

Assessing the Benefits of CDD to Support Capacity Building in Haiti

By: **Odae Bood*** | Randy Pestana

Taking direct action at the community level to improve welfare and mobility prospects has become an increasingly common trend in poorer countries. Action of this kind is yet concentrated among few community members and is often uncoordinated. Successful community initiatives are typically confined to communities of origin and despite the potential for expansion domestically, countries fail to learn from cases to coordinate national development strategies that is in one sense decentralized and targeted for the poorest communities within a country. Community Driven Development (CDD) offers an approach to providing micro-economic advancement, improved social cohesion, and more effective governance at the local level. It puts community members at the center of decision making and project management and advocates for budget support rather than targeted financing by external agents. The conditions in Haiti provide an opportunity to inquire on the expansion of CDD as a feasible development strategy beyond the continent of Africa. It has been prevalent across the continent since the late 1990s as these countries face government instability stagnant economies, and social divisions. The progress achieved resulting from CDD implementation can prove helpful in finding solutions in Haiti. Decades of political turmoil in the country has produced a country in which administrative functioning is severely lacking. Various social and economic indices show that Haiti has experienced regression and depreciation in critical areas where the rest of the world has improved. Haitians have been forced into a self-help system of obtaining resources. Additionally, the density of post- earthquake international aid via NGOs and governmental organizations has exhibited mixed results. In this context, CDD has potential to assist the country's transition out of poverty. This paper will review prevalent literature on the concept of CDD, consider specific examples from African countries and provide insight into the Haitian context to propose the consideration of CDD as a part of Haiti's growth.