

STATUS OF WOMEN’S RIGHTS IN HAITI (JULY 2026):

JOINT SUBMISSION BY THE COALITION OF HAITIAN AND SOLIDARITY FEMINIST, WOMEN’S RIGHTS, AND HUMAN RIGHTS ORGANIZATIONS

INTRODUCTION

1. Since Haiti’s last Universal Periodic Review (UPR), the State’s fulfillment of its human rights obligations towards women and girls has further deteriorated. Related recommendations remain materially unimplemented.¹
2. Discrimination and gender-based violence (GBV) are endemic, and have been deeply exacerbated by Haiti’s acute governance and security crisis.² Women and girls are distinctly affected, both because they are specifically targeted for sexual violence and because prevailing gender inequalities leave them more vulnerable to the humanitarian and institutional dimensions of the crisis. The true scale and scope of the harms is impossible to document due to the scarcity of gender-disaggregated data, which the State does not systematically collect or disseminate in spite of longstanding demands.³ This submission relies on observations by the submitting organizations, which work closely with women and girls in Haiti, and most of which are based there.⁴
3. The State has directed neither sufficient policy focus nor funding towards tackling these issues. It is largely absent from providing or funding related services, including shelter, medical care, and psychosocial support for survivors of GBV, leaving local organizations to do so at grave personal risk.⁵ Local organizations, especially those in rural areas, report being insufficiently consulted on key programs, policies, and decisions.⁶
4. The State is instead deepening inequalities by marginalizing women in Haiti’s transition, neglecting gender-specific considerations in its responses to the crisis, and generally deprioritizing women’s distinct needs in its policies and programs, including in planning for elections. Periodic improvements are generally not sustained due to the lack of corresponding policy and funding prioritization, protective legal framework, and meaningful enforcement, along with an unaddressed climate of GBV.

I. LEGAL FRAMEWORK

5. Haiti ratified nearly the full range of international human rights legal obligations for protecting and advancing the rights of women and girls.⁷

6. Haiti's Constitution domesticates these obligations⁸ and affirms equality and non-discrimination.⁹ However, in practice, Haiti's domestic legal framework – especially with respect to protections from GBV and progressive elimination of gender discrimination – remains weak. More importantly, implementation and enforcement of the laws that do exist are limited.¹⁰ Haiti's antiquated Penal Code is out of alignment with contemporary human rights standards. A new Code, drafted to provide better protections against GBV and discrimination, and to partially decriminalize abortion,¹¹ was published by unconstitutional decree in March 2020 and then updated (with changed provisions) in 2025.¹² However, it remains unimplemented and poorly distributed.

II. WIDESPREAD GENDER-BASED DISCRIMINATION AND INEQUALITY

7. Haiti's women and girls continue to face wide-ranging violence, discrimination, and systemic exclusions in both private and public life. Consequently, they have less independent wealth and opportunities, which in turn makes them more vulnerable to external shocks like natural disasters and conflict, as they have fewer resources to fall back on or rebuild with.¹³ Crisis-driven displacement is illustrative: women and girls are the majority of those displaced (54% of Haiti's 1.46 million internally displaced persons (IDPs)); men comprise 23%.¹⁴ Displacement then compounds vulnerabilities: displaced women and girls account for two-thirds of all reported GBV cases¹⁵ and over 88% lack any source of income.¹⁶
8. Discriminatory impacts of gender tend to be more acute for those with intersecting vulnerabilities like poverty, rural location, disability, LGBTQ+ identity, and *restavek* status.¹⁷ For example, poverty increases the risk of sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA), including by families.¹⁸ Rural women are more likely to be impoverished, illiterate, and subject to negative cultural practices, and are therefore more vulnerable to other harms.¹⁹ Women with disabilities are at a higher risk of GBV due to cultural beliefs that they are hypersexual or divinely cursed.²⁰

A. Socio-Cultural Dimensions of Gendered Inequality and Discrimination

9. Harmful cultural and social attitudes towards women, many deriving from colonialism and enslavement,²¹ persist. Examples include regressive attitudes towards female bodily autonomy and sexuality, and social permissiveness towards GBV – especially domestic violence. Many Haitians are not aware that most forms of GBV are illegal, consider it private or “normal,” and stigmatize survivors.²² In some cases, families force survivors to marry their abusers to preserve community relationships,²³ increasing risk of subsequent rape.²⁴

