



USAID | HAITI

FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

POLITICAL PARTY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Background:

Many of the most serious challenges to democracy in Haiti lie in the realm of political party development, political competition, and consensus-building on the rules that govern political change. Effective management of the electoral process and democratic political party development are both essential benchmarks in a peaceful political transition process and essential components of the democratic transition process in Haiti. Citizens need to have confidence in the political process and be able to hold elected officials accountable. Building strong parties that have internal democratic governance structures is also a key step toward strengthening democratic practices in Haiti. Since 1992, USAID has been supporting political parties in Haiti.

Objectives:

USAID's Political Party Development program helps to strengthen Haiti's democratic system by developing more responsive and representative political parties. Through a network of 13 political party coordinators based in each of Haiti's ten departments, USAID strengthens the capacity of democratic political parties and political entities to govern effectively, responsibly and represent citizens at all levels. The program also facilitates dialogue between citizens and political parties to improve the credibility, integrity and incentive systems for democratic participation in political processes and increase political parties' ability to contribute to positive policy formulation and governance. Targeted assistance is also provided to empower youth and women to play a more active role within their parties and to enhance political parties' capacities to increase the number of youth and women participating in the political arena.

Activities: USAID's Political Party Development Program focuses on the following:

Strengthening the capacity of democratic political parties and political entities to govern effectively, responsibly and represent citizens at all levels.

To address the structural and organizational weaknesses of Haitian political parties, USAID's program concentrates its efforts in helping parties formalize their organization at the departmental and communal levels. Activities under this component include helping political parties conduct outreach activities, expand their base of support, and strengthen formal structures and ties across geographic lines. Thirteen regional political party coordinators work with party leaders to provide technical assistance to political parties that build internal, democratic structures at the departmental, communal, and communal section levels and to help parties extend their membership base to farmers, unions, women and youth.



Deputy Hermano Exinord (left) and Mayor Norvius Fila Gustave

Increasing political parties' positive contributions to policy formation and governance.

Activities under this component strive to establish and strengthen formal party branches and democratic practices through the development of clear and unified party identities and policies. The program works with parties at the national level to help them better understand the meaning, importance and components of party ideology and to build their capacity to systematically develop and support policies that respond to citizen needs. USAID also supports public opinion research to identify citizens' priority issues and their expectations of candidates and political parties, and shares this information with parties. The overarching objective is to help parties create a more informed platform and a common political message that responds to citizens' needs. The program also aims to encourage greater constituency outreach through communal political party and civil society town hall meetings held in each department prior to, and following, elections.

Strengthening dialogue between citizens and political parties.

This activity focuses on strengthening political reform and dialogue across party lines. To reach this goal, activities include the facilitation of multiparty roundtables on key issues such as decentralization and political party finance; promotion of political and social tolerance through public service announcements; establishing multiparty conflict resolution committees; and convening a policy dialogue roundtable on political party reform that includes party representatives, elected officials and citizens.

Participation of Parties in Elections. In the run-up to 2009 partial Senatorial Elections, USAID programming will support parties through training on organization of electoral campaigns; establishment of candidate campaign schools; training in multi-party conflict resolution; holding candidate debates; and party trainings on the new electoral law.

USAID Support: \$3,000,000

Life of Program: November 2007 to October 2010.

Geographic Focus: All ten departments including West, South, South-East, North, North-East, North-west, Artibonite, Grand Anse, Plateau Central and the Nippes Departments.

Implementing Mechanism and Partner:

The National Democratic Institute is the implementer of the program through a Cooperative Agreement. The GOH stakeholder is the Parliament

**FY 2008 Program Results:**

In FY 2008, 5,087 individuals received USG-assisted political party training and four political parties implemented USG-assisted programs to increase the number of candidates and members who are women, youth and from marginalized groups. USAID efforts helped to strengthen political party branch offices at the local level, and build consensus within parties that a local presence is vital to their electoral viability. USAID support also facilitated multiparty dialogue with a view towards avoiding future violent conflicts. For example, in the lower Artibonite region, 95 members from six different parties created a committee to facilitate multiparty dialogue, promote political tolerance and encourage peaceful conflict resolution. Technical assistance to empower women and youth within their parties resulted in draft action plans to create and expand women and youth movements in their departments. One party created a youth

Political Party Training

wing which is now active throughout Haiti's ten administrative departments. This party also held a women's party congress in eight of the ten departments. Such actions represent significant steps towards developing more representative and responsive parties, as well as a political process that provides citizens with peaceful means to influence political change.

Expected Results Over Life of Project:

Over the life of the project, U.S. assistance will result in increased numbers of well structured political parties, more party coalitions, and more inclusive platforms that effectively integrate individual party membership, including youth and women, into the political life of the country. In addition, the program seeks to help parties develop stronger ties with elected officials including members of parliament to build a harmonious role in public affairs. More specifically, the program will help party leaders to increase their knowledge on the role of a party in democratic governance; demonstrate how formal institutional systems of political participation can be used to advance a party's interests and platforms; demonstrate how to build party loyalty among members; and develop constructive ties with elected officials and citizens in their communities. USAID anticipates that over the life of the program, that the political parties USAID supports will become more responsive, increasingly representative and more accountable for their performance.