

# Do No Harm Teaching Case Study: Cité Soleil

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Reference for Workshop Facilitators



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A Teaching Case Study



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*Cover photo: Cité Soleil, taken by Sabina Carlson Robillard.*



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## Executive Summary

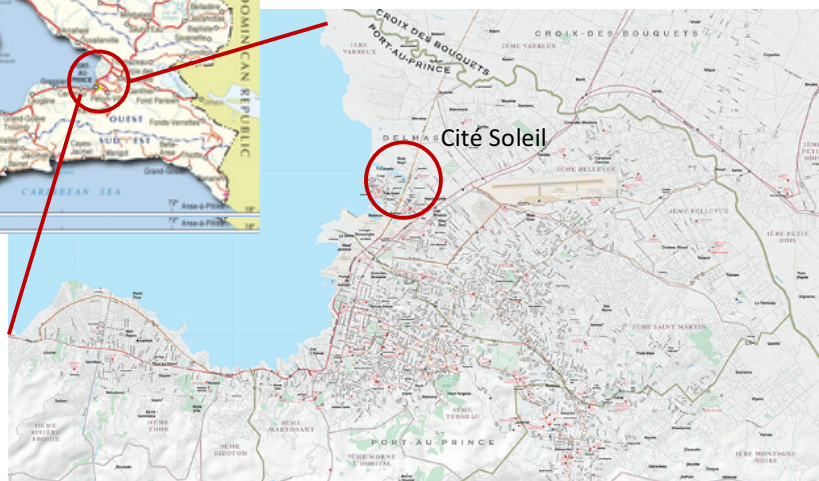
This resource is meant as guidance for Do No Harm workshop facilitators using the Cité Soleil Teaching Case Study. The case study focuses on Cité Soleil, the largest slum in Haiti, and one of the 7 municipalities that make up the capital city Port au Prince. It is an area that has experienced chronic violence for the past decade, most of which comes from armed groups of young men that are commonly referred to as gangs. The municipality is informally divided into a set of gang territories, whose boundaries shift as the gangs' power and allegiances change. Cité Soleil experiences low rates of education and employment, suffers from a lack of state services, and is vulnerable to flooding and other disasters.

The residents of Cité Soleil, after years of negative experiences, have little trust in the government, the United Nations, and international NGOs. They are extremely suspicious of outsiders, and this adds an extra layer of complexity to any intervention that takes place in the area. At the same time, there is a serious stigma attached to Cité Soleil, and few organizations, businesses, or individuals are willing to even step foot in the municipality.

This case study will explain the background of what is currently happening in Cité Soleil, as well as developments from 2015 that altered key conflict dynamics. It will then walk participants through a series of hypothetical scenarios. Participants will be guided through planning a conflict-sensitive intervention in a place like Cité Soleil that suffers from chronic urban violence.



Map 1 : Haiti from Nations Online Project at [www.nationsonline.org](http://www.nationsonline.org).



Map 2 : Port au Prince from Maps.com at [www.maps.com](http://www.maps.com).

### **Background - Haiti**

Haiti is a small country in the Caribbean that shares an island with the Dominican Republic. It was a colony of France that gained independence in 1804 through a slave revolt that led to a fourteen-year revolutionary war. Because it was the only example of a successful slave rebellion, Haiti became an international pariah to the colonial and slave-owning powers of the time. Haiti has repeatedly been the site of intervention by foreign powers ever since.

After the revolution, a small group of educated, mixed-race Haitians became the dominant political and economic elite. They exerted their power over the former slaves and their descendants, and this led to an antagonistic power dynamic between the elite and the masses that continues to this day.

Haiti has almost never had a stable government: there have been approximately 55 rulers or presidents of Haiti since independence, and only 9 have successfully completed their terms. Of the others, 33 were executed, and 23 were overthrown in coup d'état. In 1986, the 35-year Duvalier dictatorship was brought to an end by a popular uprising, led by the Lavalas movement and its leader, the priest Jean Bertrand Aristide. Aristide was elected in Haiti's first democratic election in 1990, and was overthrown by members of the Haitian army (FADH) in 1991. Aristide was very popular among the rural and urban poor, so following the coup the Haitian masses were repressed.

Aristide eventually returned from exile and was re-elected in 2000 and disbanded the FADH. But he was overthrown in a second coup in 2004, which was orchestrated by Haiti's ex-military and economic elite<sup>1</sup>. Following this coup, the UN authorized a peacekeeping mission known as *Mission des Nations Unies pour la Stabilisation en Haïti* (MINUSTAH), with a mandate to stabilize the country.

### **Background - Cité Soleil**

Cité Soleil is a municipality on the western edge of Haiti's capital, Port au Prince. It only covers about 21 square kilometers, but has anywhere from 250,000 to 500,000 residents, making it the most densely populated area in the country. It is bordered by the sea and a national highway. Cité Soleil is divided into three sections: one of which is urban, two of which are pre-urban and rural. For the purpose of this case study, 'Cité Soleil' refers to the urban section of the municipality.

During the Duvalier regime, Cité Soleil was an industrial area devoted to sugarcane processing and housing of the factory workers. In the 1980s and 1990s, an economic crisis in rural Haiti

prompted hundreds of thousands of rural migrants to move into Cité Soleil in search for factory jobs. So many people moved to the area that they overwhelmed the available supply of housing and began building informal settlements along the sea. By the early 1990s Cité Soleil was home to hundreds of thousands of people.

The political instability of the 1990s led to the closing of many of the factories. It also led to a backlash against and repression of people in Cité Soleil, who have traditionally been pro-Aristide. The 1990s were a period of increased unemployment among Cité Soleil's youth and a feeling of political and social marginalization, which continued to increase in the period after the second coup d'état in 2004.

### **Armed Groups in Cité Soleil**

The landscape of armed actors in Haiti is complex. After the fall of the Duvalier regime, many neighborhoods armed themselves to protect their residents against the chaos and repression that followed, including Cité Soleil's *Lanmè Wouj* (Red Army.) In the 1990s and early 2000s *Lanmè Wouj* was replaced by other armed groups.

During the rise of Aristide, many of the young people in marginalized communities were organizing themselves into *baz*, or bases, from which they could mobilize their neighborhoods for local or national action. Different political groups began arming these *baz*, including, allegedly, Aristide. Not all *baz* are armed: every neighborhood has a *baz*, and they can serve social functions, (organizing parties, community service, etc.) political functions, (attending protests, mobilizing for elections, etc.) or violent functions (crime and politically-motivated violence.) Some *baz* ended up amassing a lot of power and weapons in the 2004 period, and became what was referred to as 'gangs'.

Complicating this are other armed groups currently operating in Haiti: there are ex-FADH soldiers, (who operate as a national network even though it is illegal) countless private militias, (belonging to the political and economic elite) and criminal networks (who are associated with powerful families.) There is a significant amount of political manipulation of armed groups and youth in general, who are often paid by politicians to create disturbances.

The police and the country's elite also contribute to the violent environment. The police are involved in many criminal activities, and as a whole, the economic elite possess more weapons per person than the rest of the country, even when compared with active gang members.

### **The Anatomy of the Gangs**

There are many different names that are used by locals to identify types of armed groups in the country's ghettos, such as: *Bandi* (bandit), *Mafya* (mafia), *Chime* (people who supported Lavalas),



and *Militant* (militants). While each name marks a unique identity within the context, policy makers have typically referred to all of these armed groups with the blanket term "gang." We believe that noting the different names and what they imply is crucial for real-life interventions in this context. However, for the sake of simplicity and an English-speaking audience, this case study will also be using the term "gang."

The word 'gang' often carries connotations of very structured, hierarchical groups with their own colors, symbols, names, and initiation rituals. While some Cité Soleil gangs have those characteristics, most tend to have a more fluid structure. Cité Soleil gang identity is mainly based on the neighborhood the gang comes from, although a gang's territory can expand over many neighborhoods. Because these gangs have no colors or uniform, it can be impossible to identify who is a gang member unless you are from the neighborhood.

Typically, a gang has one leader, called a *chef*, and a set of core (male) members, referred to as *solda*, or 'soldiers'. There exists some sort of hierarchy between soldiers, but the edges of the gang are hard to define. A soldier has his own gun, that stays with him at all times. But there are many other young men who are given weapons only when needed, some who drive motorcycles for the gangs, and others who run errands or work as lookouts. Many of the soldiers become involved with the gangs as young boys: they start out as lookouts or run errands, and gradually get pulled in as they get older and gain the *chef's* trust.

