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ID4D Identification For Development

Diagnostic of ID Ecosystems: Haiti

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ABOUT ID4D

This publication was developed by the World Bank Group's Digital and AI Vice Presidency, with support from the Digital Public Infrastructure and Services Umbrella Multi-Donor Trust Fund (DPI and Services TF).

DPI refers to the foundational digital building blocks—such as digital identity, data sharing, and digital payments—that enable governments and economies to deliver services at scale.

The DPI and Services TF aims to increase the adoption and productive use of safe, inclusive, and interoperable digital building blocks and digitally enabled services. Operating as a One World Bank effort, it mobilizes expertise across digital transformation, social protection, health, financial inclusion, agriculture, governance, and education, among others. It also collaborates closely with Project FASTT on fast payment systems.

The DPI and Services TF is based on three pillars:

- **Knowledge:** generating evidence and translating standards into practical tools.
- **Action:** supporting country-level DPI strategies, safe and inclusive building blocks, and sectoral digital transformation.
- **Convening:** strengthening the global DPI community through peer learning, standards alignment, and digital public goods.

The work supported by the DPI and Services TF is anchored in cross-cutting commitments **to inclusion and gender equity, human-centric design, reusability through digital public goods, safeguards, data protection, and evidence-based implementation.**

Building on the foundations laid by the Identification for Development (ID4D)–Digital Government-to-Person Payments (G2Px) Multi-Donor Trust Fund (2016–2026), the DPI and Services TF is structured around three workstreams:

- The ID4D Initiative helps countries realize the transformational potential of identification systems for the Sustainable Development Goals—from foundational ID and civil registration to next-generation digital identity and trust services. Its mission is to enable all people to access services and exercise their rights by improving the inclusivity, design, and governance of ID and trust service ecosystems. Learn more at id4d.worldbank.org.
- The G2Px Initiative transforms Government-to-Person (G2P) payments to accelerate financial inclusion, women's economic empowerment, resilience, and government efficiency. It helps countries modernize their G2P ecosystems through recipient-centric frameworks and evidence-based guidance on sustainable, inclusive models. Learn more at www.worldbank.org/g2px.
- The Data Sharing workstream enables secure, interoperable, and privacy-respecting data sharing across sectors at the national scale, advancing high-value use cases and inclusive benefits.

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ABBREVIATIONS

ENGLISH		FRENCH	
AFD	French Development Agency	**AFD**	*Agence française de développement*
ANH	National Archives of Haiti	**ANH**	*Archives nationales d'Haïti*
API	Application Programming Interface	**API**	*Interface de programmation d'applications*
ASPIRE	Adaptive Social Protection for Increased Resilience Project	**PSARA**	*Projet de protection sociale adaptative pour une résilience accrue*
BECs	Civil Registration Offices	**BECs**	*Bureaux d'état civil*
BONI	ONI Office (Fixed Identity Service Point)	**BONI**	*Bureau de l'ONI (point de service fixe)*
BRH	Central Bank of Haiti	**BRH**	*Banque de la République d'Haïti*
CASEC	Communal Section Administration	**CASEC**	*Administration de la section communale*
CEP	Provisional Electoral Council	**CEP**	*Conseil électoral provisoire*
CHNV	Cuba-Haiti-Nicaragua-Venezuela Humanitarian Parole Program	**CHNV**	*Programme de parole humanitaire Cuba-Haïti-Nicaragua-Venezuela*
CINU	Unique National Identification Card	**CINU**	*Carte d'identité nationale unique*
CNSI	National Council for Statistics and Informatics	**CNSI**	*Conseil national de la statistique et de l'informatique*
CONATEL	National Telecommunications Commission	**CONATEL**	*Conseil national des télécommunications*
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019	**COVID-19**	*Maladie à coronavirus 2019*
CR	Civil Registration	**EC**	*État civil*
CRLDI	Centers for Reception and Delivery of Identity Documents	**CRLDI**	*Centres de réception et de livraison des documents d'identité*
CRVS	Civil Registration and Vital Statistics	**CRVS**	*État civil et statistiques de l'état civil*
DELIDOC	ONI Online Application & Tracking Portal	**DELIDOC**	*Portail en ligne de demande et suivi de l'ONI*
DFS	Digital Financial Services	**SFN**	*Services financiers numériques*
DG	Director General	**DG**	*Directeur général*
DGI	General Taxation Directorate	**DGI**	*Direction générale des impôts*
DIE	Directorate of Immigration and Emigration	**DIE**	*Direction de l'immigration et de l'émigration*
DPI	Digital Public Infrastructure	**DPI**	*Infrastructures Publiques Numériques*
ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean	**CEPALC**	*Commission économique pour l'Amérique latine et les Caraïbes*

ENGLISH		FRENCH	
ECVMAS	Survey on Household Living Conditions after the Earthquake	**ECVMAS**	*Enquête sur les Conditions de Vie des Ménages après Séisme*
EMMUSVI	Haiti Demographic and Health Survey (VI)	**EMMUSVI**	*Enquête Mortalité, Morbidité et Utilisation des Services (VI)*
FAES	Economic and Social Assistance Fund	**FAES**	*Fonds d'assistance économique et sociale*
FCV	Fragility, Conflict, and Violence	**FCV**	*Fragilité, conflit et violence*
FSP	Financial Service Provider	**FSF**	*Fournisseur de Services Financiers*
G2B	Government to Business	**G2B**	*Gouvernement vers Entreprises*
G2G	Government to Government	**G2G**	*Gouvernement vers Gouvernement*
G2P	Government-to-Person	**G2P**	*Gouvernement vers Personnes*
GDP	Gross Domestic Product	**PIB**	*Produit intérieur brut*
HDAP	Haiti Digital Acceleration Project	**HDAP**	*Projet d'accélération numérique d'Haïti*
HDVI	Haitian Deprivation and Vulnerability Index	**IDVH**	*Indice de déprivation et de vulnérabilité d'Haïti*
HTG	Haitian Gourde	**HTG**	*Gourde haïtienne*
IADB/IDB	Inter-American Development Bank	**BID**	*Banque interaméricaine de développement*
ICAO	International Civil Aviation Organization	**OACI**	*Organisation de l'aviation civile internationale*
ID	Identification	**ID**	*Identification*
ID4D	Identification for Development	**ID4D**	*Identification pour le développement*
IDA	International Development Association	**IDA**	*Association internationale de développement*
IDEEA	ID Enabling Environment Assessment	**IDEEA**	*Évaluation de l'environnement habilitant de l'identité*
IGO	Intergovernmental Organization	**OIG**	*Organisation intergouvernementale*
IHSI	Haitian Institute of Statistics and Informatics	**IHSI**	*Institut haïtien de statistique et d'informatique*
IOM	International Organization for Migration	**OIM**	*Organisation internationale pour les migrations*
IPC	Integrated Food Security Phase Classification	**IPC**	*Classification intégrée de la sécurité alimentaire*
ISO	International Organization for Standardization	**ISO**	*Organisation internationale de normalisation*
KYC	Know Your Customer	**KYC**	*Connaissance du client*

ENGLISH		FRENCH	
MAE	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	**MAE**	*Ministère des affaires étrangères*
MAST	Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor	**MAST**	*Ministère des affaires sociales et du travail*
MCC	Ministry of Culture and Communication	**MCC**	Ministère de la culture et de la communication
MICT	Ministry of the Interior and Territorial Collectivities	**MICT**	*Ministère de l'intérieur et des collectivités territoriales*
MJSP	Ministry of Justice and Public Security	**MJSP**	*Ministère de la justice et de la sécurité publique*
MNO	Mobile Network Operator	**ORM**	*Opérateur de Réseau Mobile*
MSME	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises	**MPME**	*Micro, petites et moyennes entreprises*
NINU	Unique National Identification Number	**NINU**	*Numéro d'identification nationale unique*
OAS	Organization of American States	**OEA**	*Organisation des États américains*
OEC	Civil Registrars	**OEC**	*Officiers d'état civil*
ONI	National Identification Office	**ONI**	*Office national d'identification*
PKI	Public Key Infrastructure	**ICP**	*Infrastructure à clés publiques*
PNPPS	National Social Protection and Promotion Policy	**PNPPS**	*Politique nationale de protection et de promotion sociales*
POS	Point-of-Service	**PdS**	*Point de service*
PR	Population Registry	**RP**	*Registre de la population*
PSI	Strategic Institutional Plan	**PSI**	*Plan stratégique institutionnel*
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal	**ODD**	*Objectif de développement durable*
SIMAST	Social Registry Information System	**SIMAST**	*Système d'information du ministère des affaires sociales et du travail*
SNIF	National Strategy for Financial Inclusion	**SNIF**	*Stratégie nationale d'inclusion financière*
SP	Social Protection	**PS**	*Protection sociale*

ENGLISH		FRENCH	
SyNSIP	National System of Public Statistics and Informatics	**SyNSIP**	*Système national de statistiques publiques et d'informatique*
TA	Technical Assistance	**AT**	*Assistance technique*
UIN	Unique Identity Number	**NIU**	*Numéro d'identité unique*
UNHCR	UN Refugee Agency	**HCR**	*Haut Commissariat des Nations Unies pour les réfugiés*
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund	**UNICEF**	*Fonds des Nations Unies pour l'enfance*
USAID	United States Agency for International Development	**USAID**	*Agence des États-Unis pour le développement international*
WB	World Bank	**BM**	*Banque mondiale*
WFP	World Food Programme	**PAM**	*Programme alimentaire mondial*

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Context

About 2.7 to 3.1 million Haitian adults (approximately one in three) lack a valid Unique National Identification Card (Carte d'identité nationale unique, CINU), leaving large segments of the population without official proof of identity. Among children under age five, 85 percent have had their birth registered, yet only 77 percent possess a birth certificate, with coverage lowest among the poorest and rural households. Identification gaps are most pronounced among the poorest 40 percent, residents of remote or insecure areas, women facing cultural barriers to birth declaration, and individuals affected by insecurity or forced displacement, including deportees and internally displaced persons (IDPs).

Despite significant progress, the absence of civil registration (CR) and identity (ID) documents limits many Haitians from accessing essential services and economic opportunities. Haiti's National Identification Office (ONI) has issued national identity cards (CINUs) to a large share of the population, and CR offices record a significant number of births and other vital events every year. But millions of Haitians remain excluded from CR and ID systems, without valid ID or unregistered in civil registries, leaving them unable to access services such as education, social assistance, financial services, mobile communications, formal employment, and civic and political participation. Gaps in coverage reinforce exclusion from services and prevent individuals from fully exercising their rights. Addressing these gaps is critical for achieving Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Target 16.9—to "provide legal identity for all, including birth registration"—and to enable progress on financial inclusion, social protection, gender equality, and safe migration.

While the Government of Haiti (GOH) has demonstrated commitment to modernizing CR and ID systems, progress has been limited by financial, institutional, and strategic constraints. Recent reforms—such as the 2020 Decree introducing biometric and chip-enabled national ID cards, and efforts to decentralize card printing and expand service points—reflect a clear ambition to strengthen the foundational ID ecosystem. Development partners have supported these initiatives through technical assistance focused on digitalization, capacity building, and improved service delivery.

However, achievements remain limited by unpredictable financing, fragmented institutional mandates, and the absence of a unified, costed national strategy.

Coordination between civil registration and identification systems is still evolving, with ongoing discussions on harmonizing processes, enabling data sharing, and establishing a unique identifier from birth. While steps have been taken to improve interoperability and efficiency, further alignment is needed on identity verification, authentication, and digital integration to ensure reforms translate into inclusive and effective service delivery.

Main System Challenges

Despite active identification registration offices in many Haitian cities and some rural areas, coverage remains uneven. Particularly in remote or insecure regions, access is constrained by geography, infrastructure, and security challenges. The process of obtaining identity documents is further complicated by requirements for supporting paperwork, reliance on paper-based systems, and limited staff capacity. Financial and logistical barriers such as informal fees, travel costs, and time away from work also deter timely registration, especially for vulnerable groups. For late birth registration or document replacement, judicial and administrative procedures are often complex and time-consuming.

CR and ID modernization in Haiti remains limited by unpredictable financing, fragmented institutional mandates, and the absence of a unified, financially supported national strategy. Coordination between CR and ID systems is still evolving, with ongoing discussions on harmonizing processes, enabling data sharing, and establishing a unique identifier from birth.

Institutional and governance arrangements are fragmented and often unclear. Overlapping mandates between ONI, CR offices, and related actors such as the judiciary, health sector, and archives create confusion for both service providers and users. The absence of a coherent national policy and updated legal framework leaves room for ambiguity and weak coordination, preventing a unified government effort to modernize the ecosystem. Limited inter-agency collaboration further compounds the problem, forcing citizens to navigate multiple offices and procedures to obtain basic documents.

Service delivery weaknesses also undermine trust. Citizens regularly face long waiting times, lack of materials, and inconsistent application of procedures. Cases of bribery requests or inappropriate administrative practices further erode confidence. Infrastructure is uneven across the country: many local offices are poorly equipped and understaffed, while others remain inaccessible to rural populations. These deficiencies create enrollment and vital event registration bottlenecks, discouraging timely declarations and fueling perceptions of inefficiency.

The digital backbone of the system remains underdeveloped. Most processes continue to rely on paper, with limited digitization of records and minimal electronic data exchange between institutions. Haiti does not yet have an operational interoperability framework or national data-sharing infrastructure, which restricts the use of ID and CR data for service delivery and policymaking. Technical constraints such as unreliable electricity and poor connectivity, especially outside Port-au-Prince, exacerbate these gaps and constrain efforts to modernize.

Finally, financial sustainability remains a pressing challenge. ONI's operations and card issuance have depended heavily on donor funding and costly vendor contracts, while CR has lacked predictable allocations in the public budget. This dependence makes the system vulnerable to funding interruptions and undermines long-term planning. Although credentials are officially free of charge, citizens still bear high indirect costs, including travel to distant enrollment offices, multiple visits due to delays, and loss of income while waiting. These burdens fall disproportionately on the poor and rural populations, limiting enrollment and further deepening exclusion, even if they do not directly threaten ONI operations.

Civil Registration (CR)

Civil registration (CR) in Haiti plays a central role in providing individuals with proof of legal identity, yet it is marked by fragmentation, uneven service delivery, and persistent access barriers. Civil Registrars (OECs) are responsible for vital event registration, but in practice, coordination between the OEC, local civil registry offices (BECs), hospitals, midwives, and ONI remains weak. While some hospitals host CR clerks to facilitate birth declarations, these offices may be inadequately staffed or poorly integrated into the workflow of the health facility. Often, these systems are not connected to CR databases, limiting efficiency and real-time data sharing. As a result, even when health facilities collect information at birth, parents often face additional steps at separate offices before obtaining a valid birth certificate.

Geographic disparities further complicate coverage. CR services concentrate in urban centers, leaving rural communities and border populations underserved. Many BECs operate with minimal infrastructure, inadequate staffing, and inconsistent availability of supplies. Registration clerks often lack training or guidance on the proper application of laws, leading to arbitrary practices. For instance, some clerks refuse to register a birth declared by a single mother, or insert non-mandated information such as the marital status of parents on birth certificates. These practices introduce discrimination and undermine universal registration.

Citizens face significant procedural and financial hurdles. The legal deadline for registering a birth within two years remains a barrier, and delayed declarations require court authorization, additional fees, and travel to judicial offices. This discourages parents, especially in poor and remote communities, from regularizing their children's situation. Furthermore, the absence of digitized records means that lost or uncollected certificates must be reissued manually, often after long delays.

Additional weaknesses affect the integrity of CR records. In many communes, OECs must purchase their own paper registers due to limited funding, which results in uneven practices, charges to the population, and risks to the legal validity of records. The National Archives, which should safeguard the records, often receives paper registers with a significant delay, and faces recurrent shortages of the secure paper required for issuing certified copies. Certificates transmitted to the archives are not systematically digitized, creating vulnerabilities to loss, deterioration, and fraud. Citizens must request an extract in person through an ANH office, a decentralized request and delivery office, or an authorized partner. These requirements remain burdensome for people living far from available service points. The absence of systematic digitization and verification at the archives also contributes to long delays in issuing copies and reduces the potential for CR data to be used for planning and statistics.

Trust in CR services is further weakened by perceptions of corruption and inefficiency. Reports of bribery requests and weak oversight mechanisms contribute to citizen frustration and low uptake. In some cases, certificates are not signed promptly by the OEC official, further delaying issuance. Moreover, certificates that do reach parents are not always well preserved, particularly in contexts where paper documents are prone to damage or loss.

Institutionally, the national budget underfunds CR, which lacks the strategic prioritization afforded to the ONI's ID system. CR is heavily reliant on external technical and financial assistance for both infrastructure and operations, translating into fragile service delivery, dependence on ad hoc support, and limited modernization capacity. There is also no unified digital infrastructure, no direct data sharing with health or ID systems, and no effective feedback mechanism between different institutions involved in vital event registration.

Together, these factors mean that the system does not guarantee complete, timely, or accurate registration of vital events such as births. Deaths and marriages are rarely recorded. This undermines the integrity of CR as the foundation of legal identity and weakens its contribution to inclusive service delivery, public trust, and evidence-based policymaking.

Identification (ID)

Identification (ID) in Haiti has seen measurable progress, but still has challenges. Progress has occurred in coverage through ONI efforts, particularly with the introduction of the CINU. However, structural, legal, financial, and operational challenges continue to undermine the system's credibility, inclusiveness, and long-term viability.

Although ONI reports that about 67 percent of Haitian adults have received a CINU card, the process of obtaining the card remains challenging for many. The network of enrollment and card distribution centers is sparse and concentrates in urban areas. In rural and remote communities, access is significantly more difficult due to long travel distances, high transportation costs, and the opportunity cost of time spent away from work or caregiving responsibilities. These constraints are particularly severe for women, the elderly, and persons with disabilities. Physical infrastructure at enrollment centers is often inadequate, and the process is slow, with some applicants making multiple trips before obtaining a card.

While the CINU itself is provided at no cost, acquiring it can involve unofficial fees. This is particularly the case in areas where demand outpaces staffing capacity or where intermediaries exploit lack of oversight. In addition, outreach efforts are limited and not systematically targeted at hard-to-reach or marginalized groups, which perpetuates existing exclusion patterns. For example, border populations, informal urban settlements, and individuals without proof of CR often remain without IDs.

The legal and institutional framework guiding ONI's operations remains in flux. While the June 2020 Presidential Decree provides a legal framework for the digital identity system, questions remain around its operationalization, coherence with other laws, and alignment with the broader ID ecosystem. The absence of a comprehensive data protection law further limits clarity around data governance and institutional accountability.

Inter-institutional integration and data sharing are limited. The ONI collects biometric and biographic data but does not systematically share it with other government agencies, nor does it consistently receive updates from CR or health systems. There is no centralized or federated population register serving as a reference for authentication or service delivery. As a result, other institutions—such as the BRH *(Banque de la République d'Haïti)* or social protection agencies—maintain separate databases, creating inefficiencies, duplication, and inconsistencies.

Few Haitian institutions use digital identity verification services in a standardized manner, and there are no open Application Programming Interfaces (APIs) for secure authentication or interoperability across sectors. ONI's technical infrastructure includes a biometric deduplication system and a digital verification portal, but capabilities are underutilized. This limits the potential of the system to support use cases such as mobile onboarding for financial services, remote authentication, or digital integration.

Limited internal capacity to fully own, operate, and adapt the system introduces risks related to long-term maintenance, scalability, and system evolution. The operational structure of the identity system is publicly owned, and while external vendors have supported its development, it is not operated under a formal concession model—preserving public control over a critical piece of national infrastructure. However, gaps in public sector technical capacity mean that reliance on external partners and proprietary technologies can translate into dependency rather than complementarity, ultimately limiting the ONI's ability to independently scale, maintain, and adapt the system as needs evolve.

As with CR, trust and awareness also remain concerns. Many Haitians are unaware of the benefits of possessing a CINU or are skeptical of its relevance, especially when the card is not uniformly required to access services. Inconsistent communication and weak outreach limit understanding, while the lack of robust legal safeguards for personal data contributes to concerns about privacy and potential misuse.

Financial sustainability poses a continued risk. ONI has relied significantly on donor financing for system development and card issuance. While some funding is allocated through the national budget, it remains insufficient to ensure uninterrupted operations, future renewals, and expansion. No long-term financial model has been adopted to support ongoing coverage and system updates.

