



**USAID** | **I-TRADE**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

**Exploratory study for the planning of advocacy campaigns by business associations in Haiti**

**Final Report**

**Submitted to**

**Chemonics International – I-Trade Haiti**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1- Mandate**

Investment Trade and Association Development (I-Trade) is a program developed by the United States Agency for International Development in partnership with the Haitian Government and the Private Sector to improve the business environment and the investment climate. The objective of this program is to facilitate the implementation of a productive private/public dialogue so as to remove obstacles to the development of the private sector; to support and enhance the capacity of the business associations; to strengthen the capacity of the public sector to promote and develop international trade, facilitate investments, and efficiently conduct international trade negotiations as well as to develop and implement laws and policies favorable to private sector development. The main results expected by USAID from this project are increased income and purchasing power of workers, increased trade exchanges and investment and improved livelihoods.

In pursuing one of its objectives, the institutional strengthening of the business associations, I-Trade supports them in developing and implementing strategies and public campaigns for two advocacy issues. The program has, therefore, hired the services of Caribbean Business Consulting (CBC) to assist the business associations in identifying and selecting two topics for future advocacy campaigns. The mandate consists of a study conducive to the preparation of a list of private sector prioritized advocacy topics, the presentation of these advocacy issues, proposed strategies and actions to implement the two advocacy campaigns recommended and agreed upon by the leaders of the business associations on the occasion of a workshop. Before specifying the approach followed for the study, it is deemed necessary to specify the meaning of the concept of advocacy.

### **2- Definition of the concept**

Following are some of the definitions of the concept of advocacy as envisaged in the framework of this study:

- Advocacy is an action aimed at changing the policies, positions or programs of any institution whatsoever.
- Advocacy is taking position in favor of a cause.
- Advocacy is a means for citizens to make their voices heard.
- Advocacy is a specific series of activities aimed at reaching an objective of change.
- Advocacy is defining a problem and finding a solution for it.

- Advocacy is bringing about change without conflict.
- Advocacy is speaking up, attracting the attention of a community on an important issue and guiding decision-makers towards a solution.
- Advocacy is raising a problem, offering a solution to such problem and setting the necessary framework for action both at the level of the problem and of its solution.
- Advocacy is made up of different strategies aimed at influencing decision-making at the local, provincial, national and international levels.
- Advocacy is a series of techniques or methods aimed at effecting change.
- Advocacy is attempting to influence someone to get him to understand your position on an issue so as to change a policy or a law in such a way that your position is given due consideration and positive social change is brought about.
- Advocacy is expressing oneself, drawing decision-makers' attention on an important issue and guiding them towards a solution.
- Advocacy is working with others to make things change.

### **3- Methodology adopted for the study**

In order to meet the objectives expected by I-Trade, Caribbean Business Consulting (CBC) divided the work in six (6) steps hereinafter described:

#### ***3.2.1- Documentary Research***

The documentary research included the identification and analysis of the studies and reports made or commissioned by the private sector associations and consultants on topics related to the business environment, to the development of businesses and to private/public dialogue. Surfing a few web sites supplied updated information on advocacy experiences and tools.

#### ***3.2.2- Discussions with leaders of private sector associations***

A list including 23 associations of the private sector was drawn (annexed) and submitted to I-Trade. Face to face interviews were planned and conducted with eleven (11) associations including four (4) from the provinces. Telephone conversations were held with the leaders of two (2) associations the *Center for Free Enterprise and Democracy* (CLED) and the *New Haiti Foundation* (FNH). The associations were selected so as to cover the various sectors of economic activity and according to the availability of their leaders. Three (3) bi-national Chambers of Commerce are included. Meetings were held with at minimum two representatives of each selected association. This approach deemed more efficient made it difficult to set meetings. A questionnaire was developed to facilitate interviews and it was e-mailed to the associations ahead of time.

#### ***3.2.3- Preliminary report***

The information collected in interviews was analyzed. This process allowed the identification of common concerns and trends among associations, the lessons to be learnt from past advocacy experiences, the reasons of success or failure of such experiences and of any other collective action. It has allowed to identify the advocacy topics common to several associations and to assess the capacity of associations to conduct a collective action.

A list of the topics prioritized by the associations we met with was drawn. The justification for choosing these issues and the objectives aimed at as expressed by the persons we met, are also included for each theme.

A brief report of each interview is also included in the preliminary report. It describes the interest shown by the associations to conduct advocacy actions, to work in synergy, and the results expected from such venture.

Taking into consideration the recommendations made by the persons interviewed, the preliminary report recommends an approach aimed at developing a synergy between business associations. It describes the strategies and actions foreseen by the persons questioned to carry out any advocacy action.

#### ***3.2.4- Planning a validation workshop***

A methodology for the facilitation of the workshop has been developed. It facilitates a good understanding of the advocacy concept for the participants, their full participation in the debate and the consensual choice of two prioritized topics. A PowerPoint presentation has also been developed as a support for the workshop. It introduces the advocacy concept, the key elements of advocacy, the topics prioritized, the advocacy strategies, actions and tools as expressed by the persons interviewed.

#### ***3.2.5- Facilitation of the workshop***

The PowerPoint presentation enables to place the workshop in its given context. Facilitated by the participative method proposed, the participants will agree on two advocacy topics. Together, they will explore a strategy and contemplate ways to successfully conduct such advocacy actions. The workshop will lead to the approval of a joint resolution of the business associations regarding the selected advocacy topics.

#### ***3.2.6- Final report***

A final report will be prepared and will include the most relevant points of the intermediary report, a report of the workshop, proposals for the implementation of the advocacy campaigns taking into account the recommendations of the persons questioned and of participants to the workshop. The list of the persons and organizations met, the proposed topics, the prioritized topics, the workshop participants and the resolution(s), as well as photographs of the workshop will be annexed to the report.

## **1- MAJOR CONSTRAINTS TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR**

Major constraints to the development of the business sector have been identified by the leaders of the eleven (11) associations we met within the context of the study.

- Murders, kidnappings and violence especially in the metropolitan area which destroy and endanger the existing investments, de-capitalize businesses, prevent new investments and affect the image of the country.
- Land tenure insecurity deriving from the weaknesses of the legal system and its deficiencies that cannot guarantee to businesses their property rights and titles, resolve conflicts and ensure the enforcement of court decisions.
- The lack of qualified human resources due to the flight of labor to foreign countries and the absence of a market-driven higher education system.
- The lack, absence and deterioration of basic infrastructures and services, i.e. roads and electricity.
- The administrative red tape in spite of the establishment of the CFI (Center for the Facilitation of Investments), especially for customs and tax procedures.
- The difficulties to access loans due to high interest rates, the conditions and terms of credit and the absence of financial policies and products favorable to investment.
- The absence of dialogue between the private and public sectors.

## **2- EXPERIENCE IN ADVOCACY AND TOPICS PRIORITIZED BY LEADERS OF BUSINESS ASSOCIATIONS**

### **2.1- French - Haitian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CFHCI)**

#### **2.1.1- Experience in action and in advocacy to influence public policies**

This chamber has one hundred (100) members operating in various areas of activity of the business sector. It has no experience in advocacy. The activities it carries out are mostly missions abroad in collaboration with other Chambers of Commerce, in particular with the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Haiti (CCIH) and the Canadian Haitian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCHCI).

Two major constraints to the development of the private sector were mentioned by representatives of CFHCI : the lack of qualified human resources and the absence of infrastructure and basic services.

#### **2.1.2- Advocacy topics prioritized**

*Topic 1: Establishment of a legal and public policy framework aimed at developing poles of growth. (clusters)*

Justification / problems: There is a great potential for increased production in areas near a port or planning investments in port infrastructure. Ports throughout the country are used mostly for imports. There is no legal and public policy framework to allow the development of business clusters in “niche” sub-sectors, vectors of growth and of poverty reduction.

Goal: Create wealth by developing business clusters of one or several strategic industries in port areas.

Strategy: Promote the concept among the other private sector associations. Create a structure in charge of developing advocacy campaigns. Obtain the assistance of a structure to accompany such an entity independent from I-Trade. Mobilize Diaspora associations existing in the region.

Priority actions: Develop a map of investment potential and opportunities in port areas; study the strategic sectors and niche sub-sectors, analyze foreign models and experiences, proposals of policies and legal policy reforms / frameworks.

Key partners: CCIH, given its relations with the departmental chambers; ADIH due to its lobbying capacities.

Risks: Government officials often have a perception of advocacy as an initiative of the rich. This risk will be mitigated by focusing on the social aspect of this initiative, vector of the reduction of poverty.

## ***Topic 2: Creation of higher education, research and innovation centers around the niche sectors.***

Justification/problems: The lack of qualified human resources is one of the major constraints to the development of businesses. The latter are often forced to recruit foreign labor. The evolution of the job market increases technical and higher education needs.

Goal: Prepare a critical mass of high level skills in strategic areas.