The gang lifestyle is precarious, mostly dependent on political patronage and robbery, gangs frequently alternate between relative wealth and complete poverty. There is a lot of fighting between gangs, as well as fighting within gangs for power and control. Few live past their 30s. *Chef's* have absolute power within their neighborhoods, but can almost never leave the boundaries of the areas they control without having significant political connections.

Leaving the gangs is incredibly challenging. A person who is in a gang's outer ring, running errands or occasionally holding a weapon, could possibly withdraw and return to 'civilian life.' However, leaving the gangs would be extremely difficult for a soldier, and virtually impossible for a *chef*. The only way they could leave the gangs would be by leaving Cité Soleil, preferably also leaving Port au Prince, or Haiti. The few powerful *chimè* who tried to return to civilian life in Cité Soleil were assassinated, because other gangsters felt threatened by their former power. So for most soldiers and *chef*, there is no exit strategy except for death or prison.

### **Age and Social Determinants of Gang Membership in Cité Soleil**

Youth are an important part of the political and militarized space in Haiti. Young people have been at the forefront of the political movements that led up to the end of the Duvalier regime,

the coup d'états of Aristide, and everything in between. The average age of an armed urban gang member is 22, and the average age of other insurgency group members is 26.

The mechanisms that the community's adults would use to control youth have broken down: urban migration has eroded many of the traditional community mechanisms for social order. In addition, so few parents are able to adequately provide for the basic needs of their households (food, shelter, safety, education) that many have lost their moral authority over their children. Some families even depend on their children's gang-related activities for their livelihood or safety.

The reasons young people join gangs are complex: one of the primary reasons is that being a part of a gang, and being armed, gives them a feeling of control over a very chaotic existence. Violence in Haiti falls disproportionately on people living in the poorest neighborhoods, and domestic abuse is prevalent. One study showed that every person in Cité Soleil knew someone who was a victim of violence. Joining a gang - or being in the good graces of a gang - provides a sense of security.

Cité Soleil youth also feel socially excluded and marginalized. They are aware that their poor living conditions are not normal, and of how the rest of the country sees them. They see violence as a legitimate way to gain social respect, fight exclusion, and set the score with those in power.

This social exclusion increases youth's chances of unemployment. Social mobility opportunities are very limited in neighborhoods like Cité Soleil, as is access to education. On average, gang members have only 7 years of education, which is not enough to graduate secondary school. Being from Cité Soleil carries such a strong stigma that even those who *are* qualified for jobs may be disqualified on the spot.

Due to the lasting insecurity few private enterprises are willing to invest in Cité Soleil. Many young people feel that if the public and private sectors aren't willing to give them a chance, they will 'take matters into their own hands'. Gang association is one of the few existing income opportunities in Cité Soleil. Gangs gain money through illegal activities, as well use political connections to control access to legitimate jobs and professional development opportunities.

### **Community-Gang Relations**

The gangs have a complex relationship with the communities they are from. Many armed young people, and unarmed residents, see the gangs as a necessary form of protection on many levels. Because of the lack of trust in the police, many communities rely on gangs to protect them from thieves and other gangs. Some communities will even pressure local unarmed *baz* to take up arms, citing their responsibility to protect the neighborhood. Other gang members are more militant and see themselves at war with those in power, including the political and economic



elite, the police, and even MINUSTAH. Many armed youth cite a desire to serve their community as their main reason for joining a gang.

Given this, there is an unwritten social contract between neighborhoods and their local gangs. There are informal "rules" for gang behavior, including who they can target to kill (other gangsters, gangsters' family and girlfriends, politicians, and thieves.) Women are generally considered neutral and not direct targets of gangs (although there are high rates of domestic and sexual violence in Cité Soleil.) If the gangs protect the neighborhood against thieves, and follow the "rules", then the community will allow them to operate and even protect them against arrest by the police or MINUSTAH. But if a gangster gets out of control, the neighborhood may try to cooperate with the police or MINUSTAH for their arrest, recruit a rival gang to run them out, or even kill the gangsters themselves. While this is rare, it does happen when the community is pushed past its breaking point.

However, despite this unspoken arrangement, the gangs regularly abuse their power. They divert many local resources for their own gain, endanger their communities through battles with other gangs or police/MINUSTAH, use their weapons to settle personal grievances over pride or women, and are often hostile to other forms of local leadership. Much of the violence that residents experience is directly related to the gangs.

The younger generation of gangsters is less powerful but more unpredictable; many of them seem to disregard the "rules" of the past and have been known to beat women and children just for looking at them the wrong way. Recently, one opened fire on a crowd of several thousand at a street party - this was unheard of even in the "bad years" of 2004-2006. Locals estimate that between 12 to 27 people were killed.

## **The State**

Underlying all of this is the real and perceived absence of the Haitian state. There is extremely low confidence in the justice system: the police are seen as very corrupt and have been involved in many criminal activities such as kidnapping, rape, and other abuses of power. Most people in Cité Soleil simply do not see it as a viable option to go to the police, which is why they turn to local gangs for justice and protection. When people do go to the police, they are often asked to hand bribes in order for an arrest to be made, and even when this happens, criminals are frequently released. This makes people reluctant to engage with the police for fear of retribution. The rest of the justice system is seen as equally corrupt, with bribes and favors being the primary determinants of rulings.

There is great distrust of the government: a post-earthquake survey showed that only 15% of residents thought that the government was doing a good job, and only 9% thought it was honest

and fair. Basic services such as electricity, trash collection, water, sanitation, road maintenance, and education are unreliable or non-existent, and if they are present, it is often because an NGO or UN group is financing it. Many residents feel that the local government has an incentive to keep Cité Soleil impoverished, because the officials profit from projects designed to fix the municipality's problems. In the absence of the government, gangs function as a substitute state in many neighborhoods.

There are many allegations of local and national politicians directly supporting local gangs with financing, guns, and ammunition, in addition to providing immunity when necessary. This is why even being associated with politics (being an *abolocho*; an intermediary between politicians and gangs or groups of young people) can make someone a 'justifiable' gang target.

### **International Intervention**

Between 2004 and 2006, the gangs had complete control over Cité Soleil and there was virtually no state presence. In 2007, the Preval government made it a priority to regain control over the area, and authorized a MINUSTAH/police intervention. Soleil became a virtual war zone, with tanks in the streets, helicopters in the air, and barricades at the entries to the area. While some reports describe this intervention as sensitive and cautious, many residents remember the time as terrifying and deadly, with many civilian casualties and disproportionate use of force. After many months of fighting, most of the major gang leaders were imprisoned, killed, or exiled, and the state regained some control.

A 'window of opportunity' for creating peace dividends and re-establishing the legitimacy of the state was opened, and largely missed. Despite several 'quick win' projects, local residents' expectations of the return of the state and the private sector to Cité Soleil went unrealized. This not only created great cynicism among local residents, but also meant that the underlying factors that led to the creation of gangs went unresolved. Therefore, the post-2007 reduction in gang activity was temporary. By 2013, the percentage of youth involved in gangs was about the same as it was between 2004 and 2005.

MINUSTAH's post-2007 disarmament programs were also problematic: their incentives were too weak to convince most gang members to transition to a civilian life, but were strong enough to convince some unarmed young people to buy arms just to benefit from their services. After it failed to succeed, the DDR program became the Community Violence Reduction (CVR) program. MINUSTAH soldiers are still present and patrolling in Cité Soleil, and their militarized presence is resented by many residents, who see it as a foreign occupying force and a symbol of foreign intervention in Haiti.

The post-2007 period was also a time when many international NGOs began operating in Cité Soleil. While there were some positive initiatives, as a whole, NGO interventions failed to 'add up' to lasting peace and NGO operations may often have contributed to violence. Many NGOs operated through local gangsters, which reinforced their power. Many residents felt alienated and excluded by the politics of relief and lack of communication. Some jobs related to NGO projects were disruptive because they caused a lot of competition and did not last long; 'cash for work' projects were notoriously corrupt.

Between 2007 and 2010, the international community spent more than \$100 million in Cité Soleil; much more has been spent since the earthquake. Many locals know this and yet see no change, and therefore assume that NGOs are exploiting their poverty for personal gain. This has led to an attitude of "mutual exploitation:" when residents feel that NGOs are taking advantage of them, they take advantage of the NGOs by stealing project resources and sabotaging the project. When there is trust between an NGO and a community, however, residents will actively take risks to protect the project.

