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Haiti: The Relationship Between Political Instability and Post-Disaster Response

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Haiti: The Relationship Between Political Instability and Post-Disaster Response

Submitted by

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Table of Contents

Abstract	3
Good Governance and Governmentality in the Context of Development.....	4
Post-disaster Reconstruction in a Failed State	7
Haiti and Corruption	9
Recommendations	23
Bibliography.....	25

Abstract

The 2010 earthquake in Haiti represents what Naomi Klein in *The Shock Doctrine* refers to as an event leading to the exploitation of disaster-shocked countries. With this idea in mind, this paper seeks to analyze the hidden setbacks of international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) and their counterproductive relationship with Haiti's unstable government in the aftermath of the 2010 earthquake. The ways in which corruption operates within the Haitian government and international NGO structures pre-and post-neoliberalism, is an important factor in understanding this post-disaster relationship. Before neoliberalist ideologist expanded throughout the world, corruption in Haiti was evident under the Duvalier regime and the Jean-Bertrand Aristide, the presidency. Under neoliberalism, corruption continued within the Haitian government but also resulted in the rise of Western free-market policies as well as international NGOs. This, in turn, exacerbated the political, social, and economic instability of Haiti. Essentially, the argument of this paper is that the systemic corruption within the Haitian government resulted in a lack of regulation of international NGOs during their post-disaster response. This increased corruption and a lack of accountability within NGO's resulted in a lack of progress in the aftermath of the 2010 earthquake.

Good Governance and Governmentality in the Context of Development

In the context of international development, the discourse surrounding Haiti's political instability is mostly associated with a lack of good governance and its status as a failed state. In development, good governance is defined as the process in which public institutions conduct public affairs and manage public resources.¹ Governance is the process of decision-making and the process in which decisions are implemented or not. Additionally, the characteristics that make up good governance include participation, rule of law, transparency, responsiveness, consensus orientation, equity, effectiveness and orientation, accountability, and strategic vision.²

The concept of good governance emerged out of the notion of governmentality. Governmentality is a term created by philosopher Michel Foucault and refers to the way in which the state exercises control over, or governs, its population. Governmentality can also be understood as the "conduct of conduct", referring to a government's attempt to shape human conducted through calculated means.³ The main purpose of a government is to ensure the welfare of its citizens, and to promote its longevity and wealth. However, in Foucault's description of how a government is conducted, it is not always possible to coerce and regulate every individual's actions. Therefore, governments operate by educating desires, aspirations, and beliefs of various stakeholders.⁴

¹ Smith, T. (1979). The underdevelopment of development literature: the case of dependency theory. *World Politics*, 31(2), 247-288.

² *ibid*

³ Li, T. (2007). Governmentality. *Anthropologica*, 49(2), 275-281. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25605363>

⁴ *ibid*

The will to govern and more importantly prioritize the welfare of a population is an integral part discussed in governmentality literature. In Foucault's definition, it is defined as "men and their relations with wealth resources, means of subsistence, and territory". The government then intervenes to foster beneficial processes that can increase the welfare of a population. Improving the welfare of a population requires what Foucault describes as governmental rationality, where a government follows the right way of doing things—good governance.⁵ This utopian element of good governance emphasizes a need for calculated strategies that will lead to the effective growth of a state. The most important key in governmentality is the will to govern. In the context of Haiti, the will to govern is overshadowed by the systemic corruption with the nation's government structures.

Although the concept of good governance is often equated to how a government functions, it also pertains to the effectiveness of relationships governments have with external actors. Good governance also focuses on how governments and other social organizations interact, how they relate to citizens, and how they go about making certain decisions.⁶ The attention is often focused on the governance framework in which good governance operates. The process includes the arrangements, procedures, and policies that define who gets power. Furthermore, the concept of good governance is applied in the global, national, institutional, and community context. Understanding governance at these various levels is made easier once the different entities that occupy the social and political spheres are considered.

⁵ Li, T. (2007). Governmentality. *Anthropologica*, 49(2), 275-281. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25605363>

⁶ Graham, J., Plumptre, T. W., & Amos, B. (2003). *Principles for good governance in the 21st century*. Ottawa: Institute on governance.