10. Women and girls are also expected to perform domestic labor and family care, reducing their ability to engage in other self-actualizing activities like education²⁵ and formal employment.
11. Restrictive social attitudes compound the challenge: for example, over a quarter of Haitians oppose women working outside the home,²⁶ customs favor men as managers,²⁷ and politics are still considered to be a man's domain.²⁸
12. Sexist attitudes are reflected in a pattern of discriminatory and exclusionary practices in the public sphere that restrict women's livelihoods. Women's unemployment is over twice that of men.²⁹ Women are underrepresented in the formal economy: according to the World Food Programme, in 2025 only 16% of women had formal jobs.³⁰ Women also make on average 32% less than men³¹ and those who pursue formal employment experience gendered discrimination,³² including demands for sex in return for being hired, retained, promoted, etc.³³
13. Women also face gendered barriers to accessing productive inputs for economic activity and building personal wealth, though no formal legal distinctions exist.³⁴ Especially in rural areas,³⁵ they have less access to collateral and formal credit.³⁶ As a consequence – and due to discrimination by landlords and preferences for male-headed households – women have lower rates of land and property ownership and face greater barriers to renting.³⁷ This particularly affects women farmers, who are less likely to hold formal title to land and are therefore especially vulnerable to land grabs.³⁸ Women are also less likely to inherit assets and land due to practices prioritizing male relatives or making it harder for women to enforce their rights.³⁹ Only 9% of women own businesses compared to 36% of men.⁴⁰
14. As a consequence of these barriers to personal economic security, women face greater challenges to equal participation in public life and are forced into dependence on men and harmful or dangerous coping strategies to survive. For example, because some public offices require property ownership, women are inherently disadvantaged.⁴¹ Economic reliance on male relatives makes women less able to demand good treatment or leave abusive homes.⁴² As Haiti's humanitarian situation has grown worse, an increasing number of women and girls are being forced into transactional sex in order to survive – sometimes for tiny amounts of food.⁴³ Some have resorted to joining armed groups, where many experience repeated GBV.⁴⁴ Limited livelihood opportunities also push women into dangerous public spaces where they are at heightened risk of GBV. For example, Madan Sara – Haiti's women traders – report increased levels of harassment, rape, and other forms of violence, including as they travel to market.⁴⁵

B. Systematic Exclusion from Power and Decision-Making

15. Women are persistently underrepresented in elected office, healthcare, education, the justice sector, public administration, and other decision-making positions, including in business leadership,⁴⁶ falling well short of Haiti's Constitutional 30% quota for women's participation in "all levels of national life"⁴⁷ (and separately in political parties).⁴⁸ A 2024 survey found that of 3,069 civil servants with decision-making authority, only 21.2% were women.⁴⁹ Haiti's last functioning Parliament had 2.5% women.⁵⁰ Data from 2020 indicated that 11.5% of judges were women – consistent with current partner observations.⁵¹ Haiti's police has only had one female director, and there are few women in command positions.⁵² Even where women are present, they are often sidelined into secondary or logistical roles, reducing women's ability to influence policies and adding to perceptions of inferiority.⁵³ In some cases, women are included as a quota formality, but expected to be silent and defer to men.⁵⁴
16. Women who attempt to advocate for their rights, participate in public debate and elections, run for office, or vote face systematic exclusion and violence.⁵⁵ When elections are held (none during the review period), women who run for office face greater barriers to securing campaign funds and exclusion from fundraising networks.⁵⁶ Some have reported being propositioned for sexual favors in return for political support.⁵⁷ They are assailed by verbal abuse and sexist remarks that discount them as candidates, portray them as "whores" or "lesbians," and minimize their abilities, including from the press.⁵⁸ Impunity for such harms is near-total and represents a serious risk to the integrity of any future elections if adequate measures are not taken. At least one woman candidate for the Senate in the next elections has reported receiving "constant" attacks already.⁵⁹

C. Institutional Failures to Dismantle Inequality and Discrimination

17. The State is not taking adequate action to tackle discrimination against women and girls.⁶⁰ Haiti's transitional governments since the assassination of President Moïse have marginalized women in leadership and decision-making, and failed to center women's specific needs,⁶¹ in violation of the Women, Peace, and Security Agenda. For example,⁶² no woman has held a top decision-making position in the transitional government: the sole woman serving in the now-defunct nine-member Transitional Presidential Council (TPC) had no vote and no women have served as – or were publicly considered for the role of – transitional Prime Minister. All the transitional cabinets have fallen short of gender parity and all but one (which had too few women but assigned multiple ministerial mandates)⁶³ fell short of the 30% Constitutional minimum while relegating women to less powerful Ministries like Tourism, Haitians Living Abroad, and the marginalized Ministry on the Status and Rights of Women (MCFDF).⁶⁴

18. The fact that several transitional cabinets came closer to meeting the Constitutional minimum than the last (20% female) cabinet under Moïse⁶⁵ likely reflects forceful public pressure generated by civil society through a widely-supported⁶⁶ Policy Framework for an Effective and Equitable Transition⁶⁷ and numerous open letters.⁶⁸ However, their principal demands for the empowered inclusion of women in leadership and the mainstreaming of gender-specific considerations in resolving Haiti's crisis (including tackling GBV) have been largely disregarded, even as the situation for women worsens.⁶⁹
19. For example, Haiti's latest electoral decree⁷⁰ does not sufficiently address women's systematic exclusion.⁷¹ There are no tangible measures to combat gendered political violence, even though it has impacted every past election.⁷² While several provisions incorporate the 30% Constitutional quota and offer some financial incentives for women's inclusion, the decree establishes no sanctions for non-compliance, even though the quota is historically violated by enormous margins.⁷³ Further, some of the more recent provisions tightening financial and administrative criteria for party registration⁷⁴ are likely to pose a disproportionate barrier to women without any corresponding measures to prevent gendered impact.⁷⁵
20. The few entities and programs dedicated to securing women's rights are generally underfunded, marginalized, and ineffectual. The MCFDF – the product of hard-fought advocacy efforts by the Haitian women's rights movement that initially served a key strategic role in advancing and mainstreaming gender equality – has become largely ineffective,⁷⁶ as the State has deprioritized its mandate.⁷⁷ One illustration is the Ministry's miniscule budget: less than 0.25% of the annual national budget (and usually half that) since 2021⁷⁸ – most of which goes to administrative costs, rather than programs.⁷⁹
21. State failure to prioritize and budget for women's rights is likewise reflected in the disappearing impact from joint initiatives with international partners. For example, the *Brigade de Protection des Mineurs* (BPM)⁸⁰ and the *l'Unité de lutte contre les crimes sexuels* (ULCS)⁸¹ were created to improve protections for minors and survivors of sexual violence through specialized police units with dedicated training and mandates.⁸² Despite some early improvements, most progress was lost after 2019, when funding from the Norwegian government ended and the State neglected to prioritize these efforts in its own budget.⁸³ As of writing, the ULCS has no internet or phones in its office and lacks vehicles, fuel, and protective gear.⁸⁴ There are few BPM and ULCS units, limiting their geographic availability; advocates regard them as having limited impact.⁸⁵

