



RAND RESEARCH AREAS
 CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
 EDUCATION AND THE ARTS
 ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT
 HEALTH AND HEALTH CARE
 INFRASTRUCTURE AND TRANSPORTATION
 INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS
 LAW AND BUSINESS
 NATIONAL SECURITY
 POPULATION AND AGING
 PUBLIC SAFETY
 SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
 TERRORISM AND HOMELAND SECURITY

Building a More Resilient Haitian State

Key Recommendations and Priorities

The January 12, 2010, earthquake in Haiti demonstrated the weaknesses not only of the country’s infrastructure but also of its state institutions. Although the earthquake was the cause of the disaster, Haiti’s long history of poor governance was largely responsible for the extent of the devastation and the society’s almost complete dependence on help from abroad to deal with the consequences.

Much has stabilized in Haiti since the earthquake, and the Haitian government has developed plans for reconstruction in consultation with the international donor community. However, more than physical reconstruction is needed: Hope for a more prosperous and peaceful future for the Haitian people lies in building a more effective, resilient state. Haiti’s state institutions are riddled with weaknesses in human resources, organization, procedures, and policies. State-building should be at the forefront of efforts to recover from the earthquake.

A new RAND study identified the main challenges to more-capable governance and evaluated past and current plans to strengthen government institutions and improve the delivery of public services. Drawing on these appraisals, discussions with key stakeholders, and the experiences of other societies emerging from conflict and crisis, the researchers identified state-building priorities for the next three to five years and suggested measures that might produce palpable improvements during this time frame. Among the priorities emphasized are civil service reform, justice-system reform, and streamlined regulations for business.

Key Recommendations

The researchers developed common criteria for the recommendations: that they be fiscally sustainable, commensurate with the administrative capacity of Haiti’s government, realistic in their prospects for

Abstract

Haiti’s future prosperity and peace require building a more effective, resilient state. Haiti’s state institutions are riddled with weaknesses in human resources, organization, procedures, and policies. RAND researchers identified Haiti’s main challenges and recommended a set of state-building priorities that are necessary, feasible, and sustainable. These include civil service reform, justice-system reform, ongoing involvement of United Nations peacekeepers, streamlined regulations for business, and improved access and quality assurance for health care and schools.

implementation, geared toward enhancing the effectiveness of the state, and mutually coherent.

Governance and Public Administration

Together with limited financial resources, the lack of skilled, trained, and properly organized government personnel and the lack of management systems within ministries and other government bodies are the principal constraints on the state’s effectiveness. The implications of the institutional deficiencies in planning, budgeting, executing policy decisions, and managing people and resources cut across all the government activities covered in the study.

- The Haitian government, with donor-funded technical assistance, should implement a reformulated strategy for administrative reform. Within this strategy, civil service reform deserves the highest priority.
- Major donors need to employ their influence in concerted, carefully focused, discreet, and subtle ways to promote the political reforms essential to any broad program of state-building.

This product is part of the RAND Corporation research brief series. RAND research briefs present policy-oriented summaries of published, peer-reviewed documents.

Headquarters Campus
 1776 Main Street
 P.O. Box 2138
 Santa Monica, California
 90407-2138
 TEL 310.393.0411
 FAX 310.393.4818

© RAND 2010

Justice and Security

Haiti's justice system is deeply flawed. The courts do not carry out their constitutional responsibilities, laws are not applied, prison conditions are horrific, and corruption is widespread. Efforts to reform the security sector have faced major challenges, including a volatile security situation, lack of consistent commitment to police reform, and a low level of institutional development within the Haitian National Police (HNP).

- With assistance from donors, the Haitian government needs to create and implement a comprehensive system for managing cases that links the police, prosecutors, judges, and prisons. Other priorities include pretrial detainee review and property-dispute resolution.
- Providing public security is critical. The Haitian government and the international community should agree to keep United Nations peacekeepers for at least the next five years and to then reduce the international military and police presence only gradually.
- Building the HNP's administrative capacity should also be a priority.

Economic Policy and Infrastructure

Haiti's primary economic challenge is generating economic growth. Haiti is poor in great part because of its difficult environment for business. The process of registering a business is one of the most complex and lengthy in the world.

The earthquake had a devastating effect on housing in Haiti, and providing permanent housing for the displaced is now urgent. Infrastructure (roads, seaports, airports, electric-power system, water, and sewage) needs to be improved and maintained if Haiti is to enjoy sustained economic growth.

