



# THE HIGH COST OF LOW WAGES IN HAITI

## A Living Wage Estimate for Garment Workers in Port-au-Prince



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Author: Lauren Stewart

Editor: Kate Conradt

Design: Deepika Mehta

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### **On the Cover:**

Women market vendors selling produce in a community outside Port-au-Prince, Haiti. Most garment workers purchase food from independent street and market vendors because their meager wages will not allow for grocery store purchases. Even so, some garment workers say they can only afford to consume one meal per day—usually lunch. Credit: Solidarity Center/Lauren Stewart

## BACKGROUND

Haiti is in the throes of a political and economic crisis, as pervasive corruption and poor living conditions fuel protests across the country. Much of the outrage stems from the alleged embezzlement of nearly \$2 billion in PetroCaribe funds, a discounted Venezuelan oil program intended to finance social projects in Haiti. More than a dozen former Haitian government officials and business owners have been implicated in the scandal, and accusations against President Moïse have prompted calls for his resignation. As Haitians grapple with the squandering of funds and mounting instability, many find it increasingly difficult to make ends meet amid soaring prices, double-digit inflation and currency depreciation. Approximately 80 percent of the workforce lacks formal employment, and wages fall far below the high cost of living.<sup>1</sup> Workers are toiling longer for less due to diminished purchasing power.

The apparel industry represents one of the few sources of formal employment in Haiti. The sector provides factory jobs to as many as 52,000 workers, the majority of whom are women.<sup>2</sup> Industry representatives anticipate additional job growth in the sector due to trade incentives for companies that produce apparel in Haiti. Under U.S. legislation known as the Haitian Hemispheric Opportunity through Partnership Encouragement Act of 2008 (HOPE II), qualifying exports gain duty-free access to the U.S. market in exchange for factory adherence to international labor standards and domestic labor law, among other criteria.<sup>3</sup> Despite these requirements, Better Work Haiti—an independent monitoring program that assesses factory compliance—routinely reports rights abuses, including improper payment of wages and benefits, health and safety violations, sexual harassment and repression of freedom of association.<sup>4</sup> In addition to poor working conditions, many workers labor with persistent hunger due to their inability to afford enough food.

While Haiti has incrementally increased the minimum wage since the passage of HOPE II, workers' earnings remain inadequate.<sup>5</sup> The daily minimum wage for export apparel workers is 420 gourdes (about \$5.07),<sup>6</sup> more than four times less than the estimated cost of living.<sup>7</sup> Haiti's Superior Council on Wages—a presidentially appointed commission composed of labor, business and government representatives—is charged with deliberating and proposing a minimum wage increase to the president on an annual basis. However, unions have grown increasingly frustrated by the lack of transparency within the council, as well as with workers' preclusion from choosing their own labor representatives to genuinely advocate on their behalf. Haitian unions contend that workers must be paid a living wage, which affords a decent standard of living and enables workers to support themselves and their families. This, in turn, generates economic prosperity, an essential step toward resolving the ongoing crisis.

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## SURVEY METHODOLOGY

The Solidarity Center used a mixed-methods approach to estimate the cost of living for garment workers in Port-au-Prince, Haiti. From September 2018 through March 2019, a team of three data collectors surveyed the prices of products and services for a locally appropriate basket of goods.<sup>8</sup> The Worker Rights Consortium originally configured the basket of goods in 2008 when it assessed the cost of living for garment workers in the Haitian border town of Ouanaminthe.

The three-member team surveyed prices across communities in which garment workers are concentrated, including Delmas, La Plaine, Petionville, Tabarre, downtown Port-au-Prince and the airport zone near the Metropolitan Industrial Park. To the extent possible, data collectors sought five price quotes for each expense directly from vendors and service providers.

Following the field-based data collection process, the Solidarity Center calculated the average cost of each expense. For instances in which the price more than doubled or decreased since the Solidarity Center's 2014 living wage assessment, data collectors completed a second round of surveying to ensure validity.

For further verification, the Solidarity Center triangulated the data through two focus group discussions with 16 garment workers, who reported the prices they pay for various expenses, in addition to providing qualitative information.