Strategy: Conduct a study of niche sub-sectors, consider and analyze models developed and implemented in foreign countries.

Key partners: ADIH, AHTIC, Universities

Risks: Advocacy perceived by the government authorities as an initiative of the rich.

## **2.2- Women in Democracy**

### **2.2.1- Experience in action and advocacy aimed at influencing public policies**

This women’s organization comprises a network of fifty-three (53) micro and small businesses and twenty-two (22) associations and cooperatives of women producers. The main constraints to business development mentioned by the representatives of the organization are the insecurity generated by murders, kidnappings and violence; administrative red tape and difficulties to access funds. The organization has no experience in advocacy. However, four (4) of its members have attended advocacy trainings both in Haiti and abroad. They organize trainings in advocacy for women’s associations in various regions of the country.

## **2.2.2- Advocacy topics prioritized**

### ***Topic 1: Facilitation of tax procedures, in particular, to obtain the tax clearance certificate.***

Justification / problems: Tax clearance certificate (Quitus) is only issued for a period of three (3) months, forcing businesses to deal with administrative red tape throughout the year. Considering the limited number of their staff and incapacity to afford the services of an employee in charge of tax matters, small businesses wishing to avoid the red tape prefer to go through service providers for their imports. Some of them use the tax clearance of larger firms for their exports. The process for granting tax clearances lacks transparency.

Objective: Increase the period of validity of the tax clearance so as to be renewable every six (6) months. Facilitate access to tax clearance for all businesspersons by providing information on the procedures and simplifying them.

Strategy: Seek information in order to develop a substantiated position and recommend more flexible procedures. Increase the awareness of the members of the network (women entrepreneurs) of the organization and of other business associations, thus encouraging them to combine efforts to defend this cause.

Key partners: Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Haiti (CCIH), Order of Certified Public Accountants of Haiti (OCPAH)

Term: Six (6) months.

### ***Topic 2: Establishment of a development bank***

Justification / problems: One of the main constraints to the development of the private sector and in particular, of businesses, is the difficulty to access financing. There are no institutions and financial products adapted to the needs of businesses.

Goal: To facilitate access to credit with preferential conditions for the productive sectors.

Strategy: To draw inspiration from the models that work in the Caribbean. To undertake a study and research work and develop a position paper. To inform the other associations increase awareness and induce them to join the cause.

Key partners: Consultant firms; Haitian Manufacturers Association (ADIH)

Implementation: Development of a platform of associations involved in the issue. Creation of a Constitutive Committee as a hard core in charge of facilitating such advocacy and conducting the negotiations while reporting to the platform. Development of regulations for operating the platform and the Committee.

## **2.3- Haitian Canadian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCIHC)**

### **2.3.1- Experience in action and advocacy aimed at influencing public policies**

This chamber has a membership of sixty-two (62). It has not conducted any action aimed at influencing the public decision-makers. The main constraints to the development of the private sector identified by the representatives of the Chamber we met are : the absence of a private/public dialogue; the poor image of the private sector associations, regarded as clubs, by the public decision-makers and also by the community at large; the lack of qualified human resources. This Chamber has no experience in advocacy.

### **2.3.2- Advocacy topics prioritized**

#### ***Topic 1: Establishment of a normalization, standardization and metrological agency and of a regulatory framework pertaining thereto***

Justification / problems: The local and international markets are becoming increasingly competitive and demanding in terms of quality and standards. In Haiti, there is no internationally recognized certifying institution for the certification of the quality of products and services. Few businesses meet or are even aware of internationally required rules and standards. A project to establish such a body has been under consideration since 1994 at the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

Goal: Contribute in reinforcing the national production system by making products and services more competitive and ensuring better protection for Haitian and foreign consumers.

Strategy: Prepare a proposal by compiling all of the studies already completed. Inform and motivate the other business associations. Seek the assistance of IICA, PRIMA, and the Bureau of Facilitation of Commerce of Canada.

Key partners: National Association of Mango Exporters (ANEM), Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Haiti, Haitian Manufacturers Association (ADIH).

Term: 8 to 12 months.

#### ***Topic 2: Implementation of a legal framework enabling the Chambers of Commerce to conduct public service missions***

Justification / problems: The absence and deterioration of public infrastructure such as ports and airports, the lack of qualified human resources resulting from a professional education system that does not respond to the employment market are obstacles to the development of the private sector. The government bodies are poor managers of public infrastructure and services. Few businesses have the financial capacity to invest in this business of a public nature.

Goal: Enhance the capacity of the Chambers of Commerce and guarantee better management of public infrastructures and professional education.

Strategy: Promote the concept of public service mission by the chambers among the other business associations to rally them for the defense of this cause. Seek the assistance of Chambers of Commerce and other “francophonie” institutions to prepare a paper inspired by successful models in other countries.

Key partners: Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Haiti (CCIH), Departmental Chambers, Bi-national Chambers

Term: 8 to 12 months

## **2.4- Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Professions of the North (CCIPN)**

### **2.4.1- Experience in action and advocacy aimed at influencing public policies**

This Chamber has a membership of one hundred and twenty (120) businesses. It is currently attempting to inform public decision-makers and, most especially, the President of the Republic with a view to obtain a gradual tax relief in favor of its membership. The Chamber has prepared a position paper on the issue and has had two meetings with the President of the Republic. It has also met the President of the Senate. It has received qualified technical assistance from economists and tax specialists.

### **2.4.2- Advocacy topics prioritized**

#### ***Topic 1: Tax amnesty to help the business sector come out of a “ impasse”***

Justification: Twenty-two (22) businesses members of the Chamber have been subjected to brutal taxation over a five (5) year period. De-capitalized, they are not able to immediately meet their tax obligations.

Goal: Implement policies and measures facilitating the integration of the businesses in a new tax order, to reclaim the tax administration and secure technical assistance to businesses.

Strategy: Promote the concept of tax amnesty among the other business associations. Gather information and draw inspiration from the best practices and lessons learnt from experiences of tax amnesty in Haiti and other countries.

Key partners: Departmental Chambers of Commerce, Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Haiti (CCIH), Order of Certified Public Accountants (OCPAH).

Risks: Demobilization of the economic operators due to a lack of solidarity and the wear and tear caused by time. Poor perception of the public decision-makers and community at large leading to believe that entrepreneurs are unwilling to pay their taxes.

#### ***Topic 2: Development bank to facilitate the financing of investments by way of a guarantee fund for a period of 3 to 5 years.***

Justification / problems: Businesses do not benefit from a macro economic framework favorable to investments. They cannot access loans given the high interest rates, loans are granted on too short terms and the conditions are dictated by the commercial banks. The latter do not take risks and do not offer financial services responsive to the needs of businesses.

Goal: Facilitate access to loans for businesses.

Strategy: Motivate the other business associations. Seek suggestions / feedback from the banking sector. Conduct a feasibility study.

Key partners: Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Haiti (CCIH), Professional Association of Banks.

Risks: Climate of insecurity

Term: 2 years

## **2.5- AmCham Haiti (American Chamber of Commerce in Haiti)**

### **2.5.1- Experience in action and advocacy aimed at influencing public policies**

This chamber has a membership of sixty-three (63) businesses. During the past few years, AmCham, through luncheons, initiatives and meetings was able to motivate the business sector and the public decision-makers on the importance of the fight against corruption. It is the main advocate, at the business sector level, in the struggle against smuggling and corruption. These different actions have contributed to the establishment of a Presidential Committee on Corruption by the government. This association has also developed a document on smuggling which was submitted to the government bodies concerned by the issue. AmCham's initiative was supported by other business associations, in particular, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Haiti (CCIH) and the Haitian Manufacturers Association (ADIH) and they have had some impact on the public decision-makers and may well have weighed in the decision, by the Interim Government in 2004, to establish the Unité de Lutte contre la Corruption (Anti-Corruption Unit). AmCham is presently attempting to influence public decision-makers in favor of enlarging the tax base.

### **2.5.2- Advocacy topics prioritized**

#### ***Topic 1: Increasing the tax base and the State responsibility to provide public services***

Justification / problems: The great majority of Haitian businesses operate in the informal sector. Taxes are one of the main factors that discourage micro and small businesses from operating in the formal sector. Smuggling and corruption prevent the State from levying taxes. Taxpayers expect the government to be more responsible and aware of their needs.

Goal: Increase the volume of tax collection and ensure the State responsibly provides services.

Strategy: Inform and motivate other employers' associations. Prepare a position paper developing proposals and a taxation model based on the principle of reciprocity and mutual obligations.

Key partners: Haitian Manufacturers Association (ADIH), Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Haiti (CCIH).

#### ***Topic 2: Encourage the preparation of a long term vision of the country's economic development***

Justification / problems: One of the major constraints to the development of the business sector is the absence of dialogue between the private and public sectors. One of the obstacles to this dialogue is the absence of a shared long term vision for the country's economic development.

Goal: To develop a long term vision for the country's economic growth that would allow for the establishment of an agenda and a specific action plan.

