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# Mapping and dynamics of violence involving Young People and Children in Urban Areas in Port-au-Prince

September, 2023

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This study was commissioned by UNICEF in Haiti and was conducted by Data-Pop Alliance between 2023 and 2024. This team was composed by Enrique Bonilla, Ricardo Fuentes Nieva, Mireille Haddad, Lynn Alexandre Medginah, Andres Lozano, Emmanuel Letouzé, Agustina Perez Mirianco, Santiago Ruiz, Yamil Ruiz Moreno and Maram Tebini.

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# 1

## Introduction

Violence in Haiti is on the rise at an alarming rate, with increasing rates of killings and kidnappings between 2016 and 2021, with gangs exercising control over about 80% of the country's cities, including the presence of 90 gangs in Port-au-Prince, and the proliferation of illegal weapons. The police are understaffed to deal with this threat. The country also faces a paralysis of the judiciary, the absence of elections since the assassination of President Jovenel Moïse, widespread poverty, inflation, unemployment and lack of access to basic services. Social movements have emerged to demand change, but they have also spawned violence in public space, affecting the tourism industry, schools and mobility. In addition, the population in Haiti has to deal with natural and health disasters. Therefore, these cumulative factors make the Haitian population vulnerable to violence and worsen socio-economic challenges.

This study focuses on the need to find actions to protect young people and children from the growing phenomenon of gang violence in Port-au-Prince. Indeed, young people and children are victims of gangs through physical, psychological and sexual violence, and multiple deprivations to their development. They are also targeted as recruits to perpetuate violence, with multiple consequences for their well-being. The phenomenon of violence in Port-au-Prince is increasing in a context where political, economic and social instability makes it difficult to implement actions to mitigate it.

In order to address this need, this study aims to map and explain the dynamics of gang violence and armed actors involving and impacting young people and children (0-24 years old) in urban areas in Port-au-Prince between 2016 and 2022<sup>1</sup>. Its main goal is to understand the context, dynamics and impacts of violence on children and young people in order to create strategies to protect them from violence and prevent their recruitment into gangs. The study is commissioned by UNICEF in Haiti, and conducted by Data-Pop Alliance between September 2022 and September 2023.

Violence is studied under the conceptual framework of the socio-ecological model<sup>2</sup>. This provides an analysis perspective at the individual, relational, community and societal levels of the factors contributing to the evolution of violence. In terms of methodology, the study started with a literature review, followed by primary data collection with quantitative and qualitative methods conducted simultaneously (mixed methods). A participant-based sampling survey and several semi-structured interviews were conducted with young people and children impacted by gang violence in Port-au-Prince. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with civil society organizations, international organizations and the United Nations system in Haiti. Non-traditional data were used to understand the evolution of violence and the population of young people and children at risk by municipality in the Port-au-Prince metropolitan area, including estimates of the number of violent events from the ACLED platform and population estimates by sex and age from WorldPop.

The structure of this document is as follows: it begins with the research questions, the study framework, and the methodology. This is followed by the testimony of a young woman who was a victim of violence and a young man who had been involved in gangs, in which the main aspects of the study were taken up. This is followed by an in-depth study of the context and trends of violence in time and space in Port-au-Prince. The document then shows the direct and indirect impacts of violence on young people and children and the dynamics of young people and child recruitment into gangs. Then, the dynamics of violence are analysed through the structural factors enabling its growth. The final sections of the study present the actions currently being taken to tackle violence, the conclusion and recommendations to protect young people and children from violence and prevent their recruitment into gangs.

<sup>1</sup> In the framework of this study, children are defined as 0 to 17 years old, and young people are defined as 18 to 24 years old.

<sup>2</sup> UNICEF. A social and behavior change agenda for inclusion and equity in education, 2016, <https://www.unicef.org/esa/media/1756/file/UNICEF-ESA-2016-Program-Brief-Education-Inclusion.pdf>

# 2

## Research questions

This study aims to answer the following questions:

**1. Background:** What are the trends in violence involving and affecting young people and children in Port-au-Prince and where is it taking place?

- 1.1. What is the overall situation and trends of violence involving/affecting young people and children in the affected metropolitan area of Port-au-Prince?
- 1.2. Where does violence involving and affecting children and young people take place in the Port-au-Prince metropolitan area (spatial distribution, magnitude and socio-economic and socio-political characteristics)

**2. Impacts:** What are the impacts of different types of violence on children and young people?

- 2.1. What are the different types of violence experienced by children and young people in the affected areas? (direct and indirect impacts: physical harm, recruitment into armed groups, kidnapping, etc./indirect impacts: emotional, psychological, socio-economic impacts, etc.)
- 2.2. How do different types of violence affect children and young people in the metropolitan areas of Port-au-Prince?

**3. Engagement:** How and why are they engaged in violence?

- 3.1. Why are children and young people in metropolitan areas engaged in violent activities?
- 3.2. What is the nature, underlying, dynamic, causes and drivers of children and young people's involvement in violence?

**4. Reasons:** Structural dynamics and causes behind the escalation of violence

- 4.1. How does the current context allow for the escalation of violence and its impacts on children and young people in affected areas? (dynamic) (This question can be put in another section, this will be reviewed during the development of the study).

**5. Actions:** What is currently being done, and what could be done by the various stakeholders to address these issues?

- 5.1. Where are the various stakeholders and initiatives that could create partnerships to address the issues of the incidence of violence, the impacts suffered by young people and children and their recruitment into gangs? Are there any differences between the affected areas?
- 5.2. How could existing stakeholders and potential partners address issues of violence in affected areas?

**6. Conclusion and Recommendations:**

- 6.1. What would be a possible access point to address the structural causes of this violence?
- 6.2. What are the recommended and feasible strategies to address the problem, and how can the strategies be contextualized as per the dynamics of each affected area?

# 3

## Study Framework

This study was commissioned by UNICEF in Haiti, and was conducted by Data-Pop Alliance, with the aim of understanding the spatial distribution, socio-economic factors and impact on children (under 18 years old) and young people (aged 18 to 24 years old) affected by violence, as well as the dynamics of child and young people participation in violent activities in targeted urban areas of the Port-au-Prince metropolitan area, across several sectors. The deliverables for this study include this document, a policy brief summarizing the main aspects of this document, and a PowerPoint presentation.

The study focuses on the types of violence that young people (18-24 years old) and children (<18 years old) face in the context of gang violence in the municipalities of the Port-au-Prince metropolitan area, namely: Carrefour, Cité Soleil, Delmas, Gressier, Kenscoff, Pétiön-Ville, Port-au-Prince, Tabarre and Croix-des-Bouquets. The study is guided by the theoretical model of the Alliance for the Prevention of Violence (APV), of which UNICEF is a member<sup>3</sup>. This model guides the choice of definition and typology of violence as well as the choice of ecological model in order to understand the factors that influence the risk of exposure to violence.

This guide and study use the **definition** of violence of the World Health Organization: "the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment or deprivation."

In terms of **typology**, the types of violence are studied according to whether they impact the individual at the physical, psychological, sexual and deprivation levels and according to whether they are perpetrated at the collective (gangs, armed groups or strangers), interpersonal level (people known to the victims) or self-directed level (suicides or suicide attempts).

The socio-ecological model was used to frame the themes of each research question. The model is composed of four analysis levels

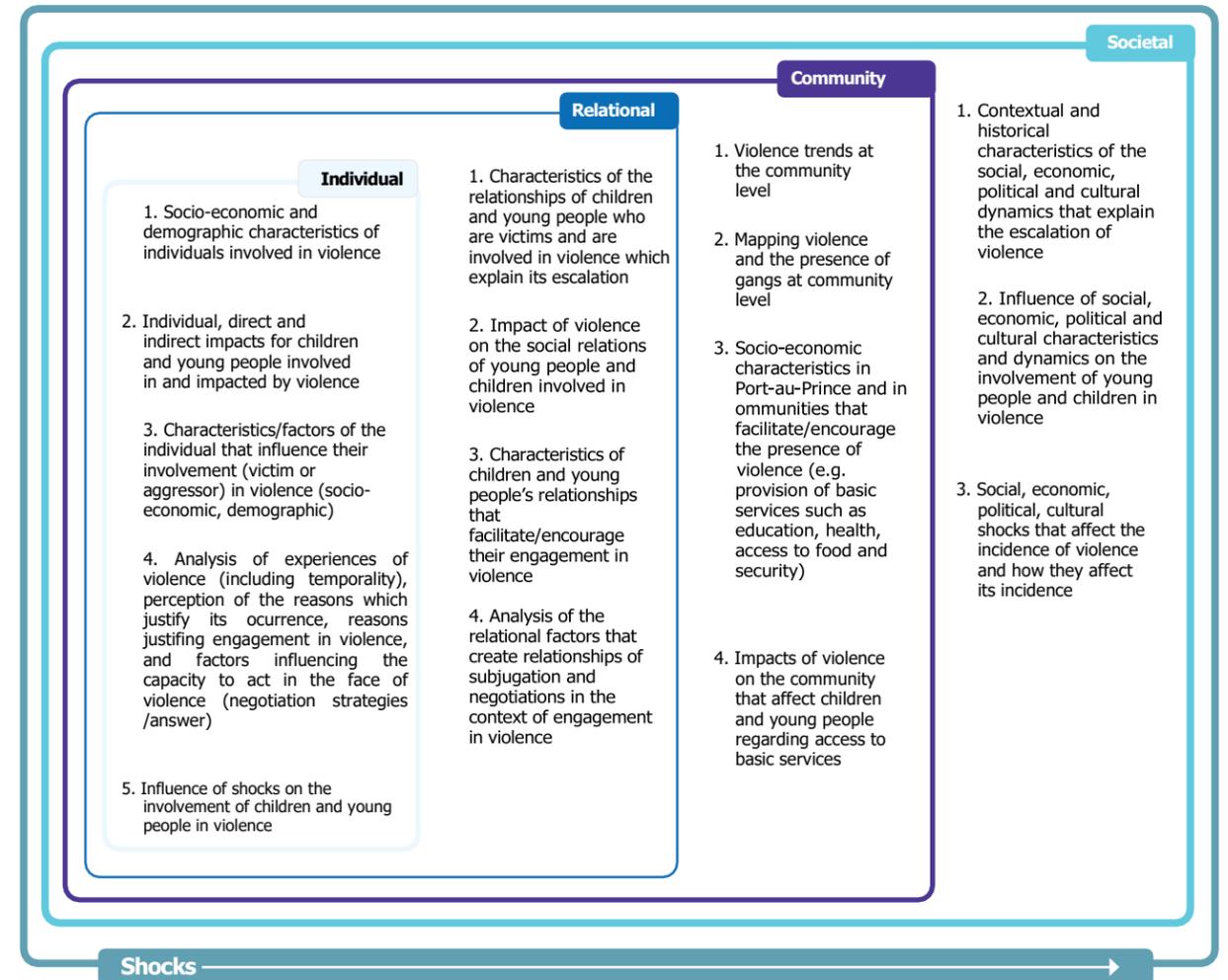
(individual, relational, community and societal). A cross-sectional level related to shocks has been added in order to consider the context of recurrent shocks taking place in Haiti. The factors are the following:

- 1. Individual:** the effect of individual traits on the occurrence of violence.
- 2. Relational:** relationships between family members, friends or peers, and the consequences of these factors on personal and family paths.
- 3. Community:** neighbourhood relations, work and gang presence, as well as the relationship of young people and children who are victims and are involved in violence with initiatives to reduce violence and protect them.
- 4. Societal:** the influence of political, economic and social aspects on violent behaviour.
- 5. Shocks** that can exacerbate violence at the social (e.g., Peyi Lok), political (e.g., assassination of President Jovenel Moïse), economic (e.g., inflation), health (e.g., COVID-19), and natural (disaster) levels (e.g., earthquake, hurricane).

These aspects are shown in the following table:

This study used mixed methods to answer the research questions. The methods include a literature review, semi-structured interviews, a quantitative survey, and the use of non-traditional data to make estimates of violent events in Port-au-Prince, the population of young people and children, and the socioeconomic status of different municipalities in the Port-au-Prince metropolitan area.

**Table 1. Socio-Ecological model adapted to the study**



**Source: Prepared by the authors using the APV ecological model**

<sup>3</sup> OMS. The VPA approach, 2023, <https://www.who.int/groups/violence-prevention-alliance/approach>.

# 4 Methodology

## A. Literature review

It analyzes and synthesizes secondary sources of information to answer research questions and address the four topics of the study. It is used to explain the social, political and economic situation in relation to violence, as well as some trends of violence, the presence of gangs and the context of the people affected.

## B. Semi-structured interviews

Semi-structured interviews focus on perceptions about patterns of violence, gender and geographic differences, impact, and possible actions. The team contacted local and international organizations working in prevention, support for victims of violence, and rehabilitation of minors. A total of 17 organizations participated in the interviews. After the interviews, these organizations helped reach out to young people and children impacted and involved in violence to participate in semi-structured interviews. Here, 10 people between the ages of 12 and 24 were chosen and interviews focused on the impacts of violence, socio-economic conditions, and the reasons behind this population's involvement in violent gang activity.

## C. Quantitative survey

The aim of the quantitative survey was to understand the experiences, impacts and characteristics of young people and children exposed to violence in Port-au-Prince. The survey method chosen was Respondent Driven Sampling, hereafter referred to as the RDS survey, conducted by telephone. This method was chosen because it makes it possible to get closer to profiles that are difficult to reach e.g. children and young people impacted by violence in a context of increasing violence. This is because more traditional probability sampling methods are difficult to implement as there is no sampling framework

identifying that population. The survey cannot be conducted in person as violence in neighbourhoods can put enumerators and respondents at risk. Further, random telephone sampling does not guarantee that respondents actually live in Port-au-Prince, so this increases the number of people ineligible for the study and the duration of the survey.

The RDS survey was conducted by telephone, with a duration of 20 to 30 minutes. The sample corresponds to 177 young people and children between 15-24 years old who are victims of physical, sexual and/or psychological violence by gangs in Port-au-Prince and who still live in Port-au-Prince (hereinafter the target population). To explore individual factors related to violence, the survey contains a demographic and socio-economic module. Afterwards, questions are asked about the involvement of young people and children in violence and their assignment by violence type suffered or perpetrated. To create the questionnaire, we gathered questions from widely used surveys, including but not limited to the National Baseline Survey on Life Experiences of Adolescents, and the Screen for Adolescent Violence Exposure (SAVE), among others. However, some questions have been specially designed and created to adapt both to the Haitian context and to the needs of this project (see the questionnaire used in the Appendix). Like any sampling design and data collection method, the RDS survey, as conducted in this study, presents risks in terms of statistical inference, such as selection bias. For example, since the surveys were conducted by telephone, there is a risk that only the population of young people and children with a cell phone or landline will be targeted. Yet, the differences in exposure to violence between those who have and those who do not have a cell phone or landline can be mitigated by the fact that violence is widespread in Port-au-Prince and that the survey reached municipalities in the Port-au-Prince metropolitan area with high

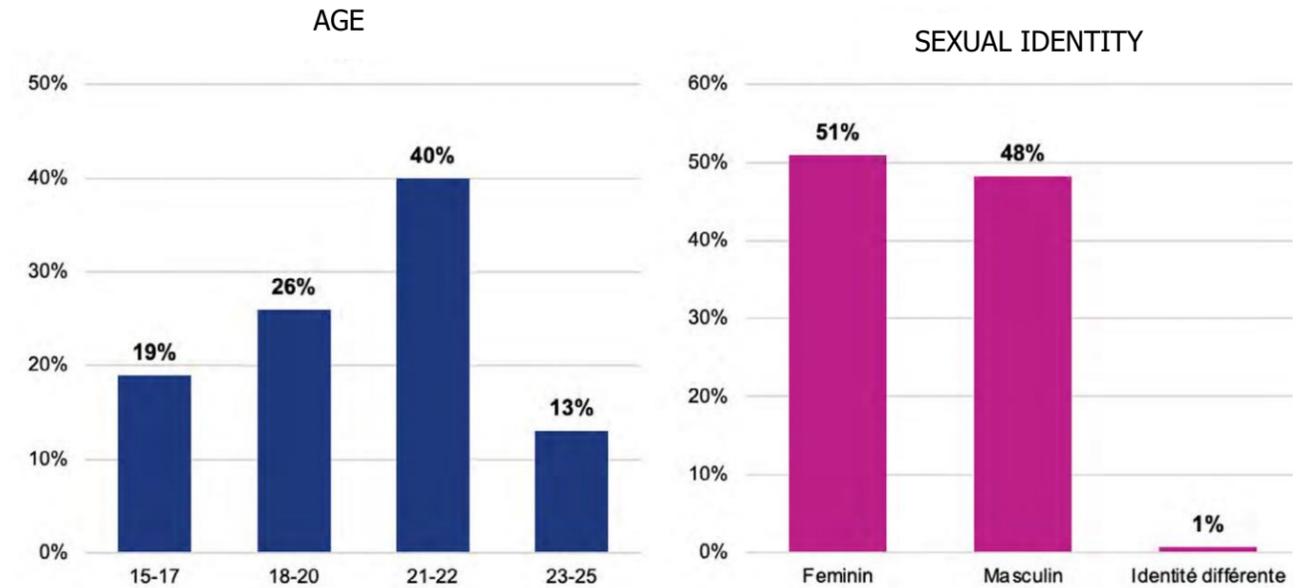
<sup>4</sup> The RDS survey is a method based on snowball sampling, where researchers choose seeds (or initial respondents) based on eligibility criteria to complete the survey. Then, each respondent suggests people in their network who meet the eligibility criteria and become the respondents for the next batch. The process continues until the desired sample is reached. The sample of respondents corresponds, and therefore depends, on the respondents' network. It achieves independence from the initial choice of seeds made by the researchers since each wave depends on the selection of the respondents. In the end, the sample approximates probability sampling through peer selection and statistical adjustments depending on the weight/size of the respondents' network.

exposure to violence such as the municipality of Port-au-Prince and Cité Soleil, among others. Without minimizing these risks, the survey results help us understand better violence affecting children and young people in Port-au-Prince. In addition, the information from the survey was supplemented and contrasted with the interviews, presented below, which made it possible to contrast, confirm or qualify the results of each method.

This type of survey starts with a selection of seeds, which are the first respondent to the survey and who will then recruit people from their network who fit into the target population. Seed selection began at the end of March and ended in April 2023. The seeds were identified from a contact list provided by Port-au-Prince-based NGOs with the profiles of the most suitable youth from 15 to 25-years-old for this study were selected. They are individuals with a circle of friends or a social network large and varied enough to allow participants of all age groups targeted by this study to participate in the survey,

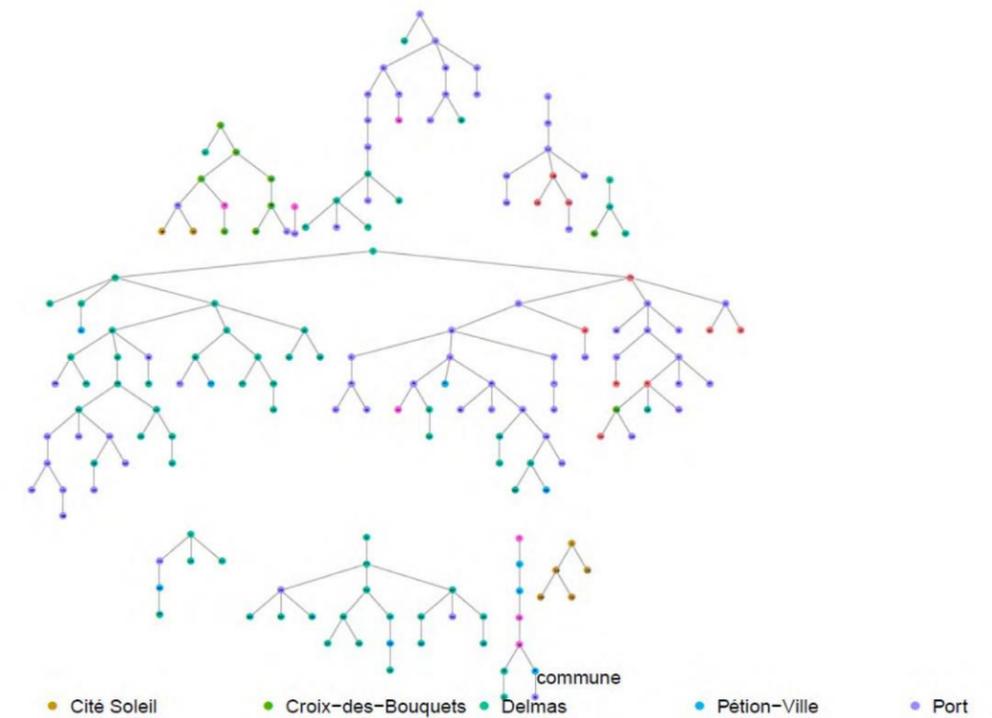
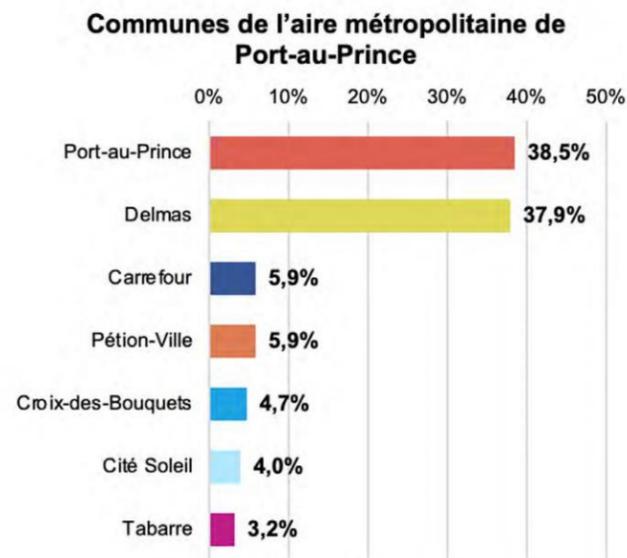
from the different municipalities of the metropolitan area as well as from participants who have suffered different forms of violence considered in this study. This step is important to ensure the smooth running of the survey because it is the only one over which the researchers have control on the sample and because it allows long selection chains and therefore various segments of the population can be reached. Although the response rate of these early participants was very low (about 50%), a list of eight eligible individuals with these characteristics was consolidated. The ensuing waves of selection resulted in a total of 177 young people and children living in Port-au-Prince who had experienced various types of gang violence. Image 3 shows a selection chain with a diverse mix of municipalities in the Port-au-Prince metropolitan area where the participants reside. On the other hand, Table 1 shows the questions used to select seed profiles.

**Image 2: Summary of Demographic Characteristics of RDS Survey Participants**



Source: RDS Survey conducted by DPA.

**Image 3. RDS Survey Selection Chain**



<b>Size of the social network</b>	How many people do you know that live in Port-au-Prince who have been affected by psychological, sexual or physical violence caused by street gangs? (by knowing, you know their name and they know yours) II) How many of these XX people are between 15 and 15 years old? 24 years old? III) And among these XX people, how many have you been in contact with by phone in the last 2 months?	Between 1 and 3 people	More than 3 people	Between 1 and 3 people	Between 1 and 3 people	More than 3 people	1 person	1 person	More than 3 people	Between 1 and 3 people
<b>Mandatory eligibility criteria</b>	How old are you?	17	20	24	19	24	24	20	23	20
	Do you live in Port-au-Prince?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Have you ever been a victim of psychological, physical or sexual violence by members of an organized criminal group (gang) in the Port-au-Prince metropolitan area?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Primary diversity criteria</b>	Gender	Woman	Woman	Woman	Woman	Woman	Woman	Woman	Man	Woman
	In the past 12 months, what kind of violence have you experienced? (psychological, physical, sexual or other)	Psychological	Emotional abuse	Sexual Violence	Sexual violence	Sexual Violence	Emotional abuse	Sexual Violence	Other types of violence	Emotional abuse
	How many young people and children between the ages of 15 and 24 do you know who are or have been part of a street gang in the Port-au-Prince metropolitan area?	Between 1 and 5 people	Between 1 and 5 people	Between 1 and 5 people	Anybody	Anybody	1 person	Anybody	Between 1 and 5 persons	Anybody
<b>Secondary diversity criteria</b>	In the past 12 months, has there been a time when your household has run out of food due to lack of money or other resources?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Which area of the Port-au-Prince do you live in?	Croix-des-Bouquets	Tabarre	Cité Soleil	Crossroads	Crossroads	Crossroads	Crossroads	Cité Soleil	Tabarre

## D. Non-traditional data

Non-traditional data are used to analyze trends and locations of violent events, and the distribution of people in Port-au-Prince's municipalities.

The Violence Events Database (ACLED)<sup>5</sup> is used to analyze violence. It contains disaggregated information on incidents related to political violence, protests, and some nonviolent developments around the world ([ACLED Codebook](#)). This data details the type of event, the actors involved, the location, date, and other characteristics of these incidents. It is collected in real time from media outlets, verified social media accounts, reports from governments and NGOs, and ACLED's partner organizations. The data is published on a weekly basis. Data goes through several rounds of review prior to publication to avoid duplication and ensure the quality of the information. It allows to identify the actors in the events, such as the police forces, armed groups or gangs (identified according to the information in the sources), demonstrators, rioters (demonstrators who use violence). The types of events analyzed are below:

1. **Armed confrontation:** includes violent actions committed between armed and organized actors, including gangs and police.
2. **Attacks on civilians:** events where organized armed actors attack civilians.
3. **Destruction of property:** when organized armed groups destroy or seize property.
4. **Riot:** popular uprisings where force and/or violence are used by protesters.
5. **Abduction/enforced disappearance:** Violent acts where civilians are held against their will.

6. **Violent demonstrations:** uprisings by the security forces, and/or uprisings or excessive force is used against peaceful protesters leading to serious injury or even death.
7. **Peaceful protest:** they are often linked to demands for justice, safety and living conditions without the use of violence.
8. **Sexual violence:** any sexual act against the will of the victim.

Demographic factors were addressed with WorldPop's estimates on distribution according to sex and age of the population<sup>6</sup> in Port-au-Prince in 2020<sup>7</sup>. This estimate is made using satellite imagery and population censuses. Although these estimates do not consider migration effects, they are regulated with the United Nations estimates of the countries' populations and therefore allow for conservative and geographically disaggregated images.

## E. Ethical aspects of the study

Collecting data on violence impacting and involving young people and children is a sensitive topic, both for potential data collection participants and for interviewers. For example, both groups may be exposed to abusive situations if perpetrators learn that a research on violence is taking place. Given the sensitivity of the topic, the consultants adopted guidelines to ensure that the "*Do no harm*" principle is respected and maintained throughout the execution of the study. This is based on the no-harm research approaches, on gender-based violence and the age of the respondents.

The research team's priority is to preserve the dignity of participants who have survived violence, as well as their emotional, physical and economic safety.

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5 Raleigh, C., Linke, A., Hegre, H., & Karlsen, J. "Introducing ACLED: An armed conflict location and event dataset: Special data feature", 2010, <https://acleddata.com/>

6 WorldPop, 2020.

7 WorldPop. Estimates of 2020 Total Number of People per Grid Square, Adjusted to Match the Corresponding UNPD 2020 Estimates and Broken down by Gender and Age Groupings, Produced Using Built-Settlement Growth Model (BSGM) Outputs, 2020, <https://eprints.soton.ac.uk/445318/>

In order to do this, the field activity approach is based on the following protocol documents offering guidelines and principles for conducting research with victims of gender-based violence: 1) UNICEF Procedure on Ethical Standards in Research, Evaluation, Data Collection and Analysis, 2) [Researching Violence Against Women: A Practical Guide for Researchers and Activists](#), 3) [Gender-based Violence Research, Monitoring and Evaluation with Refugee and Conflict-affected Populations](#), 4) UN and Unicef guidelines for child safeguarding and ethical conduct of research, 5) Unicef's policy on personal data protection (2020) and 6) Unicef procedure for a child safeguarding framework (2019).

According to these guides, we can mention the following criteria:

1. **Research ethics review:** The research approach has been reviewed and approved by an independent ethics committee (HML IRB Research & Ethics) selected by UNICEF.
2. **Remote data collection:** Interviews and survey were conducted by telephone since travel to Port-au-Prince can expose participants and interviewers to violent situations.
3. **Reaching out to young people and children through organizations working with/for respondents:** Respondents were selected through organizations that already know the survivors who will be interviewed. Having competent organizations that have already have professional relationships with participants can create desirability biases. However, this bias increases trust between enumerators and respondents and thus improves the quality of the results. This approach also helps to avoid potential harm. In this case, the organizations guide the research towards victims or perpetrators of violence who feel confident and safe to share their situation. This can lead to selection biases but this was decided in order to prioritize the safety and comfort of respondents.
4. **Respondent selection:** The project team does not include individuals who are currently involved in violence. This is in order to prevent

researchers/interviewers from exposing themselves to the risk of violence if they are identified by violent actors, and to prevent respondents from being assaulted by other actors because of the information they provide. The team aimed to have the representation of boys, girls, men and women in the data collection. Their expression of sexual identity and orientation was respected and reflected in the research results.

5. **Training of researchers/interviewers:** The data collection team was selected based on whether they were trained to deal with vulnerable groups and trained to adopt research ethics measures. The consultants prepared documents containing the necessary steps to be taken by the researchers/interviewers in cases where participants would feel extremely vulnerable and emotional during the interviews. These measures included the use of words of comfort and acceptance, as well as concluding all interviews in positive tones so that participants did not feel that their stories were only about their experiences of violence. In addition, all researchers were provided with a list of governmental and non-governmental organizations responsible for providing support and assistance to victims of violence in Port-au-Prince. When conducting the interviews, the gender of the research team was taken into account because women and girls may feel more comfortable talking about their experiences with another woman.
6. **Informed consent:** The study objectives were clearly explained to participants prior to initiating the interviews or survey. The same was done for organizations that provided the contact information of young people and children. Participants learned about the ethical guidelines used to conduct the interviews and the steps taken to preserve their identity. The consent of participants, including the children's parents/legal guardians, was requested verbally. The participants have been informed about the voluntary nature of their participation,

the fact that they could refuse to answer questions and end the interview at any given moment. A website ([etidjenesayiti.org/](http://etidjenesayiti.org/)) was created with the study objectives, consent forms, list of supporting organizations and information to get in touch with the research team to receive further information, request changes to the information provided and to request the destruction of the collected information, if they wish so.

7. **Risk mitigation during interviews/surveys:** Enumerators asked respondents questions regarding their perception of safety prior to starting interviews. Interviews were conducted only if the respondent felt safe to talk about violence. In addition, at the beginning of each interview, the respondent was asked to choose a code word, which could be used to finalize the interview at any time if the respondent no longer felt safe to continue the interview.
8. **Confidentiality of the information collected:** respondents were anonymized. Qualitative interviews were not recorded and information was compiled by taking notes. Interview and survey data is saved in confidential databases (KoboToolbox, Airtable, and Google Drive) and will be destroyed once the project is completed. For the analysis, participants were identified by unique codes, rather than personal information. RDS survey participants' personal information (first names and phone numbers) was collected in the Airtable platform while survey data was collected separately in Kobo Toolbox. There is therefore a separation between the participant's personal data and their response to the survey. Participants' phone numbers were stored in a separate database solely for the purpose of ensuring that the same phone number did not repeat.

Once the study is completed, all phone numbers will be deleted.

9. **Compensation for time spent on the RDS survey:** Participants in the RDS survey received compensation in the form of cell phone top-ups (airtime) of USD 2 as compensation for their participation.
10. **Dissemination of information:** Information was disseminated either in an aggregated manner (RDS survey) or with fictitious names chosen randomly (interviews).

## F. Data and study limitations

This study aims to map gang-led violence impacting young people and children in the different municipalities of the Port-au-Prince metropolitan area over time, as well as the dynamics and impacts of this violence. Currently, there are estimates of certain types of violence in Haiti, such as homicides and kidnappings, including minors<sup>8</sup>. However, these estimates are not available at municipality level in the Port-au-Prince metropolitan area and do not include all types of violence that take place, such as clashes between gangs, violent demonstrations, and cases of sexual violence among others. In addition, violence tends to be underestimated by the authorities and under-reported by victims. In an effort to address these information gaps, the DPA team used several methods. Yet, each method has its limitations, which are presented below to better contextualize the study results.

## ACLED

ACLED's violence data is used to understand the trends and the location of violent events in the municipalities of the Port-au-Prince metropolitan area. While this data can help fill in the gaps in official data, it also has limitations. First of all, the unit of data analysis are the

<sup>8</sup> Haitian National Police. Haiti Crime Statistics: 2021, February 15, 2022.

events and not the number of victims of the events.<sup>9</sup> Secondly, these data are only available from 2018 onwards. Hence, the study does not include data on violence trends by type and municipality in the Port-au-Prince metropolitan area since 2016. In addition, as mentioned earlier, this data is obtained from the media, verified social media accounts, government and NGO reports, and ACLED's partner organizations. In this regard, they face the limitations of underestimating official data. Despite these limitations, this data provides an important advantage. ACLED centralizes information from several credible sources and analyzes it in a systematic way (location establishment, main actors, type of events, among others). This allows us to systematically analyse the trends in violence in the municipalities of the Port-au-Prince metropolitan area.

In addition, the location of some events is not accurate. If the event takes place in Port-au-Prince but the municipality in the metropolitan area is not clearly specified, ACLED assigns the event to the municipality of Port-au-Prince. In a similar manner, if the location is not specified within a municipality in the Port-au-Prince metropolitan area, the event is assigned to a coordinate (latitude and longitude) that is central to the municipality. Still, ACLED's database contains detailed explanations of the events. To address this limitation, the research team used word processing on ACLED's event summary in order to identify the location of the events. For example, when the event takes place in the Bank of the Republic of Haiti, the algorithm allows the Bank to be listed as the location where the event takes place. Then, the latitude and longitude of the Bank are automatically searched through software and the location of the event is assigned to the municipality of the corresponding metropolitan area.

This procedure made it possible to identify the location of events that are specific to each municipality in the Port-au-Prince metropolitan area and, for certain events, there was a precise location within the municipality. Yet, there is still a margin of error on events that do not have information on the precise location. These events were not used in the violence mapping section.

### WorldPop

Regarding WorldPop's population data for Haiti, the projection is based on data from the latest available population census (2003), and population projections available from the Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat.<sup>10</sup> Therefore, these data do not take into account migration effects. However, they are used in this study to obtain conservative estimates of the population at a high level of geographical resolution (level of the municipalities of the Port-au-Prince metropolitan area).

### Primary Data Collection

When collecting data through the RDS survey and semi-structured interviews, one of the main difficulties was to get in touch with young people and children. Their response rate was generally low, with individuals who had to be called back at least 3 to 5 times to get in touch and others who did not respond. In total, through NGOs, around 50 young people and children were identified to participate in the study. Out of these, 5 were contacted for semi-structured interviews and 15 participated in the seed selection process for the RDS survey. This response rate is mixed with interviews with the 17 civil society organizations and international agencies that participated in the interviews and the RDS survey with 177 respondents.

### RDS Survey

Increased violence on the streets of Port-au-Prince has prevented the survey from being conducted on the ground. Therefore, the RDS survey was conducted over the phone. This systematically excludes children and young people who do not have a cell phone or a relative with a cell phone to be able to participate in the survey. As an indication, the ITU estimates in 2021 that in Haiti 64% of the population has access to a cell phone<sup>11</sup>. This proportion could be higher among residents of an urban area such as Port-au-Prince, especially among young people. However, the proportion may be lower for young people and children facing economic hardship. In this regard, the survey may be biased if respondents with a cell phone are systematically exposed to violence in a different way than those without a cell phone, which may be the case for the poorest young people and children who would not have been part of the survey. The high prevalence of violence and poverty in the Port-au-Prince metropolitan area may mitigate these differences, so researchers cannot guarantee that these differences are zero. The survey was still conducted by telephone, despite this possible bias, in an effort to ensure the safety of respondents and enumerators, as the priority throughout this study has been to minimize participants' risk of exposure to violence. In addition, several challenges were identified during the 4-month collection phase.

1. Mobile network connection issues and power cuts were flagged by the team of interviewers in Haiti. Indeed, during several phone calls, the connection prevented the fluidity of exchanges. In some cases, we had to postpone the call several times. Because of the sequential nature of the RDS survey, these types of drawbacks have been particularly problematic because in the early stages of identifying the 'Seeds' - or first participants - it is not possible to continue the study without the response of the participants suggested by those who have already responded to the survey.

2. The presence of violence during calls has slowed down

its development. For example, several surveys had to stop due to gunshots outside the residences of respondents and enumerators. Second, some victims' refusal to participate, particularly victims of sexual violence, slowed the increase in the number of survey participants.

3. An effective RDS survey depends on the initial selection of a group of 'seed' individuals with a wide range of friends. This makes it possible to generate a representative sample of all the subpopulations studied. It is therefore absolutely necessary to devote all available resources to the identification of this group. However, despite the efforts made, such as calls at different times of the day and even on weekends, the selection process took longer than expected because of the very low response rate. We had to conduct two selection phases since in the first phase, 1 out of 2 participants could not be reached.
4. Among the causes of the low response rate, we find that phone numbers are often associated or used only in the WhatsApp messaging app, but they are not operational for calls. To overcome this difficulty, we sent individual messages through the app to participants whose phone numbers seemed to be not working, which increased the number of responses. In addition, the timeframes/schedules of children and young people open a fairly short and precise window of availability, especially between 12 and 2 p.m.

9 Although estimates of the number of fatalities per event are available, they are based on approximations created from the content of the source of information. For instance, when a source informs of "hundreds of deaths" ACLED logs 100 fatalities. In the case of Haiti, the DPA team noticed that these approximations do not follow the same trends or orders of magnitude as those in the National Police report, and for this reason, they were not used.

10 WorldPop. Estimates of the total number of persons per grid square in 2020, adjusted to match the corresponding UN estimates for 2020 and broken down by sex and age groups, produced using the results of the Settlement Growth Model (BSGM) in 2020 <https://eprints.soton.ac.uk/445318/>

11 FROM, "Digital Development Dashboard: Haiti",

# 5

## Testimonies

The following testimonies come from interviews conducted during this study, with young people and children who are victims and involved in gangs in the municipalities of the Port-au-Prince metropolitan area.

Their stories were chosen because they include all the elements that are analysed in depth in this study.

### Testimony of Nadine, a young woman survivor of gang violence

Nadine is a resilient young woman who survived gang sexual violence and the murder of her children's father by these groups. Like so many other young Haitians, in addition to the highly violent context in Port-au-Prince, she faces significant challenges related to the vulnerable context in which she lives. Being well over 18 years of age, she was in school at the time of the interviews. When she explains her perspective on the violence in Haiti she says: "The current situation is impossible, a family member can go out and may not come back. They can be killed or even set on fire. Young girls are raped and young men are forced to join armed groups [...] children are traumatized by the shooting, they don't sleep. Children are afraid, women are raped and men lose their lives." The constant insecurity and gendered differentiation of the types of violence experienced by men, who experience physical violence, and women who experience sexual violence are highlighted in this study through the experiences of other young people and the different sources of information used. Her story also refers to the indirect effects of violence, particularly through the trauma experienced by children who hear gunfire on the street.

Nadine shared her own experiences of violence, as well as experiences in her surroundings. One day, when she went out "between 8 and 9 a.m., there were bullets flying in the area during the day. I went out to buy food for my two children and 3 men kidnapped me in a corridor and raped me." One of her friends "was held captive for a week and raped during that time." Her story shows how sexual violence is perpetrated by individuals and groups. She recounts the impacts of these acts afterwards, for example, on a psychological and physical level, she says that "The person will never forget and can hurt themselves [...] I wasn't well, I had a fever. I had tried to

commit suicide by taking medication. I felt like I wasn't the same person anymore." Social relationships are also affected because "the person has changed because she will no longer feel comfortable". She also refers to the damage linked to rape victims when she mentions that "if people know, they will use it to insult the victim". The increasing prevalence and frequency of acts of sexual violence are evidenced by her story and throughout this study. Although the extent of these acts is not known due to the fact that this data is most likely underreported, the story of Nadine and other victims shows how sexual violence is becoming increasingly known as a weapon of gangs, and how victims are being re-victimized by society.

Despite her very difficult situation, Nadine survived the violence inflicted on her. She managed to get access to psychologists to support her: "The psychologist helped me to see more clearly, to avoid being alone, to continue doing the activities I love." Yet, in her interview, she also shows the complications experienced even when victims receive assistance. "At the hospital we find medicines, but we have lost everything because we lost our homes in a fire. We don't have money to eat. I was given medicine, but then I can't eat. After taking these medications, I don't feel well." The need for comprehensive support, including health and economic support becomes evident in the violent context she has faced. "I need financial support to help me with my children, the bandits killed their father. When they came home, they killed him." In a broader sense, she talks about the general need for employment, to meet one's needs, but also to reduce violence: "We need security and jobs. Fewer people will become bandits."

## Testimony of George, a young man who left the gangs of Port-au-Prince

George's testimony describes the experience of a young Haitian man who was a victim of violence and gang recruitment. According to him, he joined the gangs due to his precarious living conditions, due to economic needs, and through his 'friendships' at the time, who he no longer keeps in touch with since he left the gangs. When he describes his experiences of violence, George said: "I lived all forms of violence, I've seen old people die in fires, I've seen rapes, fires and people killed. In the ghetto, we are used to the situation, we resign ourselves. When I was a criminal, I thought I was living, but now I feel the difference." His Statement quickly gave an account of the multiple types of violence experienced by young people in several municipalities of the Port-au-Prince metropolitan area.

The story he shared showed important aspects regarding the impact and perception of violence. "A 14-year-old girl can be raped, and it becomes a burden for her, she can get sick afterwards. Kids involved in gangs don't understand what they're doing, it's nothing to them." In addition to the physical and psychological consequences on health, sexual violence against minors is aggravated by perverse social norms of discrimination where people will attribute responsibility to the victim by saying that "she was the one who looked for it", while the attackers do not show self-reflection, remorse or a deep understanding of what they are doing. This shows that beyond the way in which gangs use sexual violence to exert power over the territory in a political sense as a group, at the individual level, those who commit the crimes, at least among young people who grow up in this context of violence and who begin to normalize these violent acts, do not necessarily have the same understanding of the motives or impacts of their actions.

