



*Community members engaging in a local dialogue process (Photo courtesy COFHED).*

USIP's Haitian Citizen Engagement Project ensures that marginalized communities, particularly in rural Southern Haiti, have a voice in the country's political transition. Communities Organizing for Haitian Engagement and Development (COFHED), USIP's key partner in Haiti, has nearly two decades of experience supporting marginalized communities to forge their own path toward empowerment. COFHED's deep-rooted relationships within these communities make them a crucial partner in facilitating dialogues that reflect the needs and aspirations of rural Haitians, ensuring their voices are included in national discussions. The project empowers local citizens to generate their own solutions and advocate for their representation in dialogues with national leaders.

## **PROGRAM OVERVIEW**

Haiti is facing deepening political instability and violence, worsened by the assassination of President Jovenel Moïse in 2021 and escalating gang activity. Efforts to restore democratic governance and security often overlook rural populations, leaving them excluded from critical conversations about the country's future. The Haitian Citizen Engagement Project works to address this gap by facilitating inclusive dialogues in five rural communities in the commune of Camp-Perrin, ensuring these perspectives contribute to Haiti's national dialogue.

## **DIALOGUE AND METHODOLOGY**

USIP, in partnership with COFHED, will engage 24 co-researchers from 12 rural communities to lead discussions aimed at understanding the concerns and aspirations of local citizens. These co-researchers will be trained in facilitation and research techniques to foster inclusive, community-driven dialogues that directly reflect the voices of marginalized populations.

1. **Community Dialogues:** A total of 36 dialogues will be held across five communities, focused on eliciting locally driven discussions on governance, security and political inclusion. These communities will also develop and propose their own solutions, fostering ownership of the political process.

2. **Co-researcher Training:** Co-researchers, drawn from the communities themselves, will lead the focus groups and interviews, ensuring that community members shape the conversation based on their own experiences.
3. **Participatory Research:** The research process will focus on building local capacity to engage in governance and civil society, ensuring communities have the tools to continue self-led dialogues and advocate for their inclusion in national processes. Research findings will also be synthesized and presented to Haitian government officials and civil society, contributing to more inclusive and effective governance solutions.

## TESTIMONIALS

*"I would like to keep our community dialogue space to raise consciousness about who we are as a country. I am ready to collaborate. Our voices are not enough, I would like to see our state leaders to be involved and to support us."*

— "R" from the Duvezin community

*"If the population can trust our government to work together, we can bring about solutions."*

— "J" from the Guillaume community