Strategy: Inform and motivate the associations of the business sector. Seek information and draw inspiration from models developed in foreign countries, in particular, the successful experience of Rwanda.

Key partners: Center for Free Enterprise and Democracy (CLED), Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Haiti (CCIH), Bi-national Chambers, National Association of Haitian Medias (ANMH).

## **2.6- Haitian Manufacturers Association (ADIH)**

### **2.6.1- Experience in action and advocacy aimed at influencing public policies**

This association has ninety-two (92) members. It has undertaken action in view of the reform of the National Insurance Office (ONA) and the establishment of the Board of Directors for the Social Security Agencies (CAOSS). These initiatives consisted in organizing meetings to motivate other business associations, participating in meetings with the Director of ONA and the President of the Republic. Contacts were also initiated by ADIH on this issue with certain international cooperation agencies such as the Inter American Development Bank, the World Bank and CEPAL.

The Haitian Manufacturers Association (ADIH) was able to promote the establishment of the Center for the Facilitation of Investments (CFI) by organizing meetings with the public decision-makers and approaching USAID for assistance and, most especially, by ensuring its management by a mixed private/public Council.

Lobbying initiatives and action were undertaken by the Haitian Manufacturers Association (ADIH) in respect of American public decision-makers for the passage of the Hope Legislation. ADIH was able to rally economic operators that are not part of its membership to this cause, and to convince the Haitian Government which allocated more than 40% of the funds required for the advocacy and lobbying activities, Haitian associations of the Diaspora, and American law-makers. Assisted by American lobbyists, ADIH was able to prepare documents to influence the American executive and legislative powers. This action, developed over a period of six (6) years, was supported by the members of the association and benefited from the commitment and determination of its leaders. Following the passage of the Hope Act in December 2006, other lobbying initiatives were conducted in order to increase the preferential benefits granted by this legislation. Another success was achieved by ADIH when the revised Hope Law was voted in May of 2008. ADIH's success story is the closest thing to advocacy that has occurred on the level of the business sector. It was however, much more based on lobbying than on advocacy.

### **2.6.2- Advocacy topics prioritized**

#### ***Topic 1: Customs Code favorable to competitiveness of businesses***

Justification / problems: A bill on the revision of the Customs Code was submitted to the Haitian Parliament. It must be analyzed and checked to see if it meets the requirements of the new economy based on the productivity and competitiveness of businesses.

Objective: Contribute to the enactment of a Customs Code favorable to the improvement of the productivity and competitiveness of businesses.

Key partners: AmCham, Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Haiti (CCIH), Canadian Haitian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCHCI), French Haitian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CFHCI)

Risks: Lack of interest on the part of the political decision-makers. The issue is highly technical.

Term: Six (6) months.

## ***Topic 2: Modernization of the Labor Code***

Justification / problems: The enactment of the revised Hope Legislation offers new opportunities to the textile industry, the largest provider of jobs of the formal business sector. The existing Labor Code does not meet the latest needs of the new economic and social dynamics and is not harmonized with certain international labor agreements ratified by Haiti.

Goal: Establishment of a regulatory labor framework favorable to the improvement of productivity and competitiveness of businesses by facilitating relations between labor and capital.

Strategy: Identify critical points for the improvement of productivity and competitiveness of businesses. Lobby among other business associations. Establish a Committee composed of representatives of the different business associations. Engage the members of ADIH and other associations.

Key partners: Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Haiti (CCIH)

Risks: Negative reactions of extremist labor unions.

## **2.7- Haitian Association for the Development of Information and Communication Technologies (AHTIC)**

### **2.7.1- Experience in action and advocacy aimed at influencing public policies**

This association includes thirty (30) members. It is the youngest association of the business sector. It has rapidly become the necessary interface of the public sector as regards ICT-related issues. It has no experience in advocacy but has efficiently conducted negotiations that have allowed it to influence the public authorities. It responded to the publication of the Telecommunications bill prepared by the Ministry of Public Works, Transportation and Communications (MTPTC) by organizing a constructive discussion and a workshop in which businesses of the ICT sector participated. Following this workshop, it called upon experts to prepare a position paper presenting its stand and including recommendations for a regulatory framework favorable to the development of ICTs in Haiti. The Haitian Government considered the recommendations AHTIC expressed in the process of reviewing the bill published on the MTPTC web site. AHTIC also took position against the procedure of selling frequencies at auction by CONATEL. The association, in a written note submitted to the government authorities opposed the procedures being adopted by CONATEL. The institution was forced to put an end to such activity. A five (5) members committee was created by AHTIC to ensure the monitoring of

this issue. The Association hired the services of a Law Firm for legal advice. A special fund was opened by the members of the association to finance actions to follow up and monitor this issue.

## **2.7.2- Advocacy topics prioritized**

### ***Topic 1: Reduction of Internet costs***

Justification / problems: Many businesses have difficulty in accessing an efficient Internet system due to the prohibitive costs of this technological tool in Haiti. The State collects close to 30% taxes on Internet services. Measures such as operationalized optic fiber operational, exemption of the sales tax on computer materials should be adopted in order to facilitate access to businesses and MSEs.

Goal: Increase the productivity of businesses by facilitating their access to quality Internet services.

Strategy: Develop a position paper recommending measures to be taken by the public authorities to reduce the cost of Internet. Inform and increase awareness of other business associations, as well as associations and cooperatives of micro entrepreneurs on the issue.

Key partners: Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Haiti (CCIH), French Haitian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CFHCI), AmCham.

### ***Topic 2: Obligation to associate foreign firm(s) to Haitian firms in procurement contracts (bids)***

Justification: Given the de-capitalization and weak capacities of Haitian businesses, procurement contracts, in particular those financed by international donors are adjudicated to foreign firms. The importance of public bids in the economy justifies that they rest on rules in favor of local businesses.

Goal: Increase the capacity of Haitian firms and widen their opportunities to bid for procurement contracts.

Strategy: Inform and motivate the other business associations. Collect and compile data on procurement contracts granted to foreign firms to better develop a policy in favor of Haitian businesses.

Key partners: Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Haiti (CCIH), French Haitian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CFHCI), professional associations.

Risks: Pressure from international donors. Weak capacity of Haitian businesses.

## **2.8- Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Haiti (CCIH)**

### **2.8.1- Experience in action and advocacy aimed at influencing public policies**

This Chamber has a membership of three hundred and sixty-one (361). With the assistance of the PRIMA program (Program for the Integrated Reinforcement of the Business Community) it is in the process of reviewing its by-laws to become a federated institution including the various

departmental Chambers of Commerce. It has a wide experience in negotiating with the public authorities and has sometimes stood in opposition to the public authorities. Collective actions were conducted by associations of the business sector in order to resolve customs and security problems under the leadership of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Haiti (CCIH). Such actions consisted in the establishing a Task Force on these issues as well as in coordinating meetings with the public decision-makers in order to find solutions. Demonstrations, strikes and other collective actions were promoted by the business associations together with other organizations of civil society to fight against insecurity under the leadership of CCIH. Documents were prepared and actions undertaken to influence the public authorities on key issues such as smuggling, corruption, customs procedures by CCIH. These different actions were limited in time.

### **2.8.2- Advocacy topics prioritized**

#### ***Topic of advocacy 1: Legislation on the responsibility of the State in the event of riots, looting and violence against businesses***

Justification / problems: During the past few years and until recently, the Haitian Government has failed to be able to protect businesses against acts of violence and looting. After such events, the businesses affected have had no recourse and were left defenseless before the public decision-makers and in the incapacity to obtain assistance. There is no law on State responsibility following such violence that de-capitalize and ruin businesses.

Goal: Make the State accountable and responsible vis-à-vis violence, riots and lootings to businesses.

Strategy: Secure the technical assistance of law-makers and experts. Conduct a study on the economic impact of acts of violence against businesses in recent years.

Key partners: Haitian Manufacturers Association (ADIH), New Haiti Foundation (FNH), Canadian Haitian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCHCI).

Risks: Division and conflicts within the private sector at political decision-makers' instigation.

#### ***Advocacy Topic 2: Modernization of the Customs Code***

Justification / problems: A bill revising the Customs Code has been submitted to Parliament. CCIH has engaged in the study of this law. It created a Steering Committee whose task is to recruit an expert to advise CCIH on the essential points for a revision of the Code in a perspective to ensure the increased productivity and competitiveness of businesses.

Goal: Modernize the Customs Code in view of improving the productivity and competitiveness of businesses.

Strategy: Continue the work initiated by CCIH. Rally the other private sector associations. Prepare a position paper with a view to influence parliamentarians.

Key partners: Haitian Manufacturers Association (ADIH), Departmental Chambers of Commerce

Risk: Electoral period.