### **Daily Life and Civil Society**

Despite all of these dynamics, life goes on in Cité Soleil. Without the factories, most families depend on the informal markets for their livelihoods; very few people have formal jobs. The economic heart of Cité Soleil is the Brooklyn market, followed by the Bwa Nef market, both of which attract people from neighborhoods across the municipality. Because Cité Soleil borders the sea, there is a substantial fishing population in neighborhoods along the water.

Neighborhoods that border National Highway #1 have bigger businesses, like commercial depots and wholesalers. There are still some factories, where people work for very low wages that provide some stable form of employment.

There has recently been some minor economic investment in various parts of the municipality by some progressive members of the elite class and by emerging social enterprises.

Because there is so little economic opportunity in Cité Soleil, there is an intense focus on education as the path to a better life. Families make great sacrifices to send their children to school, and will even send them to neighborhoods that are considered 'rival territories' if necessary. Schools and after-school activities are also seen as important for keeping young people 'off the streets' and make them less vulnerable to involvement with gangs. However, Cité Soleil has only two state-run schools (one primary, one secondary) and both were severely damaged in the earthquake. So most families either have to pay tuition for private schools that, have varying quality of instruction, or give up on schooling entirely.

For the people who succeed at school and find employment, there is intense pressure to leave Cité Soleil. There is a perception that the only people who live in Cité Soleil are those that have no other choice, and residents are suspicious of successful neighbors who remain in the area. This has created a 'brain drain' out of Cité Soleil, and resulted in a significant number of local Diaspora, known as *Soley Deyò*. While many are ashamed of their origins (and many others exploit their connections to Cité Soleil for political gain), there is a growing number of former residents (including famous ones such as the international boxer Evens Paul) who are trying to positively engage the area.

For those that remain behind, geography is identity. The geographic nature of the gang conflicts creates lines that many residents feel uncomfortable crossing. This isolation has led to an intense sense of neighborhood identity and pride. This sense of pride motivates many *baz* to name their neighborhoods after big cities; e.g. Los Angeles, Paris, and Jerusalem are three neighborhoods that border each other. *Baz* are competitive about who has the best area: this can be healthy when it motivates young people to invest their energy and resources into their neighborhoods. However, this competitiveness can also get out of hand and lead to inter-neighborhood conflict.

The dominance of young men is clear in the Cité Soleil culture. A globalized urban culture has taken hold in the area, with hip-hop, break-dancing, graffiti, and street parties being very important. Local DJs are influential figures, because bringing a popular DJ to a street party is a measure of a *baz*'s resources and connections. Sports such as basketball and football (soccer) are extremely popular, although they are played less during times of increased violence. Excelling in one of these areas is one of the few ways to earn some respect in Cité Soleil without being involved with gangs or politics.

Religion also plays a role in the lives of many in Cité Soleil: residents generally practice Voudou, Catholicism, or one of many Protestant denominations. Some religious leaders are respected and active community organizers, others are suspected of corruption or political links. Various churches and temples may draw people of the same faith together from across the municipality, but not across faiths. There are no active inter-religious forums to coordinate between faith leaders in Cité Soleil. However, during certain times of crisis, local activists have managed to mobilize religious leaders to participate in movements such as peace marches and other displays of unity.

Civil society also plays a role in Cité Soleil: there is a countless number of informal local associations and registered organizations. Many of these have been providing services to their communities for years. However, many others are seen as "pocket organizations" (which their leaders will "pull out of their pockets" when NGOs or other funding sources are around, but are otherwise not active in the community.) The latter has seriously delegitimized the former, to the

point where there is suspicion of even legitimate local groups. The use of some local associations as "middlemen" for politicians further undermines civil society's legitimacy.

In general, the media is seen as another force that exploits Cité Soleil's misery for its own financial benefit. Residents are very suspicious of anyone with a camera: it is assumed that foreigners taking pictures will use the images of Cité Soleil's poverty as a way to raise funds for projects that will never benefit Cité Soleil. There is one community radio station in Cité Soleil called Radio Boukman, which is generally appreciated by local residents, although the founder was assassinated by gangs in 2013. Most Soleyans get their local news from *Teledjòl*, the rumors that circulate constantly around Cité Soleil. While they are important for survival, rumors can easily spiral out of control and result in conflict or death.

### **Post-Earthquake Conflict and Opportunities**

The earthquake of January 12, 2010 was a shock to the entire country, but its effects in Cité Soleil were not what was covered in the media. The national prison was destroyed in the earthquake, releasing thousands of prisoners, many of which were gang members that communities helped to arrest, and came back to terrorize their old neighborhoods. New struggles emerged as boundaries of gang territories were disrupted by the disaster and ex-prisoners sought to re-establish their power.

The camp for displaced persons in Cité Soleil's central square, Place Fierte, became a source of insecurity because thieves and unruly gangsters could hide in the tent camp instead of being accountable to their neighborhoods. The situation was so bad that an ad-hoc coalition of *baz* eventually evacuated and burned down the camp in a single night in October 2010.

The government, police, and MINUSTAH had all been badly affected by the earthquake and were already stretched thin with the response. This led to further reduction in state presence and services that created a void that the gangs filled. Many gangs profited from dealing with corrupt NGO and government workers who controlled relief resources.

As a result levels of insecurity and gang membership, which had been declining since 2007, increased sharply in the post-earthquake period.

However, the post-earthquake period also brought together many unarmed civil society groups who felt motivated by the disaster. A social movement was established in 2011 called Konbit Soley Leve, which sought to bring people from different neighborhoods together to address common problems such as flooded canals, trash, blackouts, and at-risk youth. It was an unstructured, unofficial, open movement with no fixed leadership. The movement's structure was designed to make it impossible for it to receive money, cooperate with politicians, or ignite

fighting over control. The movement grew over the next few years until it had participants from across Cité Soleil, and has gone through various cycles of visible activity (such as leading a peace march that ended a conflict between Cité Soleil and the area of Simon-Pele) and more underground activity (during times when social leaders are being targeted.)

2014 saw the re-emergence of the conflict between 'Upper' and 'Lower' Cité Soleil, which is separated by the Route 9 highway. This conflict has historical, political, and class aspects: Upper Cité Soleil is all housing projects, whereas Lower Cité Soleil is a mixture of housing projects and slums. These zones have also traditionally had differing political allegiances. The battle has recently reignited, and even unarmed civilians have been targeted and killed for being in the wrong territory at the wrong time. The conflict has escalated through tit-for-tat killings, and has gotten to the point where few people will cross Route 9. This poses a new challenge for everyone operating in Cité Soleil.

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Several sources were reviewed in compiling this case study. Facilitators can make this list available to participants and should familiarize themselves with some of these sources.

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## Main Scenario

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You work for the Port au Prince office of an international NGO based in Europe. Your NGO works to rehabilitate disaster-affected buildings, and its mission is to improve human wellbeing and safety through providing resilient shelter in disaster-affected areas. The NGO came to Haiti in 2010 after the earthquake, and you have successfully rehabilitated dozens of earthquake-damaged buildings across Haiti. The NGO's priority is projects that will have significant impact, and therefore you focus only on community buildings (schools, churches, public buildings, etc.) You are proud that you employ Haitian engineers from the top schools and companies, and have about 20 national staff and 10 international staff. You've so far had challenging but workable relationships with local government, and value the relationships you've built with several relevant Haitian ministries.

