



June 28, 2023

The Honorable Samantha Power  
Administrator  
U.S. Agency for International Development  
Washington, DC 20523

Dear Administrator Power,

We write to follow up on our [December 15, 2022, letter](#) from diaspora and faith leaders asking USAID to help Haitian farmers respond to rising hunger in Haiti. We continue to be deeply concerned that USAID is not working with and through Haitian community-based organizations and local farmers. We urge you to change USAID's agricultural policy and programming in Haiti to help small-scale farmers, who are the backbone of fighting hunger in Haiti, adapt to drought and climate change.

Half of Haitians are hungry because of Haiti's dependence on increasingly expensive imported food and the impact of a decade of drought. As the World Food Program details in its [March 2023 Dry Conditions report](#), lack of rain has drained reservoirs, lowered groundwater levels, and left soil too dry to grow crops normally. Drought has forced farmers to change crop types and significantly reduced agricultural productivity. Conditions are worst in North and Northeast Haiti. Local Haitian farmers desperately need help with irrigation, higher quality seeds, better tools, and support from agronomists to adapt their crops to drought and climate change.

USAID has three agriculture mega-projects in North and Northeast Haiti, all managed by large U.S.-based for-profit contractors and NGOs, totaling more than \$100 million, and awarded during your tenure. None of these existing projects address the key inputs that local farmers say they need to adapt to climate change. For example, in September 2021, USAID awarded a \$30 million Feed the Future project to DAI, despite [Oxfam finding](#) that DAI's previous AVANSE project did not consult local farmers, ignored their "crying need" for water infrastructure, and "failed to provide resources for their key priorities, such as credit, soil preparation, cultivation of a broader range of locally consumed food crops, and animal husbandry." DAI's new HRASA project was similarly developed without significant input from local farmers and does not focus on their priorities.

Haiti is often referred to as the Republic of NGOs. Few societies have been as distorted by USAID's funding paradigm. As it was for previous Administrators, Haiti is a test of your commitment to shifting USAID from top-down projects managed by foreign companies and NGOs to supporting long-term locally-led development.

Given the urgent need to help Haitians make their way through the current crisis, the availability of \$62.4 million in new USAID resources for Haiti, and the importance of localizing aid to Haiti, we ask you to take the following steps.

1. **Personally engage with Haiti** by visiting North and Northeast Haiti to meet with local Haitian farmers. OPODNE members are happy to host you in one of the 62 communities where they live and work.
2. **Collaborate with OPODNE, other community-based and peasant organizations, and regional government offices to co-create a comprehensive water management plan for the Plaine du Nord–Massacre Aquifer** that balances water usage and enables local communities and small-scale farmers to adapt to drought through investments in deeper wells, piping, and catchment basins to make water available where it is needed.
3. **Release the USAID-funded research by BRGM, the French Geological Survey, modeling groundwater flow in the Plaine du Nord–Massacre shallow aquifer**, which was originally carried out to assess the feasibility of DAI's plans for large-scale, water-intensive banana cultivation for export.
4. **Apply USAID 25 percent locally-managed/50 percent locally-led localization requirements to Haiti.**
5. **Provide USAID funding to the Inter-American Foundation to double their available resources to directly support Haiti community-based organizations**, which are on the front lines of responding to Haiti's humanitarian and political crises.
6. **Find the \$500,000 in funding needed to fully launch the Northeast Haiti Community Seed Bank.** USAID could achieve this goal by replenishing funding for Locally-Led Development in Haiti.
7. **Cancel for convenience USAID's Haiti Resilience and Agriculture Sector Advancement (HRASA) contract with DAI** and redesign this initiative through a co-creation process with local farmers, peasant organizations, and community-based organizations, focusing USAID's agricultural policy in Haiti on the inputs farmers need to adapt to climate change.
8. **Support inclusion of localization goals in Resilience Food Security Activities (RFSAs) and McGovern-Dole Food for Education in the Farm Bill reauthorization, and restrict Community Development Fund (CDF) projects to community-based, locally-led organizations.**

We remain committed to working with USAID to realize your commitment to support locally-led development in Haiti and globally.

Our Haiti affiliate, the People's Organization for the Development of Haiti (OPODNE), is an umbrella for [62 grassroots community-based organizations across Northeast and North Haiti](#).

Each resident-led team meets weekly to identify and resolve community issues and work together across teams to improve agriculture, health, and other policies. Last Spring, 1,492

people participated in elections for the Presidents and Boards of each local organization, and 100 grassroots leaders from OPODNE listened to 4,400 small-scale farmers to understand their needs. OPODNE is one example of the many credible, deeply-rooted local Haitian organizations whose lead USAID needs to follow in Haiti.