Yet, with George's self-reflection and the support he received from civil society organizations,

he managed to leave the gangs. "In the beginning, my only focus was not to lose these friends because they gave me something to eat and something to live on." Subsequently, civil society organizations approached his neighborhood. He went to see them out of curiosity. Training and awareness workshops on violence were the first steps that allowed him to leave the gangs, as well as the rejection he experienced from those he no longer considered his friends because he changed his lifestyle. "My vision changed because I saw that I could [become] a professional who could make jerseys, mugs and stuff. That's how it changed. My friends' were angry about this change, took their distance and didn't give me any more money [...] I received offers to return to the gangs but I refused and realized that they were not my friends." In terms of the process of leaving the gangs, he says, "It was difficult because everywhere I kept thinking about what I was doing. People didn't encourage me to do positive things, we smoked all the time, we drank alcohol. When I stepped away, I was able to think. It wasn't easy, they gave me 1000 gourdes to eat. It was only afterwards that I realized that I wasn't comfortable, now I don't inspire fear in others. People respect me because I changed." His testimony evokes the awareness he had about the negative aspects surrounding his life around gangs, and the need he had for gangs in order to have access to financial resources.

Therefore, his process of disaffiliation from gangs took place through the support he received from civil society. They offered him training to have economic resources, and workshops to change his perspective on his participation in violent acts. His testimony sheds light on the impact of violence at different levels, at the individual, relational, community and social levels for young people and children. These impacts are evident both in victims of violence and in young people and children who join gangs. It is important to recognize that these

young people involved in crime can also be considered victims, as their involvement often stems from direct and violent coercion by gangs or from a complex context with a lack of opportunities and resources, predominant gang domination, as well as the lack of understanding of their own actions. However, well-directed actions on the part of civil society accompanied by their will and resilience show that the path of young people and children recruited by gangs can indeed change.

# 6

## Context:

What are the trends of violence involving and affecting young people and children in Port-au-Prince and where does it take place?

—“Violence is horrific. It has always existed in Haiti, but today it is unprecedented”

Civil Society Organization

Violence in Haiti is not new, yet it is currently reaching critical levels, and is aggravated by political, economic and social crises. This situation increases population's vulnerability. This section presents the general context of violence in Haiti, and then delves into the trends of violence and its mapping for the general population of Port-au-Prince and for young people and children.

### A. Overall situation

Violence in Haiti is on the rise. The homicide rate increased from 9.51 to 13.56 per 100,000 residents between 2016 and 2021 and kidnappings increased from 63 to 664 in the same period<sup>12</sup>, among other types of violence. The gangs, who have been reported to have control or influence over 80% of the country's cities<sup>13</sup> and who reach 200 in number (including 90 gangs in Port-au-Prince),<sup>14</sup> clash with a police force that lacks personnel to confront them<sup>15</sup>. Residents of Port-au-Prince are reportedly exposed to this increasing violence, with nearly 1.5 million residents reportedly living in areas under gang control or influence as of August 2022<sup>16</sup> (see more details on gangs in the box at the end of the subsection).

In addition, the country has not held elections since the assassination of President Jovenel Moïse, and its judicial system is now paralyzed, with a failing High Council of the Judiciary and almost non-existent jurisprudential production that limit institutional power and increase impunity of crimes. The Haitian population, which faces the highest prevalence of poverty in Latin America and the Caribbean, with 41.3% of the population in multidimensional poverty and 24.5% of the population living on less than \$1.9 a day<sup>17</sup>, also faces

inflation phenomena, unemployment and lack of access to basic services, which makes them even more vulnerable to gang violence (see section on structural causes for more information on government functioning and socio-economic characteristics of the population). Faced with these conditions, the population has also taken the public arena to demand change, with social movements such as the Peyi-Lok and the Petrochallenger movement, where people have openly demanded setting up a government, effective public policies for the fight against corruption and other demands at the economic level, among others. However, these social movements have caused violence in the public arena, particularly affecting the tourism industry and schools and, in general, the free mobility of people. The population is also facing natural and health disasters, such as hurricanes, earthquakes, COVID-19 and cholera. These disasters have increased the pressure on basic services and the population.

In this context, the study focuses on the analysis of the evolution of violence for the population of Port-au-Prince, particularly of young people and children, who are in the majority in the city, but distributed in a heterogeneous manner in the municipalities of the Port-au-Prince metropolitan area (hereafter referred to as municipalities for simplicity). According to WorldPop data (Image 4), the 0-24 age population comprises 50.5% of the population. By gender, women make up 51.5% of the population and men 48.5%. For the 0-24 age population, the proportion is similar, with 52% of women and 48% of men. The distribution of the population is heterogeneous between the municipalities. Port-au-Prince is the most populated municipality. The proportion of young people and children remains at almost half in each municipality (Image 5).

12 Haitian National Police. Haiti Crime Statistics: 2021, February 15, 2022.

13 United Nations, "As Haiti Slides into Violence, Its People 'Cannot Wait Any Longer' for Assistance, Foreign Minister Tells Security Council", (2023), <https://press.un.org/en/2023/sc15266.doc.htm>

14 Global Initiative Against Organized Crime, "Gangs of Haiti, expansion, power and an escalating crisis", (2022), <https://globalinitiative.net/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/GITOC-Gangs-of-Haiti.pdf>

15 United Nations Security Council, "United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti Report of the Secretary-General", (2023), <https://reliefweb.int/report/haiti/united-nations-integrated-office-haiti-report-secretary-general-s2023274>

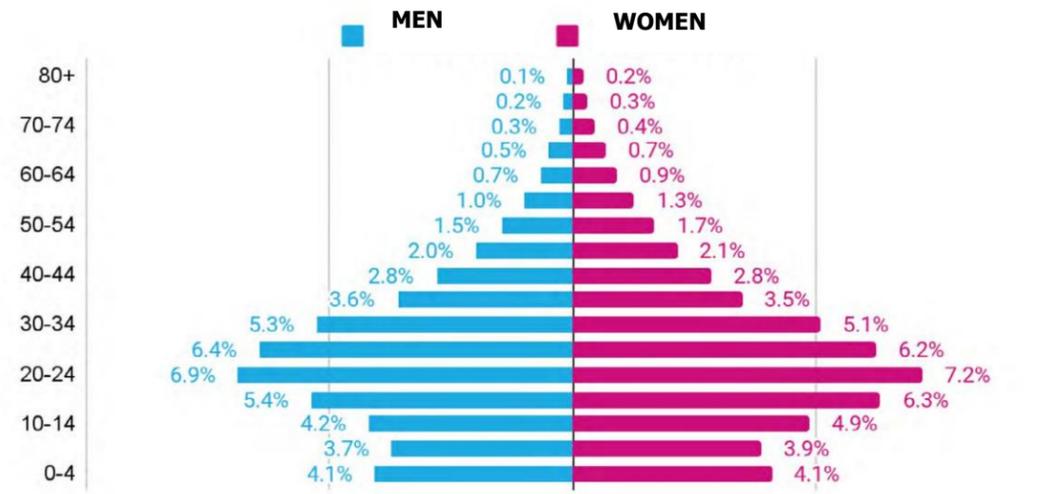
16 OHCHR. Sexual Violence in Port-au-Prince: A Weapon Used by Gangs to Spread Fear, 14 October 2022, op. cit. cit, <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/2022-10/20221014-summary-Report-on-Sexual-Violence-haiti-fr.pdf>

17 PNUD, "Multidimensional Poverty Index 2022: Haiti", (2022), <https://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/Country-Profiles/MPI/HTI.pdf>

Most of the residents live in the municipalities of Port-au-Prince (888 thousand people, 49% of whom are <25 years old). Carrefour (503 thousand people, of which 51% are <25 years old),

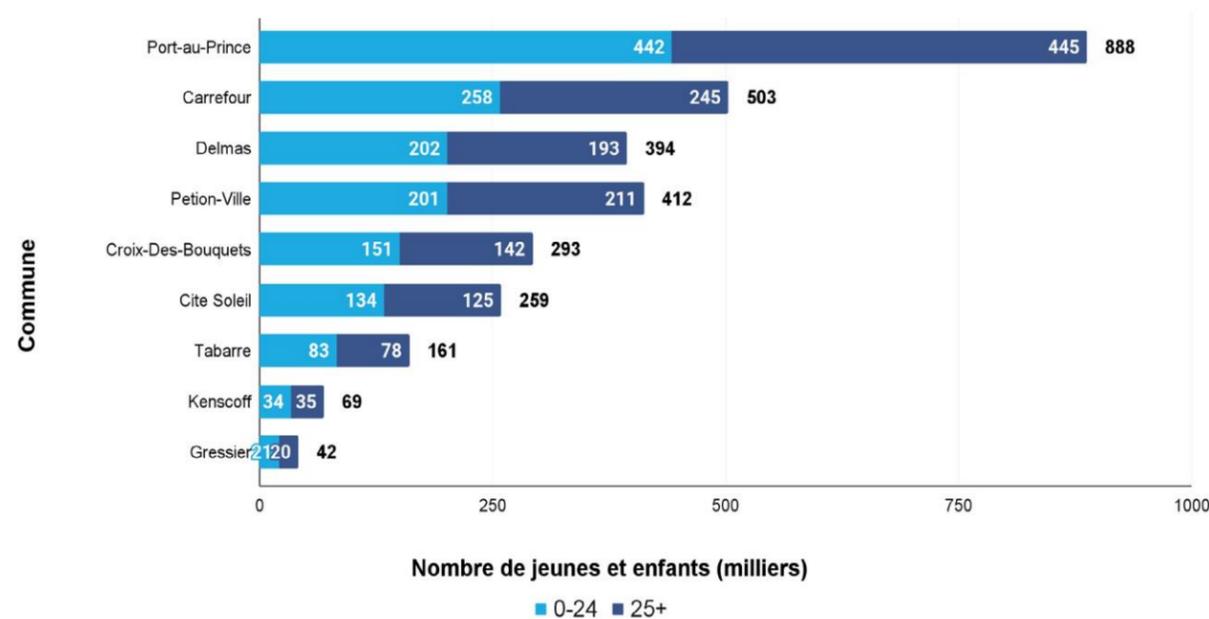
Pétion-Ville (412 thousand, of which 48% are >25 years old) and Delmas (394 thousand people, of which 51% are <25 years old).

Image 4. Population Pyramid in Port-au-Prince 2020



Source: Authors' estimate based on WorldPop data

Distribution of the population (thousands) in Port-au-Prince



Source: Authors' estimate based on WorldPop data

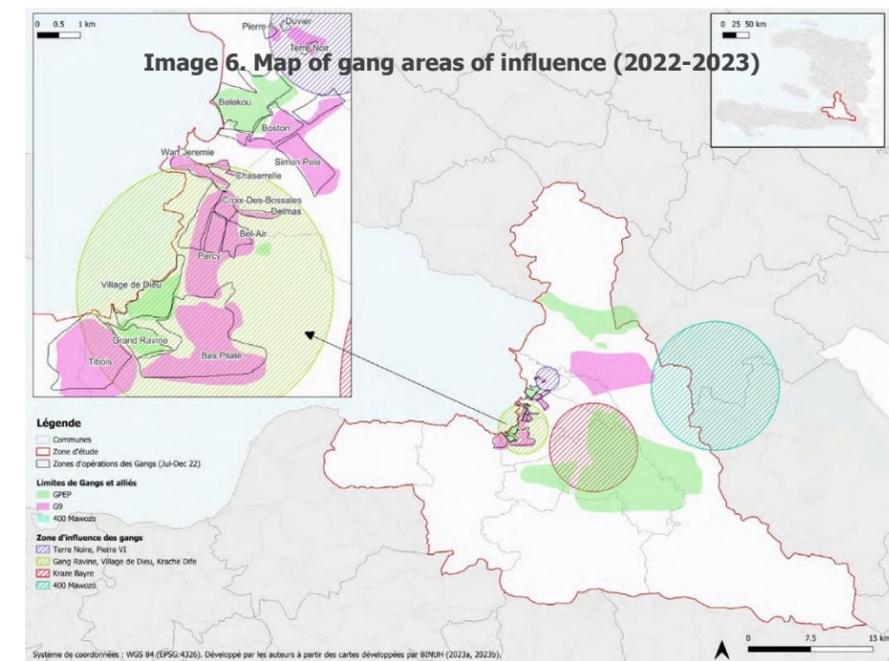
### Box 1. Description of gangs in Port-au-Prince

#### Gangs in Port-au-Prince

Gangs have an extremely strong and growing presence in the municipalities of the Port-au-Prince metropolitan area that affects the political, social, economic and cultural aspects in their areas of influence and in the country. This presence manages to control almost all aspects of people's lives through a complex, changing and coordinated dynamics of power, alliances and brutality. Image 6 was created by the authors from maps developed by the BINUH<sup>18,19</sup>, in 2023, with the areas that are occupied by gangs. It shows gang-controlled areas in 2022 and 2023 and 2023 gang-influenced areas (circles).

(trends in this violence, impacts on young people and children, and the dynamics behind this control are detailed in the following sections). This box exemplifies how gangs take control of key economic sectors for the population such as fuel, food and goods, from the monopoly of violence through gun control, to political control and the legitimacy of the state through actions to impact elections and public authorities. This happens especially in the judiciary, and with the participation of former members of the police in its ranks, thus affecting the legitimacy of the forces of order. The power they have accumulated allows gangs to exert social control because they play the role of providers and referees of people's lives. Gangs decide people's safety, their access to food, health, school, work, among other aspects. In recent years, this has allowed them to control the social behaviour of the population.

In general, the strong presence of gangs in the territory explains the high number of violent events, but it goes beyond violence, through coordinated acts aiming to take full control of the lives of the people who live in the controlled areas



18 BINUH, "The population of Cité Soleil in the grip of gangs. Report of Investigation into Human Rights Abuses Committed by Gangs in the Brooklyn Area from July to December 2022", (2023), <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/countries/ht/rapport-denquete-sur-les-abus-des-droits-de-lhomme-commis-par-les-gangs-dans-la-zone-de-brooklyn-de.pdf>

19 BINUH, "Situation of Human Rights, Main Trends, Quarterly Report, January-March 2023", (2023), <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/countries/haiti/Haiti-Human-rights-quarterly-report-Q1-2023-FR.pdf>

Among the most important gangs and gang alliances are G9 Alliance, Baz Pilate, 400 Mawozo, G-Pep, Grand Ravine and 5 Secondes<sup>20</sup>. The G9 alliance, previously known as G9 in Family and Allies, is an alliance of nine gangs, including Delmas 6 (led by Jimmy Chérizier, former police officer and leader of the Delmas 6 gang), Baz Krache Dife, Baz Pilate and Nan Ti Bwa. According to the Global Initiative's 2022 report on gangs in Haiti, they exert their influence in Delmas, Pétion Ville and parts of Carrefour. This alliance has impacted the economy through control of key areas along the coast, impacting fuel and food deliveries through extortion of businesses that use the ports. The alliance carried out different types of violence such as rape, arbitrary killings, body dismemberment, fires and looting.

The **Baz Pilate**<sup>21</sup> gang is known as one of the most powerful gangs in Haiti and is part of the G9. It is made up of licensed and serving police officers, who would have been part of specialized forces such as SWAT. It exerts its influence in a large part of Port-au-Prince, including Champ de Mars, the government administrative zone and the Ti Bois district. They are involved in drug trafficking, burglaries, murders. Since 2015, they have been associated with criminal gangs and politicians to influence electoral processes. This gang is said to have also infiltrated the country's judicial system.

The **400 Mawozo**<sup>22</sup> gang, considered the largest gang in Haiti at the time of the Global Initiative study, exerts its influence mainly in Ganthier and in the metropolitan area of Port-au-Prince in Tabarre and some areas of Pétion Ville. It is made up of former leaders of opposition organizations and police officers among others. The gang carried out kidnappings, among

other crimes. It gained international visibility following the kidnapping of 17 American missionaries in October 2021. Its leader was extradited to the United States in May 2022. In 2022 this gang aligned itself with the G-Pep coalition to expand its influence.

**G-Pep**<sup>23</sup> is a gang alliance led by Jean Pierre Gabriel, alias Ti Gabriel, concentrated in Cité Soleil and Port-au-Prince. It was created to counter the G9 and has been fighting G9 affiliates in Cité Soleil since 2020. Their conflict has intensified since 2022, when the G9 attempted to take G-Pop territory in the Brooklyn neighborhood.

**Grand Ravine and 5 Secondes**<sup>24</sup> are gangs based in Martissant in Port-au-Prince. They are made up of young people from the slums of the metropolitan region, most of whom were part of the self-defence brigades and organizations close to Fanmi Lavalas. They obtained their funding from kidnappings and the hijacking of freight vehicles. They control motorcycle taxis and the southern exit from Port-au-Prince.

Previously, these gangs tended to stay in specific neighborhoods. However, the Global Initiative's 2022 gang report states that the municipalities of Cité Soleil, Delmas, Croix des Bouquets and the neighborhoods of Martissant and Bel Air face clashes that reach beyond neighborhoods and increase the number of civilian victims<sup>25</sup>.

Their actions affects several fronts. Recently, according to UN figures, the confrontation in July 2022, which is far from unprecedented, resulted in 209 deaths including 114 gang members and a police inspector, 135 injured, 3,000 displaced residents, and a fire in a cathedral.

20 Global Initiative, "Gangs in Haiti, Expansion, Power, and Worsening of the Crisis," 2022, <https://globalinitiative.net/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Summer-Walker-Les-gangs-en-Hai%CC%88ti-Expansion-pouvoir-et-aggravation-de-la-crise-GI-TOC-octobre-2022.pdf>  
21 Global Initiative, "Gangs in Haiti, Expansion, Power, and Worsening of the Crisis," 2022, <https://globalinitiative.net/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Summer-Walker-Les-gangs-en-Hai%CC%88ti-Expansion-pouvoir-et-aggravation-de-la-crise-GI-TOC-octobre-2022.pdf>  
22 Global Initiative, "Gangs in Haiti, Expansion, Power, and Worsening of the Crisis," 2022, <https://globalinitiative.net/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Summer-Walker-Les-gangs-en-Hai%CC%88ti-Expansion-pouvoir-et-aggravation-de-la-crise-GI-TOC-octobre-2022.pdf>  
23 Global Initiative, "Gangs in Haiti, Expansion, Power, and Worsening of the Crisis," 2022, <https://globalinitiative.net/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Summer-Walker-Les-gangs-en-Hai%CC%88ti-Expansion-pouvoir-et-aggravation-de-la-crise-GI-TOC-octobre-2022.pdf>  
24 Global Initiative, "Gangs in Haiti, Expansion, Power, and Worsening of the Crisis," 2022, <https://globalinitiative.net/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Summer-Walker-Les-gangs-en-Hai%CC%88ti-Expansion-pouvoir-et-aggravation-de-la-crise-GI-TOC-octobre-2022.pdf>  
25 Global Initiative, "Gangs in Haiti, Expansion, Power, and Worsening of the Crisis," 2022, <https://globalinitiative.net/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Summer-Walker-Les-gangs-en-Hai%CC%88ti-Expansion-pouvoir-et-aggravation-de-la-crise-GI-TOC-octobre-2022.pdf>

The Bel Air, Delmas and Croix-des-Bouquets districts were the preferred municipalities for the confrontation<sup>26</sup>. The Human Rights Service (HRS) of the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti (BINUH) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)<sup>27</sup> has recorded 1,634 murder, injury and abduction victims. Men account for 80 per cent of victims, women 17 per cent and children 3 per cent. Ransoms from kidnappings are an important source of income for many gangs. The report mentions at least 395 kidnappings between January and March 2023, a 12% increase compared to the previous quarter. Gangs use ransoms to acquire weapons, pay their members, and reward the population for supporting their activities. Gang activity impacts all social categories, with an increase in kidnappings of teachers, students and their parents in or near schools. Gangs also target medical professionals, court personnel and other government officials. Sexual violence against abduction victims has been used as a means of forcing families to pay ransoms.<sup>28</sup> Killings have also targeted journalists who drew attention to the situation of violence.<sup>29</sup>

The gangs also target key economic areas, such as ports and oil terminals. They force companies to support them through extortion and have also taken control of the revenue from customs, public procurement, electricity and water distribution from public transport stations. They control the entrances and exits in the Port-au-Prince metropolitan area which give access to ports, oil terminals, commercial and industrial zones, and the Toussaint Louverture International Airport. Gangs also seize food products to be later distributed to their

26 UN Haiti. UN humanitarian agencies 'ready to help' communities affected by gang violence in Haiti, 15 July 2022, <https://haiti.un.org/fr/190501-les-agences-humanitaires-de-lonu-pretes-porter-secours-aux-communautes-touchees-par-la>  
27 BINUH, "Situation of Human Rights, Main Trends, Quarterly Report, January-March 2023", (2023), <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/countries/haiti/Haiti-Human-rights-quarterly-report-Q1-2023-FR.pdf>  
28 Ibid.  
29 Global Initiative, "Gangs in Haiti, Expansion, Power, and Worsening of the Crisis," 2022, <https://globalinitiative.net/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Summer-Walker-Les-gangs-en-Hai%CC%88ti-Expansion-pouvoir-et-aggravation-de-la-crise-GI-TOC-octobre-2022.pdf>  
30 OHCHR, "The population of Cité Soleil in the grip of gangs Investigative Report on Human Rights Abuses Committed by Gangs in the Brooklyn Area from July to December 2022", (2023), <https://www.ohchr.org/fr/documents/country-reports/population-cite-soleil-grip-gang-violence-investigative-report-human>

community to control their image and exert power over the population.

In response to growing gang power, and given the limitations of the police force in tackling violence, the population began to engage in violence themselves. "Vigilante Squads" and mass lynchings have increased in Port-au-Prince, with at least 75 murders, including 66 gang members, since the beginning of the year, according to the report. However, the OHCHR report of February 2023, shows that gangs still manage to restrict the freedom of movement of the population in a significant part of the neighborhoods, as well as their access to basic services (water and sanitation), thus aggravating the unsanitary conditions in Port au Prince. ACLED data for 2023 identifies events with the involvement of this group, including the Bwa Kale, which has been involved in a series of vigilante actions in Port-au-Prince<sup>30</sup>, targeting individuals suspected of gang affiliation. These actions have included brutal attacks that resulted in injuries and deaths, such as cuts, burns, lynchings, and even beheadings. The movement justified these actions in the name of community safety, believing that the alleged elimination of gang members would help reduce gang-related violence. However, the situation is complex, and some incidents result from disputes related to police support in their fight against gangs. As the Bwa Kale Movement aims to address the gang violence plaguing the city, its actions also carry significant risks, which can potentially lead to further instability and violence within the communities it aims to protect. Finding a balance between the need to ensure security and respect for the rule of law remains a challenge, and these incidents highlight the fragility of governance and security in Haiti.

## B. General Trends in Violence<sup>31</sup>

### Evolution of events

In accordance with the previously mentioned reports of the various UN agencies, ACLED data shows a persistent increase in violence-related events between 2018 and 2022. The municipalities of Port-au-Prince recorded a total of 2317 violence-related events between 2018 and 2022. Each year, the number of violence-related events increased by an average of 36.4%, from 208 to 721 during the 2018 to 2022 period (Image 7).

### Frequency of events by type

From interviews with organizations, young people and children, it should be noted that the most frequent types of violence are armed attacks, kidnappings and rapes, used by gangs to create terror. According to ACLED data, the most frequent types of violence are also armed clashes, followed by riots and attacks on civilians. Armed clashes (23%) include violent actions committed between armed and organized actors, including gangs and police. Riots (22%) are

uprisings where force and/or violence are used by protesters. Attacks (21%) are events where organized armed actors attack civilians. Peaceful protests (14%) are often linked to demands for justice, safety and living conditions without the use of violence. In Port-au-Prince, these events are often conducted in response to violence, with 36% of peaceful protests linked to gangs, violence, death or assassinations, kidnappings, or insecurity. Kidnappings (13%) are violent acts where civilians are held against their will<sup>32</sup>. Violent protests (3%) are uprisings by law enforcement, e.g. with tear gas, and/or uprisings where force is used against peaceful protesters leading to serious injury or death. Property destruction (3%) occurs when organized armed groups destroy or seize property. Finally, sexual violence (2%) occurs when individuals are subjected to any sexual act against their will. In Port-au-Prince, sexual violence is linked to actions conducted by gangs (97% of events) or unidentified armed groups (3%).

### Evolution of events by type

**Clashes between armed groups and attacks on civilians became more frequent during the study period. Sexual violence, although not widely recorded, has significantly increased between 2018 and 2022.** Image 8 shows the evolution of these events by type between 2018 and 2022. Armed clashes became the most frequent event in 2022 (222 events), followed by attacks on civilians (142), kidnappings (133). Sexual violence, although most likely underestimated, has had a strong resurgence, increasing from 9 to 20 events between 2020 and 2022.

### Key actors

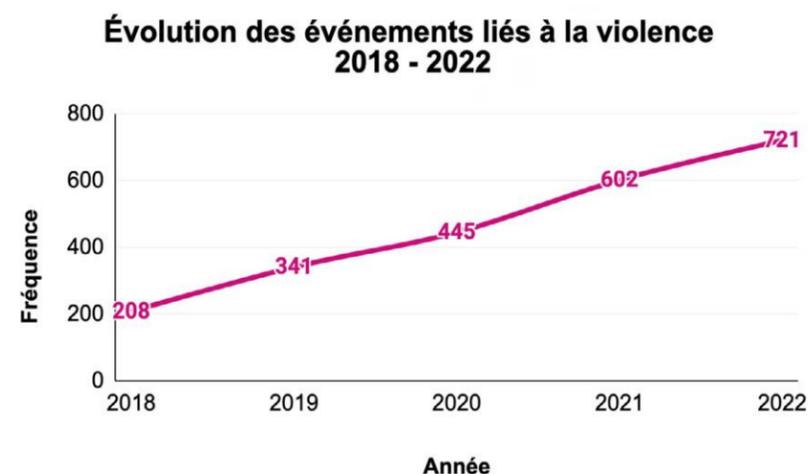
**When we analyze the actors who are part of violent events, we see that civilians are impacted by violence more frequently than other actors, in most cases as victims of gangs.** Image 9 shows the actors involved in 90% of the events analyzed. It excludes events where actors interacted less than 5 times between 2018 and 2022, as well as peaceful protests and riots where the only actors are

the rioters and there is property but not personal damage. Here, civilians are the victims in 855 events, affected in most cases by unidentified armed groups (394 events) and unidentified gangs (247 events). Then, police forces had confrontations in more than 460 events with armed groups, gangs, rioters and protesters.

### Main gangs

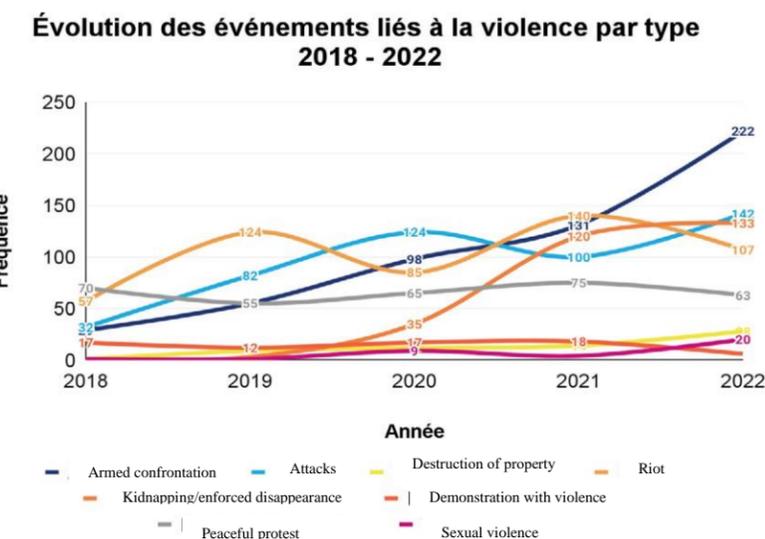
**Among the identified gangs, the growth in gang violence is led by gangs such as 400 Mawozo, Chien Méchant and G-9, with a strong growth in G-Pep.** Image 10 shows the number of events where gangs were identified between 2018 and 2022 (for gangs with more than 10 events). Here, 400 Mawozo went from being involved in 4 events in 2019 to 71 in 2022, being the gang most identified in violent events. Chien-Méchant went from being identified in 2 events in 2020 to 37 in 2022. The G-9 is the third in frequency, increasing from 1 event in 2019 to 32. Although less frequent, the G-Pep gang has grown from 1 event in 2020 to 11 events in 2022.

Image 7. Evolution of violence-related events 2018-2022



Source: Authors' estimate based on ACLED data

Image 8. Evolution of violence-related events 2018-2022<sup>34</sup>



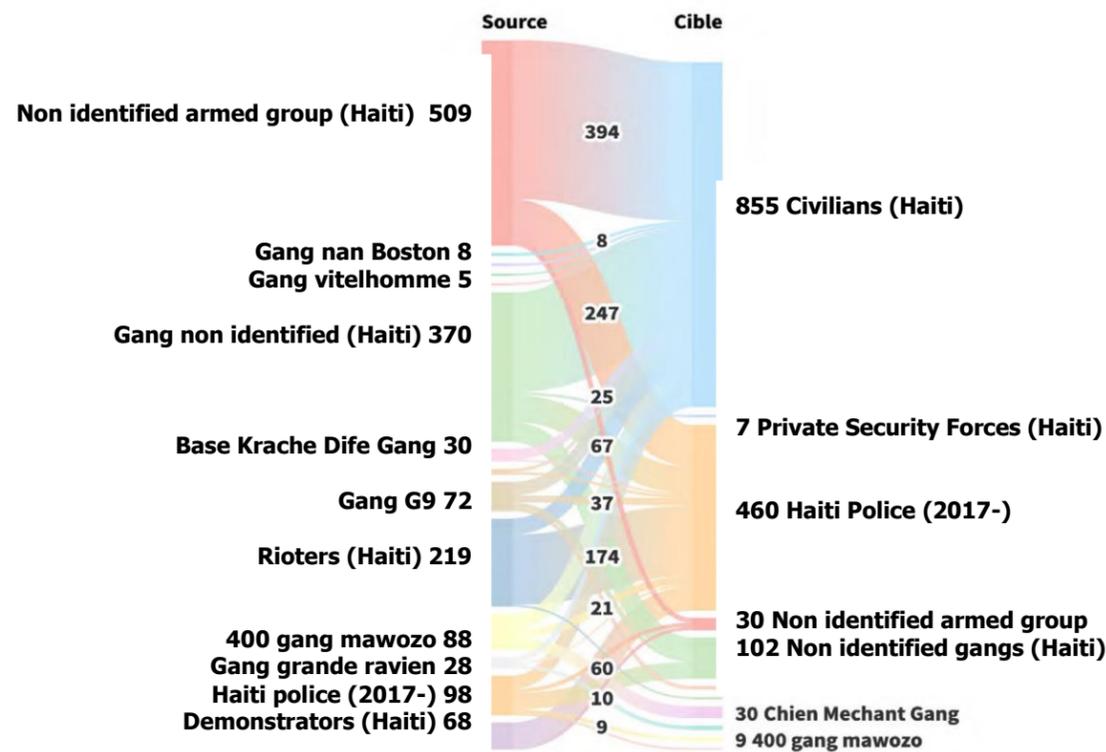
Source: Authors' estimate based on ACLED data

31 Violence refers to "the intentional use of physical force or power, or threats, against persons, which result or may result in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment or deprivation."

32 A report by the CARDH recorded 389 kidnappings for the first quarter of 2023, showing a growth of more than 173% compared to that of 2021 and 72% compared to that of 2022 in which 142 and 225 kidnappings were recorded respectively.

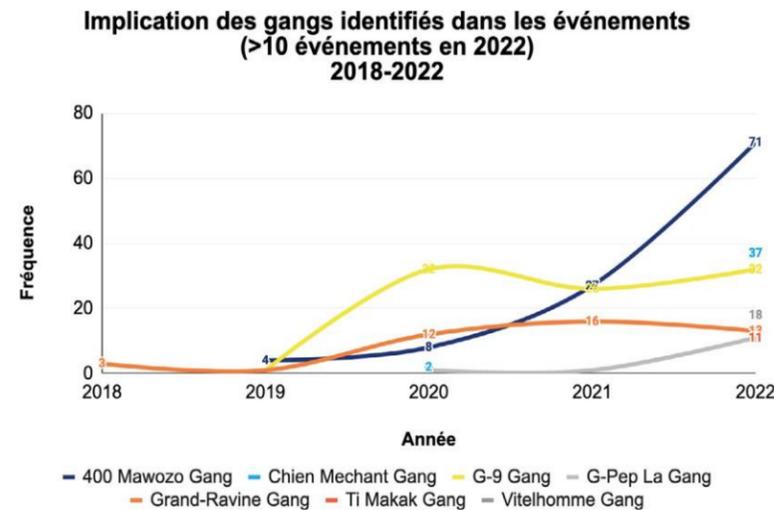
33 Image 5 shows the actors involved in 90% of the events analyzed. It excludes events where actors interacted less than 5 times between 2018 and 2022, as well as peaceful protests and riots where the only actors are the rioters and the damage is to property and not people.

Image 9. Main actors in violent events between 2018-2022



Source: Authors' estimate based on ACLED data

Image 10. Gang involvement in violence-related events between 2018-2022 (>10 events in 2022)



Source: Authors' estimate based on ACLED data.

## Trends in violence involving youth and children

### Evolution of events involving young people and children

The number of violence-related events involving young people and children in Port-au-Prince increased between 2018 and 2022, from 15 to 38 events (Image 11).<sup>34</sup> A total of 134 events were identified, e.g. 6% of the total events, where young people and children (girl, boy, student, young person, among others) were involved as actors or victims.

### Evolution of events involving young people and children by violence type

When analyzing these events by type, trends show an increase in attacks (from 3 in 2018 to 13 in 2022), kidnappings (6 in 2020 to 11 in 2022) and sexual violence (1 in 2020 to 6

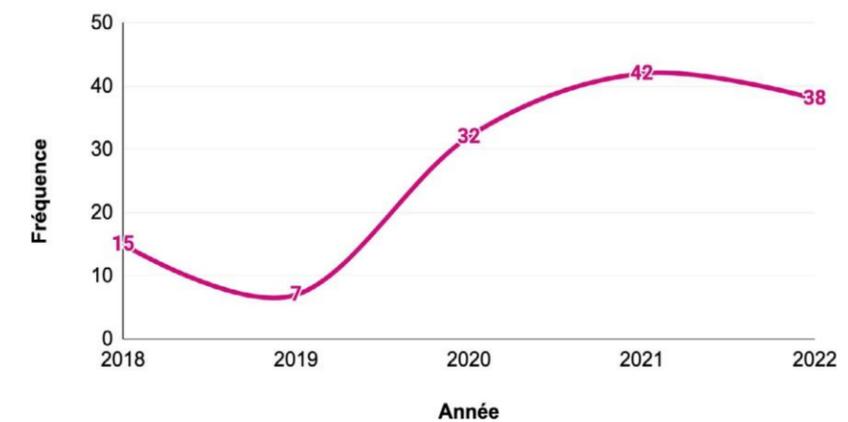
in 2022) against young people and children (Image 12). Table A in the appendix presents excerpts from these events, where the involvement of young people and children in violent acts is detailed, through sexual violence, kidnappings, gang confrontations and murders, with an example where the perpetrators of violence are also young people.

### Main perpetrators and frequency by type of violence involving young people and children

In most cases, according to ACLED data, young people and children are involved in violent events as victims of armed group or gang attacks on civilians, with at least 77 incidents between 2018 and 2022. However, other types of confrontations, such as battles between gangs, between police and gangs, or police and rioters, also impact young people and children.

Image 11. Evolution of violence related events that impact young people and children (2018-2022)<sup>35</sup>

### Évolution des événements liés à la violence impactant des jeunes et des enfants 2018 - 2022

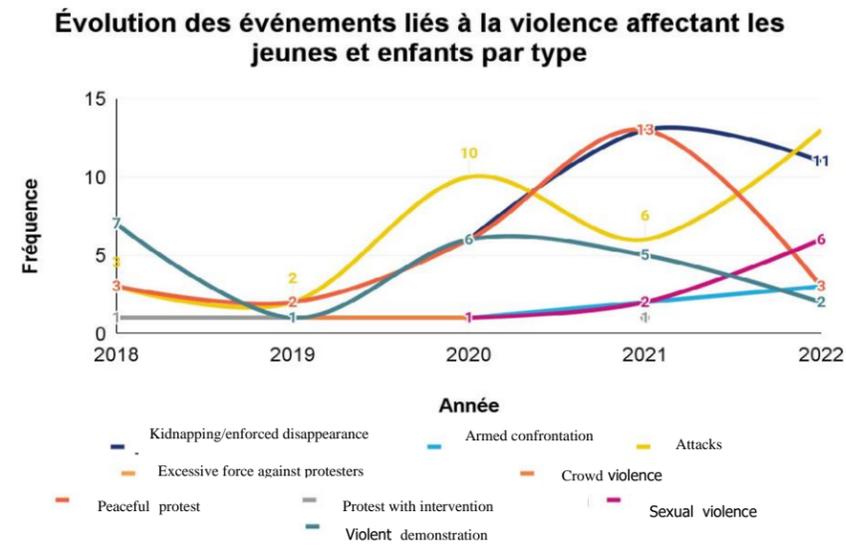


Source: Authors' estimate based on ACLED data

<sup>34</sup> The text that describes each event in the ACLED data was filtered using text mining to understand the direct involvement of young people and children in violence-related events. While ACLED data likely underestimate the actual situation experienced by children and young people, these data suggest an increased frequency in the identification of these events, which may be a sign of escalating, or at least, increasingly visible violence.

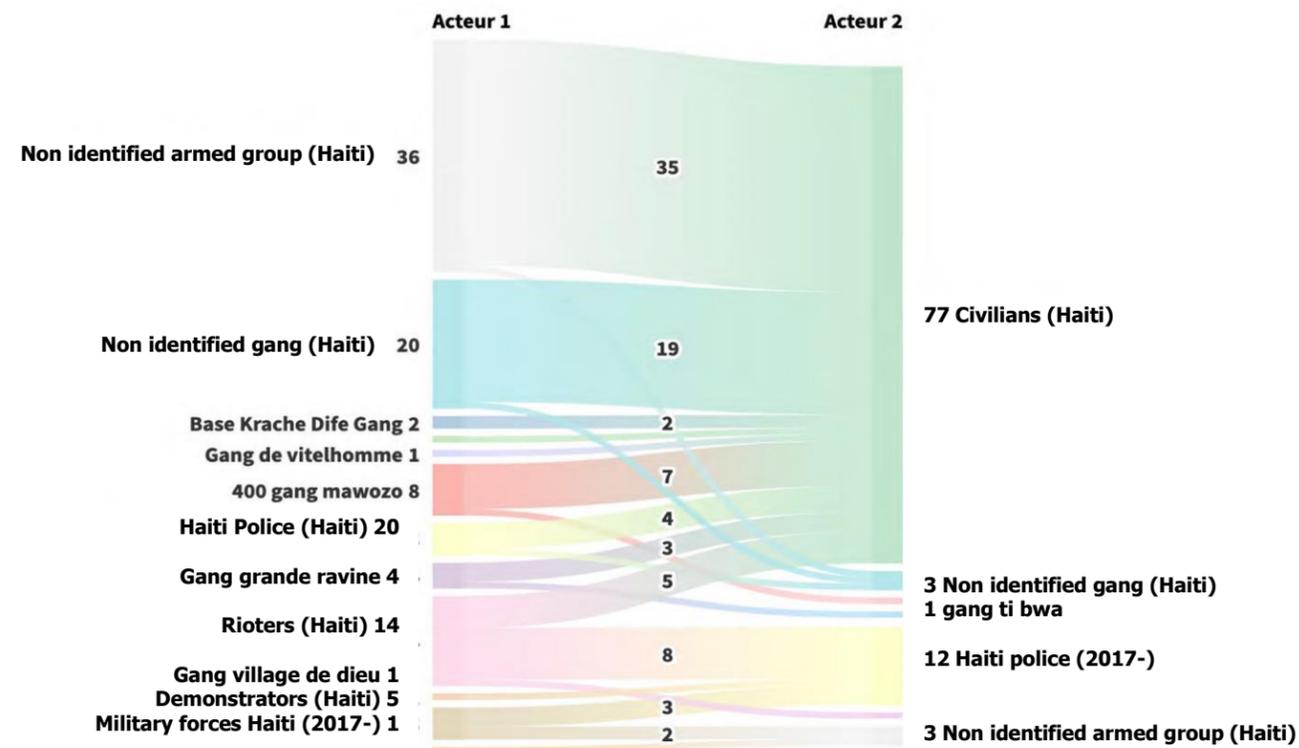
<sup>35</sup> Image 11 shows the number of events in which young people and children are involved, excluding peaceful demonstrations and riots where the only actors are the rioters and the damage is to property and not to people.

Image 12. Evolution of violence-related events that impact young people and children by type (2018-2022)



Source: Authors' estimate based on ACLED data

Image 13. Main actors in violent events affecting young people and children between 2018-2022



Source: Authors' estimate based on ACLED data

The survey conducted for this study between April and July 2023 confirms that gangs are the main perpetrators of physical violence against young people and children. It also shows that other types of violence are committed by their relatives. Although psychological and sexual violence is also perpetrated by gangs, the perpetrators are primarily family members<sup>36</sup> (see next paragraph). This sheds light on a violent environment that extends into the home for victims. About one in two young people or children reported having been a victim of physical violence in the Port-au-Prince metropolitan area (51%). Among them, 70% say they have been a victim of this violence at least once in the last 6 months and at least once a month for 27% of those surveyed<sup>37</sup>. Almost unanimously (81%) respondents identified gang members as the main perpetrators of physical violence. Other actors such as the police (1%) or family members (3%) also stand out, but with very insignificant percentages, which is in line with the ACLED data results. It is therefore not surprising to find that this type of violence occurs mainly on the streets, with 73% of survey participants having declared that physical violence took place on the street, 16% in public places such as parks, restaurants and public markets where the presence of gangs is very high, with some controlled by gangs that have a community anchor.<sup>38</sup> Other places such as home (20%) and school (5%) also appear but with less representation.

