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Entrepreneuriat : Quelle voie pour le développement d'Haïti?

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### The Emergence of Social Entrepreneurship in Haiti

L'émergence de l'entrepreneuriat social en Haïti

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### Résumés

English Français

The term social entrepreneurship is not new but during the past decade its interests have increased rapidly around the world while its field is still young and fragmented (Gawell, 2013). We believe that in one way or the other, the main objective of social entrepreneurship is to solve social, economic and environmental problems for sustainable development goals. One of the development challenges is the fact that Haiti has 0.47 as Human Development Index (HDI) figuring 168th among 187 countries with 58.6 % of the population living under the poverty line and 24.6% under the extreme poverty line with less than 1\$UD per day (PNUD & MCI, 2014). Despite the fact that Haiti has a unique know-how that is passed down for generations in the area of craft, small industry and in the processing of products, social entrepreneurship has not taken its roots as it should have. Importantly, to get where they are today, it is undeniable that developed nations leaned the strengths of their development on human capital to produce physical/material capital. Most often, the human capital is utilized to produce strong public policies which enable the economic growth. The value of using human capital as a pillar for economic growth proved itself for Asian nations with an annual economic growth of 6.9% between 1980 and 1990 against 1.5% for Latin America (Gener, 2005). Thus, in this paper, we looked at the Emergence of Social Entrepreneurship for economic growth in Haiti.

L'entrepreneuriat social n'est pas nouveau, mais au cours de la dernière décennie, l'intérêt pour ce terme a rapidement augmenté dans le monde alors que son champ est encore jeune et fragmenté (Gawell, 2013). Nous pensons que d'une manière ou d'une autre, l'objectif principal de l'entrepreneuriat social est de résoudre les problèmes sociaux, économiques et environnementaux en vue d'atteindre les objectifs de développement durable. La mission ou les activités d'une

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économique a été prouvée pour les pays asiatiques avec une croissance économique annuelle de 6,9% entre 1980 et 1990 contre 1,5% pour l'Amérique latine (Gener, 2005). Ainsi, dans cet article, nous examinons l'émergence de l'entrepreneuriat social pour la croissance économique en Haïti.

### Entrées d'index

**Mots-clés**: entrepreneuriat social, développement durable, culture, leadership, politique publique

Keywords: social entrepreneurship, sustainable development, culture, leadership, public policy

Index géographique : Haïti

### Texte intégral

### Introduction

Despite technology and human capital development around the world, there is still a lack of equal opportunities. The revenue of families differs from one place to another. As it is already known everywhere, government cannot solve all of the problems of their people, businesses cannot create jobs for everyone and the nonprofit organizations alone cannot fulfil the gap - targeting all of the social issues. Thus, individual and group of individuals around the world have created opportunities for their communities at all levels regardless their circumstances and the economic situations in their hands through social entrepreneurship.

### Box 1. Definition of social entrepreneurship

Social entrepreneurship is not just a response to the nonprofit organizations and businesses' unsolved problems but also a recovery of the government's failures in all sectors of sustainable development around the world.

- To the benefit of the local communities, the government, businesses and nonprofit organizations are not opposed entities but complementary going hand in hand. The three above organizations of economic, social and political responsibilities have organized and coordinated multiple development activities for the benefits of their people around the world. Despite the positive changes and opportunities created, there are still unbalanced or unequal economic and social spheres among the same communities. In order to balance and create equal opportunities, there is a need of another social sector to take place. Thus, the creation of the social entrepreneurship intends to adjust the limited financial resources to develop social enterprises. Social entrepreneurship is not just a response to the nonprofit organizations' unsolved problems but also a recovery of the government's failures in all sectors of sustainable development around the world.
- Nowadays, governments, businesses and nonprofit organizations are structured and institutionalized which is the contrary in regard to social entrepreneurship where there has been less institutional structures, leadership, and social capital together into a process theory of social entrepreneurship (Weber, 2005). Thus, again this article focuses on the Emergence of Social Entrepreneurship in Haiti.
- Social entrepreneurship has two pillars: the type innovation and social change and the process collective leadership and mass management (Weber, 2005). However, the

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are looking at opportunities of investment; nonprofit organizations are focusing on solving social problems while the entrepreneurship sector is socially solving massive/collective economic problems for sustainable development.

