

HAITI



BASIC INFORMATION

Population:	8.5 million inhabitants (2005)
GDP:	4,245 million dollars (2005)
GNI per capita:	450 dollars (2005)
HDI:	0.482 (154 th) (2004)

BACKGROUND TO THE CONFLICT

Haiti is in a situation of deep **economic, political and social crisis**. In the absence of an inclusive and sustainable process of democratisation, **racial, social and economic polarisation has led to chronic political instability**. The dysfunctional nature of its institutions and the rise of armed violence represent huge obstacles to the human security of the civilian population and attempts to provide humanitarian aid and sustainable development. This situation has worsened since 2004, when President Jean Bertrand Aristide abandoned the country following rising social unrest, leaving the country in the hands of an interim government. Since then, both Aristide's supporters (who mainly group themselves around the political party run by the Lavalas family) and a scattered swarm of urban gangs with no defined programme or ideology have been increasing their acts of violence against the United Nations Mission and the Transitional Government, as well as fighting among themselves.

Former President J. B. Aristide decided to wind up the country's armed forces in 1994, the *Forces Armées d'Haití (FAd'H)* being the only legitimate force operating in the country. Payment of compensation to former FAd'H troops remains an outstanding issue, and there is now the added problem of the demobilisation of the urban gangs. These gangs are made up of youths who call themselves "*chimères*" (bad boys in Creole) and who originally fought to defend Aristide but now use their weapons for criminal purposes, particularly kidnapping and drug-trafficking. They mainly operate in the poorer districts of the country's capital, particularly Cité Soleil, Bel Air and La Saline, where more than 800 deaths have been recorded since September 2004 and where kidnapping has become an increasingly common phenomenon.

The elections were to be held in November 2005, but there have been postponed 4 times, being 7th of February the last proposed day. The high levels of violence in several areas of the capital contrast with the declarations made by official bodies, which emphasise an increase in security in the country as a result of a greater number of police operations which should lead to a reform of the (Haitian National Police PNH) itself. For its part, in October 2006 the US announced a partial lifting of the arms embargo, which allows the police to purchase weapons from the US.

INTERNATIONAL PRESENCE

Under United Nations **Resolution 1542**, it was decided to establish a peace mission, **MINUSTAH**, which by the end of October 2005 had deployed 9,934 military troops and 1,471 police at an annual cost of 307.69 million dollars. The main purpose of this mission was to ensure security, support the Transitional Government in its work towards holding elections,

introduce a DDR programme and establish a new judicial system. It's mandate ends on 15th February 2007.

DDR STRUCTURE

Background to the DDR process:

Between 1994 and 2000, the role played by the USA began to take on particular importance when it led UNMIH troops in an attempt to restore a legitimate government. The main thrust of its efforts involved creating a professional police force, financed with an investment of 70 million dollars, though this did not end in any great success. Although the components of the FAd'H were eventually successfully demobilised, they did not choose to reintegrate in civilian society but instead joined the many different private security forces.

At the beginning of 2005, the Transitional Government introduced a programme of compensation payments for former members of the FAd'H which was heavily criticised by the international community as it was regarded as giving rise to serious security risks for the country. The absence of a reliable list of people eligible to benefit from this programme, the offer of generous incentives by the Transitional Government (10 years' salary payments) which they had no way of financing and the fact that this was only being offered to one of the armed groups were some of the reasons behind this criticism.

Type of DDR:

Reintegration and compensation for former members of the FAd'H. Demobilisation of urban gangs and subsequent reincorporation in suitable DDR programmes. Reduction of criminality and violence, especially in Port-au-Prince. Reform of the Haitian National Police, with a focus on human rights training and the reduction of cases of the abuse of authority. The criminally violence makes a few conventional approach on DDR.

Enforcing bodies:

National Commission for DDR (NCDDR) under the auspices of MINUSTAH. Technical assistance is provided by the UNDP, whose programme has been drawn up in two separate stages: an internal preparatory stage to establish programme strategy and a stage in which the national programme is implemented. By the end of 2005, the integrated DDR Section had grown from 16 to more than 60 permanent staff who were trained and ready to translate this new strategy into concrete actions in the field.

