

Haiti Regeneration Initiative



What is the Haiti Regeneration Initiative?

The Haiti Regeneration Initiative (HRI) is a very long-term sustainable development initiative, designed to gradually grow and evolve from its small beginnings in 2010 to a national scale venture lasting until 2040.

The **Mission** of the HRI is to assist in the long-term regeneration of Haiti. **Regeneration** is the term we use for the sum of four immense, individual but closely interlinked challenges:

- Post-earthquake recovery and reconstruction
- Sustained economic and social development
- Environmental stabilization and restoration
- Building resilience against future hurricanes, floods and earthquakes and economic shocks.

What is its scope?



The HRI currently has four interlinked components at different stages of development:

Sustainable Development Solutions (SDS) is a solution incubator and promoter: a support mechanism and web-based showcase for projects, approaches, technologies and organizations that offer scalable solutions to very specific problems and opportunities. The goal of SDS is to encourage the growth of these solutions from often very small beginnings to national scale application. It is expected that most solutions will require 5-10 years to expand to national scale. SDS was launched in September 2011.

The Cote Sud Initiative (CSI) is a new 20-year sustainable development initiative for the South Department of Haiti. The CSI is where all of the theory, technology and partnerships behind the HRI are applied in an integrated manner within a specific region. The CSI was launched in January 2011 and is coordinated by the CSI Partnership, which as of September 2011 consisted of 11 organizations including the Government of Haiti. Investments are planned and coordinated using a programmatic approach, with ongoing activities in agriculture, forestry, water resource management, marine and coastal management, clean energy, education, health, water and sanitation.

The Port a Piment Millennium Village Project (PaPMVP) The original Millennium Villages are long running integrated development programmes across fourteen sentinel sites in ten countries in Africa and Asia. The programmes are designed to demonstrate how the eight Millennium Goals can be met within five to ten years through community led development and well targeted interventions that deliver rapid results. Preparations have been underway since 2009 for the 2012 launch of the first Millennium Village in the western hemisphere, in the catchment of Port a Piment on the southwest coast of the South Department. More information on the Millennium Village model and achievements to date is available at <http://millenniumvillages.org/>

Haiti 2040 is the planned applied research and policy support component of the Haiti Regeneration Initiative. Support activities have been ongoing since 2010 and the core research and publication activities are at the proposal and consultation stage. The proposed focus of Haiti 2040 is guiding and catalyzing sustainable development throughout the country over the next 30 years.

Why is it needed?



The HRI offers a new approach to an enormous challenge – the regeneration of Haiti from its current state to a stable, sustainable and prosperous country within the next generation. This challenge has three faces:

Chronic national scale problems Even before the earthquake in January 2010, Haiti was the poorest and most environmentally degraded country in the Western Hemisphere. Today, the country's severely depleted natural resources can no longer support its population, further entrenching poverty and increasing the Haitian people's vulnerability to the impacts of natural disasters. The future looks equally difficult with ongoing challenges such as population pressure, food insecurity, future hurricanes, ongoing environmental degradation and high imported energy prices.

Evolving opportunities Against this challenging background, there are however many clear opportunities and cause for hope. Haiti has a democratic government, a free press, relative stability, improving security and healthy international relations. A large diaspora provides billions in remittances every year and Haiti has a unique preferential trade agreement with the USA. There is a clear and unrealized potential for tourism, increased cash crops and for continued improvement of the garment export industry.

The international aid enigma The international community has been delivering humanitarian, development and financial assistance to Haiti for over 30 years. The results of this assistance are unfortunately not always visible or lasting at the local scale. At the national level the country has clearly not been able to capitalize on this assistance to achieve lasting development. Since the earthquake some improvements in approach are visible, but overall it is still "business as usual" for the aid sector.

The HRI team has been analyzing these three aspects of the Haiti challenge since 2009 and concluded that a major change in approach was needed, but also that this change could only occur gradually, whilst concurrently addressing the many short term priorities of reconstruction and stabilization.