To remain consistent with the original methodology, upon which previous Solidarity Center living wage assessments are based (2011 and 2014), the quantitative data was used to calculate the basic monthly living expenses for a three-member household (comprising one adult wage earner and two minor dependents, ages 8–14). However, it is important to note that the total fertility rate in Haiti is currently estimated at 2.66 children per woman of childbearing age.<sup>9</sup> The lack of formal employment opportunities means that some households have only one wage earner.

The prices in the tables that follow are pro-rated to reflect the monthly allocation of cost.

## CATEGORIES OF EXPENSES

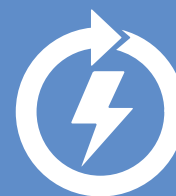
The basket of goods includes a range of products and services that span the following categories of expenses: housing, energy, nutrition, clothing, health care, education, transportation and communication, as well as funds for savings and miscellaneous discretionary spending. A description of each category is provided below:

**Housing:** Home ownership is out of reach for the great majority of garment workers in Port-au-Prince. Focus group participants reported that they rent small, often-substandard cement dwellings that lack indoor plumbing. Some workers noted overcrowding in their households due to the need to share rent among several people. Others said that they cannot afford to fully furnish their homes or that they must purchase less expensive, used furniture.

The housing category includes rental costs for a modest, two-bedroom home with a kitchen, a living space and a bathroom. The category includes non-potable water (for cleaning and bathing), which must often be transported long distances on foot, multiple times per week. The category also includes two queen-size beds and bedding, a table with four chairs, a wardrobe, a sofa, a radio, basic cookware, dishes and cleaning supplies. The prices for furniture and small appliances were obtained from street vendors, since store prices typically exceed garment workers' limited means.

**Energy:** Access to energy is a persistent problem—one that has worsened since Venezuela ended its discounted oil program with Haiti. Prior to the country's most recent stretch of turbulence, Port-au-Prince received less than 20 hours of electricity per day.<sup>10</sup> The absence of PetroCaribe assistance has exacerbated fuel shortages and led to prolonged power outages, rationing and price hikes on petroleum products. These price increases particularly impact the cost that workers pay for transportation and food. While the cost of electricity is also affected, many workers contribute a negligible amount to a collective utility bill shared with neighbors, which enables them to wire their homes to a public power network. For this reason, the energy category only includes the cost of charcoal, the primary fuel expense of garment workers.

Approximately 90 percent of the population in Port-au-Prince uses charcoal or firewood to prepare food.<sup>11</sup> While propane represents another (more environmentally sound) option for cooking fuel, most garment workers are unable to afford the upfront cost. Instead, they must parcel fuel costs over time by purchasing small bags of charcoal several times per week. Larger, more economical bags of charcoal are available for purchase, but, similar to propane, workers often struggle to afford the upfront cost of a larger bag.





**Nutrition:** The selection of foods and corresponding quantities are based on a local diet that is adequate in terms of caloric intake (minimum 2,200 calories per day) and basic nutritional needs, according to standards established by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization.

Most garment workers are unable to afford grocery store prices and, therefore, typically purchase food from independent street and market vendors. Data collectors visited several of these markets to survey prices and used a scale to determine the cost of goods for which the pound was the unit of measure.

In addition to foods purchased at local marketplaces, the nutrition category includes the cost of potable water, as well as lunch for workers at or near the factories in which they work. A standard lunch includes rice, beans and a small portion of chicken. Some workers reported that lunch is sometimes the only meal that they consume throughout the day.



**Clothing:** Garment expenses include three complete sets of clothing and two pairs of shoes per year for one adult and two children. Many workers can only afford secondhand clothing sold by street vendors.



**Health Care:** Employers are required by law to deduct and forward 3 percent of workers' base salary to the Insurance Office for Occupational Injury, Sickness and Maternity (OFATMA). However, Better Work Haiti consistently reports widespread noncompliance with this legal requirement. Several factories have been cited for failure to register with OFATMA's health and maternity services, as well as for failure to collect and forward OFATMA contributions to the agency. As a result, many garment workers are unable to access basic health care services at OFATMA-affiliated facilities. Of those who do have access, many are critical of the quality of care. In addition to OFATMA, some workers have access to government-subsidized and/or non-governmental organization-operated medical facilities.