**Emotional abuse is the most prevalent form of violence among young people and children in**

Port-au-Prince, with 84% of the young people and children surveyed having experienced this form of violence in the last 6 months<sup>39</sup>. Emotional abuse occurs constantly, with 51% of children and young people experiencing this form of violence and reporting experiencing it at least once in the past six months, and 38% at least once a month. Three main actors were mentioned by victims as the main perpetrators, family members reported in 59% of cases, street gang members in 28% of cases. Thus, this type of violence is experienced both at home, perpetrated by parents and outside with gang members. As for the place where this psychological violence takes place, victims reported the home in 75% of cases, and the street in 37% of situations (the Images in Appendix A, B, C and D show details on the frequency, frequency in the last 6 months, places and perpetrators of the violence which are detailed in this section).

Despite the possible under-representation of sexual violence, the percentage of participants who reported experiencing sexual violence was very high. A total of 18% of the study population reported having been a victim of sexual violence. The perpetrators of this type of violence are mainly their own family members and their partners or companions (18%), which contrasts with the way the survey was designed, with a focus on gang-generated violence. Among the places where sexual violence takes place, according to the surveyed participants, it is mainly the home (36% said they had experienced sexual violence in home) and on the street for 58% of cases<sup>40</sup>. Among those who have experienced sexual violence

36 The survey asked young people and children about the types of violence experienced (physical, psychological and sexual), the perpetrators and where it took place. These results are presented in this study. However, it is important to remember that domestic violence of all types can be subject to different dynamics than gang violence. The purpose of this section is to show that young people and children experience violence from actors other than gangs to ensure that the respective actions are not only focused on protecting young people and children from gangs, but in the home as well.

37 Although we did not explore in detail the forms of physical abuse experienced in order to avoid confronting participants with questions that were too awkward and could raise psychological trauma, examples that accompanied the description of physical abuse were: beatings with an object, threats with a knife or a firearm, and intentional burns. For more information on the questionnaire, the full version of the telephone survey can be found in the appendix of this report.

38 For example, Unicef experts claim that the Bossale Cross Market is controlled by the Saltworks Gang and the Sylvana Market by Baz Pilate.

39 Forms of emotional abuse included in the example associated with the question included humiliation, insults, verbal abuse, neglect, and exploitation by known and unknown individuals.

40 On the subject of sexual violence, it should be noted that it is surely underestimated. Indeed, it is not possible to fully capture the extent of this type of violence because some victims are afraid to report it or are very often judged by their own community when they do so. In addition, some victims expressed that they did not want to share the contact data of some young people and children who had been victims of sexual violence so as not to jeopardize their confidentiality and expose them.

90% have suffered it at least once in the past six months, and 9% at least once a month. Sexual violence is used by gangs as a means of spreading fear, controlling, punishing, and as a means of obtaining resources through ransoms demanded from victims' families.<sup>41</sup> This violence manifests itself in threats, rapes, sometimes followed by mutilations and murders and gang rapes that have already taken place in front of the victims' families, both within the communities "protected" by the gangs, as well as against the residents of other municipalities suspected of collaborating with opposing gangs or simply for living in a territory controlled by another gang. Sexual violence used as a weapon in conflict enters into a complex dynamic, where on a few occasions families, who are in precarious areas and subordinated to the disproportionate power of gangs, use the bodies of victims of sexual violence as bargaining chips to gain access to the safety and well-being that is controlled by these same gangs. Indeed, reports and interviews show that some families ask victims to have 'consensual' sex with gang members in exchange for financial support, access to basic services, protection from actions of the same gang or other gangs, among others (this type of instrumentalization of women's bodies is explained in the section on engagement).

**The young people and children interviewed were highly exposed to indirect violence, with 45% of young people and children reporting that they sometimes or almost always heard gunshots in their neighbourhood.** Interviewers had to stop their calls several times because of the gunfire that took place during the calls. Violence is also very present through the stories circulating in the municipalities

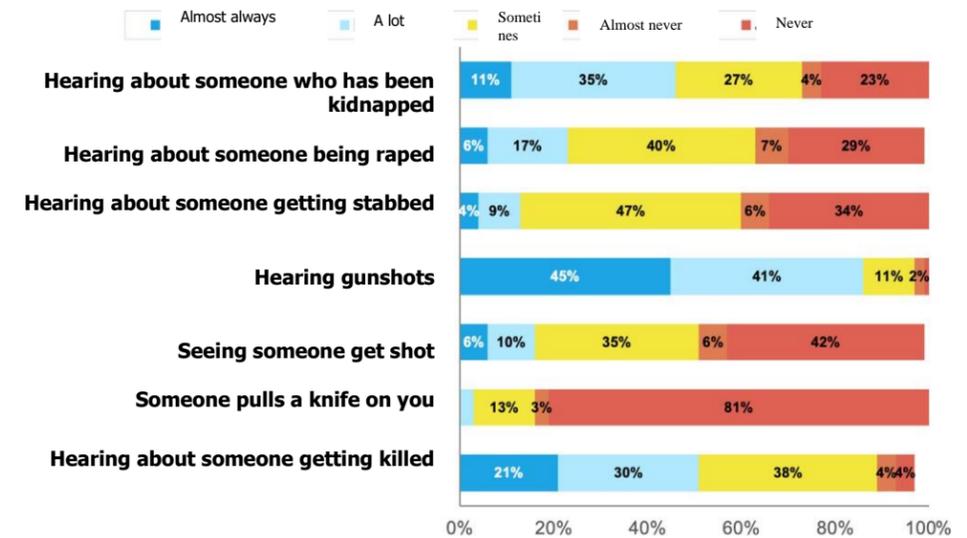
where they live<sup>42</sup>. Among young people and children, 35% say they have heard a lot about someone who has been kidnapped, and 17% have heard a lot about someone who has been raped. Other acts of indirect physical violence are also present with less frequency. 47% of young people and children said they had sometimes heard of someone who had been stabbed. Finally, a lower (13%) but alarming proportion said they had been threatened with a knife. These indicators of perception and experiences of violence indicate that very severe forms of violence are present on a daily basis in Port-au-Prince, thus leading to the risk of normalizing these types of environments and serious psychological consequences. Image 13 illustrates the frequency of occurrence of a series of violent actions to represent the climate of violence in Port-au-Prince. It is therefore clear that violence is omnipresent in Port-au-Prince. Depending on the municipality where the young people and children live, it can be felt more frequently and take different forms. But regardless of the municipality or neighbourhood, violence is always present in the form of gunfire, insecurity and fear.

#### D. Mapping of violence

##### Evolution of violence by municipality

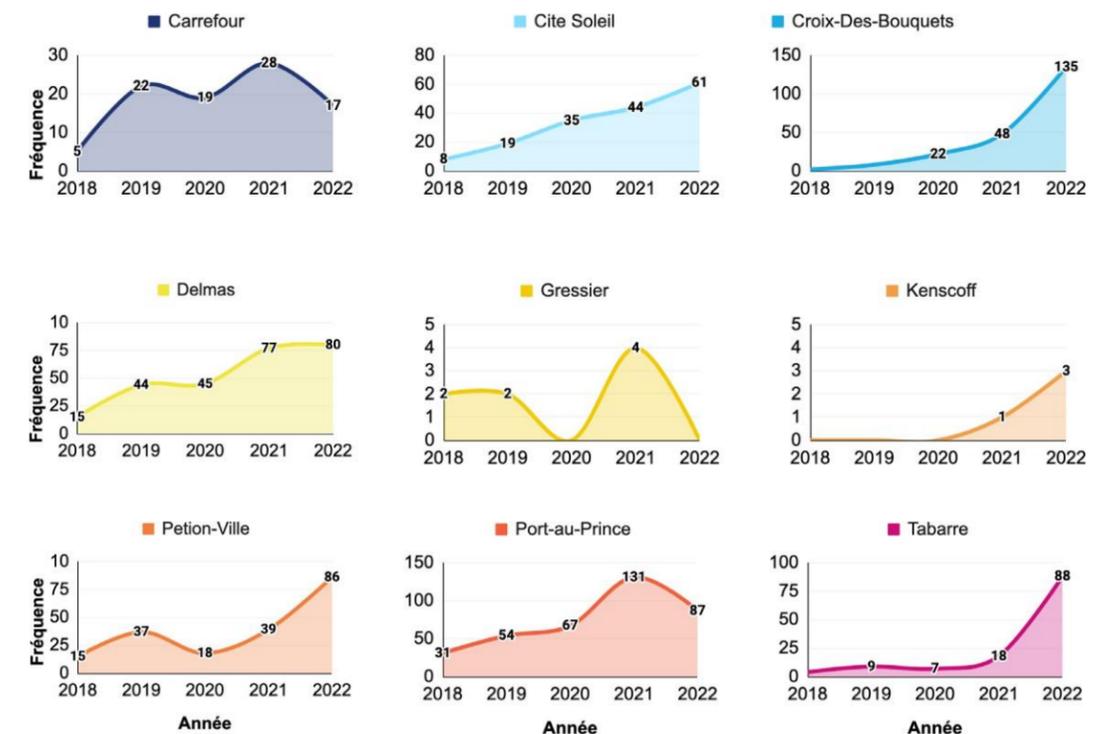
**All municipalities in the Port-au-Prince metropolitan area are affected by violence at different levels. Croix-des-Bouquets and Tabarre have the highest number of events in 2022 as well as the largest growth in the period (Image 14)**<sup>43</sup>. In 2022, the municipalities with the highest frequency of violence were Croix-des-Bouquets (135), Tabarre (88), Port-au-Prince (87), Pétion-Ville (86), Delmas (80) and Cité-Soleil (61)<sup>44</sup>. The average annual growth

Image 14. How often does violence take place in your neighbourhood?



Source: RDS Survey

Image 14. Evolution of violence-related events by municipality



Source: Authors' estimate based on ACLED data

41 BINUH, "Sexual Violence in Port-au-Prince: A Weapon Used by Gangs to Spread Fear", 2022, <https://reliefweb.int/report/haiti/-Sexual-Violence-Port-au-Prince-a-Weapon-Used-by-Gangs-to-Spread-Fear>

42 The questions were formulated on the basis of other questionnaires existing in the literature and taking into account very high exposure to violence, for example the "Screen for Adolescent Violence Exposure" (SAVE).

43 To map the violence in Port-au-Prince, an additional step of filtering events was conducted, since in the ACLED database some events are associated with the municipality of Port-au-Prince when the municipality is not known. Using text mining, the researchers identified the locations described in the excerpts of the events (see examples of the excerpts of the events in Table A in the Appendix). Then, the latitude and longitude of the locations were identified and the events were grouped by municipality. For example, if the event mentions the Bank of the Republic of Haiti, the location was extracted and then the event was placed in the municipality of Port-au-Prince.

44 Image 12 shows the evolution of the number of violence-related events, excluding peaceful protests, by municipality between 2018 and 2022. Each bar represents the percentage distribution of a type of violence between municipalities (y-axis) and the labels of each bar show the frequency of events.

in the number of events was strongly visible in Croix-des-Bouquets (186% average annual growth 2018-2022). In Tabarre, the number of events increased almost fivefold between 2021 and 2022 (116% average annual growth 2018-2022).

### Types of violence by municipality

Violence is spreading to all the municipalities of Port-au-Prince. In terms of frequency, the municipality of Port-au-Prince has most armed clashes, attacks on civilians, destruction of property and kidnappings. Riots are more frequent in Delmas. Violent demonstrations in Pétion-Ville. Cases of sexual violence were more frequent in Cité Soleil and Tabarre (Image 15).

### Types of violence involving young people and children by municipality

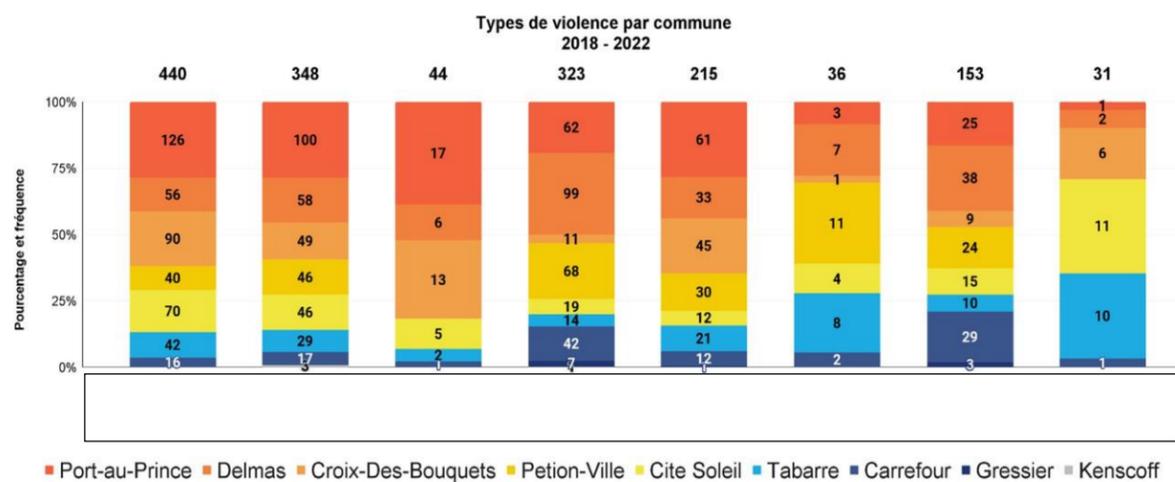
**Violent events affected the young people and children population in all municipalities (Image 16).** Armed clashes have affected them in Port-au-Prince and Croix-des-Bouquets. Attacks on civilians were mainly significant in Port-au-Prince, Croix-des-Bouquets, Tabarre, Pétion-Ville, Delmas, Carrefour and Cité Soleil. The riots impacted them in Port-au-Prince, Croix-des-Bouquets, Tabarre, Pétion-Ville, Delmas, Carrefour, Cité Soleil and Gressier.

There are registers of kidnappings in all municipalities except Gressier. Violent demonstrations affected the population in Port-au-Prince, Croix-des-Bouquets, Pétion-Ville, and Cité Soleil. Sexual violence in Croix-des-Bouquets, Tabarre, Delmas, Carrefour and Cité Soleil.

### E. Exposure of young people to violence

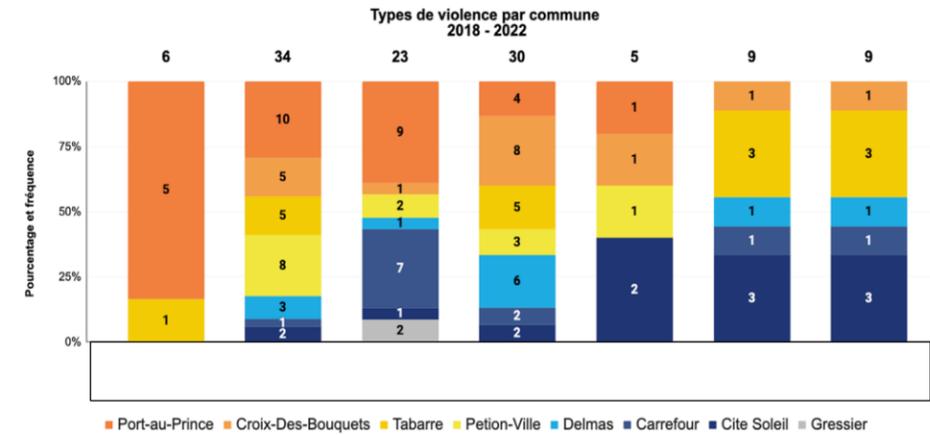
This subsection develops a measure of the number of children at risk of exposure to violence. This is done because the number of young people and children impacted by violence goes beyond those identified in the previous section. Both because there are unidentified victims in the ACLED events and in the investigation and also because there are people indirectly impacted by violence, for example, through deprivation in terms of mobility, access to basic services and psychological trauma related to indirect exposure to violence. Image 17 below shows the number of young people and children (<25 years old) by municipality, as well as the number of violent events (not including peaceful demonstrations). An index of exposure to violence per 100,000 young people and children (<25) years old has been developed in order to understand the number of children and young people who are exposed to violence directly and indirectly by municipality and by violence type, the results are shown in Image 19<sup>45</sup>.

Image 15. Types of violence by municipality (2018-2022)



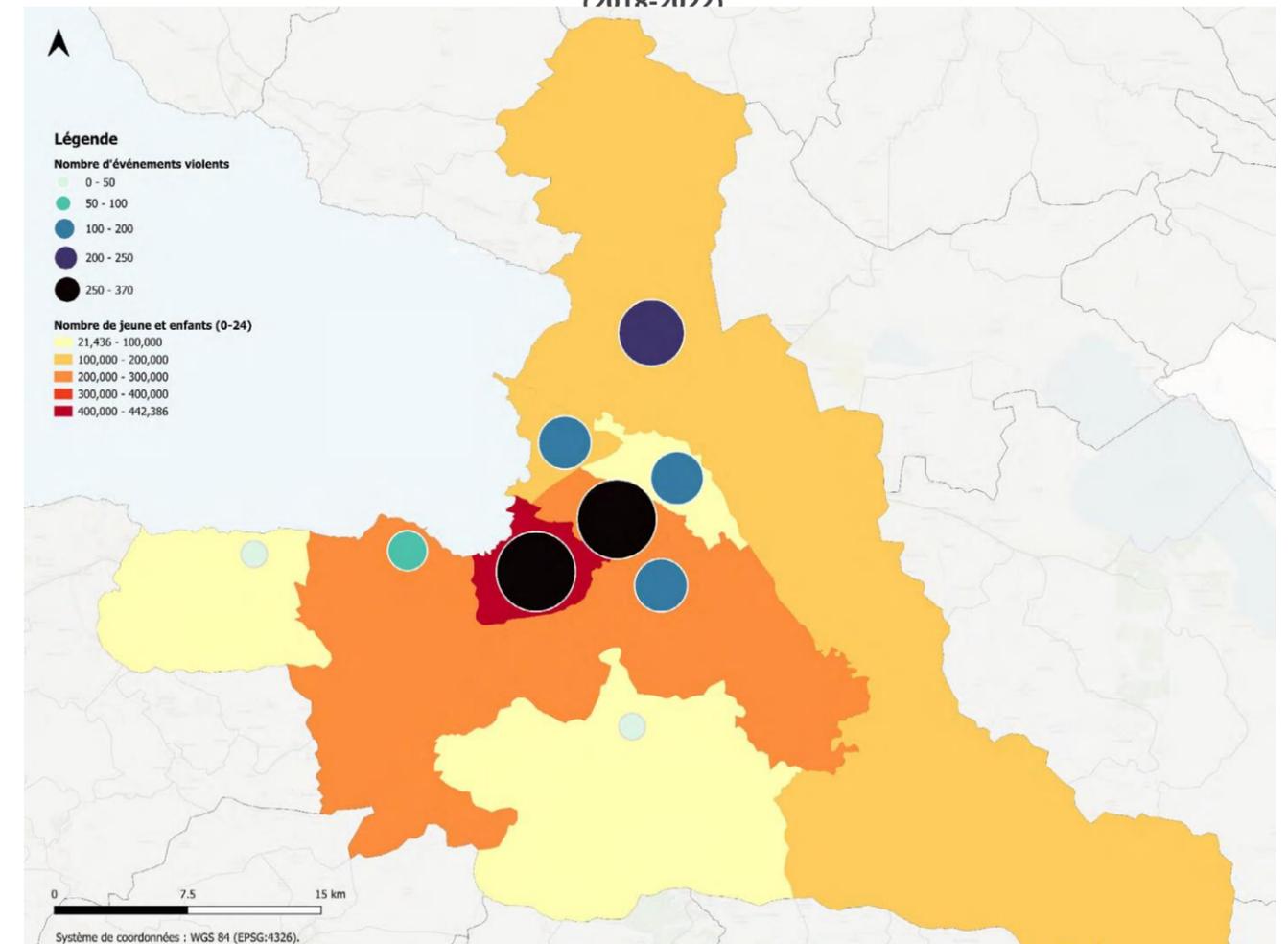
Source: Authors' estimate based on ACLED data

Image 16. Types of violence involving young people and children by municipality (2018-2022)



Source: Authors' estimate based on ACLED data

Image 17. Map of the distribution of the young people and children population and violent events (2018-2022)



Source: Authors' estimate based on ACLED and WorldPop data

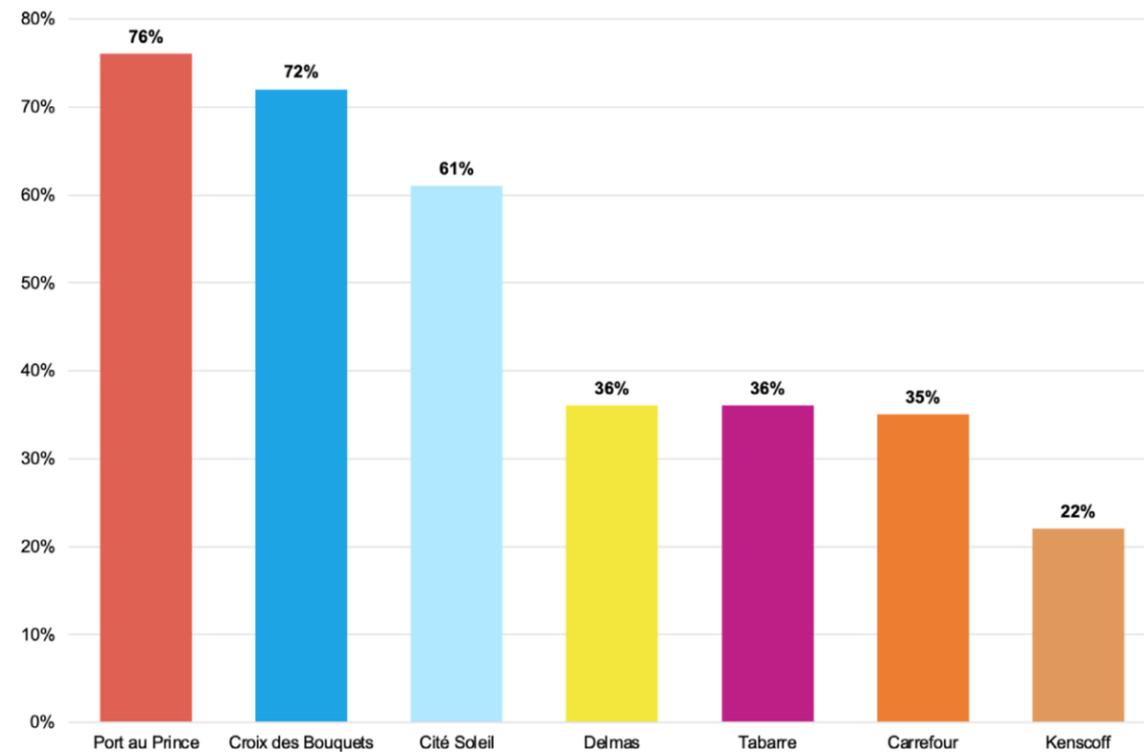
45 The index of exposure to violence per 100,000 young people and children (<25) years old is based on the average number of violent events between 2018-2022 and the number of young people and children in each WorldPop municipality, multiplied by 100,000.

These results are aligned with those of the RDS survey for the most dangerous municipalities. During the survey, 3 municipalities stand out in the RDS survey as epicenters of violence, namely Port-au-Prince, Croix des Bouquets and Cité Soleil (Image 18). Seventy-six percent of young people said Port-au-Prince was a dangerous town for young people and children between the ages of 11 and 24, 72 percent for Croix des Bouquets, and 61 percent for Cité Soleil. Although the other municipalities are perceived as relatively less dangerous, the ACLED data allows us to complete the information, thus reaffirming that the municipalities of Tabarre, Pétion-Ville and Delmas represent risky areas for young people and children.

### Violence exposure index

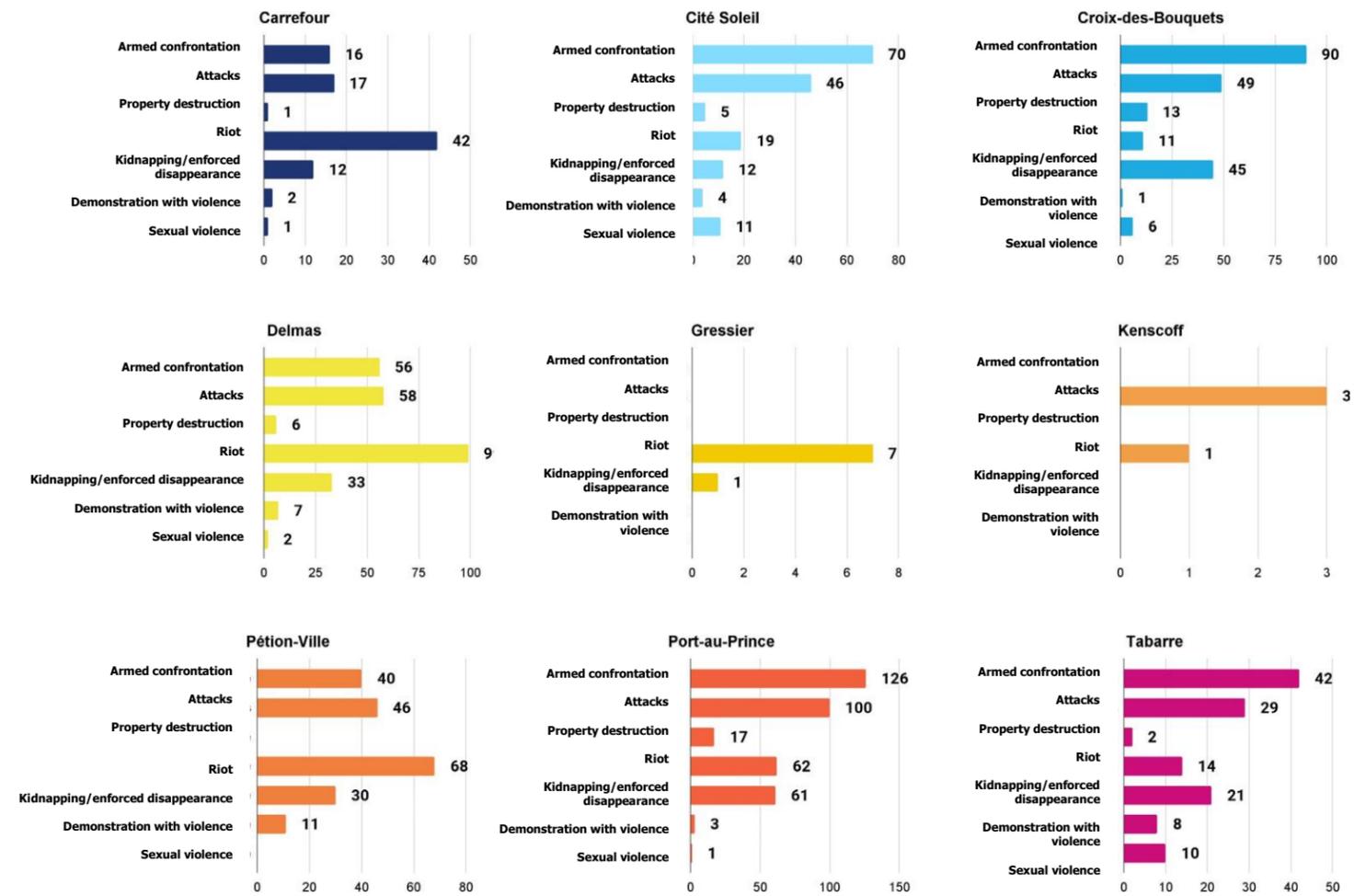
The results of the index (Image 19) show that in Port-au-Prince young people and children have the highest exposure to armed clashes (126 events per 100,000 young people and children), attacks (100 per 100,000), destruction of property (17 per 100,000), and kidnapping, (62 per 100,000). As far as riots are concerned, the highest exposure is present in Pétion-Ville, with 68 events per 100,000 children. Violent demonstrations are highest in Pétion-Ville, with 11 events per 100,000. Finally, sexual violence exposes young people and children more in the municipality of Cité-Soleil, with 11 events recorded per 100,000 young people and children.

Image 18. Most dangerous municipalities for the population between 11 and 24 years old



Source: RDS Survey

Image 19. Average rate of violence-related events per 100,000 young people and children (<25), 2018-2022



Source: Authors' estimate based on ACLED and WorldPop data

# 7

## Impacts: What are the impacts of the different types of violence on children and youth?

*"The impact of this violence has physical, psychological and emotional repercussions causing denigration, injuries, developmental disorders, risky behaviour, unwanted pregnancies, communicable and non-communicable diseases. This violence directly impacts the environment and the community of children and young people."*

Civil Society Organization

### A. Individual impacts

*"Children who experience this are traumatized for life. We can't even say what will become of them in the future with all these traumas."*

Max, a teenager affected by violence

*"The effect is not the same. Not much, but it's different. Because as a young person, I see things differently than a child. This will mark us both for life, but with time the child can forget the main aspects of what he has experienced, he will only have aftereffects. But for me, as a young person, it will haunt me for the rest of my life. That's one of the reasons I left the area."*

Marie, survivor of violence

**As shown before, young people and children see different direct impacts of violence at physical level, but these impacts extend powerfully on a psychological level.** The different data sources used in the study show that young people and children are victims of murder, injury, rape (diseases, unwanted pregnancy and/or adolescent pregnancy, according to interviews) among other attacks on their physical well-being. One of the interviewees informed the team that she had been raped by a group of men and then became pregnant, without having resources to meet her or her child's medical needs. Signs of psychological trauma were mentioned by gang victims during interviews and their prevalence among victims was confirmed by the RDS survey. Interviewees spoke of fear, insomnia, irritability, panic and stress as a result of gang violence. According to the organizations, young people and children affected by violence develop depression and suicidal behaviors. The stress is also evident. For example the Testimony of Luke shows he often hears the gunfire related to the armed attacks, and has no chance to avoid them. Victims may also develop risky behaviours, such as alcohol and drug use. These behaviours can increase the risk of violence among young people, as gangs are financed in part through drug trafficking (see section on structural dynamics and causes of violence).

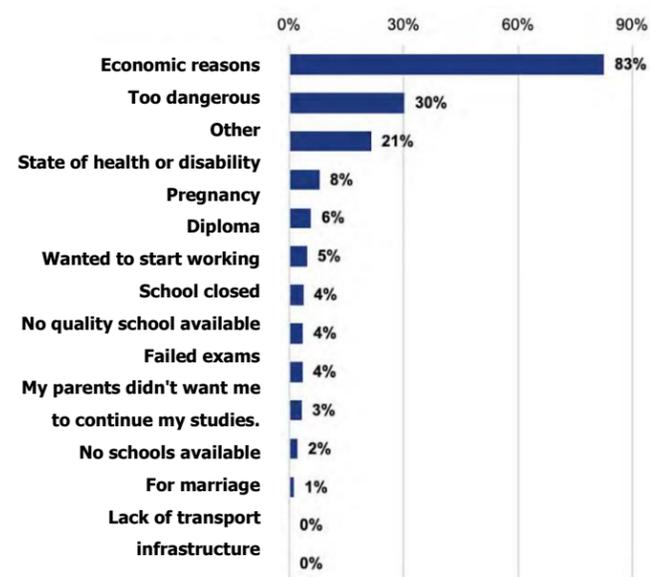
The RDS survey shows only 60% of young people between the ages of 15 and 16 impacted by violence are enrolled in the 2022-2023 school year, indicating a very high dropout rate. The percentage of young graduates is extremely low, with only 10% of young people surveyed between the ages of 23 and 25 having a degree. This percentage is even lower (2%) for those between 21 and 22 years old.

Violence is cited as one of the main causes preventing schooling, with 88% of respondents living in Croix-de-Bouquets and Pétion-Ville citing violence as one of the reasons for not attending school. Although this violence seems to be concentrated in certain municipalities, it is present everywhere in Port-au-Prince. A total of 30% of survey participants said they did not go to school or dropped out of school because it was too dangerous (see Image 20).

Economic reasons are the most cited by children to justify not attending school (for example, the need to earn money to support the family) (87%). Other factors cited as the cause of the high dropout rate include school closures (9%), which is itself linked to violence. The lack of transport infrastructure is never mentioned as reducing mobility opportunities for children, while health or disability reasons are mentioned marginally (3%) and only 3% say that this requirement comes from their parents directly while 6% say they wanted to work on their own. Pregnancies appear to be a fairly important factor to drop out of school (10%).

Although the low school enrolment rate is not only attributed to violence, interviews with organizations, children and reports from the various organizations mentioned above state that the presence of gangs is an important cause. The organizations interviewed also noted that a low level of education is one of the factors that makes the recruitment of young people and children into gangs easier. Further, the low school enrolment rate among young people and children who are already victims of violence denotes the high level of victims' vulnerability, which is reinforced by the economic difficulties presented in the section on involvement of young people and children with gangs.

**Image 20. The main reason for not going to school or dropping out of school**



[1] For example "I couldn't afford it" or "I needed to earn money to support my family"

Source: RDS survey

This potential link between schooling difficulties and gang recruitment is particularly important in Haiti, given that according to 2019 estimates, 40% of children drop out of school before Grade 9, and 80% of children who drop out of school are over-aged due to a variety of difficulties, including school closures related to lockdowns, violence, the COVID-19 that took place afterwards, the stigmatization of over-aged students, poverty in a country where 85% of schools are private, the distance from schools, the lack of cafeterias, language barriers between the French used in institutions and the Creole spoken at home, among others<sup>46</sup>.

## B. Relational impacts

*"We don't trust anyone, especially strangers.*

*We avoid going out too often (only*

*if necessary). We avoid public or leisure spaces and visiting friends, some families are separated, people are isolated, among others."*  
Paul, survivor of violence

*"I've changed but not much. I became very suspicious, especially of men. Although I don't know the people who did this to me. I don't trust anyone really. I can't stand men anymore"* Marie, survivor of sexual violence

Violence impacts social cohesion, reduces spaces for interaction, increases mistrust, destroys trust, forces people to flee and isolate themselves. As mentioned by Paul, people in general and youth and children in particular are forced to reduce their free mobility in public spaces to

avoid being exposed to violence. This limitation breaks people's social ties by limiting the spaces for interpersonal relationships between and within communities. Following the experience of violent events, the youth and children interviewed affirmed a state of hypervigilance. It is the development of a form of mistrust that evolves among people present in the affected areas where they avoid going out in public spaces to visit friends and family members. Therefore social isolation has resulted from the violence of armed gangs, thus affecting interpersonal relationships.

**In the RDS survey, this breakdown of trust was victims of the violence, by mistrusting others.** With the statement, "People in your/community (i.e., people living in your/block and with whom you/you interact/interact on a daily basis) can be trustworthy." A very tiny proportion agree (4%). In the face of this violence, family ties are one of the last resorts, with more than 65% of respondents strongly agreeing or agreeing with the phrase "You can count on a present, competent, caring and positive adult" (see Image E "To what extent are you able to agree or disagree with the following statements, in the Appendix).

On the other hand, effects are observed on the trust between peers and friends. According to interviews with people affected by gang violence. Trust, which is already fragile in vulnerable gang-controlled neighbourhoods, is further weakened by direct exposure to violence, particularly among women who have been sexually assaulted. In this regard, an interviewee who had survived a rape said that she had become very suspicious of men because she associated them with her attacker. It is important to note that gang violence is one of the factors, among many, that impact young people and children at the psychological and relational levels. Survey respondents have experienced psychological and sexual violence in their homes, which

shows that distrusting others can happen even within the home.

In addition, following violence, interviewees also mentioned being forced to leave the area." According to interviews, people affected by violence in Haiti then fall prey to a "immobilize-flight-fight-abandon" response sequence, which manifests itself in the wake of imminent threats<sup>47</sup>. The International Organization for Migration says that 96,000 people fled the capital between June and August 2022 due to gang violence.

## C. Community impacts

*"Sometimes I am forced to stay at home because of gunfire and threats from bandits, I can't even go to school"*  
Mylena, survivor of violence

**The insecurity experienced in the municipalities of the Port-au-Prince metropolitan area because of intra and inter-community violence also limits access to the basic needs caused by it.** Gangs have created an atmosphere of widespread violence in public spaces, with more than 65% of respondents strongly agreeing or agreeing with the statement below:

"I feel unsafe when I leave my house to go to work or school to do my daily activities." Gangs exert control in the streets through terror; similarly within their community, through violence against those they perceive as detractors, as inter-communal, through clashes between gangs in turf struggles. Only 11% of young people and children agree with the statement "You feel safe walking down the street in front of your house during the day" (see Image E "To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements, in Appendix).

**Violence leads to barriers to access to basic services in general and health services in particular.** Access to health services is hampered as neither the healthcare staff nor the patients are safe to

46 UNESCO "Abandonment school one phenomenon chronic in Haiti", (2020), <https://www.iiep.unesco.org/fr/school-dropping-a-chronic-phenomenon-in-haiti-13486>

47 HS Bracha et al. Does "Fight or Flight" Need Updating?. Psychosomatics, 2004.

48 Relief Web. 96,000 Haitians displaced by recent gang violence in capital: IOM Report, October 28, 2022, <https://reliefweb.int/report/haiti/96000-haitians-displaced-recent-gang-violence-capital-iom-report>

go to medical centers<sup>49</sup>. Interviews with the organizations mention the shutdown of the MSF hospital in Martissant as a significant event in the shift from gang violence to attacks on basic services. The reduced mobility reinforces the phenomenon of broken community ties, as young people and children who experience the psychological and psychic effects of violence do not find spaces to be supported by professionals. This can worsen the consequences of the violence they face.

**Violence, in turn, exacerbates difficulties to access education.** The temporary or permanent shutdown of certain schools due to the danger has jeopardized the continuity of the educational path of Haitian youth and children<sup>50</sup>. According to UNICEF<sup>51</sup>, as of May 2022, about 500,000 children had lost access to school in Haiti due to gang violence. Interviewees who have been affected by violence say this impact forces them to stay at home and miss classes and exams. The insecurity experienced around schools, linked to their shutdown and abductions mentioned in the "violence trends" section, weakens even further human capital. This has been presented as an individual impact of violence among children and young people.

**In terms of leisure**, "it's very difficult to go to an amusement park because you can catch a bullet"<sup>52</sup>. Indirectly, young people and children lose their spaces for socialization and leisure. The study's interviews show that the lack of recreational spaces and safe access to these spaces makes children and young people vulnerable to being recruited

by gangs - the street becomes their socialization space where they are more exposed to gang control and abuse.

**In addition, food insecurity is a latent effect of this violence.** Organizations inform that the blockades of the main roads between the departments led by gangs, as well as gang control on the markets, increase the price of products in the city, thus making it more difficult to buy food. This is among other phenomena that enhance the food security of young people and children. For example, inflation in October 2022 stood at 47.2% according to the Haitian Institute of Statistics and Informatics<sup>53</sup>. UNICEF experts who participated in interviews for this study also mentioned difficulties in supplying markets related in part to gang control, theft of goods, diversion of vehicles to transport these goods and extortion faced by businesses.

#### D. Social impacts

**Gangs are increasingly limiting opportunities to increase human capital in Haiti. This limits access to education, health and employment for children and young people**<sup>54</sup>. Currently, gangs target schools for extortion and armed robbery<sup>55</sup>. This negatively impacts human capital building (for those who already relied on access to education) and may exacerbate the unemployment rate, which in 2021 was higher for the young population (35.7%, between 15 and 24 years old) than for the total population (15.7%)<sup>56, 57</sup>. As mentioned before, hospitals are struggling to treat people due to the lack of staff caused by violence.

In this case, the World Bank's Human Capital 2020 Index for Haiti is 0.4 (the index was 0.4 in 2028 as well). This means that a child born in Haiti would only be able to reach 40% of their productive capital by the age of 18 if they have access to quality education and health services.

The organizations participating in this study also informed that gangs have a negative impact on local businesses, through the blocking of trade in the main roads between departments<sup>58</sup> and security taxes on businesses<sup>59</sup>, which increases the price of goods and negatively impacts the local economy. This implies a significant loss of productivity for the country and an increase in socio-economic precariousness.

Interviewees say they do not see a solution to this situation. One interviewee affected by the violence said that "in order to protect yourself, the only solution is to get on a plane and go away from this country". Others note that the government, its agencies and the international bodies present are not sufficiently equipped to assist the population. **The context of powerlessness on the part of law enforcement and order leads them to admire the gangs and their way of life.** That's because it is the gangs that hold the power in the neighborhoods and they don't see opportunities elsewhere. For young people and children involved in violence, interviews reveal that early exposure to violence leads them to normalize it and engage in violent behaviors in response, "They say their family were victims and joined gangs to avenge them," which creates a vicious cycle of reinforcing violence and destroys the social fabric.

In addition, the WHO is examining the consequences of exposure to different types of violence<sup>60</sup> (see

Image 21). Physical effects include potential injuries, fractures and burns as a result of violence. Mental health effects include post-traumatic stress disorder as well. Violence can expose young people and children to

transmittable and non-transmittable diseases, as well as risky behaviors such as drug and alcohol abuse, smoking, addiction, and interpersonal violence. Sexual violence, in addition to the psychological effects, can lead to pregnancy complications, death of the mother or the fetus.

Overall, the high exposure to violence experienced by young people and children leaves effects that directly impact their development and that of future generations. In terms of their physical and psychological health, the impacts are highlighted by the consequences of the various violent acts, death, injuries, early and unwanted pregnancies, transmittable diseases, the psychological consequences of the experience of violence, such as post-traumatic stress, depression, among others. Their human capital is impacted both in terms of their health and in terms of their education, which undermines their rights, reduces the opportunities to find a job and improves their living conditions given that their productivity is already less than half of what it could be if their living conditions were better. Negative social norms reinforce the harms experienced by victims of violence. For instance, taboos around teenage pregnancies increase the likelihood of dropping out of school and other types of gender-based violence. Their social relationships are also interrupted by mobility restrictions and danger outside their homes. We also highlight that a significant number of victims of gang violence are also victims of violence at the hands of their loved ones.