### 1. Problem statement

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There is a huge difference between the private and public social entrepreneurship in the sense that the public sector faces many administrative and political constraints contrary to the private sector. As stated that public organizations have more difficult time adapting to changing circumstances and innovation owing to constitutional, executive, legislative considerations, as well as to the sheer habit (Roper & Cheney, 2005).

We visited more than 10 social enterprises and just very few of them have real documentation that we could explore and understand their businesses. Additionally, it is recently that the Haitian government with the Ministry of Commerce and Industries started identifying the social enterprises in Haiti. It is also recently that Quisqueya University through the department of economic and administrative sciences launched a programme to classify the enterprises in Haiti according to their size from small, medium to large businesses.

Therefore, the objective of the current study is to explore the Emergence of Social Entrepreneurship in Haiti through a qualitative, semi-structured research along using the existing documentation in the current scenario of Haiti. It is important to note that there is no agreement on the best way to document social entrepreneurship and there is a limited research on social entrepreneurship policy and/or documentation in Haiti. The main focus in this study is to enumerate the issues and challenges related to the emergence of social entrepreneurship in Haiti based on the culture of leadership and public policy.

### 2. Literature review

## 2.1. Social Entrepreneurship and its constraints in Haiti

First and for most, it is important to note that there is no universally accepted definition of social entrepreneurship (Roundy, 2014). Thus, in this paper we will explore differently recognized definitions of social entrepreneurship. The management of social and financial side of an organization is linked to competing identities, value systems and norms (Sinha, Pathak & Thomas, 2014). In many countries especially in developing nations, social entrepreneurship is a process of filling the gap of economic growth. It is a process to empower the marginalized population through innovative entrepreneurship strategy. Any well-structured social entrepreneurship programme within a nation would support the government development agenda.

In order to reduce inequality and promote economic growth in building an inclusive and cohesive society in Haiti, social entrepreneurship should be one of the government's development priorities in the future. A well-established social entrepreneurship

Recently, we visited more than 10 social enterprises which are complaining about the overlapping roles between them and the government entities. Social entrepreneurship is further defined as any initiative which is innovative, economic or non-economic, profit or non-profit to render help and support to people (Sinha, Pathak & Thomas, 2014). This type of enterprise should be supported at a national level in Haiti where the majority of the population is young and poor with little or no higher educational level.

# 2.2. Targeted Society, Motives and decision in Social Entrepreneurship

It is evident that our world is governed by four different types of organizations: 1) Governments for national and international social, economic and political responsibilities, 2) Capital businesses for investment and profit opportunities, 3) non-profits organizations for the solutions of social problems, and 4) social entrepreneurship for the social solutions of the massive/collective economic problems for sustainable development. Therefore, let us compare them in the table 1 below.

Table 1. Society, motives and decision in social entrepreneurship

	Motives	Targeted society	Decisions & capital	Differences
Government	Well- being of all of the citizens	All citizens	Representatives of the citizens Public capital with public revenue returns	All for all & none should be specific
Capital business	Profits	Specific targeted products/services & clients	Owners/Investors Commercial capital with profit returns	Need most often to be specialized & client target oriented
Not-for-profit	Solving social problems	Specific targeted issue & community	Members Philanthropic capital generating social returns	Cannot tackle all at once (specific issues & specific communities)
Social entrepreneurship	Solving massive economic problems	All communities with economic problems	Democratic decisions (Partners with social capital for social economic growth in return)	Can target all but with specific strategy/approach Serves its members rather making profits

# 2.3. Culture, social entrepreneurship and economic growth

Culture is a complex notion and has led to many researches. The concept of culture is associated to a set of norms, to common habits or behaviour within a community or within a country; culture also refers to shared values and lastly to a common identity. According to Hofstede (2005), "culture consists of the unwritten rules of the social

work and consumption. It also has an influence on institutions, social networks and confidence which is an important factor for social groups (Fukuyama, 2001). Lastly, culture can explain attitudes that lead to building business, whether it is a for profit or a not-for-profit organization.