This strategy will be carried out by a network of Community Based Organisations (CBOs) called Committees for the Prevention of Violence for Development (CPVD), while the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) has acted as our partner to engage these CBOs in community projects through the Haitian Transitional Initiatives (HTI) Program

Groups to be demobilised:

There are serious difficulties of identification, as regards both members of the urban gangs and those who claim to have been members of the Fad'H and are therefore claiming compensation. In any case, the estimated figure for armed bands is around 6,000 individuals, although it has been estimated that the demobilisation of some 1,000 members belonging to the hard core of the bands would mean a significant step towards the proposed objectives. Despite the fact that the nature and activities of the armed bands is constantly changing, these can be divided into: *Milices Populaires*, the most numerous and most dangerous; *Brigades de Vigilance o de Quartier*, self-defence neighbourhood groups; the ideologically motivated *Organisations Politiques*; *Groupes de Bandits*, which control an area externally, and *Vagabonds*, adolescent groups specialising in rape.

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Vulnerable groups:

Armed youth are recognised as a significant threat to the security of the community. The Integrated DDR Section is working with these organisations to strengthen their capacity to tackle the problem related to armed youth. The projects are targeting 60 children in *Martissant* and 60 children in *Bel Air*. They are implemented through two local NGOs, CODEHA and CEER. Moreover, the Integrated DDR Section, in partnership with USAID and IOM launched a Cyber Centre in *Carrefour Feuille*. This centre will facilitate young people in the area to learn or improve IT skills, sign up for training courses, etc.

During the second term of 2006, UNICEF and child protection sections and DDR MINUSTAH section signed a Memorandum of Understanding to implement a joint strategy for the disarmament and reinsertion of minors associated with armed groups. Establishment of the Conflict Prevention of Violence and Development Committee (CPVD).

Basic principles:

The programme has adopted a multi-faceted approach for the reduction of armed violence in Haiti through a strategy articulated in the twin complementary axes of supporting the strengthening of relevant State institutions while concurrently establishing and reinforcing community institutional capacity to address armed violence. Both axes are supported on the following five pillars:

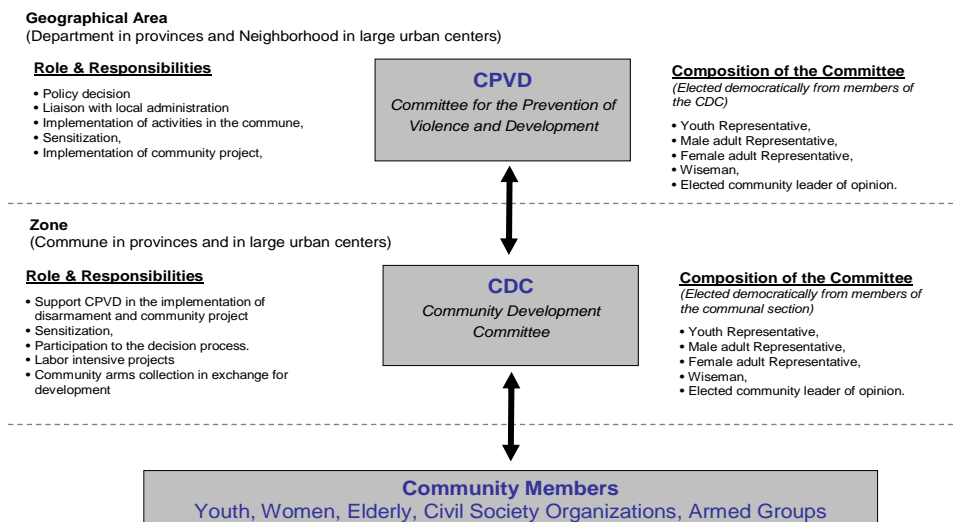
- Negotiation, disarmament and reintegration of armed groups,
- Youths associated with armed groups – disarmament, reintegration and prevention,
- Women associated with armed groups and reinforcement of their role as vectors of peace,
- Reinforcement of the legislative and Institutional framework to control the proliferation of small arms,
- Community disarmament and conflict prevention.

The programme takes an innovative view of the DDR mandate to focus on communities in order to break the cycle of violence. This is based on a new concept of human, economic and sociocultural security whereby it is “the ability of a society to identify and avoid threats to its members or offset the consequence of the occurrence of such threats”.