For instances in which workers seek specialized care at private clinics or obtain services and supplies not covered by insurance, they are responsible for out-of-pocket expenses, which are included in the health care category. Such expenses include doctor visits, laboratory tests, eyeglasses, prescription drugs and over-the-counter medications. The category also includes the cost of pregnancy and childbirth (with one of five quotes based on a caesarean delivery). Nearly all of the focus group participants reported that they are unable to afford dental care or eye glasses.

**Education:** Educational expenses reflect the cost of private school education for two children (one in primary school and one in secondary school). Although the 1987 Constitution provides for free, public education, more than 85 percent of students attend schools run by religious or private organizations given the lack of government resources for public education.<sup>12</sup>

The education category includes private school tuition, mandatory uniforms, books, supplies and transportation to and from school. It is typical for parents to accompany younger children to and from school, which increases education-related transportation costs. For instances in which families cannot afford transportation, students must walk to and from school—often significant distances and along congested roads.

Given that the cost of child supervision (during school hours) is indirectly included in the education category, this assessment does not include child care expenses. If one or both of a worker’s dependents are below primary school age, the funds allocated for education-related costs can be allotted to child care.



**Transportation:** The transportation category includes shared rides (via *tap tap*,<sup>13</sup> moto taxi or commuter bus) to and from work and local marketplaces. The category also includes roundtrip bus fare for an adult and two children to visit family in outlying areas on an annual basis. For instances in which workers cannot afford transportation, they must walk to and from the factory.



**Communication:** Based on worker feedback during the focus group discussions, the Solidarity Center added a communication category to its 2019 living wage assessment. The category includes the cost of a mobile phone, as well as a basic voice and data plan.



**Savings and Discretionary Spending:** After calculating the cost of living based on the categories above, an additional 10 percent is applied for savings (7.5 percent) and discretionary spending (2.5 percent). Savings represent funds set aside for emergencies and substantial future expenses. Discretionary spending represents occasional expenditures such as religious observances, university education and leisure activities.



Focus group participants reported that they do not have bank accounts because their wages are too low to generate savings—rather, they live paycheck to paycheck. When workers need to make a substantial payment, for instance for a child’s wedding, some participate in lending pools. These pools generally consist of relatives, friends, coworkers and/or community members who contribute payments to a monthly fund, which one member is able to collect in its entirety during their designated month. Others seek additional working hours, sometimes laboring seven days per week or during night shifts, to earn overtime pay. The government modified the law in 2018 to reduce overtime pay to 1.5 times the normal wage (from double) for work performed during the night shift.

Garment workers must forgo basic necessities due to the massive disparity between the minimum wage and the cost of living. When asked what they would purchase if they earned sufficient income, workers most often said they would:

- BUILD OR PURCHASE A HOME
- DEVOTE MORE RESOURCES TO THEIR CHILDREN'S EDUCATION
- INVEST IN A SMALL BUSINESS

## KEY FINDINGS

The Solidarity Center estimates the basic cost of living for a garment worker in Port-au-Prince to be 45,517 gourdes (about \$549.19) per month.

- Based on the standard 48-hour work week, workers must earn at least 1,750 gourdes (about \$21.21) per day to adequately provide for themselves and their families.
- The cost of living is more than four times higher than the minimum wage and increased by 74 percent since the Solidarity Center's last assessment in 2014.
- Based on the current minimum wage, workers spend more than half (55 percent) of their take-home pay on transportation to/from work and a modest lunch to sustain their labor.<sup>14</sup>

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The Haitian government must ensure that workers earn decent wages that enable them to adequately support themselves and their families. When workers are able to meet their basic needs, a range of related societal problems are simultaneously addressed. Payment of a living wage has the potential to create a positive multiplier effect, leading to: reduced poverty and aid dependence; the weakening of push factors that contribute to dangerous migration; more robust participation in the formal economy; and the generation of tax revenue to fund infrastructure projects and public services.

To realize these advances, the Solidarity Center recommends the following measures:

- The Haitian government should increase the minimum wage to a living wage (est. 1,750 gourdes per day).
- The Haitian government should enable workers to select their representatives on the tripartite Superior Council on Wages.
- The Haitian government should ensure that workers' rights to freedom of association and collective bargaining are fully respected, so that workers are empowered to negotiate wage increases and improved working conditions with employers.
- The Haitian government should ensure that employers properly compensate workers according to the law, including accurate payment of OFATMA and pension contributions.<sup>15</sup>
- The Haitian government should improve OFATMA services and quality of care to minimize the cost of private healthcare for garment workers.
- Employers should subsidize work-related expenses, including transportation and lunch.
- Employers should standardize and set reasonable production quotas that enable workers to earn a supplement to the minimum wage when they attain established quotas.



