

HAITI ADVOCACY WORKING GROUP (HAWG)

HAWG is a working group of international development, faith-based, human rights and social justice organizations advocating on issues related to U.S.-Haiti policy.

Gender Impacts of International Financial Institution Grants & Loans

Over the past 20 years, more than \$5 billion USD in condition-laden donor aid from the International Financial Institutions (IFIs) like the World Bank, Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) benefited rich contractors, investors, and Haiti's tiny elite, but harmed poor women and men while utterly failing to provide the poor with basic needs such as clean drinking water. In the six months since the devastating earthquake of January 12, 2010, 50 IFI loans and grants¹ to Haiti have been either approved or are pending approval for Haiti's recovery needs, with over \$60 million USD to Haiti provided in the form of IFI loans². These loans and grants have ignored women and girls on all levels, from inclusion in the preparation and planning stage to the harmful impacts they will have during and after implementation.

International Financial Institutions: Loans versus Grants

We acknowledge and appreciate the World Bank, IDB, and IMF cancelling most outstanding loan debt incurred by Haiti prior to January 12, 2010; yet Gender Action's monitoring has found that the almost \$310 million USD approved to date for post-earthquake Haiti by the World Bank, IDB, and the IMF includes over \$60 million USD in new loans.

Gender-Based Violence in the Camps

Gender Action's analysis of IFI post-earthquake assistance demonstrates that, incredibly, it fails to address Haiti's escalating gender-based violence, despite international mandates made by the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, UN Security Resolution 1325, and other internationally recognized standards. A crucial example of these missed opportunities is a post-earthquake World Bank grant to Haiti for solar power generation and lighting which aims to provide security for children and the disabled, but fails to target obvious potential beneficiaries such as women and girls who live with an unacceptably high risk of rape and sexual assault.

Malya Villard-Apollon, leader of the Haitian women's organization KOFAVIV, recently testified to the UN Human Rights Council that gender-based violence is an urgent concern needing immediate attention in refugee camps and beyond. "Conditions in the displacement camps, following the January 12 earthquake, have exacerbated women's vulnerability to rape," she said in her testimony. "Women and girls live in constant fear for their safety."³

KOFAVIV, like many other grassroots organizations working to address gender issues in Haiti, has documented hundreds and hundreds of cases of rape and violence that have yet to be prosecuted. The organization cites inadequate security, lack of sufficient housing and lighting, and poor aid

¹ This information is current as July 15, 2010.

² Data in this document comes from the IFI websites, as of July 15, 2010. These publicly available websites continue to call some operations loans, despite announcements that post-earthquake only grants would be made, not loans.

³ Villard-Apollon, Malya. (June 2010). *Oral Intervention of Malya Villard-Apollon*. Speech presented at UN Human Rights Council, Geneva, Switzerland.

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Multiple organizations contribute on a case by case basis to issue or sector specific recommendations and positions expressed in HAWG materials. These materials are not designed to be consensus positions and have not been explicitly endorsed by each organization active in the HAWG.

distribution that excludes civil society consultations as reasons for rampant rapes. Massive IFI spending in post-earthquake Haiti must address gender-based violence.

The U.S. Role in Haiti Reconstruction

The U.S. has pledged \$1.15 billion USD in financial contributions to the reconstruction of Haiti, and has so far donated \$30 million USD to the Haiti Reconstruction Fund, administered by the International Development Association (IDA) of the World Bank. The U.S. pledge entitles it to a voting seat on the Interim Haiti Recovery Commission (IHRC). As a country that has committed one of the highest contributions⁴ to Haiti, the U.S. must ensure that its funds are used for the advancement, security, and inclusion of women.

Recommendations and Requests to the U.S. Congress

On the six month anniversary of Haiti's devastating earthquake, Gender Action respectfully urges the U.S. Congress to use its influence to end the IFI pattern of past mistakes, including the exclusion of women and unsustainable loans. With the World Bank and IDB positioned as the largest sources of post-earthquake aid, and given our nation's uniquely powerful role in these IFIs, it is imperative that our funding to the IFIs require them to encourage the inclusion and participation of women in all levels of decision making, address Haiti's rapes and other gender-based violence, and end the cycle of crushing debt.

We respectfully request that the U.S. Congress:

- Require that IFIs involve Haitian women's groups and grassroots social movements in designing and implementing IFI investments. Local women's organizations and social movements must be involved in participant-driven evaluations of temporary camps, housing, security, police-training, education, agricultural development, water, sanitation, healthcare, and job creation.
- Authorize the U.S. appointed Executive Directors at the IFIs to oppose any operation which does not mandate a gender analysis nor guarantee full participation and leadership by women.
- Direct the U.S. representative to the IHRC to oppose any investment which does not mandate a gender analysis, guarantee full participation and leadership by women, nor address gender-based violence.
- Require that IFI operations in Haiti include impact assessments of rapes and other gender-based violence in their recovery and reconstruction operations, as outlined by the U.N. Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, U.N. Security Council Resolution 1325, and other internationally recognized standards.
- Authorize the U.S. appointed Executive Directors on the IDB, IMF, and World Bank Boards of Directors to oppose any funding in the form of loans to Haiti. We respectfully urge Congress to also seek the elimination of all existing Haitian debt to the IDB, IMF, and World Bank.

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⁴ The U.S.'s contribution is second only to Venezuela, which has pledged U.S. \$ 2.4 billion in financial aid to Haiti.

⁵ Elaine Zuckerman, President of Gender Action, was former Inter-American Development Bank Programs Officer for Haiti.