Haiti case study
(implemented by HELVETAS Swiss Intercooperation)

Context and participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Haiti</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Suburban coastal with dry forest</td>
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<tr>
<td>Context</td>
<td>Area with high risks of disasters</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communities part of the project?</td>
<td>YES</td>
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<tr>
<td>Project name</td>
<td>Support to the Management of Protected Dry Area in Belle-Anse (AGAP)</td>
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<tr>
<td>What common risks and hazards do you face in this region?</td>
<td>Cyclones and political unrest</td>
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<tr>
<td>Previous risk survey participation</td>
<td>YES</td>
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The Project “Support to the Management of Protected Dry Area in Belle-Anse - AGAP” aims to support the national and local authorities and local communities, in search of economic alternatives, the definition of participatory mechanisms for managing protected areas (PA) and the restoration and conservation of forest ecosystems. The project has three interrelated components that are strengthening the institutional and regulatory framework of the National Agency of Protected Areas (ANAP), improving the incomes of local communities and the development of innovative financing mechanism for self-financing PA.

Figure 1: Participants at the resilience workshop in Haiti coastal area
This matrix was filled in by the representative group of the community which was interviewed. It shows the most important risks identified by the community and their perceptions of risks. For each risk, they agreed together where to position it according to its impact and likelihood of occurrence.

Matrix of risks

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Reported risks and impacts

Figure 3 was produced from the matrix of risks. Based on the perceptions from the representative group, it shows the main identified risks. These risks are ranked according to the combination of each risk’s impact (5 ranks) and likelihood of occurrence (5 ranks), and they are cumulated and measured on a scale of 10 ranks. The scale of Figure 4 is based on the risk’s impact (5 ranks) divided by the number of times it was mentioned.
Most commonly reported actions

- Community mobilisation
- Sensitisation / prevention / preparedness (EWS)
- Hard risk reduction measures
- Use of traditional knowledge - soil conservation measures
- Crop diversification
- Migration

Most commonly reported barriers

- Limited information access
- Lack of infrastructure (roads, storage, schools, hospitals)
- Lack of financial and technical means
- Poor governance
- Limited transportation
- Deforestation
Analysis of characteristics of the community

- **Assets and resources:** The community depends largely on the surrounding natural resources (fish, various cultures) which are relatively rich. However, access to safe drinking water remains a major problem. Illegal logging in the poorly managed and controlled dry forest to make charcoal is also a growing problem. They mainly use imported rice at the expense of their own production. Access to education and health is limited and it is common that people have to move to Jacmel if there are health complications.

- **Infrastructure:** The level of infrastructure is limited in this area: bad road conditions, weak infrastructure for the market, few schools, only one poorly equipped hospital, insufficient tanks for water reserves and they are often in poor condition, little irrigation, etc. Very few or no hard measures against cyclones.

- **Institutions & processes:** The state is not very active in this area. Communities are therefore left to themselves. Community mobilisation is not very active, but with the project actions have become stronger. The CASEC\(^1\) gathers area managers and distributes roles to facilitate decision-making. Therefore, the project has a mobilising effect that brings together those who are interested (economic attraction as well). Without or before the positive effect of the project, community mobilisation was rather weak as there was a lot of distrust. The church remains however a central pillar of the community.

- **Knowledge & learning:** The community relies heavily on its know-how and traditional knowledge. There is a shortage of professionals in the health and education sectors, as well as a lack of economic opportunity and training of the new generation. Access to outside information is limited in this remote area. The church remains a place to disseminate information to the community.

- **Values & attitudes:** There is a sense of distrust and strong skepticism within the community which is primarily related to the political climate (there are too many different political parties, everything and anything is possible in this false democracy) cumulating with the non-existence of the state (each community organizes itself). There is reluctance to change. It is difficult to generate interest and community confidence in adopting new models and practices. There is an attitude of dependency and expectation of outside assistance (NGOs, donors, etc.) combined with weak leadership.

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\(^1\) Conséils d’Administration des Sections Communales (CASEC)
Survey analysis based on the three capacities

- **Absorptive capacity**: The community tends to support each other during difficult times, until it reaches its limit and in this case it uses migration during severe drought and famine. Some more healthy families sometimes welcome children from poorer families as a mutual help, this is called “restavek”.

- **Adaptive capacity**: The community has developed some adaptation measures (construction of tanks for water harvesting, crop diversification, walls of protection against cyclones etc.) which have been established by personal initiative (excluding project activities as recently launched).

- **Transformative capacity**: The community uses long-term migration when there is no other alternative. The famers go to the cities where they expect to find some work and earn money. It is rare that a whole family migrates, it is rather the men who move.

![Figure 5: The resilience triangle](image-url)