Within good governance literature, there is also the connection between political corruption and the lack of good governance. Although the literature focuses on the aspect of corruption in Nigeria, much of this argument holds true for Haiti where bribes, patronage, and nepotism are embedded within government structures. Other characteristics of good governance include voice and accountability, which refers to the capacity to call officials to account for their actions.⁷ In theory, good governance is supposed to lead to political stability and an absence of violence. If violence did not exist, this would then refer to the strength and expertise of bureaucracy structures to perform independently of political influence—and without drastic changes in policy.

Stability and effectiveness may show the responsiveness of a government to its people. There is also the aspect of regulatory quality which involves the perceptions of a government's ability to adopt and implement policies that enhance private sector development. The rule of law is also as an essential part of good governance, and assesses the strength and impartiality of the legal system within a given state.⁸ This aspect is important, particularly when discussing the laws on human rights. For many underdeveloped countries that lack good governance, human rights violations are more likely to occur. Without political stability, there is no accountability or responsiveness from a leader.

Given the various arguments about governance, the question then becomes can good governance equate to economic development, or in Haiti's case, post-earthquake reconstruction.

⁷ Fagbadebo, O. (2007). Corruption, governance and political instability in Nigeria. *African Journal of Political Science and International Relations*, 1(2), 28.

⁸ *ibid*

From an economist perspective, good governance is a prerequisite for economic growth. If all aspects of a country's government strive for transparent, equitable, and market-driven policies then the overall development of a given country will prosper.⁹ The problem with "good governance" is that it makes perfect sense theoretically, but the implementation of this concept comes across various obstacles. For many developing countries such as Haiti, their instability is tied to the role colonialism played in disrupting their systems of living rather than the idea of "good governance" alone.

Post-disaster Reconstruction in a Failed State

Developing countries with the inability to achieve good governance are categorized as a failed state. The internal dynamics of failed states are unstable and the notion of government rationality is limited. Governments of failed states often cannot provide increase welfare resources, and economic stability for their citizens and have little or no control over their governance structures and policy outcomes. In some cases, these governments do not have enough ruling power to carry out functions that resemble good governance. In other cases, governments of failed states have a lack of political will to accept the responsibilities that come with their power.

A failed state is defined as, "the product of a collapse of power structures providing political support for law and order, a process generally triggered and accompanied by "anarchic" forms of internal violence".¹⁰ The era of warlords in Somalia in 1990; small-scale conflicts in

⁹ (Abdellatif, A. M. (2003, May). Good governance and its relationship to democracy and economic development. In *Global Forum III on Fighting Corruption and Safeguarding Integrity*, Seoul (Vol. 20, p. 31).

¹⁰Thürer, D. (1999). The "failed state" and international law. *International Review of the Red Cross*, 81(836), 731-761.

Sierra Leone and Liberia, as well the civil war in Lebanon in the 1980s are examples of failed states. In these countries, law and order have collapsed under the pressure and amidst erupting violence. This example further links a lack of good governance to a characteristic of a failed state. The literature on failed states argue that “failed states” as an expression is not sufficiently precise. The word “failed” is seen as too broad of a term considering the fact that totalitarian states would equally be regarded as having “failed”—this is according to modern day international law. On the other hand, the “state without government” is too narrow, since other functions in addition to the central government of a state also collapse.¹¹

In the context of development, the more stable governments are understood to be the “First World”, while failed states exist in the less powerful “Third world”. The First World” consists of Western hegemonic powers such as the U.S. and European countries that maintain control of the globalized economic world. Additionally, the extension of capitalism to the “Third World” gave way for hegemonic powers to rise and maintain economic control within “Third World” countries. The dependency theory also explains this unequal balance of power within the globalized system whereby, economic aid distributed by neoliberal institutions International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank was a strategy to further exploit the “Third World”.¹² Inequality is an outcome of the distribution of power that affects all populations in both worlds in the form of poverty, hunger, and lack of education. However, the expansion of capitalism has open countries in the "Third World" to economic exploitation that perpetuates such inequalities.

¹¹ Thüerer, D. (1999). The “failed state” and international law. *International Review of the Red Cross*, 81(836), 731-761.

¹² Smith, T. (1979). The underdevelopment of development literature: the case of dependency theory. *World Politics*, 31(2), 247-288.