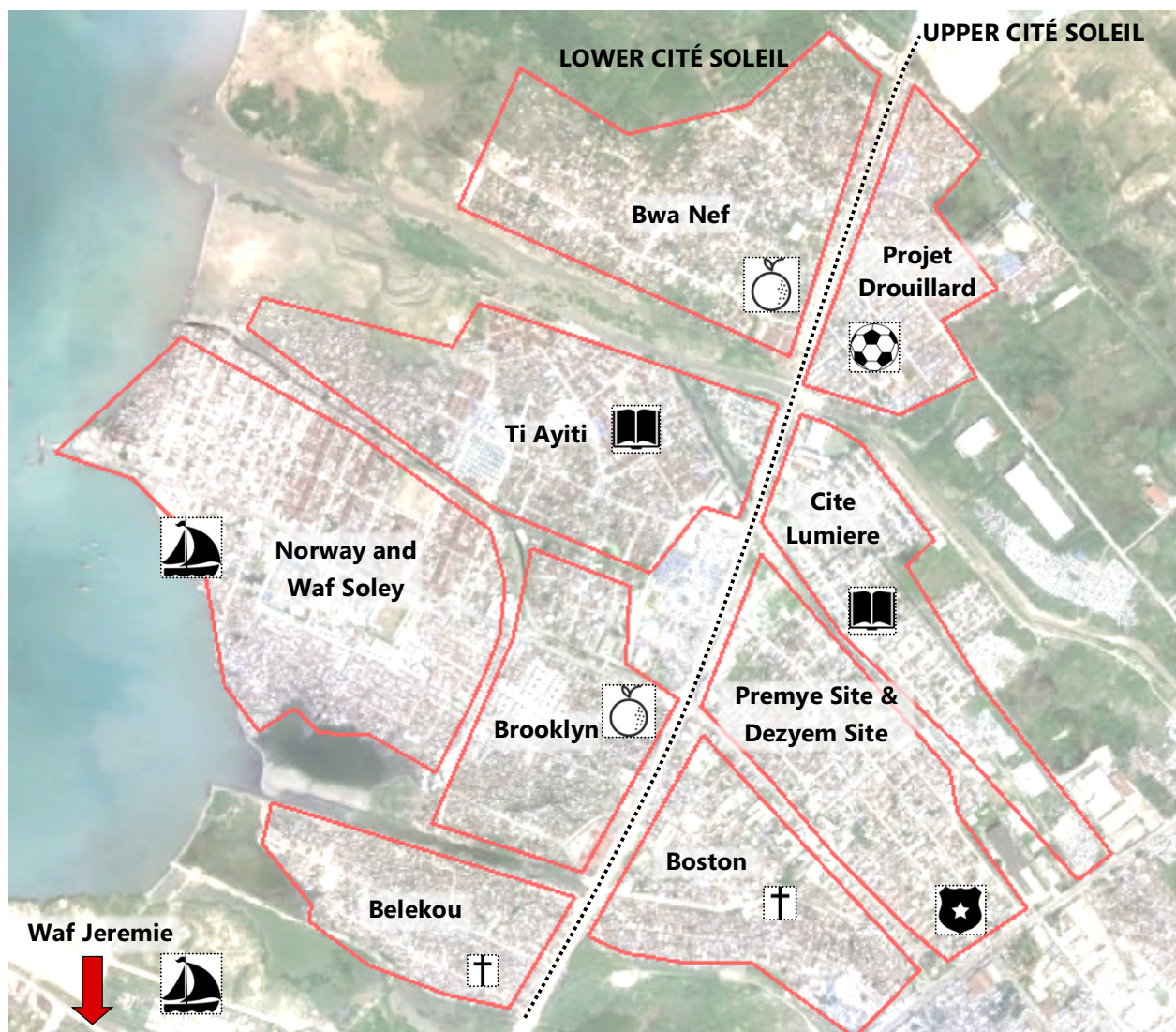
You recently won a contract to work in Cité Soleil. You have been provided with an assessment from a contracted engineer about the state of 10 buildings in the municipality. You have \$1,000,000 to spend on this project, and your organization is responsible for selecting the sites and carrying out the work. However, you do not have a lot of experience working in the *katye popilè* (the poorer, marginalized areas of the capital such as Cité Soleil), and you are unsure if any of your staff are from these areas. Your organization's board is excited about the prospect of working in such a high-profile area, but your field staff are seriously concerned for their safety. As this is a new situation, your organization needs new protocols and principles for how to successfully pull off this project. You need to figure out which sites to rehabilitate, how to approach the situation, who you will work with, and how you will protect your staff and materials.

## Map and Building Assessments

Below is a map of Cité Soleil, divided into 10 neighborhoods. Route 9, that divides Upper and Lower Cité Soleil is represented by the dotted line. Everything to the left of the dotted line is lower Cité Soleil, and everything to the right of the dotted line is Upper Cité Soleil.

Waf Jeremi is not pictured on the map but is due South of Belekou. It is not directly involved in the current conflict.


The assessed buildings are represented by square icons, and their descriptions can be found in the damage assessment report on the next page. *While these buildings are based on real places in Cité Soleil, details have been altered for the sake of the case study, including the extent of earthquake damage, consequence of earthquake damage, exact location, pre-earthquake functions, etc.*





Map 3: Cité Soleil from Google Maps at [www.google.com/maps](http://www.google.com/maps) adapted by CDA. The six icons which were added to the map, and are also used below, are from Canva at [www.canva.com](http://www.canva.com).


## Damage Assessment Report


You are asked to choose which earthquake-affected buildings to rebuild. You must choose from a list given to you by an independent contractor who assessed one site per neighborhood. The assessment includes a short description of each building and the cost of rehabilitating it. Sites are ranked from least to most damaged:


Block	Structure	
Project Drouillard	Recreational Area	
Damage:	Estimated cost:	
MILD	\$100,000	
Description:		
<p><i>This recreational area had basketball courts and a flat area to play soccer. A lot of young people from Project Drouillard and Cite Lumiere spent their free time there, which local parents say was important to "keep them out of trouble." The blacktop was split by the earthquake, the goal post and basketball post/hoop were destroyed, and young people no longer spend time there.</i></p>		


Block	Structure	
Norway/Waf Soley	Fisherman's Cooperative Building	
Damage:	Estimated cost:	
MODERATE	\$200,000	
Description:		
<i>The fisherman's cooperative serves neighborhoods that lie along the ocean. They share boats, nets, and other equipment. They have a building that was built to serve as a place to clean the fish and had a 'cold room' for storage. Since this building has been damaged, the fishermen are forced to sell the fish as quickly as they catch them. This has been harmful to the local economy, and even just repairing the cold room would improve local livelihoods.</i>		


Block	Structure	
Bwa Nef	Public Market	
Damage:	Estimated cost:	
MODERATE	\$200,000	
Description:		
<p><i>This is the second-largest public market in the municipality. It serves people from many of the surrounding neighborhoods, including Bwa Nef, Projet Drouillard, Cite Lumiere, and Ti Ayiti. The structures that protected the market from the sun and rain are damaged, and the number of people who can sell in the market has been seriously limited. This is a hit to the local economy.</i></p>		


Block	Structure	
Brooklyn	Public Market	
Damage:	Estimated cost:	
MODERATE	\$200,000	
Description:		
<p><i>This is the largest public market in the municipality. It serves people from many of the surrounding neighborhoods, including Belekou, Brooklyn, Norway/Waf Soley, Ti Ayiti, Boston, and Premye Site / Dezyem Site. The earthquake damaged the market structures and the streetlights, so not only is there less space, but people do not feel safe to sell there after dark. Less people can come to the market and they can't stay as late as they could before, which hurts the local economy.</i></p>		


Block	Structure	
Belekou	Adventist Church	
Damage:	Estimated cost:	
MODERATE	\$250,000	
Description:		
This is a local Adventist church that serves people from Belekou, Brooklyn, and Norway. The front half of the church collapsed, so congregants now have services under a makeshift roof of tarps and sheets, which are incredibly hot. This has reduced the number of parishioners.		

Block	Structure	
Boston	Catholic Church	
Damage:	Estimated cost:	
MODERATE	\$250,000	
Description:		
<p><i>This is the only Catholic church for the municipality, and it serves neighborhoods across Cité Soleil. The side of the church collapsed, reducing the church's capacity by half. There are now hundreds of people who cannot fit into the church every Sunday, causing significant distress in the Catholic community.</i></p>		

Block	Structure	
Ti Ayiti	Secondary School	
Damage:	Estimated cost:	
MODERATE / SEVERE	\$300,000	
Description:		
<p><i>This is a very well-respected secondary school that normally can hold 500 students. It normally draws students from across Cité Soleil, but because of the damage, it has had to limit its enrollment to 250 students because there are not enough safe classrooms. This was one of the few affordable high schools in the municipality, so many students who are not accepted to this school will have no other option for secondary school.</i></p>		

Block	Structure	
Cite Lumiere	Primary School	
Damage:	Estimated cost:	
MODERATE / SEVERE	\$300,000	
Description:		
<p><i>This is a well-respected primary school that normally holds 750 students. Its reputation is good enough that it draws students from across Cité Soleil. Because of the damage, they can only hold 400 students in classrooms, and another 100 in make-shift sheet metal classrooms that are so hot that students have been known to pass out from the heat.</i></p>		

Block	Structure	
Premye Site & Dezyem Site	Annex of Police Department	
Damage:	Estimated cost:	
SEVERE	\$500,000	
Description:		
<p><i>This is the smallest of the two police stations in Cité Soleil. It is on the outer edge of the municipality, and is mostly responsible for monitoring Upper Cité Soleil. The damage is so severe that the few police officers based there had to move to the other, previously unoccupied, police station which is located in Norway, and this reduces their ability to patrol Upper Cité Soleil.</i></p>		

Block	Structure	
Waf Jeremi	The New Port	
Damage:	Estimated cost:	
SEVERE	\$500,000	
Description:		
<p>Before the earthquake hit, the government was investing in building an improved port in Waf Jeremie, the often-ignored block to the south of Belekou. It is one of the few significant government investments in the municipality in the recent past. The port was planned as a job creation opportunity for the residents of Waf Jeremi, but the earthquake completely destroyed all of the progress that had been made so far.</p>		

### Reconstruction and Conflict in Cité Soleil

#### Study Questions

1. What seem to be the main sources of division in Cité Soleil?
2. What seem to be the main sources of connection in Cité Soleil?
3. Who should be involved in the decision-making process about what locations to select?  
What criteria can you use to ensure that connectors are strengthened and divisions are not?
4. How do you ensure the safety of your staff without legitimizing armed actors? (gangsters, UN, and police - all of which have rocky relationships with the community.)
5. How do you build trust with local communities and ensure that building materials are not stolen? (as they often are in Cité Soleil.)
6. What role should the municipal government play in this context?