Use Cases

Despite widespread issuance of CINU cards, effective use in service delivery and governance remains limited. The potential for identification to serve as a platform for inclusive development and digital transformation remains largely untapped.

Chapter 5 of this report analyzes how this problem limits effective delivery of key government services and responsibilities. Use cases discussed are (i) delivery of social protection, (ii) facilitating financial inclusion and migration, (iii) administering elections, and (iv) collecting demographic and poverty statistics. A few key observations that highlight the kind of significant problems that can stem from an underdeveloped CR and ID system include:

- **Social protection.** Weak linkages between ID, social registry, and program beneficiaries' information systems mean that eligibility and targeting processes are often inefficient, relying on *ad hoc* methods rather than robust identity-based verification.

- **Financial services.** Rigid Know Your Customer (KYC) requirements hinder access for low-income populations. Mobile money providers cannot rely on simplified verification tiers, limiting the ability of poor households to open accounts and participate in the digital economy.

- **Statistics.** Similarly, the lack of integration between CR, ID, and the Institute of Statistics and Informatics (IHSI) data prevents generation of reliable population estimates and demographic insights that could inform policies.

Lack of interoperability across systems remains a major barrier. ONI, ANH, and IHSI maintain separate datasets, and few mechanisms exist for secure, automated data sharing. As a result, identity verification for service provision—whether in banking, mobile money, social protection, elections, or other uses—is often manual, duplicative, and prone to error. This raises costs for institutions and creates frustration for citizens, who must repeatedly present paper documents to prove their identity.

Digital verification capabilities exist but are not yet used consistently across the ecosystem. ONI provides a public verification interface through DELIDOC and API integrations with selected ministries, while many service-delivery processes continue to rely on manual checks and paper documents. Moreover, the system has not yet moved toward issuing verifiable digital credentials that would support future use cases such as e-government, e-signatures, or cross-sectoral data exchange.

Haiti ID4D Diagnostic and Key Recommendations

This diagnostic identifies gaps and weaknesses in Haiti's CR and ID systems and analyzes sectoral needs to provide actionable recommendations for modernization and investment. Analysis is guided by the Principles on Identification for Sustainable Development[1], endorsed by a broad coalition of global organizations, which emphasize inclusion, robust system design, and effective governance.

Despite the many challenges identified, Haiti's identity system offers a strong foundation on which to build. Existing infrastructure, growing coverage, and technical capacity can be leveraged to improve accessibility, trust, interoperability, and sustainability.

This diagnostic recommends a coordinated set of reforms and high-impact investments across three pillars: (i) Inclusion, (ii) System Design, and (iii) Governance. More specifically:

1. Expand options and coverage of credentials and identifiers. To close CR and ID access gaps, emphasize decentralization (through CRLDIs), easing of late registration processes, pre-recording of vital events, and systematic attribution of the NINU from birth. These steps aim to make credentials both more accessible and more inclusive.

2. Improve and facilitate enrollment processes. Conduct mass enrollment campaigns (leveraging existing social data like SIMAST and IHSI), expand mobile registration options, and simplify documentation requirements to address these barriers. Together, these reforms would reduce exclusion by making enrollment more convenient and less burdensome, particularly for marginalized groups.

3. Ensure long-term financial sustainability. To reduce reliance on outside funding and promote financial sustainability, recommendations call for earmarking budget lines for CR in the Public Budget Law and developing long-term financing models for both CR and ID. These measures would gradually shift the system from donor dependency to sustainable national ownership.

4. Initiate a whole-of-society awareness and advocacy movement. Develop user-friendly guides, launch communication campaigns, and engage communities directly

[1] *Principles on Identification for Sustainable Development : Toward the Digital Age (English).* Washington, D.C. : World Bank Group. http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/213581486378184357

during enrollment drives. Such interventions would not only build awareness but also strengthen trust in the system, reducing the risk of exclusion and under-registration.

5. Modernize and clarify policy and laws to enable and safeguard ID capabilities. Emphasize consolidating and clarifying the confusing legal framework, draft and enforce data protection and cybersecurity laws, and articulate a national policy vision to provide clarity, legal safeguards, and coherence for long-term development of the CR and ID ecosystem.

6. Reinforce institutional capacity and professionalize service delivery. Create training toolkits, practical guides, and exchange opportunities among staff, while reinforcing complaint-handling through platforms such as "Doléances." In parallel, strengthening ONI's board with institutions like the Ministry of Health and IHSI would increase ownership and inter-agency coordination. Collectively, these measures would professionalize service delivery, improve citizen experience, and reinforce institutional accountability.

7. Improve interoperability, data sharing, and data protection capabilities.[2] Design interoperability frameworks, create a national data sharing infrastructure, and operationalize connections between ONI, ANH, IHSI, and others to address systemic shortcomings. Coupled with anonymization and pseudonymization capabilities (techniques that remove or mask personal identifiers to protect individual privacy), these reforms would both protect privacy and maximize the value of CR/ID data for social, economic, and statistical purposes.

8. Digitize and decentralize processes and credentials. Decentralize back-end functions (including card printing), digitize enrollment and records issuance, scan and make historic records accessible, and create verifiable digital credentials. By investing in these reforms, Haiti could simplify processes, accelerate service delivery, and build the foundation for digital government services.

9. Strengthen infrastructure and technical capabilities. Evaluate and upgrade infrastructure, renew enrollment kits, and equip offices appropriately. Build remote verification capabilities and develop electronic signature functions to expand the utility and trustworthiness of ID credentials. These improvements would modernize the technical backbone of CR and ID systems and make them more crisis-resilient. Additionally, this would alleviate some government constraints on digital infrastructure

[2] While anonymization permanently and irreversibly de-identifies data, pseudonymization replaces direct identifiers with artificial codes. This allows data to be analyzed safely, while restricting the ability to re-identify individuals to authorized administrators holding the decryption key.

at the government level that hinder data sharing between CR and ID databases and the services that would rely on it, including regarding statistics.

Tables 6.1–6.3 in Chapter 6 present more specific recommendations for Haiti's ID and CR systems in each of these categories. The tables organize these recommendations by priority and expected time horizon, from "quick wins" to medium-term improvements and long-term investments, to facilitate prioritization and implementation planning.

Systematically implementing these recommendations can address barriers and advance development, ensuring that all Haitians can exercise their rights and access opportunities. Haiti has the opportunity to rapidly build a more inclusive, resilient, and effective identification ecosystem that supports access to essential services, strengthens social protection and financial inclusion, unlocks civic participation, and promotes access to economic opportunity.

1. INTRODUCTION

Context

Identification (ID) ecosystem

A large number of Haitians live without official proof of identity. Only an estimated 4.4 to 4.7 million Haitian adults, roughly two in three, possess a valid Unique National Identification Card (CINU). Among children under age five, 85 percent have their birth registered, but only 77 percent possess a birth certificate, with lower rates among the poorest and rural households. Identification (ID) gaps are especially acute for the poorest 40 percent of the population, people in rural and hard-to-reach areas, women facing cultural barriers to birth declaration, people affected by insecurity, and forcibly displaced populations, both deportees and internally displaced persons (IDPs).

Lack of civil registration (CR) and identity (ID) documents restricts access to essential services and economic opportunities in Haiti. These include education, social assistance, financial services, mobile communications, formal employment, and political participation. Late birth registration and ID issuance are hampered by poorly defined procedures, high indirect costs such as travel or informal fees, and weak interoperability between the CR and National Identification systems. Even for those who register, issuance delays are common: in May 2025, over 650,000 ID cards (representing about 11 percent of total cards produced) remained undelivered, with bottlenecks driven by centralized card printing in Port-au-Prince, logistical constraints, and security conditions limiting distribution.

Several systemic challenges explain coverage and delivery gaps. CR offices ***(Bureaux d'état civil, BECs)*** and the National Archives face chronic underfunding, reliance on informal fees and outdated paper-based processes, and suffer high staff turnover with limited training. Registers and certificates are often stuck in local offices instead of reaching the National Archives, blocking the issuance of secure archive extracts people require to access many services. The ID system, managed by the National Identification Office (ONI), is more digitalized but still depends on paper-based breeder documents, which many lack, and on limited enrollment capacity concentrated in urban centers. Mobile enrollment kits exist but are few in number, and their deployment is constrained by security risks, road inaccessibility, and resource limits.

Many individuals, particularly those in vulnerable or displaced situations, receive support from international partners to navigate these processes. Examples include:

- the International Organization for Migration (IOM), which works with the government to rehabilitate centers for reception and delivery of identity documents (CRLDIs) and other service points for people without identity documents;

- UNICEF, which supports birth registration efforts, especially in underserved communities and emergency settings;

- the Organization of American States (OAS), which has provided technical and logistical support to Haiti's ID system;

- the World Food Programme (WFP), which helps individuals obtain secure ID needed to deliver targeted cash transfers for food assistance; and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), which supports documentation for returnees and stateless persons.

The Government of Haiti (GOH) has taken steps to address these issues. These include legislative reforms through a 2020 Decree, the introduction of an electronic national ID card with biometric and chip-based security features, and ongoing efforts to decentralize card printing to Cap-Haïtien and other regional hubs. These reforms align with proposed mechanisms outlined under the National Social Protection and Promotion Policy (PNPPS) as part of a broader vision to expand inclusive service delivery. ID is also central to achieving other national priorities such as the National Financial Inclusion Strategy (SNIF), which depends on robust ID systems for secure customer verification and access to financial services. This ID4D diagnostic was conducted as complementary technical assistance linked to the World Bank's Haiti Digital Acceleration Project (HDAP).

Despite these advances, there is no unified vision for how Haiti's CR and ID systems should interoperate to improve service delivery. Key gaps remain around establishing a unique identifier from birth, enabling data sharing across systems, and standardizing identity verification and authentication mechanisms.

Geography and topography

Haiti's geography and topography present significant challenges for ID, CR, and delivery of public services. The country is predominantly mountainous, with rugged terrain covering much of its landmass and coastal plains accounting for only about 20 percent of its surface area. Many rural communities are located in isolated valleys or on steep hillsides, making physical access to administrative centers difficult. Road infrastructure is limited and often in poor condition, with only a few major road axes connecting key urban hubs. Secondary and rural roads are frequently unpaved and prone to flooding or landslides, especially during the rainy season, further restricting mobility.

For large segments of Haiti's rural population, especially in poorer households, long-distance travel on foot remains the primary means of transportation, limiting ability to access services. The cost of motorized transport is prohibitive, and even where available, vehicles may not be able to traverse the narrow, muddy, or damaged roads. This geographic isolation hampers individuals' ability to register births, obtain or renew ID credentials, or access other public services. Mobile registration campaigns and decentralized service points are essential but face logistical constraints, including transporting personnel, equipment, and materials to remote areas. Insecurity in certain regions compounds these challenges, creating additional barriers to outreach and consistent service delivery. As a result, geographic barriers contribute directly to disparities in CR and ID coverage between urban and rural areas, reinforcing broader inequalities in access to education, healthcare, social protection, and economic opportunities.

Demographics

Haiti's population is estimated at 11.6 million, based on projections from the last national census conducted in 2003. The absence of updated census data creates uncertainty in demographic estimates, particularly given high migration flows, significant internal displacement, and changing settlement patterns.

The country has a notably young population, with an average age of just under 25 and more than half of Haitians under 25. Fertility rates, while gradually declining over recent decades, remain among the highest in the Caribbean. This sustained high birth rate drives strong demand for birth registration services, particularly in rural

areas where access to CR remains uneven. Large households, averaging around five members and often spanning multiple generations, reflect both cultural norms and economic realities, and can influence the prioritization and pooling of resources for administrative processes such as obtaining identity credentials.

Life expectancy in Haiti remains relatively low at around 65 years for men and 69 years for women. The combination of shorter lifespans and health system challenges contributes to gaps in timely death registration, with many deaths occurring outside of formal health facilities and without subsequent civil registration. Together, these demographic patterns, including high fertility, a young population, large household sizes, and relatively low life expectancy, create both pressure and opportunity for strengthening CR systems, which are essential to capturing vital events accurately and delivering services equitably.

Infrastructure

Electricity coverage remains limited and unreliable, hampering service delivery. Frequent outages occur even in urban areas, and large parts of rural communities lack grid access altogether. Many local registration offices rely on backup generators or solar panels, which can be costly to maintain and limit service continuity.

Connectivity is similarly constrained. While mobile phone penetration has grown, internet access remains uneven, particularly in remote regions where cellular coverage is patchy or absent. This digital divide limits the ability to use online CR systems, identity verification, and service delivery, and often forces reliance on paper-based processes that are slower and more vulnerable to loss or damage.

Transportation infrastructure is underdeveloped. Roads are poorly maintained, there is limited public transportation, and few reliable long-distance transport options exist. Seasonal flooding, landslides, and road blockages caused by natural disasters or insecurity further isolate communities. For many residents of rural or mountainous areas, traveling to registration offices can require hours or even days of walking, which delays registration and document issuance. These infrastructure constraints, when combined, slow the modernization of Haiti's ID and CR systems and exacerbate disparities in access to public services.

Security

Haiti faces an acute security crisis driven by the pervasive control of armed gangs over large swaths of territory, particularly in the capital and surrounding areas. Gang-related violence has escalated in recent years, affecting every aspect of daily life and significantly hindering public service delivery, including CR and ID. Frequent armed confrontations, kidnappings, and territorial blockades have forced many government offices, including CR centers and National Archives, to suspend operations or operate under severe constraints.

Box 1.1: Violence also affects administrative functions

Because of the current security situation, most governmental offices in Port-au-Prince have had to move towards the outskirts of town, and some are office-less. Offices welcoming the public have also been affected, as can be seen in this picture depicting the Delmas registrar's office burned down by gangs.



Picture: Clarens Siffroy/Agence France-Presse — Getty Images

As of June 2025, an estimated 1.3 million people—11 percent of the country's population—were internally displaced, largely due to gang violence and insecurity. By March 2025, UNICEF estimated that more than one in eight children were internally displaced, a figure that had doubled compared to October 2024. While 45 percent of these IDPs came from the Port-au-Prince metropolitan area, the recent spread of armed violence to the Centre and Artibonite regions has caused increased displacements in the country's provinces. This scale of displacement places Haiti firmly in the category of a Fragility, Conflict, and Violence (FCV) context.

For ID and CR, the FCV situation creates systemic obstacles. Physical access to registration centers is often impossible in gang-controlled or conflict-affected areas, and mobile outreach teams face severe security risks. Displacement severs the link between individuals and their place of birth or residence, complicating verification processes and delaying document issuance. Many

IDPs lose their credentials while fleeing, and replacing them in unsafe zones can be nearly impossible. This not only excludes people from essential public services but also deepens their vulnerability, as lack of ID limits access to social protection, humanitarian aid, education, and economic opportunities.

Legal framework and institutional capacity

A pronounced gap between legislative intent and operational reality is emblematic of broader governance challenges in Haiti, where laws are often more advanced on paper than in practice. This is particularly evident in the CR and ID systems, where persistent capacity constraints, limited funding, and logistical difficulties undermine progressive legal frameworks and formal institutional mandates.

Existing laws related to CR are difficult to apply. The Civil Code remains the foundational legal reference for CR, defining the registration requirements for births, marriages, and deaths. However, relevant provisions are scattered across multiple articles, making them cumbersome to interpret and apply in practice. Complementary instruments—including the 2020 Decree that redefined the national identification framework—add further detail, yet are not fully integrated with the Civil Code or other sectoral laws. This dispersion complicates understanding for practitioners and can weaken compliance. For example, some interviewed CR clerks were not aware of the legal deadline to register a child, believing it was shorter than mentioned in the law.

Institutional roles mirror this lack of cohesion. *The Office National d'Identification* (ONI), operating under the Ministry of Justice and Public Security, manages the national identification system, while civil registration is carried out through a decentralized network of registry offices and supported by actors including tribunals, health facilities, communal authorities, embassies and consulates.

A number of factors hamper reform efforts. Reforms have strengthened the legal basis for identification and introduced modern security features such as biometric and chip-enabled ID cards, and development partners have supported capacity building. However, these advances remain hampered by insufficient infrastructure, outdated processes, and limited reach beyond urban centers.

Current Related Projects

Several World Bank and other development partner initiatives have sought to strengthen CR and ID systems and their interoperability with other databases in

Haiti, but with limited success. To date, most of these efforts have largely been small-scale and fragmented, often limited to pilot projects, sector-specific interventions, or activities targeting narrow geographic areas or specific population groups. Consequently, they have not yet delivered the systemic transformation required to modernize Haiti's foundational identity ecosystem. While some initiatives have produced valuable lessons and localized improvements, their impact has remained confined to the targeted contexts.

Achieving a robust and inclusive ID system in Haiti will require a comprehensive nationwide strategy supported by commensurate investment, as highlighted in the "Recommendations" section of this diagnostic. This approach should aim to create an integrated ecosystem that meets the needs of individuals, government institutions, and the private sector. In addition to the World Bank, key development partners active in this space include the Organization of American States (OAS); the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB); United Nations agencies such as UNICEF, UNHCR, and IOM; as well as the World Food Programme (WFP), and other bilateral and multilateral actors.

Tables 1.1 and 1.2 provide information on projects that support initiatives related to population registration (including ID, CR, and SP) as well as data enhancements contributing to improvement of the identification ecosystem. Annex B presents selected essential documentation related to CR and ID systems in Haiti.

Table 1.1: Projects involving the World Bank

NAME OF THE PROJECT	STATUS	DESCRIPTION
Adaptive Social Protection for Increased Resilience Project (ASPIRE / PSARA)	Active	The Project Development Objective (PDO) of the ASPIRE Project is to deliver cash transfers to targeted households and establish foundations for an adaptive social protection system that can respond to shocks such as natural disasters and pandemics. Its components include providing cash transfers through the Klere Chimen safety net program, strengthening and expanding the existing social registry (SIMAST), and improving data systems for targeting and monitoring. These activities are closely linked to data sharing, interoperability, and personal data quality, as they involve updating and validating household information, enhancing interoperability of social protection databases, and implementing geo-enabled monitoring tools to ensure accurate, transparent, and efficient delivery of benefits.
Haiti Digital Acceleration Project (HDAP)	Closed	The PDOs are to increase access to broadband services in Haiti and establish the foundations of digital resilience to respond to shocks. The project was implemented by the Ministry of Public Works and Communication (MTPTC). This ID4D diagnostic is linked and conducted as complementary technical assistance to the HDAP project.

Table 1.2: Projects involving other development and humanitarian partners

NAME OF THE PROJECT	STATUS	DESCRIPTION
Support to Haiti's National Identification Office (ONI) **OAS, MOFA, USAID (until 2025)**	Active	The objectives are to strengthen institutional capacity of Haiti's National Identification Office (ONI), enhance the nationwide identity card registration and distribution systems, and design and conduct a nationwide public awareness campaign.
Strengthening the Foundations of Digital Transformation of Public Management to Improve Government Effectiveness **IADB**	Active	The development objective is to contribute to improvements to policy implementation and service delivery to citizens by supporting increased effectiveness of public management through digitalization. The specific development objectives are to: (i) increase the institutional capacity of the digital government agency, (ii) increase efficiency of core management systems run by the Central MEF through digitalization of Central MEF internal management, and increase cybersecurity monitoring and management capacity of priority public agencies.
Western Hemisphere Program – Rehabilitation of CRLDIs **IOM**	Active	Rehabilitation of centers for reception and delivery of identity documents (CRLDIs) and provision of support to the relevant authorities to deliver identity documents. Seven CRLDIs have already been rehabilitated.
Poto Mitan **AFD, Expertise France**	Active	Aims to improve inclusive and locally accessible CR and administrative services by strengthening public institutions and fostering citizen engagement. It supports national-level reforms and decentralization efforts, focusing on efficiency, equity, and responsiveness—especially for women. The program also enhances service quality through citizen-administration partnerships, better complaint handling, and increased transparency.

2. HAITIAN IDENTITY ECOSYSTEM

Overview

Haiti's foundational ID ecosystem is composed of CR, ID, and Social Protection (SP) systems. The CR system is responsible for registering all births, deaths, marriages, and adoptions, and the identification framework provides for registration from birth, while national identity cards are issued from age 18. Additionally, the SP system (the social registry) contains personal data for vulnerability assessment.