Haiti and Corruption

Located on the Caribbean island of Hispaniola, Haiti gained its independence from France on January 1st, 1804.¹³ As a French colony, Haiti was one of the richest with its main exports of sugar, coffee, and cotton.¹⁴ Under these exports and slave labor, the economic state of Haiti during colonization was thriving. The successful slave revolt that soon followed, although it liberated the people, it also left Haiti's economy in ruins. The leadership of the new nation was left to revive what was left of the economy and ensure the economic development and the social well-being of the nation. Today, Haiti is considered to be one of the poorest nations in the western hemisphere. With extreme poverty, an unstable economy, and a history of corrupt governments, Haiti remains in the context of a fragile state. While Haiti has had a long history of corrupt political leaders, the Duvalier regime, and The Jean-Bertrand Aristide presidency, are two very prominent cases of corruption within the Haitian government system pre-neoliberalism. The legacy of a lack of transparency and extortion during those eras have hindered the overall progression and future of development in the nation, particularly in the aftermath of the 2010 earthquake.

After the successful slave rebellion that established Haiti as the first independent Black nation, Haiti was internationally isolated from the rest of the world. On the foreign stage, countries refused to recognize Haiti as independent, and this undermined the very essence of the slave rebellion.¹⁵ Haiti had established a name for itself but at the same time became feared by

¹³ Ott, T. O. (1973). *The Haitian Revolution, 1789-1804*. Univ. of Tennessee Press.

¹⁴ Nesbitt, F. N. T. (2008). *Universal Emancipation: The Haitian Revolution and the Radical Enlightenment*. University of Virginia Press.

¹⁵ Dunkel, G. (2003). US embargoes against Haïti, from 1806 to 2003 in Chin, P. et alii. *Haiti, a slave revolution, 200 years after 1804*.

other colonial powers. These colonial powers such as the Spanish and the English did not want what the Haitians had accomplished to influence their colonies. During that period of time, many of the world's dominant powers still relied on slavery and the exploitation as a vital aspect of their economy. Acknowledging Haiti's independence meant that world powers would neglect their belief of the necessity of slavery, and that was not possible.

The recognition from France following the years of the Haitian independence is an important aspect in analyzing the state of Haiti today. After Haiti's independence, France did not recognize Haiti as an independent nation. Seventeen years after the Haitian independence, France offered Haiti self-rule under French surveillance.¹⁶ The Haitian opposed this idea, and rightfully so because they believe this to be a threat. This from an economic perspective was an attempt by the French colonial powers to maintain control over the former colony. France attempted to obtain the internal power of the new nation, while Haiti would be "self-ruled" France would still be making the overall decisions that affected the country as a whole. These decisions would continue to benefit France as the dominant power and further exploit Haiti. In exchange for international recognition, France demanded that Haiti pay 150 gold Francs (\$21 Billion)—money that Haiti did not possess.¹⁷ This was to compensate the former slave owners for damages during the revolt. In order to pay off the debt, Haiti had to borrow 24 million francs to pay the first installment.¹⁸ Haiti was able to pay off the debt to France in 1947, 122 years after the "agreement" was established.¹⁹

¹⁶ Dubois, L. (2012). *Haiti: The aftershocks of history*. Metropolitan Books.

¹⁷ Dunkel, G. (2003). US embargoes against Haïti, from 1806 to 2003 in Chin, P. et alii. *Haiti, a slave revolution, 200 years after 1804*.

¹⁸ Ibid

¹⁹ Ives, K. (2013). Haiti: Independence Debt, Reparations for Slavery and Colonialism, and International Aid. *Global Research*, 12.

The root of Haiti's economic and social problem today can be traced back to the debt Haiti was forced to pay back to France during their "agreement". The weight placed upon repaying this debt left Haiti with little to no means of rebuilding and governing itself as a new nation. After paying off their debt, Haiti was left in an economically vulnerable state. Ultimately, economic instability led to the political instability of the country, and increased the likelihood of government corruption. A government's job is to protect the rights of their people, as well as encourage the growth of their nation. It is very evident that the economic and social state of Haiti has worsened over the last 214 years. The country seems to be repeating a history of constant oppression, perpetuation of inequality, and corruption. The culprit of these injustices is no longer the French colonial power but, politicians voted into office by the people to eliminate the same inequalities they are perpetuating. The Duvalier regime from 1957-1968 and Jean-Bertrand Aristide are prominent cases of corruption in the country.²⁰