This strategy is implemented through a network of Community Based Organisations (CBOs) called Committees for the Prevention of Violence and for Development (CPVDs). These committees are composed of community representatives selected through a democratic process. The first step in establishing these committees has been to organise the neighbourhood into smaller administrative areas called locality in urban area and commune in provinces, focusing resources on the communities requiring prioritised interventions. Each commune/locality targeted selects representatives from youth groups, women, elders and adults who form a Community Development Committee (CDC). The outcome of the process is to provide a functional committee with broad representation from the community targeted, and an executive committee, the CPVD. More importantly, it ensures active participation and ownership of activities addressing armed violence in the community.

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Community Platform for Conflict Management



The expected outcome of the process is to reduce armed violence in Haiti. More specifically, it contributes at the community level to:

- Fully functional CBOs dedicated to violence prevention and conflict management,
- Community becomes a key player rather than a witness to addressing armed violence,
- Community based agreement to reduce violence and disarm armed groups,
- Harness conflict prevention and peace building activities to create a real impact,
- Support the coordination of peace building activities at the grass root level,
- Lessons Learned – establishment of good practices in violence reduction based on experiences throughout the country in each CPVD.
- Bridge the gap and support state security institutions in reducing armed violence in the short-term and criminality in the long-term.

Longer term objectives aim at linking CPVDs to create a mutually reinforced network acting as an agent of changed in Haiti (RE: annex 1). The objectives of the networks are:

- Further reinforce the expertise of the CPVDs through sharing experience and knowledge,
- Develop lessons learned and good practices for the Haitian community,
- Develop synergies between CPVDs,
- Develop a national agenda for violence reduction.

Budget:

The estimated cost initially were 50.1 million dollars, including the institutional capacities items. The DDR cost itself was 28.2 million dollars. The cost of the different elements breaks down as follows:

Stage	Amount (millions of \$)
Strengthen institutional powers	21.9
Awareness	4.9
Disarmament and demobilisation	2.2
Rehabilitation and reinsertion	21.1
TOTAL	50.1

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It should be pointed out that, in addition to this amount, the Transitional Government calculates that a further 6 million dollars is needed for a programme to collect the small arms and light weapons currently in the hands of the civilian population. The EU has already donated 3 million dollars for demobilisation and the USA is offering help with security sector reform, particularly in the training and equipping of the Haitian National Police, aid which will amount to more than 5 million dollars.

In March 2006, during a DDR conference in Oslo, the 5th Committee of the United Nations funds with 3.7 million dollars (from the US) for the implementation of the five areas planned within the DDR programme. The reformulation of the DDR programme has meant the need to search for new funds, which are still to arrive. In February 2007, Canada announced its country's contribution of 10 million dollars for the programmes to reform the PNH and Community Security. The distribution would be five million for each programme, and formed part of a total contribution of 15 million for the Fund for Overall Peace and Security for the country.

Calendar:

Initially, the DDR programme was supposed to have begun in 2004 and lasted until 2007 (3 years). It remains to be defined the calendar due to the possibility on the change of approach, much more focused on community security.

Other issues:

- **Security Sector Reform:** The transitional strategy for the HNP is founded on three basic priorities: Strengthening the organisation of the HNP; Strengthening its operational capacity, increasing numbers from 3,000 to 6,000 in 2006 (10% women) and to 20,000 by 2015, with the aim of ensuring better coverage of the whole territory; and turn profession the HNP: provision of human and material resources to fight corruption and impunity among other issues.

1,546 police officers were trained between March 2004 and September 2006. The study plan, which places particular emphasis on the protection of children and awareness about HIV is complemented with training on the ground alongside members of MINUSTAH. During the first term 2006, it has been seen that this process hadn't achieved to the sufficient level to guarantee the armed violence reduction in the country.

The difficulties with this reform stem mainly from the opposition by the armed groups with both political and criminal interests, who were condemned for their persistent acts of violence. In October 2006, the Government urged the General Secretary of the UN to initiate a plan to reform the PNH: This project has been elaborated jointly by the Haitian Executive itself and MINUSTAH, and among the main demands was especially for a more professional institution. According to United Nations sources, the PNH currently consists of 7,000 troops, the majority of which lack the necessary training and equipment.