#### Teaching Plan

This case can be taught in three parts after an initial introduction. This teaching case also includes some additional optional scenarios, and an optional fourth part that explores organizational impacts.

#### Introduction

After participants had time to read the case, the facilitator should outline the scenario:

- We are an international NGO that is based in Port au Prince,
- We have been offered a contract to rebuild earthquake-damaged houses in Cité Soleil,
- There is active conflict between gangs in Upper and Lower Cité Soleil,
- We have a limited budget of \$1,000,000,
- We are responsible to ensure our donors that supplies are not stolen, and
- We are responsible to ensure our staff's safety.

Continue to facilitate the discussion outlined in the following pages.



## Discussion Part I: Dividers

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After the introduction, the facilitator should write "**The Conflict**" on a board and ask participants to identify the existing conflicts in this scenario. This list should include:

- Intra-gang conflict,
- Inter-gang conflict,
- Gang vs. police and MINUSTAH,
- Gang vs. community members, and
- Community members vs. police and MINUSTAH.

Then, underneath to the right, write "**Dividers**," and ask participants to name the sources of tension and division in Cité Soleil. Give the participants about 15 minutes to brainstorm their ideas. Encourage them to draw lessons from the text and question each others' assumptions. This list should include:

- Geographic divisions, (e.g. Upper vs. Lower Cité Soleil, rival neighborhoods, etc.)
- Lack of economic opportunity/competition for jobs,
- Inter-neighborhood competition, enhanced by neighborhoods' isolation,
- Gang power and privilege,
- Gangsters as "gatekeepers" of opportunity, and resentment of unarmed youth,
- Gangsters breaking "the rules," especially younger gangsters,
- Undermining of local civil society,
- Political manipulation of the community,
- Distrust of NGOs,
- Distrust of politicians and local government,
- Lack of state services and infrastructure,
- Distrust of MINUSTAH, the police, and the justice system,
- Distrust of the media,
- Class divisions,
- Different livelihoods,
- Political divisions,
- Religious differences, and
- Stigma of being from Cité Soleil.

## Optional: Finding Patterns

Once a good list has been generated, the trainer can ask the participants to look at the list as a whole and search for patterns, "What do you see in these tensions? Any patterns? Any common features? Any important differences?" Understanding the broader patterns in these dividers can provide additional insight that can be used for program planning.

The group may note that the vast majority of the tensions relate to **distrust** that comes from real experiences (and the perceptions/interpretations of those experiences) over the past twenty years. Even after the war-like situation of 2004-2006, Cité Soleil's residents have been continually exposed to trauma that makes them feel as if they have little control over their lives: peacekeepers who don't speak their language raid their communities, police arrest friends and family members when there is no functioning justice system that will release the innocent, gangsters decide who lives and who dies, etc. This trauma creates extremely high levels of distrust within the population, and it will almost always assume the worst out of an attempt to protect itself.

## Discussion Part II: Connectors

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On the right side of the board, the trainer should write "**Connectors.**" Then ask the participants about the sources of connection in Cité Soleil, "What connects the residents of Cité Soleil? What are shared values, experiences, community structures that could be a source of connection/unity?" This list should include:

- Schools and the value of education,
- Public markets,
- Health centers/hospitals,
- Community radio station,
- Self-reliance/self-organization, (*baz*)
- Sense of responsibility that some of the gangs have towards their neighborhood,
- Gang "rules",
- Women considered neutral,
- Community mobilization in times of crises,
- Population's desire for safety,
- Some legitimate civil society,
- Shared problems: trash, flooding, blackouts, etc.
- Shared activities: street parties, sports, etc.
- Shared culture: graffiti, hip-hop, etc.
- Neighborhood pride transformed into "Soleyan Pride,"
- Value of "keeping young people out of trouble," and
- Faith or religion unifying across geographic lines *within* a single faith.

### Optional: Finding Patterns

After this discussion, the trainer can ask participants to reflect on these connecting factors, "What do you see in these connectors? Any patterns? Any common features? Any important differences?" Understanding the broader patterns in these connectors can provide additional insight that can be used for program planning.

One possible pattern is that shared spaces (like schools and markets) will have a direct impact on how the project is planned. Another could be that shared culture and activities will have more implications for how the NGO builds trust. There could also be an interesting conversation about identity and neighborhood pride, and whether they can be turned into a broader Cité Soleil pride and sense of identity?

However, one of the most important patterns that appears in the connectors is having shared problems: insecurity, thieves, trash, blackouts, lack of services, stigma. These problems are universal across all neighborhoods, and participants shouldn't underestimate the power of helping people realize their shared challenges.

## Discussion Part III: What, Why, Where, Who, How

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In this part, the facilitator will guide the participants in planning out various aspects of the program by asking "**what, why, where, who, and how**" questions. As you facilitate a discussion around each set of questions, ensure that people are considering the dividers and the connectors. Part III should take about an hour.

### Why, and What

Write "**Program**" or "**Aid**" between the list of dividers and connectors, and note that now it is time to talk about the intervention by our program. Write "**why?**" and "**what?**", and try to get the group to come to consensus on what their mission is and why. This should be done relatively quickly, in 5 to 10 minutes. When the group has come to consensus, write their decision under the question heading in the middle column.

### Where

Write "**where?**" below the first two questions, and pass out the map and building assessments. Explain that the map marks the location of 10 earthquake-damaged buildings that were assessed by a contractor. There is one building in each neighborhood, and they each have different amounts of damage and therefore different prices to rehabilitate (*note: these prices are intentionally unrealistic to make calculations easy*). Break participants up into small groups. Remind them that they have a limit of \$1,000,000, and give them 15 minutes to discuss which buildings they should repair.

There are many different combinations that could add up to \$1,000,000, so the interesting part of this exercise will be seeing what people choose and why. Each building/combination of buildings should bring up discussions of dividers, connectors, and tradeoffs. Each group should have 5 minutes to present their decision and rationale, followed by 10 minutes of discussion. Here are some points to consider:

### Geographic Balance

Consider the tension between Upper and Lower Cité Soleil and avoid creating a sense of one area being 'favored.' Note: Working with spaces that serve neighborhoods on both sides of Route 9 (like the markets or the Catholic church) will have unique impacts.

### The Schools

- Schools can be a connector: they represent shared values and bring together young people from rival neighborhoods.

- There is one school on each side of Route 9. Both schools serve neighborhoods from both sides.
- If participants choose only one school, ask them why they chose one and not the other. More children are left out of the primary school, but the secondary school is the only option for many teenagers, and this is the group that is at most risk of joining a gang. Consider: Does our mandate include violence prevention as well as maximizing impact?

### **The Markets**

- Markets can also be a connector: they bring women (and some men) from all over Cité Soleil together, and support livelihoods.
- Even though both markets are in Lower Cité Soleil, they serve both sides of Route 9.

### **The Youth Recreational Facility**

- There is a shared value of "keeping kids out of trouble," but this facility would only serve young people from certain neighborhoods of Upper Cité Soleil.
- The facility has potential to prevent violence, but does our mandate include violence prevention as well as maximizing impact?

### **The Churches**

- The Adventist church only serves a few communities in Lower Cité Soleil, so choosing this could cause some feelings of resentment due to favoritism.
- The Catholic Church serves people from all over Cité Soleil and could be seen as a connector between Catholics.
- However, other religious communities (Voudou and Protestant) are left out. So while there is one church in Upper Cité Soleil and one in Lower Cité Soleil, there are other dividers to be considered
- In reality, religious differences are not the greatest divider in Cité Soleil, but they are in many other contexts, so it is important for the purpose of this exercise that the participants think this through.