III. WIDESPREAD GBV AFFECTING WOMEN AND GIRLS

22. Sexual violence has dramatically increased since the last review cycle, as armed groups deliberately use increasingly gruesome forms as a tool for terrorizing and controlling civilians.⁸⁶ But all forms of GBV remain widespread, even as attention and resources are focused mostly on conflict-related sexual violence.⁸⁷ Civil society reporting indicates that 50-70% of Haitian women and girls had experienced GBV by 2023.⁸⁸ Between January and September 2025, the UN documented over 7,400 cases,⁸⁹ averaging more than one incident every hour. The true incidence is likely far higher, as the majority of survivors do not report GBV.⁹⁰ In some cases, authorities themselves are implicated.⁹¹
23. Victims include very old women and girls as young as five.⁹² GBV takes place in the home, on transit, and in public spaces, and is particularly common in rural areas, at displacement sites, and in and between areas controlled by armed groups.⁹³
24. The increased risk of GBV in public spaces constrains the ability of women and girls to obtain critical supplies, reach necessary services, and pursue independent livelihoods.⁹⁴ The general collapse of healthcare services⁹⁵ together with the dangerous roads mean that survivors are rarely able to timely access necessary medical care and prophylaxis for sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and pregnancy: according to *Médecins Sans Frontières* (MSF), 67% of survivors treated at one clinic since 2022 did not get care in time to prevent HIV transmission and 59% could not prevent pregnancies resulting from assaults.⁹⁶ Accompanying (i) physical and psychological trauma like deep injuries, STIs, and post-traumatic stress disorder;⁹⁷ (ii) associated costs of treatment and recovery; and (iii) pregnancies and children resulting from rape violently compound the harms. Deep social stigma and shame, which can manifest as “social death”⁹⁸ and lead to suicide,⁹⁹ add another dimension. The impacts are both immediate and generational, as these impediments both disproportionately put women and girls into a more precarious humanitarian situation, and curtail their long-term wellbeing and socioeconomic mobility, resulting in deepened intergenerational poverty and vulnerability.
25. The State provides almost no protection, accountability,¹⁰⁰ or services.¹⁰¹ Displacement sites are illustrative: State failure to provide adequate security, including lighting, fences, and gender-segregated hygiene facilities, has turned them into hotspots of GBV.¹⁰²

A. Sexual and Physical Violence

26. Sexual violence has exploded.¹⁰³ The high reported numbers generally still so significantly undercount the true rate as to be misleading.¹⁰⁴ Some individual providers have reported seeing averages of 40 rape cases per day.¹⁰⁵ The UN has consistently reported ever-increasing incidence of sexual violence each year since the last review,¹⁰⁶

including an increase of 163% from 2024 to 2025.¹⁰⁷ UNICEF reported a 1,000% increase in sexual violence directed against children from 2023 to 2024.¹⁰⁸

27. Reported harms increasingly include collective rape, sometimes with as many as 20 perpetrators;¹⁰⁹ collective rape accounted for 61% of all sexual assaults documented by BINUH between October 2024 and February 2025.¹¹⁰ Rape – especially by armed groups – is often accompanied by other harms, with victims beaten, blinded, mutilated, killed, or forced to watch other atrocities.¹¹¹ Women and girls who are kidnapped generally experience sexual assault as well, sometimes as a means of extorting higher ransoms.¹¹² Armed group members rape women and girls in the presence of their families and children, and sometimes share videos of the assaults online, creating further complex traumas.¹¹³
28. While much of the available reporting focuses on assaults by armed group members, physical and sexual violence in the home remains prevalent, with intimate partners especially implicated.¹¹⁴ The BAI has observed a resurgence of domestic and intrafamilial violence (including physical assault, spousal rape, and attempted femicide) driven by household tensions over acute food insecurity, hyperinflation, and complex traumas.¹¹⁵ Most domestic violence is not reported. Femicide is not separately tracked by officials, even as advocates regularly see gendered killings – usually by intimate partners.¹¹⁶

B. Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

29. Unequal status and reduced economic independence places Haitian women at high risk for SEA by those with greater power and resources. In general, women and girls report being forced into sex or romantic relationships in order to participate in public life, including at school, work, church, and in public administration.¹¹⁷ Women and girls in displacement situations report being forced to trade sex for basic necessities like tents and food by camp managers.¹¹⁸ A 2024 study found that 10.8% of women surveyed in six IDP camps had engaged in sex to meet their basic needs at least once, and 20.6% knew someone else who had done so.¹¹⁹ More generally, survival sex is on the rise as more women and girls as young as 15 become desperate for food and other necessities.¹²⁰ In some instances, families force daughters into sex in return for food.¹²¹ Other women and girls resort to joining armed groups, where they face sexual slavery, human trafficking, and being forced to become the “girlfriends” of or domestic laborers for male members.¹²² The widespread *restavek* practice, wherein poor families send children (60% girls)¹²³ to help with household chores in wealthier households in return for food and education, in reality amounts to forced servitude. Promised education rarely materializes and *restavek* girls are at added risk of SEA.¹²⁴

30. International actors have perpetrated extensive SEA in Haiti. Past abuses by UN peacekeepers¹²⁵ remain mired in impunity¹²⁶ and inadequate support for survivors and resulting children.¹²⁷ This history prompted extreme concern about new military interventions into Haiti and demands for an effective prevention, monitoring, and accountability system.¹²⁸ The Multinational Security Support Mission (MSS) did not adequately consult civil society or implement sufficient measures.¹²⁹ As of writing, the UN has substantiated four cases of rape by Kenyan MSS personnel against girls aged 12, 16, 16, and 18.¹³⁰ There have been no public announcements regarding trials, convictions, or compensation, and the Kenyan government has denied the allegations.¹³¹ The still-deploying Gang Suppression Force (GSF) does not have clear mechanisms in place.¹³² It is looking to add a contingent from Sri Lanka, despite concerns about ongoing impunity for past abuses that involved Haitian children as young as eight.¹³³ Civil society organizations are demanding a robust, independent vetting mechanism for the foreign military presence.¹³⁴ Concerningly, the UN's local mandate (for BINUH) was meanwhile amended to reduce focus on GBV and women's political inclusion.¹³⁵

C. Gendered Political Violence

31. Haitian women consistently face violence aimed at preventing their participation in and advocacy around politics and policy, including rape, kidnapping, domestic violence, harassment, and intimidation.¹³⁶ Especially in rural areas, male partners sometimes threaten women to prevent their political participation.¹³⁷ Armed groups, political parties, and election workers have used sexual violence and physical intimidation to prevent women from voting or running for office.¹³⁸ Where women do reach polling stations, male poll watchers and relatives have attempted to coerce or intimidate them into changing their votes.¹³⁹ Those few women who stand as candidates or hold public office experience violence; threats against themselves and their families; harassment; character assassination; and sexist, shaming, and belittling comments from male Haitian political officials, journalists, and other actors.¹⁴⁰ The gendered impacts are significant: Haiti has one of the world's lowest rates of government gender parity.¹⁴¹
32. Multiple women's rights activists and organizations experienced threats and violence, all without effective State response.¹⁴² Antoinette Duclair, a feminist anti-corruption activist outspoken about human rights violations and ensuring women's political participation, was killed on June 30th, 2021.¹⁴³ Dominique Dupuy reported receiving death threats to herself and her family when she served as Minister of Foreign Affairs and when she was briefly considered for a TPC appointment (which forced her to withdraw from consideration in March 2024).¹⁴⁴ Current Minister of Tourism, Stéphanie Smith, has experienced weeks of harassment and sexualized social media assaults linked to her appointment.¹⁴⁵ Nègès Mawon experienced such severe threats in connection with its feminist and anti-corruption advocacy that it twice had to move office locations and

several of its leaders and members have had to leave the country or relocate domestically.¹⁴⁶

33. In none of these cases did State authorities respond in an effective way or offer protection and accountability. Ms. Duclair's murder remains unsolved, with the file apparently lost.¹⁴⁷

D. Economic and Psychological Violence

34. Haitian women and girls are particularly vulnerable¹⁴⁸ to economic and psychological violence, especially in rural areas.¹⁴⁹ Data collected between January and June 2025 across *Solidarite Fanm Ayisyèn's* support centers in five departments showed economic violence (defined as denial of financial resources as a tool of control or abuse)¹⁵⁰ as a factor in 78% of reported GBV cases.¹⁵¹ Psychological violence was reported by 100% of survivors, who experienced insults, humiliation, and threats from both intimate partners and armed group members.¹⁵² Reporting and tracking of economic and psychological harms is rare and accountability nonexistent, as no criminal sanctions exist and domestic conduct of this type is socially normalized.¹⁵³

E. Harassment

35. Haiti does not explicitly criminalize sexual harassment and it is widely socially accepted in all its forms.¹⁵⁴ Impunity is effectively universal.¹⁵⁵ As a consequence, harassment is rarely documented or formally reported, though local advocates confirm it is omnipresent – whether in the form of humiliating or demeaning comments, or demands for sex in return for basic participation in public activities, which collectively impede women's ability to fully enjoy public life.¹⁵⁶ Armed groups subject women and girls to harassment at checkpoints.¹⁵⁷ Digital harassment is emerging as a new modality.¹⁵⁸