About PNH, Action Aid recommends a deeply rearrangement of the police body, enhance the capacities of the General Inspector Office with material and technical assistance; rebuild the policies building and reestablishment of the training and management frameworks.

- **Justice:** Measures to combat impunity: organisation of fair and impartial trials, strengthening of investigation procedures, examination of legal capacities in cases of sexual or psychological violence and economic and financial crimes, strengthening of the penal system, organisation of correctional sessions, among other issues. Promotion of an independent judiciary: development of basic legal texts.

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Action Aid recommends to support of a Special Camera and Ad hoc Tribunals, as well as an specific body for the judiciary control and reconstruct the judiciary installations. Finally, the recommendation on the judiciary reform refers to the correctional officials deployment, establish an specific budget for the penal reform, reconstruct the prisons and adopt a coordinated approach.

A report by the *International Crisis Group* (ICG) in January 2007 warned of the weak and dysfunctional nature of the country's judicial system, characterised by a high level of corruption, faced with the threats of violence and organised crime. Faced with an outdated legal code, the State cannot guarantee the safety of its citizens, as well as being incapable of carrying our fair trials and with a growing overcrowding in prisons. Nonetheless, the ICG appreciated MINUSTAH's initiative, and the Government chose I. Préval to carry out an in-depth renewal of the judiciary system. Due to all of this, the report made a series of recommendations: in the short term, a new code of ethics should be enacted for judges and an independent judicial advisory board. Special courts should be authorised for the most serious crimes, and a witness protection system and improved salaries for judges should be introduced. In the long term, it is recommended to amend the constitution in order to establish more rational and effective procedures for appointing the most senior judges, modernising the criminal code procedures, building up the support of the civil society for judicial reform and assuring that donors and MINUSTAH extend their programmes for a period of five years, with the aim of working jointly with the Haitian Government and other members of CARICOM.

DDR STAGES

Disarmament:

Confusion regarding the nature of MINUSTAH's operation. There are currently two scenarios foreseen in the aftermath of the elections: Option I: Successful negotiation between the government and main armed groups leads to the significant disarmament and disbandment of armed groups throughout the country by the end of 2006. Option II: There is no general agreement and disarmament of groups shall be a gradual process linked to piece-meal negotiation and the gradual improvement in the security environment through SSR and increasing confidence in the new government. The schema above outlines this scenario.

Lack of information on the number of weapons, groups and troops to be identified. Varying information has led to estimates of between 90,000 and 200,000 weapons in the country. Haiti's constitution gives ordinary people the right to bear arms.

This process must be joined to an arms registry into the country, a higher border control and stronger la won small arms proliferation.

Demobilisation:

Earlier experiences that were highly focused on the military have proved a source of instability and insecurity. Tensions between the international community (whose aim is the restructuring of the armed forces) and the Haitian people (complete abolition).

Reintegration:

Two components are to be distinguished: (i) Reinsertion, which is a process of rehabilitation of individuals in view of the fact that the beneficiary needs to be prepared to enter into a constructive way of life and to participate actively to the Development of his Reinsertion Option Package; (ii) Reintegration is subdivided in four: formal education, vocational training, micro enterprise support and employment creation. The training periods lasts 9 months with a total cost of 1,500 dollars per combatant. The reintegration itself is the plan developed in

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collaboration with the beneficiary who is then monitored for a period of up to 18 months to ensure the sustainability of the process.

Lack of payment and jobs. From earlier experiences, of the 4,867 soldiers demobilised in training courses run by the OIM, only 304 ended up in employment. Due to the country's extreme poverty, training was focused on former members of the military and paid little attention to civilians, who were merely given kits or financial payments. There is no knowledge of aspects of justice in previous cases. Previous lack of support from government. Need for a psychological adjustment as part of the reintegration process, particularly in the transition from civilian to military status.

The reintegration programmes designed have received strong criticism for being merely focused on ex-combatants, which creates scepticism among the Haitian civil society. A re-definition of the DDR programme in the country would lead to it being reconstructed based on five fundamental points: disarmament and rehabilitation of the armed groups, women, a legislative structure for arms control, and community disarmament. In practice, it would focus on the reduction of violence in the communities, creating a Community Development Committee and Centres and Committees for the Prevention of Community Violence.