The key institutions involved in Haiti's ID ecosystem are:

- The Ministry of Justice and Public Security (MJSP), and in particular the National Identification Office (ONI) that operates under its authority, and the Civil Registrars *(Officiers d'état civil, OEC)*, who are sworn civil servants of the Republic.

- The Ministry of Culture and Communication (MCC), and in particular the National Archives (ANH) that operate under its authority.

- The Ministry of the Interior and Territorial Collectivities (MICT), which plays an essential role in the administrative and territorial decentralization of both CR and ID processes.

- Embassies and consulates (under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Worship).

- Civil society organizations (CSOs) and religious leaders, who play an important community engagement and advocacy role to the population.

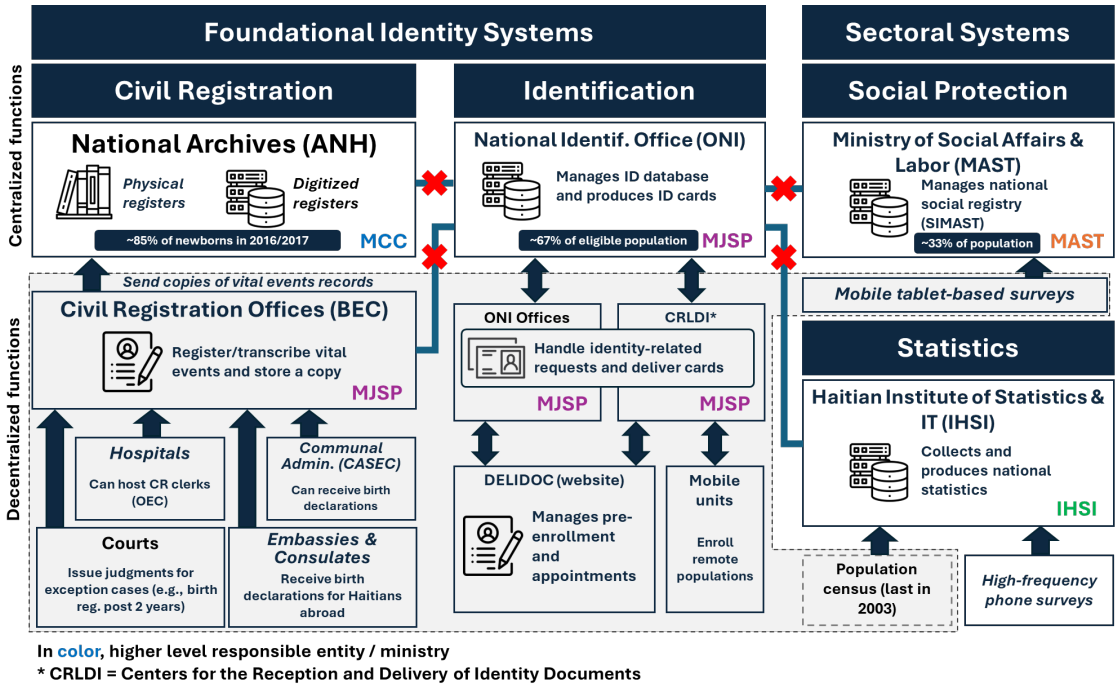
Three primary large-scale databases containing identification data coexist in the country: the National Archives, the National Identification system, and the Social Registry. Two other databases containing a subset of identification data but serving more limited purposes, are also in use in the country: the Fiscal Identification System and the Passport System.

Table 2.1: List of ID-related systems in Haiti and their characteristics (World Bank analysis)

SYSTEM NAME	ROLE	RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY	LEVEL OF DIGITALIZATION
National Archives *(Archives Nationales d'Haïti, ANH)*	Stores civil registration records and issues archives extracts	National Archives *(Archives Nationales d'Haiti)* under the Ministry of Culture and Communication	Paper-based, with limited digitization (scanning) of paper copies
National Identification system	Issues identification number and identification cards to Haitian nationals and residents	National Identification Office *(Office National d'Identification)*, under the Ministry of Justice and Public Security	Fully digitalized
Social Registry *(Système d'Information du Ministère des Affaires Sociales et du Travail, SIMAST)*	Collects demographic data for vulnerable households' identification and targeting purposes	Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor	Fully digitalized
Fiscal Identification System (NIF Database)	Maintains fiscal identification numbers for taxpayers (historically NIF, now transitioning to NINU)	Direction Générale des Impôts (DGI), under the Ministry of Economy and Finance	Partially digitalized (legacy system, some integration challenges with NINU)
Passport Database	Issues and manages passports for Haitian citizens	Immigration and Emigration Service, under the Ministry of Interior and Collectivities	Fully digitalized

Coordination mechanisms across the institutions operating the three primary systems are suboptimal. The systems operate with minimal interaction due to the absence of interoperability mechanisms. The fact that different entities manage the three systems complicates alignment of processes and data, hindering potential for interoperability. The two other systems that contain a subset of identity information operate completely independently, and are not embedded in the ecosystem.

Figure 2.1: Overview of the foundational ID ecosystem of Haiti (World Bank analysis)



A recurrent theme in the Haitian ID ecosystem is that practices often differ significantly from legislative mandates. Haitian laws themselves are vague and do not clearly specify the applicable processes. When the law is precise and prescriptive, it is rarely applied, or when it is, it is with significant delays. For example, the Decree of June 18th 2020 makes significant changes to Civil Registration procedures, but there is little indication that its provisions are applied in any systematic manner. As a result, we will describe here both the reality of the situation and the existing legal framework.

Haiti's three main foundational ecosystems all have difficulty closing gaps between operational effectiveness and laws governing them. The CR system, codified even before Haiti's independence in 1804, faces large obstacles to clarify and operationalize its legal framework. The ID system is slightly better organized, but many challenges remain, in particular with regards to financing and coverage. SP systems also have challenges, but due to their development with, and use by, international development organizations, and less interconnectedness with other aspects of daily life, the SP system is used dependably by SP agencies and humanitarian actors.

The 2005 decree creating the ONI marked the beginning of a trend towards consolidation of the two ID and CR functions. The restructuring combined ID and CR responsibility with the Ministry of Justice and Public Security within the National Office for Identification (ONI). However, this dynamic has not resulted in substantial changes for Haitians, who still need to separately perform processes related to each function.

Several dynamics combine to maintain the status quo, including:

- **While CR is handled by civil servants under the Ministry of Justice and Public Security as part of a historic prerogative, the ONI is a significantly more recent agency with administrative authority.** The ONI has the financial and operational means to operate at a faster speed, and is neither burdened by legacy organization and processes, nor by standard public employee salary limits, allowing it to recruit qualified staff more easily. However, the big gap in capacity and means between the two institutions slows the possibility to converge towards streamlined CR and ID systems.
- **CR has historically been an analogue process, based on pen and paper and management of physical registries akin to books.** One interviewed stakeholder referred to CR clerks as "scribes", whose roles are primarily to transcribe textual information from one paper to the other. Identity, on the other hand, is treated as a digital process, leveraging digital technologies such as biometrics, and tools such as digital forms and databases. Bridging these two worlds requires time, significant political will, and financial means.
- **There has so far been little political push to integrate systems and services.** In all countries, including Haiti, tensions exist between the will to provide a high-quality government service and challenges related to financing and cooperating between different entities. The combination of low financing and low incentives hinders data sharing, preventing development of technical infrastructures and trust frameworks. Enabling interoperability requires streamlining processes and avoiding redundancies, and natural organizational defensiveness exists where change and push toward efficiency is viewed as a potential threat to political power and budgets.

Coverage Levels

Ongoing constitutional, institutional, societal, medical, and natural crises troubling Haiti for the past decade, coupled with complicated surveying conditions, have hampered population survey data collection. Haiti's last population census was conducted in 2003. Subsequent population estimates rely on projections from that census, while sample surveys provide additional demographic and socioeconomic information. Most disaggregated data is not accessible, and the scarce data comes from a variety of sources with different data collection approaches. As such, they can only paint a general picture of the country's current state.

Table 2.2: Key demographic statistics related to CR and ID coverage (compilation from various sources)

POPULATION GROUP	NUMBER[3]	COVERAGE IN CR FOR CHILDREN BELOW AGE 5	COVERAGE IN ID
Total population	11,867,032 (100%)	85% Emmus-VI 2016-2017 estimates	4,400,000 (February 2023 USAID estimate) 4,700,000 (April 2025 WB estimate)
of which are aged 15 and above	~7,594,900 (64%)	Unknown	Same as above
of which are below age 15	~4,272,131 (36%)	Unknown	None
of which are men/boys	5,873,888 (49.5%)	Unknown	75.8% (2017 Findex estimate)
of which are women/girls	5,993,144 (50.5%)	Unknown	83% (2017 Findex estimate)
of which live in urban areas	7,084,618 (59.7%)	90% Emmus- VI 2016-2017 estimates	Unknown
of which live in rural areas	4,782,413 (40.3%)	82% Emmus- VI 2016-2017 estimates	Unknown
of which live on less than US$2.15 per day (2017 PPP) – 2026 projection	36.6%	Unknown	Unknown
of which are illiterate (ages 15 and above) – 2012 data	32%	Unknown	Unknown
of which are illiterate (ages 15-24) – 2017 data	11%	Unknown	Unknown

Civil Registration (CR)

High CR rates obscure important income and geographic disparities. The 2016-2017 EMMUS-VI survey provides the most up-to-date CR statistics. In it, 85 percent of children are estimated to have their birth registered before age five, an encouraging statistic. However, among the poorest quintile, only 75 percent of children have their births registered, indicating that the most vulnerable populations face significant barriers. Additionally, there is an 8-percentage-point gap between urban and rural areas, with urban areas achieving 90 percent registration compared to 82 percent in rural areas. Birth registration does not always translate into possession of a certificate: 85 percent of children under age five have their births registered, while only 77 percent possess a birth certificate.

[3] Numbers based on IHSI statistics for 2024 and extrapolations based on demographic and geographic indicators. Absolute numbers not provided when indicator is obtained in percentage point for a reference period prior to 2024.

Figure 2.2: Percentage of children below age five whose births were registered in the civil registry, by wealth quintile, from the poorest quintile on the left to the wealthiest quintile on the right. EMMUS-VI 2016–2017.

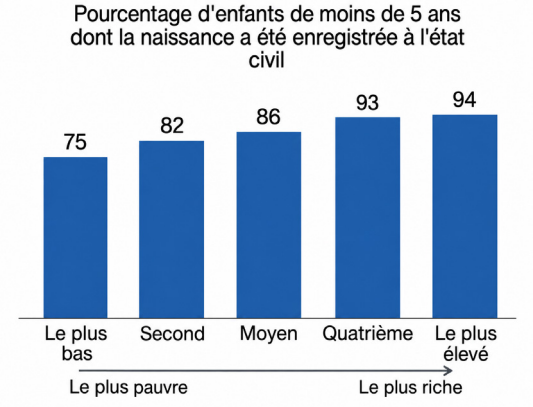
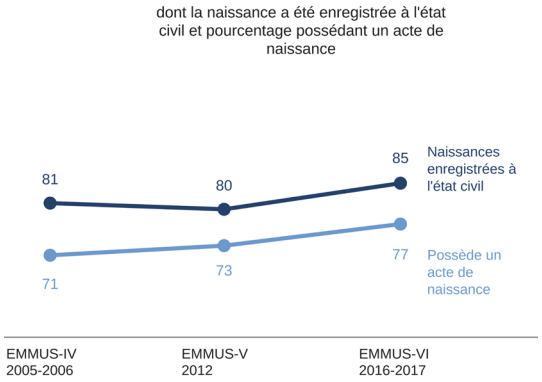


Figure 2.3: % of children below age five whose births were registered in the civil registry (dark blue) and % possessing a birth certificate (light blue). EMMUS-VI 2016-2017.



Identification (ID)

Despite the law calling for registration of all Haitians regardless of age, current procedures overwhelmingly target adults. Approximately 6.15 million individuals were registered in Haiti's identification database between 2019 and 2025,[4] of whom an estimated 4.4 to 4.7 million are living holders of a CINU. Around 67 percent of this population (Haitians above age 18) is covered. Of the 6.15 million individuals enrolled in the database, around 10 percent have not received their unique national identification card (~650k cards undelivered in May 2025).

Challenges for the Unregistered

Absence of a birth certificate entails far-reaching consequences for children and adults, hampering ability to receive a national identity card. A birth certificate is required to obtain a national identity card. Other documents such as a marriage certificate can in theory be accepted, but in practice, obtaining them also often requires a birth certificate. The Decree of June 18, 2020, stipulates that baptismal certificates can also be used to obtain a national identity card. In reality, even birth certificates issued by Bureaux d'état civil (BECs) (as opposed to extracts from the National Archives) are sometimes rejected as supporting documentation.

In turn, having a national identity card is a legal prerequisite for accessing most public services. Many are linked to the formal sector, such as holding a political appointment, working for the public or private sector, requesting documents from the public administration, applying to university, or obtaining a passport, driver's license, or vehicle license plates. But the requirement also extends to processes that have a cascading effect on exclusion. For example, opening a bank account, obtaining a phone number, voting, generally benefitting from social government programs, all legally require a national ID card.

Procedures for exceptions are poorly defined and applied, with significant lack of legal clarity causing confusion and dismissal of CR and ID processes. For example, a national ID card is required for "any registration or request to the civil register or to the civil registration services of the National Archives." In other words, to register a birth (including one's own), an adult must present their national ID card, for which a birth certificate is necessary. As part of the list of cases in which the law explicitly requires a national identity card, the Decree of June 18, 2020, adds: "generally all other cases requiring an identification card." This leaves service providers with legal uncertainty regarding to what identification means they can accept, and results in case-by-case processes, prone to generating confusion with both service providers and citizens. This pervasive confusion forces many Haitians to resort to illegality, or to simply dismiss CR and ID processes.

[4] Statistics in May 2025. Up to date statistics can be found on the ONI's website (https://oni.gouv.ht/), in the "Statistics" tab.

3. CIVIL REGISTRATION (CR) SYSTEM

Overview and Context

Civil Registration (CR) in Haiti has a long history, tracing its roots back to the colonial period. Initially established under French rule, the system was designed to record vital events such as births, marriages, and deaths. This was primarily intended to serve administrative and legal purposes, including taxation and inheritance claims.

Following Haiti's independence in 1804, the state adopted and adapted the existing CR system. The objective was to build a foundation for governance and social order in the newly independent nation. Over the years, legislative frameworks were introduced to formalize and modernize the process. For instance, the Civil Code of Haiti, first enacted in 1825, mandated the registration of vital events and outlined the responsibilities of local officials in maintaining accurate records. Subsequent amendments to the Civil Code and additional laws have sought to refine these regulations, addressing issues such as delayed registrations and penalties for non-compliance. In the mid-20th century, the Haitian government introduced specific decrees to expand the reach of CR offices, aiming to improve accessibility in underserved rural areas. These legislative updates reflected an evolving understanding of the importance of civil documentation for national planning, legal identity, and social equity.

Despite being mandatory and heavily regulated, CR is poorly funded, causing operational problems. In practice, CR in Haiti is synonymous with birth registration, whereas marriage, death, and other vital events registration are not performed in any systematic fashion. CR activities fall under the authority of the Ministry of Justice and Public Security. Following the Decree dated June 18, 2020, these responsibilities have been specifically assigned to the ONI, the MJSP agency in charge of identification, although only civil registrars *(Officiers d'état civil, OECs)* are legally given the authority to sign civil certificates.

Table 3.1: Birth Registration system, summary of primary information.

BIRTH REGISTRATION	
Minimum eligible age	From birth
Maximum age for regular declaration	Two years, after which the birth registration process must go through lower / trial court to be regularized. In 2019, a presidential decree declared a five-year period during which people needing to regularize their situation could do so for free.
Target demographic	Haitian nationals Foreigners born on Haitian soil
Target population size	~11.6 million
Coverage	85% of children below 5 were reported registered in the EMMUS-VI 2016-2017 survey, up from 81% in 2005-2006
Birth record cost for the population	Free in theory. In practice, it is well-established that the birth records are often charged between HTG 250 and HTG 1000 (US$1.9 to US$7.6)

Inclusion

Eligibility

All Haitians' births are eligible to be recorded in the CR system. In addition, foreigners born in Haiti can also have their birth registered. Registration is mandatory by law, and the law provides for prison sentences for individuals who have witnessed a birth and failed to declare it, although these sentences are very rarely enforced. Birth registration is also made practically mandatory by conditioning access to many fundamental services, such as opening a bank account, enrolling in a school or obtaining an ID card. The age limit for birth registration is two years old. Beyond that age, regularization must take place through the judicial system. The procedure to do so is not clearly defined and therefore complicated to navigate.

Box 3.1: The Birth Certificate

The Haitian birth certificate issued by BEC is an A4-sized paper record that contains biographic and metadata elements.

These elements are handwritten on pre-printed forms and present virtually no security features, with the exception of the ink-based stamp and signature of the CR officer.



Picture: World's Children's Prize Foundation

Cost

Birth registration is theoretically free, but in practice, CR offices are not provided enough financial resources, so they sometimes informally charge citizens for the service. The amount charged can vary case by case. A 2020 UNICEF study estimated that the amount charged for birth registration lies between HTG 250 and HTG 1000 (US$1.9 to US$7.6), and reports of fees of up to HTG 1500 have been documented. This represents wages of weeks of labor for a significant amount of the population (see statistics in the Coverage Levels section), which may deter the poorest citizens from declaring the birth of their children. This situation is recognized at the highest level of government, as exemplified by a 2019 circular by the Minister of Justice reminding CR officers that birth registration processes and delivery of birth certificates should be free of charge.

A baptismal certificate, issued by a religious institution, can occasionally serve as a substitute for a birth certificate in Haiti. These certificates play a vital role for children whose births have not been officially declared. They are often accepted for purposes such as school enrollment (particularly in schools run by churches) and as supporting documentation for late birth registration or obtaining a national identity card. However, like birth certificates, baptismal certificates come at a cost, which can reach up to HTG 1000, posing additional financial barriers for families in need.

Challenges for the population

Declaration by mothers

Both laws and customs place disproportionate hardships on mothers when they want to declare the birth of their child. During the declaration, they are required to provide identification for both the mother and the father. In 2021, UNICEF reported that this often translates into clerks requiring the father to also be present during the declaration, either because of lack of knowledge of the appropriate procedure, or by custom. With many children in single-parent families being born out of wedlock, including in cases where the father does not want to recognize parenthood of the child, or when the identity of the father is unknown, this creates conditions in which mothers are not able to declare the birth of their children. This perpetuates cultural traditions causing underreporting of children by single mothers out of shame or lack of knowledge.

Reaching registrar offices

CR offices are primarily based in city centers, which presents several obstacles. While attempts at spreading them throughout the country have taken place, including instances when clerks' offices have been located in places such as maternity wards, these cases remain rare and access to registrar's offices remains challenging.

Obtaining copies

Obtaining copies of birth certificates is particularly challenging for several reasons. These include complex processes, cost and distance to administrative centers (ANH and BECs, depending on the case) able to provide them, and inadequate procedures and non-compliance with established procedures by the administration at different parts of the value chain. For more detailed information about cost challenges, refer to section Cost. For more detailed information about the challenges, refer to section Lifecycle and Business Processes.

Governance

The CR system in Haiti is administratively divided into ten regional offices, about 180 local offices, and a few other notable actors designed to manage vital events recording across the country. The central authority, under the Ministry of Justice and Public Security (MJSP), oversees policy implementation and regulation, ensuring compliance with national laws. Regional offices coordinate efforts across departments, providing support and supervision to local registry offices. Local offices are the primary points of contact for citizens, registering births, as well as marriages and deaths, although the last two are rarely recorded. While CR is primarily the prerogative of MJSP offices, hospitals, communal administration, embassies and consulates also play a role in capturing birth registration data. In addition, tribunals are also mandated to pronounce judgments allowing registration of births after a child passes two years of age. While the Ministry of Culture, through the National Archives, is mandated to store copies of vital records, it plays no functional role in CR processes beyond storage and retrieval. The Decree of June 2020 (see Box 3.2) brings CR and ID functions closer together, but does not clarify the modalities and the split of responsibilities between the ONI and Officiers d'état civil (OECs) (see next section).