IV. GENDERED LACK OF ACCESS TO JUSTICE AND DUE PROCESS

36. Haiti has made no progress on improving access to justice for women and girls, especially with respect to GBV.¹⁵⁹ Haiti's laws remain antiquated and particularly ill-suited for GBV accountability.¹⁶⁰ Haiti's already weak justice system¹⁶¹ has deteriorated due to deliberate dismantling, corruption, and under-resourcing, compounded by generalized insecurity and government collapse resulting from the crisis.¹⁶² Courts in the Port-au-Prince region barely function, survivors and witnesses cannot safely reach authorities, and police are overwhelmed.¹⁶³ Local legal providers like the BAI describe near-total impunity that condemns women to permanent vulnerability.¹⁶⁴ Women are also acutely under-represented in the justice sector and gender-sensitive training is rare and generally insufficient, leaving women and girls facing a system with pervasive biases against them.¹⁶⁵ One manifestation is that law enforcement and judicial personnel

commonly blame and stigmatize survivors, leading to additional trauma and impeding accountability.¹⁶⁶

37. Authorities rarely prosecute or convict for GBV crimes, and almost never for harms other than violent rape.¹⁶⁷ According to a BINUH report, only 36% of GBV complaints recorded in the Grand-Anse Department in 2020 had been assigned to an investigating judge, and none went to trial.¹⁶⁸ In the judicial year October 2022 – September 2023, only 43 cases related to sexual assault resulted in convictions.¹⁶⁹ For context, the Global Protection Cluster reported 3,056 cases of rape between just January and August.¹⁷⁰ When perpetrators are convicted, sentences are often inconsistent and lenient relative to the 10-year minimum sentence for rape required by current law¹⁷¹ (of the above 43 convicted rapists, 6 were sentenced to less than a year in prison and 20 to 3-8 years).¹⁷²
38. Police and investigative judges also rarely stage effective investigations, leaving survivors without protection and support, and impeding the possibility of successful prosecutions. The BAI reports that even as an increasing number of rape survivors struggle to identify their attackers, police and investigative judges are failing to conduct adequate investigations, leaving those survivors effectively without recourse.¹⁷³ In some cases, authorities have been reluctant to investigate due to fear of reprisals by the perpetrator.¹⁷⁴
39. Underlying these failures are gendered procedural barriers and a culture of dismissing and neglecting GBV cases. Timely follow-up and protection from retaliation is rare and investigative authorities regularly breach confidentiality and privacy rights, fail to obtain informed consent, and mistreat GBV survivors throughout proceedings.¹⁷⁵ Survivors are, as a practical matter, required to provide medical certificates prepared by a doctor,¹⁷⁶ even though certificates are not legally mandatory and timely medical care is rare and not always provided by a doctor.¹⁷⁷ Legal fees and transportation costs, competing family responsibilities, social pressures to reconcile, trivialization of GBV, and loss of income from taking time to pursue cases add to reporting and prosecution barriers.¹⁷⁸
40. The combination of a stigmatizing and abusive system, high procedural barriers, vanishing institutional support, poor investigative quality, lack of protection for survivors and witnesses, and low probability of any – let alone successful – prosecution mean that few GBV survivors report to authorities.¹⁷⁹ A 2022 study across Cité Soleil found that while 80% of women and girls surveyed experienced some form of GBV, 84% of the survivors did not report.¹⁸⁰
41. The touted *pôle judiciaire* tasked with mass crimes, including sexual violence,¹⁸¹ is still not operational.¹⁸² Available information gives little indication that the *pôle* can overcome the systemic challenges described above, while several features suggest it will at best deliver limited symbolic actions. Concerns include questions about sustainable

government commitment and funding (as with the BPM and ULCS);¹⁸³ diversion of skill and resources from an already weak judicial system towards an unsustainable symbol that would likely reduce overall access to justice for most GBV survivors; and a plethora of procedural, jurisdictional, and training weaknesses.¹⁸⁴

V. GENDERED VIOLATIONS OF OTHER KEY RIGHTS

42. Access to food, water, healthcare, and education has grown progressively worse, with the State failing its related human rights obligations. Women and girls are disproportionately affected, largely due to pre-existing institutional discrimination, greater vulnerabilities to external stressors, and increased risk of GBV in transit.¹⁸⁵ The resulting gendered privations in turn further exacerbate preexisting inequalities.

A. Right to Food and Water

43. Haiti has become one of five global famine hotspots,¹⁸⁶ with women and girls disproportionately affected by the lack of access to food and water. Over 2 million women and girls are acutely food insecure¹⁸⁷ and half of all female-led households are at crisis-level food insecurity;¹⁸⁸ 33% of girls say food security is their number one concern (versus 28% of boys).¹⁸⁹ Disproportionately reduced food access reflects cultural expectations that women sacrifice food for any children or male relatives.¹⁹⁰ In some cases – especially at displacement sites – women report men using GBV, including sexual extortion, to control access.¹⁹¹ At the same time, because women and girls are generally expected to collect water and food, they are forced to undertake additional GBV risk, and some women have reported being attacked when doing so.¹⁹²

