



United Nations Development Programme

Communications Office

PRESS RELEASE

Millennium Development Goals look out of reach for increasingly impoverished Haiti, concludes detailed report by the UN and Interim Government

If trends continue, 1 out of 10 Haitians will be infected by HIV in 2015 and a quarter of the population will remain shackled by extreme poverty

Cap-Haïtien, 17 November 2004—The Government of Haiti and the United Nations today launched a joint report that should serve as a wake-up call to the country and to nations across the world interested in Haiti's future.

[“A Common Vision of Sustainable Development”](#) presents a detailed report card on the desperate frailty of daily life in Haiti and projects disturbing downward trends in the country's health, education, economic and environmental sectors over the following decade.

The report was researched and written by a team of Haitian and UN experts lead by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) during the final and most turbulent years of the Aristide government, but was finished prior to the hurricane-related tragedy in Gonaïves which claimed close to 3,000 lives last September.

At a launch ceremony hosted by Gerard Latortue, the Interim Haitian Prime Minister, and Adama Guindo, UN Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative to Haiti, both men agreed that the report is very clear in two aspects:

- **Diagnosis:** If current trends of deterioration of life in Haiti continue, the country will not meet the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals by the year 2015.
- **Message:** the international donor community needs to make good on its promises of financial support for Haiti; aid and development programmes must be reoriented to best meet the goals and Haiti's leadership must develop good governance practices and use the resources made available to them in a transparent and efficient manner.

“The alarm bells go off with this Report,” warned Prime Minister Latortue. “Haiti cannot go at it alone. The time for action is long past due.”

“The situation described in the Report is already seriously distressing and yet, it doesn't take into account the staggering human and monetary costs which the tragedy in Gonaïves entails for the short and long-term,” said Adama Guindo. “When that is all factored in it becomes evident that Haiti cannot make it on its own and that we must ask for an immediate disbursement of the more than US\$1 billion promised last July in Washington within the framework of the Interim Cooperation Framework.”

Some of the major findings contained in the Report include:

HALVING EXTREME POVERTY

- 76 percent of Haitians live on less than US\$2 per day, while 55 percent live on less than US\$1 per day.
- In 25 years Haiti has not known a single period of lasting economic growth and has sustained a yearly decrease of –2 percent of its Gross Domestic Product (GDP). In 2002 the GDP hardly represented 61 percent of its value in 1980.
- Food supply covers only 55 percent of the population and daily food insecurity affects 40 percent of Haitian homes.
- Haiti ranks along with Afghanistan and Somalia as one three countries of the world with the worst daily caloric deficit per inhabitant and 2.4 million Haitians cannot afford the minimum 2,240 daily calories recommended by the World Health Organization.
- The effect is particularly critical on children: 42 percent of those below age 5 are malnourished and easily preventable maladies like malnutrition and diarrhea kill 28 percent and 20 percent of children age 0-5 respectively.

CHILD MORTALITY

- One out of every three deaths in Haiti is a child. An estimated 38,000 Haitian children age 0-5 die each year, a full two thirds of all child deaths in this age group for the whole Caribbean.
- Haiti's rate of 118 deaths per thousand live births for the period 1995-2000 is by far the highest in the western hemisphere and is likely to get worse.
- Juvenile deaths are almost double in rural vs. urban areas (43.3 percent vs. 24 percent respectively), post neo-natal deaths are higher in urban areas than in rural ones (52.4 vs. 34 percent).

MATERNAL HEALTH & MORTALITY

- The ratio of women dying during childbirth has regressed to the point that it is now the second cause of death for Haitian women—between 1994 and 1995, 457 out of 100,000 women died in childbirth, while in 1999-2000 the percentage increased to 523 per 100,000.
- 80 percent of women still give birth outside the health system and 19 percent of all pregnant women never have pre-natal care.
- There is a chronic lack of Obstetricians-Gynecologists, pediatricians, surgeons and orthopedists. The Western region, for example, has one doctor per 67,000 inhabitants.
- Only 36 percent of medical establishments of any kind are dependent of the Ministry of Health.
- Only 26 out of the country's 135 communes have functioning operating rooms.
- Most hospitals don't have ambulances.

HIV/AIDS, MALARIA & TUBERCULOSIS

- At current rates of transmission, an estimated 10.5 percent of the population will be infected with HIV/AIDS by the year 2015, compared to 6.31 in 2002 and 4.98 in 1996.
- 60 to 80 percent of the population is at risk of exposure to Malaria and yet there is still no national prevention plan in place. The prevalence rose considerably between 1994 (3.9 percent) and 2002 (17 percent).
- The incidence of Tuberculosis is endemic and today is the sixth largest cause of death in Haiti.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

- Erosion threatens 25 percent of Haiti's territory.
- Between 1987 and 2000, forest areas diminished by half - 4 percent vs. 9 percent.
- Close to 96 percent of Haiti's population still relies on traditional means for their energy needs.

- Only metropolitan areas have water treatment facilities. Other areas have no systems to protect water sources, and the water that is distributed is neither disinfected nor controlled.

EDUCATION

- More than 21 percent of children ages 6-9 do not go to school at all – they are deemed too young to walk alone the distances of several kilometers to and from school.
- More children ages 10-14 attend school than those 6-9 years of age. Such late entry has negative effects on the system and explains the presence of older-than- school appropriate aged students in primary school.
- There are 4 percent more girls attending school than boys, but they quit school on average twice as early as boys.
- Only 15 percent of teachers meet the academic requirements to teach.

“A Common Vision of Sustainable Development” is available in French at <http://www.ht.undp.org/OMD>

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