Box 3.2: Articles of the Decree of June 2020 pertaining to the Civil Registry and ONI

Article 7 – The Ministry of Justice, which oversees the Civil Registry and has authority over the National Identification Office (ONI), aligns the respective roles and responsibilities of these two entities to enable them to effectively manage the national identification register.

Article 7.1 – Civil registry officers remain public officials who work closely and systematically with the ONI in managing birth certificates and the unique national identification number.

Article 7.2 – The ONI carries out the digital entry and processing of civil registry data. It also ensures the assignment of the unique national identification number and the issuance of birth certificates, death certificates, and the national identification card.

Source: Decree of June 2020 on the Unique National Identification Number and the National Identification Card

Civil Registration Offices (Bureaux d'état civil, BEC)

CR processes are mostly handled by civil registration offices (BECs), and their officers (OECs) and clerks. These are responsible for transposing birth declarations to their registers, storing copies, sharing copies with the National Archives, and providing copies to the population.

Box 3.3: BEC offices

BEC offices concentrate in urban areas, with limited online information on their locations. In the Cap-Haïtien office, no digital systems were present, electricity was scarce, and clerks worked in cramped, poorly lit conditions without privacy, hindering service delivery and accurate recordkeeping.





Pictures: Alexandre Amard, World Bank

The 2005 Decree places BECs and OECs under ONI authority and supervision, in theory to better link CR and ID. The rationale is that this could, for example, facilitate issuing of national identification numbers during birth registration. In practice, however, little has changed due to financial and technical limitations:

- **UNICEF reports that BECs are severely understaffed.** Budget allocations for salaries are not systematically earmarked for BEC personnel, leaving many essential functions to be performed by workers not on the MJSP's payroll. Approximately 42.5 percent of BEC staff did not receive remuneration from the MJSP in 2021.[5] Instead, their compensation relies on charges for services that, by law, should be provided free of charge. In effect, BEC staff are forced to engage in unlawful practices to sustain their operations.
- **Staff training is another significant challenge.** About 29 percent (29.4) of personnel reported they did not receive any training on birth registration norms, standards, and laws.[6] Even among those trained, the content often relies on outdated information that does not reflect recent legislative updates. This was confirmed by a World Bank mission during which some clerks were unaware of the legal provisions on matters as basic as the time limit for a regular birth declaration.

National Archives of Haiti

Under the Ministry of Culture and Communications, the National Archives of Haiti (ANH) is responsible for CR document collection, preservation, and management. This includes birth, marriage, and death certificates. These archives act as a centralized repository for official records used for legal and administrative purposes. The law of August 18, 1976 on National Archives outlining CR duties and responsibilities specifies that signed extracts issued by the ANH are valid supporting documents for administrative, judicial, or other institutions across the national territory.

But the ANH faces several challenges:

- **Fees.** Unlike BECs, ANH is not legally required to provide their services free of charge; they are authorized to charge fees for preparing and delivering copies of records, with revenue generated from these charges allocated to the institution's operating budget.

[5] Oversee Advising Group (OAG). Étude compréhensive du système d'enregistrement des naissances en Haïti. UNICEF Haiti, 2021.
[6] Ibid.

- **Security.** The ANH is split between two buildings, with the main office—which contains historical documents and certificates of vital events from Port-au-Prince dating from prior to 1950—inaccessible due to the city's security conditions. The other building, at Delmas 75, stores the majority of civil registries over eight storage areas, separated by region, for a total surface area of around 600m^2. Archives extracts pertaining to vital events represent approximately 70 percent of the activity of the Archives; around 200 people out of a total of 300.

Box 3.4: The archives extract

The archives extract issued by the ANH is an A4-sized paper record that contains a copy of the vital record.

The elements are machine-printed on embossed paper, to which a hologram is affixed. Each extract is then individually signed by the director general.

The paper costs around US$0.70 per sheet, and the hologram US$0.40 per piece, for a total of US$1.10 in consumables per extract excluding printing.



RÉPUBLIQUE D'HAÏTI

LIBERTÉ ÉGALITÉ FRATERNITÉ

ARCHIVES NATIONALES

D2016/410757

A0520153

Extrait des registres des Actes de **Naissance** déposés au bureau des Archives Nationales de la République.

Commune : JACMEL - Bureau : NORD
Acte n° : - Année : 199 - Registre : ALZ - Page :

ACTE DE NAISSANCE DE né le 11 août 1993

L'An mil neuf cent quatre-vingt- , An 19 ème de l'Indépendance et le Lundi trois Jan er.
Par-devant Nous Thieno LUBIN, Officier de l'Etat Civil de Jacmel Section Nord, Soussigné;
A comparu le , majeur demeurant à Jacmel et domicilié à Jacmel. Lequel nous a présenté un enfant du sexe masculin qu'il nous a déclaré être son fils né le à midi de ses oeuvres légitimes avec la citoyenne son épouse majeure demeurant et domiciliée à Jacmel.
Auquel enfant il a donné les prénoms de
Dont acte fait en notre Bureau, Rue Baranquilla en présence de et de tous deux majeurs demeurant et domiciliés à Jacmel témoins choisis et amenés par la comparante.
Après lecture faite par nous du présent acte, l'avons signé avec le comparant et les témoins.
Récépissé de l'Administration Générale des Contributions au No 644 Série H.H.H.
Signé: Le Comparant: Les Témoins: L'Officier:
Thieno LUBIN

Fait à Port-au-Prince, le 14 novembre 2016
POUR COPIE CONFORME

JEAN WILFRID BERTRAND
DIRECTEUR GENERAL

Picture: Haiti démarches administratives

- **Limited records digitization.** This restricts accessibility and increases the risk of loss or damage from environmental factors. The majority of documents are still maintained in physical form, making them vulnerable to natural disasters and inadequate storage conditions. The National Archives have storage space constraints for new documents, and several years of archives are yet to be sorted. Since 2005, what is being qualified as a pilot project (but is in effect a running operating procedure) has progressively digitized records, with the infrastructure provided by the company FamilySearch. Between 2008 and 2012, a mass digitization campaign supported by the OAS and the Government of Canada helped digitize 16.7M records, but the campaign has stopped.[7]

Box 3.5: ANH operations

CR operations represent around 70 percent of the ANH's operations, and consist of the storage, preservation, digitization of vital events certificates, and the production of archives extracts.

These pictures depict a digitization work station, and the tedious process of manually searching for records in degrading registries lining the ~600m^2 warehouse.





Picture: Archives Nationales de Haïti.

[7] https://w05.international.gc.ca/projectbrowser-banqueprojets/project-projet/details/a034034001

Other functional actors

Besides BECs, different actors support birth registration processes:

- Communal section administration (CASEC) can initiate CR processes, in particular in locations where no BECs are available in the vicinity.[8]
- In some hospitals, CR clerks dispatched from local BEC offices can initiate birth registrations. Hospitals may provide birth details as supporting documentation for declarations, but their systems are not directly linked to CR databases, limiting efficiency and preventing real-time data sharing. Once the initial process is completed, the clerk takes the certificates to the BEC office for OEC signature. The signed documents are then returned to the hospital in the following days for parents to collect, which can lead to delays and unclaimed certificates if parents do not return.
- Embassies and consulates serve as BECs for Haitians living abroad.
- Churches and other religious institutions can provide baptismal certificates, which can be used as supporting documentation for a birth declaration or to request identity cards.
- Local tribunals can regularize situations (for example, birth declarations after the child reaches age two).

Box 3.6: Birth registration clerk's desk in a maternity ward in Cap-Haïtien

In Justinien Hospital in Cap-Haïtien, the birth registration clerk's desk is located in an open, public-facing area with no privacy measures. Birth certificates are stored unsecured in the desk's drawer, risking loss, damage, or un-authorized access. Many certificates remain uncollected because mothers often leave the hospital before the documents are signed and ready for delivery, further complicating timely and secure issuance.



P

[8] Law of April 4, 1996, on the organization of the communal section territorial collectivity.

Lifecycle and Business Processes

Birth declaration: information recording, birth certificate issuance, and transcription in registries

A birth declaration system is in place, but in practice mothers encounter significant challenges when declaring the birth of their children, especially for children born out of wedlock (see Section Challenges for the population). The declaration must be made to a civil registrar in the municipality where the mother resides or where the child was born. This step involves reporting the birth of the child to the appropriate civil authority within two years of the birth.[9] The responsibility lies with the parents or, in the absence of the parents, with medical professionals (doctors, midwives) or anyone present during the birth.[9] Where birth occurs at a hospital, parents request an attestation of birth, which can be used to facilitate subsequent birth registration. Births can also be declared to the communal section (CASEC) in regions without immediate access to a civil registry office, who will then transfer the declaration to the BEC. For Haitians born out of the country, embassies and consulates serve as CR officers (OEC) to record births and send records to the National Archives.[10]

Registrars (OECs) collect data for birth registration based on information provided by parents, other individuals present at the birth, and witnesses. Religious establishments, such as churches, also often act as data sources through baptismal certificates, and some medical establishments also supply birth-related data that can be used to establish records. The form to be used is conditioned by the child's family situation. There exist three different forms—"Mother", "Father" and "Third party"—complicating the procedure.

[9] Decree of November 14, 1988.
[10] Law of September 14, 1953, on the Consular Service.

Table 3.2: Practices of civil registry officers (OECs) for registering a birth with the civil registry and assigning the child's surname[11]

Declarant	Marital status of the child's parents	Copy of declaration issued to declarant	Surname to be carried by the child / note entered in margin of the record
1. Father	Married	Birth certificate / declaration "father"	Father – legitimate child
	Cohabiting	Declaration "father"	Father – natural child
2. Mother	Married	Birth certificate / declaration "mother"	Father [upon presentation of marriage certificate] – legitimate child
	Cohabiting	Declaration "mother"	Father – natural child
	Single	Declaration "mother"	Mother – natural child
	Widow [former legal spouse]	Declaration "mother"	Father [upon presentation of marriage certificate] – legitimate child
	"widow" [former cohabiting partner]	Declaration "mother"	Mother – natural child
3. Adult heirs of the deceased accompanied by the "widow"	Mother "widow" [former cohabiting partner]	—	Father – natural child
4. Representative of the father	Married or cohabiting	—	Father – natural child
5. Guardians of orphan(s)	Married parents but deceased	Birth certificate / declaration "third party" (person)	Father – legitimate or natural child
5.1. Paternal-side guardians	Cohabiting parents but deceased	—	Father [upon presentation of parents' marriage certificate] – legitimate child
5.2. Maternal-side guardians	Cohabiting parents but deceased, or mother single and deceased	—	Father – natural child / mother – natural child
6. Doctors, surgeons, midwives, or others present at birth or who received the mother for delivery	—	Civil registrars often refuse to register the birth declaration	—

[11] Source : Diagnostic des systèmes D'enregistrement à l'État Civil et D'Identification Nationale En Haïti, 2007, GARR and D&D

There are notable inconsistencies in the birth registration process. Registers are not uniformly provided by the Ministry of Justice and Public Security, leading to potential discrepancies in forms used across different BECs. Additionally, there is often a delay between the introduction of new legal requirements—such as those specified by the Decree of June 18, 2020—and their implementation in the field, meaning not all BECs may collect the updated data elements. The most commonly collected data attributes in birth registration include the following (in this order):

- Number of the record
- Date of the record
- Name of the OEC and city of the BEC
- Name and address of the father
- Gender of the child
- Mention of the marital status of the parents (recorded as "legitimate" child)
- Date and hour of birth
- Name and address of the mother
- Name of child
- Names and city of two witnesses

Minimal fraud protections exist for the birth registration process. The Decree of June 18, 2020, mandates inclusion of the nationality of both parents and the National Identification Numbers (NINU) for the mother, father, and child. It also removes the requirement to record the parents' marital status and the presence of witnesses. In practice, old registers are still in use. The information is handwritten in a standardized form and stamped with a common ink seal, offering minimal protection against forgery or unauthorized use. CR clerks record the information in most cases, but they are not empowered to sign the certificates. The certificates are thus often signed in batches, meaning the family must come back to the office to receive their signed certificate.

While policy dictates an annual submission process between January 1 and February 10, severe backlogs persist; many registries are not transmitted for several years and remain archived in local registrar offices. The signed certificate record is transcribed in two registers, one that will remain with the office for as long as the OEC is active, and one that needs to go through a complex administrative chain. It is first brought to the government commissioner ***(commissaire du gouvernement)*** to be signed, then sent to the Ministry of Justice and Public Security to finally be forwarded to the National Archives. But because the registries remain unsent, the National Archives are unable to provide archive extracts for these certificates, and the only option to

obtain a copy is to go back to the office where the initial registration was done, in the hope that the registry copy might still be accessible and retrievable. When the registrar's appointment at the office terminates, representatives from the Ministry of Justice must inventory the remaining registers in the office, put them through a certification process involving the commissioner, and send them to the National Archives. In practice, all reports indicate this is rarely done.

Box 3.7: Non-delivered vital record certificates and registers

Due to the delay between declaration and signature by the civil registrar, many vital record certificates end up lying around CR offices for extended time, in conditions unfavorable to their integrity and retrievability.



Pictures: Alexandre Amard, World Bank

Data management

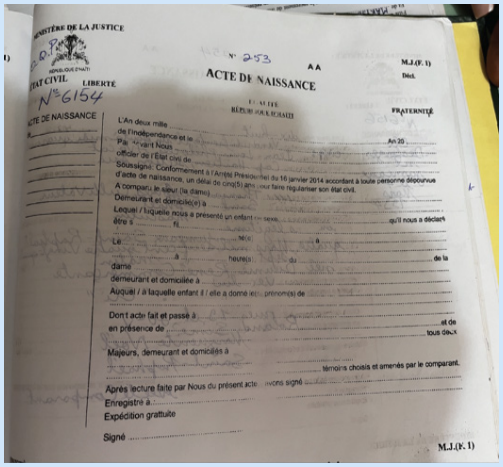
Data management also presents difficult challenges:

- Until the end of the stage just described, every process has been paper-based. The birth certificate provided to the family is a single sheet of regular paper, and the two birth registers are paper booklets.
- The certificates were originally designed to contain a unique identifier to facilitate tracking and authentication. However, due to the registrar offices' lack of resources, they are primarily simply photocopied from a single source document—a cheaper way to acquire them—meaning a single identifier can be found on hundreds, or even thousands of certificates.
- Similarly, registers are often not purchased through any official channel, and numbers are handwritten.

The only birth registration data digitization that takes place is for the register that reaches the ANH, but capacity for even this is weak. Since 2005, a subset of civil certificates is being digitized: certificates processed to respond to archive extracts requests, and civil registries received from civil registrars. Due to capacity constraints, only a fraction of these incoming civil registries is being digitized. This digitization process is supported by approximately 20 computers and their operators, who manually transcribe the information from the registries to the system. Additionally, the registries are scanned and appended to the digitized database records. This system is provided by FamilySearch, an American Mormon organization, for free. Data is shared with the organization, who then provides a structured database to the ANH, and the appropriate search functionality.

Box 3.8: Vital events registers

These booklets are primarily acquired through the cheapest local printer, and their quality is poor. A 200-page register costs around HTG 5000 (~40USD)



Pictures: Alexandre Amard, World Bank

Obtaining copies of birth certificates

Both the BEC and the National Archives can provide birth certificate copies, but this procedure also presents significant challenges. Copies issued by the National Archives are called "archives extracts" ("extraits d'archives"). For copies requested from BEC, the birth record must be intact and locatable (see Box 3.7), and the individual must pay for the copy. However, these copies are rarely accepted as official documentation due to the ease with which they can be fabricated. A more useful copy comes in the form of the archives extract. This procedure also faces several challenges. First of all, obtaining an archives extract is conditional on the ANH's receipt of the register. Second, the procedure to obtain the extract is obfuscated by the lack of

public explanations on the process, with the website of the National Archives last being online in 2020. Third, copies are costly: it cost HTG 700.00 in 2020, or approximately US$5.35.[12]

Citizens have three options to obtain their archives extract, each of which requires a personal appearance. The first option is to make a request directly at the ANH office. Due to the current security situation, this option is only realistic for individuals already living in Port-au-Prince. The second option is to make the request to any of the ANH request and delivery offices, including those present in Centers for the Reception and Delivery of Identity Documents (CRLDI). Obtaining an archives extract typically takes one month using this route, which includes transit time out of Port-au-Prince and into the ANH deconcentrated unit. The last option is to make the request through the partner network of the ANH (for example, Sogexpress, an entity of the Sogebank group). In case a birth record cannot be located through any of these routes, a new declaration must be done through a local tribunal, without guarantee that this new record will find its way to the national archives for future re-issuance.

Interoperability and Use

Only original birth certificates, archives extracts, and, in rare cases, certified copies are accepted for administrative procedures, but the majority of records are stored in paper form with no interoperability with other systems or services. Due to the lack of interoperability, other databases containing personal information, such as the National Identification Register and SIMAST, must replicate data collection efforts. This challenge is exacerbated by the unstructured nature of birth certificates and diverse handwriting styles, making optical character recognition difficult. These factors significantly increase the risk of errors during data transcription, especially considering the unique and less standardized naming conventions commonly found in Haiti.

Meanwhile, copies of birth certificates issued by BECs are, in practice, not considered trustworthy. While these are legally acceptable forms of identification for accessing common services such as opening bank accounts or obtaining passports, they are too easily forgeable. Archives extracts are required in these cases because they have contained an embedded holographic security feature since 2008. These extracts, however, can still be obtained through corruption of National Archives personnel.

[12] Operations in which free archive extracts have been offered to the population, called "Coup de poing" or "Kout pwen" in Haitian Creole, have taken place in partnership with the ONI, but they are rare and targeted.

Summary of Business Processes and Associated Challenges

Figure 3.1: Simplified view of birth registration and birth record copy obtaining processes, and key challenges identified (World Bank analysis)

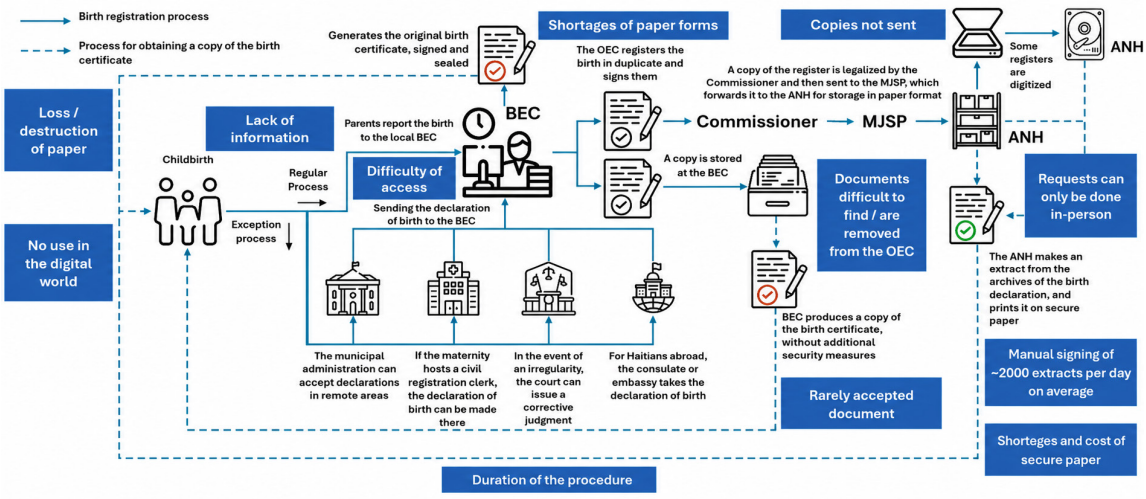


Table 3.3: List of challenges related to Haitian birth registration processes (World Bank analysis)

CHALLENGE	DESCRIPTION
1. Lack of information – uncertainty about record location or process	Many citizens do not know where their birth was registered, which office holds the record, or how to request an extract, especially if they have moved to another department.
2. Difficulty of access – Physical and financial barriers to reaching registry offices	Registry offices are often far from where people live, especially in rural or mountainous areas. Poor road infrastructure, high transport costs, and insecurity make it hard for citizens to access them.
3. Lack of records – missing or destroyed civil registers	Physical registers may have been damaged, lost, or never properly recorded due to disasters, poor archiving, or negligence.
4. Copies not sent – gaps in transmission between communes and the national archives	Local registry offices may fail to send copies of civil registers to the national archives (ANH), limiting retrieval options.
5. Documents that are difficult to find / removed from the OEC – poor organization or unauthorized removal of records	Even when copies exist at the OEC, they may be misplaced, poorly cataloged, or removed, making extraction difficult.