B. Right to Health

44. Haiti's healthcare system has long struggled to provide adequate care to women and girls due to chronic underfunding. Haiti's maternal mortality rate has been the highest in the region for many years,¹⁹³ at over four times the regional average as of 2023.¹⁹⁴ In 2025, maternal deaths numbered approximately 350 per 100,000 live births according to the MSF – the result of insufficient equipment, qualified personnel, medicine, and blood banks, as well as women's inability to reach care.¹⁹⁵ The crisis has dramatically reduced already limited care through forced hospital closures – including maternity units¹⁹⁶ – and growing scarcities of supplies and staff,¹⁹⁷ even as needs for sexual and reproductive care have increased with escalating GBV. The impact has been catastrophic for perinatal care in particular: women are opting for dangerous home births¹⁹⁸ and providers report that a third of women are unable to complete minimum prenatal care, while two-thirds receive no postnatal care.¹⁹⁹ The result is an increased risk of hemorrhage, infections, hypertension, and death in childbirth.²⁰⁰

45. Abortion remains illegal, prohibitively expensive, and largely inaccessible²⁰¹ even as the number of unwanted pregnancies arising from rape has increased,²⁰² including for very young girls.²⁰³ The Guttmacher Institute estimates that 74% of abortions are not safe.²⁰⁴ Haiti's new Penal Code as published in 2025²⁰⁵ would decriminalize abortion up to 8 weeks and in circumstances like rape, incest, and where required by the physical or mental health of the mother.²⁰⁶ Failure to timely implement this overdo and recommended²⁰⁷ legislative change forces Haiti's women and girls to risk their health and lives through unsafe abortions²⁰⁸ or unwanted, traumatizing, and – for the reasons described above – dangerous pregnancies and resulting burdens of parenthood.
46. Family planning was inaccessible to 80% of households surveyed in 2023, a dramatic increase since the start of the crisis.²⁰⁹ Cervical cancer screening is largely unavailable.²¹⁰ Menstrual products are scarce, of poor quality, and prohibitively expensive for many.²¹¹ Some girls have to choose between purchasing menstrual products or food; without them, many miss school.²¹²
47. Mental healthcare is inadequate and limited to a few facilities, even as it is desperately needed, especially for survivors of GBV.²¹³

C. Right to Education

48. Haitian women have historically faced discrimination in education,²¹⁴ a disparity that is being exacerbated by the general state of collapse of Haiti's schools due to the crisis.²¹⁵ Families with resource constraints are less likely to educate girls than boys due to school fees, domestic labor expectations, and discriminatory cultural norms devaluing education for females,²¹⁶ though there has been some improvement in more urban and wealthier settings.²¹⁷ Particularly in urban areas, girls enroll in primary school at similar rates to boys,²¹⁸ but they finish at much lower rates: for example, only 0.7% of women ultimately achieve higher education – half that of men.²¹⁹ Girls with intersecting vulnerabilities like disability and displacement are especially excluded.²²⁰ Early pregnancies – including as a result of rape²²¹ – further increase barriers to attending school, contributing to intergenerational risks of poverty.²²² Those girls who are able to attend school face discrimination and harassment from teachers and staff.²²³

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Center women's rights as a policy and funding priority across all of government and ensure that gender-specific considerations are a core part of all policymaking, including with respect to security, economy, and elections.

2. Rigorously implement and enforce laws and policies protecting women and girls from GBV and discrimination. Concurrently modernize outdated laws to align them with international standards of human rights – especially with respect to (i) extending legal protections against all forms of GBV; (ii) legalizing abortion; and (iii) combatting discrimination.
3. Include women on an equal and empowered basis in all elements of public life, including especially in leadership positions. Implement and fully fund specific laws, policies, programs, and measures to advance women’s full and equal participation in public life, including elections, by: (i) actively preventing and appropriately sanctioning political violence; (ii) providing financial, logistical, training, and other support for female candidates and public servants; (iii) enforcing and further expanding minimum quotas; (iv) creating an independent monitoring mechanism for implementation; (v) strictly imposing sanctions for noncompliance; (vi) implementing an accessible and robust complaint mechanism; and (vii) investing in education and sensibilization efforts to confront cultural and social biases.
4. Ensure and fund adequate protections from, investigation of, and accountability for GBV in all its forms, including SEA, harassment, and domestic violence. Implement rigorous training within the police and judicial workforce to (i) improve understanding of all women’s rights as recognized by international law; (ii) institute continuing education to enculturate respect for women’s rights and safety, and overcome any trivialization or normalization of GBV; (iii) implement and strictly enforce effective protocols for trauma-informed and victim-focused interviews and investigations, including removing unnecessary barriers like medical certificates for reporting; (iv) provide victims and witnesses with protection from retaliation; (v) ensure timely legal proceedings and zealous prosecutions of substantiated cases; (vi) train judges on appropriate sentencing standards, including damage awards for victims who join as civil parties; and (vii) create and fully fund a case management mechanism to support survivors through the judicial process and improve their access to services.
5. Implement and fully fund services for GBV survivors, including those who are displaced. These must include medical and psychological care; shelter, livelihoods support, security and protection; and legal recourse. Ensure services are accessible through mobile units and decentralization.
6. Prioritize progressive closure of displacement sites through safe, voluntary, and dignified return, relocation, or sustainable local integration. Meantime, ensure that operating sites meet minimum standards of safety, sanitation, privacy, and protection – taking into account gender-specific needs and vulnerabilities. Include women in all aspects of planning, managing, and closing displacement sites; ensure adequate gender-sensitive

services, especially for survivors of GBV; and implement rigorous measures to prevent SEA by foreign actors, site managers, and any agents thereof.