How will it work?

The HRI approach first and foremost is to support and work with the Government of Haiti, who has the mandate for policy and planning - but at present does not have firm control over the direction and quality of over 80% of the international assistance that is ongoing in Haiti. There are literally thousands of independent and often self financed organizations working in Haiti – they cannot be easily controlled, but must instead be influenced and motivated to both collaborate and work more effectively on the longer term issues.

The HRI strategy is twofold. The first theme is leading by example: identifying, developing, implementing and communicating a wide range of sustainable development solutions. These solutions will range in scale from households to Departments and utilize many different approaches and technologies – the unifying feature is the emphasis on long-term sustainability, valuing quality and durability over speed.

The second theme is coordination: attracting partner organizations into semi-formal but enduring voluntary coalitions, through the provision of shared services and the opportunity to increase the impact and durability of individual investments. In practice the HRI will be visible on the ground as coalitions of organizations (including the government of Haiti) jointly funding, developing and implementing a range of long-term field oriented thematic and local programmes. At the project level, most activities will be derived from existing ideas – the differences will be in the increased impact and transparency and their fit into a larger sustainability framework.

Who is involved?

The HRI currently operates as four coalitions, one for each major component. The coalitions in total have over 20 members and are designed to grow and evolve in both scale and formality. Current partner organizations include the Government of Haiti (several ministries and authorities), the Government of Norway, UN Environment Programme, UN Office for Project Services, Earth Institute at Columbia University, Catholic Relief Services, The Nature Conservancy, Earthspark, Solar Electric Light Fund, Worldwatch Institute and the Organization for the Rehabilitation of the Environment.

Where are we active?

At present, virtually all activities are focused on the South Department and in the Port au Prince region, however it is planned that the HRI will gradually expand to other parts of Haiti.

Learn more and contact us

We welcome all enquiries and expressions of interest regarding the HRI Initiative. Contact us at info@haitiregeneration.org or visit our website at www.haitiregeneration.org

Sustainable Development Solutions case study: Eneji Pwop



The development benefits of reliable economic and clean lighting are undeniable, however currently less than 30% of the population of Haiti has reliable access to mains electricity. The majority of people light their homes with kerosene lanterns, candles and battery-powered torches. Solar charged battery lanterns and solar units offer a sustainable solution: providing a clean, highly functional and much more economic source of light and even ancillary power for charging mobile phones.

Given how much they are spending on the alternative sources of energy, most Haitian households can afford solar lanterns, so there is no need to give them away. At present however the fully free market approach is problematic for Haiti. The purchase price of reliable lanterns in Haiti is a major barrier to adoption and product quality problems are also spoiling the market. The SDS alternative approach is to support the growth of a new social enterprise – one that is already providing a more cost-effective and sustainable solution.

EarthSpark, a USA and Haiti based NGO, has created the Eneji Pwop (clean energy in Creole) social enterprise, with an operating store in Les Anglais, South Department where energy products can be purchased. Additional stores will be opened soon. Initial grant funding has allowed for store start up, product customer testing, sales force training and initial stock purchases. Consumer credit is provided by the micro-credit organization Fonkoze for solar home systems and by the stores for lanterns (and improved charcoal stoves). The Eneji Pwop approach essentially combines the best elements of the commercial retail franchise model and NGO model to create a sustainable social enterprise. The stores and the mobile sales force operate on a fully commercial basis, providing sustainable livelihoods, whilst the NGO base ensures cost effective central purchasing, marketing, training and other support.

The ambition of Eneji Pwop is to grow to a national chain, delivering practical development benefits to over 2 million households on a financially sustainable basis for a total investment of less than US\$5 million over the next 5 years.

Cote Sud Initiative case study: Tourism Programme



Haiti is an anomaly in the Caribbean – tourism is only a negligible part of its economy. Nonetheless it does have most of the essential ingredients for Caribbean tourism: tropical climate, beaches and seafood and also a major asset in its unique musical and historical culture. The present undeveloped state of tourism in Haiti and particularly in the South Department can be explained by two interlinked factors – the negative international reputation of Haiti and a lack of international class facilities.