Since August 2021, OPODNE [has sought to engage USAID](#) and has been rebuffed at every turn. As Florcie Tyrell, OPODNE's Executive Director has said, "OPODNE is not bringing people together to receive projects or support politicians." But given that USAID is the largest source of funding for development in Haiti, the agency's decisions and agriculture policy have serious consequences for the Haitian people and the work of organizations like OPODNE.

You have an opportunity to change how USAID relates to the Haitian people and contribute to progress in Haiti. We urge you to demonstrate that your reform agenda is possible where it is most needed.

Sincerely,

Ms. Florcie Tyrell, Director, People's Organization for the Development of Haiti

Jean Mirvil, People's Organization for the Development of Haiti and A Way Forward in Haiti

Pastor Dieufort J. Fleurissant, Board Chair, Haitian Americans United, Massachusetts

Fr. Yves Geffrard, Notre Dame Catholic Mission, Fort Pierce, FL, Haitian Apostolate

Dr. Keny Felix, Pastor Bethel Evangelical Baptist Church

Rev. Lucy Kolin, Evangelical Lutheran Church of America

Dr. Francois Pierre-Louis, Faith in Action Haiti Director

Fr. John Baumann, Founder, Faith in Action International

**Way Forward in Haiti Steering Committee**

June 28, 2023

The Honorable Samantha Power  
Administrator  
U.S. Agency for International Development  
Washington, DC 20523

Chè Administratè Power,

Nou ekri pou nou swiv nou [15 desanm 20223 lèt](#) lidè dyaspora ak relijye yo mande USAID pou ede fèmeye ayisyen yo reponn ak grangou k ap monte ann Ayiti. Nou kontinye gen anpil enkyetid paske USAID pa travay ak ak atravè òganizasyon kominotè ak kiltivatè lokal yo. Nou ankouraje w pou w chanje politik ak pwogram agrikòl USAID ann Ayiti pou sipòte ti kiltivatè yo, ki se kolòn vètebral konbat grangou ann Ayiti, pou adapte yo ak sechrès ak chanjman klimatik yo.

Mwatye nan Ayisyen grangou paske Ayiti depandans sou manje enpòte de pli zan pli chè ak enpak yon dekad nan sechrès. Kòm Pwogram Manje Mondyal la detay nan li yo [Rapò Mas 2023 Kondisyon Sèch yo](#), mank lapli te vide rezèvwa, bese nivo dlo anba tè, epi kite tè twò sèk pou fè rekòt nòmalmen. Sechrès te fòse kiltivatè yo chanje kalite rekòt ak siyifikativman redwi pwodiktivite agrikòl. Kondisyon yo pi mal nan Nò ak Nòdès Ayiti. Fèmeye ayisyen lokal yo bezwen dezespereman èd ak irigasyon, pi bon kalite semans, pi bon zouti, ak sipò nan men agwonòm pou adapte rekòt yo a sechrès ak chanjman klima.

USAID gen twa mega-pwojè agrikilti nan Nò ak Nòdès Ayiti, yo tout jere pa gwo kontraktè ak ONG ki baze Ozetazini pou fè pwofi, ki totalize plis pase \$100 milyon, epi yo bay yo pandan manda w. Okenn adrese antre kle kiltivatè lokal yo di ke yo bezwen pou adapte yo ak chanjman nan klima. Pa egzanp, nan mwa septanm 2021, USAID te bay DAI yon pwojè Feed the Future \$30 milyon, malgre [Oxfam jwenn](#) ke pwojè AVANSE anvan DAI a pa t konsilte kiltivatè lokal yo, li te inyore "bezwen kriye" yo pou enfrastrikti dlo, epi "echwe pou bay resous pou priorite kle yo, tankou kredi, preparasyon tè, kiltivasyon nan yon seri pi laj nan rekòt manje lokalman konsome, ak elvaj bèt." Nouvo pwojè HRASA DAI a te devlope menm jan an san yo pa antre nan men kiltivatè lokal yo epi li pa konsantre sou priorite yo.

Souvan rele Ayiti kòm Repiblik ONG yo. Gen kèk sosyete ki te menm defòme pa paradigman finansman USAID a. Menm jan sa te ye pou Administratè anvan yo, Ayiti se yon tès sou angajman w pou w fè USAID soti nan pwojè tè anba jere pa konpayi etranje ak ONG yo pou sipòte devlopman alontèm ki dirije lokalman.

Etandone nesosite ijan pou ede Ayisyen fè wout yo atravè kriz aktyèl la, disponiblite \$62.4 milyon dola nan nouvo resous USAID pou Ayiti, ak enpòtans lokalizasyon èd pou Ayiti, nou mande w pou pran etap sa yo.