49 MSF. Haiti: Maintaining access to health care in a context of increasing violence, 28 October 2021, <https://www.msf.fr/actualites/Haiti-haiti-maintenir-l-acces-aux-soins-de-sante-dans-un-contexte-de-violences-croissantes>

50 UNICEF. Haiti: Nine times more armed violence against schools in one year, 9 February 2023, <https://www.unicef.fr/article/haiti-neuf-fois-plus-de-violence-armee-contre-les-ecoles-en-un-an/>

51 UNICEF. Haiti: Gang violence pushes half a million children out of school in Port-au-Prince, 05 May 2022, <https://www.unicef.org/haiti/communiqu%C3%A9s-de-presse/ha%C3%A9ti-la-violence-des-gangs-pousse-un-demi-million-denfants-out-of-the-l%C3%A9school#:~:text=PORT%2DAU%2DPRINCE%2C%205,ont%20%C3%A9clat%C3%A920since%20fin%April%20>

52 Interview with civil society organization

53 Haitian Institute of Statistics and Informatics. Data, October 2022, <https://ihsi.ayiti.digital/>

54 UNICEF. Increasing number of schools in Haiti targeted by gangs - UNICEF, November 2, 2021, <https://www.unicef.org/lac/en/press-releases/increasing-number-schools-haiti-targeted-gangs-unicef>

55 IDB.

56 World Bank, Haiti data, 2023, <https://data.worldbank.org/country/haiti>

57 Ibid.

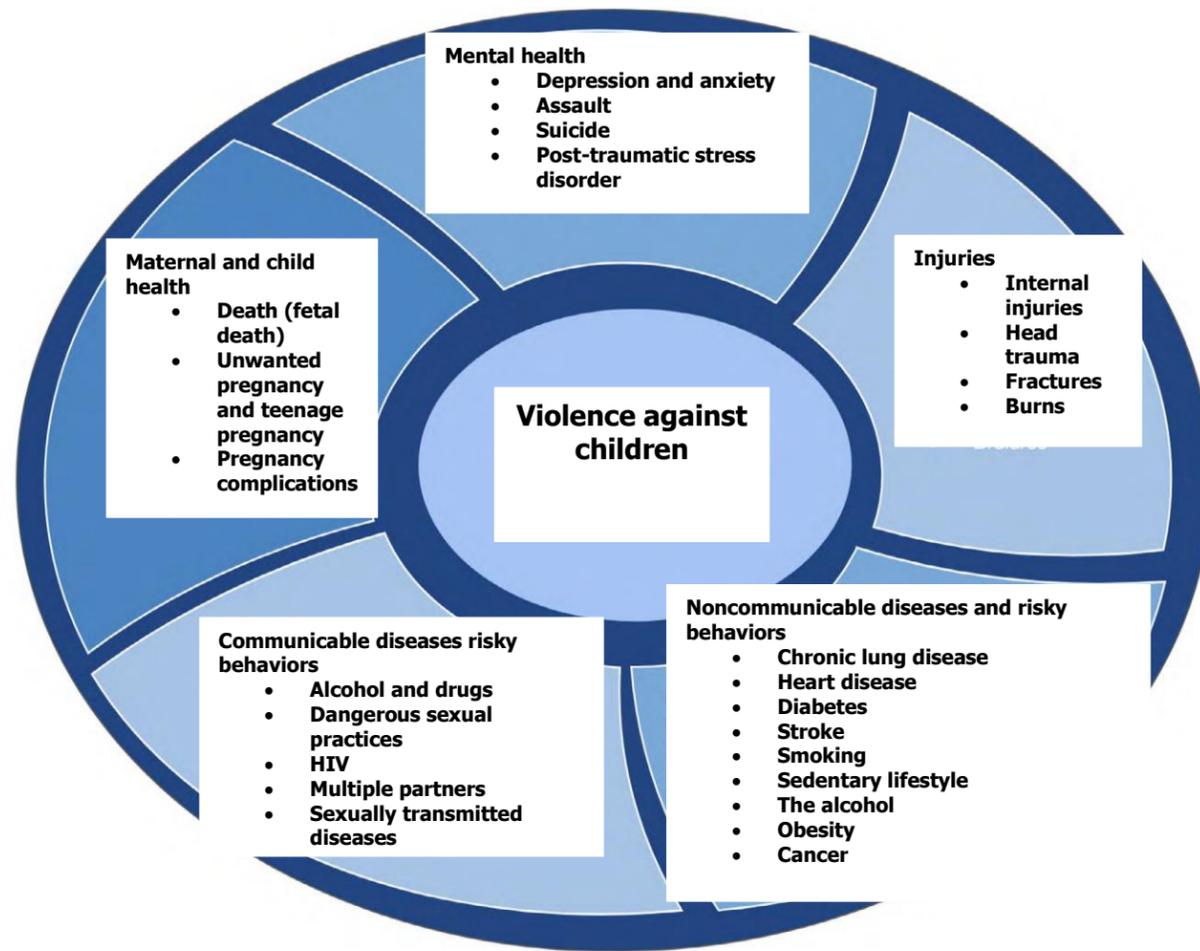
58 Information obtained from interviews with civil society organizations.

59 Information obtained through UNICEF experts

60 OMS, "INSPIRE Seven Strategies for Ending Violence Against Children", (2016), <https://www.unicef.org/media/66876/file/INSPIRE-SevenStrategies.pdf>

61 Global Initiative, "Gangs in Haiti, Expansion, Power, and Worsening of the Crisis," 2022, <https://globalinitiative.net/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Summer-Walker-Les-gangs-en-Hai%CC%88ti-Expansion-pouvoir-et-aggravation-de-la-crise-GI-TOC-octobre-2022.pdf>

Image 21. Potential impacts of violence on young people and children



Source: OMS, 2016

# 8

## Involvement:

How and why are they involved in violence?

**Gangs have their economic, political and social power in neighbourhoods to recruit young people and children, which manifests itself through several mechanisms.** The economic level through their control over resources within the neighborhoods, the political level through the gangs' political demands, especially those against corruption<sup>62</sup> and the social level notions such as respect, revenge, friendship, and running away from home. These power assignments in gangs show that they operate as multi-purpose organized groups, and use violence as one tool among many to exercise and increase their power. The evidence of their organization and strategy to take control can be seen, for instance, in the ransacking of courthouses in Port-au-Prince<sup>63</sup> to impact the justice sector, their economic influence on the transport of goods, trade, food, fuel among others. According to the Global Initiative<sup>64</sup> study, gangs also have influence on political life, notably through electoral 'services', such as the distribution of leaflets in their neighborhoods on

election days, door-to-door lobbying— and probably through intimidation – in favor of candidates, fundraising through extortion and the destruction of polling stations to benefit candidates. These interventions in political life, as well as discourses claiming them as actors against corruption<sup>65</sup> may explain the perception of gangs as a force with political influence, both through force and through their influence on elections and public authorities. In a sense, they become intermediaries between Haiti's fragmented and weakened institutionality and the residents of several neighborhoods, particularly the most vulnerable ones, as evidenced by the use of gang members by politicians for their electoral services. On the other hand, in the face of little or no institutional presence in some areas, gangs become the holders of institutional power. In both cases, their interaction with

politics and their positioning within the neighbourhoods gives them the strength to influence the lives of residents. The social aspect is covered by the RDS survey (see results in the next paragraph), where the notions of respect, revenge and friendship are perceived as reasons for joining gangs. It also shows how the integration of gangs into the community, whether through the origin of its members within the neighbourhoods and/or through the balance of power in favour of its allies and against its opponents, creates spaces where they are perceived as social actors, who deserve or command respect, who provide a form of justice in the face of rivalry and violence that they themselves have created, but also justice in the face of a broken political system. They are also seen as a refuge accessible through friendship or through the desire to escape personal situations of each young person and child. Above all, the most important thing is the fact that this holistic dynamic of control outsourced by the gangs, which takes place under the façade of power located in the municipalities of the Port-au-Prince metropolitan area, reveals an evolution in their political, economic and social strategies, where gangs forge alliances, control more territories and manage to separate people, which creates distinctions between the neighbourhood residents. Through this social divide and their control in other aspects, they forge an influence on all, or most, aspects of social life in communities. This is where gangs use their mechanisms to recruit and engage young people and children.

**The results of the RDS survey show the extent to which the actions of gangs have allowed them to influence the various aspects of life in the municipalities of the Port-au-Prince metropolitan area.** The responses to the question on engagement show a wide variety of aspects on which gangs impact young people and children that go beyond forced engagement and the need for protection. The RDS survey (Image 22, the reasons to get involved with

gangs are mostly related to the desire to acquire more economic resources (94%) which are, as discussed above, controlled by gangs. Several reasons related to the status given by gang involvement are also mentioned ("being respected" 36%; "reaching out to people who are considered role models" 33%). Some reasons are directly related to the context of violence people live in. For example, 21% would have signed up for protection, while 11% would have been forced to join gangs, and 25% out of a desire for revenge. Although with lower percentages, gangs also appear as a substitute for a family environment, with 16% joining gangs to run away from home and 21% out of friendship (Image 22). These aspects are taken up and supplemented with the results of the interviews and the literature review. They are presented thereafter<sup>66</sup>.

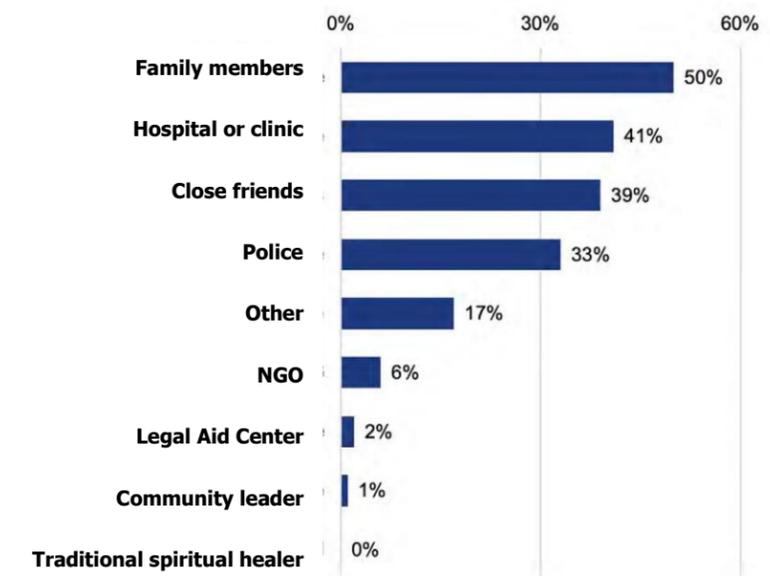
## A. Affiliation as a protection strategy

*"To protect yourself, you have to be in a gang."  
Civil Society Organization*

*"They say they're doing it to be able to live"  
Survivor of gang violence*

**One of the vectors in gang involvement is the need to be protected from and by gangs. In the absence and weakening of law enforcement, gangs present themselves as providers of help and protection.** Due to geographical proximity, the inability to flee their neighborhoods, and violent reprisals against gang critics, young people and children are forced to join them. This process is complex because some young people and children seem to join the ranks of gangs 'voluntarily', for example,

Image 22. What do you think are the main reasons why young people join gangs?



Source: RDS Survey: Authors' estimate based on ACLED data

62 Global Initiative, "Les gangs en Haïti, Expansion, pouvoir et aggravation de la crise", 2022, <https://globalinitiative.net/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Summer-Walker-Les-gangs-en-Hai%CC%88ti-Expansion-pouvoir-et-aggravation-de-la-crise-GI-TOC-octobre-2022.pdf>  
63 BINUH, "Violence sexuelle à Port-au-Prince : une arme utilisée par les gangs pour répandre la peur", 2022, <https://reliefweb.int/report/haiti/-Violence-sexuelle-port-au-prince-une-arme-utilisee-par-les-gangs-pour-repandre-la-peur>  
64 Global Initiative, "Les gangs en Haïti, Expansion, pouvoir et aggravation de la crise", 2022, <https://globalinitiative.net/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Summer-Walker-Les-gangs-en-Hai%CC%88ti-Expansion-pouvoir-et-aggravation-de-la-crise-GI-TOC-octobre-2022.pdf>  
65 Global Initiative, "Les gangs en Haïti, Expansion, pouvoir et aggravation de la crise", 2022, <https://globalinitiative.net/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Summer-Walker-Les-gangs-en-Hai%CC%88ti-Expansion-pouvoir-et-aggravation-de-la-crise-GI-TOC-octobre-2022.pdf>

66 Regarding the possible ways in which recruited children could leave street gangs, only 12% of the children surveyed knew someone who had joined and left a gang. A large proportion do not know or do not know such a person. Most children surveyed do not know anyone close to them (37%) who has joined gangs or do not know (44%). 21% of children report knowing 1 person (6%), between 1 and 5 people (5%) or more than 5 people (10%) who have joined gangs. These people joined gangs at various ages, 5% are very young (between 11 and 14 years old), 12% are between 15 and 18 years old and 30% are older.

to defend themselves from another gang attack on their neighborhood. Yet their agency is constrained by the gangs' ability to punish their detractors and by the lack of ability to defend themselves from other gang attacks. Young people and children are aware of the potential repercussions of not acting with or in favour of gangs. Beyond the physical, psychological and sexual violence that can be inflicted on them, the young people and children interviewed testified on how gangs attack the families and loved ones of those who do not support the gangs. This creates a sense of responsibility for young people over their loved ones and the community that weighs on their 'choice' to join gangs. At the same time, gangs use community ties, created by force and by their control over the social, economic, and political aspects of neighborhoods, to position themselves as providers of protection. Their possession of weapons and impunity for their crimes allows them to impose their law in the neighborhoods. The issue of the protection offered by the gang, as well as the fear of revenge from its members if the recruited person decides to leave the gang, pushes children and young people to accept and remain in a gang.<sup>67</sup>

### B. Forced affiliation determined by gender and age of the victim

*"If there's a beautiful girl, the gang leader is going to get her even if she doesn't want to"*  
Civil Society Organization

*"For young people, it's even more serious. They can become bandits to protect themselves, girls can engage in prostitution. All I can say is it's complicated in any case."*  
Survivor of gang sexual assault

*"They're easier to use, easier to handle." Person affected by gang violence*

### Children and young people who are recruited by gangs are exploited by gangs for a variety of reasons that are part of gang fighting strategies.

According to an interview, they are often used by gangs to carry weapons and equipment, in part because they are easier to exploit than older people. Children are hired to act as gang outlets, carry ammunition, monitor abductees, and do espionage. According to interviews, since the age of 14, children have already learned to be violent, and commit violent acts by gangs.

Interviews with organizations show that violence is gender-based: women are targets of violence, particularly sexual violence. They are engaged in violence through the instrumentalization of their bodies by violent actors, sometimes with the goal of affecting a rival group. For example, one organization claims that "the Croix-des-Bouquets gangs use women as a weapon of war to destabilize [other] gangs, to humiliate the other rival group"<sup>68</sup>. Another organization reports that gangs ask women for sexual favors in exchange for protection. According to interviews, men tend to be targets of physical violence and are subject to gang recruitment. Organizations also report some cases of sexual violence. Although there are no images on this type of attack on men, gang rapes and rapes during gang clashes have already been documented. For example, the gang rape of a 12-year-old boy by five armed individuals, and the rape of a young man with firearms during a gang confrontation.<sup>69</sup>

### C. Affiliation due to socio-economic factors

*"To recruit new members, they don't do anything extraordinary. Every month they promise payments of 15,000 gourdes, they appoint a merchant who*

*will give you food every day (a hot meal), a "chef" can also give you 250 gourdes"*  
Baptiste, a young man recruited by gangs

*"I don't know how to fit into these groups. But I know that some people fit there because they can't suffer. They want to achieve certain goals, they avoid misery."*

*Unemployment is one of the reasons for their actions." Paul, survivor of gang violence*

The vulnerability of young people and children, as well as their families, plays an important role in recruitment. The impoverishment of the Haitian population and the financial resources available to the gangs through theft, ransom and looting make the population even more vulnerable to their influence. Gangs have been documented to offer money to children and threaten to kill them if they don't join.<sup>70</sup> For interviewees recruited by gangs, children join gangs to meet their immediate needs. Jonel said, "They do everything to have a hot meal (...) they don't do it to change their living conditions." The organizations also report that young people and children who join gangs become a source of income for their families, and that recruitment works as if "families donate human resources to gangs." Although images on the number of street children involved in armed gangs are not available, the organizations interviewed in this study mentioned that there are fewer and fewer children on the streets potentially because of recruitment. The children recruited are then built under the influence of gangs and become both victims and actors of insecurity and poverty in Haiti.<sup>71</sup>

These economic limitations are experienced from childhood, and prevent young people and children from accessing food and basic services such as education. This makes them more vulnerable to violence

and recruitment. In the RDS survey, one in two respondents said their family did not have enough money to buy food when they were children. The survey assesses the economic conditions of young people and children and analyses how these conditions affect their ability to access basic services. To the question "When you were a child, do you think the household had enough money to..." 52% of the young people and children surveyed said they did not have enough money in their childhood to access food, 47% to be able to buy their clothes, 40% to cover their school tuition and 35% did not have enough to pay for medical care (Image 23). This lack of resources can have irreversible long-term consequences when it takes place in the early stages of life, is rooted in both the causes and consequences of the crisis in the country, and increases the young people's and children's vulnerability to gang recruitment.

According to interviews with victims and actors of gang violence, unemployment and the inability to make a dignified living make individuals more likely for gang recruitment. In this case, the need to "escape poverty" would be an element that would encourage them to join. According to Tom, *"More often than not, those who are part of gangs are those who can't find work or do a profitable business to make a living. Life is expensive so they use their weapons to put pressure on others. In both cases, there are some who work together and others who only attack each other and innocent people pay a high price."* Tom's words – affected by gang violence in his neighbourhood – illustrate his perception of the weight of socio-economic vulnerability, a risk factor for gang affiliation.

67 Child Soldiers International, Child Soldiers Global Report 2004 - Haiti, 2004, available at: <https://www.refworld.org/docid/4988065628.htm> [accessed October 27, 2022]

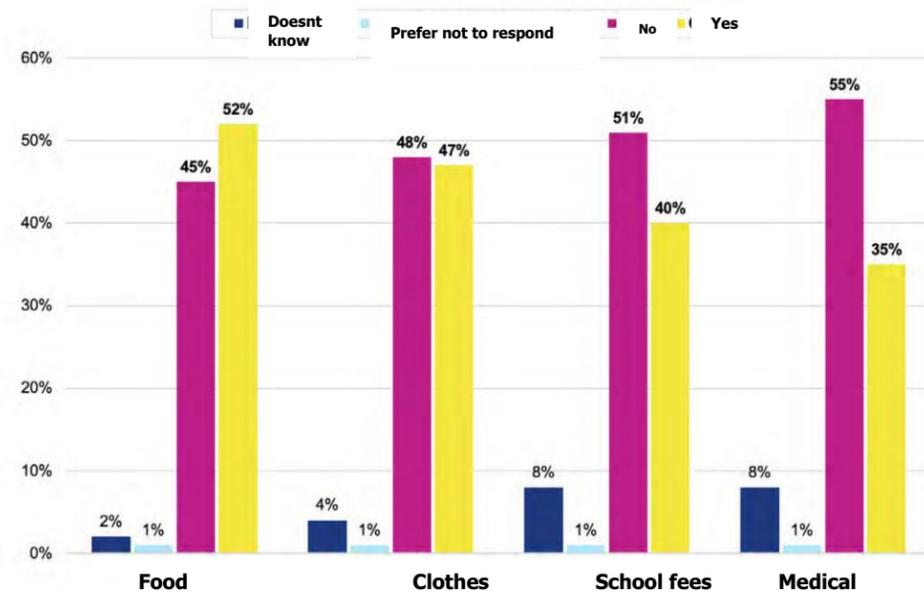
68 Interviews with organizations

69 BINUH, "Violence sexuelle à Port-au-Prince : une arme utilisée par les gangs pour répandre la peur", 2022, <https://reliefweb.int/report/haiti-violence-sexuelle-port-au-prince-une-arme-utilisee-par-les-gangs-pour-repandre-la-peur>

70 UNICEF. From the Classroom to Armed Groups: Steve's Shattered Dream, June 12, 2022, <https://www.unicef.org/haiti/recits/-from-the-classroom-to-arm%C3%A9s-the-r%C3%A9ve-breaks%C3%A9-of-steve>

71 Huyghebaert, Patricia. Children in Armed Conflict: An Analysis of Vulnerability, Poverty and Capability, 2009, <https://www.cairn.info/revue-mondes-en-developpement-2009-2-page-59.htm>

Image 23. When you were a child, do you think the household had enough money for:



Source: RDS Survey

#### D. Affiliation as a social and identity connection

*"They want to be like the boss. When they see that the leader is the judge and that he has money easily. The lack of other social role models, the child gets used to wanting to be like the boss who gets money."*  
Civil Society Organization

*"Young people find a certain pleasure in being called rapists, criminal bandits (...) When they talk to each other after a rape, they are satisfied with their act, neither can reason with the other by lack of capacity. Killing someone doesn't mean much to them. It wasn't until after the training that I was able to understand some things."*

Yannick, a young man recruited by gangs and later supported by civil society

According to the interviews, gang involvement is also a search for connections, yet the results of the RDS survey suggest that only a minority of young people and children would join gangs for this reason. Interviewees describe how the normalization of crime related to constant exposure to violent acts and the search for role models in violent actors guide the aspirations of some children, who lose the notion of the seriousness of the acts (rape, murder, among others) and participate in gangs to develop identity and social ties. Faced with a lack of protection from the police and a lack of opportunities to study and work, children and young people are forced to seek an ally to protect them.<sup>72</sup> According to interviewees, these actors become gangs, where they can find protection and connections at the relational and cultural level.<sup>73</sup>

72 Lacroix, Olivier and Gilbert, Sophie. Disaffilier to better affiliate? Complexity of the Journey of Former Original Street Gang Members haitienne, 2015, <https://www.erudit.org/fr/revues/crimino/2015-v48-n2-crimino02155/1033842ar.pdf>

73 Lacroix, Olivier and Gilbert, Sophie "Disaffilier to better affiliate? Complexity of the journey of former street gang members of Haitian origin. Criminology 48, no. 2 (2015): 165–185. <https://doi.org/10.7202/1033842ar>

**Joining a gang is also part of the quest for an attractive lifestyle.** According to an interview with a social actor working on the issue of violence, young people are attracted to a way of life and power inspired by the leader's status. Therefore, this desire to be a leader is a factor that drives this process of gang affiliation and facilitates the recruitment of children and young people, seduced by the power of this status. The question of respect is also present among the grounds for affiliation. The power and recognition of a person's status in his or her neighbourhood and social environment could explain why gangs recruit so easily in places where their presence is conspicuous. **This instrumentalization is symbolic.** Considering "not participating as an act of treachery" and facing threats of violence towards them or their loved ones, pushes children and young people to make themselves more available in the face of recruitment attempts by gangs. The creation of a crystallized collective identity that is based on opposition between neighborhoods - also helps reinforce the desire to join gangs for children and young people, according to an interview.

However, the RDS survey shows that the victims interviewed expressed strong disagreement with how gangs operate and their violence. Committing a crime is considered to be a source of pride by only 3% of young people and children, while 40% disagree and 52% strongly disagree. This assertion is reinforced by the issue of the use of violence, which is considered unjustified by most children. Only 9% of children agree that violence can be justified, compared to 43% who disagree and 41% who strongly disagree. In addition, gangs are not seen as a source of safety within the community for victims (62% strongly disagree and 23% disagree versus 6% agree, see Image E in the Appendix).

By contrasting these results with those of the interviews semi-structured with organizations, young people and children, where a significant part of those interviewed mentioned gangs as a source of inspiration for some young people, the results suggest that it is not only a minority of people who support the actions of gangs, which could also justify why the recruitment of young people and children gangs by aspirational motives is low.

#### E. Affiliation as a quest for social connection:

*"They say their family was victim and joined the gangs to avenge their family"*  
Person affected by gang violence

*"In the beginning, I was aiming for one thing, not to lose these friends"*  
Young man recruited by a gang

**Difficult and complicated life paths play a role in gang affiliation, in a context of high vulnerability of residents in the municipalities of the Port-au-Prince metropolitan area and in the face of the breakdown of the social fabric that gangs worsen and exploit in their favor.** The most vulnerable categories adopt specific profiles, including children and young people from dysfunctional families, people who have had a delinquent history quite early in their lives, and those who are involved in friendship networks affiliated with gangs. According to interviews, some people who are recruited by gangs are disinvested by family and support networks. They spend a lot of time on the streets and are vulnerable to peer influence. In addition, there would be a need for revenge – lined to these difficult living conditions - which would make gang affiliation easy.

The need to avenge one's family - members of which have been victimized by opposing gangs - or to take revenge on political power can motivate - according to the interviews - the affiliation of certain people.

Here, the gangs' control over the population shows how they succeed in breaking the social fabric of the population, and at the same time they create social relationships with people who wish or are recruited by the gangs. The fracture of the social fabric, for example, takes place when the actions of gangs allow people to create and distinguish an enemy, and this enemy is not represented by an individual who would have committed the violent act, but by an organization or people from a neighborhood, to the point where young people and children consider joining a gang that opposes this enemy to seek revenge and protection. This breakdown also takes place in space, when people can distinguish territories in which a gang or an individual can ensure their protection, and therefore, other neighborhoods where their presence is not allowed. The search for social connections

through gang membership comes from an attempt to gain agency in the face of the social constraints imposed by the gangs, the precarious economic context, and the social disengagement caused by the weak institutional presence, corruption, and difficult living conditions of the victims in the neighborhoods. In this context, gangs have been successful in limiting the circle with whom people can and wish to interact. They have limited the spaces they can use by creating barriers and rules around the use of these spaces, including violence and rape for people crossing the zones<sup>74</sup> and have used the poor living environment in the poorest neighborhoods to make them feel that the search for social connections can involve joining their ranks.

# 9

## Reasons:

Structural dynamics and causes behind the escalation of violence

<sup>74</sup> BINUH, " Violence sexuelle à Port-au-Prince : une arme utilisée par les gangs pour répandre la peur", 2022, <https://reliefweb.int/report/haiti/-iolence-sexuelle-port-au-prince-une-arme-utilisee-par-les-gangs-pour-repandre-la-peur>

**The escalation of violence in Haiti is quite significant. It is influenced by political institutions and economic and social conditions.**<sup>75</sup>

These conditions affect the Haitian population, especially children and young people, who are a vulnerable population. It is important to note that the situation of violence in Haiti is complex, as several factors interact simultaneously and feed off each other. Therefore, the explanation presented here attempts to simplify this complex scenario in order to identify the main factors that explain and influence the overall complexity of violence in Haiti. This is not intended to provide a causal explanation, but to clarify urgent issues for action that must be understood and identified in order to mitigate the violence in Haiti. This section therefore presents the context, structural reasons and dynamics that enable the escalation of violence and its impacts on children and young people at the political, economic and social levels.

### A. At the political level

Political instability does not allow for concrete actions to mitigate violence and its structural causes

*"The government, through the police, has not been able to control gang presence. The government has not intervened for years to ensure the social protection of the community. It is the government's weakness that allows gangs to take hold."*  
Civil Society Organization

**Political instability limits the country's scope for action to mitigate violence and help its development move forward.**

Prior to the adoption of the 1987 Constitution (amended in 2011), which established Haiti as a semi-presidential regime<sup>76</sup>, the country faced authoritarian governments, such as Duvalierism where violence was used to impart order.<sup>77</sup> Subsequently, 18 regimes and/or presidents succeeded each other between 1986 and 2014, making it difficult to implement institutional mechanisms and fundamental policies essential to development<sup>78</sup>. Despite the formal existence of institutions and rules to guarantee the functioning of the State and the balance of executive, legislative, and judicial powers, the report of the Sectoral Estates General of the Nation denounced the flaws in the separation of powers and the absence of counterweights in power<sup>79</sup>. The BINUH report in Haiti of April 2023<sup>80</sup>, mentions some progress in the recovery of democratic institutions, including the appointment of members of the Court of Cassation and the establishment of the High Council of the Transition to create the security and political conditions to conduct democratic elections. Yet, elections have not yet taken place and the lack of stability in the different branches of power creates difficulties in implementing key initiatives for a decrease in violence, such as the penal code, the code of criminal procedure and the Strategic Development Plan, which limits the capacity of institutions to reduce impunity and draw up structural causes of violence, such as poverty, lack of access to basic services, productivity and institutional stability.<sup>81</sup>

Haiti has experienced specific events followed by violence in recent years.<sup>82</sup> In 2004, the country experienced political instability and violence that led to the overthrow of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide. This tumultuous period led to clashes between rival political factions and criminal gangs. In 2008, theft cases increased when the country faced three storms and food riots. In January 2010, the devastating earthquake caused a massive destruction and displaced thousands of people. In the aftermath of the earthquake, the disintegration of law and order has contributed to an upsurge in violence and looting in Port-au-Prince. Also in 2010, a cholera outbreak led to social unrest and protests, some of them violent, as people sought to establish responsibility. In 2015, Haiti's presidential elections were stained by allegations of fraud and irregularities, sparking protests and violent clashes in the capital. The following years endured an increase in gang violence and kidnappings, as well as political protests that often turned into clashes with security forces. In July 2021, the assassination of Haitian President Jovenel Moïse added a new layer of instability and violence to the country, with ongoing investigations and ongoing political tensions. These events and periods have contributed to the general insecurity in Haiti, particularly in its capital, Port-au-Prince, highlighting the complex political, economic, and social challenges the country faces. These events are directly linked to political instability - the country is not adequately prepared to maintain its institutions and establish peace. In addition, Haiti is not ready at institutional level, to face the challenges of insecurity created by natural disasters. In this regard,

Das<sup>83</sup>, makes an argument about the potential link between crime and natural disasters. He explains that in the years of natural disasters, the number of young people in prison increased, probably because social control is reduced as well as people's ability to meet their basic needs, with limited police capacity to control and support those in need. This could explain, at least partially, the increase in violence in Port-au-Prince, particularly violence related to young people.

Haiti lacks strong military and police forces to fight gangs and protect children and young people

*"Even if the police is not safe, they cannot protect us. If we had a place to complain or take refuge, we would have done it."*  
Corentin, survivor of violence

**Failures in the police force contribute to the increase in violence.** One of the key elements of this operation is the non-monopolization of the exercise of power by the national police. Indeed, the use of weapons is shared between government institutions, police and gangs, and civilians.<sup>84</sup> The *La Saline massacre* of 2018 illustrates the general violence, fuelled by the political-social context and the lack of action by the police in crimes affecting the population. These were two days of mass murder and rape that took place in the La Saline neighborhood of Port-au-Prince, Haiti, on November 13 and 14, 2018. The two armed gangs fighting for control of the area killed, raped, looted and disfigured the bodies, while the police refused to act.<sup>85</sup> Allegiances were established, linking this event to Richard Duplan, the departmental delegate of the Police in the West.<sup>86</sup>

On June 10, 2022, the takeover of the Courthouse by armed individuals some time after the takeover of

75 Ferreira, Maria Joao. Trauma as a technology of power: Memory, aid and rule in contemporary Haiti, 2013, <https://www.taylorfrancis.com/chapters/edit/10.4324/9781315882659-11/trauma-technology-power-maria-joao-ferreira>

76 Université de Sherbrooke, "Haiti | Country | World Perspective, 2017, <https://perspective.usherbrooke.ca/bilan/servlet/BMPays?codePays=HTI>.

77 After a coup in 1957, Haiti experienced a regime characterized by a repressive and authoritarian policy until 1986. Duvalierism has its roots in the name of the dictator François Duvalier, known as "Papa Doc", and his son Jean-Claude Duvalier, known as "Baby Doc", who was in power between 1971 and 1986. This regime banned opposition parties and relied on part of the army and a paramilitary militia (the Tontons Macoute) to maintain order.

78 Raju Jan Singh and Mary Barton-Dock, "Haiti, Toward a New Narrative, Systematic Country Diagnostic," The World Bank, consulté le 17 novembre, 2021, [https://www.dropbox.com/sh/q2jzqm4w55y4leq/AABjtiJLGKjkIpz7or3L6\\_K4a?dl=0&preview=2015+WB+-+Towards+a+new+country+narrative+\(1\).pdf](https://www.dropbox.com/sh/q2jzqm4w55y4leq/AABjtiJLGKjkIpz7or3L6_K4a?dl=0&preview=2015+WB+-+Towards+a+new+country+narrative+(1).pdf).

79 Sectoral General Assembly of the Nation, "Political, Economic and Sociocultural Governance: Diagnostics and Prospects for Reforms," March 2019, <https://www.haitilibre.com/docs/EGSN-RAPPORT-15-Avril-19-Gouvernance-politique-economique-socioculturelle.pdf>.

80 Conseil de Sécurité des United Nations, "United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti Report of the Secretary-General", (2023), <https://reliefweb.int/report/haiti/united-nations-integrated-office-haiti-report-secretary-general-s2023274>

81 ECLAC, "Haiti's Strategic Development Plan", <https://observatorioplanificacion.cepal.org/en/plans/Haiti-Strategic-Development-Plan>

82 Events mentioned from ACLED and DAS data, "The Evolution of the Profile of Minors in Prison in Haiti from 2004 to 2019", 2022.

83 DAS, "The Evolution of the Profile of Minors in Prison in Haiti from 2004 to 2019", 2022.

84 Niño, César, and Camilo González. Phantom state in Haiti: criminal sovereignty and the mercenary remedy, 2022, <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/perspectives-on-politics/article/abs/conceptualizing-criminal-governance/0105EC32BB9F26830179CF0B16917B02>

85 According to the OHCHR report. Report on the allegations of human rights violations and abuses of 13 and 14 November 2018 in the La Saline district, June 2019, despite the presence of HNP commissariates in the vicinity of the massacre site, no immediate intervention took place due to the limited resources of the institution. <https://www.ohchr.org/fr/documents/country-reports/report-violent-events-13-and-14-novembre-la-saline-port-au-prince-21-june>

86 Ibid.

the building of the Center for Planning Techniques and Applied Economics is yet another example of how the authorities are powerless to deal with the increasing violence.<sup>87</sup> As explained in the section on trends of violence, the violent repression of anti-regime protests has resulted in deaths and injuries. These insurrections have also taken place within the police apparatus, such as the Fantom 509 group formed by police officers and former police officers demanding the need to unionize.<sup>88</sup>

**A structural cause of this failure to respond to violence is the country's lack of police or military personnel to tackle it.** In March 2023, the HNP had a force of 14,722 police officers, which corresponds to a ratio of 1.2 officers per 1,000 residents<sup>89</sup>, lower than that of 1.33 in October 2019 and also lower than the internationally recommended ratio of 2.290. Due to desertions, temporary suspensions due to administrative investigations, and other absences, the task force in March 2023 was approximately 13,200. In terms of military forces, between 1994 and 1995 the Aristide government demobilized the Armed Forces of Haiti, which was considered a corrupt force of political repression.<sup>91</sup> Haiti therefore does not rely on national military forces to deal with violence.<sup>92</sup> The United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) operated as a military force between 2004 and 2017. However, its mandate ended and was replaced by the United Nations Mission for Justice Support in

Haiti (MINUJUSTH), which did not have military forces. This mission ended in 2019. Faced with increased violence, police forces do not have the capacity to respond to the growing power of gangs. Further, the inability to respond to violent events allows gangs to secure kidnappings as a source of funding, allowing them to continue their operations. Currently, the government and the population seem to support the idea of external armed support (see section on what is currently being done).

[Corruption undermines the effectiveness of funds to respond to crises, to finance Haiti's development, and to reduce gang control](#)

**The prevalence of corruption, facilitated by institutional instability, limits the use of funds for the country's development and contributes to gang power.** After the 2010 earthquake, Martelly came to power in a context where Haiti received significant amounts of international aid for its reconstruction (about \$3.921 million in real 2018 terms).<sup>93</sup> However, his term in office was marked by corruption events, including the Petrocaribe scandal denounced by the Court of Auditors, where \$2 billion paid by Venezuela between 2008 and 2016 was allegedly subject to fraudulent management.<sup>94</sup> Corruption extends far beyond these events.<sup>95</sup> In 2015, allegations of corruption within the Haitian National Police were reported.

In 2017, President Moïse replaced chief prosecutors and anti-corruption directors. This caused criticism over the executive's possible influence over the judiciary. In 2018, former government officials were indicted, but the charges were dropped. In 2019, reports revealed irregularities in the management of PetroCaribe funds and implicated several former officials. In 2020, allegations of corruption related to customs management were reported, and in 2022, an investigation was opened into the Director General of Customs. Despite these developments, the prosecution of senior officials for corruption remains limited in Haiti, although efforts have been made to strengthen the fight against corruption and improve transparency.

Corruption, combined with other elements examined in this section such as political instability and economic hardship, maintains the precarious context that hinders the country's development and creates an environment where gangs can gain power. Indeed, corruption reduces resources that could be used to strengthen institutions, including police forces in order to reduce poverty and gang affiliation on socio-economic grounds, as well as to improve the country's preparedness for natural disasters. In addition, corruption within members of the government has allowed for direct support for gang activities. Indeed, government officials have been involved in illicit activities, including fraud, money laundering, and supporting gangs to increase their political influence, particularly influence for the elections.<sup>96</sup> Without proper use of resources, gangs and crime grow stronger due to shortcomings at the institutional level.

In this regard, the misuse of funds, especially those related to crises, can end up further aggravating the crime experienced in the country. In general, it is important to point out that corruption has already

affected several institutions in the country. This implies that the mere strengthening of the capacities of these institutions, in particular through financial support, does not guarantee the implementation of relevant actions to fight gangs, especially in the case of the HNP, which is an essential element in the fight against violence.

It is nevertheless important to note that, despite the lack of efficiency, the country has undertaken several efforts to combat corruption. In 2014<sup>97</sup>, the enactment of the country's first anti-corruption law criminalized various corruption-related offenses and created government units dedicated to fighting corruption, including the Anti-Corruption Unit (ULCC) and the Central Financial Intelligence Unit (UCREF). These agencies have been authorized to investigate corruption, but prosecution of senior officials for corruption remains limited. In 2022, the ULCC launched an investigation into the Directorate General of Customs (AGD) and sought to reform the customs system in response to international calls to improve transparency and fight tax evasion. In addition, initiatives such as the establishment of an anti-corruption documentation center in partnership with the National Library of Haiti and the drafting of a bill to protect whistleblowers, witnesses and victims in the penal sector have been undertaken to strengthen the fight against corruption and improve accountability. Despite these efforts, the effective prosecution of high-ranking officials due to corruption remains a challenge in Haiti.

[Illegal flow of drugs and weapons strengthen gang power](#)

**Illegal arms and drug trafficking fuels gang Crime and instability in the country.** Haiti is believed to be the main drug route for users from the United States or Europe, mainly from Colombia (cocaine) and Jamaica (cannabis).<sup>98</sup> This is despite the

87 Alterpress. Haiti's courthouse occupied by bandits: Fjklenges law enforcement agencies to restore public order, June 15, 2022, [https://alterpresse.org/spip.php?article28394#:~:text=Le%20vendredi%2010%20juin%202022,d%C3%A9conomie%20appliqu%C3%A9e%20\(Ctpea\)](https://alterpresse.org/spip.php?article28394#:~:text=Le%20vendredi%2010%20juin%202022,d%C3%A9conomie%20appliqu%C3%A9e%20(Ctpea))

88 The Express. Haiti: Facing gangs, police on the verge of implosion, 26 March 2021, [https://www.lexpress.fr/actualites/1/monde/haiti-face-aux-gangs-la-police-au-bord-de-l-implosion\\_2147654.html](https://www.lexpress.fr/actualites/1/monde/haiti-face-aux-gangs-la-police-au-bord-de-l-implosion_2147654.html)

89 Conseil de Sécurité des United Nations, "United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti Report of the Secretary-General", (2023), <https://reliefweb.int/report/haiti/united-nations-integrated-office-haiti-report-secretary-general-s2023274>

90 UNDP. National Police Support Programme, <https://www.undp.org/fr/haiti/projets/programme-dappui-la-police-nationale-dhaiti>

91 Jon Lee Anderson, "Haiti Since the Earthquake," The New Yorker, 24 janvier, 2016, <http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2016/02/01/aftershocks-letter-from-haiti-jon-lee-anderson>.

92 The UNODC report states that there are 500 military personnel trained in Ecuador and Mexico, although it is not clear whether these soldiers already operate. See; UNODC, "Haiti's criminal markets: Mapping trends in firearms and drug trafficking", 2023,

[https://reliefweb.int/report/haiti/haitis-criminal-markets-mapping-trends-firearms-and-drug-trafficking?gclid=Cj0KCQjw3a2iBhCFARIsAD4jQB1WN\\_4z7rfQ8irUOnRpAAQJcE0oNm\\_LSXl1Yvifc-SSwrR-g\\_ZxEiYaAp2HEALw\\_wcB](https://reliefweb.int/report/haiti/haitis-criminal-markets-mapping-trends-firearms-and-drug-trafficking?gclid=Cj0KCQjw3a2iBhCFARIsAD4jQB1WN_4z7rfQ8irUOnRpAAQJcE0oNm_LSXl1Yvifc-SSwrR-g_ZxEiYaAp2HEALw_wcB)

93 World Bank, 2022, "Net Official Development Assistance and Official Assistance Received (Current US\$)" <https://donnees.banquemondiale.org/indicateur/TD.OA.ALLD.CD?contextual=region&end=2019&locations=HT&start=2005&view=chart>

94 Anderson.

95 US State Department, "APPENDIX C: Major Corruption Cases in Haiti and Government of Haiti Efforts to Address Corruption", (2023), <https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Appendix-C-Developments-in-Haiti-004977.pdf>

96 Olivier, D., (2021) "The political anatomy of Haiti's armed gangs", NACLA Report on the Americas, Volume 53(1), pp. 83-87, en UNODC, "Haiti's criminal markets: mapping trends in firearms and drug trafficking", 2023 [https://reliefweb.int/report/haiti/haitis-criminal-markets-mapping-trends-firearms-and-drug-trafficking?gclid=Cj0KCQjw3a2iBhCFARIsAD4jQB1WN\\_4z7rfQ8irUOnRpAAQJcE0oNm\\_LSXl1Yvifc-SSwrR-g\\_ZxEiYaAp2HEALw\\_wcB](https://reliefweb.int/report/haiti/haitis-criminal-markets-mapping-trends-firearms-and-drug-trafficking?gclid=Cj0KCQjw3a2iBhCFARIsAD4jQB1WN_4z7rfQ8irUOnRpAAQJcE0oNm_LSXl1Yvifc-SSwrR-g_ZxEiYaAp2HEALw_wcB)

97 US State Department, "APPENDIX C: Major Corruption Cases in Haiti and Government of Haiti Efforts to Address Corruption", (2023), <https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Appendix-C-Developments-in-Haiti-004977.pdf>

98 UNODC, "Haiti's criminal markets: mapping trends in firearms and drug trafficking", 2023 [https://reliefweb.int/report/haiti/haitis-criminal-markets-mapping-trends-firearms-and-drug-trafficking?gclid=Cj0KCQjw3a2iBhCFARIsAD4jQB1WN\\_4z7rfQ8irUOnRpAAQJcE0oNm\\_LSXl1Yvifc-SSwrR-g\\_ZxEiYaAp2HEALw\\_wcB](https://reliefweb.int/report/haiti/haitis-criminal-markets-mapping-trends-firearms-and-drug-trafficking?gclid=Cj0KCQjw3a2iBhCFARIsAD4jQB1WN_4z7rfQ8irUOnRpAAQJcE0oNm_LSXl1Yvifc-SSwrR-g_ZxEiYaAp2HEALw_wcB)

creation of the National Commission for the Fight against Drugs, in 2002 charged with criminalizing money laundering, trafficking in drugs, firearms and people.<sup>99</sup>

Gangs are known to use arms and drug trafficking to strengthen their capacity of attack and financing. Increasingly sophisticated, high-caliber firearms and ammunition are being trafficked to Haiti.<sup>100</sup> This allows gangs to increase their power.<sup>101</sup> It has been estimated that in 2020 there could be around 500,000 small arms and light weapons in Haiti, including 38,000 registered with the HNP. The rest would be owned by private security organizations, gangs, and individuals. This implies that a large proportion of small arms and light weapons in Haiti are illegally possessed and that police forces have fewer weapons than gangs, private security organizations, and residents combined.