## **2.9- Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Bas Artibonite (CCIBA)**

### **2.9.1- Experience in action and advocacy aimed at influencing public policies**

This chamber has a membership of eighty (80) and has no experience in advocacy. The main constraints to the development of the private sector mentioned by the representatives of the Chamber we interviewed are the lack of infrastructure and basic services, most especially, roads and electricity, and the lack of qualified human resources.

### **2.9.2- Advocacy topics prioritized**

#### ***Topic 1: Higher education and professional policy integrating the requirements of local and international job markets***

Justification / problems: The lack of qualified human resources is a major constraint to the development of businesses. The higher and professional education system does not take into account the precariousness of living conditions that often oblige the youth to enter the job market at a very early age. The migration of human resources to Northern America is constantly increasing. However, the low level of qualification of most immigrants forces them to take menial jobs that do not allow for a significant increase of remittances to Haiti in comparison with those sent by the Diaspora of the Dominican Republic and El Salvador who are better educated.

Goal: Provide higher education and training for youth to respond to the needs of both the local and international markets in terms of qualified human resources.

Strategy: Inform and motivate the business associations. Analyze the business needs and study the profile of immigrants to Northern America in recent years and the various needs in human resources of these countries.

Key partners: Haitian Manufacturers Association (ADIH), Tourist Trade Association of Haiti (ATH).

Risks: Refusal by the public decision-makers and civil servants to innovate.

#### ***Topic 2: National energy policy and regulations***

Justification / problems: Energy is instrumental for economic growth. With the increase in oil prices, the Haitian Government must implement an energy policy to ensure all Haitians access to energy at a competitive price both for individuals and businesses that are great consumers and submitted to fierce international competition. The State financial support to the electric power company (EDH) represents 10% of the State budget.

Goal: Define the objectives and guidelines of the Haitian energy policy to modernize the existing regulations by taking measures in the areas of monitoring energy saving, considering renewable energies and enhance the quality of the energy transportation and distribution networks.

Strategy: Inform and motivate the other business associations. Seek technical assistance for the preparation of a position paper to impact public decision-makers.

Key partners: Haitian Manufacturers Association (ADIH), Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Haiti (CCIH).

Term: 1 to 2 years.

## **2.10- Tourist Trade Association of the Southeast of Haiti (ASTSEH)**

### **2.10.1- Experience in action and advocacy aimed at influencing public policies**

This association represents forty-three (43) members. It has undertaken extensively action aimed at public decision-makers to revalorize the architectural heritage of the city of and to classify certain districts of Jacmel in Haiti's national heritage. Actions were undertaken with the Municipality of Jacmel and the the Institut du Patrimoine National(National Heritage Institute) (ISPAN), press conferences, meeting and debates were held to inform and increase awareness of citizens on the issue.

### **2.10.2- Advocacy topics prioritized**

#### ***Topic 1: New policies and measures guaranteeing better control of border areas and the security of business zones***

Justification / problems: The climate of insecurity, the murders and acts of violence that repeatedly take place in all impunity have a negative impact on the economy, damages the image of the country while representing an obstacle to both Haitian and foreign investments. Illegal trafficking of weapons is taking place in the border areas. The State has no capacity to control those and the business areas are often subject to acts of violence.

Goal: Curb the traffic of illegal weapons and ensure the security of business areas.

Strategy: Inform and increase the awareness of business associations and of the community at large on the impact of insecurity on investments. Seek expertise to undertake a baseline assessment of the traffic of illegal weapons in border areas and the impact of insecurity in the business areas and to make recommendations and identify solutions.

Key partners: Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Haiti (CCIH), Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Professions of the Southeast of Haiti (CCIPSE), Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Professions of the North (CCIPN).

#### ***Topic 2: Guarantee fund established by Banque de la République d'Haiti (BRH) facilitating access to loans for businesses***

Justification / problems: Among the major obstacles to the development of businesses in Haiti, difficulties to access financing rank first. The banks are not prone to grant loans. They concentrate on risk free investments such as BRH bonds since they feel that the profile of the great majority of loan applicants is not risk free.

Objective: The constitution by the Banque de la République d'Haiti (BRH) of a guarantee fund from the resources transferred to the commercial banks (i.e. a billion Gourdes) to minimize the risk incurred by banks in the loan granting process.

Strategy: Inform and motivate business associations.

Key partners: Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Haiti (CCIH), Departmental Chambers of Commerce.

Risks: Reluctance of the international donors.

## **2.11- Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Professions of the Southeast of Haiti (CCIPSE)**

### **2.11.1- Experience in action and advocacy aimed at influencing public policies**

In the event of investments in energy by the Canadian Cooperation in the Jacmel area, has led CCIPSE to undertake action in favor of the installation of a hydro-electrical plant. The government authorities, the President of the Republic, the Canadian Agency for International Development (ACDI), the Canadian Embassy and Canadian MPs were all approached. In spite of CCIPSE's initiative, a thermal plant was installed which cannot meet the needs of the area given the high cost of crude oil.

### **2.11.2- Advocacy topics prioritized**

#### ***Topic 1: Commercial, industrial and social electric energy policy***

Justification / problems: The difficulties to have access to electrical power and its high cost represent major constraints to the development of businesses. There is no national energy policy that would promote the development of renewable energy sources and to determine such energy investment choices according to the specifics of each region.

Goal: Develop an energy policy that will facilitate access to energy to the entire population as well as to private sector investments in this area.

Strategy: Secure expertise for the development of a position paper that will rally the business sector and impact on the public decision-makers.

Key partners: Association of Haitian Manufacturers (ADIH), Departmental Chambers of Commerce, Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Haiti (CCIH)

Risks: Absence of political will. Reluctance of the public decision-makers.

#### ***Topic 2: Loan policy fostering investment, jobs and consumption***

Justification / problems: High interest rates, terms and conditions of loans are major obstacles to the development of SMEs and of new investment. The commercial banks do not have the financial products to satisfy the needs of businesses. The interest rates applied to credit cards and other financial products offered to consumers are prohibitive and do not facilitate trade. There is no institution to monitor and facilitate commercial banks loans.

Goal: Develop and initiate new mechanisms and financial products to facilitate access to financing for investors, workers and consumers.

Strategy: Seek expertise for the development of a position paper that will rally the business sector and impact favorably the public decision-makers.

Key partners: Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Haïti (CCIH), Departmental Chambers of Commerce.

Risks: Recent and present policy of the Banque de la République d'Haïti (BRH)

## **2.12- New Haiti Foundation (FNH)**

### **2.12.1- Experience in action and advocacy aimed at influencing public policies**

Since its establishment in 1999, seeking a common long term vision was and remains one of the major concerns of New Haiti Foundation (FNH), a non-profit organization created by some businessmen. Over the past few years, with this perspective in mind, it has worked, performed studies and held meetings in order to initiate a deep analysis on some key issues of the national life. New Haiti Foundation (FNH) has undertaken studies and is currently, with the support of PRIMA, executing a project aimed at rationalizing and modernizing the social security system in Haiti. A Steering Committee comprising representatives of eleven (11) business associations is monitoring this project. FNH is attempting to influence the Government for the designation and establishment of a Board of Directors for the Social Security Agencies (CAOSS). A whole series of initiatives have been undertaken by FNH within the framework of this project. FNH has also commissioned studies on an essential point of social welfare, the modernization of the pension fund scheme. FNH wishes to develop an advocacy campaign on this issue in partnership with other associations of the private sector with the support of I-Trade.

### **2.12.2 Topics prioritized**

#### ***Topic: Modernization of the pension fund scheme***

Justification / problems: The pension fund of the National Insurance Office (ONA) weighs heavier and heavier on the money market and largely contributes to financing housing and other activities of those privileged by the authorities in power. These funds are often managed in a non regulatory and partisan manner and are not invested in productive activities, which occasions a loss of the savings capital. The volume of pensioners as well as the benefits provided to them remains ridiculous.

Goal: Ensure a transparent retirement scheme that enables employers to renew their human resources while facilitating retired workforce members to access to a decent exit from the job market.

Strategy: Continue with the studies initiated and share their findings with the business associations in order to rally them to the cause. Prepare a position paper and develop an action plan aimed at impacting public decision-makers.

Key partners: Association of Haitian Manufacturers (ADIH), Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Haiti (CCIH).

Risks: Lack of political will.

## **2.13- Center for Free Enterprise and Democracy (CLED)**

### **2.13.1- Experience in action and advocacy aimed at influencing public policies**

This association has a membership of thirty-nine (39) businesses. Over the last ten years, it has executed projects with the support of international donors, in particular, USAID in order to improve the business environment. This task was achieved together with other business associations. The most important projects are: a study on the formalization of the land assets of the informal sector; the private sector blueprint listing and explaining the twelve major obstacles to the development of the business sector; the Forum 2000 project that covers key sectors of national life through a radio program broadcasting the « Haiti 2020 document “: Vers une nation compétitive » [Towards a competitive nation,] published by CLED in 2003. CLED has drafted a decree for the establishment of a High Economic and Social Council with the agreement of all the employers' associations and Chambers of Commerce of the country. CLED and the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Haiti (CCIH) submitted this document to the Interim Government at the end of June 2005.