- To accelerate economic growth, the Haitian government should quickly eliminate unnecessary procedures involved in registering businesses and property and reduce the cost and time needed to complete the remaining steps.
- The Haitian government, together with the donor community, should accelerate removal of rubble, an essential step for reconstruction of housing and infrastructure.
- Other priorities include eliminating restrictions on the operation of private container ports and moving to full cost-recovery pricing for electricity.

Education and Health Care

Private, nonprofit, and religious institutions are the primary providers of education and health care in Haiti. Despite their efforts, the quality of and access to these services is the worst in the Western Hemisphere. Enrollment rates and levels of educational attainment are low, and approximately 40 percent of Haitians lack access to health care.

- To help close the gap in quality between private and public schools and to increase access to schools, the Ministry of Education and Training (Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale et de la Formation Professionnelle) should subsidize private-school teacher wages to be on par with those of public-school teachers.
- In light of its lack of capacity and funding, the Ministry of Public Health and Population (Ministère de la Santé Publique et de la Population) should shift operation of all health centers and hospitals to nongovernmental organizations and other private institutions, with performance-based contracting used for these operations.

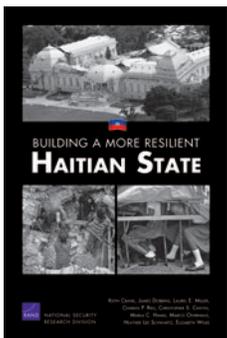
Donor Cooperation

Haiti has been a focus of concern for donors of humanitarian and development assistance for two generations. Nonetheless, Haiti's economic, social, and political situation has worsened.

- Donors should focus on making the Interim Haiti Recovery Commission (IHRC) an effective body by agreeing that all major donors will submit all project and program concepts to the IHRC for coordination and adapt them according to Haiti's and other donors' plans and preferences.
- The United States should better organize itself to engage politically with the Haitian government by appointing a full-time, high-ranking special coordinator or envoy. Similarly, a handful of major donors should organize themselves for more-coordinated political engagement through a "friends" or "contact" group for Haiti.

Conclusion

State-building is intimately connected with politics. Without executive decisiveness and legislative action, state-building cannot proceed. Donors and international organizations can assist—not only by providing financial resources but also by promoting political consensus and encouraging adherence to strategic plans. ■



This research brief describes work done for the RAND National Security Research Division documented in *Building a More Resilient Haitian State*, by Keith Crane, James Dobbins, Laurel E. Miller, Charles P. Ries, Christopher S. Chivvis, Marla C. Haims, Marco Overhaus, Heather Lee Schwartz, and Elizabeth Wilke, MG-1039-SRF/CC (available at <http://www.rand.org/pubs/monographs/MG1039/>), 2010, 208 pp., \$24, ISBN: 978-0-8330-5043-4. This research brief was written by Kristin Leuschner. The RAND Corporation is a nonprofit institution that helps improve policy and decisionmaking through research and analysis. RAND's publications do not necessarily reflect the opinions of its research clients and sponsors. RAND® is a registered trademark.

RAND Offices

Santa Monica, CA • Washington, DC • Pittsburgh, PA • New Orleans, LA/Jackson, MS • Boston, MA • Doha, QA • Cambridge, UK • Brussels, BE



NATIONAL SECURITY RESEARCH DIVISION

THE ARTS
CHILD POLICY
CIVIL JUSTICE
EDUCATION
ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT
HEALTH AND HEALTH CARE
INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS
NATIONAL SECURITY
POPULATION AND AGING
PUBLIC SAFETY
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
SUBSTANCE ABUSE
TERRORISM AND
HOMELAND SECURITY
TRANSPORTATION AND
INFRASTRUCTURE
WORKFORCE AND WORKPLACE

This PDF document was made available from www.rand.org as a public service of the RAND Corporation.

This product is part of the RAND Corporation research brief series. RAND research briefs present policy-oriented summaries of individual published, peer-reviewed documents or of a body of published work.

The RAND Corporation is a nonprofit institution that helps improve policy and decisionmaking through research and analysis.

Support RAND

[Browse Books & Publications](#)

[Make a charitable contribution](#)

For More Information

Visit RAND at www.rand.org

Explore the [RAND National Security Research Division](#)

View [document details](#)

Limited Electronic Distribution Rights

This document and trademark(s) contained herein are protected by law as indicated in a notice appearing later in this work. This electronic representation of RAND intellectual property is provided for non-commercial use only. Unauthorized posting of RAND PDFs to a non-RAND Web site is prohibited. RAND PDFs are protected under copyright law. Permission is required from RAND to reproduce, or reuse in another form, any of our research documents for commercial use. For information on reprint and linking permissions, please see [RAND Permissions](#).