



Institute for Justice & Democracy in Haiti

Fighting for the human rights of Haiti's poor

At the **Institute for Justice & Democracy in Haiti (IJDH)**, we fight for the human rights of Haiti's poor in court, on the streets, and wherever decisions about Haitians' rights are made. We represent victims of injustice—including victims of rape, unjust imprisonment, illegal evictions and cholera—and use our legal cases to force system-wide improvements for Haiti. Along with our Haitian affiliate, the ***Bureau des Avocats Internationaux (BAI)***, we have 17 years of groundbreaking success enforcing Haitians' rights in Haiti and abroad.

IJDH's top priorities for 2012 are:

Rape Accountability and Prevention Project (RAPP)

RAPP provides victims of sexual assault with the legal services and organizational support they need to obtain justice and compensation, while working with allies in Haiti and abroad to transform the social context that makes poor Haitian women vulnerable to assault. RAPP deters future rape by pursuing the perpetrators; it trains Haitian female lawyers to lead the fight against rape in the courts, and helps grassroots women's groups organize to assert their own rights. RAPP successes include:

- 45 alleged perpetrators arrested, and 15 cases ready for trial in 2012;
- A precedent-setting Precautionary Measures (injunctive relief) order from the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, ordering the Haitian government to provide increased protection to women and increased prosecution of perpetrators; and
- Zero rapes since February 2011 in the camp in Port-au-Prince that hosts our pilot security project.



BAI Grassroots Coordinator meets with Women's group leaders

Cholera Accountability Project (CAP)

The CAP is leveraging a modest investment in legal work to obtain hundreds of millions of dollars in water and sanitation investments that would save more than 50,000 lives in a decade. IJDH and BAI are pursuing a claim on behalf of victims of the cholera introduced to Haiti by UN Peacekeepers, seeking: 1) provision of water and sanitation infrastructure, 2) compensation for their losses, and 3) an apology. CAP successes so far include:

- Filing complaints on behalf of 5,000 victims, so far;
- Obtaining favorable press coverage throughout the world, including: the BBC, NPR, CNN, Democracy Now!, the New York Times, Time Magazine, the Economist, Al Jazeera and ABC News; and
- Confronting a February 2012 UN Security Council delegation to Haiti about cholera, through street protests, press releases and briefing Haitian officials, which in turn led to Security Council representatives from the United States, France and Pakistan, publicly advocating a better UN response to the cholera.



IJDH Director Brian Concannon speaks with journalists after press conference at UN in NY after filing claim

Jean-Claude Duvalier Prosecution

IJDH and the BAI pursue Jean-Claude Duvalier, one of last century's most notorious dictators, by representing his victims, supporting the Haitian government's prosecution efforts and coordinating with human rights groups, legal organizations and members of the U.S. Congress to advocate internationally for an effective prosecution. Successes of the Duvalier case include:

- Filing eight formal complaints on behalf of former political prisoners of the Duvalier regime;
- Submitted boxes of evidence of President Duvalier's financial crimes for the prosecution effort;
- Recruited and supervised three top U.S. law firms that have contributed tens of thousands of dollars in donated legal services to the case, preparing information on the Duvalier regime's killings, torture and financial crimes.

Housing Rights Advocacy Project (HRAP)

IJDH and the BAI are preventing forced evictions of earthquake survivors until adequate housing alternatives are provided. BAI lawyers represent communities at risk of eviction in court, provide training and organizational support, and along with IJDH, lead international advocacy efforts on behalf of the earthquake survivors. Successes include:

- Preventing illegal evictions of camp communities, in some cases for over a year;
- A Precautionary Measures (injunctive relief) order from the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, ordering the Haitian government to stop the illegal evictions; and
- Providing "know-your-rights" training to over twenty camp communities, many of which have successfully resisted eviction for over a year.



Overcrowded prison in Hinche

Health and Human Rights in Prisons Project (HHRPP)

The Health and Human Rights in Prisons Project provides legal and medical relief for prisoners held unjustly in some of the world's worst prison conditions, while advancing systemic reform of Haiti's criminal justice and prison systems. HHRPP is a collaboration among IJDH, BAI, Partners in Health, and their Haitian affiliate Zanmi Lasante. It combines the organizations' expertise in law and healthcare to protect the human rights of prisoners, 80% of whom have never been convicted of a crime. To date, the project has provided legal and medical screenings to 500 prisoners and has successfully freed 50 unjustly detained individuals.

Haitian Family Reunification Parole Program (HFRPP)

IJDH spearheads advocacy for a Haitian Family Reunification Parole Program (HFRPP), which would eliminate the waiting list currently preventing 110,000 Haitians who have already been approved by the Department of Homeland Security for immigrant visas from joining their families in the U.S. IJDH helps Haitian-American groups organize, works to secure allies among national, state and local officials, and coordinates a media campaign.

Universal Periodic Review (UPR)

IJDH and the BAI coordinated the preparation of 13 human rights reports by a collaboration of 57 grassroots groups, internally displaced persons (IDP) camps, nongovernmental organizations and academic institutions representing a diverse spectrum of Haitian stakeholders and their supporters in the U.S. The reports were submitted to the United Nations Human Rights Council, for its October 2011 review of Haiti's human rights situation under the Universal Periodic Review process. IJDH attended the review and a March 2012 follow-up session, bringing grassroots leaders to Geneva to attend the session and participate in side events. BAI and IJDH provided training and support to the Haitian grassroots groups, which allowed them to effectively engage the international human rights mechanisms. In Haiti, the BAI hosts a series of well-attended press conferences on different UPR report topics, which keeps human rights on the radar screen in Haiti.



The Haiti team at October's UPR hearing in Geneva

Help us to serve justice and transform Haiti for generations by making a tax-deductible gift to IJDH. Donate online at www.IJDH.org, or mail a check to IJDH, 666 Dorchester Avenue, Boston, MA, 02127.