### **The Fisherman's Cooperative or the Port**

- Both of these buildings support livelihoods.
- Competition over jobs can be a divider. Supporting the fishermen in Norway and Waf Jeremi is good, but there is no equivalent support for livelihoods in Upper Cité Soleil, and areas that are not near the ocean.
- Since the port is an example of government intervention, supporting it would reinforce the government's legitimacy.

- But opinions about the government is also a divider. Some people could perceive that as supporting the politicians who backed the project.
- Some people may argue that Waf Jeremi is not involved in the conflict and therefore it is not worth investing resources in, but do we want be seen as 'punishing' neighborhoods for staying out of the conflict?

### The Police Station

- This should cause an interesting debate: is the role of NGOs to support state security services? Especially if they are perceived as not legitimate?
- Distrust of the police can be a divider. The population has an intense distrust of the police - they could assume this money is going to a corrupt and inefficient system.
- However, this could also be seen as enabling the police to be more responsive to the community by repairing their facilities.
- Rebuilding the police station may be perceived by the local gangs as an attempt to put pressure on them, and they may do more to sabotage/attack the project and your staff.
- Is rebuilding the police station too much for this hypothetical NGO to tackle, given its expertise and mandate? Brining the police station back to operation (in addition to simply rebuilding it) would require a sustained engagement before and after construction. This could be a better job for an NGO that focuses on peacebuilding or justice system reform.

### Who

Write "**who?**" in the middle column and facilitate a discussion around the following points that get at the question of who should be involved in this initiative. This should bring up important questions about legitimization, trust-building, and balancing security with neutrality. Here are some key questions and, beneath each question, a set of key points that should come out in the dialogue. Allow 5 minutes of discussion for each set of questions:

#### Who in the community should we turn to for advice and consultation? Who can help facilitate communication with the neighborhoods in the sites we've chosen?

- Does the person have clear connections with gangs or controversial politicians?
- Does the person represent a group that has legitimacy in the community? Or do they represent a "pocket organization"?
- How would you know?



### **Who, if anyone, should we consult with about security? Local gangs, private security contractors, the police, and/or the United Nations soldiers?**

- *Would you pay off local gangs?* Hiring/paying off local gangs for security not only legitimizes them, but rewards them monetarily for the control they have over the neighborhood.
- *Would you hire private security or driver?* Hiring private security guards implies that you don't trust the community, and are anticipating problems.
- *Would you request security/protection from MINUSTAH?* MINUSTAH is usually a divider, and is seen as somewhat of an occupying force. You may want to inform them of your presence and activities just so they are aware, but because their presence is still militarized, being seen with them will have a negative impact on your reputation.
- *Would you request security/protection from the local police?* The police are also a divider, but slightly less so than MINUSTAH. You may want to inform them of your presence and coordinate with them somewhat. But again, be aware of what they represent to the community you work in.

The best protection is community trust. If people in the neighborhood understand what you are doing, they will protect you, advocate for you, inform you when things are going to get bad, and even get you out of problems

### **Who, if anyone, in the local government should be involved?**

- *Is the government a divider or a connector?* The government is a divider: the local government has little legitimacy in the eyes of the vast majority of the residents of Cité Soleil. The involvement of the Mayor's office may alienate many local organizations and associations, who feel as if the Mayor only shows up to help when an international NGO (and their funds) are involved.
- *How would your community partners feel about this?* Depending on who the Mayor is (and who he is associated with), some people will not want to be seen in the same room as officials from the local government. But others may want the local authorities to be present.
- *What are the consequences of not involving the local government?* Not involving the local government (in this case, the Mayor's office) will ultimately undermine its authority. It could be a missed opportunity to offer the local government a chance to legitimize itself with the population it is supposed to serve.

## Who would you hire, and why?

- *Is employment opportunity a divider or a connector?* While aspirations for better economic opportunity is a shared value, competition over jobs is a divider. You have to be very strategic about how you go about hiring process.
- *Do you hire local workers?* One of the root causes of the violence in the community is the lack of jobs. A program that comes in and doesn't hire local workers causes a lot of frustration. Many Soleyans don't find jobs when they go out and look for them, so when jobs come into their communities and are still impossible to get, it is incredibly frustrating. This is the kind of resentment that could undermine a project.
- *Do you hire just people from the immediate neighborhood?* If you hire people just from the neighborhood the building is in, you miss out on opportunities to use the hiring process to bring people together from different neighborhoods. But if you hire from many neighborhoods, you may create resentment in the local population who think the jobs belong to them.
- *Do you hire women?* It is important to hire women for the same reason it is important to hire young men who aren't armed. Women are often overlooked in the many projects that focus on giving opportunities to young men who are at risk of becoming armed. This approach essentially "punishes" women for not being active participants in the conflict, and ignores the role they play in stabilizing families and communities.
- *If you have to hire positions outside of Cité Soleil because of a lack of technical expertise and/or legal enterprises to contract with, who would you hire?* It is important to vet the contractor. Any biases they might have towards Soleyans will be noticed by the community - they need to have respect for community members and show it. It is also important that people you hire know how to handle themselves in situations of insecurity.
- *Do you hire gangsters?* There may be pressure to hire young armed men, as a strategy to get them out of the gangs by offering them an alternate livelihood. But a short-term project will not give these young men enough work to permanently pull them out of the gangs, and will only reinforce the perception that you need to have to have a gun to be noticed in Cité Soleil. This is a serious divider, and you shouldn't favor gang members. But you shouldn't automatically exclude someone who is a gang member either (that decision requires a separate conversation.)

## How

Write "**how**" on the board in the middle column. Then facilitate a conversation about how this project will move forward. Here are some key questions and, beneath each question, a set of key points of consideration that should come out in the dialogue. *You may also replace these questions with the "Additional Scenarios" section, which explores many of the same ideas in a more concrete way through narrative.*

### **How will you deal with the local gangsters? Would you reach out to them or ignore them? What are the consequences?**

- Working directly through gangsters or seeking their approval for the project would legitimize their role in the community and give them more power.
- However, gangsters *do* have a role in the community and it wouldn't be wise to completely ignore them and shut them out of the program if they want to participate.
- A middle ground is to not seek them out directly, but if they show up and want to participate, you treat them just as you would any other interested community member, because they are members of the community. Don't treat them like they own the community by asking for their permission.

### **How will you build community trust? How would you ensure community participation and a sense of ownership?**

- There should be real consultation with the community before deciding which building to rebuild. It should be made clear that this project is a support service that is available to the community if it chooses to accept it, and that it will have actual power in determining important aspects of the project.
- Build trust and communication by leveraging your list of Connectors. Street parties, and sports are events that will bring a lot of people together and give you an opportunity to communicate.
- Figure out a plan for communication. How will you keep the community informed? Who? How often? Communication is the most essential part of building trust, if the community doesn't understand what is happening, they will assume the worst.
- The community can take responsibility for their own complimentary activities to improve the area, such as cleaning the streets, repainting structures, planting trees. These should be paid for by the community, so that they feel real ownership.

### **If you decide to hire local people, how would you recruit?**

- Emphasize transparency - be clear about the criteria, how the selection process will work, and who is involved in the selection process.
- Get out the word in multiple ways - if the position doesn't require literacy, ensure that you advertise for it in non-written forms as well. (radio, community meetings, etc.)

### **How would you react to an increase in insecurity/ inter-neighborhood violence?**

- What does it say to the community if at the first few gunshots, everyone gets scared and leaves? It is a strong reminder of how awful their day-to-day reality is. If there is an increased rise in violence, it is important to react calmly. Consult with local contacts and follow their advice - if they say to leave, then leave.
- Call local contacts before coming down, and get advice about what routes to take, or whether to continue work at all. Your first responsibility is to keep your staff and your community partners safe. If there is inter-neighborhood fighting, your project could be targeted because it is an investment in one of the neighborhoods in conflict.
- If aggression is coming from gangs in your project area or is directed at your project area, then you should stop operations. Continuing operations under heavy insecurity can be a sign that you are more concerned with your deadline than you are with the safety of the people at work. Also, stopping a project that the community is invested in can actually create an incentive for local leaders to confront local gangsters and ask them to stop. This is not always possible, but sometimes there is enough leverage for this to happen.
- Whether you pause or continue your operations, increased communication with community contacts is necessary. If the project continues, constant and careful communication could minimize the chance for harm. If the project is stopped, frequent communication can prevent the community from feeling that it was abandoned due to something beyond its control.