CHALLENGE	DESCRIPTION
6. Request for an in-person extract only no remote or delegated request mechanisms	Citizens must often travel to the commune of registration or the ANH in person, which is costly and time-consuming, particularly for those living in different departments or abroad.
7. Manual signing of ~2,000 extracts per day on average – administrative overload	The high volume of extract requests combined with manual signing requirements leads to long delays.
8. Lack of secure paper – shortages of official stationery	Official secure paper required for extracts may be unavailable, stalling the process until resupply.
9. Rarely accepted document – limited institutional recognition	Some extracts, especially older ones, may not meet current standards and are rejected by institutions, forcing applicants to restart the process.
10. No use in the digital world – lack of digitization and interoperability	Birth records are not integrated into electronic systems, limiting their use in digital public services.
11. Loss/destruction of paper – physical vulnerability of registers	Registers stored on paper are prone to deterioration, flooding, fire, pests, and handling damage.
12. Duration of the procedure – long processing times	Delays in retrieval, verification, and manual preparation can stretch the process over weeks or months.

4. IDENTIFICATION SYSTEM

Overview and Context

Compared to CR, which has a long history in Haiti dating from the 18th century, foundational identification is a much more recent concept. It found its legal origins in the Decree of June 1, 2005 establishing the ONI and the national identity card. Prior to 2005, the fiscal card and Tax Identification Number were the primary means of identification for Haitian citizens and residents. Since then, they have been progressively replaced by the Unique National Identification Number (NINU) and the Unique National Identification Card (CINU), now considered the two primary means of legal identification. In practice, however, the Tax Identification Number is still being requested by some service providers.

The national identification card was originally conceived primarily for electoral purposes, and was largely supported by the Organization of American States (OAS). This strong link between the card and electoral processes still pervades today, with many Haitians, including in the administration, referring to the national identification card as the "electoral card".

In June 2020, a new decree replaced the decree of 2005 and stands as the current applicable legislative framework. This covers operation of the ONI, the registration in the identification database, and national identification cards. This decree also retroactively introduced a new electronic version of the Haitian ID in 2018, for which delivery started in 2019. Finally, the Decree specifically attributed birth registration prerogatives to the ONI in an effort to streamline birth registration and identification processes.

Table 4.1: National identification system, summary of primary information (World Bank analysis, data source ONI)

NATIONAL IDENTIFICATION	
Minimum eligible age	Birth for partial registration (assignment of a NINU, no biometric capture). Five years for full registration (assignment of a NINU, biometric capture). Age 18 to obtain a national ID card.
Target demographic	Haitian nationals.

NATIONAL IDENTIFICATION	
Target population size	~7 million.
Coverage	Estimated unique national identification card (CINU) ownership between ~4.4 million (USAID 2023 estimate) and ~4.7 million (WB 2025 estimate) living people (estimated based on card deliveries and death rates over the period) ~6.5 million people enrolled in the identification register between 2019 and 2025. Approximately 52% women to 48% men (based on March 2025 statistics).
Card cost for the population	Free for first and subsequent cards (situation in December 2024). Article 12.2 of the Decree of June 2020 delegates the determination of the charge to the budgetary law, which could introduce charges. Reports from humanitarian partners have mentioned the existence of "informal but systematized rent-seeking mechanism", whereby issuance of a card which should be free is conditional on payment by the citizen.
Card cost for the government	~US$4 to 5 for a blank card ~US$11/12 (estimated) total cost per card including linked processes. These costs are largely supported by international donors.

Inclusion

Eligibility

Registration in the identification database is mandatory for all Haitians. All Haitians are eligible to obtain a Unique National Identification Number (NINU), while Haitians aged 18 and above are eligible to obtain a Unique National Identification Card (CINU).

Use

The CINU and the NINU are essential for accessing most public and private services, and participating in most essential public activities. These include elections, registering in secondary education, and holding a job in the formal sector. But the law makes it a requirement beyond the formal sector, which affects the most vulnerable population as well: for example, it is also legally required to possess a National Identity Card to benefit from social protection programs and obtain a SIM card, which can be used to receive cash transfers through mobile money (see Section Financial inclusion and cash transfers).

Cost

Since introduction of the new national identity card in 2019, there is no cost for registration in the identification database, assignment of a national identification number, and issuance of an identity card. This absence of a charge is not established by law; instead, Article 12.2 of the Decree of June 2020 delegates the determination of the charge to the budgetary law, thus making it susceptible to change.

However, indirect costs can create a cascade of costs and problems for the vulnerable. A person not able to present an identity card to law enforcement authorities can be charged a fine of 5 percent of their monthly revenue, or 5 percent of the minimum social salary for unemployed persons. While acting as a strong incentive to obtain an identity card, this rule can create a cascading effect of identification injustice. While registration is technically free, it requires individuals to be physically present at enrollment offices, incurring transportation and opportunity costs and potential risks in the current security context, which disproportionately affects the poor. As a result, the most vulnerable persons who are unable to obtain an ID card face compounded disadvantages, as they are both excluded from essential services and subject to fines for non-possession.

Box 4.1: Unique National Identification Card

The Haitian national identification card is a credit card-sized card that contains biographic and biometric elements, including the unique national identification number.

These elements are contained in the visual inspection zone, the chip, and a PDF417 2D barcode at the back of the card, allowing several means of data capture, including digitally.





Dummy ID card (Source: ONI's website)

Challenges for the population

Breeder documents

Enrolling in the identification database requires individuals to provide documentation, which many Haitians do not possess. Acceptable documents include birth certificate (either the original or an archives extract thereof), a legalized certificate of baptism, an adoption certificate, or a copy of the national journal for naturalized foreigners. Between 2005 and 2012, it was possible for people who did not possess this documentation to rely on two witnesses who would vouch for the person. Since the removal of this possibility, enrollment in the ONI database, assignment of a NINU, and provision of a CINU require presentation of the above-mentioned certificates.

Distance to enrollment centers

Haiti's approximately 150 enrollment centers leave large areas of the territory uncovered. ONI offices are spread across the 27,750km² country, and can primarily be found in cities' town halls (see Figure 4.1: Map of ONI offices in Haiti), and their only option is often to rely on the passage of a mobile unit, over which they have no control.

Time for printing, reception, and delivery of identification cards

Today, all identification cards are printed in *Port-au-Prince* leaving many undelivered due to technical and security reasons. Identification cards used to be sent by road to delivery centers across the country, but given the extremely challenging security situation of the country, many locations have to rely on air transport to get out of ***Port-au-Prince***, before being sent further by road, in challenging conditions. This generates delays in the delivery of identification cards. These are challenging enough for large, fixed locations, but become critical in the case of mobile units dispatched in remote locations. In May 2025, 656,000 cards went undelivered, representing about 11 percent of total cards produced. This issue compounds with the challenges with the ONI system. Interruptions of card production due to system issues are common, with reports of an instance when interruption lasted several months. With gangs progressively controlling major crossroads of the country such as ***Port-au-Prince and Mirebalais,*** entire areas of the country are progressively becoming enclaves, with very limited transport options, and illegal roadblocks and checkpoints are commonplace. This challenge is well highlighted by the situation in the ASPIRE project (PSARA), which aims to deliver 15,000 CINU to vulnerable populations in remote areas: after 2 years

of operations, only 6,000 have been delivered. The ONI, in partnership with the ***Agence Française de Développement,*** is currently preparing the deployment of a second printing center based in *Vaudreuil (Cap-Haïtien)*.

Governance

Institutional Role

The Decree of June 1, 2005 establishes the National Identification Office (ONI), under the Ministry of Justice and Public Security, as the entity responsible for managing identification of all Haitians and overseeing issuance of national identification documents. The decree mandates that the ONI ensure the identification of all individuals from birth, recognizing this as a fundamental administrative function necessary for both civil and electoral purposes. To fulfill this duty, the ONI is tasked with managing and maintaining the central repository of identification data for all Haitian citizens, the National Identification Register. Additionally, a primary prerogative of the ONI is issuance and renewal of national identity cards. This includes processing applications, verifying identity documents, and ensuring that all Haitian citizens have access to valid identification.

In addition to its role in identification, the ONI is mandated to collaborate with the Haitian Institute of Statistics and Informatics (IHSI). This partnership is aimed at supporting national population census efforts and ensuring the accuracy and completeness of demographic data.

The ONI is also assigned a role in electoral processes. It has the responsibility to work alongside the Electoral Council to establish and maintain accurate voter lists. Given that the national identification card serves as a primary document for voter registration, the role of the ONI is critical to ensuring the integrity and inclusivity of elections. The ONI thus has

Box 4.2: Responsibilities of the ONI according to the 2020 Decree (translated from French)

Article 18.- The National Identification Office is responsible for:

a) identifying Haitians from birth;

b) maintaining the National Identification Register;

c) receiving applications for National Identification Cards;

d) issuing and renewing National Identification Cards;

e) collaborating with the Haitian Institute of Statistics and Informatics (IHSI) for population census purposes;

f) carrying out any other duties assigned by law;

g) collaborating with the Electoral Council for the preparation of electoral lists.

an obligation to provide timely and accurate identification data to electoral authorities to facilitate transparent and efficient electoral processes.

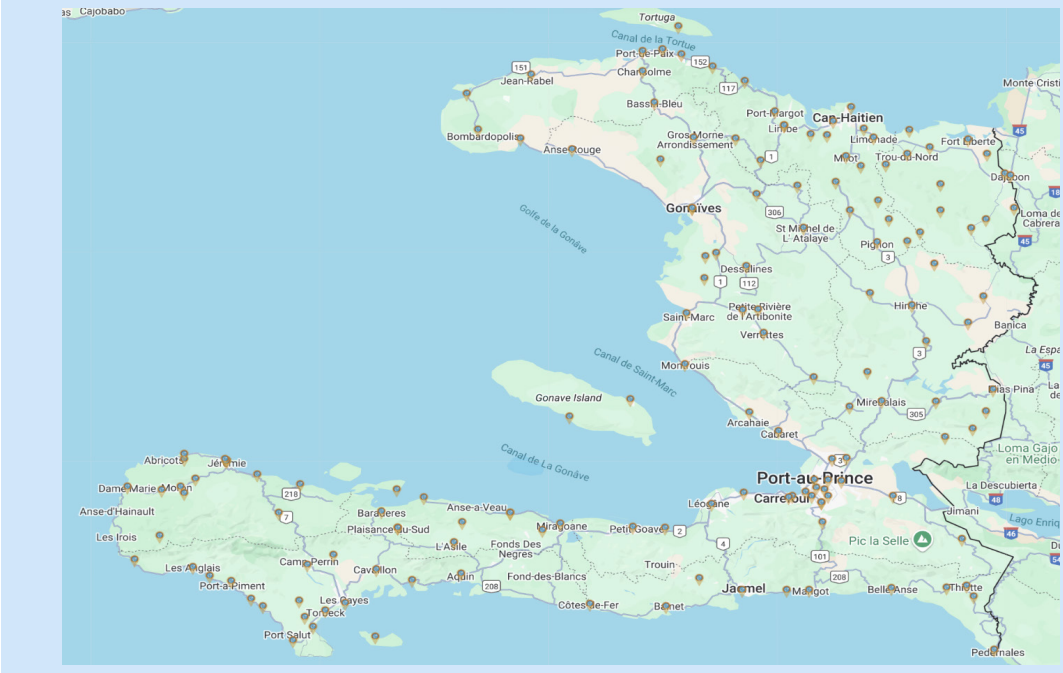
Furthermore, the decree grants ONI the authority to enable identity verification in both public and private institutions. To fulfill this mandate, ONI is responsible for implementing verification mechanisms, including the use of identity verification terminals under formal agreements. This prerogative ensures that individuals can authenticate their identity for various administrative, financial, and legal purposes, thereby enhancing security and trust in identity-related transactions.
In 2020, a decree was signed to replace the 2005 decree. While it confirmed the majority of elements from the 2005 decree, it also clearly established the responsibility of the ONI to collaborate with CR officers for birth registration processes.

Organizational Configuration

Fixed ONI offices

Around 150 fixed ONI offices (BONI) exist across the country, all collocated with other institutions such as town halls, schools, police stations, CR offices, and tribunals. These offices cover all departments of the country (see Figure 4.1). In addition, there are fixed ONI offices in Canada, the United States, Mexico, The Bahamas, Turks and Caicos Islands, the Dominican Republic, Aruba, Curaçao, Panama, Suriname, Colombia, Brazil, Argentina, and France.

Figure 4.1: Map of ONI offices in Haiti[13]



Mobile kits

Mobile enrollment kits complement the fixed ONI offices to cover hard-to-reach areas with low registration capacity. The enrollment equipment is the same as for fixed stations, facilitating procurement and deployment processes, but is packed in solid boxes facilitating safe transportation. Around 30 such mobile kits can be deployed across the country at a single point in time, while around 50 in total have been procured. These kits can be deployed as part of a semi-mobile position; for example, with a tent setup including basic furniture and solar panels for power. The majority of equipment related to the mobile kits is procured through the OAS's Support to Haiti's National Identification Office project.

Box 4.3: Example of mobile kit deployed in remote areas

Due to topographical constraints and the distribution of the population, the ONI is deploying mobile kits, manned by 3 to 4 operators, during enrollment campaigns across the country. The example below shows a fully equipped configuration acting as a "mobile office". In other cases, the setup is more rudimentary.



Picture: Department for Effective Public Management, Organization of American States

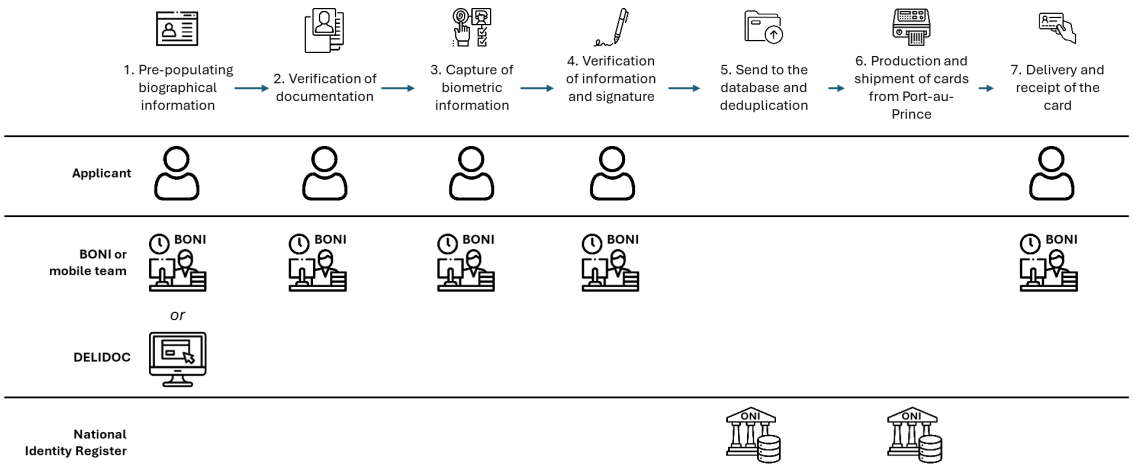
[13] Retrieved from https://oni.gouv.ht/oni-map/ in February 2025

Lifecycle and Business Processes

Registration in the Identification Database

The first step to identification requires registration in the identification database. This process can either be initiated physically in an ONI office (BONI), with mobile teams, or online on the publicly available DELIDOC platform. The choice of the BONI to perform registration is left up to the individual, although some of the BONI only accept cases that have been initiated online.

Figure 4.2: Simplified view of ID registration and card issuance processes, and stakeholders (World Bank analysis)



Box 4.4: A typical enrollment kit in a fixed office

The enrollment kit contains a computer, a card reader, a webcam for operator authentication and picture acquisition, a scanner to digitize the breeder document, a slab fingerprint scanner, an iris scanner, a signature pad, and a portable LED lighting system.



Picture: Department for Effective Public Management, Organization of American States

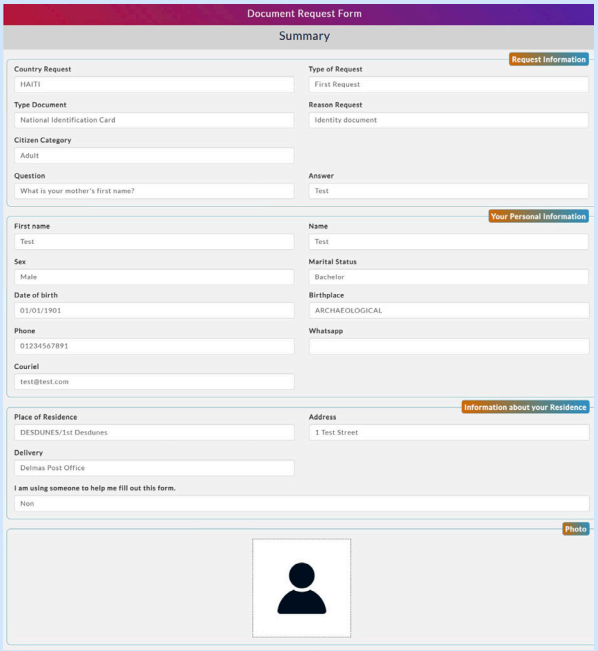
Initial registration starts with a biographic information pre-declaration. This includes fields like name, surname, gender, marital status, birth date, department, district and commune of birth, and contact details. In addition, current address is requested, together with the requested delivery BONI. Requestors can also add the contact details of someone supporting them for the procedure, who would be notified during the procedure. A picture of the person is required. Documentation requested consists of either breeder documents (archive extract, birth record, marriage record), a copy of the NINU, or a police report. Once a request has been accepted by the BONI, or a pre-declaration has been performed on the DELIDOC website, the requestor is provided with a tracking number, which can be used to track the status of the request, either with ONI employees, or directly on the DELIDOC website.

Identity Card Provision

Once the requestor's information has been captured, the data is sent to the National Identity Register in *Port-au-Prince*. The data can be sent live or by batch, in case the enrollment computer is offline, in which case all captured data can be sent once the computer is connected to the internet. Data then undergoes deduplication on the basis of the captured biometrics (fingerprints, face, and iris).

Quality control is performed on the data captured from the breeder documentation. Once validated, the printing process can start, which also includes a quality control step once the card has been printed.

Box 4.5: Summary of information requested for the pre-declaration (with dummy data, automatically translated to English)



Source: DELIDOC website

All printing happens in *Port-au-Prince* today, which—as mentioned—causes logistical challenges to deliver the cards to the rest of the country. This is particularly the case when delivering to the most remote zones where the poorest population lives. The Haitian government is currently exploring decentralization of printing processes to *Cap-Haïtien* for the northern part of the country, *Saint-Marc* for the center, and *Artibonite and Les Cayes* for the southern part.

Once processed and printed, cards are sent back in batches to the office where registration took place, which is fraught with difficulties. Office clerks then individually scan the bar codes of each card to confirm receipt. The cards then stay in the office until picked up. Through the DELIDOC platform, requestors can check the status of their ID cards; however, many requestors are unaware of the possibility of doing so, and come to the offices when their ID card is not yet ready. The offices visited provided limited protection against the weather and outdoor conditions, and electricity and internet access were severely limited, hindering operations and generating queues.

Card Renewal

By law, the ID card is valid for 10 years from the date of production. The new system having been deployed in 2019, and new cards issued since then, there is no case of renewal requirement due to standard renewal procedure. Instead, subsequent cards that are issued to the same data subject are done through a replacement process.

Card Replacement

Card replacement requests can be performed through the *Doléances* platform. The reasons for replacement include misplaced or lost or damaged cards, name changes (for example, in case of marriage or adoption), and error correction. Depending on the reason for the replacement, different supporting documents can be requested, including a declaration of loss made to the police, marriage certificate, or supplementary judgement.

Box 4.6: Reception area for ID cards

As shown in the image, individuals at the ONI office in Cap-Haïtien queue to receive their ID cards without any protective infrastructure. Frequent internet and electricity disruptions often prolong the process, adding to the challenges applicants face.