7. Require institutions to actively dismantle existing barriers, including by (i) implementing independent monitors and safe reporting mechanisms for any instances of sexual harassment, including in schools, work places, and public institutions; (ii) imposing material and public sanctions for violations; (iii) introducing and enforcing quotas as an interim mechanism for improving equity; and (iv) providing targeted support where necessary, including in accessing credit, securing formal title to property, and providing mentorship and other social scaffolding for gender inclusion.
8. Invest in robust education and sensibilization campaigns to dismantle negative stereotypes, confront gendered beliefs about social roles, and universalize knowledge regarding women's rights. Implement comprehensive sex education in schools, including about (i) sexual and reproductive health and rights, (ii) consent and healthy relationships, and (iii) prevention of GBV.
9. For all government activities, and specifically for recommendations 1-8, closely and continuously consult with and implement the guidance of Haitian feminist and women's rights organizations – including those working in rural areas and at the grassroots – in design, implementation, assessment, and modification.
10. Provide funding, security, and other institutional support for local organizations working to advance women's rights and provide related services.
11. Hold all government authorities; international actors, including the GSF and MSS; private security; self-defense groups; and armed groups to international human rights standards, and implement effective policies for preventing and addressing human rights violations, including GBV. Establish – and require international actors to establish – independent monitoring, investigations, accountability, and compensation mechanisms. Require rigorous investigations and follow-through for all allegations of GBV by these actors, including any SEA by MSS and GSF personnel.
12. Systematically collect and disseminate gender-disaggregated data, taking into account intersecting vulnerabilities like income, disability, age, rural residence, and LGBTQ+ status.

LIST OF ANNEXES

1. *Matrix of UPR Recommendations with Relevant Comments by Submitting Organizations*
2. *List of Submitting Organizations with Descriptions Demonstrating Expertise*

¹ See Annex 1, *Matrix of UPR Recommendations with Relevant Comments by Submitting Organizations* [hereinafter “Annex 1”]; see also HRC, *Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review: Haiti* (Mar. 30, 2022), <https://docs.un.org/A/HRC/50/15>.

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³ See e.g., BAI, et al., *Joint Submission to Working Group on discrimination against women and girls on Gender and Poverty in Haiti*, p. 1 (Nov. 2022), <https://www.ijdh.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Joint-Submission-to-WGDAWG-on-GenderPoverty-FINAL.pdf>; 100% FANM et al., *Open letter to His Excellency Lesli Voltaire, President of the Presidential Transitional Council*, p. 2 (Feb. 20, 2025), <https://www.ijdh.org/wp-content/uploads/Let-louvri-sou-VBG-Lettre-ouverte-sur-VBG-KR-FR-EN.pdf>; notes on file for inputs from knowledgeable Haitian organizations as listed in Annex 2, *List of Submitting Organizations with Descriptions Demonstrating Expertise* [hereinafter, “Annex 2”], including OFASO; IJDH, *Human Rights and the Rule of Law in Haiti: Key Recent Developments, July 2025 through February 2026*, notes 227, 251 (Mar. 2026), <https://www.ijdh.org/wp-content/uploads/March-2026-Human-Rights-and-the-Rule-of-Law-in-Haiti-Key-Recent-Developments.pdf>.

⁴ See Annex 2.

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⁷ But see Annex 1, e.g., Recommendations 131.30, 131.31, 131.32, 131.33, 131.7, 131.8.

⁸ Constitution de la Republique d’Haïti, art. 276-2 (1987; amended 2012) (in unofficial English translation) https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Haiti_2012.pdf?lang=en [hereinafter “Haiti Constitution”].

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¹¹ See further ¶ 45.

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¹⁵ OCHA, *Today's top news: Sudan, Occupied Palestinian Territory, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Haiti* (Nov. 20, 2025), <https://www.unocha.org/news/todays-top-news-sudan-occupied-palestinian-territory-democratic-republic-congo-haiti>; see further note 102 and associated text.

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¹⁸ See further notes 117-22 and associated text.

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¹⁵⁷ BINUH, *Quarterly Report on the Human Rights Situation in Haiti (October – December 2025)* (Jan. 30, 2026), https://binuh.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/2026-01/Quarterly%20Report%20on%20the%20human%20rights%20situation%20in%20Haiti%20%28October%20-%20December%202025%29%20-%20ENGLISH_0.pdf; OHCHR, *Interim report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights*, ¶¶ 16, 18 (Sep. 26, 2024), <https://docs.un.org/en/A/HRC/57/41>.

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¹⁵⁹ *Cf.* Annex 1, *e.g.*, Recommendations 131.97, 131.95, 131.96, 131.106, 131.114, 131.115, 131.128, 131.200, 131.107, 131.110, 131.117, 131.118, 131.119, 131.121, 131.122, 131.124, 131.126, 131.132, 131.137, 131.180, 131.181, 131.184, 131.191, 131.192, 131.193, 131.195, 131.81, 131.82, 131.83, 131.90, 131.91, 131.98, 131.99, 131.101, 131.102, 131.103, 131.109, 131.111, 131.112, 131.113, 131.116, 131.120, 131.123, 131.89, 131.35, 131.108, 131.186, 131.187, 131.188, 131.94, 131.104, 131.173, 131.129, 131.23, 131.37, 131.189, 131.153, 131.8, 131.135, 131.176, 131.180, 131.181, 131.182, 131.184, 131.191, 131.192, 131.193, 131.195, 131.35, 131.156, 131.157, 131.185, 131.186, 131.187, 131.188, 131.190, 131.194, 131.183, 131.219, 131.37, 131.59.