## BASIC COST OF LIVING IN PORT-AU-PRINCE

(September 2018–March 2019; \$1: 82.88 Haitian gourdes, as of April 1, 2019)

<b>HOUSING*</b>	<b>Average Unit Cost</b> (Haitian Gourdes)	<b>Unit of Measure</b>	<b>Quantity/ Frequency of Replacement</b>	<b>Monthly Cost</b> (Haitian Gourdes)	<b>Monthly Cost</b> (U.S. Dollars)
Rent (2 bedrooms, living room, kitchen, and bathroom)	82,000.00	year	annually	5,125.00	\$61.84
Water (non-potable)	11.25	5-gallon container	60	506.25	\$6.11
Household cleaning supplies (disinfectant and dish detergent)	241.43	set	monthly	181.07	\$2.18
Bedding (sheets, pillows, pillowcases)	882.15	queen-size set	2 sets per year	110.27	\$1.33
Queen-size bed (including mattress, frame, box spring)	8,500.00	queen-size bed	2 beds per 10 years	106.25	\$1.28
Jars and pans (4-6 pieces)	1,636.67	set	1 set per 2 years	51.15	\$0.62
Table and 4 chairs	6,000.00	table	1 set per 10 years	37.50	\$0.45
Dishes (including glasses and cutlery) (4-6 pieces)	1,178.57	set	1 set per 2 years	36.83	\$0.44
Radio	2,500.00	radio	1 per 5 years	31.25	\$0.38
Wardrobe (dresser)	2,500.00	wardrobe	1 per 5 years	31.25	\$0.38
Other seating (sofa/bench)	1,166.67	sofa/bench	1 per 10 years	7.29	\$0.09
<b>Lodging Subtotal</b>				<b>6,224.11</b>	<b>\$75.10</b>

<b>ENERGY*</b>	<b>Average Unit Cost</b> (Haitian Gourdes)	<b>Unit of Measure</b>	<b>Quantity/ Frequency of Replacement</b>	<b>Monthly Cost</b> (Haitian Gourdes)	<b>Monthly Cost</b> (U.S. Dollars)
Charcoal for cooking	104.46	bag	1 per day	2,383.35	\$28.76
<b>Energy Subtotal</b>				<b>2,383.35</b>	<b>\$28.76</b>

<b>NUTRITION</b>	<b>Average Unit Cost</b> (Haitian Gourdes)	<b>Unit of Measure</b>	<b>Quantity/ Frequency of Replacement</b>	<b>Monthly Cost</b> (Haitian Gourdes)	<b>Monthly Cost</b> (U.S. Dollars)
Lunch at/near factory	108.33	lunch	26.00	2,816.67	\$33.98
Rice	40.00	pound	45.74	1,829.60	\$22.08
Bread	25.00	roll	70.80	1,770.00	\$21.36
Chicken	95.00	pound	11.70	1,111.50	\$13.41
Plantains	35.00	pound	30.09	1,053.15	\$12.71
Banana	140.00	pound	4.03	564.20	\$6.81
Eggs	136.00	dozen	4.03	548.08	\$6.61
Mango	50.00	pound	10.09	504.50	\$6.09
Water (potable)*	40.00	5-gallon container	16, 5-gallon containers	480.00	\$5.79
Pigeon peas	83.00	can	5.00	415.00	\$5.01
Beans	93.00	pound	4.32	401.76	\$4.85
Seasoning	20.00	packet	20.00	400.00	\$4.83
Coconut	95.00	pound	4.00	380.00	\$4.58
Avocado	38.00	pound	9.65	366.70	\$4.42
Lime	100.00	pound	3.03	303.00	\$3.66
Orange	50.00	pound	6.05	302.50	\$3.65
Potato	50.00	pound	6.05	302.50	\$3.65
Carrot	70.00	pound	4.03	282.10	\$3.40
Coffee	18.00	package	15.00	270.00	\$3.26
Papaya	37.17	pound	6.05	224.86	\$2.71
Pineapple	72.00	pound	3.03	218.16	\$2.63
Sweet Potato	36.00	pound	6.05	217.80	\$2.63
Onion	70.00	pound	3.05	213.50	\$2.58
Garlic	162.00	pound	1.05	170.10	\$2.05
Cabbage	26.92	pound	6.05	162.88	\$1.97
Sugar	40.00	pound	4.03	161.20	\$1.94
Salami	50.00	pound	3.03	151.50	\$1.83
Pasta	30.00	pound	4.50	135.00	\$1.63
Milk	14.50	pound	5.17	74.97	\$0.90
Celery	50.00	pound	1.05	52.50	\$0.63
Chayote	14.13	pound	3.05	43.08	\$0.52
Oil	128.00	pound	0.26	33.28	\$0.40
Salt	14.00	pound	1.00	14.00	\$0.17
<b>Nutrition Subtotal</b>				<b>15,974.09</b>	<b>\$192.74</b>