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Culture is viewed as a key determinant of the preferences, beliefs and values of individuals and societies. Some scientists claim that these differences play a key role in shaping economic performance. Therefore, culture is incorporated into economic models, like an endogenous variable, to see how it can impact economic growth. It is considered as one of the fundamental causes of economic growth apart from geography and institutions. The rapid growth of many Asian countries is often linked with certain Asian values, which refer to culture (Acemoglu, 2007).

According to studies on culture and economic growth, economic outcomes can be affected by culture through two major channels: willingness of individuals to trade off different activities or consumption today versus consumption tomorrow and degree of cooperation among individuals (Acemoglu, 2007). Via the first channel, culture will influence societies' occupational choices, market structure, saving rates and their willingness to accumulate physical and human capital; the combination of these two factors leads to economic growth. Through to the second channel, culture may affect the degree of cooperation and trust among individuals. Cooperation and trust can sometimes play an important role in underpinning productive activities and thus affect the growth performance of societies (Acemoglu, 2007).

While many researchers have conducted studies on culture and economic growth, there is a lack of studies of joint culture, social entrepreneurship and economic growth. In their work, Rantanen *et al.* (2013) have proven that social entrepreneurial seems to be related to social values that are a key element of culture. Moreover, "the formal institutions of a society ensure the existence of entrepreneurial opportunities. The informal institutions, i.e. attitudes, habits and customs, determine the extent to which these opportunities are actually recognized and grasped" (Welter, 2002). Culture can thus explain the emergence of social entrepreneurs within a society.

Therefore, it is important to know that in Haiti, culture is a mix of African, French and Creole traditions. The Haitian culture is constructed on values that emphasize on democracy, individual freedom and civil right if one takes into account the constitution. However, these values are not plenty fulfilled while considering the socio-political situation of the country. It would be then interesting to examine the values that give birth to social entrepreneurs in a country punctuated with corruption and where the individual or personal interest counters more than the collectivity or national interest.

# 2.4. Teamwork, Leadership and Social Entrepreneurship

Goal achievement in any society or organization requires power and leadership which is generally constructed as managerial strategy or leadership influence to get the job done. In the social entrepreneurship perspectives, there is a need of understanding the interconnection between communities and their leaders, there is a need for leaders to understand or make the difference between individual and collective ambition and ownership. The individual and collective ambition of making a change or contributing to the success of the team must be the backbone of the group leading to a successful social entrepreneurship environment. "The attempt to formulate a coherent view of the

Any successful society or organization should understand the relationship between successful organizational management and effective leadership (Aitken & Obutelewicz, 1976) based on team work.

Finally, social entrepreneurship is like leadership because social entrepreneurship is not to solve our own problems but to help solve a massive/collective economic and/or social problems which are similar to the statement in leadership saying that "leadership is not about us (leaders)...., it is not about our perks, our feelings, our egos, our span of control......, it is about the people for whom we are responsible (Doerr, 1997). And this is the motives and the innovative passion of social entrepreneurship as summarized in the figure below.

Social Social Society & Problems Values Organizational Social capital -Responsability Leadership Social Human Change capital -Social Teamwork Entrepreneurship

Figure 1. From Motivation and passion to social entrepreneurship

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### 3. Research Methodology

We chose the qualitative method in this study because it allowed us to have a deep understanding of the topic. Additionally, we used multiple and open-ended questions which allowed our participants to fully express their beliefs, needs and experiences through the exploratory process and it allowed us to interpret what we saw, heard and understood (Creswell, 2009). Using the qualitative method, we based our method on semi-structured interviews and enterprise documentary reviews.

During the process, we interviewed executives and other employees along with customers and faithful clients of the enterprises in order to get a deep understanding of their process and development. The process was conducted through in depth interviews to collect and organize the data in order to easily put it in this readable document for professional needs.

Our focus during the interviews was upon four main points as follows: why did they choose social enterprise, how they started, what are the challenges they are facing and what are their perspectives. Each of these questions was discussed through many other related questions or sub-questions.

After collecting the information, we did an analysis of all of the elements involving the strengths and weaknesses of the different studied cases. We looked at the possibilities of improvement and/or extensions. Additionally, we looked at the threats against these enterprises along with the lessons learned and other topics that requires more specific research.

