

Haiti 2022 Impact Report

People's Organization for the Development of Northeast Haiti
Organisation Peuple OEcuménique pour le Developpment du Nord-Est



Despite the political, economic, and security crises facing Haiti, OPODNE continued to organize and grow in 2022. Teams of residents in 22 towns and villages across Northeast Haiti met weekly to find ways to generate income and make improvements to their communities. With hunger rising, OPODNE launched an anti-hunger campaign to help small-scale farmers adapt to drought and climate change. The organization started a new chapter in the North Department; and worked closely with Haitian diaspora organizations to press for changes in U.S. foreign and development policy toward Haiti.

HIGHLIGHTS



22
communities
organized



24
community
improvement
projects in 2022



957
people employed
through OPODNE
self-help projects



\$166,023
income generated by
co-ops in 2022



Left to right: With global food prices skyrocketing and Haiti dependent on imports, half of all Haitians face daily hunger. // As recently as the 1980s, Haitians grew enough food to feed themselves.



Restoring the capacity of Haitians to feed themselves

More than five million Haitians are hungry because they cannot afford imported food, while land stays fallow. In spring 2022, OPODNE surveyed 4,000 local farmers about what they need to plant successfully. Farmers said their most pressing issues were drought and the inability to obtain high-quality seeds, fertilizers, and tools to make the land worthwhile to cultivate.

In August 2022, 300 OPODNE leaders gathered with more than a dozen local mayors and clergy to launch a campaign called: LET'S PLANT TODAY SO WE CAN FEED OURSELVES TOMORROW. The goal is to restore the capacity of Haitians to feed themselves by better supporting small-scale farmers. Haiti grew enough food to feed itself up until the 1980s when U.S. trade policies opened the country up to cheap food imports, and development agencies began dumping commodities that undercut Haitian farmers.

With global food costs skyrocketing, OPODNE is working to develop a comprehensive agricultural policy for Northeast Haiti focused on local farmers. OPODNE farmers are organizing strong cooperatives in each of the 22 towns and villages where the organization works. OPODNE is building a department-wide seed bank with high-quality seeds. Other priorities include tool banks, irrigation, and more agronomists to help farmers to adapt their crops.

In August, OPODNE asked USAID to reprogram a small amount of the tens of millions of dollars the agency is spending on contracts with U.S. companies and NGOs to help local farmers plant in the fall. While USAID refused, OPODNE is continuing to press the U.S. to change how it approaches development in Haiti to support Haitian farmers. OPODNE's grassroots leaders are not waiting for USAID to act, but they also know that Haitian self-determination requires a shift in how development agencies operate in their country.



Left to right: OPODNE leaders started a pepper-growing cooperative in Mont Organise, Haiti. // Residents and local mayors sign OPODNE's pledge to PLANT NOW SO WE CAN FEED OURSELVES TOMORROW!



Strengthening local democracy in Haiti

In the summer of 2022, **1,492 people** voted in OPODNE elections to select presidents and board members for each of the 22 community organizations that make up the organization. In a country where the ruling party has repeatedly canceled elections and ruled by decree, OPODNE is demonstrating democracy and accountability from the bottom up. Haitians are deeply committed to civic participation and self-determination, which is helping people survive during this difficult period. Each local OPODNE team is responsible for listening to the concerns of all of the people in their community, holding public assemblies to vote on priorities, researching what can be done to solve community problems, and working together to generate income.



Economic survival

In 2022, OPODNE leaders generated \$166,023 in income through co-ops and micro-loan programs. OPODNE leaders worked cooperatively to breed goats, create a fish farm, grow peppers, purchase and re-sell household goods, and farm together through the Haitian Kombit working together system. OPODNE leaders also operate 12 mutual solidarity funds that make small loans to residents for school fees, farming tools, and other necessities. This helps people avoid loan sharks. OPODNE estimates that its mutual economic activities provided employment to 957 people in 2022.



New organizing in Haiti's North Department

In 2022, at the invitation of Cap-Haïtien Archbishop Launay Saturné and Baptist faith leaders, OPODNE launched a new organizing effort in Haiti's North Department (population 1.1 million). OPODNE hired a talented local resident as a community organizer who began meeting with clergy and providing training in grassroots community organizing. Starting a new OPODNE chapter in the North Department is an important step toward building faith-based grassroots organizing efforts across Haiti.



Changing U.S. foreign and development policy toward Haiti

Through a Way Forward in Haiti, OPODNE and Faith in Action International have organized a strong diaspora voice for democracy and sustainable development in Haiti. In 2022, hundreds of people participated in conference calls with top officials from the Biden Administration and Members of Congress to press for change in U.S. policy toward Haiti. We pushed the U.S. to sanction corrupt and abusive officials. We helped organize a large public event in Washington, DC, in October 2022 to urge the Biden Administration to allow Haitians to determine their own future by supporting civil society efforts toward a new transitional government. More than 1,100 religious leaders and people of faith joined OPODNE in urging the U.S. Agency for International Development to change its approach to Haiti to work through local organizations and farmers.



For more information, visit www.faithinactioninternational.org