Under the Duvalier regime, the value of Haitian citizens and the overall growth of the country was not a priority. In order to understand exactly the severity of the effects in of Duvalier in Haiti, we must begin with Francois Papa Doc Duvalier. Francois Duvalier was elected into office in 1957. While in office Papa Doc declared himself president for life under the new constitution he had created.²¹ His constitution eliminated presidential elections and helped maintain his position in office. François Duvalier was a ruthless dictator who governed the nation of Haiti through terror tactics. One of Papa Doc's main strategies of terror was his private militia the Tonton Makouts. The Tonton Makouts were created in 1959 and were responsible for systematic violence and human rights abuses that included, rape and murder to suppress political

²⁰ Bellegarde-Smith, P. (2013). Dynastic dictatorship: The Duvalier years, 1957-1986. *Haitian History: New Perspectives*, 273-284.

²¹ Nicholls, D. (1986). Haiti: The rise and fall of Duvalierism. *Third World Quarterly*, 8(4), 1239-1252.

opposition.²² To fund his militia, Papa Doc heavily taxed the citizens increasing poverty and inequality within the country. Corruption in the form of the misappropriation of funds, extortion, and domestic business like his administration of a tax agency, the Régie du Tabac (Tobacco Administration), for which no accounting records were kept also perpetuated inequality within the country.²³

Papa Doc as a dictator neglected the basic needs of the Haitian population and suppressed the people through fear, which was ironic as Papa Doc proclaimed himself a champion of Black nationalism. As a black nationalist, he promised to incorporate the Black population in the country that has historically been oppressed. However, Papa Doc did the complete opposite and ignored the impoverished rural Black population in his government expenditures. Under Papa Doc, the average annual income in Haiti was 75 Dollars, and 70% of the population was unemployed.²⁴ Overall, the economy under Papa Doc was never allowed to prosper as Papa Doc was a paternalistic leader who focused on a political revolution that ravaged the country.

As an example of corruption, Papa Doc misappropriated millions of US dollars of international aid, including \$15 million USD annually from the US Government, transferring stolen funds to personal Swiss accounts. The U.S during the period of Papa Doc was particularly disturbed by the economic and social situation in Haiti. In response, international aid was cut from Haiti in mid-1962.²⁵ However, to receive the return of economic assistance, the U.S. implemented stricter policies that monitored aid to Haiti which Duvalier refused. Duvalier then

²² *ibid*

²³ *ibid*

²⁴ Grafton, R. Q., & Rowlands, D. (1996). Development impeding institutions: the political economy of Haiti. *Canadian Journal of Development Studies/Revue Canadienne d'études du développement*, 17(2), 261-277.

²⁵ Farmer, P., Fawzi, M. C. S., & Nevil, P. (2003). Unjust embargo of aid for Haiti. *The Lancet*, 361(9355), 420-423.

publicly renounced all aid from The United States and damaged foreign relations. Trade relations no longer existed and the flow of income through the country's economy was drastically reduced.

After 14 years of dictatorship, Francois Duvalier died in 1971, leaving the country in economic ruins.²⁶ However, Francois "Papa Doc" Duvalier's death was not the end of the Duvalier dictatorship in Haiti. In fact, since he declared himself president for life, his 19-year-old son Jean Claude "Baby doc" succeed him as president. Baby Doc was a different kind of leader in the sense that he used fewer terror tactics and fear, but like his father, he still maintained the systemic corruption of inequality within the country that gave him power.

When Jean-Claude Duvalier took office in 1971, he promised an economic revolution in Haiti, focused on tourism, and reviving foreign relations that his father had destroyed. The US government restored aid to Haiti in 1973, and the country enjoyed slight economic development. The reestablishment of foreign relations in Haiti allowed more production and revenue for the country. However, because corruption was so prominent in the Duvalier regime the little economic development that Haiti had seen in the 1980's did not last long. Corruption continued to influence Duvalier's policies, thus hindering the economic revolution he promised for the country. Duvalier's promises of an economic revolution quickly gave into the inherent systemic corruption within the Haitian government. Although tourism was thriving, and foreign relations were restored, many of the revenues from these sources were going to Baby Doc's private accounts rather than towards the development of the country.²⁷

As allegations of corruption continued against Duvalier so did support for his regime. At this particular time, the Haitian republic became hopeless as corruption continued to take over

²⁶ ibid

²⁷ Nicholls, D. (1986). Haiti: The rise and fall of Duvalierism. *Third World Quarterly*, 8(4), 1239-1252.

the country. The growing attitudes against the capabilities of the existing government emphasized the disconnect between the government and its people. During the Duvalier regime (under both father and son) there was a lack of connection with the Haitian citizens. The government was more concerned with their own necessities, which negatively impacted people's livelihoods.

