

Poverty & Equity Brief

October 2024

HAITI

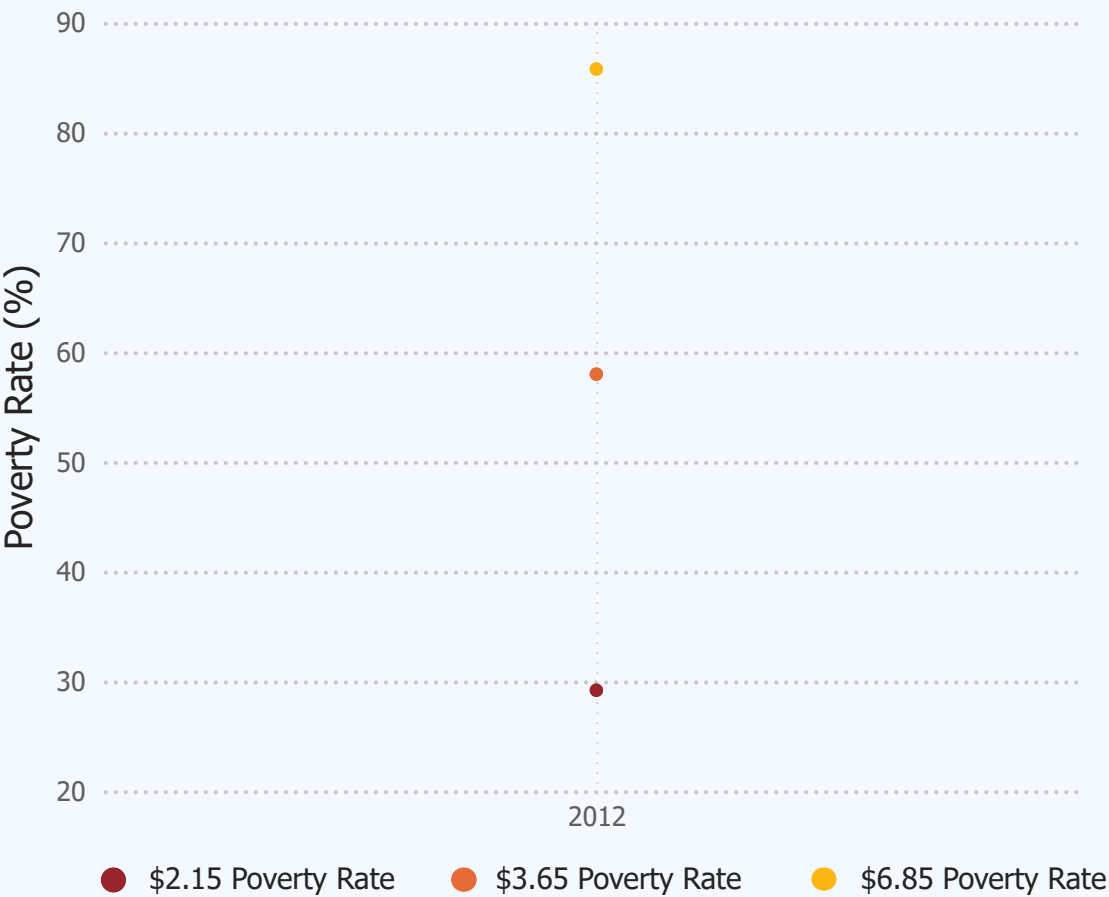
In recent years, Haiti has endured recurrent shocks, with the effects of natural disasters, including the 2010 earthquake and multiple hurricanes, being compounded by persistent conflict and social unrest. Despite the installation of a transitional council in April 2024 and the arrival of international forces to try to restore order, gang violence and political instability still hinder economic development. The economy contracted for five consecutive years between 2019 and 2023: by 2023, real GDP per capita was 10.3 percent lower than in 2012. The official poverty rate for Haiti was 58.5 percent in 2012 (the year of the last official household survey), with approximately six million people living below the national poverty line. Similarly, international poverty measures show that 58 percent of the population lived on less than \$3.65 per day (at 2017 PPP) in 2012, and 29.2 percent lived on less than \$2.15 per day (2017 PPP), the highest level in the Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) region. Nowcast estimates indicate that the poverty rate is set to reach 65.6 percent (at \$3.65 per day) and 36.4 percent (at \$2.15 per day) in 2024, underlining the fall in people’s living standards. The outlook for Haiti’s economy and its poverty-reduction prospects are extremely uncertain and depend heavily on an effective political transition and improving security.