<b>CLOTHING</b>	<b>Average Unit Cost</b> (Haitian Gourdes)	<b>Unit of Measure</b>	<b>Quantity/ Frequency of Replacement</b>	<b>Monthly Cost</b> (Haitian Gourdes)	<b>Monthly Cost</b> (U.S. Dollars)
<b>1 Adult</b>					
Laundry costs	1,100.00	month	monthly	1,100.00	\$13.27
Shoes	1,300.00	pair	2 per year	216.67	\$2.61
Pants/skirts	625.00	pair	3 per year	156.25	\$1.89
Blouses/dress shirts	460.00	shirt	3 per year	115.00	\$1.39
Rubber sandals	1,000.00	pair	1 per year	83.33	\$1.01
T-shirts	300.00	shirt	3 per year	75.00	\$0.90
Pajamas	500.00	set	1 per year	41.67	\$0.50
Underwear	100.00	pair	3 per year	25.00	\$0.30
Cap/hat	200.00	hat	1 per year	16.67	\$0.20
Socks	50.00	pair	3 per year	12.50	\$0.15
<b>2 Children</b>					
Shoes	740.00	pair	2 pair per year per child	246.67	\$2.98
Shirts	300.00	shirt	3 shirts per year per child	150.00	\$1.81
Pants/skirts	250.00	pair	3 pair per year per child	125.00	\$1.51
Dresses or dress shirts	500.00	dress/dress shirt	1 per year per child	83.33	\$1.01
Rubber sandals	400.00	pair	1 pair per year per child	66.67	\$0.80
Underwear	100.00	pair	3 pair per year per child	50.00	\$0.60
Socks	50.00	pair	3 pair per year per child	25.00	\$0.30
<b>Clothing Subtotal</b>				<b>2,588.75</b>	<b>\$31.23</b>

<b>HEALTHCARE</b>	<b>Average Unit Cost</b> (Haitian Gourdes)	<b>Unit of Measure</b>	<b>Quantity/ Frequency of Replacement</b>	<b>Monthly Cost</b> (Haitian Gourdes)	<b>Monthly Cost</b> (U.S. Dollars)
Prescription drugs	1,000.00	month	monthly	1,000.00	\$12.07
Doctor visit (including 2 lab tests)	1,250.00	visit	3 per year per 3 people	937.50	\$11.31
Prenatal care/ maternity costs (9 visits, supplements, and delivery)	34,750.00	pregnancy	1 pregnancy per 5 years per 1 person	579.17	\$6.99
Dentist visit	2,000.00	visit	1 per year per 3 people	500.00	\$6.03
Personal hygiene (soap, toothpaste, feminine hygiene products)	500.00	set	monthly	500.00	\$6.03
Eye glasses	8,900.00	pair	1 pair per 2 years per 1 person	370.83	\$4.47
Over-the-counter medication (analgesic and decongestant)	250.00	set	monthly	250.00	\$3.02
First-aid supplies (bandages and antiseptic)	125.00	set	monthly	125.00	\$1.51
<b>Healthcare Subtotal</b>				<b>4,262.50</b>	<b>\$51.43</b>