Political opposition increased in the country and in 1985 citizens of Haiti staged a coup d'état against Duvalier. The revolt began in the city of Gonaïves and quickly spread through cities across the country until reaching the Capital Port-au-Prince. In response to the revolts against him, Jean-Claude responded with a 10% cut in staple food prices such as rice, and corn. He also responded by using the military to silence people through violence, and censorship of the media as a way to control the riots. Despite his efforts, the coup d'état against Jean-Claude continued, and caught the attention of the United States. On February 6th, 1986 Jean-Claude Duvalier left Haiti and sought political asylum in France and marked the end of the Duvalier regime.²⁸ The coup d'état against Duvalier, left Haiti in unstable conditions, a situation similar to the state of the country after the slave revolt. Although "Duvalierism" had ended in Haiti, fundamentally the system of corruption remained and continued under Jean- Bertrand Aristide.

On February 7th, 1991 Jean-Bertrand Aristide took office as the first democratically elected president of Haiti.²⁹ Aristide like many Haitian politicians campaigned on promises of hope and change for the country. A very charismatic leader, Aristide promised the disappearance of Duvalierism and the prominent corruption under their regime. Because many of his reforms were geared towards increasing economic stability, he was able to gain support from the poor

²⁸ Bellegarde-Smith, P. (2013). Dynastic dictatorship: The Duvalier years, 1957-1986. *Haitian History: New Perspectives*, 273-284.

²⁹ Hallward, P. (2007). *Damming the flood: Haiti, Aristide, and the politics of containment*. Verso.

and working-class citizens of the country. Under this new leadership hope had been restored for the Haitian population, and in their eyes, Aristide marked a new beginning. Unfortunately, since the history of economic and political instability had never been resolved, it quickly resurfaced again.

Approximately 6 months after Aristide was elected into office, he was ousted by a military coup formed by the Armed Forces of Haiti under Commander-In-chief Raoul Cédras. From October 1991 to September 1994 Haiti was governed by the military that had ousted Aristide. In the span of 5 years, the military regime was responsible for widespread human rights violations—an estimated 4,000 Haitians were killed.³⁰ The military rule of Haiti reinforced the presence of systemic corruption within the country and exerted brutal force reminiscent of the terror tactics used under Francois Duvalier. Additionally, the military was only concerned with maintaining power as opposed to the overall economic and social progression of the country.

During the coup, Aristide was sent into exile in Venezuela, but after the intervention of the United States he returned to Haiti and served as president from 1994 to 1996.³¹ When Aristide returned to Haiti it was clear that his promises for prosperity in the country had changed. He was no longer the same leader who advocated for economic and social reform policies in the country. At this point, Aristide fell into the cycle of corruption like many other leaders before him. Following his return, Aristide governed Haiti under influences of external global forces. Most notably the International Monetary Fund influenced Aristides policies. While internally the people of Haiti were exploited by a system of corruption, externally Haiti was and still is exploited by global forces.

³⁰ Haiti: 1991-1994: DEATH SQUADS AND STATE VIOLENCE UNDER THE MILITARY REGIME. (n.d.). Retrieved February 11, 2018, from <http://cja.org/where-we-work/haiti/>

³¹ *ibid*

Global external forces like the IMF perpetuated corruption under Aristide because as a failed state Haiti was highly dependent on international assistance. Surrendering to global forces Aristide implemented neoliberal policies that opened Haiti's economy to the free market. This resulted in the continuation of economic instability that had plagued the nation throughout history. As corruption grew under Aristide's leadership, he became a very paternalistic leader who was concerned with pleasing external global forces. His promises of a new Haiti and equality quickly disappeared. Exploitation and corruption consumed the nation, and Haiti became the victim once again to its history. Aristide like political leaders before him left Haiti in an even more unstable economic and social conditions. Under Aristide efforts for democracy was undermined, and today the country continues to be heavily dependent on foreign assistance. Taking into context Jean-Bertrand Aristide's presidency and the Duvalier regime, there is evidence of a history of corruption throughout these governments.