Importantly, all of the information collected from entrepreneurs and others working

# 4. Presentation of three Haitian social enterprises

### 4.1. General description of the enterprises

### 4.1.1. Vétérimed

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Vétérimed is an organization created in 1991 focusing on animal health and production with 20 employees today including 5 professional trainers. In 2000, another organization called Lèt Agogo was born mainly focusing on the transformation of milk and as a partner with Vétérimed but it is only in 2001 that Lèt Agogo started producing milk and sold it in the market.

Today, the organization has 35 "laiteries" around the country with 3 in the capital Port-au-Prince: 1 in Delmas, 1 in Petionville and 1 in Pacot. Veterimed focuses their support training program in three different components as follows:

- Production support; it's about working downstream with small milk producers by providing them with training in food, animal health and rearing techniques.
   The training programs extend over 7 months with one week per month for all of the veterinary agents.
- Support organizational strengthening: Producers of small sizes and veterinary agents are encouraged to come together to form associations. Thus, the support program for strengthening organizations is fundamentally based on the following but not limited to: conflict resolution, leadership, statutes and regulations of organizations, gender equity, women's rights, etc. The entire training program is summed up in three points: research, expertise and life skills. The courses last from 3 to 6 days and are held in their training centre which is in Limonade.
- Support to Processing and Marketing of Agricultural products

The support program for the processing and marketing of agricultural products is also based on technical training. All of the teams are required to participate in technical education on the processing of pasteurized and sterilized milk into yogurt and cheese. Additionally, a support is provided to them (participants) in regard to packaging, marketing, customer development and more. The idea of this program is to work with young people who need an income-generating activity.

Over time, Lèt Agogo has grown to become a franchise with 35 dairies in the network. The owners are bound by a renewable two-year contract with Vétérmed. The decision to renew or not a contract depends on the decision of the general assembly and on the result of previous planned and unannounced inspections to measure the quality of their products. It is also important to note that the training on new products, new technologies and standards are mandatory for all of the partners.

Generally, companies operate either as individual organizations or as unions. In Haiti, there is no legal provision for associations while individual businesses operate more as a shop with a licence and a tax registration number. In contrary to corporations, the law does not take into account small businesses like Lèt Agogo despite wanting to operate under the status of a corporation. Consequently, existing laws are

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organization called FRICS (Fonds Rural d'Investissement et de Crédits Solidaires -Rural Fund for Investment and solidary Credits) which focuses only on financing.

After finding that the available financial system was just for the short term, or only in the capital and for commercial purposes, the group KNFP founded the new financial service called FRICS to provide medium and long-term credits not only in the capital but also in the rural areas for production and transformation with the lowest rate from 10% to 18%. The credits were provided at three levels: from 10% to 12% primary and secondary levels of production and transformation, from 12% to 18% third level or commercialization. The percentage of other financing systems varies from 24% to 60% according to KNFP.

KNFP was founded in 1998 with six (6) institution members. They currently have 3000 solidarity mutual and community banks bringing together 72000 individuals. Additionally, they have created 140 farmer organizations with 72500 members; have supported 529 micros and small enterprises in the country.

The organization (KNFP) is a legal entity and FRICS is now a corporation under the tutelage of the Central Bank. In order to get their title, the organization had to get three licences: 1 from the ministry of commerce, 1 from the ministry of finances, and 1 from the central bank.

### 4.1.3. ANATRAF

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ANATRAF stands for Association Nationale de Transformation des Fruits (National Association of Fruit Processing, in English). It is a national association grouping 60 other associations around the country. All of them are family owned associations. It was created in 2002 and has 10 representatives with 1 for each of the department of the nation. Despite not having any financial support from the government, ANATRAF collaborates with the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, with the Ministry of Agriculture and the State University of Haiti through the department (faculty) of agriculture on issues relate to technical training programs.

The organization has one cycle of productivity due to their financial difficulties. The cycle consists of four steps: buying the fruits, transforming the fruits into final products, sending them to the market for sale and waiting until they finish selling their products before starting another cycle of the business.

# 4.2. Administrative and financial documentation of the studied enterprises

In regard to the documents of the organizations, we looked at both inside the organization (for their own administrative and financial system) and the outside the organization (rules and regulations - legal documents provided by the government).

