

## **HAWG Statement on the Paris Agreement**

When policymakers from around the world came together in December of 2015 to solidify an international climate agreement in Paris, France, we members of the Haiti Advocacy Working Group (HAWG) engaged this process through advocacy, programmatic strategy, and grassroots activism. As we laud the spirit of international collaboration for climate action that inspired the Paris Conference, we also recognize that the Paris Agreement which ultimately emerged from these negotiations must be strengthened and improved this year and in the years to come to avoid exacerbating existing problems in highly vulnerable countries like Haiti.

Our Haitian partners emphasize the susceptibility of Haitian communities to climate-related weather events, including harsh drought, increasingly intense and frequent hurricanes and dangerous flooding (in 2008 alone, four successive hurricanes destroyed 60% of Haiti's national agricultural production). Rising temperatures and severe drought are already jeopardizing the livelihoods of Haitians, particularly farmers. According to the Haitian National Coordination of Food Security, 60 to 80 percent of agricultural production losses were registered between February and August 2015, and some of our partners report losing up to 80% of their cattle due to drought.

Women compose the majority of Haitian peasant farmers, yet the Paris Agreement fails to reference gender in its operational language, a critical shortcoming that must be addressed at the COP 22. Signatories of the Paris Agreement should also increase their carbon pledges and financial contributions to climate risk insurance, and implement robust carbon-reduction policies to prevent further damage to Haiti and other at-risk countries around the globe. Those who are most directly impacted by climate change should be consulted and involved in policy formulation and implementation as they provide a critical perspective to inform the process.

Civil society actors in Haiti offer a relevant and effective model of grassroots climate mitigation, an example that other states would do well to emulate and that international aid organizations would do well to support. Haitian farmers practice agroecology tactics that cool the planet while feeding their communities. Agrarian bodies such as the Peasant Movement of Papaye (MPP) are practicing reforestation, building and distributing solar panels, and sourcing energy from sugar cane rather than trees. Successfully transitioning our global economic system to a low-carbon economy depends on local solutions instituted by local actors, and we encourage policymakers to consult and strengthen grassroots engagement in climate mitigation and adaptation efforts.

Moving forward, we will continue to emphasize the successful paradigms and critical perspectives of Haitian civil society actors to Congress, the Administration, and aid

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organizations, calling for increased ambition and fair and accountable government policies that promote just and equitable climate mitigation. We look forward to dialoguing with policymakers and learning from the unique expertise of our Haitian partners as we work together to strengthen the Paris Agreement.

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