One of the reasons explaining why it is difficult to dismantle these drug and arms trafficking networks is that the main seaports, border crossings and airports do not have the necessary police and customs force, or the surveillance capacity to identify such trafficking.<sup>102</sup> For example, when it comes to maritime activities in 2022, the Haitian Coast Guard (HCG) had fewer than 200 officers, and out of the 12 vessels they should have used for surveillance, only 1 was operational, 4 required repairs, and 7 were out of service. The Drug Enforcement Agency (BLTS) had only one operational boat. In addition, customs officers

do not have detection equipment such as X-ray scanners and remote scanning devices. This lack of tools and personnel affects effective monitoring and seizure of drug shipments. Furthermore, surveillance personnel are already subject to gang violence.<sup>103</sup> Finally, corruption also has influence because traffickers cooperate with Haitian police and judges frequently accept bribes.<sup>104</sup>

### Shortcomings of the Haitian justice system

*"Gangs operate in a context where they can do as they please without any worry"*  
International Organization

**The judicial system manifests shortcomings that hinder access to justice in Haiti and reinforce a chaotic climate in the country.** On the one hand, there are weaknesses in the judicial system that reinforce impunity for crimes. One example is the assassination of the head of state Jovenel Moïse. The masterminds have not been identified or punished. Likewise, there were difficulties in conducting investigations into the serious human rights violations and chronic impunity, raised by international organizations, suffered by the population under his presidency.<sup>105</sup>

On the other hand, this system is paralyzed for several reasons, including the structural failure in the Supreme

Council of the Judiciary, the substantially non-existent case law production, the end of MINUJUSTH's mandate in 2019, and the numerous strikes by court clerks, etc.<sup>106</sup> According to statements by the National Association of Haitian Court Clerks,<sup>107</sup> the investigation into the murder of Jovenel Moïse is also stained by violence,<sup>108</sup> notably through the intimidation of court clerks and judges who officiated in the case of this assassination. Death threats were received by Clément Noël, the Deputy Justice of the Peace of the Pétiion-Ville Peace Court, Judge Carl Henry Destin and the two clerks of the Pétiion-ville Peace Court who assisted the judges in establishing the facts, Marcelin Valentin and Waky Philostène. This represents difficulties in the progress of the judicial investigations, which are necessary to establish justice. Halts and bottlenecks in the justice system were factors that could have hindered the investigation.

### The organization of urban spaces fosters an increase in violence and becomes a place of convergence between politics and crime

*"If we had a place to file a complaint or take refuge, we would have done it"*

*Esther, a young person affected by gang violence*

**Port-au-Prince is a stark example of the trend seen in many cities in the global south, where unprecedented levels of violence are creating considerable risks and vulnerabilities, affecting most of the poorest residents.** According to Davis (2020), this rise in urban violence "*stems from the shifting territorialities of governance and power.*"

Although violence persists outside underprivileged neighborhoods, historically it has tended to affect marginalized communities, particularly those living in informal settlements or slums.<sup>109</sup>

**A determining factor in the rise and resurgence of urban violence thus lies in the division between the "formal city" and the "informal city",** resulting from "modernist" planning that has led to the emergence of **socially and spatially divided cities.** This has excluded vulnerable communities that live outside the created economic and political order, in neighborhoods that are often invisible and routinely ignored by the authorities, where property rights and basic services are usually non-existent.<sup>110</sup>

**Thus, urban violence becomes a highly territorial phenomenon,** both in its causes and in its consequences. It creates and reinforces the socio-spatial conditions of exclusion and inequality, manifesting itself through fragmented and networked forms of association operating between and within cities.<sup>111</sup> According to Yazdani, violence in Haiti, as in many other Latin American cities, is a complex phenomenon, which **is directly linked to inadequate urban planning resulting from *ad hoc* urbanization and market forces.**<sup>112</sup>

Haiti, and particularly **Port-au-Prince, has become a ground of convergence between the political and the criminal, aiming to control territory and strengthen security.**<sup>113</sup> This leads to ongoing conflicts between armed state and non-state actors seeking to establish their supremacy in **excluded areas where**

99 Wenche Iren Hauge for Peace Research Institute Oslo. "Haiti : A Political Economy Analysis. Norwegian Institute of International Affairs", 2018.

100 US Immigration and Customs Enforcement, "HIS announces crackdown on firearms, ammunition smuggling to Haiti, the Caribbean", 19 April 2022. En UNODC, "Haiti's criminal markets: mapping trends in firearms and drug trafficking", 2023 [https://reliefweb.int/report/haiti/haitis-criminal-markets-mapping-trends-firearms-and-drug-trafficking?gclid=Cj0KCCQjw3a2iBhCFARIsAD4jQB1WN\\_4z7rfQ8irUOnRpAAqJcE\\_0oNm\\_LSXl1Yvifc-SSwrR-g\\_ZxEiYaAp2HEALw\\_wcB](https://reliefweb.int/report/haiti/haitis-criminal-markets-mapping-trends-firearms-and-drug-trafficking?gclid=Cj0KCCQjw3a2iBhCFARIsAD4jQB1WN_4z7rfQ8irUOnRpAAqJcE_0oNm_LSXl1Yvifc-SSwrR-g_ZxEiYaAp2HEALw_wcB)

101 Conseil de Sécurité des United Nations, "United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti Report of the Secretary-General", (2023), <https://reliefweb.int/report/haiti/united-nations-integrated-office-haiti-report-secretary-general-s2023274>

102 UNODC, "Haiti's criminal markets: mapping trends in firearms and drug trafficking", 2023 [https://reliefweb.int/report/haiti/haitis-criminal-markets-mapping-trends-firearms-and-drug-trafficking?gclid=Cj0KCCQjw3a2iBhCFARIsAD4jQB1WN\\_4z7rfQ8irUOnRpAAqJcE\\_0oNm\\_LSXl1Yvifc-SSwrR-g\\_ZxEiYaAp2HEALw\\_wcB](https://reliefweb.int/report/haiti/haitis-criminal-markets-mapping-trends-firearms-and-drug-trafficking?gclid=Cj0KCCQjw3a2iBhCFARIsAD4jQB1WN_4z7rfQ8irUOnRpAAqJcE_0oNm_LSXl1Yvifc-SSwrR-g_ZxEiYaAp2HEALw_wcB)

103 UNODC, "Haiti's criminal markets: mapping trends in firearms and drug trafficking", 2023 [https://reliefweb.int/report/haiti/haitis-criminal-markets-mapping-trends-firearms-and-drug-trafficking?gclid=Cj0KCCQjw3a2iBhCFARIsAD4jQB1WN\\_4z7rfQ8irUOnRpAAqJcE\\_0oNm\\_LSXl1Yvifc-SSwrR-g\\_ZxEiYaAp2HEALw\\_wcB](https://reliefweb.int/report/haiti/haitis-criminal-markets-mapping-trends-firearms-and-drug-trafficking?gclid=Cj0KCCQjw3a2iBhCFARIsAD4jQB1WN_4z7rfQ8irUOnRpAAqJcE_0oNm_LSXl1Yvifc-SSwrR-g_ZxEiYaAp2HEALw_wcB)

104 Maria Abi-Habib. The Haitian president drew up a list of drug traffickers. Her killers seized her. The New York Times. 2021 [https:// www.nytimes.com/fr/2021/12/12/world/americas/haiti-jovenel-traffic-drogue.html](https://www.nytimes.com/fr/2021/12/12/world/americas/haiti-jovenel-traffic-drogue.html)

105 Amnesty International. Rapport Haiti, 2022, <https://www.amnesty.org/fr/location/americas/central-america-and-the-caribbean/haiti/report-haiti/>

106 IDEF.1st quarter2022Republic of Haiti:The paralysis of the judiciary, 2022, [https:// www.calameo.com/read/005957280a0965ffbca45](https://www.calameo.com/read/005957280a0965ffbca45)

107 Le Nouvelliste. Death threats and intimidation, the lot of justices of the peace and clerks who officiated in the case of the assassination of President Moïse, 26 July 2021, <https://lenouvelliste.com/article/230601/menaces-de-mort-et-intimidation-le-lot-de-juges-de-paix-et-greffiers-having-officiated-in-the-case-of-the-assassination-of-president-Moise>

108 Manigat, Sabine. Haiti: anti-system mobilizations and political impasse", 2020, [https:// www.cairn.info/soulevements-populaires--9782849508947-page-135.htm](https://www.cairn.info/soulevements-populaires--9782849508947-page-135.htm)

109 Davis, D. (2020). City, nation, network: Shifting territorialities of sovereignty and urban violence in Latin America. *Urban Planning*, 5(3), 206-216.

110 Davis, D. (2020). City, nation, network: Shifting territorialities of sovereignty and urban violence in Latin America. *Urban Planning*, 5(3), 206-216.

111 Davis, D. (2020). City, nation, network: Shifting territorialities of sovereignty and urban violence in Latin America. *Urban Planning*, 5(3), 206-216.

112 Yazdani, Mariam, Daniela Bercovitch, and Jane Charles-Voltaire. "Knowledge transfer on urban violence: from Brazil to Haiti." *Environment and Urbanisation* 26.2 (2014): 457-468.

113 Niño, C., & González, C. (2022). Phantom state in Haiti: criminal sovereignty and the mercenary remedy. *Trends in Organized Crime*, 1-20.

**justice and the rule of law are absent.**<sup>114</sup> The legitimacy and authority of gangs are enhanced by their ability to control the activities that take place in these informal territories/spaces, either through the direct protection of citizens and their property, or through co-optation and extortion.<sup>115</sup>

**Therefore, the problems of urban violence stem not only from endemic poverty, but also from fragmented sovereignty.** On the one hand, the government's inability to meet the basic needs of the residents of the "informal city", such as employment, electricity, water and security, forces poor people to provide for their own housing and subsistence, thus fostering crime and the surge of alternative territorial authorities. On the other hand, urban residents, faced with the failures of a state that fails to guarantee security and allows impunity, are encouraged to submit to non-government "authorities".<sup>116</sup> With this in mind, gangs become, to some extent, a substitute for this absent government, whose negative image is mainly linked to the minimal (and sometimes repressive) relations with informal districts.<sup>117</sup>

**The slums** are under the control of these authorities, who use direct violence to maintain their control. These areas **become spaces for violent actions, and children and young people become actors highly exposed to urban violence, both as victims and perpetrators.** Violence is a serious problem for all young people in these neighbourhoods, but those who are not in school are particularly vulnerable.<sup>118</sup>

**There is a complex relationship between gangs and their own community,**

**and this creates an ambivalent system between coercion and protectionism.** Gangs establish a form of sovereignty<sup>119</sup> and "provide basic services such as waste disposal, payment of school tuition and burial fees. They also provide entertainment in the form of concerts or community get-togethers.<sup>120</sup> At the same time, they exploit the resources of their own communities or neighbouring communities. The literature claims that gangs in Haiti levy taxes on transportation, water supplies, medical facilities, and even remittances from abroad.<sup>121</sup>

**In this context, the community, especially young people and children, live precarious conditions where the organization of the urban space does not provide them with places to socialize outside the grip of gangs, which affects social cohesion.** They are conditioned to seek refuge from gangs, and therefore limit their use of space and opportunities for socialization, or to use the space and live under the control of gangs and their rules, which exposes them to violence and gang recruitment. In either case, they move away from socializing environments that could strengthen the social fabric and reduce spaces for conflict and crime. In the words of Das<sup>122</sup>, young people and children do not have access to institutions to help them create self-control in the face of transgression of rules. There is no social control by the family, church, school, or government to mitigate violence. This creates spaces where violence is reproduced and begins to be accepted or seen as natural. An example is families who support the instrumentalization of women's bodies in

exchange for protection from gangs.<sup>123</sup> Gangs take advantage of the current organization of urban space and use it to further break relationships and create a *status quo* of violence through visible barriers such as barricades and invisible barriers, including violence committed against those who cross territories between neighborhoods.

## B. At the economic and social level

*"We need a people's canteen in the ghettos. Young people can't stay hungry anymore" Paul, survivor of gang violence*

**Weaknesses in the country's productive apparatus halt its growth and increase migration and vulnerability in the population**

*"In economic terms, the indicators are in the red, with inflation at 51%. A woman will not be able to live properly or have access to services. In addition to economic precariousness, there is also great vulnerability. Purchasing power in the population has decreased considerably. There are no jobs, so girls are prostituted and men have easy access to gangs."*  
Civil Society Organization

**On the economic front, several cyclical factors structure the population's vulnerability to the power of gangs, including inflation, unemployment, debt, the informal economy**

**and low productivity. These factors, as well as the political factors outlined above, make people in Port-au-Prince vulnerable to the demands of gangs and facilitate the recruitment of children and young people.** Haiti has the lowest GDP per capita in the region.<sup>124</sup> According to the World Bank, the actual GDP will contract by 1.1% in fiscal year 2022/23, marking the fifth consecutive year of contraction.<sup>125</sup> As a result, the country's GDP per capita continues to decline, and a large majority of its population still lives in extreme poverty. Haiti is indeed considered to be one of the poorest countries in the world, according to the aforementioned HDI ranking (placed 170 out of 189 countries). Based on a poorly diversified economy, based mainly on agriculture, but with a high dependence on food imports, the country is vulnerable to crises and international price fluctuations. The year-on-year change in the Consumer Price Index (CPI) stands at 49.3 in January 2023, according to the Bank of the Republic of Haiti.<sup>126</sup> Food, fuel, and water shortages<sup>127</sup> have contributed to Emergency food insecurity in Haiti.<sup>128</sup> Food and energy prices rose by around 30% in 2022.<sup>129</sup> Food insecurity continues to rise in Haiti, exacerbated by gang violence, civil unrest, and economic deadlock. Unemployment and underemployment among urban youth are also high in the country, with an estimated rate of 60%<sup>130</sup> and the informal sector absorbs about 80% of the population.<sup>131</sup> These indicators are aligned with the UN human development index according to

114 Davis, D. (2020). City, nation, network: Shifting territorialities of sovereignty and urban violence in Latin America. *Urban Planning*, 5(3), 206-216.

115 Davis, D. (2020). City, nation, network: Shifting territorialities of sovereignty and urban violence in Latin America. *Urban Planning*, 5(3), 206-216.

116 Davis, D. (2020). City, nation, network: Shifting territorialities of sovereignty and urban violence in Latin America. *Urban Planning*, 5(3), 206-216.

117 Schubert, Moritz (2015) A transformation from political to criminal violence? Politics, organised crime and the shifting functions of Haiti's urban armed groups, *Conflict, Security & Development*, 15:2, 169-196, DOI: 10.1080/14678802.2015.1030950

118 Yazdani, Mariam, Daniela Bercovitch, and Jane Charles-Voltaire. "Knowledge transfer on urban violence: from Brazil to Haiti." *Environment and Urbanisation* 26.2 (2014): 457-468.

119 Davis, D. (2020). City, nation, network: Shifting territorialities of sovereignty and urban violence in Latin America. *Urban Planning*, 5(3), 206-216.

120 Schubert, Moritz (2015) A transformation from political to criminal violence? Politics, organised crime and the shifting functions of Haiti's urban armed groups, *Conflict, Security & Development*, 15:2, 169-196, DOI: 10.1080/14678802.2015.1030950

121 Schubert, Moritz (2015) A transformation from political to criminal violence? Politics, organised crime and the shifting functions of Haiti's urban armed groups, *Conflict, Security & Development*, 15:2, 169-196, DOI: 10.1080/14678802.2015.1030950

122 DAS, "The Evolution of the Profile of Minors in Prison in Haiti from 2004 to 2019", 2022. BINUH, "Sexual Violence in Port-au-Prince: A Weapon Used by Gangs to Spread Fear", (2022), <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/2022-10/20221014-Report-on-Sexual-Violence-haiti-fr.pdf>

124 World Bank, "GDP per capita, PPP (Current International \$) - Haiti | Data," <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAP.PP.CD?contextual=region&locations=HT>.

125 Conseil de Sécurité des Nations Unies, "United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti Report of the Secretary-General", (2023), <https://reliefweb.int/report/haiti/united-nations-integrated-office-haiti-report-secretary-general-s2023274>

126 Data retrieved from the BRH website on April 24, 2023: <https://www.brh.ht/variation-de-lindice-des-prix-a-la-consommation-par-groupe-de-expenses-January-2023/>

127 Start Network. Assessment of the impact of the current crisis in Haiti on households, 19 January 2020, <https://www.bretagne-solidaire.bzh/wp-content/uploads/sites/11/2020/04/START-NETWORK-Rapport-Final-%C3%89evaluation-de-lu2019impact-de-la-crise-pais-lock-en-Ha%C3%A9ti-sur-les-m%C3%A9nages-20200123-.pdf>

128 FEWS. Socio-Political Instability, Inflation, and Fuel Shortage Contribute to Emergency (IPC Phase 4) Food Insecurity in Cité Soleil, October 2022, <https://fews.net/fr/central-america-and-caribbean/haiti/food-security-outlook/october-2022>

129 IMF. Haiti and the IMF, October 2022, <https://www.imf.org/en/Countries/HTI>

130 ILO. Country Programme for Decent Work in Haiti, 2015-2020,

131 World Bank. The weight of the informal sector could hold back post-COVID recovery in developing economies, 11 May 2021, <https://www.banquemondiale.org/fr/news/press-release/2021/05/11/widespread-informality-likely-to-slow-recovery-from-covid-19-in-developing-economies>

which Haiti is ranked 163 out of 191 countries in 2021.<sup>132</sup>

**The factors that explain Haiti's economic situation include structural challenges in its productive apparatus, including low sector productivity resulting in high dependence on exports, and high rates of informality.** Similar to other countries, Haiti has shifted from an economy based on the primary sector to one centered on the tertiary sector. While agriculture accounted for about 95% of GDP in the 19th century<sup>133</sup>, it accounted for only 30% in 1990 and 20.3% in 2021. Manufacturing increased from 13.7% to 17.6% and services from 43.5% to 53.92% between 1990 and 2021.<sup>134</sup>

**This transition has been accompanied by reduced productivity in the primary sector,** linked to deforestation, adverse climatic conditions, lack of access to financial services, and structural adjustment policies that have lifted price restrictions on imports and prevented farmers from competing with import prices.<sup>135,136</sup> These conditions have led to a shift in the predominant sector from primary to services, and have increased the rural exodus (creating peri-urban areas and slums).<sup>137</sup> People have moved from rural to urban areas, such as Port-au-Prince, in order to benefit from better economic opportunities and services.<sup>138</sup>

**Since the tertiarization of the economy has not**

**accompanied by a boost in the secondary sector, for example through the mechanisation of the primary sector, or the tertiarization of the industrial sector, the tertiary sector is mainly informal and not very productive.**<sup>139</sup> Haitians who have entered the service sector remain in precarious conditions and the country has become highly dependent on international food prices, and these prices leave people highly vulnerable to fluctuations. Food imports accounted for about 17% of total imports in 2019<sup>140</sup> and its value increased by 21.1% between 2019 and 2020.<sup>141</sup> In addition, 80% of the rice consumed in the country (the main staple food) is imported.<sup>142,143</sup> In this context, the rural exodus has brought back migrants who have difficulty finding income-generating activities and who find themselves in a vulnerable situation.

**The country's economic vulnerability and political instability leave the population without access to basic services and without a social protection system to cope with the multiple shocks they are exposed to.**

**Faced with high vulnerability, partly due to the structure of the country's productive apparatus and government instability, the population does not have access to basic services or recourse to adaptation strategies to improve their situation.** In Haiti, in 2016/17 20% of the population are estimated to have faced multidimensional poverty, while the average for Latin America and the Caribbean

2.4%.<sup>144</sup> In this regard, the most important contributor to multidimensional poverty is the standard of living (57%), education (24.6%) and health (18.5%)<sup>145</sup>, 58.5% of the population lives below the national poverty line and 29.2% of the population lives below the extreme poverty line (USD 2.15 dpi/day)<sup>146</sup>. This low standard of living indicates that people do not have access to basic services, such as sanitation, clean water, electricity and housing among others. According to IHSI (2012), less than one-third of the population has access to basic services in some areas such as electricity, treated water, improved affluence, waste collection and sanitation<sup>147,148</sup>. In addition, the population faces significant food security challenges. Between March-June 2023, 4.9 million people will be acutely food insecure, in need of urgent humanitarian assistance. That is 49% of the population, with 1.8 million people in emergency situations.<sup>149</sup> Children are particularly affected by an increase in deprivation in the areas of housing, sanitation and food, which has probably increased in recent years, but which had already reached a rate of 70% of children in a deprived state<sup>150</sup>, according to the latest study conducted in 2007.<sup>151</sup> Multidimensional poverty affects 90.4% of children between 0 and 17 years old, which shows that vulnerability in Haiti is particularly deteriorating for children in Haiti.<sup>152</sup>

**This critical situation is worsened by gang violence.** With a monetary poverty rate of 24.5%<sup>153</sup>, a high level of food insecurity, a high dependence on import prices, weak police protection and institutions in crisis, Haitians are highly vulnerable to the demands

of gang. Without financial resources to buy food, the supply of food from gangs leaves few choices for those who join them, including young people and children. With the help of weapons trafficking, a weakened police force, and a judicial system that fails to prosecute criminals, or even with members of the government who support gangs, individuals in Port-au-Prince have no protection from gangs' demands. The recruitment and victimization of young people and children can take place and increase because the actions of the government, individuals, civil society organizations and the private sector are constrained by structural difficulties and a series of crises taking place in Port-au-Prince and Haiti in general. This creates a vicious circle where young people and children grow up with food insecurity, and have no access to health or education. All this impacts their human capital and their opportunities to obtain productive work and opportunities to improve the country's economic situation. Their high exposure to violence can also create cycles of never-ending violence. These young people who cannot find a job, but who have normalized violence through their experiences, are more likely to join gangs and perpetuate the phenomenon of violence.

132 Economic and Social Council. Country Programme Document

133 Bénédique Paul, Alix Daméus and Michel Garrabe, "The Process of Tertiarization of the Haitian Economy" 2010,

134 Banque Mondiale, "Agriculture, forestry, and fishing, value added (% of GDP)", <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NV.AGR.TOTL.ZS?locations=HT>

135 Bénédique Paul, Alix Daméus and Michel Garrabe, 2010

136 Wenche Iren Hauge for Peace Research Institute Oslo. "Haiti: A Political Economy Analysis. Norwegian Institute of International Affairs", 2018.

137 Wenche Iren Hauge for Peace Research Institute Oslo. "Haiti: A Political Economy Analysis. Norwegian Institute of International Affairs", 2018.

138 Jan Singh, R., & Barton-Dock, M. (s. d.). "Haiti, Toward a New Narrative, Systematic Country Diagnostic. The World Bank." consulté 17 novembre 2021, [https://www.dropbox.com/sh/q2jzqm4w55y4leq/AABjtjLgKjkIpz7or3L6\\_K4a?dl=0&preview=2015+WB++Towards+a+new+countr+y+narrative+\(1\).pdf](https://www.dropbox.com/sh/q2jzqm4w55y4leq/AABjtjLgKjkIpz7or3L6_K4a?dl=0&preview=2015+WB++Towards+a+new+countr+y+narrative+(1).pdf)

139 Bénédique Paul, Alix Daméus and Michel Garrabe, "The Process of Tertiarization of the Haitian Economy", 2010. <https://journals.openedition.org/caribbeanstudies/4757>

140 FMI, "Haiti IMF article IV", 2019

141 International Trade Administration, 2021, "Haiti - Country Commercial Guide", <https://www.trade.gov/country-commercial-guides/haiti-agricultural-sector>

142 Bénédique Paul, Alix Daméus and Michel Garrabe, 2010

143 This paragraph describes a complex situation in a simplified manner. Readers are invited to read the 2016 IDB report for more detailed information: Vliet et al., (2016) A comprehensive and strategic study of Haiti's agricultural/rural sector and the public investments required for its development. Cirad Agricultural Research for Development

144 PNUD, "Multidimensional Poverty Index 2022: Haïti", 2022, <https://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/Country-Profiles/MPI/HTI.pdf>

145 PNUD, "Multidimensional Poverty Index 2022: Haïti", 2022,, <https://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/Country-Profiles/MPI/HTI.pdf>

146 PNUD, "Multidimensional Poverty Index 2022: Haïti", 2022, <https://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/Country-Profiles/MPI/HTI.pdf>

147 IHSI, "Evolution of living conditions in Haiti between 2007 and 2012", 2012.

148 Republic of Haiti, "National Disaster Risk Management Plan 2019 – 2030" 2019, [https://www.preventionweb.net/files/72907\\_plannationaldegestiondesrisquesdededs.pdf](https://www.preventionweb.net/files/72907_plannationaldegestiondesrisquesdededs.pdf)

149 UN Security Council, "United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti Report of the Secretary-General", (2023), <https://reliefweb.int/report/haiti/united-nations-integrated-office-haiti-report-secretary-general-s2023274>

150 Gordon, David, and Shailen Nandy. "Absolute Child Poverty in Haiti in the 21st Century", 2007, [https://research-information.bris.ac.uk/ws/portalfiles/portal/189194366/Final\\_report\\_in\\_French.pdf](https://research-information.bris.ac.uk/ws/portalfiles/portal/189194366/Final_report_in_French.pdf)

151 We note at this point the concern of the lack of recent studies on these subjects.

152 UNICEF, "Country program description: 2023", 2023, [https://www.unicef.org/executiveboard/media/14791/file/2023-PL6-Haiti\\_CPD-FR-ODS.pdf](https://www.unicef.org/executiveboard/media/14791/file/2023-PL6-Haiti_CPD-FR-ODS.pdf)

153 PNUD, "Multidimensional Poverty Index 2022: Haïti", 2022, <https://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/Country-Profiles/MPI/HTI.pdf>

# 10

## Actions:

What is being done and what could be done by the different stakeholders to address these issues?

Two types of actions can be distinguished to reduce violence against young people in Haiti: preventive and corrective.<sup>154</sup> The former occurs before the violent events and the latter seek to mitigate the effects of violence. To reduce violence, prevention can reduce costs in the long run, and correction can reduce costs in the short term, but both are necessary.

### A. Preventive actions (ex ante)

Actions for education and the strengthening of practical know-how

*"Provide training support to prevent young people from joining gangs"*  
Civil Society Organization

**At the individual level, actions for the development of human capital play a key role in violence prevention.** According to the CDC, education, access to work, and vocational training policies promote a culture based on conflict resolution.<sup>155</sup> For example, training bursaries can discourage gang involvement at an early age and develop social integration skills.<sup>156</sup> These initiatives can be accompanied by school-based psychosocial support program, which contribute to understanding the phenomenon of violence and affiliation in a social group.

In a context where students in Haiti have only 6.1 years of schooling on average, the World Bank's PROMESSE fund has made a significant investment so children can

stay in school, thus supporting the education system in crisis.<sup>157</sup> Other local initiatives have focused on the development of skills in particularly vulnerable environments, such as temporary work experiences (internships) for at-risk young people and the skills of students and teachers to know how to react in violent contexts in rural areas (Red Cross and Rinaldi Foundation)<sup>158,159,160</sup>. UNICEF in particular has shown its willingness to massively increase access to formal and informal education in a crisis context. All of these educational efforts can lead to better communication and problem-solving skills in young people.

Actions to strengthen the social fabric

*"We need to raise awareness. We need to move towards community involvement. Workshops, theatre in the street, a crossroads, in a church or school yard, on the roof of a house. Find a way to raise awareness about others' actions. Open children's eyes"*  
Civil Society Organization

**Many violence prevention initiatives for young people are based on the development of social connection at the community level.** These initiatives to strengthen the social fabric can create incentives not to join gangs, especially when the decision to join is voluntary.<sup>161</sup> In theory, the creation of social bonds among teenagers through awareness-raising could promote a "sense of belonging" to the community and reduce the likelihood of committing violent acts.<sup>162</sup>

154 Classification established by the DPA team. This classification is also justified by civil society leaders, who consider that the problem of violence must be solved "upstream and downstream"

155 CDC. ,A Comprehensive Technical Package for the Prevention of Youth Violence and Associated Risk Behaviors 2016, <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/yv-technicalpackage.pdf>

156 Source: Interviews.

157 World Bank. World Bank Approves US\$90 Million Additional Financing for Education Sector in Haiti, March 7, 2022, <https://www.banquemonde.org/fr/news/press-release/2022/03/07/the-world-bank-approves-additional-financing-of-us-90million-for-haiti-s-education-sector>

158 Red Cross. Preventing and Combating Violence in Haiti: Respect at the Heart of Autonomy, <https://www.croixrouge.ca/nos-champs-d-action/internationales/developpement-international/ameriques/haiti/prevention-et-lutte-contre-la-violence-en-haiti-le-respect-au-cour-de-l-autonomie>

159 Foundation Rinaldi. Working for the reduction of violence, 2018 <https://www.frinaldihaiti.org/trabajando-hacia-la-reduccion-de-la-violencia/>

160 UNICEF. Rising gang violence in Haiti is now targeting children, UNICEF warns

161 Source: Interviews.

162 CDC factors mitigating violence.

A number of organisations have worked to develop a 'sense of belonging' among young men and women, through awareness-raising workshops<sup>163</sup> or by creating spaces for social cohesion and resilience.<sup>164</sup> A very active actor in this field is the Red Cross. It has conducted several projects in alliance with France and Canada: aid to schools, the construction of sports infrastructure in Cité Soleil, social theatre initiatives, and discussions in common spaces.<sup>165</sup> Indeed, community development can promote a healthier way of forming long-term relationships.<sup>166</sup> These actions can be part of lines of work on communication in order to change behaviours and attitudes. For example, one interviewee suggested cultural activities such as "theatre in the street", to develop young people's ability to act as if they were someone else affected by violence.

#### Massive aid to establish a democratic government: Application of the Law and Preventive Justice

**At the institutional, and therefore societal, level, ensuring the functioning of the judicial system, it is necessary to guarantee the rule of law and the fulfilment of the law to reduce violence. In this regard, international organizations, including the United Nations, have had an important role to play, although their capacity to act could be reinforced.** Historically, the United Nations has undertaken important initiatives to strengthen judicial

institutions through international cooperation, mainly with the Haitian National Police (HNP)<sup>167</sup> although the results have not been sufficient to resolve the complex crisis experienced in Haiti. Between 2004 and 2019, two missions, MINUJUSTH and MINUSTAH, aimed to support the development of the HNP, restore the rule of law, strengthen institutions and protect human rights<sup>168,169</sup>. MINUJUSTH fought impunity through violations of people's rights<sup>170</sup>. MINUSTAH reduced gang control through road checkpoints, reclaiming territories that were under their control, and supervising elections<sup>171,172</sup>. Nevertheless, the intervention of foreign actors has so far been insufficient to resolve the crisis of violence and has been subject to strong criticism.<sup>173,174</sup>.

Since 2019, the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti (BINUH) has adopted the same objectives as previous strategies: HNP members have received training in human rights, crisis management, coordination of intervention groups and capacities to counter armed groups<sup>175,176</sup>. However, the prevalence of crime and impunity for crimes show that police and judicial institutions cannot ensure the protection of human rights in the current situation. This means that the country still needs capacity building to operate its justice system.

**Reforms to improve national security have been implemented. Nonetheless, in reality,**

**preventive national security policies are difficult to implement as the police is unable to exercise control in the face of growing insecurity.** In the 2000s, the Haitian government implemented reforms to improve the efficiency of the HNP and the judicial system. In 2004, the Haitian National Police Reform Plan aimed to increase the number of police officers, provide them with good quality equipment, improve collaboration between judicial institutions and better manage police resources. However, this reform has not been strictly monitored, has not received enough funding, and has failed to coordinate the inclusion of parliament and civil society in the implementation of this reform in the long term.<sup>177</sup>

**It is the same scenario for the Strategic Plan for Justice Reform:** in the current context, a comprehensive and in-depth reform of the judicial system has not been possible. This reform, which would improve the state of the HNP and ensure the rule of law, requires a strengthening of a weakened local public administration, and the legislative approval of a parliament that lacks democratically elected senators and a parliament currently formalized<sup>178,179,180</sup>.

**However, several legal reforms have made progress for the creation of a legal framework to protect children, although its implementation remains weakened.** In 2014, the Act on Human Trafficking, the Adoption Act and the Paternity and Maternity Act<sup>181</sup> established a regime of sanctions against those who participate in the trafficking of people. The principle is the best interests of the child and the reduction of several forms of discrimination against children. However, the administration of

justice remains a challenge preventing the implementation of these laws. For example, some courts have been displaced by gangs and individuals have lost confidence in judges since gang leaders often have more authority and power in making decisions about justice.<sup>182</sup> Generally speaking, this is connected to challenges such as political instability and institutional weaknesses, including corruption, which do not allow for the implementation of actions to address the issues as explained in the section on structural challenges.

#### Initiatives for good governance and peacebuilding

**To mitigate the problem of violence and its effects, structural reforms must be implemented to resolve the country's political and economic crisis. This begins with national dialogues for consultation and coordination of actions.** For this reason, new groups have formed in a call for action. In 2021, the Montana Accord, an organized civil society group, was born to call for the reorganization of elections and a political transition.<sup>183</sup> The urgent need for a change in business model has motivated the Haitian Federation of Small and Medium Enterprises of Haiti to call on the political authorities to stop the escalation of violence affecting private sector operations. Haiti's Strategic Development Plan, seeking to reform state institutions, with a plan to ensure the quality of educational, health, and security services within the framework of the 2030 Agenda, has not been implemented in depth because of the political crisis, institutional instability, and lack of state funds.<sup>184</sup> The 2018-2023 Plan for the Modernization of the State aimed to improve the Government's practices in matters of good governance and the exercise of good public service.<sup>185</sup>

163 Source: Interviews.

164 UN Peacebuilding Fund <https://reliefweb.int/report/haiti/building-peace-preventing-violence-and-supporting-community-resilience-haiti>

165 Red Cross. Preventing and Combating Violence in Haiti: Respect at the Heart of Autonomy, <https://www.croixrouge.ca/nos-champs-d-action/>

International-Activities/International-Development/Americas/Haiti/Prevention-and-Combat-Violence-in-Haiti-Respect-at-the-Depth-of-Autonomy, op. cit. Cit.

166 CDC. „A Comprehensive Technical Package for the Prevention of Youth Violence and Associated Risk Behaviors 2016, <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/yv-technicalpackage.pdf>

167 Source: Interviews.

168 MINUSTAH. Fact Sheet, 28 April 2023, <https://peacekeeping.un.org/es/mission/minustah>

169 Ibid.

170 ictj synthèse, 2017, <https://www.ictj.org/sites/default/files/ICTJ-Briefing-TJ-Haiti-2017-FR-1.pdf>

171 BU. Peacekeeping In Haiti: Successes and Failures, 2020, <https://sites.bu.edu/pardeeatlas/back2school/peacekeeping-in-haiti-successes-and-failures/>

172 Crisis group. Haiti: Security and State Reintegration, 30 October 2006, <https://www.crisisgroup.org/fr/latin-america-caribbean/haiti/haiti-security-and-reintegration-state>

173 Crisis group. Haiti's Last Resort: The Prospect of Foreign Intervention

174 Magazines. The Militarization of Development: The Humanicidal Intervention in Haiti, 2020, <https://revistas.usb.edu.co/index.php/Cooperacion/article/view/4739/3739>

175 BINUH. About, <https://binuh.unmissions.org/fr/%C3%A0-propos>

176 UNDP. Haitian National Police Support Program, [https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/2022-11/hnp\\_french.pdf](https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/2022-11/hnp_french.pdf)

177 Yves-François Pierre and Isabelle Fortin. The Reform of the National Police and the Construction of a Democratic Democracy in Haiti, 2010, <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/epdf/10.1080/02255189.2011.583168?needAccess=true&role=button>

178 The Point. Without a president, deputies or senators, democracy is dying in Haiti, January 10, 2023, [https://www.lepoint.fr/monde/sans-president-deputes-ni-senateurs-la-democratie-se-meurt-en-haiti-10-01-2023-2504247\\_24.php](https://www.lepoint.fr/monde/sans-president-deputes-ni-senateurs-la-democratie-se-meurt-en-haiti-10-01-2023-2504247_24.php)

179 Crisis group. Haiti: Security and State Reintegration, 30 October 2006, <https://www.crisisgroup.org/fr/latin-america-caribbean/haiti/haiti-security-and-reintegration-state>

180 The guardian. Haiti left with no elected government officials as it spirals towards anarchy, 10 janvier 2023, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/jan/10/haiti-no-elected-officials-anarchy-failed-state>

181 Republic of Haiti. Adoption Act, [http://www.haiti.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/loi\\_sur\\_adoption.pdf](http://www.haiti.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/loi_sur_adoption.pdf) 182 Source: interviews.

183 CSIS. How to Break the Stalemate in Haiti, 30 juin 2022, <https://www.csis.org/analysis/how-break-stalemate-haiti>

184 Source: entretiens.

185 OECD. Contextualizing Public Governance in Haiti, <https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/sites/1fc9a718-fr/index.html?itemId=/content/component/1fc9a718-fr>

However, this reform proposed by the administration of Jovenel Moïse has not had continuity or follow-up due to unforeseen changes in the public administration. Hence, a recurring proposal is the call for a national dialogue involving all actors in the solution to the crisis of violence.<sup>186</sup>

**Preventive diplomacy has also been used to promote peace, justice and disarmament.** Several international actors have taken extraordinary measures, including financial or legal sanctions, and numerous positions calling for an end to the violence<sup>187,188</sup>. Recently, calls to end violence have accelerated due to its escalation: the government of Haiti has requested the help of foreign police. The Prime Minister and the Minister of Foreign Affairs advocated for the deployment of a specialized international armed force at the meeting of the Permanent Council of the Organization of American States (OAS), and at the 7th Summit of Heads of State of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC)<sup>189</sup>. The UN responded with a proposal to deploy an international force.<sup>190</sup> However, a debate has arisen among UN member states as to whether a humanitarian and peaceful strategy would not be better. It should be noted that domestic or foreign military intervention seems to be supported by the population. In a survey of 1,300 people in Haiti, 79 percent of respondents supported the idea of foreign military intervention and 80 percent supported the idea of mobilizing a national military force to support the police in the fight against violence. Nonetheless, while these decisions are being made, violence is exacerbated and young people and children

are increasingly exposed to its direct and indirect consequences. Measures have also been taken to fight the illegal trafficking of arms and drugs in Haiti. For instance, the UN Security Council has implemented a sanctions regime including travel bans, freezing of assets and financial assets, and targeted arms embargoes against key individuals and entities associated with criminal activities, including those benefiting from the proceeds of illicit drug production and trafficking<sup>192</sup>. Resolution 2653 also established a Group of Experts to collect, review and analyse information on sanctions measures, including the origin and routes of arms trafficking to Haiti and incidents affecting the political transition. In late 2022, some Member States also imposed sanctions targeting Haitian political and economic elites suspected of directly and indirectly assisting Haitian gangs to obtain drugs, firearms and ammunition, although the extent of their enforcement remains to be determined.<sup>193</sup> At the national level, most sanctions have focused on strengthening the capacity of the HNP and legislation to control weapons. Weapon licences have been suspended by the HNP, and the country has drafted a National Action Plan to tackle the problem of weapons, including the control of illicit weapons flows, among others.<sup>194</sup>

## B. Corrective actions (ex post)

### Physical and mental health services

**Physical and mental health services are not enough to respond to daily violence, particularly sexual violence.** Violence has become a major public health problem: in 2012, about 60% of women and men experienced physical violence, and 30% of girls experienced emotional violence<sup>195</sup>. Some civil society organizations, such as Médecins Sans Frontières and BDH, work to ensure physical health on the ground through services for victims of gang sexual violence<sup>196</sup>. Other international actors such as Save the Children and USAID have conducted services for the treatment of injuries or basic medical attention.<sup>197</sup> According to their assessments, these programs have made progress towards the goals of the health system<sup>198</sup>, but interviews reveal that there is a need to increase response services in the context of recurrent violence, sexual exploitation and Gender-Based Violence (GBV).