The government of Haiti is systematically disorganized and the central issue seems to be internal and external exploitation. Internally the Haitian government continues to function on corruption, and externally political instability remains an obstacle in creating regulations for international NGOs. The counterproductive relationship between the Haitian government and NGOs is an important part of understanding the lack of progression post-earthquake. According to research conducted by The North American Congress on Latin America, Haiti has the largest NGOs per capita. Approximately 80% of the country's basic services are provided by NGOs.³² Following the earthquake, NGOs received the majority of the global relief funds, while the Haitian government, due to perceived corruption by the U.S. State Department, was

³² Edmonds, K. (2010, April 5). NGOs and the Business of Poverty in Haiti. Retrieved March 18, 2018, from <https://nacla.org/news/ngos-and-business-poverty-haiti>

marginalized in the recovery and rebuilding efforts. As a result, NGOs who are unaccountable to the Haitian people were left to make the majority of decisions.

The unequal distribution of power between underdeveloped countries and developed countries is evident in the inner workings of international Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) such as the American Red Cross or Oxfam. NGOs function within the international aid system, and particularly their role in relation to other actors such as donors, civil society, and state governments capture the bigger picture in the context of Haiti. Additionally, NGOs are key actors in development and serve to tackle the "symptoms" of various issues such as poverty, gender equality, access to education, and disasters relief. NGOs attempt to work within the participatory development framework, while also catering to the needs of their donors.

Contrary to the bottom-up approach NGOs attempt to follow, there is also a top-down explanation of the emergence of nongovernmental organizations in the post-war period. Focusing on aspects related to political globalization, the funding and political access expanded in the post-war period provided a structured environment for the growth of NGOs. Secondly, there is a norm-based argument that describes the pro-NGO perspectives among donor states and intergovernmental organizations (NGOs) as a symbiotic relationship.³³ NGOs progressed in the aftermath of the Cold war, and rapid globalization that brought the spread of market-liberalizing reforms across developing countries. Market liberalizing reforms include structural adjustment programs under neoliberal policies, which led to the increase of non-state actors such as, NGOs in development. In under-developing countries where there tends to be a lack of political and economic stability, we see the rise of NGOs in the role of the state. Haiti is an interesting case to

³³ (Reimann, K. D. (2006). A view from the top: International politics, norms and the worldwide growth of NGOs. *International Studies Quarterly*, 50(1), 45-67.

look at in this context, especially when analyzing the presence NGOs in the aftermath of the 2010 earthquake.

Donor Funds and Post-earthquake Haiti

On January 12th, 2010, a 7.0 magnitude earthquake hit the island. Categorized as a "mega disaster" 22, 000 people were killed, 300,000 injured, and more than 2 million were forced from their homes.³⁴ This natural disaster perpetuated the economic instability of Haiti and left many of the population in search of a better life in countries such as the U.S. The earthquake devastated the infrastructure of the country highlighting issues pertaining to social well-being, healthcare, and government emergency response. An already fragile state prior to the earthquake, Haiti suffered more instability when government agencies responsible for post-disaster response were victims themselves. The National Disaster management system, the Emergency Operations Center and Port-au-Prince's main fire station—Direction de la Protection civil were severely damaged by the earthquake.³⁵ As a result, the government was limited in their post-disaster response plans. However, the government managed to make important post-disaster steps to resume the city's core functions by making fuel available, repairing two of the four damaged electric plants, reopening banks, and paying public sector workers.³⁶ While these steps contributed to the country's post-disaster response, it was not merely enough to address the destruction of the earthquake.

Since Haiti continued to struggle in maintaining political stability, they did not have the proper infrastructure to promote economic stability and progress in the midst of a natural disaster. As a result, government agencies who are supposed to serve the best interest of their

³⁴ Gronewold, N. (2010). earthquake in Haiti Shattered Efforts to Restore Resources, Boost Agriculture. *The New York Times*, January 18.

³⁵ Patrick, J. (2011). Evaluation insights Haiti earthquake response emerging evaluation lessons.

³⁶ *ibid*

citizen were unable to deliver adequate services. As a failed state, the Haitian government is unable to provide adequate support and good and services for their citizens. In comparison, the humanitarian response post-earthquake was much greater than the response from the Haitian government. There was an overwhelming international response to the situation in Haiti. According to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), in the first six months following the earthquake, 4 million people received food aid, 1.5 million people received emergency shelter materials, 11,000 latrines were built, and many more humanitarian responses occurred.³⁷ However, the progress did not match up to the aid delivered. Many of the issues highlighted in post-disaster responses in Haiti related to the lack of coordination and regulation between humanitarian agencies and the Haitian government.