CLED, with the support of PRIMA has compiled an inventory and classified the business-related laws and draft bills, undertaken their analysis and now plans to create a database to make them accessible to the public at large. CLED wishes to conduct an advocacy campaign for the formalization of the land assets of the informal sector vis-à-vis the 48<sup>th</sup> legislature. This organization is seeking financial assistance from the Inter American Development Bank (IADB) to update the project initiated in 1998 and the implementation of pilot actions. CLED would like to benefit from the assistance of I-Trade to promote the issue among other business associations, the associations operating in the different target neighborhoods and to undertake a public information campaign.

### **2.13.2- Topics prioritized**

#### ***Topic: Formalizing the land assets of the informal sector***

Justification / problems: The land assets of the Haitian informal sector are estimated at over one million US dollars. However, this capital is not recognized as such and thousands of citizens are living under difficult conditions in the marginal suburban areas of large cities. They have no property titles, no access to financing and do not contribute to the tax base.

Goal: Place on the market the land assets of the informal sector that cannot currently be used as collateral for loans.

Strategy: Prepare a position paper based on the studies already performed by CLED-ILD to promote the issue among the business associations and the associations of the target neighborhoods. To increase awareness of the parliamentary committees and of the mayors responsible for the country's major towns on the issue.

Key partners: Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Haiti (CCIH), Chamber of Commerce, Industry of Bas Artibonite (CCIBA), Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Professions of the North (CCIPN).

### 3- SUMMARY OF THE TOPICS SELECTED BY THE ASSOCIATIONS MET

<b>Area</b>	<b>Themes</b>	<b>Associations</b>
<i>Development and economic growth</i>	Implementation of a legal framework and public policies aimed at developing poles of growth (clusters).	CFHCI
	Development of a long term vision for the country's economic development	AMCHAM
<i>Customs</i>	Customs Code facilitating competitiveness of the private sector	ADIH
	Modernization of the Customs Code	CCIH
<i>Higher education</i>	Establishment of higher education, research and innovation Centers around the "niche" sectors.	CFHCI
	Higher education and professional policy integrating the needs of local and international job markets	CCIBA
<i>Energy</i>	National energy policy and regulations	CCIBA
	Commercial, industrial and social electric energy policy	CCIPSE
<i>Financing</i>	Establishment of a development bank	FED
	Development bank facilitating the investments thanks to a guarantee fund for a period of 3 to 5 years	CCIPN
	Guarantee fund established by Banque de la République d'Haïti (BRH) facilitating access to loans for businesses	ATSEH
	Loan policy fostering investment, jobs and consumption	CCIPSE
<i>Taxes</i>	Enlargement of the tax base and the State responsibility to provide public services	AmCham
	Tax amnesty to help the business sector come out of an impasse	CCIPN
	Facilitation of tax procedures especially the delivery of tax clearance	FED
<i>Land Tenure</i>	Formalizing the landed assets of the informal sector	CLED

<i>Support Infrastructure</i>	Establishment of a normalization, standardization and metrological agency and of a regulatory framework pertaining thereto	CCIH
<i>Procurement</i>	Obligation to foreign firms to associate to Haitian firms in procurement contracts (bids)	AHTIC
<i>Social Protection</i>	Modernization of the Labor Code	ADIH
	Modernization of the pension Scheme	FNH
<i>Security</i>	Law on the State responsibility in the event of riots, looting and violence against businesses	CCIH
	New policies and measures guaranteeing better control of border areas and the security of business zones	ATSEH
<i>Public Service</i>	Implementing a legal framework enabling the Chambers of Commerce to undertake public service missions	CCIH
<i>Security</i>	Reduction of Internet costs	AHTIC

## **4- CAPACITY OF THE BUSINESS ASSOCIATIONS TO CONDUCT ADVOCACY CAMPAIGNS**

### **4.1- Knowledge of the concept**

Most of the leaders of the associations interviewed, had a good knowledge of the advocacy concept. However, some had a tendency to confuse advocacy with grievances, negotiations, project and action plans and initiatives to approach public authorities. The Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Haiti (CCIH), the Haitian Manufacturers Association (ADIH) had already discussed prospective advocacy campaigns with the I-Trade team and associations such as AmCham and ADIH had already identified their priority advocacy themes given their longtime practice of cooperation with the public authorities. The workshop allowed the participants to master the concept, its goal, its objective and its basic components.

### **4.2- Experience in advocacy**

Generally, the associations we met with did not have any practical experience in advocacy, or any experience in systematically conducting advocacy activities. They had little consultations among themselves on key issues and had not developed a synergy that would allow them to strengthening their capacities to influence or impact public decision-makers. Some associations endorse a specific cause according to the interests of their specific members and sometimes of their leaders, and according to a project supported by an international financial assistance. Few associations invest in studies and research that would increase their capacity to advance a case. Their attempts to influence public decision-makers are occasional and are, often, initiatives to address some grievances based on verbal exchanges. The association leaders often tend to meet with the President of the Republic to discuss the issues they are concerned with.

### **4.3- Interest in conducting advocacy campaigns**

The leaders of the business sector associations we met with expressed great interest in developing and implementing advocacy campaigns on the topics proposed. Some of them, in particular, those interested in the issues of tax, energy, higher education and access to credit showed great commitment and, at times, a sort of passion to sustain the progress of the issues they deem to be priorities. Some associations such as AmCham, New Haiti Foundation (FNH), and the Center for Free Enterprise and Democracy (CLED) engaged in approaches and projects on the key issues. They see the I-Trade project as an opportunity to better address issues and to develop public information campaigns to better impact more effectively the public decision-makers.

#### **4.4- Strategies and actions foreseen**

During the interviews, the association leaders came up with suggestions, strategies and actions based on the fundamental elements of an advocacy campaign. They were able to identify the problems to be solved and to recommend sound policy solutions to address such problems. Their intention is generally to increase awareness of other business associations regarding the issues and problems identified. They suggested to seek qualified assistance to better comprehend the problems and using data collection (fact finding) prior to the development of specific policies. They suggested looking for models at the international level. They have set a goal for themselves which is general and the true subject of the advocacy at stake. They ought to be more specific in the definition of their objectives. The objective must focus on a specific activity or action. The associations must set objectives which are specific and measurable. The deadline foreseen for the advocacy campaigns is between six (6) months and two (2) years. Generally, the deadline to reach an advocacy objective is one (1) to three (3) years.

#### **4.5- Human, material and financial capacities required to conduct an advocacy campaign**

##### ***4.5.1- Human resources***

Concerned with the daily management of their own businesses and faced with a less than favorable environment for the development of their businesses, the members of the associations will not be, spontaneously, willing to be involved in an advocacy campaign. Most of the associations questioned, do not have qualified staff that could undertake the smooth implementation of an advocacy campaign. Associations are managed by an Executive Director with the assistance of a Secretary. The Executive Director is pretty busy with the day to day management of the organization. Four (4) associations, the Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Professions of the North (CCIPN), the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Haiti (CCIH), the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Haiti (CCIH), the Haitian Association for the Development of Technologies, Information and Communications (AHTIC) have hired high level professionals who are capable of performing the research and to technically handle the delicate issues to be addressed. Other organizations, such as the Haitian Canadian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCIHC) and the Tourist Trade Association of the Southeast (ATSEH), have hired middle management employees endowed with good skills in communication and public relations. Working in synergy, some business associations could pool the skills of their Executive Directors to facilitate the implementation of advocacy projects.

Certain leaders of the business associations we met possess the technical skills to engage in advocacy in addition to the fact that they clearly possess the leadership qualities required to impact on other members of their organization and stakeholders actors of the business sector. The leaders of FNH, of CLED, AmCham, CCIH, CCIHC we met and interviewed over the telephone have long practiced negotiation with public decision-makers; they have shown leadership in the past both within their association and at the larger business community level. Those of the

French Haitian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, AHTIC, Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Bas Artibonite have perfect mastery of the topics they have prioritized.

#### ***4.5.2- Material Resources***

The associations we met and questioned avail themselves of a certain volume of material resources that could facilitate an advocacy campaign. The Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Haiti (CCIH), the French Haitian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CFHCI), the Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Professions of the North (CCIPN), the Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Professions of the Southeast of Haiti (CCIPSE), the New Haiti Foundation (FNH) have large conference rooms that are able to accommodate 40 to 200 persons. All of the associations are equipped with computer equipment and Internet access. However, few have a Web site. The latter are not very active and do not have regular access. The associations have no strategies for either internal or external communication.

#### ***4.5.3- Financial Resources***

The associations we met do not have the financial resources that suffice to undertake and complete an advocacy campaign on their own. They will have to request special funds from their members and rely on financial assistance from I-Trade.