<b>EDUCATION (private school)</b>	<b>Average Unit Cost</b> (Haitian Gourdes)	<b>Unit of Measure</b>	<b>Quantity/ Frequency of Replacement</b>	<b>Monthly Cost</b> (Haitian Gourdes)	<b>Monthly Cost</b> (U.S. Dollars)
Primary school (1 child)					
Transportation fees	75.00	round-trip	22 per month	1,650.00	\$19.91
Tuition fees	1,330.00	month	10 months per year	1,108.33	\$13.37
Books and supplies	1,820.00	set	annually	151.67	\$1.83
Uniform	1,240.00	uniform	annually	103.33	\$1.25
Secondary school (1 child)					
Tuition fees	1,749.99	month	12 months per year	1,749.99	\$21.11
Transportation fees	50.00	round-trip	22 per month	1,100.00	\$13.27
Books and supplies	3,830.00	set	annually	319.17	\$3.85
Uniform	1,300.00	uniform	annually	108.33	\$1.31
<b>Education Subtotal</b>				<b>6,290.82</b>	<b>\$75.90</b>

<b>TRANSPORTATION</b>	<b>Average Unit Cost</b> (Haitian Gourdes)	<b>Unit of Measure</b>	<b>Quantity/ Frequency of Replacement</b>	<b>Monthly Cost</b> (Haitian Gourdes)	<b>Monthly Cost</b> (U.S. Dollars)
Transportation to/from factory	100.00	1 round-trip	26 per month	2,600.00	\$31.37
Transportation to/from market	50.00	1 round-trip	1 per week	216.67	\$2.61
Transportation to/from hometown	690.00	1 round-trip	1 per year per 3 people	172.50	\$2.08
<b>Transportation Subtotal</b>				<b>2,989.17</b>	<b>\$36.07</b>

<b>COMMUNICATION</b>	<b>Average Unit Cost</b> (Haitian Gourdes)	<b>Unit of Measure</b>	<b>Quantity/ Frequency of Replacement</b>	<b>Monthly Cost</b> (Haitian Gourdes)	<b>Monthly Cost</b> (U.S. Dollars)
Voice/Data plan	\$625.00	month	monthly	\$625.00	\$7.56
Cellular phone	\$1,500.00	phone	1 per 3 years	\$41.67	\$0.50
<b>Communication Subtotal</b>				<b>666.67</b>	<b>\$8.06</b>

<b>SUMMARY OF EXPENSES</b>	<b>Monthly Cost</b> (Haitian Gourdes)	<b>Monthly Cost</b> (U.S. Dollars)
Nutrition	15,974.09	\$192.74
Education	6,290.82	\$75.90
Housing	6,224.11	\$75.10
Healthcare	4,262.50	\$51.43
Clothing	2,588.75	\$31.23
Transportation	2,989.17	\$36.07
Energy	2,383.35	\$28.76
Communications	666.67	\$8.06
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>41,379.45</b>	<b>\$499.29</b>
Savings (7.5% of Subtotal)	3,103.46	\$37.45
Miscellaneous Expenses (2.5% of Subtotal)	1,034.49	\$12.48
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>45,517.39</b>	<b>\$549.22</b>

Based on the standard 48-hour workweek, workers must earn 1,750 HTG (\$21.21) per day to meet the basic cost of living. (45,517.39 HTG) x (12 months per year / 52 weeks per year / 6 working days per week)

\*Note: In keeping with the original methodology, the Solidarity Center assessment assumes that in addition to the garment worker wage earner (and two minor dependents), a household has an additional wage earner whose income covers one-quarter of the household expenses (housing, energy and potable water costs).