The misappropriation of funds by NGOs is a central aspect in analyzing the role of international aid in Haiti. According to the Center for Global Development, an estimated three billion dollars in private donations and foreign aid were donated to NGOs after the 2010 earthquake.³⁸ However, there is a gap between the amount of money donated, the aid NGOs provided, and the services the Haitian people received. Most of the money donated went to NGOs or private contractors, while less than 1% percent of aid donated went to the Haitian government. Additionally, another important aspect in this context is the issue of trust between NGOs and unstable governments such as Haiti.³⁹ As a failed state the perceived corruption

³⁷ Haiti: 1991-1994: DEATH SQUADS AND STATE VIOLENCE UNDER THE MILITARY REGIME. (n.d.). Retrieved February 11, 2018, from <http://cja.org/where-we-work/haiti/>

³⁸ Ramachandran, V., & Walz, J. (2015). Haiti: where has all the money gone? *Journal of Haitian Studies*, 21(1), 26-65.

³⁹ Ramachandran, V., & Walz, J. (2015). Haiti: where has all the money gone? *Journal of Haitian Studies*, 21(1), 26-65.

within the country's government structures fueled the lack of trust NGOs had. This lack of trust enabled a situation in which NGOs accumulated decision making power that allowed them to navigate the country with little to no accountability and transparency.

The set of relationships that emerged between the Haitian government and NGOs after the earthquake, shows what happens when underdeveloped countries experience shocks in the form of political instability and natural disasters. In the case of Haiti, the shock of a natural disaster emphasized the country's status as failed state and perpetuate their lack of good governance. More importantly, the infiltration of capitalist systems in the aftermath of these shocks led to the growth of disaster capitalism. Haiti as a failed state where corruption thrives gives way for capitalist driven institutions to profit off of situations of displacement and poverty in the country. In many cases, NGOs were operating more as business working to profit off of the poverty, as opposed creating mitigation strategies for the instability of the country.

NGOs also faced obstacles when seeking to innovate new intervention methods, their lack of focus on self-reliance and long-term sustainability, and their international funding. All these factors create setbacks for NGOs and the work they strive to do. NGOs also take part in creating a cycle of dependence, especially in the case where all public services are delivered by them. There is also the exclusion of Haitian citizens and professionals as a central problem for NGOs. NGO representatives admit that there is an unequal ratio of foreign employees to local employees.⁴⁰ How do NGOs expect to work towards a long-term resolution for the Haitian people, if Haitian people are not included in the process?

⁴⁰ Morton, B. (2013). An overview of international NGOs in development cooperation. *United Nations Development Program*.

The work of NGOs is necessary. However, the post-earthquake response in Haiti shows that corruption also exists within the NGO field. Additionally, the lack of NGO regulation by the Haitian government will only maintain the ineffective responses of NGOs. The negative effects of the lack of regulations for NGOs in Haiti is evident in the case of the American Red Cross. The organization had one of the most successful post-disaster fundraising efforts, receiving almost half a billion dollars. In their commitment to helping post-earthquake, the Red Cross vowed to help the Haitian people rebuild. However, after five years in the country, the 500 million dollars raised did not match the services provided by the organization. The Red Cross claimed to have provided homes to more than 130,000 people, but the organization only built 6 homes.⁴¹ In response to the suspicious allocation of funds, the Red Cross stated that “the needs of the country were great and like other aid groups, we faced difficult choices about where to best spend money as quickly and effectively as possible”.⁴²

The organization also stated that they did, in fact, build 6 homes, but it was part of a pilot project that ultimately did not meet the needs of the Haitian people. More specifically, the organization said, "As the project progressed, we learned a number of lessons that helped us revise our long-term shelter plans. The solutions we decided on ultimately helped more people that can be served through new construction efforts and could be implemented faster, helping people living in camps get back into safer homes and conditions sooner". In efforts to be transparent in the midst of their inconsistent post-disaster relief, the organization reported that

⁴¹ Sullivan, L. (2015, June 03). In Search Of The Red Cross' \$500 Million In Haiti Relief. Retrieved March 21, 2018, from <https://www.npr.org/2015/06/03/411524156/in-search-of-the-red-cross-500-million-in-haiti-relief>