### **5- Workshop for obtaining feedback on the interviews and selection of the priority themes**

#### **5. Logistics and level of participation**

A workshop to restate the findings of the interviews and to obtain the feedback on the business associations' positions and suggestions was held on Wednesday, June 25, 2008, at the Salle Ramier, of the Montana Hotel. It was facilitated by an Advisor/Instructor from Caribbean Business Consulting (CBC). Its logistical organization was efficiently provided by the I-Trade team. The participants were invited by e-mail a week in advance. The invitations were followed up by telephone calls. The I-Trade team was on site at the Montana before 8:00 a.m.

Fifteen (15) representatives from thirteen (13) associations of the private sector, including five (5) Executive Directors and members of upper management attended the workshop. Thus, fifty per cent (50%) of the private sector associations were represented. Representatives from USAID, from the Support Project to Parliament / SUNY – ARD and from the Project for the Support to Civil Society (PACT) were also present as well as the Director and the Private Sector Specialist of the I-Trade Project.

#### **5.2- Methodology of the workshop**

The workshop consisted in three distinct and complementary phases facilitated by a forty-four (44) page PowerPoint presentation. The first two phases were presented to the assembly and covered the definition of the advocacy concept and the findings of the interviews. The third phase consisted in separate work groups followed by reports on the work done following the presentation. The methodology used for the most part was based on Prior Individual Reflection, which requires each participant to think on its own on an issue, to reflect on it before sharing the

result of his thoughts with others. Based on this premise, the methodology adopted for the working groups is the following:

The participants are divided into groups of approximately seven (7) individuals. Each group designates a Secretary/Reporter who writes down the consensual suggestions and decisions, tracks the relevant information on the workshop report sheet; a Moderator who distributes speaking periods to the participants in the order their hands are raised and a timekeeper in charge of monitoring the periods for reflection and discussion agreed upon.

A first round is allocated to each participant. Ten (10) minutes are first dedicated to preliminary individual reflection to select two priority themes among those submitted by the private sector associations. These themes are written down by each participant.

Each person reads the themes he/she prioritizes. They are taken down by the Secretary / Reporter who classifies the themes, prioritizing those chosen by a majority of participants. Four priority themes were thus kept by the group.

A second round takes place, following ten (10) minutes of individual meditation for each participant to choose a priority theme among the four previously prioritized by the group. Each person reads the theme she/he prioritizes. They are taken down by the Secretary/Reporter. The theme selected by the majority of participants is declared to be the group's priority theme.

Discussions are facilitated by the Moderator. They allow for the presentation of the main problems to be solved by the advocacy, the proposal of a solution, the setting of a realistic and specific goal and objective, the suggested strategies, the identification of the stakeholders and key partners as well as the decision-makers to be influenced. The risks and challenges are identified as well as the deadlines and modalities for implementing the advocacy campaign. This information is noted by the Secretary / Reporter on a workshop report form.

Each Secretary / Reporter presents the theme selected by his/her group to the assembly. The two themes prioritized by most of the groups are identified. If an agreement cannot be reached on the priority themes by this method, the participants consensually prioritize two themes based on the SMARTE criteria (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, Timely and Ecological) and the context the advocacy campaigns will evolve in. It must be noted that if the business sector manages to successfully conduct an advocacy campaign, with more attainable goals and objectives at first, it will acquire an experience and credibility that will help it achieve much more ambitious goals.

### **5.3-Workshop Report**

The workshop began with a presentation of the I-TRADE project by Mr. Thierry Bungener, Project Director, followed by a presentation to recall the objectives of the workshop, by Ms. Marlène Sam, project Private Sector Specialist.

Following the opening remarks by the I-Trade team, the objectives of the workshop were presented: to identify two advocacy themes capable of getting people together, even if they may appear not to be necessarily priorities for each participant or each association but that will allow the business sector to speak with one single voice. Then the results expected to have been reached by the end of the exercise which is to last the whole morning, were also presented: a better awareness of the concept of «advocacy» combined to a good understanding of the different steps or basic components of advocacy activities; two themes prioritized based on a consensus. Hopefully, details regarding the objectives sought by implementing the two selected advocacy

campaigns, and the outline of the strategies for such advocacy; the stakeholders and key partners for both advocacy campaigns should also have been identified.

### ***5.3.1- Definition of the advocacy concept***

The definitions supplied for the concept of advocacy at the beginning of this report (See : Section 2) were presented as well as the basic components, the goal and purpose of advocacy activities. A very clear definition of the concept encompassing the main points of the definitions previously presented was given by Ms. Marlène Sam of the I-Trade project. The criteria for an advocacy objective were also presented. The difference between lobbying and advocacy was defined.

### ***5.3.2-Findings of the interviews***

This restitution was partial, and regarded mostly the presentation of the methodology followed to conduct the interviews and the presentation of twenty-four (24) topics indicated by business associations. These topics were presented together with the proposed advocacy goals and strategies for each one of them. Discussions arose in respect of certain topics, in particular, the one related to ICTs (Information and Communication Technologies).

### ***5.3.3- Work groups***

The participants were divided in two groups:

#### Group 1

Gregor Avril, ADIH  
Réginald Massuci, ANADIPP  
Frantz Large, CCIPSEH  
Ralph Pereira, AHTIC  
Nadège Beauvil, ADIH  
Arielle Mevs, AMARH  
Roland Viau, CCIBA

#### Group 2

Patrick Attié, CFHCI  
Géralde Carré, CCIH  
François Vladimir, APB  
Isabelle Mevs, FED  
Micheline Rampy, FNH  
Hervé Denis, CCIHC  
Marie Josée Garnier, CFHCI

The participants of both groups followed the proposed methodology. A Secretary / Reporter, a Moderator and a Timekeeper were designated by each group. Master Thierry Bungener, Director of the I-Trade project played the part of Timekeeper at the beginning of the work group 2.

These work groups developed in three (3) distinct sessions / phases. The first consisted of going around the table to collect views following a Prior Individual Meditation. This allowed each group to identify four priority topics.

Those prioritized by Group 1 were: *procurement contracts / bids, higher education and professional training, the labor code and energy.*

Those prioritized by Group 2 were: *higher education, technical and professional training, development bank, the labor code and the customs code.*

Then the participants of each group consensually chose two of the themes prioritized by their respective groups. Group 1 prioritized the labor code and procurement contracts. Group 2 prioritized higher education, technical and professional training and the development bank.

Pursuant to their work, both groups met. Each Secretary / Reporter presented the two topics prioritized by his/her group and the explanations to substantiate or in favor of their choices. Then, all of the participants debated on the four issues presented by both groups: *the labor code, higher education, technical and professional training, procurement contracts / bids, development bank*. The participants were asked to do another round of individual reflection and to write down on a piece of cardboard the topic they deemed most appropriate for an advocacy campaign. They were to consider the interest(s) of the other members of their association, the criteria to be considered in developing an advocacy objective and the actual context in which the advocacy was to be carried out. Five (5) participants selected the *development bank* theme, five (5) chose *higher education, technical and professional training*, and two (2) voted for : *the labor code and*. *None of them chose procurement contracts / bids*, at this stage.

The two main topics were thus identified:

- *Development and investment bank*
- *Higher education, technical and professional training*

After choosing these topics, participants discussed the best strategy to be followed. They suggested motivating the members of the various associations on the importance of advocacy in favor of the selected topics by recommending a series of meetings/debates with each chamber or association. They recommended that advocacy campaigns be placed under the leadership of the CCIH, that debates be organized among the associations on the proposed issues, that an action plan and calendar of meetings be developed. These meetings to inform and motivate members of the business associations should be conducive to the signature of a memorandum of understanding amongst them on the two advocacy campaigns.

The participants also suggested that I-Trade provides assistance to the business associations, most especially, ADIH and CCIH, in the study of the draft bill on the revision of the Customs Code. This bill was submitted to certain organizations such as CCIH and CFHCI by the parliamentarians.

At the end of the workshop, it was agreed that I-Trade, assisted by the Advisor / Instructor would transmit to the participants and to the different business associations a short report on the workshop.

## **6- Conclusions and recommendations**

### **6.1- Capacity to engage in advocacy campaigns**

The majority of the associations we met indicated the Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCIH) as a key partner to conduct advocacy campaigns. Several also mentioned the Association of Haitian Manufacturers (ADIH). These two associations have demonstrated the capacities

required to ensure the leadership for developing and implementing advocacy campaigns. They also benefit from the expertise of dynamic and competent Executive Directors who are capable of facilitating the implementation of advocacy campaigns. Both associations also enjoy some credibility that allows them to endorse such a role. Moreover, CCIH is currently leading the establishment of a Federation of Chambers of Commerce that will facilitate the full implication of the ten (10) departmental Chambers in any advocacy campaign.

## **6.2- Relevance of the prioritized topics**

The topics selected and validated by the workshop are capable of rallying business associations. The more institutions support an advocacy goal or objective, the better their chances are to impact on decision-makers and to reach the goal and objective. Advocacy campaigns on the selected topics, identified during the interviews and included in the private sector's agenda as part of the major obstacles to the development of businesses, might definitely enable to address the issues of *access to Financing and the lack of qualified human resource*,.