1. **Angaje pèsònèlman ak Ayiti** nan vizite Nò ak Nòdès Ayiti pou rankontre ak kiltivatè ayisyen lokal yo. Manm OPODNE yo kontan resevwa w nan youn nan 62 kominote kote y ap viv ak travay.

2. **Kolabore ak OPODNE, lòt òganizasyon kominotè ak peyizan, ak biwo gouvènman rejyonal yo pou ko-kreye yon plan konplè jesyon dlo pou Plaine du Nord–Massacre Aquifer.** ki balanse itilizasyon dlo epi ki pèmèt kominote lokal yo ak ti kiltivatè yo adapte yo ak sechrès atravè envèstisman nan pi fon, kanalizasyon, ak basen pou fè dlo disponib kote li nesèsè.
3. **Divilge rechèch USAID finanse pa BRGM, ankèt jeyolojik franse a, ki modle koule dlo anba tè nan Plaine du Nord-Massacre akwifè ki pa fon.,** ki te orijinèlman te pote soti nan evalye posibilite nan plan DAI a pou gwo echèl, kiltivasyon bannann dlo-entansif pou ekspòtasyon.
4. **Aplike USAID 25 pousan lokalman jere/50 pousan lokalman ki dirije kondisyon an Ayiti.**
5. **Bay Fondasyon Entè-Ameriken an finansman USAID pou double resous ki disponib yo pou sipòte dirèkteman òganizasyon kominotè Ayiti yo,** ki nan premye liy pou reponn ak kriz imanite ak politik peyi Dayiti ap fè fas.
6. **Jwenn \$500,000 nan finansman ki nesèsè pou lanse konplètman Bank Semans Kominotè Nòdès Ayiti.** USAID te kapab atenn objektif sa a lè li renouvle finansman pou Devlopman Dirije Lokal an Ayiti.
7. **Anile pou konvenyans USAID’s Resilience and Agriculture Sector Advancement (HRASA) kontra ak DAI** epi re-desine inisyativ sa a atravè yon pwosesis ko-kreyasyon ak kiltivatè lokal yo, òganizasyon peyizan yo, ak òganizasyon kominotè yo, ki konsantre politik agrikòl USAID an Ayiti sou kontribisyon kiltivatè yo bezwen pou adapte yo ak chanjman klimatik yo.
8. **Sipòte enklizyon objektif lokalizasyon nan Aktivite Sekirite Manje Rezilyans (RFSAs) ak McGovern-Dole Food for Education nan re-otorizasyon Farm Bill, epi mete restriksyon sou pwojè Fon Devlopman Kominotè (CDF) bay òganizasyon kominotè ki dirije lokalman..**

Nou rete angaje nan travay ak USAID pou reyalize angajman ou te deklare pou sipòte devlopman lokalman dirije ann Ayiti ak globalman.

Afilye Ayiti nou an, Òganizasyon Pèp pou Devlopman Ayiti (OPODNE), se yon parapli pou [62 òganizasyon kominotè debaz atravè Nòdès ak Nò Ayiti](#). Chak ekip ki dirije pa rezidan yo rankontre chak semèn pou idantifye ak rezoud pwoblèm kominote yo epi travay ansanm atravè ekip yo pou amelyore agrikilti, sante ak lòt politik. Prentan pase a, 1,492 moun te patisipe nan eleksyon pou Prezidan ak Konsèy chak òganizasyon lokal, epi 100 lidè de baz OPODNE te koute 4,400 ti fèmme pou konprann bezwen yo. OPODNE se yon egzanp òganizasyon lokal ayisyen kredib ki byen anrasinen ki gen USAID ki dwe suiv ann Ayiti.

Depi mwa Out 2021, OPODNE te chèche angaje USAID epi yo te rejte a chak vire. Jan Florcie Tyrell, Direktè Egzekitif OPODNE a, te di, “OPODNE pa mete moun ansanm pou resevwa pwojè oswa sipòte politisyen yo.” Men, lè USAID se pi gwo sous finansman pou devlopman an Ayiti, desizyon ajans lan gen konsekans pou pèp ayisyen an ak travay òganizasyon tankou OPODNE.

Ou gen yon opòtinite pou chanje fason USAID gen rapò ak pèp ayisyen an epi kontribye nan pwogrè an Ayiti. Nou ankouraje w pou demontre ke ajanda refòm ou a posib kote li pi nesesè. Senseman,

Ms. Florcie Tyrell, Director, People's Organization for the Development of Haiti

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