EVOLUTION OF THE DDR PROCESS

In spite of the fact that the idea of DDR has been around since the time at which MINUSTAH was established, it has only been introduced at a local level under the auspices of the UNDP, with the provision of a quartering camp but with no kind of planned reintegration. This is due to a lack of funds and the absence of any clear structure. This demonstrates the lack of coordination between security issues, humanitarian issues and the development of the peace-keeping operation itself.

MINUSTAH has attempted to persuade former soldiers to take part in the disarmament process voluntarily, particularly after the death of their leader, Ravix Rémissainthe, in April 2005. However, given the promises being made by the government, these former soldiers have waited for the money, pensions and offers of employment in the public sector, especially in the Haitian National Police or the reconstructed army. As far as the payment of compensation is concerned, the Transitional Government created an administrative office for demobilised members of the armed forces. This office has admitted paying the first of three instalments to 90% of the recognised soldiers, though it has also said it does not have sufficient funds to meet the remaining payments.

- Enhance the confidence between the community and the DDR Section.
- Detailed presentation of the five pillars of the program and determine the role of the CPVD and the CDC.
- Build the CPVD capacity in the conflict analysis on a participatory process.
- First mapping on the root causes of the conflict through the community.

The DDR Section is conscious of these challenges and is taking appropriate measures to moderate the process. The recommendations emerging from implementing this initiative included:

- Systematic support for the CPVDs through capacity building and implementation of small scale community based projects,
- An increase presence of the DDR Section staff in the field to accompany the CPVDs,
- Regular meeting session to continue building consensus and community cohesion,
- Creation of conflict management mechanisms at the community level,

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- Conflict analysis at the community level is time consuming and the identification of a partner becomes essential in order to expand this activity with other CPVDs.

In addition, MINUSTAH's Regional Office in Hinche handed out rehabilitation packages to 19 FAd'H ex-combatants, valued at 16,700 dollars. Lastly, the United Nations administrative and finance Commission decided to maintain the quantity assigned in sums reserved for disarmament for the 2006/2007 two year period, alluding to the high presence of light arms in the country.

In July 2006, the organisation *Action Aid* published a report with its recommendations for the DDR process and the political, judicial, and correctional reforms that needed to be carried out under the current MINUSTAH mandate. With regard to the possible DDR programme, the report recommends including victim support, urging the new government to strengthen the National Disarmament Commission, establishing a weapons registry and providing technical support, promoting a new legislation for the control of light arms, seeking a greater degree of cooperation with the civil society, and ensuring the implementation of a DDR process for reducing the violence and ensuring the support of donors.

The President, R. Préval, indicated his willingness to discuss the conditions for disarmament with the armed groups, in the framework of the visit by the General Secretary of the UN. As a response to this, several armed groups demanded certain guarantees from the Executive to be able to proceed with their disarmament. Despite these messages and conciliatory actions, R. Préval himself, appealing for the use of force, subsequently warned that any person found with an illegal weapon and not joining in the DDR process would run the risk of death. In parallel, two rival armed bands from Gonaïves (*Jubilé Blanc* y *Raboteau*) acceded to disarmament after meeting a parliamentary delegation that visited the city. In addition, MINUSTAH reported that 47 young people from the most conflictive neighbourhoods has joined the DDR programme and that 62 others were going to receive academic and professional training in view of their future rehabilitation into society.

The organisation *Action Aid* published another report in October, where it analysed the role of violence in Haiti, as well as making recommendations about the EU's work in the country, especially with regard to the DDR programme. Regarding the EU's role in the DDR programme, it should commit itself to financing rehabilitation programmes in the transition between disarmament and demobilisation, as well as long term development programmes. In addition, previous failed experiences in this regard should be taken into consideration; a greater link with MINUSTAH sought; the inclusion of specific aspects about violence and gender; the establishing of a registry for weapons; support for a new legislation and a greater control over light arms; and establishing minors from the poorest urban communities as one of the most vulnerable groups.

ASPECTS TO BE EXAMINED

Planning:

- Non classic approach to DDR.
- Lack of establishment on target groups to demobilize.
- No communication between the DDR/MINUSTAH unit with NCDDR and civil society.

Context:

- Persistent insecurity situation.
- Non peace agreement where the implementation of a DDR program is specified.
- Elections priority by MINUSTAH.
- Necessity to reform PNH.

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