Picture: Alexandre Amard, World Bank

Data Modification

There are two cases for which a data modification can be requested: for errors or for biographic changes. The first is when there was an error in the capture of information during the registration process. Error correction can take place with the appropriate proof, which can be the breeder document, or a previous card. A second case can occur when some of the biographic information changes (for example, name, marital status or gender). Haitian law authorizes the change of personal information in the database, on the basis of the appropriate documentation (for example, a marriage/divorce certificate, civil judgement for name or gender change). The modification needs to be requested within two months of the event. In case the underlying data is amended, the ID card is invalidated, and another card is issued to the requestor.

Identity Card Verification

Verification of identity card existence and validity can be done on the DELIDOC website, through a public web interface. To verify the ID card, the user needs to

provide the NINU and birth date of the person, as well as the card number. In return, if the information provides a record within the database, the service returns the associated information: Name, First Name, Gender, Birthdate, Commune of birth, City of birth, and a color picture.

Interoperability and Use

The National Identity Registry offers downstream digital services to other government entities or for government mandated processes such as know your customer (KYC) for mobile network operators (MNOs) and financial services providers. The first way the ONI shares data from the National Identity Registry is through batch sending of demographic data for electoral purposes. Another way is through a verification service, available on the DELIDOC platform, which allows a user to verify the validity and integrity of a card, the existence of a national identification number, and the data attached to the record. Finally, the ONI also offers direct integration to the National Identity Registry database through Application Programming Interface (API). This is the case for the Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Commerce, for example, which can program automated queries to the National Identity Registry.

5. USE CASES ANALYSIS

Social Protection

Context

The magnitude of Haiti's poverty challenge underscores the critical importance of effective targeting for social protection. In 2017, multidimensional poverty affected an estimated 41 percent of Haiti's population. By 2030, 3.65 million Haitians could be recipients of cash transfer mechanisms if multidimensional poverty targeting is applied. Providing transfers worth 50 percent of the poverty line to this population would require cash transfer costs amounting to 10 percent of the country's GDP.[14]

Social protection mechanisms in Haiti have long been fragmented and critically lacking data. While this did not prevent social programs from being implemented, they have mainly consisted of ad-hoc efforts and have required significant resources to reach and identify beneficiaries. In recent years, the primary large-scale social protection programs have included:

Box 5.1: Key Facts and Figures

Percentage of the population living below the LMIC poverty line: **66%** (2024 estimate), with **36%** living in extreme poverty (US$2.15 per day threshold).

Percentage of the population facing acute food insecurity: **50%** (2024 estimate).

Source: World Bank. 2024. Macro Poverty Outlook: Latin America and the Caribbean.

- the Kore Lavi Program[15] (2013-2019, financed by USAID);
- the food security and nutrition program of the 11th European Development Fund (2017-2022, supported by the European Union);
- the Klere Chimen Cash Transfer program, part of the ASPIRE Project (2021-2029, financed by the World Bank's IDA);
- the COVID-19 and Multisectoral emergency response programs introduced by the Government of Haiti that aimed at delivering cash transfers, food distribution, and payment of salary to employees in the textile sector;

[14] Tromben Rojas, S. Cecchini and R. Gilbert, "Estimates of the cost of cash transfers under the National Policy on Social Protection and Promotion (PNPPS) in Haiti", Project Documents, (LC/TS.2020/96), Santiago, Economic Commission for Latin America

[15] https://www.usaid.gov/stories/kore-lavi

- and a series of short-term emergency safety net programs implemented by the Economic and Social Assistance Fund (FAES) combining cash transfers, cash-for-work and in-kind food distributions (financed by the Inter-American Development Bank, IADB).

The *Système d'Information du Ministère des Affaires Sociales et du Travail* (SIMAST) is the main national system for social protection. This static social registry was introduced in 2014 to support the *Kore Lavi* program. SIMAST defines a Haitian Deprivation and Vulnerability Index (HDVI) score used as a proxy means test to categorize households into vulnerability tiers based on their socio-economic and demographic characteristics. The SIMAST is managed by the MAST, with significant direct or indirect financial and technical support from international development organizations including USAID, OAS, IADB, WFP, UNICEF and other UN agencies, and the World Bank Group. NGOs such as CARE, Food for the Hungry, Mercy Corps, and Catholic Relief Services also contribute technical assistance including for population surveying.

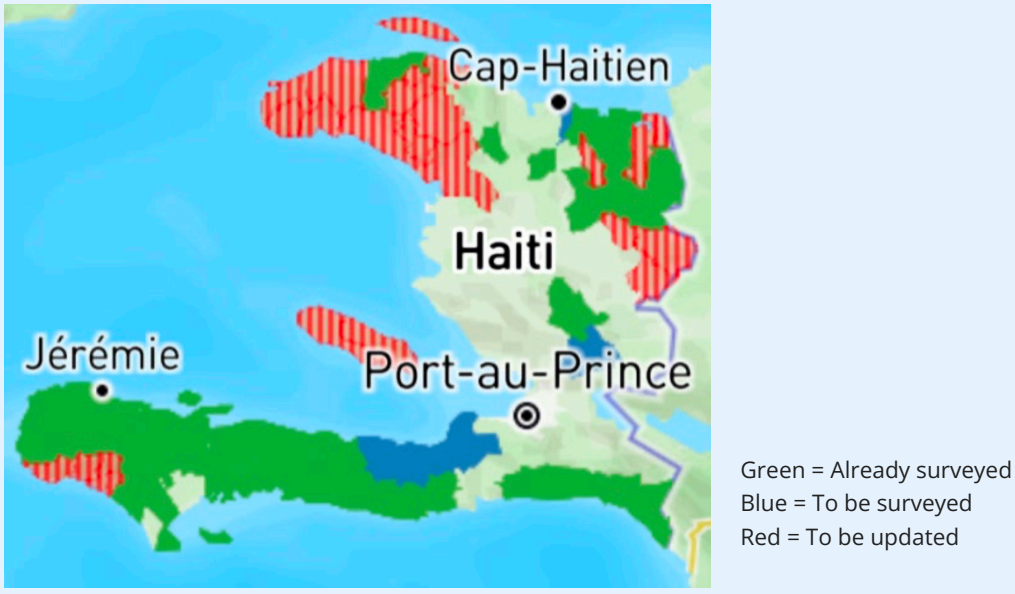
SIMAST's primary purpose is to register all individuals and households in a given geographic area by collecting socio-economic data through census-like sweeps to identify vulnerable households and inform social protection program delivery. The social registry's ambition is to cover the entire country population, but MAST set a geographical prioritization in light of resource constraints. Social registry enrollment efforts have therefore been mostly focused on areas identified as having higher vulnerability and deprivation levels, informed by data from previous surveys such as the 2012 ECVMAS *(Enquête sur les Conditions de Vie des Ménages après Séisme)* poverty survey, and additional data such as food insecurity indicators from the IPC[16] classification measures.

Although SIMAST was created within the framework of a specific program *(Kore Lavi)*, its coverage has expanded and is now used by multiple social protection actors in Haiti. The database includes less vulnerable households, to be able to react in case their situation changes. Indeed, SIMAST has evolved into a critical tool for informing the design and implementation of social protection programs under Haiti's National Social Protection and Promotion Policy (PNPPS). In recent years, SIMAST's role has grown to encompass a broader range of applications, including disaster response and social service delivery. Recent efforts to institutionalize SIMAST have included the 2023 creation of a Strategic Plan to expand its coverage, improve data reliability, and anticipate interoperability with other administrative databases.

[16] The integrated food security phase classification (IPC)

In June 2025, SIMAST had collected information on households across 92 communes[17] within all 10 Haitian departments, accounting for more than 766,381 households (about 32% of the population). The information was collected between 2014 and 2025 and 23 percent of households registered in the database had been surveyed in the past three years. The HDVI score calculation classified around 23.5 percent of people in the most vulnerable group, 20 percent as medium vulnerability, 19 percent as less vulnerable, and 38 percent as non-vulnerable. The departments with most coverage are the *Grand-Anse*, *Nippes*, *Nord-Est*, *Sud* and *Sud-Est* regions, with around 100 percent of covered communes. The MAST tracks and publishes its data on a dedicated, publicly available webpage: https://infopage.simast.info/

Figure 5.1: SIMAST coverage map



Source: SIMAST Database, retrieved December 2024.

Current Identification Methods for Social Protection-related Procedures

Enrollment in SIMAST is performed through household surveys, ensuring that participation is free of charge and accessible to all households without discrimination. Survey efforts have prioritized areas identified as having the highest incidence of poverty and food insecurity. Survey partner firms and field agents are hired and receive training, then dispatched to the regions. They perform enrollment

[17] Haiti is administratively divided into 10 departments (regions) and 146 communes (municipalities).

based on a standardized questionnaire. Data collected consists of a combination of biographical information, civil status, contact details, geospatial coordinates, and indicators including demographics, health, education, labor, food security, and dwelling characteristics.

All SIMAST data points are captured locally, as the system currently lacks interoperability with other governmental databases, reducing reliability. Consequently, it is not possible to prepopulate forms with basic household information, nor to cross-check and verify information reported by households against external sources. Precise determination of household locations prior to data intake efforts is challenging. Error checking is performed manually and ad-hoc, which may affect data reliability.

The SIMAST does not issue credentials to households, nor does it provide a mechanism for households to self-report changes in their circumstances following survey completion. Additionally, it does not function as an integrated component of a broader digital social protection delivery system. Instead, access to registry data is granted to program implementing agencies, which are allowed to use it based on data sharing agreement protocols established by the MAST. This includes both national agencies such as the *Fonds d'Assistance Économique et Sociale* (FAES), and international agencies including the UN system.

Under these agreement protocols, implementing agencies must update data whenever they record a change in a beneficiary's situation during their activities. In practice, this is not common. Moreover, since these reports are often not based on formal official records—or, when they are, are verified by clerks without the capacity to assess their validity—it is difficult to determine whether the update is appropriate. As a result, the only method for updating household data within the social registry has been redeployment of survey firms to conduct new census sweeps, entailing substantial financial and operational costs. Finally, with no machine-to-machine means, data update relies on unreliable manual data reconciliation processes that risk introducing errors and conflicts, including overwriting and data loss and corruption.

Identification-related Challenges

The 2020 Decree on identification introduces several challenges for delivering cash-based, social protection benefits. It clearly stipulates that possessing an ID card is a prerequisite for obtaining benefits from a state social program. Additionally, it

restricts the opening of a mobile phone account used for mobile-based cash transfers, and directly prohibits participation in any financial transaction, as well as opening bank or mobile money accounts (see Section Financial inclusion and Cash Transfers). Those unable to open a mobile money account must rely on envelope-based delivery to access benefits, which requires beneficiaries to travel to designated offices and exposes them to security risks. These payment methods also incur higher program delivery costs and are more susceptible to fraud.

The new Unique National Identification Card (CINU), mandated by the 2020 Decree, has reached only approximately 67 percent of the adult population. This challenge is further exacerbated by the strong correlation between poverty and the lack of access to identification documents in Haiti, which generates cascading exclusion effects. While proper authentication of beneficiaries is essential for ensuring the efficiency of social protection targeting, it introduces barriers that disproportionately affect the poorest populations and creates process inefficiencies.

Lack of identification among the poorest further complicates efforts to enroll individuals in the social registry. A significant challenge in the survey process is the difficulty of verifying biographical data and uniqueness of the registered individuals due to the absence of interoperability between SIMAST and the National Identification Register. While the NINU is theoretically required for enrollment, and could support data reconciliation, many vulnerable individuals do not have a NINU. Even for those who do, field agents are unable to cross-check or pre-populate data, as real-time data query functionality is not available. SIMAST does not, however, exclude individuals who do not have a NINU.

Currently, SIMAST covers a limited number of municipalities, and efforts to expand its coverage are ongoing as part of the WB-financed ASPIRE project combined with resources from other development partners. However, the processes of selecting areas and conducting survey activities are constrained by lack of available population data, including about births, deaths, and health indicators, as well as increasing security challenges. These limitations result in inefficiencies in the selection of zones for surveying teams to cover, and hinder registration of households living in hard-to-reach areas – including those with the highest concentrations of vulnerable populations.

Finally, lack of reliable contact methods hinders community-based reporting. This kind of reporting is known to greatly increase the efficiency and, ultimately, effectiveness of social protection programs. Interoperability between the SIMAST and

Haiti's identification systems is recognized as critical for improving social protection delivery. The application of the National Social Protection and Promotion Policy ***(Politique Nationale de Protection et de Promotion Sociales, PNPPS),*** adopted in 2020, heavily relies on using SIMAST to deliver its expected outcomes. Indeed, SIMAST offers capabilities central to the implementation of the policy: a central social registry and a classification mechanism.

Improvement Perspectives

In 2023, a Strategic Institutional Plan *(Plan Stratégique Institutionnel, PSI)* adopted for SIMAST included enhancing interoperability with other databases. It recognized the need for extending SIMAST's coverage and improving the reliability and relevance of its data. These two objectives could be achieved in part through interconnection with other national administrative databases. Interoperability between the Civil Registry database, the National Identification Register, statistical databases and the SIMAST surveying tools could:

- Accelerate enrollment procedures by reducing the need to onboard individuals from scratch (for those who have a NINU).
- Avoid enrollment duplication efforts by combining processes for enrollment in the National Identification Register and the SIMAST databases in one visit.
- Improve data accuracy by leveraging data declared on birth certificates. Similarly, data wrongly entered in the national identification register could be flagged for correction at this stage.
- Support estimation of unaccounted for households, helping focus surveying efforts and better informing policies.
- Facilitate interoperability of SIMAST with other administrative databases (health, education, fiscal) using the NINU as key identifier to verify accuracy of information reported by households and ultimately improve data quality and adequacy of the social registry.

Financial Inclusion and Cash transfers

Context

Haiti continues to experience persistently low financial inclusion despite years of reform efforts and introduction of new financial technologies. Banking infrastructure remains limited, with just 2.6 branches and fewer than four ATMs per 100,000 adults in 2020. This is far below the Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) average of roughly 15 bank branches and about 71 ATMs per 100,000 adults, according to the 2020 IMF Financial Access Survey. This structural gap significantly restricts access to financial products such as savings accounts, credit, and insurance.

Formal banking users are scarce. A small group, mostly urban and wealthier, use banking services, but less than one-third of adults have a bank account. Mobile money services like MonCash reached nearly six million accounts by March 2025, according to BRH statistics, but fewer than half remain active, as most users only use them briefly for receiving and withdrawing transfers. Fintech and digital wallets outside of mobile operators are still nascent, facing trust and interoperability barriers.

Digital financial services have grown, with three licensed operators, but the ecosystem remains fragile. According to the World Bank's Merchant Acceptance Survey 2025, less than 9 percent of micro, small, and medium enterprises have a mobile money account, and agent liquidity and connectivity issues persist. Cash remains dominant in social assistance, with over 65 percent of government programs using it in 2024 (World Bank analysis). The *Klere Chimen* program—a World Bank financed, MAST social protection and resilience program—saw only 3 percent digital disbursement at its 2022 launch, but by 2025, this reached 76 percent thanks to targeted efforts and national ID distribution (WFP/World Bank project data, March 2025).

Haitian borrowing is widespread, but not from formal financial institutions. Over 60 percent of adults in rural and unconnected areas reported having a loan in 2017,[18] but only about 10 percent of Haitian adults borrow from formal financial institutions, and just 15 percent have any savings. Formal borrowing and saving concentrates in urban and higher-income populations, and informal mechanisms dominate in rural areas (World Bank Financial Capability and Inclusion Survey, 2017).

[18] Buchenau, Juan; Trevino Garza, Luis. 2020. Financial Capability and Inclusion in Haiti: Result of a Demand-Side Survey (English). Washington, D.C. : World Bank Group

Mobile phone access is essential but uneven, with poorer households often lacking devices or stable connections. SIM registration and KYC requirements mean users must have valid IDs, excluding many from mobile financial services (Decree of June 2020). A recent contextual development is the designation by the US administration of certain Haitian gangs as Foreign Terrorist Organizations, which may increase compliance and know-your-customer (KYC) risks for financial service providers. Over 710,000 medium, small, and micro enterprises largely operate informally, with only 11 percent formally registered, which limits their access to credit and digital payments (FinScope Haiti, 2023). National strategies like the National Strategy for Financial Inclusion (SNIF) aim to expand access by encouraging digital payments and interoperability, but stringent KYC regulations leave the most vulnerable groups excluded.

Identification-related Challenges

Identification constraints remain one of the most significant barriers to financial inclusion in Haiti. Under BRH (*Banque de la République d'Haïti*, Haiti's Central Bank) regulations, access to formal financial services, including the opening of a bank account or mobile wallet, requires compliance with stringent KYC rules. In practice, this means that regardless of the type of financial product, individuals must present valid identity credentials, which large segments of the population do not possess. The consequence is that those without official IDs are unable to open accounts or receive digital transfers.

Even for individuals who hold identity credentials, the process of authentication and account opening is often burdensome. Current procedures rely heavily on the physical presentation of documents, which are vulnerable to loss, deterioration, or forgery. Moreover, the absence of remote authentication capabilities prevents people from opening or managing accounts without physically visiting a branch or agent. For rural populations, costs related to transport and time away from income generating activities, in addition to the limited availability of service points, create strong disincentives to formalize financial activity.

For financial service providers, these shortcomings generate high compliance costs and operational risks. Without efficient mechanisms to verify the validity of identity documents in real time, providers must invest in manual checks, increasing the cost of onboarding low-income clients. Regulatory safeguards, such as those set out in Circular 121, designed to uphold financial integrity and reduce risks of illicit activity, therefore present a complex trade-off. While they strengthen oversight and protect the

system from misuse, they also make it more difficult to extend services to populations without secure forms of identification.

A key factor shaping digital financial services (DFS) usage is access to mobile phone services. While overall penetration is relatively high, the SNIF and supporting studies indicate that many poor households rely on shared devices or lack stable connections, which restricts their ability to independently operate wallets. Importantly, SIM card registration also requires possession of valid identity documents (under BRH's mobile money directives and the regulator CONATEL's 2017 regulation on SIM registration). This compounds exclusion for individuals without recognized IDs, as lack of phone access directly translates into exclusion from mobile-enabled financial services.

These identity-related barriers push households and businesses toward informal practices. Individuals unable to meet identification requirements rely on cash savings, family networks, or unregulated lenders. MSMEs, the majority of which operate without formal registration, remain cut off from credit and digital payments, further entrenching informality and weakening their links to the formal financial system. The result is a dual-track economy, where those with strong identification credentials can access regulated banking services, while the rest are confined to informal and insecure channels.

Improvement Perspectives

Addressing these challenges requires a holistic approach that looks beyond identification coverage alone. Expanding access to foundational IDs is a necessary first step, but equally important are investments in remote authentication and eKYC capacities that allow accounts to be opened and managed without repeated in-person visits. Interoperability and data sharing between the National Identification Register, financial institutions, and mobile operators would reduce onboarding costs, improve data accuracy, and strengthen consumer trust. At the same time, modernizing the regulatory framework to enable proportional, risk-based KYC models would make it possible to extend low-value services to vulnerable groups while maintaining safeguards for financial integrity. Taken together, these improvements could:

- Reduce onboarding time and cost through automated and secure identity checks.
- Facilitate remote account opening and management, reducing the need for physical presence.
- Lower fraud risks through stronger and more reliable validation of identity data.

- Support progressive KYC models, where account limits and services expand as users' identity information is strengthened.

- Build greater trust in digital financial services, encouraging households and MSMEs to keep funds in digital form.

Coordinated progress on these fronts would support financial inclusion. Haiti could move beyond a fragmented and exclusionary financial landscape toward a more inclusive system that balances regulatory oversight with the urgent need to extend access to vulnerable households and enterprises.

Elections

Context

Haiti's elections have historically been marked by instability and contested outcomes, reflecting the country's tumultuous political past. Since gaining independence in 1804, Haiti has experienced cycles of authoritarian rule, coups, and fragile democratic institutions. The fall of the Duvalier dictatorship in 1986 ushered in a period of attempts at democratic governance, but these efforts have been hampered by corruption, political violence, and a lack of trust in electoral processes. Notably, the 2010-2011 elections were overshadowed by allegations of fraud and external influence, further deepening public skepticism. The last elections to take place in Haiti were the presidential and legislative elections held on November 20, 2016. These elections were initially scheduled for earlier dates but faced multiple postponements due to political instability and the aftermath of natural disasters, including Hurricane Matthew. In the presidential race, Jovenel Moïse secured a first-round victory with over 50 percent of the vote, eliminating the need for a runoff. He assumed office on February 7, 2017.