The objective of the advocacy topic: *development bank* seems easier to achieve since it directly affects businesses regardless of their size. The various criteria pertaining to the advocacy objective may well be applied to this specific topic : it is specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, timely and ecological. This objective is precise and focuses on a specific measure to be taken by the public decision-makers. It can be achieved within a deadline of one (1) to two (2) years. From the start, during the interviews, this theme was indicated by four (4) associations, including three (3) departmental associations. This advocacy objective can be reached even faced with opposition.

The other topic also pertains to the businesses environment requirements but does not directly affect them. Its advocacy objective seems less likely to be achieved in one (1) or two (2) years, considering the priority placed by the donors and the government on basic education. It is less specific and addresses two levels of education: higher education and professional training. Businesses would more easily rally around professional training. The goal and objective of this advocacy issue will be supported by other institutions of the civil society such as youth organizations, socio-professional organizations and universities.

## **6.3- Monitoring to be facilitated by I-Trade**

### ***6.3.1- Establishment of a Promotion and Monitoring Committee***

Following this study, and, particularly after considering the tasks and recommendations which arose from the workshop, it would be appropriate for I-Trade to immediately facilitate the establishment of a Promotion and Monitoring Committee. The latter could include the Executive Directors of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Haiti (CCIH), the Haitian Manufacturers Association (ADIH), the Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Professions of the North (CCIPN), the Vice- presidents of the French Haitian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CFHCI), the Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Professions of the Southeast of Haiti (CCIPSEH) and of the Canadian Haitian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCICH). The main mandate of this Committee would be to "sell" the advocacy initiative to the business associations and chambers. The most challenge and difficulty is to convince businesspersons to take part in information and motivation meetings. Once fully informed and familiar with the concept, a large number of businessmen and women should be interested in engaging in an advocacy campaign, especially,

those resident in the provinces who are less pressured and more available than those of the capital.

### ***6.3.2- Selection of an advocacy topic and of the objective of an advocacy***

Given the limited experience of the business community in advocacy practices and the difficulties in involving the stakeholders of this sector in collective actions, the theme “*development and investment bank*” would be appropriate for a first advocacy campaign. With the assistance of a Consultant, the Promotion and Monitoring Committee will organize a workshop to develop a vision to which a few association leaders of the business sector, representatives of the Banking sector and of the Haitian Association of Economists and specialists in finances will be invited. This workshop, supported by I-Trade, will contribute in defining the specific objective of the advocacy campaign, outline an implementation strategy and set the target groups that are the decision-makers to be impacted as well as actors of the private sector and civil society that may join in the initiative.

### ***6.3.3- Study on the financing of businesses and preparation of a position paper***

A Consultant may be hired to support I-Trade in conducting a study on businesses access to financing. This study will be facilitated by the organization of a workshop to gather some twenty businesspersons, representatives of the banking sector, of the Banque de la République d’Haïti (BRH), of the Haitian Association of Economists (AHE) and some experts in finances. The workshop will enable the various categories of stakeholders to come forth with suggestions regarding most suitable mechanisms for both the Haitian and world context, thus facilitating access to financing for the businesses. The Consultant will analyze the results of this workshop and prepare a draft document to meet / address the needs and expectations of the businesses. This draft will be presented during a validation workshop attended by the participants of the first workshop. Following such activity, and with these recommendations in mind, the Consultant will prepare a position paper which will be submitted to the Promotion and Monitoring Committee. This document will help continue and further develop the motivation within the business associations and other economic operators and become the key element of the advocacy.

### ***6.3.4- Departmental workshops***

The Promotion and Monitoring Committee assisted by a Consultant will coordinate workshops at the departmental level so as to promote the advocacy initiative and the selected topics. These workshops supported by I-Trade will be organized by the Departmental Chambers of Commerce and attended by their members and other local actors concerned by the selected topics. These meetings will unfold around the definition of the «advocacy» concept, its basic components and tools and the presentation of the position paper. The participants, working in groups, will determine the implementation strategy of the advocacy in their respective departments, taking their resources into consideration. The Promotion and Monitoring Committee, assisted by the Consultant, will develop a strategy based on the proposals, recommendations and suggestions expressed by the departmental workshops.

### ***6.3.5- Memorandum of understanding between the associations of the business sector***

Subsequent to these workshops, a large meeting will be held with the leaders of all the business associations and business community. The proposals of the departmental workshops will be presented and a comprehensive strategy defined. At the end of this meeting, a memorandum of understanding (MOU) will be signed between the business associations and chambers for the implementation of the first advocacy campaign so as to reach the specific objective aimed at facilitating access to financing to businesses. The signature of this memorandum of understanding will be followed by a press conference that will definitely launch the advocacy campaign to be conducted according to the strategy defined in consensus by the various business associations.

### ***6.3.6- Development of synergies with other USAID-funded projects***

The implementation of a public information campaign on the topic «*access to financing*» will facilitate the synergy between I-Trade and other ongoing or in the process of being implemented projects financed by USAID.

*Project to Support Parliament SUNY-ARD*: Collaboration with this project could facilitate the development of relations with the Parliamentary Commissions on issues related to the business sector (Commerce, Industry, Tourism, Trade and Agriculture) and on finances. This step will facilitate brainstorming with the parliamentarians and any approach aimed at drafting laws and policies in favor of access to financing of businesses.

*Project to Support Civil Society (PACT)*: Collaboration with this project could facilitate the promotion of advocacy by outreaching several civil society organizations. Moreover, this project whose main objectives include the institutional strengthening of the organizations of civil society to increase their advocacy capacities may facilitate the technical assistance of both Haitian and foreign experts in advocacy to the business associations.

*Project Haiti MSME*: The expertise of this project, whose objectives include the strengthening of the capacities of financial institutions to offer services to the MSMEs could be sought in the context of the brainstorming efforts on the financial mechanisms to facilitate access to financing to the SMEs.

*MarChE – Market Enhancement Chain*: The objective of this new project is the strengthening SMEs operating in niche sub-sectors. It will establish regional offices in the Southeast, the South and the North. This project plans to promote the constitution of an investment fund for the SMEs. Joint brainstorming sessions could be conducive to the establishment of mechanisms to facilitate access to financing to the SMEs.

### **Persons who took part in the Interviews**

Argant Jean-Robert, President, Chambre de Commerce et d'Industrie d'Haïti (CCIH)  
[Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Haiti]

Attié Patrick, Vice President, Chambre Franco Haïtienne de Commerce et d'Industrie  
(CFHCI) [Franco-Haitian Chamber of Commerce and Industry]

Auguste Raoul, Advisor and Former President, Chambre de Commerce et d'Industrie et  
des Professions du Nord (CCIPN) [Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Professions of  
the North]

Auguste René Max, Vice President, AmCham

Avril Gregor, Executive Director, Association des Industries d'Haïti (ADIH)  
[Association of Haitian Manufacturers]

Beauvil Nadège, Assistant Director, Association des Industries d'Haïti (ADIH)  
[Association of Haitian Manufacturers]

Béon Wilbert, Executive Director, Chambre de Commerce et d'Industrie et des  
Professions du Nord (CCIPN) [Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Professions of the  
North]

Bruno Stéphane, Executive Director, Association Haïtienne pour le Développement des  
Technologies, de l'Information et de la Communication (AHTIC) [Haitian Association  
for the Development of Information and Communication Technologies]

Carré Géralde, Executive Director, Chambre de Commerce et d'Industrie d' Haïti (CCIH)  
[Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Haiti]

Charles Mirlande, President, Association Touristique du Sud-est d'Haïti (ATSEH)  
[Tourist Trade Association of the Southeast]

Coupet Gladys, President, AmCham

Denis Hervé, Vice President, Chambre de Commerce et d'Industrie Haïtiano Canadienne  
(CCIHC) [Haitian Canadian Chamber of Commerce and Industry]

Derenencourt Claude, President, Chambre de Commerce et d'Industrie du Bas Artibonite  
(CCIBA) [Chamber of Commerce, Industry of Bas Artibonite]

Derenencourt Ena, Advisor, Chambre de Commerce et d'Industrie du Bas Artibonite (CCIBA) [Chamber of Commerce, Industry of Bas Artibonite]

Destin Joan, Advisor, Association Touristique du Sud-est d'Haïti (ATSEH) [Tourist Trade Association of the Southeast]

Francillon Elodie, Executive Director, Chambre de Commerce et d'Industrie Haïtiano Canadienne (CCIHC) [Haitian Canadian Chamber of Commerce and Industry]

Fritzeau Marc, Secretary General, Chambre de Commerce et d'Industrie et des Professions du Sud-est (CCIPSE) [Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Professions of the Southeast]

Garnier Marie Josée, Advisor, Chambre Franco Haïtienne de Commerce et d'Industrie (CFHCI) [French Haitian Chamber of Commerce and Industry]