## Endnotes

- 1 World Bank Group. (2015, May). *Haiti: Towards a New Narrative - Systematic Country Diagnostic*, available at: <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/319651467986293030/pdf/97341-SCD-P150705-IDA-SecM2015-0130-IFC-SecM2015-0071-MIGA-SecM2015-0046-Box391466B-OUO-9.pdf>.
- 2 Better Work Haiti. (2018, October). *Better Work Haiti: 17th Biannual Synthesis Report Under the HOPE II Legislation*, available at: <https://betterwork.org/blog/portfolio/better-work-haiti-17th-biannual-synthesis-report-under-the-hope-ii-legislation/>.
- 3 International labor standards, or internationally recognized worker rights, as defined in HOPE II include: the right of association; the right to organize and bargain collectively; a prohibition on the use of any form of forced or compulsory labor; a minimum age for the employment of children; and acceptable conditions of work with respect to minimum wages, hours of work, and occupational safety and health. See, 19 U.S.C. § 2703a(d)(1)(A)(vi).
- 4 Better Work Haiti. (2018, October). *Better Work Haiti: 17th Biannual Synthesis Report Under the HOPE II Legislation*, available at: <https://betterwork.org/blog/portfolio/better-work-haiti-17th-biannual-synthesis-report-under-the-hope-ii-legislation/>.
- 5 In 2008, the national daily minimum wage for export industries, including the apparel sector, was 70 gourdes (HTG) per day. With the passage of a new minimum wage law in 2009 and subsequent increases proposed by the CSS, the minimum wage rose to 125 HTG in 2009, 150 HTG in 2010, 200 HTG in 2012, 225 HTG in 2014, 240 HTG in 2015, 300 HTG in 2016, 350 HTG in 2017 and 420 HTG in 2018. In March 2019, the Chamber of Deputies voted to increase the daily minimum wage for garment workers to 750 HTG, but the Senate has yet to consider the measure and, thus, the increase has not become law. See, United States Trade Representative. (2018). *2018 USTR Annual Report on the Implementation of the Technical Assistance Improvement and Compliance Needs Assessment and Remediation (TAICNAR) Program and Assessment of Producer Eligibility*, available at: <https://ustr.gov/sites/default/files/2018%20USTR%20Report%20Haiti%20HOPE%20II.PDF>. See also, Haiti—Politic : Revised minimum wages, according to the bill voted by the deputies. (2019, March 27). *Haiti Libre*, available at: [www.haitilibre.com/en/news-27295-haiti-politic-revised-minimum-wages-according-to-the-bill-voted-by-the-deputies.html](http://www.haitilibre.com/en/news-27295-haiti-politic-revised-minimum-wages-according-to-the-bill-voted-by-the-deputies.html).
- 6 The currency exchange rate is \$1 to 82.88 HTG (as of April 1, 2019).
- 7 Arrete Fixant Le Salaire Minimum a Compter du 1 Octobre 2018. (2018, October 8). *Le Moniteur*, available at [www.haitilibre.com/docs/moniteur-18-salaire.pdf](http://www.haitilibre.com/docs/moniteur-18-salaire.pdf).
- 8 Field-based data collection was interrupted at various points of the process due to widespread protests across Port-au-Prince.
- 9 Central Intelligence Agency. (2018). *The World Factbook: Haiti*, available at: [www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ha.html](http://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ha.html).
- 10 Export.gov. (2019, February 14). *Haiti—Energy*, available at: [www.export.gov/article?id=Haiti-Energy](http://www.export.gov/article?id=Haiti-Energy).
- 11 U.S. Agency for International Development. (2017, March). *Energy Fact Sheet*, available at: [www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1862/FINAL\\_Energy\\_Sector\\_Fact\\_Sheet\\_March\\_2017.pdf](http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1862/FINAL_Energy_Sector_Fact_Sheet_March_2017.pdf).
- 12 U.S. Agency for International Development. (2017, March). *Education Fact Sheet*, available at: [www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1862/FINAL\\_EducationMarch2017.pdf](http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1862/FINAL_EducationMarch2017.pdf).
- 13 *Tap taps* are privately-owned, covered pick-up trucks that transport passengers along designated routes.
- 14 Garment workers are legally required to contribute 3 percent of their base salary to OFATMA, as well as 6 percent of their base salary to the Office of National Pension Insurance (ONA). Therefore, based on the current 420 HTG daily minimum wage, take-home pay equals 382.20 HTG. Income taxes are not owed by employees who earn less than 120,000 HTG per year, which is the case for most garment workers. See, Better Work Haiti. (2017). *Practical Guide—Haiti Labor Code*, available at: [www.centrengo.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Labor-Law-English.pdf](http://www.centrengo.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Labor-Law-English.pdf)
- 15 Employers are legally required to contribute the equivalent of 3 percent of a worker's base salary to OFATMA and 6 percent to ONA (matching employees' contributions). Ibid.





1130 Connecticut Ave., NW  
Suite 800  
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