The emerging Tourism programme of the Cote Sud Initiative aims to address these issues step by step over the next 10 years or more with a programme of activities highly tailored to the unique assets and circumstances of the South Department.

At the grassroots level, several small projects are planned, such as improved facilities at a historical fort, support for a new tourist cave tour operator and improvement on an existing municipal beach management operation. In the international arena, the proposal is support publicity generating events and visits, marketing the South as the “other side of Haiti”.

The key to unleashing the full tourism potential of the South however will be integrated multi-sectoral investments throughout the South and this will be delivered through other programmes such Transport, Marine and Health. The Les Cayes airport needs to be upgraded to international standards in order to attract direct flights from Miami and elsewhere. Roads and trails must be improved to increase the accessibility of tourism sites. Local seafood production needs to be upgraded and made more sustainable. Hospitals and security must be maintained. One of the strengths of the CSI is this inter-linkage and coordination between thematic programmes, ensuring the maximum possible overall impact for each dollar of investment.

Port a Piment MVP case study: Agricultural hillside test plots



One critical component of the Millennium Village Project is to address chronic malnutrition and failing food production systems for communities. Part of the food insecurity and rural poverty problems of Haiti can be attributed to low agricultural productivity – destructive and primitive techniques degrade the landscape and produce very little per hectare, as low as 25% of global averages. Haiti's national production of cereals has decreased by 4% from 1961 to 2009 while the Dominican Republic increased production by 142%. This is however a solvable problem – agricultural productivity in Haiti can be improved and sustained, with the right investments.

In March 2011, the Organization for the Rehabilitation of the Environment, a local NGO, in partnership with the Earth Institute at Columbia University, launched a number of trials plots in Port a Piment catchment. The first season of trials involved planting controlled plots with several varieties of beans and applying different levels of fertilizer to monitor and measure variations in growing rates and calculate the difference in potential income.

The program also provided training for local community groups on use of elephant grass planting to provide forage and reduce erosion on the characteristic steep slopes of the watershed. Just as important, the trials had a high demonstration value, as they were located in a central and visible location – with constant crowds of onlookers. As part of the training, ORE provided several grain storage facilities – showing how to store harvests to help improve sale prices and seed retention for next harvest.

The results were predictable and very positive – some of the trial plots saw bean yields per hectare nearly doubled. Now that they have seen the possibilities, the farmers of Port a Piment are highly motivated and ready to start introducing these ideas into their own land. In 2012 the MVP will be launched, providing the means to expand beyond the trial to investment across the catchment.

Haiti 2040 example: Diaspora and remittance projections



Haiti actually has two overlapping but distinct populations: Residents and Diaspora. Over the last generation the latter have provided massive and absolutely critical economic support to the former – remittances are crudely estimated to be in the order of 20% of GDP.

However this positive phenomenon may not last forever. The global financial problems, and more specifically in the United States, are expected to strike hard at the capacity of the Diaspora to maintain remittance levels after the post-earthquake surge. The current Diaspora generation is ageing and will retire over the next 30 years and there is no data on the current or potential generosity or loyalty of the next generation. The resident population is growing at 1.6% per annum and at the same time emigration is more difficult than it used to be due to changing foreign government policies – the safety valve is being closed off.

The Government of Haiti needs to be well informed and to understand this issue in order to react appropriately. At present policies are being developed in a vacuum – so the first priority is well-targeted research to both understand current remittance and emigration trends and to develop the best possible long-term projections.

Haiti 2040 proposes to launch a highly targeted research programme to give the Government of Haiti and its international partners the information they need in order to develop well informed and well designed legislation, policies, plans and programmes on this and many other topics. Proposed topics include NGO coordination, climate change, food aid, fisheries, migration, education, health, sanitation and security. Each topic will be addressed in the first instance with a detailed and well-researched paper compiled by a consortium of Haitian and international experts.