Around half of the population is experiencing acute food insecurity, including 1.6 million people with emergency levels of food insecurity, according to the Integrated Food Insecurity Phase Classification report from March 2024. The recent escalation of gang violence has aggravated the disruption to the supply and local transport of food and other necessities, undermining availability and access. High food prices also contribute to food insecurity and tend to disproportionately hurt poorer Haitian households who devote a larger share of their consumption to food. While overall inflation dropped slightly from 47.9 percent year-on-year in April 2023 to 27.3 percent in April 2024, food price inflation continued to run higher at 38.5 percent year-on-year.

Lack of productive jobs and low access to basic services constrain Haiti’s poverty-reduction prospects. Despite initially dropping between 2020 and 2021, the share of working-age Haitians in employment increased between 2020 and 2023 by around 10.6 percentage points, according to data from the Haiti High Frequency Phone Survey (HFPS). Since this has not been accompanied by an increase in living standards, this suggests that Haitians have been trying in vain to find livelihood activities to make ends meet; in-work poverty is widespread. Turning to basic services, around 40.4 percent of the population had access to electricity in 2016/17, while 74.9 percent were using an improved water source and 54.8 percent had an improved sanitation facility. Access to services has likely deteriorated with the COVID-19 crisis and rising insecurity.



Poverty Rate



Inequality



Poverty at Different Lines

Poverty Line	Number of Poor (Thousands)	Rate (%)	Year
National Poverty Line	6,019.2	58.5	2012
International Poverty Line (\$2.15/day)	2,950.9	29.2	2012
Lower Middle Income Class Poverty Line (\$3.65/day)	5,865.8	58.0	2012
Upper Middle Income Class Poverty Line (\$6.85/day)	8,673.3	85.8	2012
Multidimensional Poverty Measure		46.8	2012

Group and Multidimensional Poverty

Poverty by Group	Poverty Rate (%)	Multidimensional Poverty Components	(% of Pop.)
Urban population	40.1	Daily income less than US\$2.15 per person	29.2
Rural population	74.4	At least one school-aged child is not enrolled in school	9.0
Males	58.9	No adult has completed primary education	23.2
Females	57.2	No access to limited-standard drinking water	33.5
0 to 14 years old	66.4	No access to limited-standard sanitation	68.8
15 to 64 years old	53.2	No access to electricity	64.3
65 and older	55.3		
Without education (16+)	70.7		
Primary education (16+)	60.3		
Secondary education (16+)	44.7		
Tertiary/post-secondary education (16+)	12.7		

Note:

Data for the "Poverty by Group" table is derived from a 2012 survey and data for the "Multidimensional Poverty Components" table is derived from a 2012 survey. The rates in the "Poverty by Group" table above are shown at the \$3.65 lower-middle income line.

"N/A" denotes a missing/removed value, while "N/A*" refers to a value which was removed due to having fewer than 30 observations.

Poverty Data & Methodology

The last national household living conditions survey, Enquête sur les Conditions de Vie des Ménages Apres le Séisme, to measure poverty was conducted in 2012. More recent data to monitor trends in consumption poverty, inequality, and shared prosperity indicators in Haiti are not available.

Poverty in Haiti is measured using the cost-of-basic-needs methodology. Per-capita household expenditure is used as the welfare aggregate and includes both food and non-food expenditures. The poverty line reflects a minimum threshold of 2,300 calories per person per day and is based on a food basket of 26 food items. The national overall poverty line is very close to the \$3.65 (2017 PPP) international poverty line, being just 0.9 percent higher, while the national extreme poverty line is 12.7 percent lower than the \$2.15 (2017 PPP) international poverty line.

Harmonization

The numbers presented in the brief are based on the regional data harmonization effort known as the Socio-economic Database for Latin America and the Caribbean (SEDLAC) - a joint effort of the World Bank and CEDLAS from the National University of La Plata (Argentina). SEDLAC includes 18 countries and more than 300 household surveys since the 80s. Several Caribbean countries have not been included in the SEDLAC project due to lack of data. Since an income-based welfare aggregate is widely used in the region for official poverty estimates, income-based microdata is used for the Global Monitoring Database (GMD) and Global Poverty Monitoring. SEDLAC covers demographics, income, employment, and education. Terms of use of the data adhere to agreements with the original data producers.