Labrousse Robert, Vice President, Chambre de Commerce et d'Industrie d'Haïti (CCIH) [Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Haiti]

Pereira Ralph, President, Association Haïtienne pour le Développement des Technologies, de l'Information et de la Communication (AHTIC) [Haitian Association for the Development Information and Communication Technologies]

Roy Macimala, Executive Director, Association Touristique du Sud-est d'Haïti (ATSEH) [Tourist Trade Association of the Southeast]

Tozin Michel, Advisor, Chambre de Commerce et d'Industrie et des Professions de Sud-Est (CCIPSE) [Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Professions of the Southeast]

Viau Roland, Advisor and Former President Chambre de Commerce et d'Industrie du Bas Artibonite (CCIBA) [Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Bas Artibonite]

Zenny Roland, President, Chambre de Commerce et d'Industrie et des Professions du Sud-est (CCIPSE) [Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Professions of the Southeast]

### **Telephone Interviews**

Berlanger Léopold, Secretary General, Fondation Nouvelle Haiti (FNH) [New Haiti Foundation]

Craan Bernard, President, Centre pour la Libre Entreprise et la Démocratie (CLED) [Center for Free Enterprise and Democracy]

### **Participants in the workshop of June 25, 2008**

Attié Patrick, Vice President, Chambre Franco Haïtienne de Commerce et d'Industrie [French Haitian Chamber of Commerce and Industry]

Avril Gregor, Executive Director, Association des Industries d'Haïti (ADIH)

[Association of Haitian Manufacturers]

Baker Sally, Representative of USAID

Balthazar Lins, Representative du Projet d'Appui au Parlement SUNY-ARD [Project for the Support of Parliament SUNY-ARD]

Beauvil Nadège, Assistant Director, Association des Industries d'Haïti (ADIH) [Association of Haitian Manufacturers]

Carré A. Géralde, Executive Director, Chambre de Commerce et d'Industrie d'Haïti (CCIH) [Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Haiti]

Denis Hervé, Vice President, Chambre de Commerce et d'Industrie Canado Haïtienne (CCICH) [Canadian Haitian Chamber of Commerce and Industry]

François Vladimir, Executive Director, Association Professionnelle des Banques (APB)[Professional Association of Banks]

Garnier Marie Josée, Advisor, Chambre Franco Haïtienne de Commerce et d'Industrie (CFHCI) [French Haitian Chamber of Commerce and Industry]

Jean-Louis Karl, Director du Projet d'Appui à la Société Civile (PACT) [Project for the Support of Civil Society]

Large Frantz, Vice President, Chambre de Commerce, d'Industrie et des Professions du Sud-est d'Haïti (CCIPSEH) [Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Professions of the Southeast of Haiti]

Massuci Réginald, Advisor, Association Nationale des Distributeurs de Produits Pétroliers (ANADIPP) [National Association of Distributors of Oil Products]

Mevs Isabelle, Member of the network of women entrepreneurs of Femmes en Démocratie (FED) [Women in Democracy]

Mevs Arielle, Representative Association Maritime d'Haïti (AMARH) [Maritime Association of Haiti]

Pereira Ralph, President, Association Haïtienne de Développement des TIC (AHTIC) [Haitian Association for the Development of Technologies, Information and Communications]

Pierre Mathias, Advisor Amcham, Association Haïtienne de Développement des TIC (AHTIC) [Haitian Association for the Development of Technologies, Information and Communications]

Rampy Micheline, Administrator, Fondation Nouvelle Haïti (FNH) [New Haiti Foundation]

Viau Roland, Advisor, Chambre de Commerce et d'Industrie du Bas Artibonite (CCIBA)[Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Bas Artibonite]

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## ***OVERVIEW OF INTERVIEWS***

### **A few definitions of the advocacy concept :**

Defense, support of a cause or person.

Oral or written statement defending a cause or person.

Advocacy is an action aimed at changing the policies, positions or programs of any institution whatsoever.

Advocacy is taking position in favor of a cause.

Advocacy is a means for citizens to make their voices heard.

Advocacy is a specific series of activities aimed at reaching an objective of change.

Advocacy is defining a problem and finding a solution for it.

Advocacy is bringing about change without conflict.

Advocacy is speaking up, attracting the attention of a community on an important issue and guiding decision-makers towards a solution.

Advocacy is bringing up a problem, offering a solution to such problem and putting in place support for action both at the level of the problem and its solution.

Advocacy is made up of different strategies aimed at influencing decision-making at the local, provincial, national and international levels.

Advocacy is a series of techniques or methods of action aimed at effecting change.

Advocacy is attempting to influence someone to get him to understand your position on an issue so as to change a policy or a law in such a way that your position is considered and positive social change is brought about.

Advocacy is expressing one's self, attracting attention on an important issue and guiding the decision-makers towards a solution

Advocacy is working with others to bring about change.

### **Definition of the business environment**

A series of elements external to a business. The human and financial resources, the social elements and physical resources are internal to the business and pertain to the micro level. Infrastructure, macro-economic policies and strategies, governance, regulatory and legal frameworks, financial services, social conditions and services (health, education, professional training, social security), cultural influences and attitudes towards business, etc., relate to the external factors of the business environment.

- 1- What are the five major constraints that prevent the development of the business sector?
- 2- What are the five major challenges faced by the business sector?

### **Experience in advocacy**

- 1- Does the organization take part in advocacy training?
- 2- What are the organization's experiences and activities in the area of advocacy?
- 3- What is the advocacy topic/issue (s) that have been developed by the organization?

Process of topic selection

Objective

Strategies utilized

Tools

Level of commitment of the membership

Key partners

Achievements/Results

Human, material and financial resources

Factors of success or failure

Best practices

Lessons learned

### **Interest in conducting an advocacy action**

1-Does the organization wish to conduct new advocacy actions? If not, why?

2- If yes, on what topic(s)? Prioritize 2 topics.

Topic

Objective

Key Partners

Strategy

Priority actions

Tools

Human, material and financial resources

### **Organizational capacities for advocacy**

1- Is the organization conducting or has it already conducted one or several projects in partnership with other organizations of the business sector?

Type of project (s)

Term

Objective of the project (s)

Key partners

Results / Achievements

Human, material and financial resources

2- Is the organization conducting or has it already conducted one or several collective actions in order to influence the public decision-makers?

Type of action

Term

Objective

Key partners

Results obtained

Human, material and financial resources

3- Does the organization have the human, material and financial capacity to conduct an advocacy campaign? If yes, which are they?

4- Does the organization have an internal communication system?

5- Does the organization have a web site, a newsletter, a radio or television program or any other means of public communication?

6- Does the organization have a conference room?

**Reminder of the twelve 12) priorities of the Private Business Sector's Agenda**

This agenda is the result of a reflection initiated by the Center for Free Enterprise and Democracy (CLED), in 2001 and more than twenty business sector associations throughout the country on the major obstacles to the development of business. Twelve major constraints and paths of proposals pertaining to these were consensually selected.

***Absence of an institutional dialogue:*** To establish an institutional dialogue on various issues with the public authorities.

***Taxation Framework:*** to simplify, clarify and harmonize our tax rules and practices so as to make our tax system more fair and less dissuasive.

***Institutional framework:*** to restructure, modernize and reinforce the key public institutions for the development of businesses: Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Ministry of Economy and Finances, Ministry du Tourism, Direction Générale des Impôts (DGI / ISR), Administration Générale des Douanes (AGD / Customs).

***Legal framework:*** to update, modernize and harmonize the regulatory business framework taking into account our integration in Caricom

***Macro economic framework:*** to establish a coherent and healthy macro economic framework to improve visibility and the expectations of the private sector in matters of interest rates, exchange rates and inflation rates.

***Physical framework:*** to continue with the modernization of public companies in order to find solutions to the serious problems raised by the lack, the prohibitive cost and the poor quality of infrastructure and basic services: electricity, roads, ports, airports, telecommunications, drinking water, sanitation.

***Social framework:*** to radically modify the social environment of our businesses by a better allocation of social taxes unanimously deemed to be counter-productive(ONA, OFATMA, TMS...) and mostly by enacting a less constraining Labor Code, more stimulating for job creation, following extensive consultation.

***Unfair Competition:*** to eliminate the unfair competition practices of the State and certain organizations (NGOs, cooperatives, foundations...).

***Governance:*** to improve national and regional governance by asking for a new recruitment and promotion system in the public service based on merit rather than favoritism, in compliance with the Constitution.

***Land Tenure Insecurity:*** to secure property rights and titles, provide mechanisms for quick solution to land tenure conflicts and ensure the strict compliance with court orders on the issue.

***Physical Insecurity:*** to put in place a more efficient and more credible national security apparatus, with the assistance of international technical cooperation.

***Administrative red tape:*** to reduce the weight of administrative procedures and, at the same time, decrease the discretionary power of certain civil servants placed in key public administration positions.