Haiti has experienced continued significant political turmoil, including assassination of President Moïse in July 2021, which has led to delays in subsequent elections. As of December 2024, the country has not held national elections since 2016. In September 2024, the Haitian government established a provisional electoral council tasked with organizing elections by 2026, aiming to restore democratic governance after a decade-long electoral hiatus.

The electoral process in Haiti is overseen by the Provisional Electoral Council *(Conseil Électoral Provisoire, CEP)* and supported by Communal Electoral Offices (BEC) at the local level. The CEP is responsible for organizing and supervising

elections, ensuring voter registration, and certifying results, while the BECs act as local administrative units managing voter lists and polling stations. Elections in Haiti typically include multiple rounds for presidential, parliamentary, and local offices, with a focus on proportional representation. However, logistical challenges, such as inadequate infrastructure and, in recent years, growing security threats from gang activities, hinder smooth operations.

Despite growth in voter registration, actual recent voter turnout has been notably low. To be eligible to vote in Haiti, individuals must be at least age 18, be registered in the electoral register, possess a valid national identification card, and have full enjoyment of civil and political rights. The number of registered voters has varied over recent election cycles. For instance, during the 2015 legislative elections, there were approximately 5,838,838 registered voters. By the 2016 presidential elections, this number had increased to about 6,189,253. In the 2016 presidential election, only 1,120,663 votes were cast, resulting in a turnout of only approximately 19.2 percent.

Current Identification Methods for Elections

Enrollment in the electoral register is automatic with enrollment in the National Identification Register. In practice, this means that anyone who has applied for a national identity card is registered in the electoral register, in one of the rare cases of database synergies in Haiti. Additionally, the sole usable credential for voting is the National Identity Card.

Identification-related Challenges

While linking national identification databases with credentials reduces duplication, several challenges persist. Generating and distributing National Identity Cards is not efficient enough to ensure timely delivery to voters. Registration surges typically occur before elections, overwhelming a system not designed to meet such demand. Furthermore, the high cost of producing identity cards has made Haiti reliant on donor funding, which significantly limits its ability to manage elections independently. It can reasonably be assumed that the low coverage of population with regards to ID ownership decreases voter turnout.

CR data poses another electoral fraud challenge related to the low level of death registration. As a result, the electoral register includes records of deceased individuals, and the absence of death records in civil registration systems makes it difficult to identify and remove them, which increases the risk of electoral fraud.

Improvement Perspectives

Strengthening Haiti's ID and CR ecosystem, combined with improved data interoperability across government systems, could significantly address these persistent challenges. A more robust and inclusive CR system would enable timely and accurate recording of life events, including births, deaths, and changes in residence, ensuring that national identification databases remain up-to-date and accurate. Enhanced interoperability would allow electoral bodies to seamlessly cross-check and verify data with CR and other relevant databases, reducing duplication and removing ineligible records such as deceased individuals. By facilitating faster issuance and renewal of identity credentials, and enabling secure digital verification across multiple sectors, these improvements would help streamline voter registration processes, reduce reliance on last-minute surges before elections, and mitigate the administrative burden on electoral institutions. Furthermore, a more integrated and reliable identity ecosystem would enhance the integrity of electoral rolls, lower the risk of fraud, and foster greater public trust in democratic processes.

Ensuring the sovereignty of electoral processes is essential, as it underpins the legitimacy and independence of democratic governance. While offering ID cards free of charge is highly beneficial for the population and for expanding identification coverage, exploring ways for the ONI to generate sustainable revenue could enhance its capacity and efficiency. Integrating such revenue models—for example, through fees for certain verification services—while keeping core services free would reduce ONI's dependence on external funding cycles or priorities and reduce vulnerability to political or financial influence from external actors. Better financial sustainability would reinforce public confidence in the fairness and credibility of elections while helping ONI maintain continuous service delivery, invest in system improvements, respond to electoral needs, and generally bolster its institutional resilience.

Migration

Context

Migration challenges in Haiti are accelerating. Migration challenges have been prevalent in Haiti for decades, but have substantially accelerated since the early 2020s. The key challenging migration profiles can be broadly split in three categories: legal migration, deportations, and internally displaced people.

Legal migration

In Haiti, legal migration depends on issuance of passports, the primary travel credentials. Passports are issued by the Directorate of Immigration and Emigration (DIE), under the Ministry of the Interior and Territorial Collectivities (MICT). To apply for a passport, adults must provide their Unique National Identification Card (CINU), an original archives extract of their birth certificate, and a fiscal identifier from the General Taxation Directorate (DGI). For minors, the required documents are an archives extract of the birth certificate (or, if not yet available in the archives, a notarized birth certificate) and the CINU of one parent. All passports issued in Haiti are printed in *Port-au-Prince*, which creates delays for people residing outside the capital and requesting passports in secondary cities. The application fee is HTG 8,000 (~US$60) for adults and HTG 2,500 (~US$20) for minors, payable through a fiscal stamp.

Demand for legal migration has surged. Demand for passports rose sharply in 2023 following the launch of the United States' CHNV program, which offers humanitarian parole to up to 30,000 people monthly from Cuba, Haiti, Nicaragua, and Venezuela. An estimated 138,000 Haitians have benefitted from this program, triggering a nationwide surge in passport applications, with waiting times to obtain a passport ranging from several months to years in certain cities outside of *Port-au-Prince*.

Overall, the processes for issuing Haitian passports function effectively. Despite the challenges, the system is functioning. Passport data is stored both physically and on an embedded chip that contains biometric information, with security reinforced by a Public Key Infrastructure. Biometric data is collected during the application process, and the passport complies with ICAO Doc 9303 specifications for machine-readable travel documents (MRTDs).

Deportations

In 2011, legal changes in the Dominican Republic (DR), which borders Haiti, left hundreds of thousands of Haitians stateless. The changes were later reinforced by a 2013 Constitutional Court ruling that retroactively revoked the nationality of individuals born in the country to undocumented foreign parents, disproportionately affecting people of Haitian descent and leaving many stateless. Since 2024, Dominican authorities have tightened migration policies with a particular focus on Haitians living in the DR. In 2024, the IOM estimates that around 200,000 individuals were deported from the DR

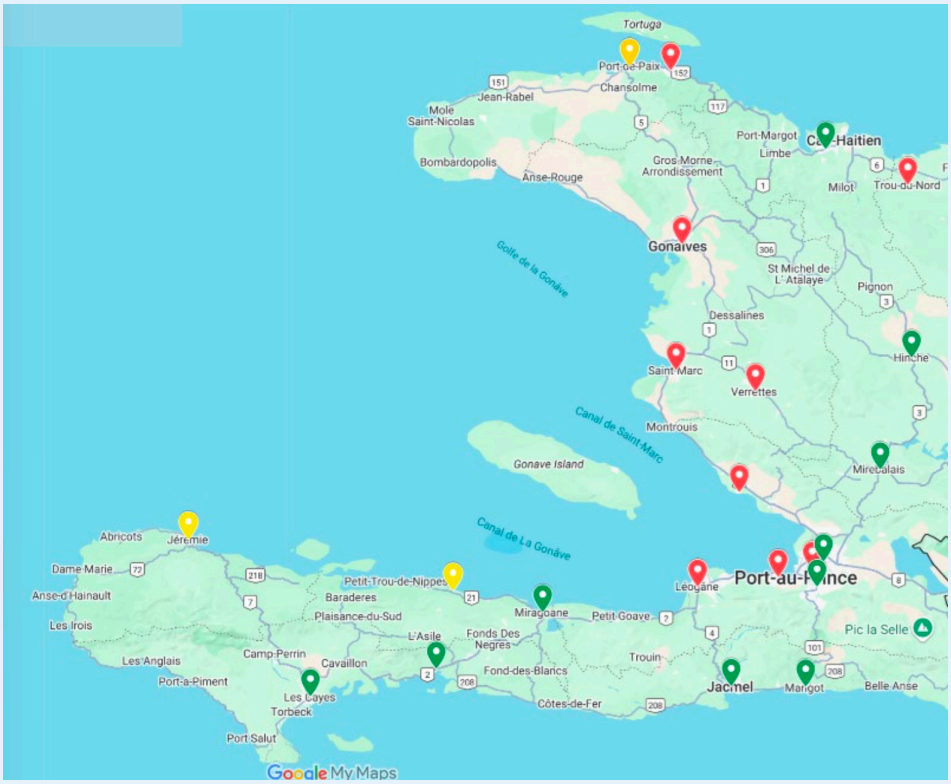
to Haiti, while the DR government reports 180,000 deportations between October and March 2025. In 2025, an estimated average of 10,000 people were deported per week.

Haitians living in the DR often lack ID credentials. For the most part, they reached the DR illegally, and many have lost their identification credentials as part of the journey. But many were also born in the DR and have never been registered with the Haitian administration. Deportations often take place as part of unannounced night raids, during which individuals are given no chance of gathering their belongings, including identification credentials. As such, the prevalence of identification documents among Haitians living in DR is low: IOM surveys at the border established the figure at around 54 percent.

For those who have never had their birth declared in Haiti, this starts a cumbersome process of regularizing their situation, on top of deportation challenges. Deportations primarily take place at the border crossing of *Ouanaminthe – Dajabón*, but the three other border crossing points—*Belladère-Comendador [Elías Piña], Malpasse-Jimaní,* and *Anse-à-Pitres-Pedernales*—are also used. CRLDIs are being set up at the border to assist deported individuals in acquiring identification credentials, but substantial challenges remain concerning access to these border crossing points. For example, increasing gang activity and security challenges in the Centre department limit road access to the *Belladère-Comendador* border crossing.

Many Haitians deported to Haiti have spent little or no time in the country for years, leaving them unfamiliar with identification procedures and creating an additional barrier to reintegration. To address this, Border Resource Centers have been established at border crossings in partnership with the IOM. Together with the CRLDIs, they provide a crucial first point of support for returnees on their path back into society.

Figure 5.2: Map of CRLDIs across the country



25 CRLDIs are planned to be deployed across Haiti, with support from donors and humanitarian actors such as the IOM. Out of these, 12 are already operational (green), three are currently being operationalized (yellow), and 10 are planned but non-operational (red).

Internally-displaced persons (IDPs)

In 2024 and 2025, escalating armed violence and territorial expansion by gangs have forced massive population movements within Haiti, with ID documents frequently lost, stolen, or destroyed. In June 2025, an estimated 1.3 million internally-displaced persons (IDPs) existed nationwide, and in March 2025, UNICEF estimated that more than one in eight children were internally displaced—double the proportion recorded in October 2024. Displacement is most acute in the *Port-au-Prince* metropolitan area and in *Artibonite*, with large-scale movements toward safer rural communes or urban areas perceived as more secure. Many IDPs have been displaced repeatedly, often as a result of sudden attacks, and are unable to gather their belongings before leaving, including ID documents.

Prevalence of ID credentials among IDPs is low. IOM surveys in major displacement sites indicate that a substantial proportion lack a valid birth certificate or CINU, either because they were never issued or because they were lost during flight. For those without prior registration in the Haitian civil registry, the process of regularizing their situation is lengthy and complex, compounded by the precarious displacement conditions.

CRLDIs have been deployed in displacement-affected areas to assist with birth registration, replacement of lost documents, and issuance of ID cards. However, insecurity and limited humanitarian access remain major obstacles. In some communes under gang control, road access to CRLDI service points is cut off, making the delivery of ID documents extremely difficult.

Many IDPs have lived for months or years without reliable access to administrative services. This has left them unfamiliar with current identification procedures, creating an additional barrier to social and economic reintegration. Mobile documentation teams and temporary service points, established in partnership with humanitarian actors, aim to bridge this gap, but reach remains uneven and dependent on security conditions.

Improvement Perspectives

Addressing these challenges requires structural reforms that extend beyond simply scaling up existing services. Key recommendations include:

- **Decentralize production and delivery.** Passport and CINU printing concentrated in *Port-au-Prince* is a critical bottleneck. Establishing regional printing hubs would reduce delays, improve equity of access, and mitigate risks linked to insecurity in the capital.
- **Digitize credentials and records.** Introducing digital credentials and systematically digitizing paper records would allow rapid reissuance when documents are lost, stolen, or destroyed, a frequent reality for deportees and IDPs.
- **Reinforce CRLDIs as one-stop service points.** CRLDIs should be equipped to complete end-to-end transactions—not only intake—with adequate infrastructure, staffing, and secure data connectivity. This would make them more effective for border returnees and displaced persons.

- **Reduce dependency on donors and humanitarian actors.** At present, border and displacement-related ID services are heavily financed and operated by partners such as the IOM. A shift toward sustainable domestic financing and institutionalization within ONI and related agencies is essential to build resilience and sovereignty.
- **Enable secure data sharing.** Interoperability between ONI, the National Archives, fiscal authorities, and CRLDIs would simplify ID verification, reduce duplication, and accelerate service delivery.

Statistics

Context

Official statistics, as described by the United Nations Statistics Division, represent an indispensable part of the information system of a democratic society. Official statistics serve the government, the economy, and the public with data about the economic, demographic, social, and environmental situation. To this end, official statistics that meet the test of practical utility should be compiled and made available on an impartial basis by official statistical agencies to honor citizens' entitlement to public information.[19]

The Haitian Institute of Statistics and Informatics (IHSI) is the governmental agency responsible for official statistics. Created following the country's first population census in 1950, its legal foundation was established by the law of September 4, 1951. It was reorganized in 1958 and officially became IHSI in 1981 through a decree that expanded its role to include informatics and placed it under the Ministry of Economy and Finance. A new decree in July 2020 further modernized the institute, clarified its core functions within Haiti's national statistics system, and designated it as the executing agency of the newly formed National Council for Statistics and Informatics (CNSI).[20] The IHSI is responsible for the elaboration of demographic, social, and economic statistics on a variety of indicators and topics including statistics related to labor, education, housing, social protection, poverty and inequality, vital statistics, and migration.

The last Haitian population census was conducted in 2003. Population projections continue to use the 2003 census as their baseline; demographic and socioeconomic indicators also draw on subsequent sample surveys. The overwhelming majority of

[19] See the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics (A/RES/68/261 from 29 January 2014) https://unstats.un.org/unsd/dnss/gp/fundprinciples.aspx

[20] See https://ihsi.gouv.ht/apropos_de_nous/presentation_generale for more details on the missions and attributions of the IHSI

indicators, except for general population statistics that present projections based on the 2003 census, are considered "pending".

Challenges

The IHSI, similarly to other Haitian government entities, faces a substantial crisis due to the extremely challenging security situation and severely limited financial resources. These challenges limit the agency's capacity to deliver on its mandate. Challenges make population censuses and door-to-door surveys virtually impossible in the most affected departments, force governmental entities to transition away from legacy digital infrastructure based in *Port-au-Prince* (for example, data storage servers) towards cloud-based solutions, and generate an exodus of qualified staff, further limiting the institution's technical capability.

Valuable statistical data can vary in nature and originate from different sources. For demographic statistics, civil registries can provide valuable birth and death data. Cross-department migration can be analyzed from data included in electoral registries, which are tied to voting precincts. Health statistics can be compiled at the national level from the health management information systems, on topics such as immunization rates. Using these administrative data can improve statistics through a variety of mechanisms, including data reconciliation, which can help with correction and adjustment of empirical data, improve the reliability of its projections, and facilitate statistical compilation related to areas such as migration.

Unfortunately, several challenges compound to prevent their usefulness in Haiti. The most critical issue is that some of this data remains uncollected or is unreliable. For example, deaths are still rarely reported, in particular in remote areas with a lower likelihood of deaths occurring in a health facility. Even when the data is collected, interoperability between systems is scarce.

Box 5.2: SyNSIP's purpose, per 2020 Decree

The SyNSIP's purpose is:

(i) For official statistics: making available statistical data that is high-quality, relevant, reliable, and timely for society, ministries and public agencies, and economic entities regarding the economic, demographic, social, and environmental situation.

(ii) For public informatics: implementing the organizational governance model for the State's digital transformation, facilitating and promoting e-government services, and supporting the change management process resulting from these transformations.

Improvement Perspectives

In the face of these conditions, the IHSI has been evaluating innovative empirical approaches to update demographic statistics. This would include leveraging a census for departments with limited gang influence, and using satellite and mobile phone data for departments most affected by gang-related violence (for example, West and Artibonite). The IHSI is also considering using administrative data, including data from the ID and civil registries, to improve the reliability of their projections.

As part of the 2020 Decree, a National System of Public Statistics and Informatics (SyNSIP) was created to develop intra-governmental data sharing capabilities. The SyNSIP consists of the national capability represented by the IHSI, and statistical and informatics units within sectoral ministries and other governmental entities. In essence, it represents the governance arrangements, processes, and systems that should enable production, exchange, and exploitation of data for statistical purposes at the national and sectoral levels.

To address its statistical constraints and insecurity, Haiti's statistical system must evolve. To address these gaps, the system must evolve from reliance on outdated projections and *ad hoc* surveys towards a model anchored in administrative data, robust digital infrastructure, and institutionalized data sharing across government:

- **Strengthen digital infrastructure.** Haiti's statistical capacity currently relies on basic cloud-based solutions, adopted after legacy systems in *Port-au-Prince* became unsustainable due to insecurity and recurrent shocks. While this transition has helped maintain continuity, it remains underdeveloped. Establishing a more robust national digital backbone—combining secure cloud environments with standardized storage and compute services—would provide resilience, scalability, and the ability to process large volumes of administrative data. Investments in a secure government service bus or similar middleware are also needed to enable real-time data exchange between agencies.

- **Strengthen interoperability effectiveness.** The integration of administrative data into official statistics is critical for Haiti, particularly for demographic indicators. CR and ID systems hold essential information on births, deaths, and population characteristics, yet these records are not linked with statistical production. Systematic data exchange between the national identification register, civil registries, and IHSI

would provide the foundation for reliable demographic baselines. Linking additional sectoral systems such as health, education, and fiscal data, as well as geolocation and addressing data, would further enhance projections and allow for continuous updates, even in regions where conducting surveys is challenging.

- **Operationalize the SyNSIP.** The 2020 decree that created the National System of Public Statistics and Informatics (SyNSIP) was an important step toward a whole-of-government approach to statistics. Its stated objective is to establish the governance, processes, and infrastructure for producing, exchanging, and exploiting data for statistical purposes at national and sectoral levels. However, the SyNSIP remains largely a framework on paper. To achieve its goals, it must be fully operationalized: ministries and agencies need to establish binding agreements for data sharing, IHSI must be empowered to coordinate and validate cross-sectoral flows, and common digital platforms must be deployed to allow secure standardized exchange.

If implemented, these reforms would move Haiti progressively toward a statistical system capable of producing reliable demographic and social data in near real time. Rather than depending solely on outdated census projections, the country could reconcile and validate multiple administrative sources through a secure cloud environment and interoperable government data-sharing infrastructure. The result would be more accurate, timely, and resilient statistics—supporting evidence-based policy, governance, and accountability in fragile conditions.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

In addition to the recommendations presented in chapter 5 related to specific use cases, our analysis of the Identification (ID) and Civil Registration (CR) situation in Haiti has led to nine key categories of recommendations to assist Haiti in development of its ID and CR systems. We recommend a coordinated set of reforms and high-impact investments across three pillars: (i) Inclusion, (ii) System Design, and (iii) Governance. We discuss each in turn. Tables 6.1–6.3 then present even more specific recommendations for Haitian ID and CR systems, presented both in terms of priority and by expected time horizon— from "quick wins" to medium-term improvements and long-term investments.

The nine main recommendation categories are:

1. Expand options and coverage of credentials and identifiers.
2. Improve and facilitate enrollment processes.
3. Ensure long-term financial sustainability.
4. Initiate a whole-of-society awareness and advocacy movement.
5. Modernize and clarify policy and laws to enable and safeguard ID capabilities.
6. Reinforce institutional capacity and professionalize service delivery.
7. Improve interoperability, data sharing, and data protection capabilities.
8. Digitize and decentralize processes and credentials.
9. Strengthen infrastructure and technical capabilities.