### 4.2.1. Vétérimed

- 43 At Vétérimed, inside the organization, the following documentation was found:
  - Accounting standards and procedures documents for the business;
  - A referential document used as a book defining the overall program for Let

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- For legal documentation, Vétérimed faces many difficulties because only cooperatives, limited and individual companies are governed by law, the associations are not recognized under the law despite their size and/or capacity. Regarding financial issues, they have little or no grant and no financial support from the state.
- They are just functioning from the contribution of their partners Lèt Agogo and other members. Vétérimed has no computerized administrative and/or financial system which they found very disturbing because of their current development programs.
- Vétérimed confirmed that there is no public policy that can accompany or support them in their struggle or in their development programs. Lèt Agogo looked for support from the Ministry of Commerce and Industry through their program created in 2014 but unfortunately nothing was successful from the demand.

### 4.2.2. KNFP

- In contrary to Vétérimed, KNFP has all of their needed documents to properly function. They have internal and external documentation. They have all of the legal documents with established administrative and financial software. FRICS, the subsidiary of KNFP has already obtained all of the three required legal documents: Ministry of Commerce, Ministry of Finances, and the Central Bank
- FRICS is now a financial company functioning with all of the technical and professional environment. They have built a website that they are currently updating. Importantly, in the near future, they are planning to insert some of the new banking technology in their website for their clients.
  - In many of their services, it is difficult to find legal documents in order to properly function and/or protect their clients.

### 4.2.3. ANATRAF

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- ANATRAF is almost at the same level in some way as Vétérimed. Most of their documentation is internal. The internal documents they have included but not limited to: technical training documents, technical sheets, quality control documentation, production and marketing documentation.
- ANATRAF has physical and software documentation. They have built a website www.anatraf.org of which they are not currently satisfied due to the lack of financing to recruit a professional in regard to updating and developing it.
  - . Despite not financially supporting ANATRAF, the ministry of agriculture provided a building which the organization is currently using as their headquarters in the capital.
  - However, due lack of public policy, ANATRAF is facing all of the difficulties to move forward and even to get a financial support. Currently, they have no grant and no other financial support except the contribution from their members.

# 5. Lessons learned from the three cases studies

Doing research on these social enterprises produced some different lessons which are important to understand in regard to social entrepreneurship in Haiti. The following are

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# 5.1. Understanding that culture and relationship impact the development of social entrepreneurship in Haiti

The cultural family and friendly relationship in rural areas are more difficult to deal with than that of the urban cities in regard to business. This relationship in rural areas prevents managers from taking disciplinary actions which may damage the operations of the business. Unanimously, all of the studied social enterprises agree on the fact that culture has a very big impact on social enterprise in Haiti. Social entrepreneurship in Haiti is family organizations so the management is also within the family. Thus, there is a mixture between business and family relationship which sometimes has a negative impact on the business. This is the reason that they provide training programs for their clients to help them understand the difference between family and business relationship for their own benefit. Many of the managers expressed their concerns when it comes to punishment or sanctions when an employee or a partner fails to fulfil his or her responsibilities within the business. Both sides the managers and the employees have a feeling that it is difficult or unnecessary to sanction a family member or a friend just because he/she fails to do what he/she has to do.

Additionally, managers are afraid of the violent reactions from employees when they apply a disciplinary decision. Most of the time, these cooperatives or associations are individual or family-owned businesses so everyone knows everyone. It is difficult for the managers to fire or punish an employee. Importantly, the reluctance of people to be documented or archived is another cultural constraint in social entrepreneurship in Haiti. Thus, culture and relationship in the business have major impacts in operating business in the country.

# 5.2. Social entrepreneurship can contribute to fight against poverty in Haiti

Despite the difficulties and constraints the studied enterprises are facing, they have created jobs and improved people's lives, they contributed in poverty reduction. Thus, if well managed with stable sources of funding and government support, social entrepreneurship could contribute to a secure future in fighting against poverty in Haiti. Despite the fact that social entrepreneurship remains as a new term and not well known, with the support of the state and the involvement of the local communities with a well-organized society, social entrepreneurship would be an asset for a long-term and sustainable program in fighting against poverty.