**Mental health services are similarly necessary to prevent and address the impact of violence on young people.** For example, the training of "resilience tutors" (community actors) who accompany children in trauma situations<sup>199</sup> can recognize, value, and encourage Haitian children's resilience skills. Other initiatives promote the resilience of children and young people. Several civil society organizations, such as APADEH and Kids Club Haiti, provide psychosocial assistance services for children and girls who undergo family separation or trauma.<sup>200</sup>

Other initiatives such as the Fonkoze microfinance programme also provide psychosocial support to people to cope with trauma related to political instability, natural disasters, among others.<sup>201</sup> The Spotlight Initiative, for example, provides holistic care to women and girls survivors of violence. The United Nations system is taking action to improve the mental and physical health of young people and children in Haiti, including UN Women, UNFPA, UNDP, WHO and UNICEF. For example, through UNICEF, shelters for women victims of sexual violence are supported, such as Rapha House<sup>202</sup>. These organizations contribute to the recovery of violence with psychological and medical services, and family mediation.

### Reporting violence and case follow-up

**UNICEF's theory of change states that institutions must ensure the quality of whistleblowing mechanisms and response services for girls, boys and teenagers<sup>203</sup>.** It is necessary to invest in violence detection, response, monitoring, follow-up, support and documentation of cases through initiatives to respond to violence against children and adolescents, in alignment with international best practices<sup>204</sup>. In Haiti, reporting is mainly conducted by international actors. For example, Amnesty International documents human rights violations on its official page by recently reporting the death threat against Sanièce Petit Phat, a defender of girls' rights<sup>205</sup>. In October 2022, the UN Security Council imposed a sanction on gang leaders, particularly Jimmy "Barbecue" Chérizier, the former

186 Source: entretiens.

187 UNICEF. Rising gang violence in Haiti is now targeting children, UNICEF warns 15 avril 2021, <https://www.unicef.org/lac/en/press-releases/rising-gang-violence-haiti-now-is-targeting-children-unicef-warns>

188 PBS. The U.N. adopts resolution to end violence in Haiti, sanctions powerful gang leader, 2022, <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/world/the-u-n-adopts-resolution-to-end-violence-in-haiti-sanctions-powerful-gang-leader>

189 CEPAL, "Plan Strategic from Development of Haiti", <https://observatorioplanificacion.cepal.org/en/plans/Strategic-Development-Plan-Dhaiti>

190 Al Jazeera. Haiti requests aid of foreign police forces as violence rages, 7 October 2022, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/10/7/haiti-to-request-aid-of-foreign-forces-as-violence-rages-reports>

191 ECLAC, "Plan Strategic from Development of Haiti", <https://observatorioplanificacion.cepal.org/en/plans/Strategic-Development-Plan-Dhaiti>

192 UNODC, "Haiti's criminal markets: mapping trends in firearms and drug trafficking", 2023 [https://reliefweb.int/report/haiti/haitis-criminal-markets-mapping-trends-firearms-and-drug-trafficking?gclid=Cj0KCQjw3a2iBhCFARIsAD4jQB1WN\\_4z7rfQ8irUOnRpAAQJcE0oNm\\_LSX11Yvifc-SSwrR-g\\_ZxEiYaAp2HEALw\\_wcB](https://reliefweb.int/report/haiti/haitis-criminal-markets-mapping-trends-firearms-and-drug-trafficking?gclid=Cj0KCQjw3a2iBhCFARIsAD4jQB1WN_4z7rfQ8irUOnRpAAQJcE0oNm_LSX11Yvifc-SSwrR-g_ZxEiYaAp2HEALw_wcB)

193 Ibid.

194 Ibid

195 CDC. Violence against children in Haiti, findings from a national survey,, 2012, <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/violence-haiti.pdf>

196 Source: Interviews.

197 Save the children Haiti. Education, <https://haiti.savethechildren.net/news/education>

198 Health policy project. Haiti, <http://www.healthpolicyproject.com/index.cfm?ID=country-Haiti>

199 BICE. Fostering resilience, training resilience tutors, <https://bice.org/fr/actions-de-terrain/domaines-daction/tuteurs-de-resilience/>

200 Source: Interviews.

201 <https://fonkoze.org/health>

202 Spotlight initiative. Healing Haiti in the face of an increase in sexual violence, 27 novembre 2022, <https://www.spotlightinitiative.org/news/healing-haiti-face-increase-sexual-violence>

203 UNICEF. Preventing and Responding to Violence Against Children and Adolescents Theory of Change, 2017, <https://www.unicef.org/media/83206/file/Violence-Against-Children-ToC.pdf>

204 Ibid.

205 Amnesty International. Haiti: Women's rights defender threatened with death: Sanièce Petit Phat 2017,, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/amr36/7598/2017/en/>

police officer head of the G9 Family and its allies, planning a travel ban and embargo.<sup>206</sup> The European Union, the International Organization of *La Francophonie* and other international organizations have issued a statement against gang violence. Recently, following the kidnappings, the Religious Associations of Haiti called for a national strike to demand an end to violence.<sup>207</sup>

### C. Joint analysis of actions and shortcomings

In Haiti, a review of 40 initiatives shows that international and civil society actors are taking the most significant actions to mitigate violence<sup>208</sup>, as compared to the government, which has taken fewer actions in terms of numbers and impact.<sup>209</sup> This is due to the absence and weakness of government institutions, the lack of the rule of law and the difficulties in implementing the law.<sup>210</sup> Table 2 illustrates different types of actions to mitigate violence against young people, using as a reference the "INSPIRE" model for reducing violence against children, which was pioneered by UNICEF.<sup>211</sup> and the analytical framework on the impact of violence at different levels.<sup>212</sup>

When initiatives are analysed according to the analytical framework of the ecological model, the impact sought by these initiatives is mainly at the societal (37.5%) or community (35%) level, as the majority is centered on the integration of young people into the community and the reconstruction of the social fabric. Initiatives focused on the development of the individual (17.5%) and social relations (15%) are the least numerous (see Table 1). These actions include:

1. The safety of environments (55% of actions<sup>213</sup>) is the most common goal of the initiatives as they seek to prevent or punish violence. Indeed, the actors make a recurrent call for an end to the violence in the country. These actions are the most frequent because there are many efforts to improve justice institutions. **However, it is still possible to increase shelter availability for victims of violence and improve their infrastructure.**
2. 45% of the stocks seek to modify behaviours. These are institutional changes to promote healthy behaviours among teenagers.<sup>214</sup> For example, raising awareness among young people or sanctioning gang leaders by foreign actors. **However, there are few actions for investment in cultural or recreational spaces.**
3. Secondly, a quarter of the actions are for application of the law or education (25% for both categories). In both cases, these initiatives prevent violent behaviour by young people through the courts or education. **In this area, there are few initiatives to limit young people's access to drugs and weapons, there are no mechanisms to monitor violence at the local level, and there is barely any program to develop social-emotional skills in schools.**<sup>215</sup>
4. The fewest initiatives are those to support parents or caregivers (12.5%) in a situation of high family disintegration, domestic violence suffered mainly by women, and rebellion of children

against their parents, incited by gangs.<sup>216</sup> Even though two laws have been adopted for parental responsibility and adoption, **there are very few initiatives to prevent domestic violence.**<sup>217</sup>

5. Only 10% of the actions are for economic income boosting, in the form of money transfers, microfinance, grants, loans or other forms of financial assistance to mitigate violence.<sup>218</sup> In addition, the Government's public expenditure on social development is very low<sup>219</sup>, the poverty

level is very high (87.6%, USD 6.85 in purchasing power parity per day) in 2022 and Haiti is among the poorest countries in the region.<sup>220</sup> **Therefore, economic support to households could be strengthened.**

Table 2: Actions to mitigate violence against young people based on the INSPIRE model and analytical framework

Type of impact according to the analytical framework	Individual	Relational	Community	Societal	Total
<b>Environmental safety</b>	Application of sanctions against gang leaders	Participation of young people in workshops for well-being	Strengthening local justice institutions	Creation of shelters for victims of violence	22 (55%)
<b>Change of norms and values</b>	Preventive sanctions to prevent violent behavior by certain individuals	Awareness raising for peace and conflict resolution	Raising awareness and involving young people in the community	Investment in cultural and social activities	18 (45%)
<b>Response and support services</b>	Care for the trauma of victims of violence	Amplification of the offer of psychosocial services	Increase in recreational spaces	Family reintegration services	16 (40%)
<b>Implementation and enforcement of laws</b>	Capacity building for police members	Implementation of laws and sanctions against gang violence	Monitor and track cases of physical and sexual violence at the local level	Restoration of judicial institutions and institutional coordination	10 (25%)
<b>Education and practical know-how</b>	Creation of scholarships to facilitate access and permanence in school	Development of relational skills at school	Skills development for community leadership	Implementation of public schools	10 (25%)
<b>Support for parents and caregivers (positive parenting)</b>	Creation of accommodation for victims of violence	Initiatives to prevent domestic violence	Community family and social reintegration services	Creation of laws for parental responsibility	5 (12.5%)
<b>Economic strengthening of income</b>	Money transfers for basic expenses (food)	Investment in relational skills	Economic transfers for organizations communautaires	State public spending on social development and security	4 (10%)
<b>Total &amp; % (40)</b>	<b>7 (17.5%)</b>	<b>6 (15)</b>	<b>14 (35%)</b>	<b>15 (37.5%)</b>	

216 Source: Interviews.

217 See Table X of possible actions and in the Appendix.

218 The percentages are taken from the table of possible actions to mitigate violence.

219 International Monetary Fund. <https://www.imf.org/~media/Files/Publications/CR/2020/English/1HTIEA2020002.ashx>

220 World Bank <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/haiti/overview#:~:text=In%20line%20with%20these%20results,greatest%20inequality%20in%20the%20region.>

206 PBS. The U.N. adopts resolution to end violence in Haiti, sanctions powerful gang leader, 21 October 2022, PBS. The U.N. adopts resolution to end violence in Haiti, sanctions powerful gang leader, October 21, 2022,

207 NC reporter. Church in Haiti calls for national strike following violence, kidnappings, April 15, 2021, <https://www.ncronline.org/news/church-haiti-calls-national-strike-following-violence-kidnappings>

208 See the list of initiatives found in the appendix

209 Crisis group. Haiti: Security and State Reintegration, 30 October 2006, <https://www.crisisgroup.org/fr/latin-america-caribbean/haiti/haiti-security-and-reintegration-state>

210 Source: Interviews.

211 UNICEF. Preventing and Responding to Violence Against Children and Adolescents Theory of Change, 2017, <https://www.unicef.org/media/83206/file/Violence-Against-Children-ToC.pdf>

212 See section on the conceptual framework.

213 It should be noted that each action may affect several criteria. For this reason, the total percentages are higher than 100%. The total list of actions, description and classification is added as an attachment shared with UNICEF.

214 UNICEF. Seven Strategies for Ending Violence Against Children, 2016, <https://www.unicef.org/media/66876/file/INSPIRE-SevenStrategies.pdf>

215 See Table X of possible actions and in the Appendix.

### D. Factors impacting aid effectiveness and main actors sought by young people and children who are victims of violence

The young people and children participating in the RDS survey answered questions about where they sought help following the violent events they experienced, the reasons why they did not seek help, and their main needs to cope with the violence. These questions aimed to identify, from their perspective, the main shortcomings in seeking help, as well as to prioritize the actions to be taken.

In the study, a large majority of young people and children did not seek help from social services (71%) in the face of violence (Image 24). This shows a disconnect between the offer of help from organisations and their asking for help, leading to a lower effectiveness of the help available.<sup>221</sup> Among those who sought help, the diversity of people or organizations seeking help shows that there is no centralized place or organization where young people and children who have experienced violence can seek help in a systemic way. Fifty percent of young people who said they had sought help did so with a family members, who remain the first point of contact for young people, followed by a hospital or clinic (41%). Victims also turn to their close friends (39%) before turning to the police (33%) (see Image 24 below). It should be noted that the respondents mentioned other services or persons, not listed in the possibilities of the questionnaire, in 17% of cases. Finally, NGOs are also places where young people can seek help (in 6% of cases).

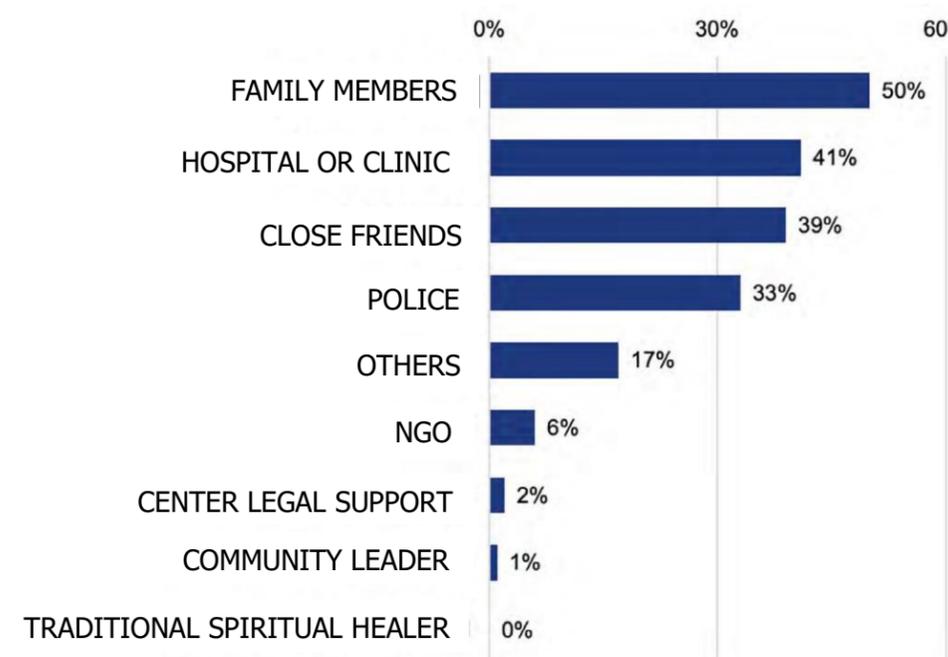
Victims almost never turn to gang members, community leaders, traditional healers, justices of the peace and very few to legal aid centers (1%). In general, victims consider that these people and services have helped them a little (54%), helped them a lot (30%) or not helped them at all (15%). It is important to note that

while the family and health services can be used as a means to identify victims and assist young people and children, the family is also a source of violence for those who are victims (as per the survey) and health services are blocked by violence. In this regard, there is a need for services accessible to young people and children outside their families and as an alternative to health centers.

**Fear of the consequences of reporting violence is the main cause why respondents do not seek help. 37% say they did not seek help for fear of getting into trouble (Image 25).** The lack of economic resources is also cited (35%), as well as the absence of people or organizations willing to help them (35%). In addition, in exceptional cases where these services are available, respondents stated that other barriers such as distance from them or travel costs (30%) and (17%) hinder obtaining help in situations of violence.

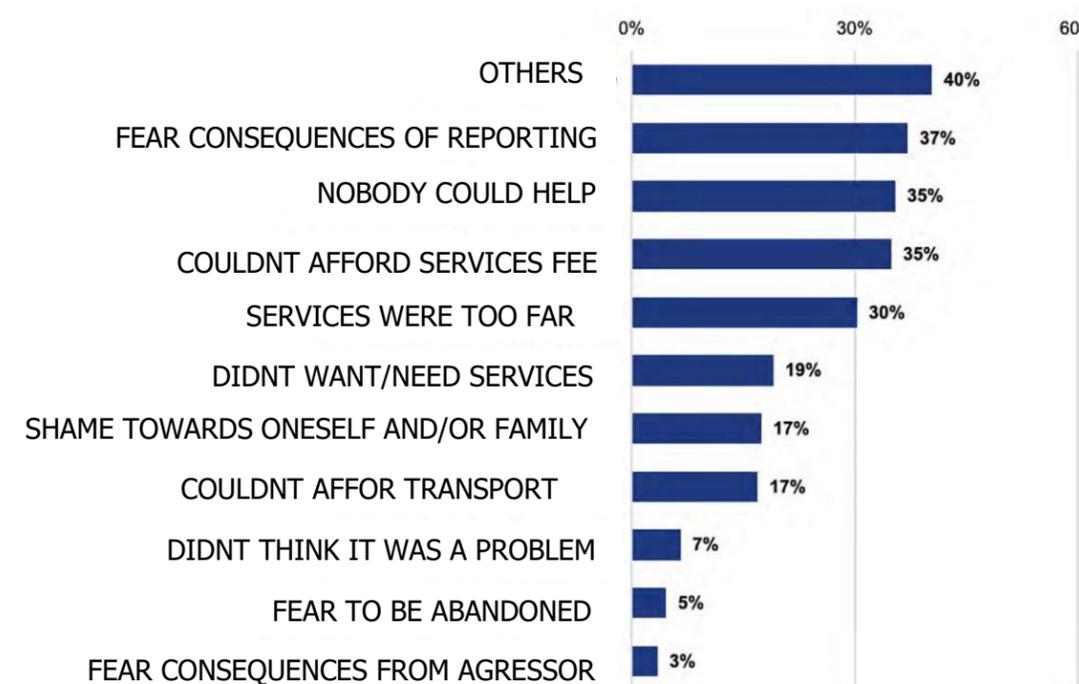
**According to the young people and children surveyed, the factors that can contribute to mitigating violence are primarily related to employment (80%) and training (66%) (Image 26),** i.e. the ability to support oneself and one's family, to be useful to society and to be able to look to the future with serenity. The need for security (police, 62%) and justice (63%) are also important criteria that can reduce violence. Social connections are mentioned (38%) as well as family support (29%). The food situation appears to be critical. 35% of respondents believe that food aid would reduce violence. Finally, the issue of housing (20%) and money transfers (21%) appear to be violence mitigating factors.

Image 24. First place or the first person where young people and children sought help<sup>222</sup>



Source: RDS Survey

Image 25. Reasons not to seek help

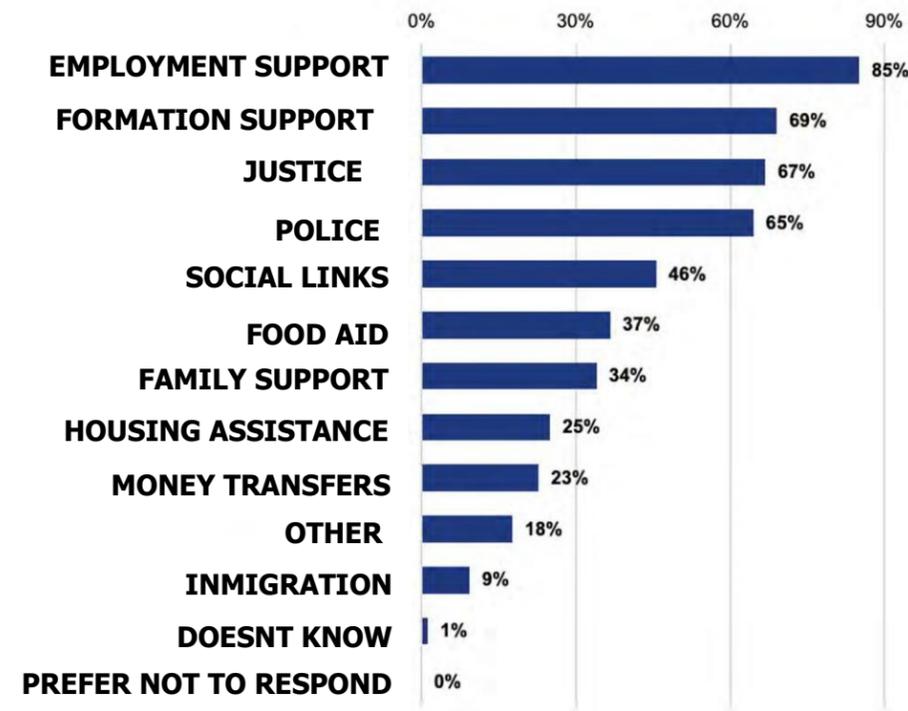


Source: RDS Survey

<sup>221</sup> Here, the concept of not seeking help must be qualified, because the fact that children do not seek help is not necessarily a deliberate choice. It can be conditioned by a lack of access to information or a lack of access to support. However, the disconnect between need and supply persists.

<sup>222</sup> Other response options such as Transportation, Justice of the Peace, Gang Member, or Church were among the options but were not selected by any respondents.

Image 26. Which of these factors do you think can or contribute to mitigate violence?



Source: RDS Survey

# 11

## Conclusion and Recommendations

## A. Conclusion

Violence in Port-au-Prince reached critical levels, with the presence of approximately 90 gangs that inflicted violence in all municipalities of the Port-au-Prince metropolitan area. Faced with a poorly trained, poorly equipped and understaffed police force, and a failing judicial system, gangs are consolidating their power with impunity through access to illegal weapons, kidnappings, demands for ransom, and drug trafficking in order to impose themselves violently in Port-au-Prince. These gangs engage in all types of violence. In addition to kidnappings, gangs have perpetrated murders, rapes, destruction of property and have done so in public, in front of the partners, children and family members of the victims as a means of exercising psychological torture on the population and their opponents.

Young people and children suffer violence directly and indirectly. In general, young people and children are exposed and at risk of becoming victims of the violence taking place in all the municipalities of Port-au-Prince. This study specifically found events of physical, psychological, sexual violence and significant deprivation of human rights, conducted by gangs against young people and children, including murders, individual and gang rapes, and kidnappings, among others. They have also been indirect victims of confrontations between gangs, between gangs and police, during riots and violent demonstrations. Young people and children are also instrumentalized and engaged in violence. Interviews show that in most cases, women and girls are forced to perform sexual favours for gang members, both coercively and in exchange for protection from gangs, while men and boys are recruited to support violent gang activities. The younger ones are used to carry ammunition, monitor abductees, and do espionage, and the older ones are used to perpetuate all types of violence as early as 14 years of age.

Participants in the study shed light on the dynamics of young people and child recruitment into gangs, linking the dynamics to the vulnerability of this population in several overlapping levels.

When gangs settle in a neighbourhood, they recruit people by force, through threats and physical, sexual and psychological violence. Other factors are in addition to the direct recruitment made by gangs through the absence of mechanisms to defend young people and children against gang power. They may accept recruitment to be protected from gang violence, mainly because the state, through the police, fails to protect them. Faced with widespread poverty in Port-au-Prince, gangs pay for the participation of young people and children financially and in cash in the form of food to its members. Therefore, gang membership becomes a coping strategy for young people and children to cope with their vulnerability. It even becomes a household strategy, as the parents of some children agree for their children to be recruited for the same economic reasons. Finally, there is an aspirational and psychological aspect that contributes to gang involvement. Faced with the instability of the country, the government and its corruption, people lose confidence in the country's institutions and look for role models in gangs, which offer them social ties in their communities and are perceived as bearers of power locally. These factors overlap as the population experiences gang power, lack of protection, economic vulnerability, and the search for role models at the same time.

There are several structural reasons for the escalation of violence, some of which have already been mentioned. At the political level, the widespread absence of elections reduces the legitimacy and power of the state to respond to violence and to implement development strategies. The blockade of the judiciary, as well as corruption, drug and arms trafficking as well as the low level of police force to respond to violence and act against illicit flows in the country create a space of impunity where criminals spread their operations. At the economic level, the crisis manifested by negative GDP growth, high unemployment and poverty rates, inflation, and a weakened productive apparatus dependent on imports, create a space where people become even more vulnerable to abuses by gangs, which control access to basic goods, thus affecting the price of fuel and food, among others, through their

criminal actions, the pressure on small businesses and the blockade of the capital's main roads. At the social level, people are protesting, peacefully and violently, against the political, economic and violence crisis, creating other spaces where violence can recur and impact young people and children.

Urgent action is necessary at all levels to tackle the crisis of violence impacting Port-au-Prince and the young people and children population residing there. After the mapping of initiatives for this study and the analysis of the research results, recommendations for action are presented at the individual, relational, community and societal levels.

## B. Recommendations

This section shows the recommended point of entry for reducing violence and recruitment, as well as recommendations at the individual, relational, community and societal levels targeting the various factors that contribute to the increase in violence in Port-au-Prince.

### Point of entry

Establishment of a comprehensive **money transfer programme**, aimed at strengthening the income of young people and their household to facilitate access to basic goods and services, increase resilience to shocks, and avoid their participation in violence in the short and long term, **facilitating access to cognitive therapy services, vocational training and community outreach**. The target population is the household of young people and children impacted by violence in vulnerable neighborhoods of Port-au-Prince. This prioritization can be done by area, based on the Violence Exposure Index data in the mapping section. Studies supporting the intervention can be found in the Appendix.

### Intervention components and actions

The program would have 4 main components:

1. A money transfer for young people in vulnerable economic situations. This action aims to

reduce the instability and economic vulnerability of young people and their households, promote the empowerment of the participating young women, with a gender perspective, and contribute to the fight against poverty and economic inequality. The amount claims to cover basic needs, considering the basic basket and inflation. Considering the opportunity cost, this amount also claims to avoid gang recruitment during the duration of the program due to a lack of short-term employment opportunities. This action corresponds to the economic and income strengthening of the INSPIRE model.

Money transfer is a way to meet the immediate needs of young people and children, and to provide them with three additional services to avoid its impact on violent behaviour in the short and long term, transfers are not conditional in principle but could be conditional depending on the level of assistance to the other services:

2. A conducive cognitive therapy service (health component, support services). Therapy, once a week, in order to respond to the mental health crisis, to provide assistance to trauma experienced due to violence or during childhood. This therapy can be done in a group, with individual sessions if necessary. This also helps with build a support group between several young people, to develop socio-emotional skills, conflict resolution, stress management and crisis response in a preventive way. This component of the program is based on the [STYL model](#), which has been shown to be successful in reducing long-term violence in a collaborative manner among young people.
3. Vocational training (education and practical know-how). An educational intervention was suggested by most interviewees. The most common argument in this regard is the importance of offering an alternative life path for young people. This component consists of learning a job that the young person could practice in the future: for bakers, artisans, cooks. This would make it possible to combat the lack of professional opportunities, channel the energy of young people in a positive way, counterattack the learning deficit, increase their range of skills

and offer them a chance to earn money in a peaceful way. These activities need to be aligned with the vocational aspirations of the young participants to ensure their effectiveness<sup>223</sup> and the needs of local markets.

4. Awareness-raising and community integration (component about change of values and norms). The literature on effective strategies and interviews indicates that there is a need to emphasize the importance of community in preventing youth violence. This component aims to mitigate the disruption of the social fabric due to conflict and daily violence. The instructor of this sensitization should be a young person from the community, aimed to actively and productively engage young people in a "community circle" of trust, in an environment that fosters reflection on peaceful solutions to conflicts, the development of empathy and the search for solutions for others.

#### At the individual level

**Young people and children are victims of all types of violence, physically, psychologically and sexually.** Currently, gang violence restricts access to hospitals and discourages health workers from travelling to health centers. The capacity of the care system needs to improve to ensure young people and children have access to health services.

1. **In the short term, there is a need to strengthen the financial and operational capacities of international organizations and civil society that have already provided treatment for injuries and basic medical care to victims of physical violence, sexual violence care, and mental health care for victims of violence.** These organizations include: Médecins Sans Frontières, BDH and Save the Children among others. Comprehensive care initiatives (in the face of sexual violence) such as Spotlight, need to be strengthened as well. Generally speaking, service should include factors

of prevention of risk that may take place as a consequence of violence, including the recurrence of violence, substance abuse, unsafe sexual practices, sexually transmitted diseases, among others. **In the medium and long term,** public policies and the support of international organizations must be coordinated to increase access to health services, starting with restoring blocked services, possibly through humanitarian corridors and investments in health infrastructure. These investments are intended to ensure the availability of medicines and health personnel in Port-au-Prince. It is necessary to accompany these investments in infrastructure and personnel with actions to make care services visible, so that these services are closer to the community, and so that the population knows about their existence and benefits from them.

Responsible entity: The government (Ministry of Public Health), the international community and the United Nations System.

2. **To support victims of violence, the healthcare personnel, the police personnel, and community leaders must undergo training in human rights, crisis management, and coordination of anti-violence intervention groups.** BINUH in Haiti has already conducted this type of training with the Haitian National Police. These trainings could be replicated and adapted for other actors who deal with violence experienced by young people and children. This could include the training of "resilience tutors" (community actors) who accompany children in trauma situations<sup>224</sup>, to recognize, value and encourage the resilience capacities of young people and children who are victims of violence and to lead them to organisations that can support them at a professional level. Beyond that, there is a fundamental problem to be solved in the medium and long term in terms of human capital regarding health. It is imperative to increase human capital in the health sector in Haiti, especially the number of

nurses, doctors and midwives, in line with WHO recommendations, which suggest at least 4.45 health professionals per 1,000 population. In Haiti, these images are lower, with 1.4 doctors and 1.8 nurses per 10,000 residents in the public sector, and 1 doctor and 2.1 nurses per 10,000 residents in the private sector, which has serious consequences for the delivery of health care<sup>225</sup>. It is essential to implement meaningful incentives to encourage these health professionals to stay in Haiti. For example, about 50% of nurses leave Haiti within five years of graduation due to poor working conditions, lack of incentives, and employment opportunities.<sup>226</sup> This must be achieved by improving their working conditions, offering them attractive benefits and job opportunities, and strengthening their career development. This increase in qualified health personnel and their retention will help significantly improve access to quality health care in Haiti, especially for pregnant women and children.

3. **Behaviour change actions are needed to strengthen the resilience of children, young people and their parents involved in violence and to strengthen community mechanisms for this change.** Key priorities include changing the perspective on violence to prevent its acceptance by children and young people, as well as supporting parents in preventing young people and children's involvement with gangs. To achieve this, community-based educational programs should be put in place to promote positive alternatives to violence. Parents need to be actively involved, receiving psychosocial support and parenting skills to build healthier bonds with their children. Working with community leaders, local schools and

organizations is essential to create an environment that encourages behaviour change and the creation of resilient communities. As a preventive measure, sex education efforts should be undertaken for youth, children, gang members and the community at large. The testimonies collected for this study show that part of the sexual violence that takes place at the time of writing is also linked to a lack of understanding of the phenomenon. Similarly, victims of violence do not always turn to health centers due to a lack of knowledge on how to respond to events, in addition to lack of access to infrastructure. In this regard, behaviour change work can aim to reduce sexual violence by raising awareness on the subject.

Responsible entity: United Nations system and specialized civil society NGOs

**Violence restricts mobility, families access to work and access to basic services. In this regard, access to food, school, and consumer goods is reduced for young people and children, as well as their ability to access spaces designed for their cognitive and relational development.** The recruitment of children into armed gangs also involves the precariousness of households.

1. **Initiatives to support households with basic needs are needed.** Malnutrition and poverty are prevalent in Haiti. In the short term, money transfers as well as food support programs can alleviate conditions of vulnerability and reduce the incentive to join gangs for economic reasons. The United Nations system has extensive experience in implementing money transfer program (WFP, UNICEF, among others). In addition, WFP's focus on local procurement can promote development of local businesses and agriculture nationwide.

223 Source: Interviews.

224 BICE. Fostering resilience, training resilience tutors, <https://bice.org/fr/actions-de-terrain/domaines-daction/tuteurs-de-resilience/>

225 Gallagher et al, "Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization Collaborating Centers in Nursing and Midwifery in Haiti", 2019, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6519681/>  
226 Ibid.

Responsible entity: United Nations System, in particular WFP and UNICEF.

2. **Access to education must be guaranteed to provide children with spaces for learning, socialization, economic opportunities and reduce their exposure to street violence.**

In this regard, it is necessary to support more initiatives such the one of the World Bank's PROMISE fund. It has made a significant investment in school attendance and support for the education system in crisis, noting that students in Haiti had an average of 6.1 years of schooling, once adjusted to quality<sup>227</sup>. Initiatives such as that of UNICEF, the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training and WFP are also needed, where they have helped to prevent the mass drop-out of students through the distribution of financial assistance, the distribution of hot meals, school kits and by organizing compensation courses for students in sensitive areas<sup>228</sup>. These incentives are key, when we consider that most schools in Haiti are private<sup>229</sup>. The fact that most schools are private creates economic barriers to access to education. In addition, training about violence, training against the use of drugs and weapons for young people and children, as well as to promote the development of socio-emotional skills in dealing with violence should be included to support educational centers. In a broader sense, efforts to increase education in Haiti must consider access to formal education, access to non-formal education,

professional learning from a perspective that responds to the identified challenges preventing schooling such as distance from schools, food availability, school closures, quality of teaching, age when being admitted to school, repeating a grade, among others.

Responsible entity: United Nations system (World Bank, WFP, UNICEF) and government (Ministry of Education, Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Rural Development and Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour).

3. **A rigorous effort must be made to improve access to work.**

In the short term, investments should be made to develop skills in particularly vulnerable environments, such as temporary work experiences (internships) for at-risk young people and the skills of students and professors to know how to react in violent contexts in rural areas (Red Cross and Rinaldi Foundation).<sup>230,231,232</sup> Investing in the development of job skills can increase the income of young people and children in the medium to long term. In addition, there is evidence that investing in these skills can significantly reduce youth participation in violent activities by providing a better understanding of how to resolve social conflicts.<sup>233</sup> In this crisis and considering the damage created by the violence in Port-au-Prince, UN program geared towards crisis response such as UNDP's Livelihoods and Economic Recovery Program can provide rapid employment opportunities for young people, as well as

income and technical skills for young people. Capacity development must also have a gender approach and ensure women are included in the training. These institutions, through civil society organizations for implementation (identifying young people and children, coordinating and disbursing incentives) and the private sector to find opportunities, can support the government in reducing incentives to join gangs and reduce poverty. Initiatives to strengthen youth entrepreneurship are also key, particularly to provide opportunities for young people who drop out of school and are susceptible to gang recruitment, as well as opportunities for parents of young people who face economic hardship and facilitate the recruitment of their children by gangs to obtain resources.

Responsible entity: United Nations system, Government (Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour), National Institute of Vocational Training, civil society, Haitian Federation of Small and Medium Enterprises.

#### At the relational level

**Exposure to violence impacts the values, identity and social ties of young people and children. This study found evidence that for some young people, exposure to violence leads them to normalize it and want to perpetuate it. The context of powerlessness on the part of law enforcement leads them to admire the gangs and their way of life.** Secondly, young people and children exposed to violence are developing social circles where acceptance and incitement to commit violent acts is reinforced.

1. **Awareness-raising is necessary to rebuild the role models of young people and children in the municipalities of Port-au-Prince and to reduce normalizing violence.** In addition, the creation of social connections between adolescents through awareness-raising could promote a "sense of belonging" to the community and reduce the likelihood of committing violent acts.<sup>234</sup>

In this context, initiatives inspired by models of positive nonconformity among young people could help create connections and examples to follow. These initiatives would look for examples of young people and children who, in precarious and vulnerable conditions, have decided not to join gangs or leave gangs. These individuals could serve as an example for other young people and children, both on the prevention side and on the exit side of gangs. Here, working with civil society organizations already conducting awareness-raising workshops and already have contact with these young role models is key. In the medium and long term, it is necessary to deploy actions to strengthen the social pact in Haiti. Individuals face widespread distrust of government institutions due to institutional presence failures, corruption, and fragmentation of social relations linked to violence. There is a need for strategic measures, including education for citizenship and social cohesion, support for community mediation and the promotion of youth participation to strengthen the social pact, as well as ensure access to basic services and security (these points are elaborated on in the other recommendations). These combined actions aim to rebuild trust, reduce mistrust in institutions and restore the social fabric, to create an environment conducive to peace in Haiti.

Responsible entity: The United Nations system, with the assistance of the Government (the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour, the Ministry of Young people and Sports and Civic Action, the Ministry of Women and Women's Rights) and civil society to create a strategic alliance around the issue.

Children who live, or spend most of their time on the streets, are more likely to be exposed to gang violence due to their economic vulnerability and lack of protection by responsible adults.

227 World Bank, "World Bank Approves US\$90 Million Additional Financing for Haiti's Education Sector," (2022), <https://www.banquemondiale.org/fr/news/press-release/2022/03/07/the-world-bank-approves-additional-financing-of-us-90million-for-haiti-s-education-sector>

228 UNICEF, "Haiti: One-in-Three School Is Target-of-Violence-in-Port-au-Prince", (2022), <https://www.unicef.org/haiti/communiqu%C3%A9s-de-presse/Haiti-One-School-on-Three-is-Target-of-Violence-in-Port-au-Prince>

229 <https://www.bancomundial.org/es/news/feature/2015/03/12/four-things-you-need-to-know-about-education-in-haiti>

230 Red Cross. Preventing and Combating Violence in Haiti: Respect at the Heart of Autonomy, <https://www.croixrouge.ca/nos-champs-d-action/International-Activities/International-Development/Americas/Haiti/Prevention-and-Combat-Violence-in-Haiti-Respect-at-the-Heart-of-Autonomy>

231 Fondation Rinaldi. Trabajar hacia la reducción de la violencia, 2018 <https://www.frinaldihaiti.org/trabajando-hacia-la-reduccion-de-la-violencia/>

232 UNICEF. Rising gang violence in Haiti is now targeting children, UNICEF warns, 18 April 2021, <https://www.unicef.org/lac/en/press-releases/rising-gang-violence-haiti-now-is-targeting-children-unicef-warns>

233 CDC. A Comprehensive Technical Package for the Prevention of Youth Violence and Associated Risk Behaviors, 2016, <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/yv-technicalpackage.pdf>

234 CDC factors mitigating violence.

1. The Support programs for street young people and children are important to help them find social connections with organizations that can invest in their development and keep them away from gangs. Here, working with civil society becomes important, both in terms of building relationships with this population and in providing support services. In the medium and long term, this support work must go beyond direct attention to street children and must involve strategic and preventive work on care for children within the home to avoid abandonment. In this regard, economic support for families must be accompanied by awareness-raising work on children's rights and sex education that reaches young people, victims of sexual violence and the actors who perpetrate it. It must also aim at a change in the perspective and treatment of children known as *'restaveks'* who are abused through domestic work and related violence.

Responsible entity: Government (Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour), Civil Society Organisations and international organisations such as the Red Cross.

**Economic precariousness leads some families to allow the recruitment of their children in exchange for payment and support given by the gangs.**

2. Although economic necessities would be met through the support mechanisms of recommendations at the individual level, **awareness-raising work must be conducted among the parents of young people and children in the municipalities of the Port-au-Prince metropolitan area to help understand the types and consequences of violence children are exposed to, as well as the possible legal consequences.** This awareness-raising work must also seek to identify the problem of domestic violence young people and children are exposed to.

Several civil society organizations, such as APADEH and Kids Club Haiti, provide psychosocial assistance services for children and girls in the context of family separation or trauma.<sup>235</sup> These services could be extended to reach families in the context of violence prevention. Again, in the medium to long term, these aspects of child abuse within the home need to be targeted by initiatives for behaviour change in order to educate about children's rights. Children and young people who are victims of violence outside the home have also been victims of psychological and sexual violence at home.

Responsible entity: The United Nations system, with the assistance of the Government (Ministry of the Interior and Local Authorities, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour, the Ministry of Women's Affairs and Women's Rights), civil society.

#### At the community level

**Recovering public spaces is urgent, including the operation of schools and health centers in the affected areas. Yet, there are not enough police officers to tackle violence and regain control of the affected areas.**

1. **In the short term, humanitarian corridors** that seek to ensure safe mobility between key areas (education, health) can be used to focus law enforcement power, since law enforcement agencies are unable to cover all areas where violence is taking place. **In the long term, investments in access to basic services are necessary through the restructuring of urban spaces.** This action component involves reframing the social security system, with a local perspective and prioritizing disadvantaged neighborhoods. Here, the strategy must focus on the creation of community links through investments in infrastructure to approach access to health, education, leisure, food, and employment for the

population in the districts, training and retention of local talent within its infrastructure, and security to maintain access to infrastructure. The study addresses the contribution of organizing urban space as a structural cause of the fragmentation of relationships and the territorialized control of gangs in neighborhoods. In this regard, supporting investments in security through actions that reduce the institutional abandonment of marginalized neighborhoods is a priority to improve social conditions and reduce violence.

Responsible entity: Government (Ministry of the Interior and Local Government, Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour, Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education), the United Nations system, humanitarian organizations and local social leaders.

2. **Coordinated and effective mobilization strategies for national and international law enforcement are fundamental to responding to the violence crisis.** The population, including young people and children, is the most vulnerable to incidents of violence against civilians, armed clashes and faces increasing sexual violence. Yet, riots and protests also expose them to violent events. In the short term, strategies for the coordinated and speedy deployment of available law enforcement agencies are necessary to protect the population. They have been requested by the government as mentioned in the section on actions taken. However, it is difficult to mobilize forces if they do not have the necessary weapons and manpower. In this regard, there is an urgent need to mobilize international support to respond urgently to the violence in Port-au-Prince. This mobilization requires a better coordination of efforts, since progress in recent years through the interventions of international bodies did not

see the expected results.

Responsible entity: Government (Ministry of the Interior and Local Authorities, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Worship, Ministry of Defence, the United Nations System, the international community (embassies).

**Data on violence tend to be underestimated and underreported.** This reduces the ability to respond to violent events, including physical, sexual and psychological violence. Significantly, strengthening the flow of information to improve the effectiveness of the police in responding to cases of kidnapping is essential to protect individuals and reduce the funding sources for gangs.

1. **Develop an information system with interoperable data to compile information on violence and the context where it takes place.** As part of its faculties, BINUH has contributed to data collection on violence and to the conduct of studies with state institutions<sup>236</sup>. However, the UN has acknowledged that efforts for data collection can still be strengthened.<sup>237</sup> To reduce violence, it is advisable to monitor and assess prevention program, reinforce a statistical information system and use the data collected to guide the relevance of action.<sup>238</sup> In addition, interviewed leaders repeatedly mentioned the need to establish a mechanism to monitor and follow up on cases of violence.<sup>239</sup> For example, the UN Mission in Haiti could monitor the status of international standards in the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Committee on the Rights of the Child (CEDAW and CRC). With regard to systems for collecting information on violence, initiatives have already been implemented for countries in Central America, which could be used as an example,

<sup>235</sup> Source: Interviews.

<sup>236</sup> [https://binuh.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/2022-06-13\\_-\\_sg\\_report\\_on\\_binuh.pdf](https://binuh.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/2022-06-13_-_sg_report_on_binuh.pdf)

<sup>237</sup> BINUH p16 <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/2022-10/20221014-Report-on-Sexual-Violence-haiti-fr.pdf>

<sup>238</sup> <https://www.unicef.org/media/83206/file/Violence-Against-Children-ToC.pdf>

<sup>239</sup> Source: Interviews.

especially UNDP's [InfoSegura](#) project with USAID. Using technology in a broader sense can help to monitor and assess proposed program. For example, the ACLED data used in this study allows for a systematic tracking of violent events.