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- ²¹² Notes on file for inputs from knowledgeable Haitian organizations as listed in Annex 2, including the BAI, HWC, Nègès Mawon, PROFAMIL & Règ Ayiti.
- ²¹³ Notes on file for inputs from knowledgeable Haitian organizations as listed in Annex 2, including HWC, OFASO & an anonymous Haitian civil society organization working on women’s rights; Global Protection Cluster, *Haiti: Protection Analysis Update (September 2025)*, p. 1 (Sep. 2025), https://globalprotectioncluster.org/sites/default/files/2025-09/pau25_20_protection_analysis_update_haiti_sept2025_final.pdf; PAHO, *Public Health Situation Analysis – Haiti*, pp. 11-12 (Oct. 4, 2024), <https://www.paho.org/en/documents/public-health-situation-analysis-haiti-4-october-2024>; Exil, *A country in post-traumatic stress: The unseen effects of Haiti’s violent crisis* (Mar. 30, 2025),

<https://efe.com/en/latest-news/2025-03-30/a-country-in-post-traumatic-stress-the-unseen-effects-of-haitis-violent-crisis/>.

²¹⁴ See e.g., notes on file for inputs from knowledgeable Haitian organizations as listed in Annex 2, including the BAI & HWC.

²¹⁵ UNICEF, *The polycrisis for children in Haiti*, pp. 1, 6, 11 (Oct. 2025), https://www.unicef.org/media/174956/file/UNICEF%20Haiti%20Child%20Alert%20EN.pdf.pdf?_cf_chl_f_tk=luv4Kp8pVr1uQTF1LPi9bdOtt0Q2xRSkoHdRflecZlY-1782765041-1.0.1.1-rV8UUVLmcY.wlneLkPxzm7GKPbzIQ6_F6Wv6wbKFWM68; notes on file for inputs from knowledgeable Haitian organizations as listed in Annex 2, including Nègès Mawon.

²¹⁶ Notes on file for inputs from knowledgeable Haitian organizations as listed in Annex 2, including the BAI & ZAFK; BAI et al., *Joint Submission to Working Group on discrimination against women and girls on Gender and Poverty in Haiti*, p. 2 (Nov. 2022), <https://www.ijdh.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Joint-Submission-to-WGDAWG-on-GenderPoverty-FINAL.pdf>; see further ¶¶ 8-9.

²¹⁷ Notes on file for inputs from knowledgeable Haitian organizations as listed in Annex 2, including the BAI.

²¹⁸ The Borgen Project, *Top 10 Facts About Girls' Education in Haiti* (Feb. 25, 2019), <https://borgenproject.org/top-10-facts-about-girls-education-in-haiti/>; notes on file for inputs from knowledgeable Haitian organizations as listed in Annex 2, including OEFE & OFASO; Paola Buitrago-Hernandez et al., *The key to ending gender inequality in Haiti is youth empowerment*, World Bank (Aug. 30, 2023), <https://blogs.worldbank.org/en/latinamerica/ending-gender-inequality-haiti-youth-empowerment>.

²¹⁹ Itinerant University of Resistance in Haiti, *Scholarship Fanm Yo La*, <https://unir-haiti.org/en/scholarship-fanm-yo-la/> (last visited Jul. 14, 2026); notes on file for inputs from knowledgeable Haitian organizations as listed in Annex 2, including HWC, Nègès Mawon & OFASO.

²²⁰ See BINUH, *Report of the Secretary-General*, ¶ 58 (Jun. 27, 2024), https://binuh.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/report_of_the_un_secretary-general_on_the_situation_in_haiti_on_binuh_july_3rd_2024.pdf; notes on file for inputs from knowledgeable Haitian organizations as listed in Annex 2, including HWC & OEFE; see further ¶¶ 7-8.

²²¹ See further notes 202-03 and associated text.

²²² Notes on file for inputs from knowledgeable Haitian organizations as listed in Annex 2, including 100% Fanm, HWC & ZAKAF; Pascale Solages, *Six Haitian women's struggles to recover from rape by gangs*, The New Humanitarian (Feb. 4, 2025), <https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/opinion/first-person/2025/02/04/six-haitian-women-struggles-recover-rape-gangs>; RHI News, *Haïti – Violence sexuelle en temps de guerre : Rosy Auguste Ducéna appelle à une reconnaissance internationale des crimes contre l'humanité...* (Apr. 13, 2025), <https://www.rhinews.com/actualites/haiti-violence-sexuelle-en-temps-de-guerre-rosy-auguste-ducena-appelle-a-une-reconnaissance-internationale-des-crimes-contre-lhumanite/>.

²²³ Notes on file for inputs from knowledgeable Haitian organizations as listed in Annex 2, including 100% Fanm, the BAI, OEFE, OFASO, HWC, MARIJAN, Nègès Mawon & ZAFK.