and accelerate a solar energy company's unique solar leasing model for residential, commercial and industrial customers.

### **Political Security**

Despite the challenges we face, USAID continues working to ensure our programs not only operate in the short term, but really take root, so they can contribute to long-term stability when the security situation improves.

That includes supporting institutional improvements, like national identification cards Haitians can use to vote and to access banks and other services. To make sure people everywhere can get these cards, USAID is partnering with the Organization of American States to distribute three million cards throughout the country.

We stand ready to use our convening power to help Haiti move toward democratic elections. USAID recently launched a new elections-support program to work with Haitian institutions and civil society to take concrete steps forward, including: creating a realistic electoral calendar; developing security plans for voting; and supporting Haitian efforts to carry out constitutional and electoral reforms.

## **Conclusion**

Thanks to our incredible staff and partners on the ground, and the generosity of this congress, our local staff are right: “all is not lost in Haiti.” But there is more left to lose – and more will be lost – if we don’t continue to back these critical efforts across the country.

I thank this subcommittee for its ongoing support, and I look forward to your questions.