Responsible entity: Government (Ministry of the Interior and Local Authorities, Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour, Haitian Institute of Statistics and Informatics), the United Nations System and the National Observatory on Poverty and Social Exclusion, in collaboration with universities and research centers.

2. Impunity for crimes can aggravate the difficulties of victims of violence when reporting it. **In the short term, it becomes necessary to promote mechanisms for the reporting of violent events**, through a centralized service that can guide victims towards physical, mental and legal assistance and guide people's reactions to abduction cases. A basis for conducting this work could be a platform similar to U-Report. Part of the mechanisms to increase reporting include awareness workshops for victims on what constitutes violence, its types, the importance of reporting, and the support services available.

Responsible entity: The United Nations system, with the assistance of the Government (Ministry of the Interior and Local Authorities, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour, the Ministry of Women's Affairs and Women's Rights), civil society.

**The violence has restricted access to safe, recreational, and community-building spaces for people in Port-au-Prince.** It must be taken into account that these spaces did not exist in the most vulnerable areas of Port-au-Prince even before violence took over.

Similarly, migrants and displaced people are a type of population that is vulnerable to gangs, also because they have nowhere to go.

1. **There is a need to create or adapt spaces to invest in young people and children's relationships, community connections, and their perceptions of violence.** A very active player in this field is the Red Cross that has conducted several projects in alliance with France and Canada: aid to schools, the construction of sports infrastructure in Cité Soleil, social theatre initiatives, and discussions in common spaces.<sup>240</sup> These actions can be part of the lines of work on communication with the population, aimed at changing behaviors and attitudes about the normalization of violence. For example, one interviewee suggested cultural activities such as "theatre in the street", to develop young people's ability to understand the experiences of people affected by violence. This helps to change the existing prejudices around victims of violence, especially victims of sexual violence, often subject to re-victimization and discrimination by the community. In addition, these initiatives contribute to the creation of recreational spaces for the community and the reconstruction of the social fabric.

Responsible entity: the Government (Ministry of Culture and Communication, Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour, Ministry of Women's Affairs and Women's Rights), civil society.

2. **Safe shelters could be built for victims of violence and children who live or spend most of their time on the streets and the migrant/displaced population.** Spaces such as UNICEF-supported Rapha House can be supported adapted to the needs of those with no access to a safe space. In the medium and long term, the existence of shelters must be accompanied by

investments in infrastructure for social protection, including psychosocial care for victims of violence and the community at large and the behaviour change efforts previously mentioned.

Responsible entity: The United Nations system, with the assistance of the Government (entity in charge of housing and housing, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour, the Ministry of Women's Affairs and Women's Rights), Civil Society.

#### At the societal level

In order to implement an effective public security policy and ensure the proper functioning of judicial institutions, a structural government reform is essential. Without deputies and senators<sup>241</sup>, and local courts relocated due to violence<sup>242</sup>, any security legislation passed will have little or no impact. The democratic and sovereign institutions of the State must be established, to ensure the implementation of norms that prevent the increase in violence, and that ensure security in a broad sense of human security. Interviews with civil society reveal the urgency of recovering the government apparatus. In this regard, the Montana Accord is an example of an organized civil society group. It was created to demand the reorganization of elections and a political transition.<sup>243</sup>

Experts and international bodies such as the IACHR, as well as the civil society organizations that were part of the study, advised the organization of a national dialogue with all actors to ensure good governance of the country and protect communities from violence<sup>244</sup>. In this regard, all actors agree on the need for a political transition to resolve the crisis, because the reduction of violence must go through economic, political, social and cultural reforms. However, this transition is extremely limited by the rapid expansion of gangs, the appropriation of the economy and politics, and the difficulty to end this.

The key actions to be implemented include:

1. Rapid organization of elections
2. Strengthening the judicial system, including the use of the Criminal Code, the Code of Criminal Procedure and legislation for the protection of children.
3. The implementation of the country's development plan to address the structural causes of violence, including the rebuilding of the government, poverty reduction, access to basic services, among others.
4. Beyond the development plan, it is necessary to consider the framing of the social protection system, to identify people in vulnerable situations, to strengthen the offer of support to households in difficulty and to create a link between the supply and demand of social protection.
5. The fight against corruption.
6. Strengthening systems for monitoring and controlling the illegal flow of arms and drugs, including at seaports, border crossings and airports.
7. Strengthening the capacity to disarm gangs.
8. The need to invest in the country's productive sectors and regain food sovereignty, which includes the development of the tertiary sector around the primary and secondary sectors.
9. Development of adequate plans to address the country's natural and health disaster risks.

Responsible entity: The Government has the most important role, although the United Nations system can work in reinforcing the skills within the

<sup>240</sup> Red Cross. Preventing and Combating Violence in Haiti: Respect at the Heart of Autonomy, <https://www.croixrouge.ca/our-fields-of-action/international-activities/international-development/americas/haiti/prevention-and-combat-of-violence-in-haiti-respect-at-the-court-of-autonomy>, op. cit. Cit.

<sup>241</sup> The Point. The Human Rights Situation in Haiti, 10 April 2023, [https://www.lepoint.fr/monde/sans-president-deputes-ni-senateurs-la-democratie-se-meurt-en-haiti-10-01-2023-2504247\\_24.php](https://www.lepoint.fr/monde/sans-president-deputes-ni-senateurs-la-democratie-se-meurt-en-haiti-10-01-2023-2504247_24.php)

<sup>242</sup> Source: Interviews.

<sup>243</sup> CSIS. How to Break the Stalemate in Haiti, 30 juin 2022, <https://www.csis.org/analysis/how-break-stalemate-haiti>

<sup>244</sup> Relief Web. La situation of human rights in Haiti, 5 January 2023, <https://reliefweb.int/report/haiti/la-situation-des-droits-humains-en-haiti>

government to help set up the basis for a change that must take place in order to promote democratization processes. Regarding the social protection system, entities such as the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour (MAST), the Center for Analysis and Research in Social Sciences (CAS), the Economic and Social Assistance Fund (FAES), and the Office of Accident, Sickness and Maternity Insurance (OFATMA).

# Appendix

Rationale for recommendation: Point of entry - money transfer

Name of intervention or study and link	Brief description of the intervention or study	Level of impact and relationship to a decrease in violence.	Societal
<a href="#">Conditional Money transfers and Their effect on the crime rate in Brazil and Mexico</a>	The effects of two conditional transfer programs were studied: PROGRESA in Mexico and Bolsa Familia. These programs provide cash if households invest in human capital: medical check-ups, school attendance, vaccinations, etc., among others. Their positive impact is seen in increasing access to education and health.	Conditional money transfers have reduced crime at the municipal level in Mexico and Brazil. Not only because they reduce income inequality, but because they make it easier for beneficiaries to access services.  The more people received the transfer, the less likely it was to commit a crime at the municipal level. Investing in a conditional transfer program has led to reduced inequality, and fewer murders.	Economic opportunities to increase income
<a href="#">The Liberia Sustainable Youth Transformation Program (STYL)</a>	This is an eight-week (short-term) program for high-risk young people to reduce criminal and destructive behaviour.  Those who had received group therapy sessions themselves participated as instructors in another group. The program taught emotional control, peaceful conflict resolution, and recognition of violent behaviour.	The results of an impact evaluation showed that conductive cognitive therapy, combined with unconditional money transfer, may be most effective (even more so than without transference). The combination cost 530 USD per participant, averting 200 crimes and 2.50 USD less spending on crime.  The study considers that the program can be replicated in other contexts due to its low cost.	Response and support services
Interventions for the Support of People Exposed to Adverse Childhood Experiences <sup>245</sup>	Based on this review on several interventions, the evidence shows that conductive cognitive therapy for people exposed to abuse showed positive results.	Conductive cognitive therapy programs are often mentioned in the literature as effective strategies for long-term violence prevention.	Response and support services
"Équipe Nahual", El Salvador <sup>246</sup>	The agency organizes programs in human development, group therapy, communication groups, social reintegration and promotion motivation the street.	The success of this initiative is due to efforts to integrate young people into a "circle of reconciliation" with other young people, sharing sports activities, reflection on personal improvement and community development at the same time. The model may be useful for other regions in Latin America <sup>247</sup> .	Response and support services
I Can Problem Solve, États-Unis	This program, implemented in sessions focused on interpersonal problem solving, trained the children to develop their social-emotional skills.	In general, a review of interventions suggests that those focused on skill development are among the most effective in preventing youth violence and mitigating risk factors.  For example, I Can Problem Solve improved children's behaviour even 4 years after the intervention, especially for children living in poor urban areas.	Life Skills Training

<sup>245</sup> Interventions to support people exposed to adverse childhood experiences: systematic review of systematic reviews | BMC Public Health | Full Text (biomedcentral.com)

<sup>246</sup> <https://www.wola.org/analysis/atreviendose-a-querer-respuestas-comunitarias-a-la-violencia-pandillera-juvenil-en-america-central-y-central-american-immigrant-communities-in-the-united-states/>

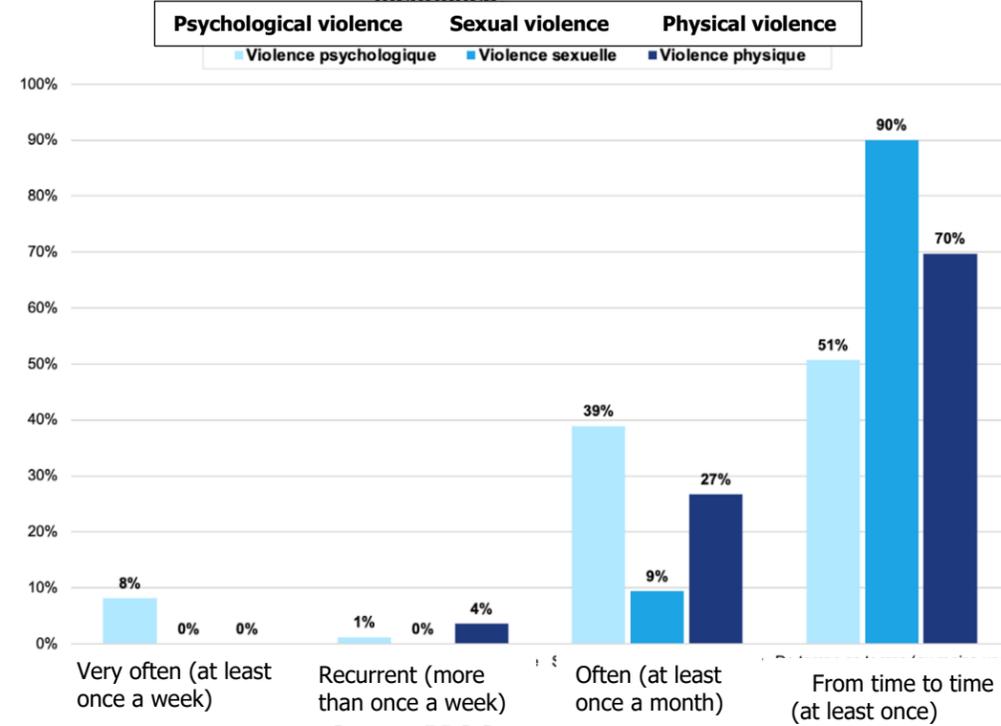
<sup>247</sup> WOLA p44 [https://www.wola.org/sites/default/files/downloadable/Citizen%20Security/past/Atreviendose\\_a\\_querer.pdf](https://www.wola.org/sites/default/files/downloadable/Citizen%20Security/past/Atreviendose_a_querer.pdf)

Table A. Excerpts from incidents of violence involving and impacting young people and children in Port-au-Prince

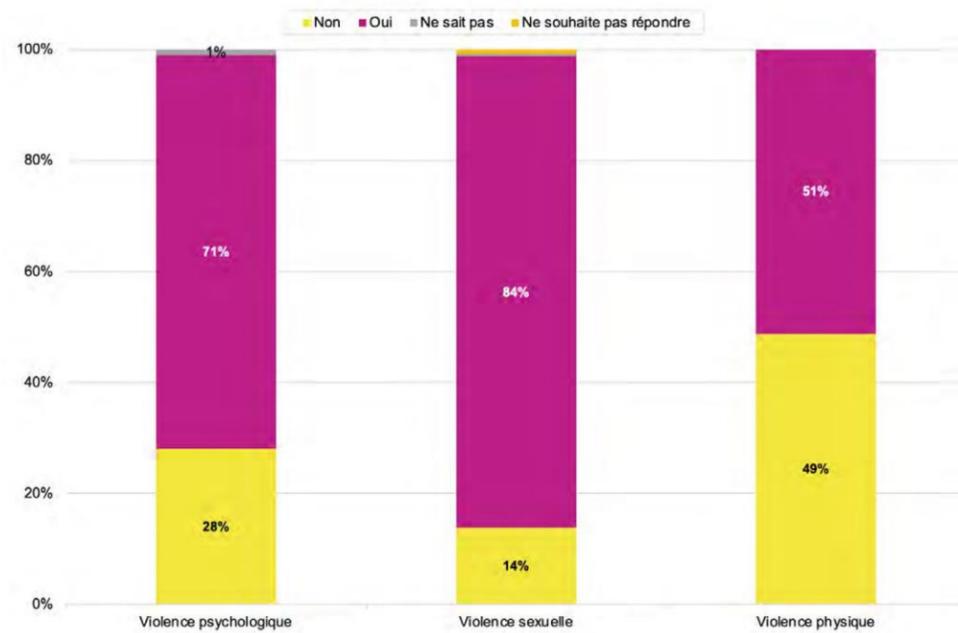
Attacks
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. According to the information gathered, around February 7, 2021, in Port-au-Prince, West, a young girl was kidnapped was killed. A few days after the kidnappers called the mother to demand a ransom, they called her to tell her that she could go looking for the child. Her body was found on a garbage pile in Martissant, naked and with a rope around her neck. 1 dead.</li> <li>2. On May 4, 2022, near Port-au-Prince - Tabarre, West, the leader of the Chien Méchant gang killed and burned the body of a man he accused of giving food to the rival gang 400 Mawozo gang during clashes between the two gangs. He also killed a teenager who happened to be in the victim's home. 2 dead.</li> </ol>
Kidnapping/forced disappearance
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. On July 10, 2022, in Port-au-Prince, West, armed teenagers kidnapped four people on Cameau and Capois streets. Among the victims was a woman who was forced out of her vehicle with her two children. The perpetrators also kidnapped another woman who was returning from the market and, shortly after, opened fire in the air. Although information about the perpetrators remains unknown, most kidnappings in the area are gang-related. The whereabouts of the victims are unknown.</li> <li>2. On December 3, 2020, in Croix-des-Bouquets, West, members of the 400 Mawozo gang kidnapped 12 schoolchildren in La Temblay. They were later released by the police.</li> </ol>
Peaceful demonstration
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. On November 4, 2020, in Delmas (West), citizens protested against kidnappings and insecurity by blocking the street with cars after the kidnapping of a schoolgirl. When her family was unable to pay the ransom, the girl was raped, beaten and killed, and then her body was dumped on a garbage pile. The girl's boyfriend, a gang member, is wanted as a suspect in the case.</li> <li>2. On February 14, 2022, in Port-au-Prince, West, students protested at the Champ de Mars to demand the teachers' presence in classrooms and demand a safe environment to start classes. A dozen teachers living in the towns of Carrefour and Croix-des-Bouquets stayed home for safety reasons.</li> </ol>
Sexual violence
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. On April 12, 2021, in Croix-des-Bouquets, about fifteen armed men broke into an orphanage, killed the caretaker and raped two young girls and an adult woman. They then vandalized the orphanage and took a sum of money. In this area, the 400 Mawozo Gang was active. However, it is unknown whether the perpetrators were members of this gang or prisoners who had recently escaped from a nearby prison. [Targeted women: girls]</li> <li>2. On July 8, 2022, in Port-au-Prince – Cité Soleil, West, gang members broke into homes and raped at least 22 women in separate attacks, including two attacks in which two male partners of two victims were killed. Gang members raped the women in front of their children and partners. Also in Cité Soleil, gang members stopped a bus and raped an unknown number of women, and killed an unknown number of men whose bodies were then burned. These attacks occurred as part of clashes between the G-9 and the G-Pep La Gang (coded separately). The number of unknown victims is coded to 3, including the two men killed.</li> </ol>

## Numbers on prevalence and perpetrators of violence against young people and children in Port-au-Prince

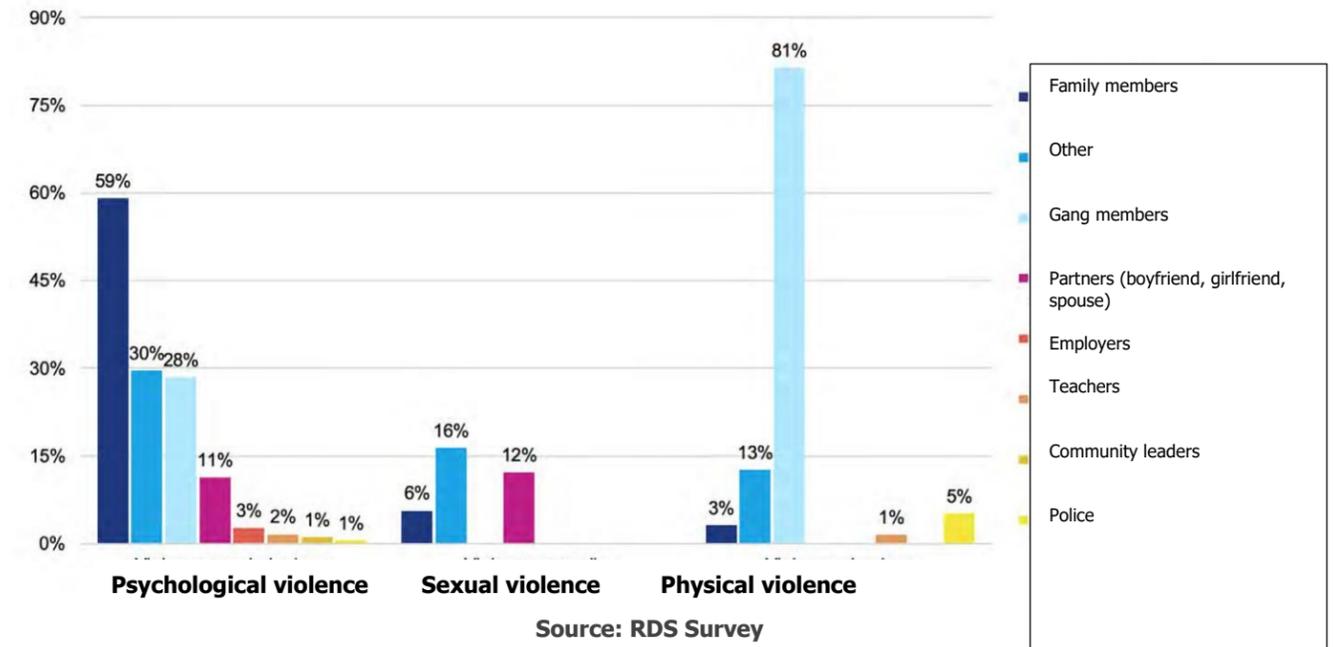
**Image A. Frequency of violence:**  
How many times have you experienced the type of violence mentioned?



**Image B. Percentage of child victims of physical, emotional and sexual abuse who experienced violence in the past 6 months**



**Image C. Perpetrators of violent acts**



**Image D. Answers to the question: Where have you experienced these acts:**

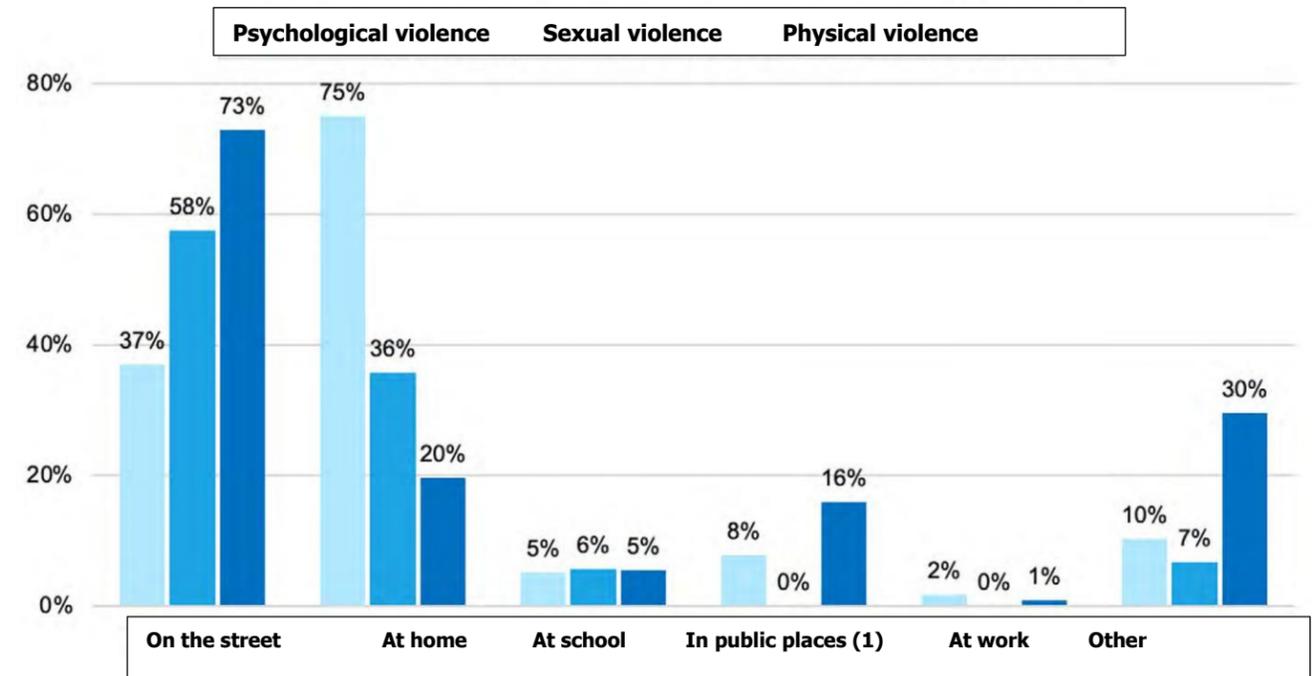
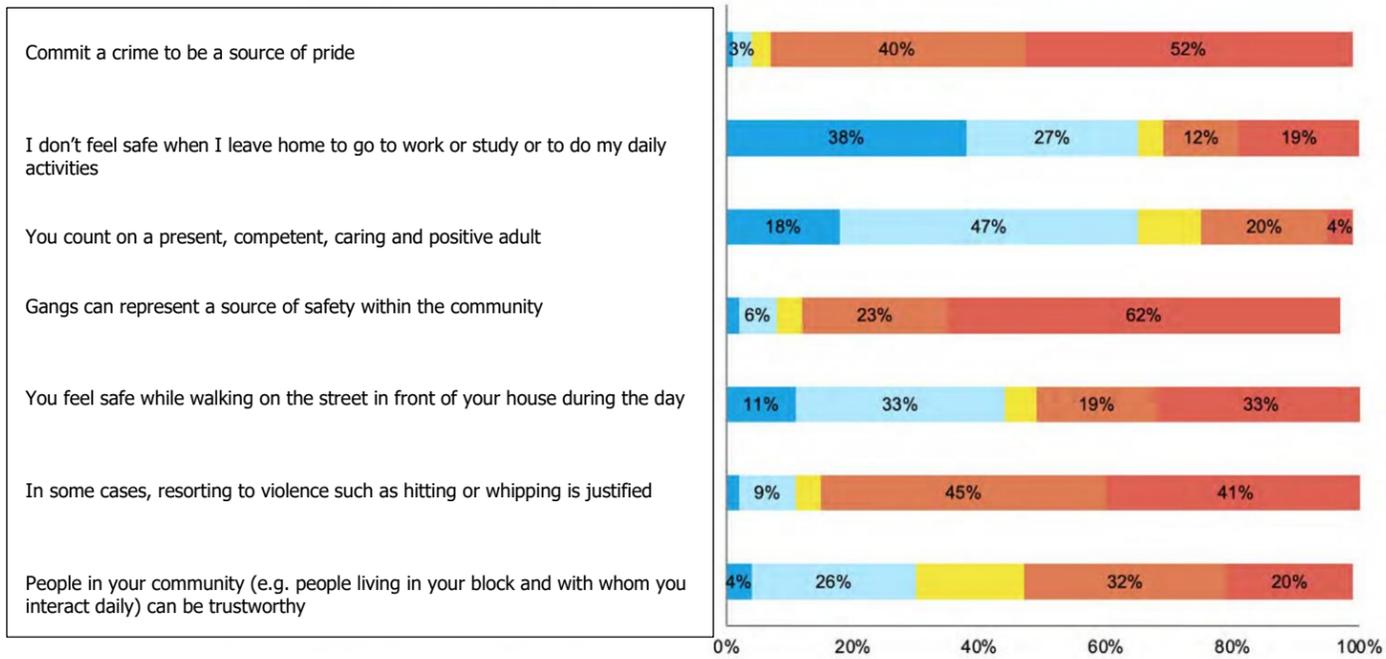
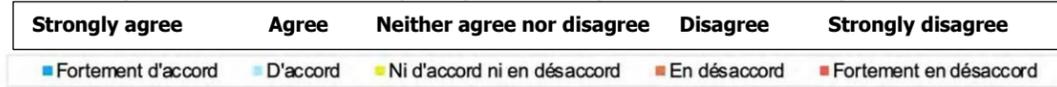


Image E. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?



Source: RDS Survey

Table B. List of actions taken to mitigate violence

N	Type of actor	Actor	Name of initiative	Date	Target population	Initiative objective and general description
1	International Government Actor	US Department of State	Transparency in Collusion Act, 2022 Criminal Crime in Haiti	October 2022	Haitian gang leaders and those who support their activities. Members of the political elites in collusion with criminal gangs.	<p>Democratic and Republican members of the U.S. Congress on Monday announced legislation to help Haiti deal with the humanitarian and security crisis that keeps getting worse, punishing members of the political elites deemed to be in collusion with criminal gangs.</p> <p>The Haiti Criminal Collusion Transparency Act of 2022, introduced in both the Senate and House of Representatives, required the U.S. State Department to investigate gang relations and elites, and report to Congress.</p> <p>It imposes sanctions for human rights violations and visa restrictions on both Haitian gang leaders and those who support their activities.</p> <p>On Saturday, U.S. and Canadian military planes delivered tactical and armored vehicles and other supplies to Haitian police to help them fight gangs.</p>

N	Type of actor	Actor	Name of initiative	Date	Target population	Initiative objective and general description
2	International government actor	US Department of State	The Rewards Program for the US Department of State's Transnational Organized Crime Narcotics Rewards Program.	November 2022	Three Haitians - Lanmò Sanjou, alias Joseph Wilson, Jermaine Stephenson, alias Gaspiyay, and Vitel'Homme Innocent - for conspiracy to participate or attempt to participate in transnational organized crime	US State Department offers rewards for information leading to arrest and/or conviction of three Haitian gang leaders.
3	Religious associations	Catholic schools, churches and other organizations	Call for national strike	April 2021	Religious associations of Haiti (Church and its members)	The church in Haiti has asked Catholic schools, religious schools, universities and other Catholic institutions to halt activities in April 2021. In recent years, protesters, including Catholic leaders, have called for an end to corruption and mismanagement and the destitution of President Moïse.
4	Government	Parliament with the support of the United Nations Security Council	Haitian National Police Reform Plan	2006	Members of the Haitian National Police	<p>Therefore, the broad outlines of this Plan for police reform are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Fiscal and administrative strengthening, and of the PNH, to ensure the sustainability of its budget and the effective management of its resources.</li> <li>1. The Updating of police infrastructure and equipment.</li> <li>2. Recruitment of approximately 1,250 officers per year to reach a force of 14,000 members by 2011, as well as the professional training of these officers.</li> <li>2. The review of all officers' files, and the dismissal of these accused of crimes.</li> <li>5. Supporting these institutional reforms by improving relations between the police, justice, Parliament and society.</li> </ol>
5	Government	Government of Haiti	The National Plan to Combat Violence Against Women (2017-2027)	January 2017	Women and young women of Haiti	<p>The National Plan intends to enable women and girls to enjoy their rights — the right to be protected and adequately supported—to emerge from the violence suffered and rebuild their life.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Strengthen the construction of a democratic rule of law in Haiti, through the fight for respect for the human rights of women and girls and, subsequently, through the development of a public response corresponding to the needs and diversity of situations.</li> <li>2. Strengthen prevention and multidisciplinary action regarding violence against women and girls, recognized as a problem of violation of human rights, public health and development.</li> <li>3. Raise awareness and inform populations about the consequences of violence against women and girls, in order to reduce social tolerance towards this violence.</li> </ol>
6	Government	Legislation	Law on Adoption	October 2013	Young population and women	In October 2013, the Haitian government adopted a law to regularize adoption. This new law focuses on the best interests of the child and aims to promote international adoption as a measure of last resort after considering all domestic options. This legal breakthrough is an essential step towards achieving the goal of better protecting vulnerable children and women by creating a policy environment favorable to human rights.

N	Type of actor	Actor	Name of initiative	Date	Target population	Initiative objective and general description
7	Government	Legislation	Law on Paternity, Maternity and Filiation, Republic of Haiti	June 2014	Young population and women	In June 2014, the government of Haiti adopted a new law: the law on responsible parenthood. With this law, Haiti sent a clear signal promoting the "protection of all children, without discrimination." An important implication of the law for parents is that children born in and out of wedlock should be afforded the same opportunities and rights (e.g. inheritance rights) – an important principle in a society with five forms of union.
8	Government	Legislation	Law against Human Trafficking in Haiti	June 2014	Young population and women	In June 2014, the government of Haiti adopted a new law against human trafficking. The main goal of this law was to minimize incentives for people to become human traffickers. The law establishes penalties for trafficking-related crimes, including prison terms of up to 15 years, and fines of more than US\$30,000. Before the adoption of this law, there was no provision in the Haitian legal framework that criminalized human trafficking.
9	Government and international organizations	The Government of the Republic of Haiti, the United Nations and the European Union	Spotlight Initiative	October 2020	In Haiti, more than one in three women report having suffered violence at the hands their partner or husband. Nearly 30% of women of childbearing age have experienced physical violence - in 45% of cases, from their intimate partner. Thirty-four percent of women in relationships are victims of domestic violence, and in 37% of cases, this violence caused serious injuries. Twelve percent of Haitian women have already experienced sexual violence, including a quarter of girls aged 15 to 17. Furthermore, 31% of women suffer or are exposed to several types of violence and controlling behavior, including excessive jealousy, limitation of contacts with the outside world or with their family, strict control of where they go.	<p>The Haiti Spotlight initiative will focus on ending domestic violence, rape, incest, sexual harassment, physical and psychological violence, and other restrictions on the freedoms and rights of women and young girls. It also aims to provide holistic aftercare to women and girls who are survivors of violence.</p> <p>In Haiti, more than one in three women report having suffered violence at the hands of their partner or husband.</p>

N	Type of actor	Actor	Name of initiative	Date	Target population	Initiative objective and general description
10	Government and civil society	The Commission for the Search for a Haitian Solution to the Crisis. The government with civil society organizations, Catholic and Protestant churches, organizations women and youth, unions, chambers of commerce, human rights groups, the media, and even many Haitian businesses and social elites.	Montana Agreement	Aug. 2021	Haitian people	<p>The Montana Accord generated a plausible transition formula to emerge from the crisis and become more relevant by establishing links with a coalition of political parties, the Protocol of National Understanding (PEN) - a coalition of some 70 political organizations and social groups. The agreement seeks to establish the following principles:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Respect for the sovereignty of the State as well as its republican form and its democratic and secular character;</li> <li>2. The rejection of violence as a means of political expression and the use of dialogue and consultation for the resolution of disputes;</li> <li>3. The principles of equality, freedom, dignity of the human person and the inalienable nature of fundamental rights and freedoms;</li> <li>4. The fight against corruption and impunity;</li> <li>5. Transparency and accountability.</li> </ol>
11	Regional integration mechanism	Delegation of the European Union	Statement against gang violence	Aug. 2022	Haitian Govt,	<p>The Delegation of the European Union and the embassies of Germany, Spain and France in Haiti expressed their constant dismay at the constant deterioration of the situation human rights in metropolitan area neighborhoods under the influence of armed gangs.</p> <p>The EU Delegation expresses a very serious concern about reports of acts of sexual violence. Among the victims, there are little teenage girls and boys who are subjected to gang rape.</p>
12	International civil society organization	Red Cross	Haiti en Scene	Undetermined	Young people and women	<p>The Red Cross's efforts to counter violence have mainly targeted young people and women through training, partnerships with local organizations and community activities in Port-au-Prince, Jacmel, Léogane and Nippes.</p> <p>The Haiti on Stage project is a good example of the approach which consists of equipping people so that they are able to find solutions themselves to prevent violence or protect themselves from it.</p>
13	International civil society organization	Save the Children	Reading is the Future Program Lekti se Lavni/ Lire c'est L'avenir program, an innovative Creole and French literacy program	41426	Children for educational programs Girls victims of SGBV	<p>Although Save the Children's work is primarily in the humanitarian field, its educational programs reinforce education as a strategy for achieving peace.</p> <p>The <i>Lire, c'est l'avenir</i> (Reading is the Future) program develops key reading skills and the basics of the language.</p> <p>The <i>C'est L'avenir</i> (It's the Future) program is based on the principle that children develop their reading skills more easily and quickly in their mother tongue. Our teams from the West department and Dessalines already support schools in using this approach.</p>

N	Type of actor	Actor	Name of initiative	Date	Target population	Initiative objective and general description
14	International civil society organization	Amnesty International	Local human rights campaign	June 2019, Aug. 2021	Govt. authorities of Haiti	<p>More than four reports encouraging respect for human rights in Haiti between September and May 2021.</p> <p>"On June 9 and 10, thousands of Haitians marched in Port-au-Prince against corruption and poverty, some calling for the resignation of President Jovenel Moïse.</p> <p>As reports emerge of excessive use of force by police and protests continue, we call on the President to guarantee the rights to freedom of expression and assembly, promptly investigate alleged violations human rights and bring those responsible to justice.</p> <p>On June 30, reporter Diego Charles and activist Antoinette Duclair were shot dead by unknown armed men in front of his home in Port-au-Prince. Both had previously been threatened and intimidated. A day after the murders, armed individuals fired shots in front of the two victims' homes in order to intimidate relatives and potential witnesses. We call on the authorities to immediately conduct an independent and impartial investigation in order to find and prosecute those responsible for the murders of Diego and Antoinette and the acts of intimidation against them, their families and witnesses."</p>
15	Local civil society organization	Rinaldi Foundation	"Trabajando hacia la Reducción de la Violencia" (Working for Violence Reduction)	September 2018	These rewards are offered as part of Transnational Organized Crime Rewards Program of the US Department of State, which, together with the Narcotics Rewards Program, has brought to justice more than 75 transnational criminals and major drug traffickers. The U.S. State Department has paid more than \$155 million in rewards under these programs for information leading to arrests and convictions.	<p>With support from the Community Violence Reduction Section of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), the Rinaldi Foundation launched a one-year program to help young adults aged 18 to 27 to gain professional experience and find a job.</p> <p>In partnership with Lakou and Lakay from Port-au-Prince, 90 young people at risk were selected to benefit from the program. The initial phase of the project placed beneficiaries in three-month internships in 43 different companies linked to the participants' previous studies. They benefited from the support of psychologists and support program staff during this period. Regular training was also offered on topics such as resume writing, job interviews, stress management, rights and duties in the workplace and ethics. Additionally, a two-module violence reduction program was introduced.</p>

N	Type of actor	Actor	Name of initiative	Date	Target population	Initiative objective and general description
16	Local civil society organization	The Asosyasyon Fanm Soley Dayiti (AFASDA) (Women's Sun Association of Haiti),	Actions to prevent violence against women, legal assistance and fight against gender-based violence	Unspecified	Victims of gender violence in Haiti	<p>AFASDA is involved in the fight against gender-based violence, particularly front-line defense (psycho-legal assistance, awareness-raising, etc.). To contribute to the reduction cases of gender violence, AFASDA makes a legal support for victims, offers temporary accommodation for safety needs. It organizes seminars and debates and public awareness activities.</p> <p>"Our team work with our partners contributes to the prevention of violence against women and girls and their social reintegration, by raising community awareness of the problem of violence against women and girls and that of the judicial and other key players on the difficulties encountered in caring for women victims of violence." It offers women victims of violence adequate support and helps them access the appropriate service.</p>
17	Government organization	Presidency of the Republic of Haiti	Official launch of sixteen (16) days of activism against violence against women.	November 2019	Haitian women	<p>The Head of State underlined his involvement and that of the First Lady of the Republic, Martine Moïse, in the fight against violence against women.</p> <p>Jovenel Moïse took the opportunity to condemn the acts of violence that women and girls have suffered in the country in general, particularly those who were incarcerated in the Gonaïves civil prison.</p> <p>"The political situation must in no way serve as an excuse for women and girls to be victims in the country," underlined, speaking to Vant Bèf Info (VBI), the Head of State who renewed the support of his administration in the fight against violence against women. He also asked victims to denounce their attackers and to maintain the "zero tolerance" principle against them.</p>
18	International organisation	United Nations	The UN Peacebuilding Fund (PBF)	Start in 2019	Emphasizes the role of women and youth in community-building efforts peace through their involvement and participation	<p>It is a fund set up by the United Nations to build peace, prevent violence, strengthen justice, consolidate the rule of law and security institutions, boost the resilience of Haiti's most vulnerable people and support the efforts of government to restore security and stability in the country.</p>
19	International organisation	United Nations	United Nations humanitarian assistance in Haiti	June 2022	Vulnerable residents of the commune of Cité Soleil as well as those in other neighborhoods of the capital, Port-au-Prince, received items such as hygiene products and baby supplies, plastic sheeting, water jerry cans, blankets, solar lamps and home repair items.	<p>United Nations humanitarian agencies have begun delivering aid directly to the people of Haiti, following a recent surge in violence between rival gangs that has fueled a deepening crisis in the capital, Port-au-Prince. Prince.</p>

N	Type of actor	Actor	Name of initiative	Date	Target population	Initiative objective and general description
20	International organization	WPH	Fonds Humanitaire pour la Paix des Femmes (Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund)	July 2022	The FHPF supports local women's organizations in Haiti to end violence against women and girls and protect human rights.	In Haiti, FHPF is mobilizing funding through its latest emergency appeal for local women's organizations responding to the converging crises of political, economic, and gang violence. The partnership between FMAP and the Spotlight Initiative currently channels programmatic and institutional funding to grassroots women's organizations working to end violence against women and promote human rights and gender equality in crisis and conflict contexts.
21	International organization	UNICEF	PROMESSE UNICEF	March 2022	This project will benefit around 150,000 students including around 69,000 girls and will also support targeted interventions to help at least 1,500 girls stay and progress in school.	The World Bank Board of Directors approved a grant of USD 90 million for additional financing of the "Promoting a More Equitable, Sustainable and Safer Education in Haiti" (PROMISE – in English) Project. The project will also support access to 126 non-public primary schools and improve their teaching and learning environment through the waiver of school fees through a results-based financing mechanism. Additionally, this donation will be used to improve infrastructure investment planning and upgrade permanent school infrastructure over the longer term to "build back better" with greater resilience to earthquakes and climate change. School infrastructure plans will include gender sensitivity and accessibility for people living with disabilities, the planting of trees in school spaces to encourage water infiltration, shading, and the use of water-saving and renewable energy technologies.
22	International organization	United Nations	United Nations Consolidation Fund Peace	2019	This fund particularly promotes the role of women and young people in peacebuilding work by allowing them to take a significant part in it.	The Fund has focused its financing on a certain number of priority objectives, including that of reducing community violence, for which he focused mainly on the development and promotion of the participation of populations, particularly young people, at the local level. Its action also consisted of promoting social cohesion as well as mental health, particularly for women and girls. The Fund also finances interventions intended to prevent political violence, particularly in electoral contexts, with emphasis on women' protection and empowerment.  Other priorities of the Fund include strengthening the judicial system through the provision of legal aid to vulnerable populations and strengthening coordination between judicial actors and the penal system.

N	Type of actor	Actor	Name of initiative	Date	Target population	Initiative objective and general description
23	International organization	United Nations	United Nations resolution to end violence in Haiti. Sanctions against powerful gang leader.	Octobre 2022	The sanctions resolution mentions only one Haitian, Jimmy "Barbecue" Cherizier, whose gang blockaded a critical fuel terminal, worsening severe shortages. Cherizier, a former police officer who leads a gang alliance known as the <i>Famille G9</i> and allies, will now be subject to a travel ban, asset freeze and to a weapons embargo.	At a special Security Council meeting held on October 17, the U.S. and Mexican delegations announced that they were drafting two resolutions to address insecurity in Haiti. The first, adopted unanimously at a second meeting four days later, provides for sanctions against gang leaders and their sponsors, including an asset freeze, a travel ban and an arms embargo.  Although these sanctions will not be imposed until early 2023, when a group of experts advising the Council determines who will be targeted (only gang leader Chérizier is included for now), the United States and Canada have already adopted their own sanctions against several of Haiti's most powerful politicians, including former president Michel Martelly, two former prime ministers and two senate presidents, as well as three high-profile members of Haiti's economic elite  On Friday, the UN Security Council unanimously adopted a resolution demanding an immediate end to violence and criminal activity in Haiti and imposing sanctions on individuals and groups who threaten peace and stability in the poorest nation in the Western Hemisphere - starting with a powerful gang leader.  The sanctions were the first authorized by the U.N.'s most powerful body since 2017 and the approval of the resolution by the 15-nation council, whose divisions were exacerbated by Russia's invasion of Ukraine, demonstrated a rare sign that council members can work together — at least on some global crises.  The resolution is an important first step by the Security Council to help Haitians who want action against criminals, including gangs and their financiers. A second resolution will help restore security and enable the delivery of desperately needed humanitarian aid to the country by authorizing "a non-UN international security assistance mission."
24	International organization	Millennium Development Goals Fund (F-OMD)	The joint program "Conflict prevention and social cohesion through the empowerment of local communities and the strengthening institutional capacities".	2009-2013	Community leaders from 10 particularly vulnerable communities in Haiti	In order to address the drivers of violence, the program is conducting a broad awareness campaign by providing community leaders with training on violence and conflict resolution, and helping to create socio-economic opportunities for the most vulnerable women, young people at risk and people with disabilities in order to improve their economic independence.  Through a strong partnership between five United Nations agencies and the United Nations peacekeeping mission, the joint program addressed the immediate causes of violence in ten communities particularly vulnerable to violence in Haiti by supporting strategies of violence prevention, thus providing a window of calm for recovery efforts and long-term development can take root.  To support these efforts at the local level and ensure a sustainable and comprehensive response to violence in Haiti, the program has also encouraged a more systematic integration of violence and crisis-related factors into development policies and other responses from the national government.  This was achieved by strengthening the skills of local and national institutions to collect and analyze data relating to violence and crises, with the aim of producing and sharing credible analyzes to improve the impact of programs and policies on the dynamics of violence, including from the national government.