## Part IV (Optional): Patterns of Impact

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It is not just what an organization does, but *how* it does things that impacts a context. The way an institution acts (organizational actions) and the way its individual staff act (organizational behaviors) also influence dividers and connectors.

The following pages present a series of questions for participants to reflect on about each type of organizational impact. Each impact also has a relevant scenario that can provide a more concrete base for discussion. These scenarios are all based on things that really happened to people working in Cité Soleil. At the bottom of each scenario you can read how the NGO staff responded and what the eventual outcome of their actions was.

### Organizational Actions

- Theft See page 29
- Market Effects See page 30
- Distribution Effects See page 31
- Legitimization Effects See page 32
- Substitution Effects See page 33

### Organizational Behaviors

- Transparency See page 35
- Fairness See page 35
- Respect See page 36
- Accountability See page 37

## Organizational Actions

### Theft

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How can you prevent the stealing of project resources, and prevent them from being used to reinforce dividers?

- Local gangs might try to steal resources that they can sell to profit their operations. They also might attempt to extort money from the project in exchange for "permission" to continue working safely. You need to develop contingency plans with your local partners for handling those situations.
- Local community buy-in and trust are the best ways to ensure the safety of your materials. If the community believes in the project, they are likely to protect and safeguard the project's resources and staff, sometimes even at the cost of confronting a local gang.
- Establish continuous and open communication. Remember, the burden to maintain trust is on you, and community members will likely assume the worst if you are not proactive and clear about your decisions. If trust is broken, things will go missing.
- Avoid stocking excess supplies at the worksite – so that the community isn't burdened with protecting them when you are away.
- Follow local advice about which route to take to deliver supplies. Making your route shorter isn't always safer – shortcuts may be more isolated and therefore more likely to lead to robbery.

**Scenario:** You get a call from one of your contractors, and he is angry. He says that a significant piece of equipment has gone missing. Right after he hangs up, you get a call from one of your community contacts, who is also angry - she says that your staff accused some local people of stealing the equipment, and that they are insulted that he would make such an accusation. How do you prevent theft, in a manner that is respectful of your community partners and contractors?

**Considerations:**

- This is a situation where trust can easily break - both parties (the contractor and the community partner) feel that their trust was violated.
- Don't presume guilt on the community's part, but also don't minimize the concerns of the contractor. Give both parties the time to express themselves.
- Be wary of assumptions that will be made based on class/social status.
- Emphasize connectors, in this case: the shared vision of completing the project.
- Thieves are clearly a large point of contention in the community - be aware that being accused of robbery has serious consequences.



**How this played out in real life:** In this case, a miscommunication allowed the theft to take place. The contractor had some off-site work to do, and didn't communicate it well to the project's community volunteers. It turns out these community volunteers had been making a special effort to protect the supplies, and when they saw the contractor 'disappear,' they thought he ran off with the rest of the project money. So they stopped protecting the supplies, and someone else stole a piece of equipment. A community outreach officer figured out what was going on, called everyone into a meeting, and explained the miscommunication. They had to write off the stolen equipment as a loss, but together they established new protocols for communication and safeguarding the materials.

## Market Effects

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What impacts might the project have on the local economy? What do you do to ensure that your project has a positive economic impact and minimize negative ones?

- Hiring local workers could boost the local economy, but make sure that your wages aren't so high that people are being pulled away from 'day jobs' that are also important community services. (e.g. teaching at a school.)
- Purchasing goods from local sellers (cement, water, etc.) could be more expensive for you, but could also improve the local economy. At the same time, by buying from local sellers you might inadvertently force other, local, customers out of the market. Since INGOs are known to overpay for things local vendors might increase their prices once they know you are looking to buy. Have a third party research the standard rates to avoid this situation.
- Be wary of giving away free things in order to promote your project. (e.g. handing free books to promote rebuilding a school) This could disrupt the local market.

**Scenario:** A local mason asks to speak to your contractor, and explains that he hasn't been able to buy cement for a week because your project bought all of the locally available cement. The closest shop where he could buy cement is in a rival neighborhood that he doesn't feel safe going to. He says there are many other local masons, carpenters, and workers that are experiencing the same problem. How should you respond? **Considerations:**

- You are fortunate that someone volunteered to come forward and confirm that you caused a negative market effect.
- You want to continue buying from local merchants as a way to boost the local economy, (saying you would stop buying from them could also have negative repercussions) but you do need to address this problem.

- You can't ask local shops to 'set aside' a certain amount of cement per week. Because many of these local masons don't have formal, stable, jobs their resource needs change too quickly to allow for rationing resources in advance.
- Set up a system where local workers can buy what they need from your own stock for the same price they could buy it from the local shops. Then take the responsibility of sourcing replacement materials from other businesses. This way you continue to support the local shops, give workers access to what they need, and keep enough cement for you to operate with.

**How this played out in real life:** In a similar manner, after the 2010 earthquake, relief rice distribution in Cité Soleil put a lot of local merchants out of business. Because this was happening at the national level, there was no recourse for local merchants to voice their concerns. When Haiti's president eventually ended the food distributions across the whole nation the situation also changed in Cité Soleil.

## Distribution Effects

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Your decisions at every level of the project have impacts on who benefits directly and indirectly from the project, and who feels left out. How do you ensure that the distribution of benefits (real or perceived) minimizes dividers and enhances connectors?

- Inter-neighborhood jealousy/competition is a major source of conflict, so be aware of how other neighborhoods close to the project site perceive the initiative and find ways to open dialogue with them so they feel included.
- Some of this comes down to what buildings you selected. Hopefully your list has a balanced amount of sites from Upper and Lower Cité Soleil, as well as neutral spaces that serve both sides. Otherwise, perceived favoritism can cause conflict and resentment.
- Pay close attention to how you distribute jobs. Competition over jobs is a significant divider and a frequent source of conflict. Being transparent and proactively explaining who will be chosen for a job and why, and giving the community time to weigh in on your criteria, can help avoid conflict.

**Scenario:** Representatives from the neighborhood next to your project site confront your staff and ask why they are not benefitting from the current project. They say that they also have damaged buildings, and are always ignored. They want to know why their site wasn't chosen, and hint that they can cut off access to your job site if they continue to not benefit from the project. **Considerations:**

- You owe this community an explanation of your criteria for picking the site, and how the decision was made.

- Search for connectors between this community and the one you're working in: do children from both neighborhoods go to this school? this church? this market?
- Don't respond to the threat, but search for ways that benefits can be more diffuse. Can some of your equipment be used on the weekend to help them with a project of their own? Could they send some young people who are interested in construction to get some on-site training or shadow the workers? Could you buy snacks from local vendors?

**How this played out in real life:** A similar real life situation had to do with selecting sites for new latrines. A project was designed to allocate a large number of latrines to one neighborhood in Cité Soleil. When the operating NGO realized how problematic this project would be given Cité Soleil's geo-politics, it asked the funding donor if it could expand the project's geographic area, and was denied. The NGO's community outreach coordinator had to do a lot of damage control because this inspired a lot of jealousy. While not ideal, the community coordinator had to share some project resources with leaders of other neighborhoods so they wouldn't disrupt the project. This could have been avoided with more careful planning and consultation when the project was still in its design stage.

## Legitimization Effects

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Who you work with (and how you work with them) can change community dynamics by legitimizing certain people. What do you need to be aware of in terms of who you confer legitimacy to?

- Be wary of giving away branding materials. (t-shirts, hats, wristbands, etc. with the NGO logo on them.) If a gangster is seen walking around in "your" shirt your image of neutrality will be damaged. Also, if a gang doesn't like your project, people wearing your logo could become targets.
- Actively involving, consulting, or seeking permission from gangs legitimizes their power over the community.
- If the local government tries to take credit for the project without having really contributed, you will be seen as contributing to the legitimization of a state authority that hasn't "earned" that legitimacy by actually working for its constituents.
- Community leaders often see themselves as, and benefit from being seen as, gatekeepers to their communities. Whoever you select to be your community representatives will have increased power because of their role of connecting the community to a source of goods. (You, the NGO) The power of being a community representative can be used to legitimize and reinforce community leaders who do the unforgiving everyday work of providing services to their neighborhoods. However, if you pick someone from a "pocket

organization," you are legitimizing someone who hasn't "earned" that respect, and reinforcing the idea that local organizations are income-generating middlemen.