⁴² Meltzer, D. (2015, June 5). The Real Story of the 6 Homes in Haiti: Answering Your Questions. Retrieved March 21, 2018, from <http://www.redcross.org/news/article/The-Real-Story-of-the-6-Homes-Answering-Questions-about-Haiti>

they allocated \$66 million to emergency relief, \$173 million to shelter, \$73 million to health, \$47 million to water and sanitation, \$48 million to livelihoods, \$56 million to disaster preparedness, and \$25 million to cholera prevention.⁴³

Although the Red Cross eventually provided statistical evidence for the allocation of their funds, it is important to highlight that one of their main obstacles was a lack of knowledge on the existing conditions of Haiti prior to the earthquake. Through their reconstruction pilot project, the organization soon realized that the unequal land tenure system in Haiti would make it difficult to build homes as quickly as they promised. The lack of knowledge the Red Cross had on the existing conditions in Haiti, could have been avoided if a stronger relationship between the Haitian government and NGOs existed through a regulation system. A stronger relationship would allow for communication between NGOs and government officials in Haiti, and obstacles such as inconsistent tenure rights could be identified in disaster preparedness efforts.

The type of exploitation and corruption exhibited by the American Red Cross increased the instability of the country and made no room for the Haitian government to build their capacity. More importantly, the presence of corruption within international aid institutions and government structures create spaces in which exploitation becomes inevitable. As exploitation of the Haitian government increases, so will their inability to regulate particular funding mechanisms. If the Haitian government decided to restrict the ways NGOs operate in their country, they would potentially risk their ability to receive aid entirely. However, having a

⁴³ Meltzer, D. (2015, June 5). The Real Story of the 6 Homes in Haiti: Answering Your Questions. Retrieved March 21, 2018, from <http://www.redcross.org/news/article/The-Real-Story-of-the-6-Homes-Answering-Questions-about-Haiti>

regulation system is essential in mitigating the unequal power dynamic that allows NGOs to abide by regulations they set for themselves

Recommendations

To address the existing corruption and the counterproductive relationship between the Haitian government and NGOs, the strategies necessary in pushing Haiti towards progression involves creating a strict regulation system for NGOs that enter the country. The monitoring system would hold both the Haitian government and international aid agencies responsible for the steps taken in post-disaster relief efforts. The NGO monitoring system includes an appointed commission responsible for the following:

1. The registration and supervision of NGOs

Under this regulation, NGOs would be required to register with the Haitian government through an application process.

2. The coordination of NGO activities

Once NGOs are registered to operate in the country, they would be responsible for reporting the evaluation data of their services to the Haitian government in addition to their home government.

3. Providing advisory services for the NGOs

The advisory services would help mitigate any obstacles NGOs come across when implementing specific post-disaster projects. The commission would assist with clarifying legal issues and providing alternative implementation options.

Overall the case of Haiti post-earthquake is a difficult one to address. Haiti still remains one of the poorest countries in the Western Hemisphere dependent on international aid. Although

international assistance to Haiti has aided the country, the Haitian government still needs to take responsibility for the country. The future of Haiti's social and economic future is relying on new policies. Haiti's existing assets are important when implementing new strategies. Additionally, post-disaster projects need to be geared towards ensuring economic prosperity for the country. The solution for the overall progression of the country returns to the government, in order for Haiti to change the government needs to change. As mentioned before the government needs to be held accountable for their actions. After all economic and social stability are all connected to political stability. Once the systemic corruption with the Haitian government is addressed, political stability as well as economic and social stability will follow.

Recently, the Haitian government made important steps to regulate NGO operations in the country. In September 2017, The Haitian government announced banning the operations of 257 NGOs in the country. The sanctions came after The Minister of Planning and External Cooperation (MPCE) discovered that many of these NGOs were disconnected from the priorities and needs of the Haitian people. Furthermore, The Minister of Planning and External Cooperation, Aviol Fleurant stated, "the administration intends to redefine a partnership with these international development institutions and agencies." This decision is an example of stricter regulations that would ultimately address NGOs taking on the role of the state. Additionally, this decision, is the Haitian governments attempt to slowly remove Haiti from the state of welfare. By strengthening NGO regulations Haiti would be able to increase their capacity building efforts and take the necessary steps towards good governance.

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