N	Type of actor	Actor	Name of initiative	Date	Target population	Initiative objective and general description
25	International organization	UNICEF	Forum for adolescents and young people on employability	43709	150 participants including adolescents and young people from the 10 departments of the country as well as representatives of national and international associations and organizations gathered in Port-au-Prince to discuss professional training, leadership, entrepreneurship, technological and social innovations, among others.	The objective of this initiative is to realize the rights of these young people and to invest in their development, strengthening their participation in the life of the nation. Génération Sans Limites gathers public and private partners focusing on three priorities: 1) secondary education, 2) skills for learning, employability and decent work and 3) empowerment, especially for girls.
26	International organization	PNUD Haiti	Joint support program for the Haitian National Police	March 2022 - December 2024	Members, executives and officers of the Haitian National Police.	The general objective of the Joint Program is to accompany and support the PNH to address its priorities in terms of internal governance including control mechanisms, strengthening recruitment capacities, training and the institutionalization of a process of "vetting", operational intervention and intelligence capabilities including the fight against organized crime, this so that the Police can fully fulfill their role as a public service of maintaining order.  Hypothetically, this objective will improve if the following six specific objectives are achieved: Objective 1: The performance, good governance and compliance of the administrative and logistical management procedures of the PNH are improved, including internal mechanisms ensuring compliance. Objective 2: The properly trained PNH workforce is part of the gradual increase in the police/population ratio, with a better representation of women, based on strengthening recruitment and training capacities and the institutionalization of a "vetting" process (background checks of police personnel), to meet the needs of the different police services. Objective 3: The operational capacity of the police and the provision of basic services by the PNH is strengthened and accompanied by rehabilitation of police infrastructure and logistical resources. Objective 4: Capacities to fight organized crime are more effective. Objective 5: General and criminal intelligence services are strengthened, expanded and useful for all PNH operations. Objective 6: The skills and capacity of the PNH to fight gangs and control crowds are strengthened by supplying certain priority equipment.
27	International organization	United Nations Organization in Haiti	MINUSTAH - United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti	2004-2017	Haitian National Police, government administration	The seventh United Nations peace mission in Haiti.  Its mission: to create a safe and stable environment to allow the Haitian authorities to restore the authority of the State throughout the territory and to reestablish democracy and the rule of law. Since then, mandates adapted to changes in the situation have been renewed each year.  MINUSTAH pursued, mainly, four objectives: a secure and stable environment, political stability through the strengthening of democracy, including through electoral assistance, the development and professionalization of the Haitian National Police and the restoration and maintenance of the rule of law, also through the promotion and protection of Human Rights.

N	Type of actor	Actor	Name of initiative	Date	Target population	Initiative objective and general description
28	International organization	United Nations Organization in Haiti	MINUJUSTH	2017-2019	Haitian National Police, government administration	MINUJUSTH supported the Government of Haiti to further develop the Haitian National Police (PNH), strengthen rule of law institutions, including justice and prisons, and promote and protect human rights - all with the aim of improving the daily lives of the Haitian people.  The mandate of the United Nations Mission to Support Justice in Haiti (MINUJUSTH) is defined in Security Council resolution 2350 (2017), which was adopted on April 13, 2017. It provides for the creation of a peacekeeping mission in Haiti which will begin its operations at the end of the mandate of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH). The Mission was made up of 351 civilian personnel, up to seven formed police units (FPUs) (consisting of 980 FPU personnel) and 295 individual police officers (IPOs), for an initial period of six months, from October 16, 2017, to April 15, 2018.
29	International organization	Organization United Nations Organization in Haiti	The United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti (BINUH)	Since June 2019	Haitian National Police, government administration	The United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti (BINUH) is a special political mission created by the Security Council in its resolution 2476 of June 25, 2019, and deployed under Chapter VI of the United Nations Charter. Present only in Port-au-Prince, and focusing exclusively on the provision of consultancy and good offices services, BINUH works primarily with state institutions to:  -Strengthen political stability and good governance, including the rule of law; -Promote a peaceful and stable environment, in particular by supporting an inclusive inter-Haitian national dialogue; protect and promote human rights. -The mission's activities, which aim to help create the conditions necessary for sustainable development, are integrated with those of the 19 agencies, funds and programs of the United Nations country team, which provide humanitarian aid and implement development programs under the direction of national authorities.
30	International organization	Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR)	Resolution on the protection of Haitian people in human mobility	November 2021	Member States of the IACHR	The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) presents the resolution "Protection of Haitian persons in human mobility: inter-American solidarity", with the aim of guiding the States of the region to guarantee the rights of Haitian migrants, refugees, displaced persons, stateless persons and victims of human trafficking; pursuant to international obligations of humanitarian assistance, protection, cooperation and international solidarity.  The document details the humanitarian crisis and the context of violence which affects the lives of millions of Haitians, as well as the challenges concerning the security of citizens.
31	International organization	United Nations	UN call for international solidarity through a specialized armed force in Haiti	December 2022	Gangs	United Nations Deputy Secretary-General Amina Mohammed has called for international solidarity and support as the country continues to face gang violence, political instability and a deadly cholera outbreak.  "I urge all countries with the capacity to urgently consider the Haitian government's request to send a specialized international armed force to help restore security and alleviate the humanitarian crisis".
32	International organization	United Nations	Regime of Sanctions	October 2022	Gang leaders and those financing them	The United Nations Security Council unanimously approved a sanctions regime for Haiti, targeting gang leaders and those financing them, in order to alleviate the violence and lawlessness that have fueled a major humanitarian crisis.

N	Type of actor	Actor	Name of initiative	Date	Target population	Initiative objective and general description
33	International organization	United States Agency for International Development (USAID)	Health Policy Project)	2010-2016	Children, women and sexual minorities	The Health Policy Project's (HPP) AKSE "Collective Action for Safety from Exploitation" project responded to the increasing vulnerability of children, women and sexual minorities to sexual and gender-based violence, trafficking, sexual exploitation, child labor and domestic violence. Building on a previous program funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the 18-month HPP AKSE program works with local partners to strengthen human rights protections and expand access to child protection and SGBV services for vulnerable groups. The program : 1) Improves child protection 2) Strengthens gender-related rights and improves monitoring and response to SGBV. 3) Promotes a political environment favorable to child protection, gender equality and other human rights.
34	International organization	International organization of the Francophonie (OIF)	Condemnation of gang violence in Haiti and call for solidarity action from the international community	October 2022	United Nations Member States	At the Security Council urgent meeting to examine the proposals of the Secretary General of the United Nations for an international intervention in Haiti, the OIF shared the concerns of the Secretary General regarding the deterioration of human security in Haiti. While the country is already faced with a juxtaposition of political, economic and security crises, accentuated by a dramatic humanitarian situation, La Francophonie has expressed its solidarity with the options and initiatives of its partners and is committed to continuing advocacy so that the fight against gangs is a priority.
35	International civil society organization	Latin American Campaign for the Right to education (CLADE), in alliance with Alternatives (Canada) and in the countries with Dakar Forum Honduras, Rally for all of Haiti	Project "Strategies to prevent sexual and gender-based violence and promote equity in rural schools".	2021-2023	Children and girls in rural schools in Haiti	This project aims to contribute to strengthening gender equality and preventing and combating gender-based violence in rural schools. To this end, it generates and disseminates empirical data and strategies that can guide the treatment and prevention of violence in educational spaces, contributing to the development and dissemination of materials, practices and public policies that address that question.  Using a participatory action research approach, the project aims to develop local knowledge and capacity to identify and prevent multiple expressions of violence and gender-based violence, as well as to design and adapt tools and existing instruments, thus helping to integrate this issue into local practices, but also in national and regional policy instruments.
36	International NGO	ACTED (Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development)	Humanitarian assistance and support mission to local civil society organizations	2021	Communities present in the areas most affected by the crisis	ACTED focuses on three axes: strengthening organizational capacities, support in the implementation of feminist micro-projects and strengthening the skills of CSOs. Present in Haiti since 2004, ACTED has intervened simultaneously in emergency, recovery and development. Interventions are concentrated in the areas most affected by the recent crisis: Grand'Anse, departments of South, South-East, Nippes, Center and West. ACTED works in partnership with REACH D' IMPACT initiative, international organizations and civil society organizations.
37	Non-Governmental Organization (NGO)	AVSI Foundation. It has an agreement with DINEPA, the water management authority, and with the Ministry of Health for nutritional projects. We collaborate with Unicef, WFP, MAECI, EU, IDB.	Socio-educational, human rights, food security and training projects	Since the establishment of the NGO in the country in 1999	Communities in situations of vulnerability, notably Cité Soleil and Martissant	AVSI works on the island with socio-educational, human rights, food security and training projects.  In Port-au-Prince, AVSI focuses its work in two poor communities, Cité Soleil and Martissant, where, thanks to the distance support project, more than 1,000 children can go to school, eat and have places to play and learn.

N	Type of actor	Actor	Name of Initiative	Date	Target population	Objective and general description of the initiative
38	International Governmental Organization	US Department of State	Actions to address the humanitarian and security situation in Haiti	October 2022	Haitian National Police; Haitian officials and others involved in the actions of urban gangs and Other Haitian criminal organizations that have threatened livelihoods of the Haitian people and are blocking life-saving humanitarian aid	The initiative aims to increase and mobilize assistance to the Haitian National Police in order to strengthen its capacity to fight gangs and restore an environment of stable safety in a context of rule of law.  A new visa restriction policy has been announced, under the Immigration and Nationality Act, against Haitian officials and others involved in the actions of urban gangs and other Haitian criminal organizations that have threatened livelihoods of the Haitian people and are blocking life-saving humanitarian aid. These actions could also apply to the immediate family members of these individuals."
39	Private sector	Haitian Federation of Small and Medium Enterprises (FHAPME)	Call for urgent intervention by the State to exercise its regulatory function	December 2022	The Govt. of Haiti	The Haitian Federation of Small and Medium Enterprises (FHAPME) has denounced the situation of the Haitian population and the business sector, due to the power of armed gangs. As violence hampers the functioning of the economic system, the federation has appealed to the authorities to take urgent measures to stop its escalation.  The federation highlighted the struggles between gangs, the attacks perpetrated against police stations and passengers on the roads mainly in the north of the country as well as at the southern entrance of the capital to explain the genesis of this descent into hell, including the assassination of several businessmen creating a situation of complete panic in this sector.
40	Government	The Govt. of Haiti	Haiti's Strategic Development Plan	May 2012	Public Administration, State Institutions	The Strategic Development Plan for Haiti (PSDH) proposes development orientations and strategies, and details the content of the Major Projects for the Recovery and Development of Haiti outlined in the Action Plan for the Recovery and Development of Haiti (PARDH) to make it an emerging country by 2030.  The four top projects of the PSDH are: the Territorial, Economic, Social and Institutional Refoundation which has 32 program for development, with its own sub-program and projects. The monitoring system is on trial because the government is already working on setting up a single information system on development management and evaluation, which will allow, inter alia, the monitoring of actions undertaken and a progress evaluation.

Table C. RDS Survey (French version)

**Introduction**

**My name is [NAME] and I work for Data Pop-Alliance. It is a foundation involved in a project with UNICEF. I am contacting you because we are conducting a survey on violence involving young people and children in Port-au-Prince.**

**We are contacting you to assess your eligibility and interest in participating in the study. Is this a good time to talk?**

No

Yes

**Could you tell me what**

**is your availability so I can call you back at**

**another time?**

**[INTERVIEWER]: Record the date and time listed in the survey tracking sheet. Thank you. We will contact you again on the date and time indicated.**

**ELIGIBILITY**

**Excellent. Thank you for your interest in this study. Let's start with some questions that will help us determine whether**

**you are eligible to participate in the survey.**

Do you live in one of these municipalities?

- Carrefour
- Cité Soleil
- Delmas
- Croix-des-Bouquets
- Pétion-Ville
- Port-au-Prince
- Tabarre Kenscoff
- No
- Don't know
- Prefer not to answer

**How old are you?**

**Have you ever been a victim of psychological, physical or sexual violence by members of an organized criminal group (gang) in the Port-au-Prince metropolitan area?**

- No
- Yes

**Have you ever participated in this telephone survey?**

- No
- Yes

**Thank you! You can participate in this study. I will explain the study and ask for your consent. If, at any time during the survey, you may refuse to answer a question or permanently stop the interview if you wish so.**

**If you want to end the survey because you think your safety may be affected, you can say the word [select word]. In this case, we will ask you a general question about access to education or employment and complete the survey.**

**No personal information will be disclosed to anyone outside of the survey team and your name will not be used in any report. Your personal information and responses will be stored in two encrypted and secure databases. Therefore, no one will have access to your personal data or will be able to link**

**the questionnaire responses to your contact information, which will be deleted at the end of the study.**

**Do you agree to participate in the survey?**

- No
- Yes

**I would like to start by asking you a few questions about your circle of friends. Please take the time to reflect and answer the following questions as accurately as possible.**

**How many of the people do you know who live in Port-au-Prince and have been affected by gang violence? (knowing means that you know their names and they know yours.)**

**How many of these people are between the ages of 15 and 24?**

**And how many of these people have you been in contact with by phone or in person in the past two weeks?**

**Socio-demographic characteristics**

**In this first section, I would like to ask you a few questions about your personal situation.**

What is your gender identity?

- Male
- Female
- Different identity
- Don't Know
- Prefer not to answer

**Are you having trouble with the following?**

- Hearing
- Seeing
- Walking or climbing stairs
- Remembering or concentrating
- Communicating, for example, understanding or be understood using your usual language ( )
- None
- Other
- Don't know

Prefer not to answer

**Please specify**

**Are you enrolled in the 2022-2023 school year?**

- Yes
- No
- Don't know
- Prefer not to answer

**What was the main reason for not going to school or for dropping out of school?**

- Graduated
- Economic reasons (e.g. I couldn't afford it, I needed to make money to support my family)
- Failed exams
- Wanted to start working
- To get married
- Pregnancy
- My parents didn't want me to continue my education
- Lack of transport infrastructure
- School closed
- Too dangerous
- Health status or disability
- No school available
- No quality schools available
- Other
- Don't know
- Prefer not to answer

**Please specify**

**What is your current level of education? And if you're no longer studying, what was the last year of study you completed?**

- No schooling / never completed any year
- Preschool
- Primary
- Secondary
- Vocational or technical education
- University

- Other
- Don't know
- Prefer not to answer

**Please specify**

**Have you ever worked or done remunerated activities?**

**The payment could have been money, food, gifts, or other means in the formal or informal sector**

- Yes
- No
- Don't know
- Prefer not to answer

**Was this work related to domestic services?**

- Yes
- No
- Don't know
- Prefer not to answer

**At what age did you start working or doing paid activities?**

- 5 to 10 years
- 11 to 14 years old
- 15 to 18 years old
- After 18 years old
- Don't know
- Prefer not to answer

**When you were a child, did you think the household had enough money for : Food ?**

- Yes
- No
- Don't know
- Prefer not to answer

**Clothes?**

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Prefer not to answer

Tuition fees

Yes

No

Don't know

Prefer not to answer

**Medical care**

Yes

No

Don't know

Prefer not to answer

**VIOLENCE**

**This section of the survey will address issues on the types of violence you may have been exposed to. By violence, I mean "the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against you, that results in or has a high probability of causing injury, death, psychological damage, poor development or deprivation" if, At any time, you feel uncomfortable or unsafe answering these questions, you can say the word [word to choose] out loud and we will end the survey.**

**In the past 6 months, have you experienced physical violence by known or unknown individuals, including but not limited to being hit with an object, threatened with a knife or firearm, intentional burns?**

Yes

No

Don't know

Prefer not to answer

How many times have you experienced the type of violence mentioned above?

Never

From time to time (at least once)

Often (at least once a month)

Very often (at least once a week)

Recurrent (more than once a week)

Don't know

Prefer not to answer

**The persons who committed the violent act were:**

Gang Members

Police

Military Personnel

Employers

Community Leaders Religious

Leaders Teachers

Family members

Partners (boyfriend, partner or spouse)

Other

Don't know

Prefer not to answer

**Please specify**

**Where have you experienced such actions?**

On the street

At home

At school

In public places, e.g. parks, restaurants, public markets, etc.

At work

Other

Don't know

Prefer not to answer

**Please specify**

**In the past 6 months, have you experienced emotional abuse by known or unknown individuals, including but not limited to humiliation, insults, verbal abuse such as being told by parents or guardians that one wishes one was dead or never born, neglect, exploitation?**

Yes

No

Don't know

Prefer not to answer

**How many times have you experienced this type of violence mentioned?**

Never

From time to time (at least once)

Often (at least once a month)

Very often (at least once a week)

Recurrent (more than once a week)

Don't know

Prefer not to answer

**The persons who committed the violent act were:**

Gang members

Police

Military personnel

Employers

Community leaders

Religious leaders

Teachers

Family members

Partners (boyfriend, partner or spouse)

Other

Don't know

Prefer not to answer

**Please specify**

**Where have you experienced such actions?**

On the street

At home

At school

In public places, e.g. parks, restaurants, public markets, etc.

At work

Other

Don't know

Prefer not to answer

**Please specify**

**In the past 6 months, have you experienced sexual violence, including, but not limited to, "any sexual act, attempt to obtain a sexual act, unsolicited sexual comments or advances"**

**or acts aimed at tampering with or otherwise directed against your sexuality using coercion, by any person through their relationship with you, in any context."?**

Yes

No

Don't know

Prefer not to answer

**How many times have you experienced this type of violence?**

Never

From time to time (at least once)

Often (at least once a month)

Very often (at least once a week)

Recurrent (more than once a week)

Don't know

Prefer not to answer

**The persons who committed the violent act were:**

Gang members

Police

Military personnel

Employers

Community leaders

Religious leaders

Teachers

Family members

Partners (boyfriend, partner or spouse)

Other

Don't know

Prefer not to answer

**Please specify**

**Where have you experienced these actions?**

On the street

At home

At school

In public places, e.g. parks, restaurants, public markets, etc.

At work

Other  
Don't know  
Prefer not to answer

**Please specify**

**Indicate how often do the following actions occur in your neighborhood?**

**Either (never, hardly never, sometimes, a lot, almost always)**

**And how much does it bother you? Or (not at all, hardly at all, a little, a lot, strongly)**

Hearing about someone who got killed  
Someone pulls a knife at you

**Seeing someone get shot**

Hearing gunshots  
Hearing that someone has been stabbed  
Hearing that someone has been raped  
Hearing that someone has been kidnapped

**In your opinion, which municipalities are the most dangerous for children and young people between the ages of 11 and 24?**

Carrefour  
Cité Soleil  
Delmas  
Croix-des-Bouquets  
Pétion-Ville  
Port-au-Prince  
Tabarre  
Kenscoff  
Don't know  
Prefer not to answer

**Have you tried to access social services, including but not limited to medical assistance, psychological help, assistance from your family's police or a loved one for the most recent incidents of violence experienced**

**or that you have witnessed, if any?**

Yes  
No  
Don't know  
Prefer not to answer

**What was the first place or person you went to ask for help? (Select all that apply)**

Traditional spiritual/healer  
Police  
Church  
Legal Aid Center  
Family members  
Close friends  
Community leader  
Gang members  
Hospital or clinic  
Country judge  
NGO  
Other  
Don't know  
Prefer not to answer

**How have these services helped you?**

Helped me a lot  
A little help  
No help  
Don't know  
Prefer not to answer

**If you haven't sought services, what was the reason(s)?**

Fear of getting into trouble  
Embarrassed for myself or my family  
Didn't want the abuser to get in trouble  
Services were too far away  
Fear of being abandoned  
Didn't think it was a problem  
Couldn't afford transportation  
Couldn't pay the service fee

Didn't want to/didn't need services  
No one to help me  
Other  
Don't know  
Prefer not to answer

**How many of your family members, friends or people close to you have joined street gangs?**

0  
1  
Between 1 and 5 people  
More than 5 people  
Don't know  
Prefer not to answer

**How old were they when they joined the street gang?**

5 to 10 years old  
11 to 14 years old  
15 to 18 years old  
After 18 years old  
Don't know  
Prefer not to answer

**Do you know someone who joined and left a gang?**

Yes  
No  
Don't know  
Prefer not to answer  
How did this person(s) leave the gang?  
(Please rank the choices from most relevant to least relevant)  
They were arrested  
They got a job  
They went to school  
They joined an NGO  
They went abroad  
They moved to another neighborhood or city in Haiti

Other  
Don't know  
Prefer not to answer  
Please specify

**What do you think are the main reasons why young people get involved in street gangs?**

They see gang members as role models  
Friendship  
To run away from house  
Vengeance  
To have economic resources  
To be respected  
They were forced  
For protection  
To create political changes  
Other  
Prefer not to answer  
Please specify

**Which of these factors do you think can or contribute to mitigating violence?**

Food aid  
Housing aid  
Training assistance  
Employment assistance  
Money transfers  
Immigration  
Family support

**Social connections**

**Police**

**Justice**

**Other**

**Don't know**

**Prefer not to answer**

**Please specify**

**Affirmations:**

**Please tell me if you strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree or strongly disagree with the following statements:**

People in your community (i.e., people who live in your/block and who you/you interact with on a daily basis) are trustworthy.

In some cases, the use of violence, such as beatings and whippings, is justified.

You feel safe walking down the street in front of your house during the day.

Gangs can provide safety in the community.

You rely on a competent, caring and positive adult who is present.

I feel unsafe when I leave my house to go to work, school, or to do my daily activities.

Committing a crime can be a source of pride.

**RECRUITMENT**

We've reached the end of the survey! Thank you very much for answering our questions. Finally, let me tell you about the possibility of recommending 3 other people to participate in the study. People you would refer will be informed that the survey is anonymous and confidential. Under no circumstances will they have access to the answers you have provided. Are you willing to recommend three people?

No

Yes

Thank you! I will explain to you the criteria for selecting the people in your network who have the most appropriate profile to participate in the study. Please take the time to think carefully

**Before making the three recommendations. These people must:**

1- Be between 15 and 24 years old

2- Live in Port-au-Prince

3- Have been impacted by gang violence or on the streets in Port-au-Prince

What is the name of the first person you recommend?

What is his/her phone number?

What is the name of the second person you recommend?

What is his/her phone number?

What is the name of the third person you recommend?

What is his/her phone number?

Thank you. It would be very helpful if you could reach out to these three people and encourage them to participate in the study. We will contact them soon.

**END**

INTERVIEWER: Has the interviewee completed the survey?

No

Yes

INTERVIEWER: Why did the participant not want to complete the survey?

Not enough time

Too many questions

It wasn't interesting

Don't trust the interview

Don't want to answer

Other

Please specify

Thank you for filling out this survey! You have obtained a cell phone credit of 300 HTG which you can use to buy data or minutes. We can send you the phone credits

through one of the telephone carriers: Digicel or Natcom. If your own phone number is not registered with one of them, we suggest choosing the number of a family member or friend. What is the carrier associated with the phone number you want the phone credit sent to?

Digicel

Natcom

What is your phone number?

The credit will reach your mobile number in approximately 40 hours. Thank you for your time. The survey is over. If you need additional resources, you can visit the UNICEF Haiti website.

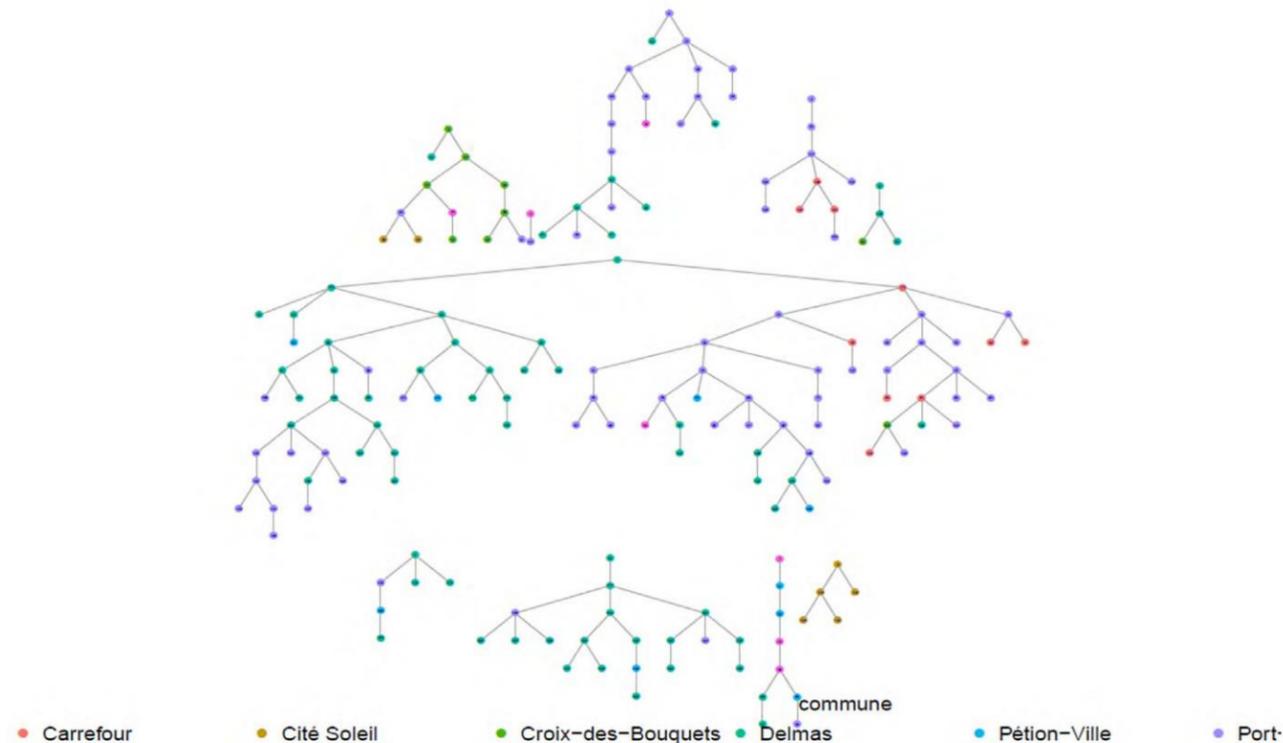
**PLEASE PRESS 'SEND' BELOW AND FILL IN YOUR STATUS AND DATE IN THE TRACKING SHEET.**

## Diagnosis of the convergence of the RDS survey

During sampling and due to small sample size, various key sociodemographic variables were assumed to be potentially biased. The two diagnostic sociodemographic variables examined were municipality and sex. Images 1 and 2 are graphs of selection by municipality and gender. Overall, the sample had a maximum of ten waves from ten seeds. Several seeds that did not select anyone were eliminated from the final sample because these participants are not part of the statistical process required for the analysis.

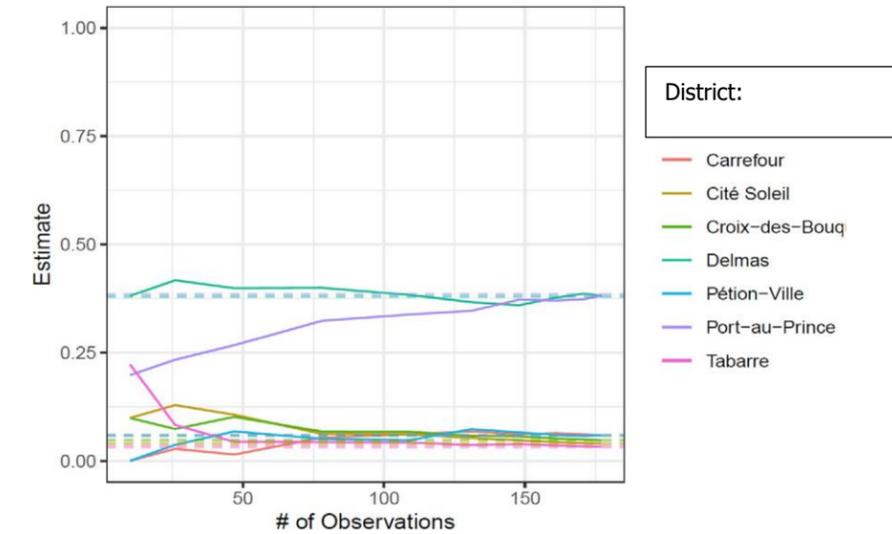
By municipality, homophily is high ( $>2$ ) in Cité Soleil, Croix-des-Bouquets and Delmas, indicating non-random recruitment. In the municipality recruitment chain, seven of the eight municipalities in the sampling area were included in the final sample (Image F). Each of the seven municipalities is highlighted in the form of nodes of a different colour. The purpose of this graph is to see that each of the different colors, representing different municipalities, appears within each chain. A small chain is made up only of those of Cité Soleil and the other chains represent only two municipalities. This likely leads to bottlenecks that can cause bias in the study.

Image F. Recruitment tree by municipality



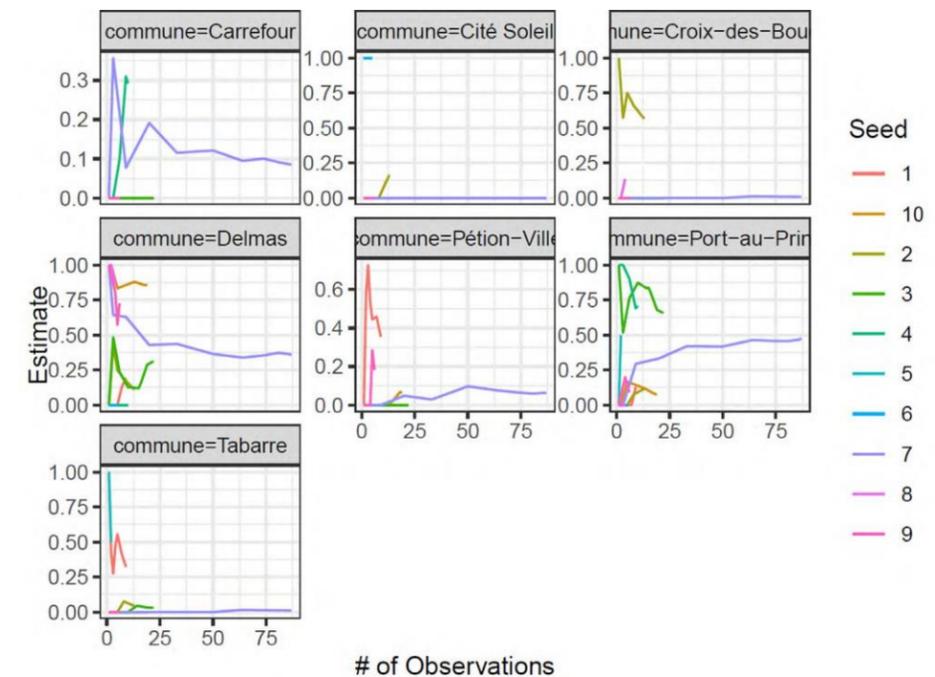
In the convergence diagram (Image G), the dashed horizontal lines represent the final weighted estimates for each municipality and the solid horizontal lines represent the estimates as they progress through recruitment. The goal is for the solid line to rest on the dotted line before the final sample is reached. This indicates that the final estimates are not biased by the initial seeds selected non-randomly. The largest proportion of the sample was from Port-au-Prince and Delmas. However, there was no convergence for Port-au-Prince. It is best to be cautious when interpreting the results linked by municipality.

Image G. Convergence by municipality



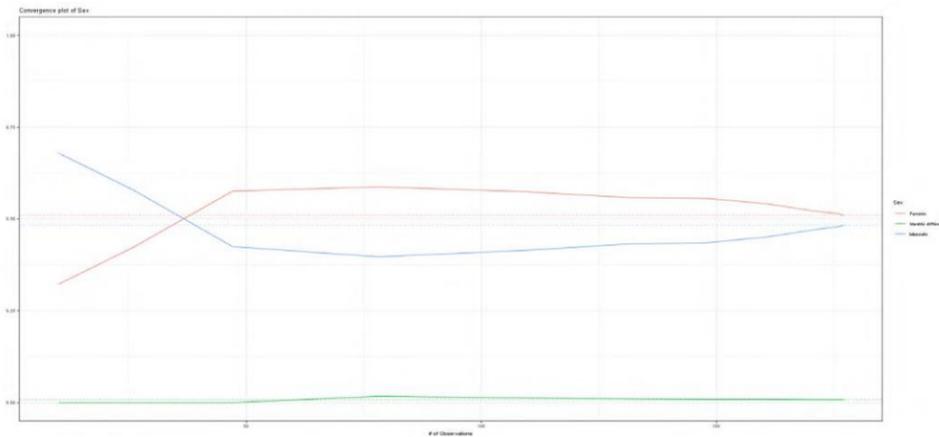
Bottleneck diagrams are difficult to interpret given the number of categories and the large number of short strings in this variable (Image H). The goal is to see the colored horizontal lines move in the same direction towards the point of the estimate for each municipality. Most of these plots have chains that are too short to show the existence of bottlenecks.

Image H. Bottleneck by municipality



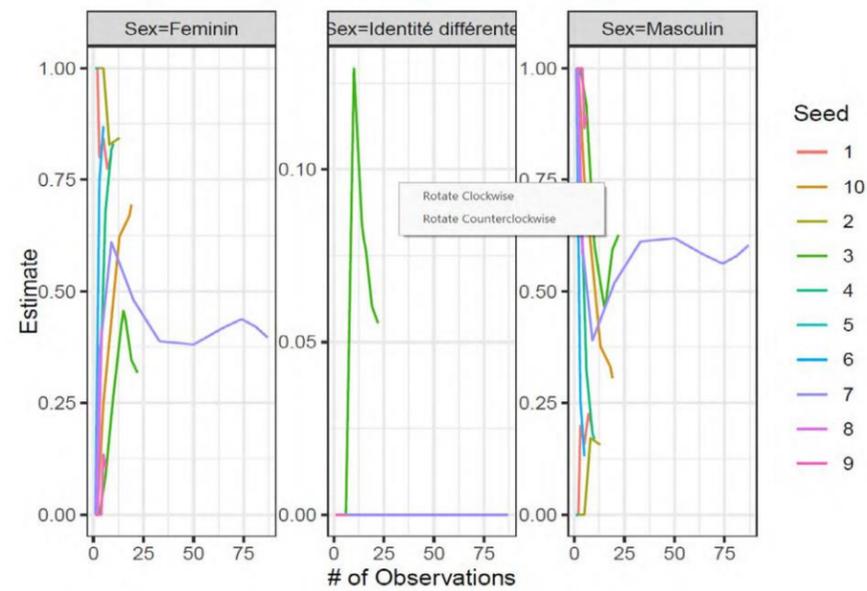
By gender, there is a certain homophily between women (1.5) and men (1.6). The selection chain by gender shows a good mix within each of the recruitment chains. One person identified with a gender different from male to male and female (Image I).

**Image I. Gender convergence diagram.**



The gender convergence plot shows that convergence has not been achieved (Image 6), indicating that age-related variables should be interpreted with caution. With a homophily of 1.5 and above and a lack of convergence, it can be assumed that there are bottlenecks in the sample (Image J). The longest chain seems to move towards the level of the final estimate. However, the number of short strings makes it difficult to interpret this graph.

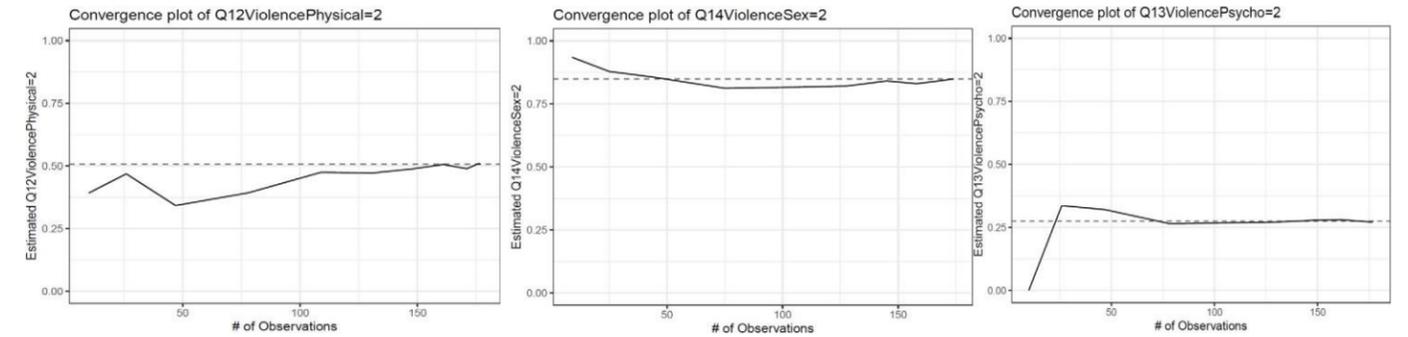
**Image J. Diagram of bottlenecks by gender**



**By violence type**

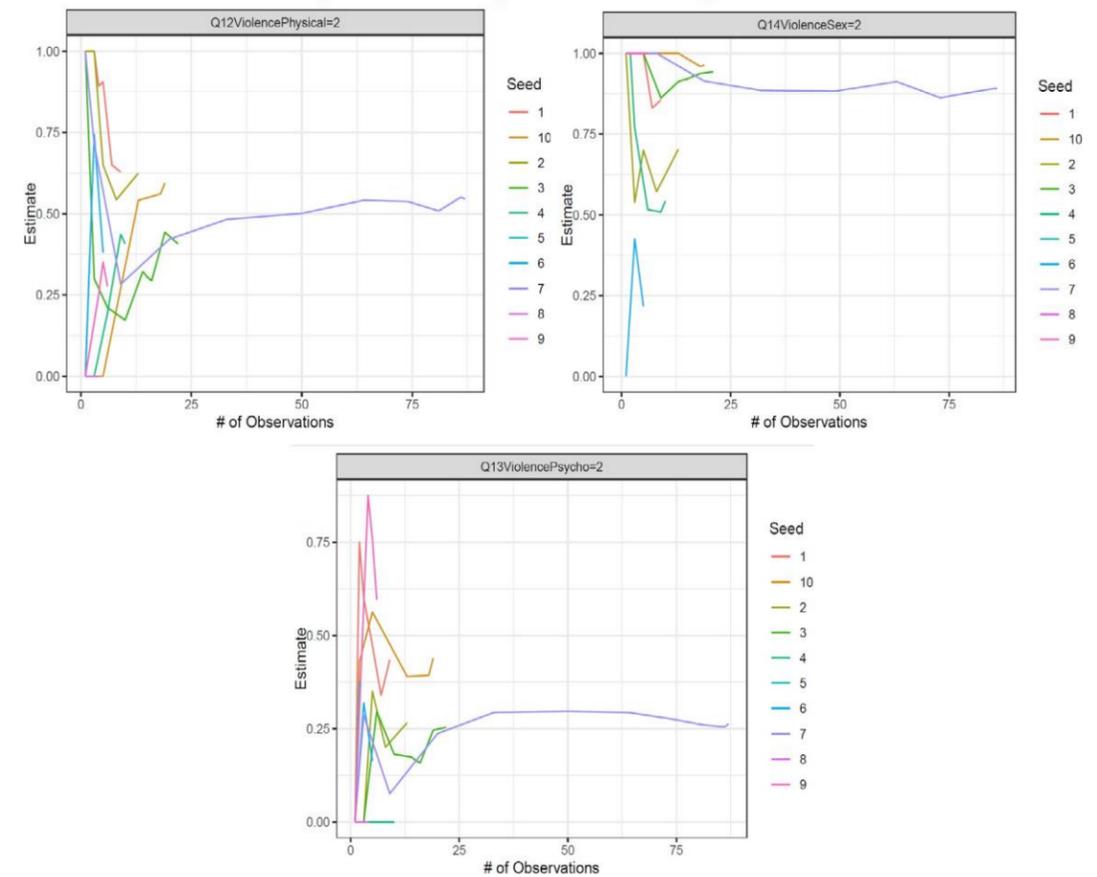
There was no homophily for any type of violence indicating random selection of respondents by variable category (yes/new). Convergence plots were assessed for physical, sexual, and emotional violence (Image K). While it is optimal for the solid line to rest above the dotted line, for physical and sexual abuse, the solid line rests just below the dotted line. There seems to be convergence for these two types of violence, and there is strong evidence that convergence is achieved through emotional abuse.

**Image K. Convergence by violence type**



Despite the longest chain seems to be moving towards the level of the final estimate, the number of short strings makes this graph difficult to interpret (Image L).

**Image L. Bottleneck Diagram**



Overall, convergence was not achieved for the two socio-demographic variables indicating that the final estimates are biased by the initial seed selected in a non-random manner. However, convergence has been reached for the types of violence. Unfortunately, it was difficult to assess bottlenecks in the sample. The inability to reach the full sample size and the large number of seeds likely led to biases in the final estimates. During the rollout of the survey, several changes were made to increase slow selection of respondent. These changes had a positive impact on selection, however, deployment was stopped before the sample size was reached due to the end of a predetermined time frame. If more time were available, the sample size would likely have been reached to indicate that the methodology was appropriate for this population.



**DATA-POP**  
ALLIANCE

**Mapping and Dynamics of Violence  
Involving Young people and Children in  
Urban Areas in Port-au-Prince**