**Scenario:** You want to provide as many local jobs as possible through your project, so you announce that you will be hiring about 30 local people to do various kinds of work related to the project. You circulate an application form and plan to interview candidates at the end of the week. A few days later, a group of young people from the local gang show up with guns and demand that you hire them. They threaten that unless some of their people get hired, your project won't be safe anymore. What do you do? How can you be fair and keep your project safe? **Considerations:**

- You are concerned for the safety of your staff.
- Giving in to the demands of these young men further legitimizes them and their tactics.
- It may also encourage others to come forward and try to use threats to get hired.
- It could also discourage the people who are going through the legitimate hiring process.
- You don't want to categorically deny these men access to the jobs, because they are also members of the community, and most of them are very poor.

**How this played out in real life:** When the project coordinator was confronted by local gang members, he encouraged them to apply the same way everyone else was. He said he had no control over the hiring and someone else was responsible, but he could put in a good word for them because he knew them as hard workers. By treating them as civilians rather than gangsters, and recognizing them for being 'hard workers' rather than for their guns, he was both giving them access to this opportunity, and avoiding legitimizing their violent strategy.

## Substitution Effects

If you decide not to work with/through the state and civil society, you can reinforce the perception that these two groups are useless, undermining any legitimate credibility they may have. By providing services that the state should provide, you might provide excuses for its inaction, and even free up resources that individuals can then divert towards conflict or personal gain. How do you ensure you are not serving as a substitute or a crutch for institutions that have mandates to serve their communities?

- If you involve the government, make clear contracts and agreements about their expected contribution.
- Have a firm end date and a plan to transition responsibilities to the relevant group/authority.

- If the community indicates there is a group whose authority they respect (an individual or group in the government, a civil society group, a religious leader, etc.) work to include them in the program.

**Scenario:** You are about a week away from finishing the project, and a representative from the Mayor's office (who has been uninvolved up until this point) comes and says he wants to make a speech at the inauguration. He also wants to invite a local politician who is very influential, but is also rumored to be supporting one of the local gangs. Your community partners complain that the Mayor always comes and takes credit for things he doesn't do. They are also scared of being associated with the politician, because that could make them targets of rivals of the gang he allegedly supports. What do you do? **Considerations:**

- Saying 'no' outright to the Mayor can be disrespectful and be interpreted as an NGO undermining the authority of the government. The Mayor does have a right to be there because it is his municipality.
- On the other hand, your community partners are not only uncomfortable, but actively afraid.
- An association with this politician could also damage your NGOs reputation.
- It would be difficult to prevent either from coming as it is a public event. Your challenge is less about deciding whether you should let them come, and more about how you structure the event assuming they are coming.

**How this played out in real life:** This scenario played out differently in different circumstances. Often the politician won't show up. If the Mayor *does* show up, he has a right to speak in front of his constituents, but not a right to take credit for something he didn't do. If you schedule his speech late in the day's agenda, it gives an opportunity for people who were really involved in the project to define/own the narrative and tell things the way they were. Strategies for dealing with the dangerous politician include having a separate "VIP" seating area for politicians, (so that photographs can't be taken with community leaders if they don't want them) and being transparent with local partners that you did not invite the politician and don't endorse his practices.

## Organizational Behaviors

### Transparency

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Transparency is a double-edged sword in Cité Soleil. Outsiders can be at risk in Cité Soleil because they are considered as highly suspicious by locals. Transparency is essential to reducing that suspicion and building trust. However, until after trust is built being transparent can make your project and staff vulnerable to harm. How do you balance transparency and risk?

**Scenario:** You received a grant from a large multilateral donor. During the project planning stages, your field staff comes to you and explains that this particular donor has a bad reputation in Cité Soleil, and many people feel that the donor is politically aligned with the economic elite. The last project this donor funded was burned to the ground, and staff were harassed. Your staff does not want to disclose the project's donor to the community because they fear for their own safety. How do you balance transparency with safety, and what should you do? **Considerations:**

- You have a responsibility for your staff's safety. However, if the community finds out you kept this information from them it could undermine their confidence in you and jeopardize the project and your staff.

**How this played out in real life:** The NGO in question negotiated with its donor to avoid the use of any prominent logos on the staff or site. But they still informed key community contacts about the donor's identity, were honest when asked about it, and used this as an opportunity to explain more about the project and how it could be different from past projects that the community has had a bad experience with.

### Fairness

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It is extremely important for the community to understand why some people were chosen for work, and why others weren't. There are so few opportunities for young people, and there is also a lot of favoritism, bribing, and politics in how benefits and jobs are distributed in Cité Soleil. How do you make tough decisions that are still perceived as fair?

**Scenario:** You are about to begin hiring for 30 construction workers on site in the local community, and your community contact lets you know there is already a lot of anxiety and speculation about how fair the hiring process is going to be. She warns that if this process goes wrong, you could lose the little bit of trust you have already gained in the community. How would you go about deciding who to hire? **Considerations:**

- Consult people in the community about what they think is 'fair,' and what criteria you should consider for a good candidate.

- Put together an application, share it with key stakeholders, and get their feedback.
- Put the application in very public places, and hold meetings to explain the hiring decision process.
- Transparency, (another key organizational behavior) and communication will be the key to success.

**How this played out in real life:** A project that was going to hire people in one neighborhood in Cité Soleil made it a point to be extremely transparent and slow in the process of hiring. They put out flyers with the selection criteria, went to churches and public places to explain the process, and communicated what was happening at every step of the way. The entire staff was bracing for conflict, but it never came. People were happy that the process was open and fair.

## Respect

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Because Cité Soleil is such a marginalized area, people are extremely aware of any signs of disrespect or manipulation from outsiders. How can you ensure that your staff navigates these complex situations while showing respect for the community?

**Scenario:** Your project is in its first week, and you get a call from your contractor. He sounds panicked, and he says he's just heard a volley of gunshots. He doesn't see anyone with a weapon and no one in the area seems to be running away, but you can actually hear the gunshots in the background over the phone. He says his crew is scared and wants to leave right now, but he's asking for your permission. What do you do? **Considerations:**

- First, calm him down. Panicking never made anyone safer, and his behavior can be upsetting for local people to watch. They have to live with this every day. If you behave like it's the end of the world, you may offend your community members and their trust in you could be undermined.
- Ask to speak to different community representatives and get a sense of how they are reacting. If they seem calm and tell you that the gunshots are coming from far away, then it's best to lay low and wait for it to pass. *Note: You could actually run into the firefight if you escape the wrong way.*
- If they seem concerned and/or think the presence of your staff could make them a target, get them to spell out a plan of when, how, and through what path to leave. Your contractors should follow that plan calmly.
- Continue to follow up periodically about the situation, and whether it is safe to return to work the next day.

**How this played out in real life:** When this happened to a community outreach coordinator in Cité Soleil, he told his team not to panic and had them team stay put. After making calls, he found out that the shooting was in another neighborhood, and if they'd left they actually would have run into the firefight. The team stayed and kept working, and their local partners considered it as a gesture of respect and trust. This prompted the team to develop a check-in system with local partners that informed them about the safety of a route before traveling. This kept the contractors safe and showed their respect to local knowledge.

## Accountability

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Many groups think about upward accountability to donors, but not downward accountability to communities. When the priorities of those two groups clash, who are you responsible to?

**Scenario:** You are busy preparing for the inauguration of your project tomorrow, and everyone is very excited. You've planned for a big party with music and performances from local youth and speeches from community leaders and other public figures. Timing is perfect, because your final report to the donor is due in two days, and this is the last event you need (along with the receipts, photos, etc.) to submit your report. Then, at 9:00 at night, you get a call from your community contact. She says that tonight there was a party on the other side of Cité Soleil, and that gangs from their side had gone in and opened fire. Two dozen civilians were killed, and a few gangsters. She is worried that there will be a reprisal attack on the inauguration party tomorrow. If you go ahead with the party, you risk making your community the target of a revenge attack. If you don't, you risk losing all of the money you've invested in the inauguration, and you won't be able to make your report deadline. Who are you accountable to and what should you do? **Considerations:**

- There should be no hesitation - you cancel or postpone the inauguration.
- You are more accountable to the community than to your donors, especially if their safety is at stake.
- You contact your donor and explain the situation. They should give you an extension and the space to make adjustments

**How this played out in real life:** A shooting along these lines happened in 2015, and most local projects were put on hold out of respect for people who lost friends and family, and because people were afraid to move around. Organizations had no choice but to change plans in light of the situation, because not doing so would have been disrespectful and dangerous.



## Part V: Closing

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The facilitator should briefly ask participants to share their closing thoughts and observations on this case study. A good question for the closing discussion is, “how is this case relevant, or not, to your own work?”



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