More specifically:

1. Expand options and coverage of credentials and identifiers. To close CR and ID access gaps, emphasize decentralization (through CRLDIs), easing of late registration processes, pre-recording of vital events, and systematic attribution of the NINU from birth. These steps aim to make credentials both more accessible and more inclusive.

2. Improve and facilitate enrollment processes. Conduct mass enrollment campaigns (leveraging existing social data like SIMAST and IHSI), expand mobile registration options, and simplify documentation requirements to address these barriers. Together, these reforms would reduce exclusion by making enrollment more convenient and less burdensome, particularly for marginalized groups.

3. Ensure long-term financial sustainability. To reduce reliance on outside funding and promote financial sustainability, recommendations call for earmarking budget lines for CR in the Public Budget Law and developing long-term financing models for both CR and ID. These measures would gradually shift the system from donor dependency to sustainable national ownership.

4. Initiate a whole-of-society awareness and advocacy movement. Develop user-friendly guides, launch communication campaigns, and engage communities directly during enrollment drives. Such interventions would not only build awareness but also strengthen trust in the system, reducing the risk of exclusion and under-registration.

5. Modernize and clarify policy and laws to enable and safeguard ID capabilities. Emphasize consolidating and clarifying the confusing legal framework, draft and enforce data protection and cybersecurity laws, and articulate a national policy vision to provide clarity, legal safeguards, and coherence for long-term development of the CR and ID ecosystem.

6. Reinforce institutional capacity and professionalize service delivery. Create training toolkits, practical guides, and exchange opportunities among staff, while reinforcing complaint-handling through platforms such as "Doléances." In parallel, strengthening ONI's board with institutions like the Ministry of Health and IHSI would increase ownership and inter-agency coordination. Collectively, these measures would professionalize service delivery, improve citizen experience, and reinforce institutional accountability.

7. Improve interoperability, data sharing, and data protection capabilities. Design interoperability frameworks, create a national data sharing infrastructure, and operationalize connections between ONI, ANH, IHSI, and others to address systemic shortcomings. Coupled with anonymization and pseudonymization[21] capabilities, these reforms would both protect privacy and maximize the value of CR/ID data for social, economic, and statistical purposes.

8. Digitize and decentralize processes and credentials. Decentralize back-end functions (including card printing), digitize enrollment and issuance of records, scan and make historic records accessible, and create verifiable digital credentials. By investing in these reforms, Haiti could simplify processes, accelerate service delivery, and build the foundation for digital government services.

9. Strengthen infrastructure and technical capabilities. Evaluate and upgrade infrastructure, renew enrollment kits, and equip offices appropriately. Build remote verification capabilities and develop electronic signature functions to expand the utility and trustworthiness of ID credentials. These improvements would modernize the technical backbone of CR and ID systems and make them more crisis-resilient. Additionally, this would alleviate some constraints on digital infrastructure at the government level that hinder data sharing between CR and ID databases and the services that would rely on it, including regarding statistics.

Tables 6.1–6.3 organize the detailed recommendations by priority and implementation timeframe. Priority distinguishes Essential from Desirable actions. The implementation timeframe distinguishes Quick wins, Medium-term improvements, and Long-term strategic investments. Together, these classifications support the prioritization and sequencing of reforms in Haiti's institutional, fiscal, and security context.

Firstly, recommendations are classified by prioritization:

- **"Essential recommendations" address foundational gaps in Haiti's ID and CR ecosystem.** They are prerequisites for inclusion, trust, and operational continuity. Without their implementation, other reforms would remain fragile, inequitable, or unsustainable. These actions directly reduce exclusion risks, stabilize core functions, and strengthen the credibility of ID and CR services.
- **"Desirable recommendations" contribute to modernization, resilience, and long-term transformation of the ecosystem.** While they generate significant value, they are not immediately critical for basic system functionality and can be sequenced once foundational capabilities, governance arrangements, and financing mechanisms are in place.

Secondly, recommendations are classified by time horizon, reflecting their technical, legal, financial and coordination requirements:

- **"Quick wins" are actions that can be implemented under current conditions.** They have low to moderate complexity and limited dependency on major legal reforms or large-scale investments. They are expected to deliver visible improvements in priority ID and CR use cases in the short term.

[21] While anonymization permanently and irreversibly de-identifies data, pseudonymization replaces direct identifiers with artificial codes. This allows data to be analyzed safely, while restricting the ability to re-identify individuals to authorized administrators holding the decryption key.

- **Medium-term improvements are achievable within approximately 24-60 months through phased implementation.** They require moderate institutional coordination, and incremental resources. These actions consolidate early gains and prepare the ecosystem for more advanced reforms.

- **Long-term strategic investments require significant policy change, sustained financing, or cross-sector coordination.** They are transformative and future-enabling—particularly for interoperability, data protection, and sustainability—but depend on improvements in the broader enabling environment and political commitment.

Taken together, this classification is intended to support sequencing and decision making, rather than to suggest rigid implementation boundaries. Some actions may progress incrementally across horizons, but the framework clarifies what must be addressed first to stabilize the system, what should follow to strengthen it, and what can be pursued to unlock long-term digital public infrastructure benefits.

Table 6.1: Quick wins

PRINCIPLE	RECOMMENDATION	FINDING(S) FROM THE REPORT	RECOMMENDATION DETAIL	PRIORITIZATION	IMPACTED SYSTEM
INCLUSION	Expand options and coverage of credentials and identifiers.	Births are often declared without linkage to NINU, delaying integration into the identification system.	Attribute a NINU to children from the moment their birth is declared.	Essential	Civil Registration
		CRLDIs exist but are limited in number and unevenly distributed, leaving rural and border populations underserved.	Expand CRLDIs to provide decentralized, one-stop shops, in particular in remote and border areas.	Essential	Both
		ONI cards have a short validity period (10 years) and reissuance requires physical renewal, creating bottlenecks for both the institution and citizens.	Adapt specifications of the current national identification card to increase their lifespan while being mindful about their cost.	Desirable	Identification
	Improve and facilitate enrollment processes.	The absence of tiered KYC rules for financial services excludes many vulnerable people without formal IDs from opening accounts.	Introduce inclusive finance strategies such as KYC tiers for mobile money account opening.	Essential	Identification
		Hospitals and midwives already capture birth and death data, but this information is not systematically transmitted to CR offices, leading to duplication or loss of records.	Systematize pre-recording of information by healthcare workers involved in births and deaths (e.g., hospitals, midwives).	Essential	Civil Registration
		Enrollment and identification processes are cumbersome, often unreliable, and with limited capacity for redress.	Conduct a systematic review of enrollment and identification processes with a human-centric perspective, with a particular emphasis on considering the needs of the vulnerable population, including IDPs.	Desirable	Both

PRINCIPLE	RECOMMENDATION	FINDING(S) FROM THE REPORT	RECOMMENDATION DETAIL	PRIORITIZATION	IMPACTED SYSTEM
GOVERNANCE	Ensure financial sustainability for the long-term.	CR activities are underfunded; current financing is ad-hoc and not integrated into stable public budgeting.	Earmark budget funding to CR processes in the public budget law.	Essential	Civil Registration
		Long-term sustainability of ID and CR systems is not guaranteed; heavy reliance on donor funding and projects raises risks for continuity.	Anticipate the necessity for financial sustainability of ID and CR.	Essential	Both
	Initiate a whole-of-society awareness and advocacy movement.	Administrative staff, healthcare providers, and intermediaries often lack clear knowledge of CR/ID procedures; citizens face confusion in processes.	Create simple ID/CR guides for administrative and healthcare staff, civil society, religious establishments, funeral service companies and citizens.	Desirable	Both
		Low awareness exists among communities on importance of CR/ID; weak citizen engagement in enrollment and update processes.	Create outreach and communication campaigns involving communities, including as part of enrollment efforts.	Desirable	Both
	Modernize and clarify policy and laws to enable and safeguard ID capabilities.	There is no unified national policy or strategic guidance for CR and ID to coordinate different actors, leaving efforts fragmented.	Provide a vision and strategic guidance for CR/ID as part of a national policy to rally a whole-of-government effort around a roadmap for systemic improvement.	Desirable	Both
		Administrative staff often lack clear and practical reference materials. Misconduct occurs, such as refusing to register births from single mothers or including prohibited information (for example marital status of parents).	Create practical CR/ID guides for administrative staff on the applicable laws and processes. These should include unacceptable professional actions —for example, refusing to register a birth when it is declared by a lone mother, or capturing prohibited information on the birth certificate such as marital status of the parents.	Desirable	Both

PRINCIPLE	RECOMMENDATION	FINDING(S) FROM THE REPORT	RECOMMENDATION DETAIL	PRIORITIZATION	IMPACTED SYSTEM
GOVERNANCE	Modernize and clarify policy and laws to enable and safeguard ID capabilities.	Coordination across agencies is weak, with no structured forum to align CR and ID institutions, leading to siloed operations.	Reinforce inter-agency collaboration through a national working group / task force on the topic of identification and data sharing.	Desirable	Both
		CR and ID institutions operate in silos with few opportunities for professional exchange. Knowledge transfer between BECs/CR and ONI/BONI staff is limited.	Organize exchange opportunities for CR / BEC and ONI / BONI staff, through online meetings and forums.	Desirable	Both
		OECs (*Officiers de l'état civil*) often lack training and updated guidance, resulting in inconsistent practices and poor application of rules.	Perform a training campaign for OECs, provide them with training toolkits, and communicate evolutions of processes and laws.	Desirable	Civil Registration
DESIGN	Digitize and decentralize processes and credentials.	All card printing is centralized in *Port-au-Prince*, creating bottlenecks, high transport costs, and issuance delays.	Decentralize back-end processes, in particular card printing, to reduce dependency on *Port-au-Prince* and reduce transportation costs and constraints.	Essential	Identification
		Birth registration remains largely paper-based; manual processes slow registration and documentation issuance.	Digitize birth registration processes, including enrollment and issuance of documentation.	Essential	Civil Registration
	Strengthen infrastructure and technical capabilities.	Enrollment kits, servers, and other technical equipment are outdated or insufficient, limiting reliable operations and scale-up.	Upgrade / renew technical equipment (for example enrollment kits).	Essential	Both
		Issuance of credentials and certificates requires manual signatures, creating inefficiencies and delays; there are no electronic signature capabilities.	Develop electronic signature capabilities and integrate them as part of CR/ID credentials and documentation issuance to simplify and accelerate these processes.	Desirable	Both
		Many BECs, BONIs, and CRLDIs lack adequate infrastructure and equipment; some offices are poorly located or unequipped to serve citizens effectively.	Evaluate infrastructure needs of BECs, BONIs, and CRLDIs, and equip or move offices as necessary.	Essential	Both

Table 6.2: Medium-term improvements

PRINCIPLE	RECOMMENDATION	FINDING(S) FROM THE REPORT	RECOMMENDATION DETAIL	PRIORITIZATION	IMPACTED SYSTEM
INCLUSION	Expand options and coverage of credentials and identifiers.	While ONI cards are free, obtaining them requires travel to enrollment centers, waiting in long queues, and sometimes multiple visits. This creates significant direct and opportunity costs, especially for vulnerable populations.	Introduce simpler and cheaper credentials, while retaining online verifiability capabilities.	Desirable	Identification
	Improve and facilitate enrollment processes.	After two years, registering a birth requires judicial authorization, a complex and costly procedure that discourages parents from completing late registration.	Ease the acquisition methods for birth records after the two-year deadline.	Desirable	Civil Registration
	Improve and facilitate enrollment processes.	SIMAST and IHSI databases contain population data that is not being fully leveraged to target unregistered individuals for mass enrollment.	Prepare and execute a mass enrollment campaign on the basis of SIMAST and IHSI data.	Desirable	Both

PRINCIPLE	RECOMMENDATION	FINDING(S) FROM THE REPORT	RECOMMENDATION DETAIL	PRIORITIZATION	IMPACTED SYSTEM
GOVERNANCE	Modernize and clarify policy and laws to enable and safeguard ID capabilities.	Haiti does not yet have dedicated data protection or cybersecurity legislation, nor supervisory bodies, leaving citizens' data unprotected.	Draft data protection and cybersecurity laws, create the agencies capable of supervising and enforcing them.	Essential	Both
	Modernize and clarify policy and laws to enable and safeguard ID capabilities.	ONI responsibilities overlap with CR actors, creating ambiguity about its role.	Clarify the role of the ONI regarding civil registration.	Essential	Both
	Reinforce institutional capacity and professionalize service delivery.	Citizen complaints platforms exist (for example ONI's *Doléances*) but do not cover CR issues and are underutilized. Feedback on corruption and infrastructure conditions is not systematically gathered.	Reinforce the *Doléances* platform of the ONI: include CR aspects, and allow citizens to evaluate the services, including bribery requests, state of infrastructure, among others.	Desirable	Both
		ONI governance lacks cross-sectoral representation; key institutions such as Health, IHSI, BRH, and CONATEL are not formally engaged, weakening ownership.	Reinforce governmental sense of ownership of the ONI, through reinforcement of Board expertise, adding, for instance, the ministry of Health, the IHSI, the BRH, the CONATEL or other appropriate actors.	Desirable	Identification

PRINCIPLE	RECOMMENDATION	FINDING(S) FROM THE REPORT	RECOMMENDATION DETAIL	PRIORITIZATION	IMPACTED SYSTEM
DESIGN	Digitize and decentralize processes and credentials.	Birth certificates are issued on paper, while the CINU is a physical card. The absence of verifiable digital credential counterparts limits integration with e-services and future DPI.	Issue CINU and birth certificates together with a verifiable credential counterpart to prepare for digital use cases.	Desirable	Both
		Government services remain paper-based and fragmented; ID and CR requests are not integrated into e-services, preventing streamlined access and digital linkages to NINU.	Integrate civil registration and identification requests to a government e-services portal, linked to the NINU	Desirable	Both
	Improve interoperability, data sharing and data protection capabilities.	Haiti lacks a national interoperability framework; current data exchange across institutions is ad hoc, creating inefficiencies and duplication.	Develop a national interoperability framework and data sharing protocols in line with data protection and cybersecurity legislation.	Essential	Both
	Improve interoperability, data sharing and data protection capabilities.	Data exchanges between ONI, ANH, and other actors are not formalized or systematic. There is no national data-sharing infrastructure to support demographic statistics or service delivery.	Design and develop a national data sharing infrastructure, and operationalize it for exchanges between the ONI, ANH, and other stakeholders that will benefit from data access (for example IHSI, SIMAST, MNOs, FSPs), including for the elaboration and dissemination of policy-informing demographic statistics.	Essential	Both
		Remote verification mechanisms are limited; service providers face challenges confirming credentials outside ONI's physical processes.	Further develop credential remote verification capabilities (verification portal, APIs).	Desirable	Identification

Table 6.3: Long-term strategic investments

PRINCIPLE	RECOMMENDATION	FINDING(S) FROM THE REPORT	RECOMMENDATION DETAIL	PRIORITIZATION	IMPACTED SYSTEM
GOVERNANCE	Modernize and clarify policy and laws to enable and safeguard ID capabilities.	CR law is fragmented: the 2020 Decree overlaps with the Civil Code and other laws, creating legal ambiguity and inconsistency in practice.	Clarify the relationship between the civil code and other legislative texts applying to CR, for example the 2020 Decree, and where possible, compile legal provisions related to CR in a dedicated law, or together with the ONI law.	Essential	Civil Registration
	Reinforce institutional capacity and professionalize service delivery.	ONI and CR institutions face capacity constraints: limited technical skills, outdated practices, and insufficient recruitment hinder modernization.	Improve technical capabilities through staff training and graduate recruitment.	Essential	Both
DESIGN	Digitize and decentralize processes and credentials.	Large volumes of historical birth records are stored only in physical form at the ANH, making them hard to access. Citizens and service providers cannot reliably verify them online.	Digitize existing birth records stored at the ANH, allow citizens to request copies online, and allow service providers to verify the birth record online.	Essential	Civil Registration
	Improve interoperability, data sharing and data protection capabilities.	Existing systems like SyNSIP provide limited connectivity; no robust, government-wide interoperability platform exists to link databases.	Design and develop interoperability capability between governmental databases (for example extend the SyNSIP).	Desirable	Both
	Strengthen infrastructure and technical capabilities.	CR and ID data exists but is not systematically leveraged for statistics; lack of anonymization / pseudonymization prevents safe reuse for research and policy.	Create an anonymization / pseudonymization capacity for statistical usage of CR / ID data.	Desirable	Both

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Annex A: Stakeholders Consulted

SECTOR	ORGANIZATION	STAKEHOLDER
Haitian Government	National Archives of Haiti (ANH)	Jean Wilfrid Bertrand – Director General Paul Dalencourt – Deputy Director General Volvick Noel – Head of IT / Digitalization Unit
	Office of National Identification (ONI)	Reynold Guerrier – Director General Mirline Dorelien Dorval – General Coordinator Reynaldo Camilus – Technical Director
	Institute of Statistics and Information Technology (IHSI)	Wilson Fièvre – Director General Guy Serge Pompilus – Coordinator, Technical Secretariat Djason Sylvaince – Acting Director, DDCT
	Central Bank of Haiti	Florence Jacques – Legal Counsel Jimy Dorsainvil – Director of Payment Systems / IT
	National Telecommunications Commission (CONATEL)	Huguens Prévilon – Director General Joseph Morose – Director of Networks and Services
	Ministry for Labor and Social Affairs (MAST)	Sherley Germain – Director General

SECTOR	ORGANIZATION	STAKEHOLDER
Development Partners	Organization of American States (OAS)	Rebeca Omaña – Program Officer, Civil Registry Juan Minetto – Senior Specialist, Electoral Processes
	Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)	Claudia Mendieta Navarro – Social Protection Specialist Emmanuel Vassor – Digital Government Specialist Horacio Nemeth – IT Infrastructure Advisor
	World Food Programme (WFP)	Isabella Bianchi – SIMAST Project Lead Katia Boudrahem – Data Management Specialist Jones Pyram – Field Operations Coordinator Jouva Remolus – Technical Support Officer
	UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (UN ECLAC)	Carlos Maldonado – Senior Statistician Randolph Gilbert – Policy Advisor Natacha Leroy – Data Governance Specialist
	UNICEF	Marie Anne Perpignand – Child Protection Specialist Naval Ravoavison – Digital Transformation Advisor Kevin Pelle – Social Policy Officer
	International Organization for Migration (IOM)	Grégoire Goodstein – Migration Policy Specialist Daniele Febei – Program Manager
	UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)	Georg von Hehn – Head of Mission Gianluca Ogis – Protection Officer
	Expertise France / French Development Agency (AFD)	Anne Azam-Pradeilles – Project Director Jude Saint Natus – Technical Advisor

Annex B: Selected Essential Documentation

Table B.1: Selected essential documentation for Haitian Civil Registration and Identification systems

NAME	TYPE	DESCRIPTION
National Social Protection and Promotion Policy (PNPPS)	National Strategy	Provides a framework to guide the design, coordination, and implementation of programs aimed at reducing poverty, vulnerability, and inequality by 2040. It is used by government and partners to align efforts across life-cycle interventions—such as child support, employment, health protection, and shock response—based on principles of universality, equity, and financial solidarity.
Decree of June 2020 on the Unique National Identification Number and the National Identification Card	Law	Mandates the use of the National Identification Card (CINU) as the sole official proof of identity for accessing services such as voting, education, employment, and banking. Assigns the National Identification Office (ONI) responsibility for managing centralized identity data to enable streamlined access to rights and services.
Amended civil code (in particular article 55)	Law	Mandates the registration of births, marriages, and deaths to establish individuals' legal identity and civil status. Assigns civil registry offices, under the Ministry of Justice, the responsibility to document and preserve these records, making them essential for access to rights, services, and legal processes. Two noteworthy amendments can be highlighted: The amendment of November 14, 1988 stipulates that births must be declared within 25 months at the Civil Registrar's office in the mother's domicile or the child's birthplace, and provides procedures for late registration through judicial processes when the initial deadline has passed. The amendment of January 8, 2014 grants a five-year grace period during which late birth registrations could be performed for free through a regular process (as opposed to a court judgement). This grace period was extended by five years in 2019, and again by another five years in 2024.



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