However, there some difficulties that prevent social entrepreneurs to reach their goals. Some of the most pressing difficulties in social entrepreneurship in Haiti are the public policy sector and legal structure governing the business. In addition to that come the internal and external administrative system along with the financial structure imposed on social entrepreneurs. The members of ANATRAF can only count on their simple and individual contribution to carry out the administrative and financial activities of their business. Other financial entrepreneurs face similar difficulties

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# 5.3. Good management system, passion and persistence can support economic growth

In the last decade, social entrepreneurship in Haiti has seen good improvement. In few years ago, the way that community-based organization was management affected their success. Lundahl (2010) stated that community-based organizations were failed because "funds were lacking, members did not participate in the decision-making, they came from social classes that differed too much, accounts were not properly kept, and a long-term vision was lacking" (2010: 118). Fortunately, at least the social enterprises that are studied in this research, have a management system that works, members participate in the decision-making despite the fact that they come from different classes and their accounts most of the time are properly kept with receipt and up-to-date systems like KNFP. Due to these factors (good new management system, their passion about social entrepreneurship and their persistence) that if social entrepreneurs are supported by the state and they are able to have access to good credits lines, they can deliver an economic growth for their communities.

However, banks and credit unions offer no real support to entrepreneurship because a real support would allow entrepreneurs to pay their loan at a low rate and be able to build up their capital to facilitate their operations. In fact, entrepreneurs fall into financial matrix where they cannot get out.

The financial system that exists can't help social entrepreneurship to grow but on the contrary it makes them fail in a short or long term. Many of those entrepreneurs who took a loan from the current existing financial system were forced to abandon both their business and their home to run away. Currently, the main reliable financial services are the initiatives of the population and family solidarity.

### 5.4. Social Entrepreneurship Is Empowering Women in Haiti

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It was a surprise to see that within many of the social entrepreneurship that were studied, there was a chance of equal opportunity between men and women. However, due to the reality of Haiti where women take more responsibilities for the family especially in the rural areas, there are more women than men in many of the enterprises. Although that is said, high-ranking or executive positions are generally held by men. However, our findings concur with the statement made by Mauconduit, Emile & Paul (2013) that women entrepreneurship is essential to the economy of a nation with respect to economic development and poverty reduction. The Haitian economy is largely based on women involved in almost all activities, mainly in rural areas. Within the Lèt Agogo network, men are still the majority (60%).

However, it has been also found that in the business, women are better managers, more diligent, rigorous and respect rules and regulations better than men. Each of the social enterprises has its own system of administration. For individual enterprises, the owner replaces the board of directors and sometimes plays the role of the CEO (Chief Executive Officer) even if he or she is not qualified to lead in carrying out the activities of the business. Women participate in all of the family activities and sometimes they carry out other workloads outside of the family. Despite all of the difficulties and challenges that women face in developing their businesses, "women have been and are

they started, the environment in which social enterprises are evolving in Haiti, that is to say the public policy sector, the banks and credits in regard to financing social entrepreneurship, the type of leadership they are facing, the culture that explains a lot of Haitians' business habits and the place of gender within the society in terms of social enterprise. This helped us to have a better understanding of the situation and allowed us to state that:

- Women play an important role in poverty reduction in Haiti although they are not really present in the decision sphere;
- The concept leadership in terms of social enterprise is not well understood or applied due to the impact of culture and family relationship in the business;
- Despite the progress already made, leadership in regard to social entrepreneurship has not yet been effective as it should be;
- The role of both private sector and government is not defined yet in regard to social entrepreneurship in Haiti;
- In order to allow social entrepreneurs to contribute effectively in both poverty reduction and economic growth in Haiti, the government should develop some public policy that can support social entrepreneurship.

However, a solid basement of building an instigator business has been put in place through some of the successful social enterprises that were studied in this research. The recommendations from this case study can be made at two levels: recommendations for supporting social entrepreneurship, and recommendations for further research.

At the first level, three recommendations for supporting social entrepreneurship: create a regulatory and normative system adaptable to the reality of the Haitian business; create a financial and credit system with a low rate available for all; and evaluate grant program as well as other financial programs in order to protect the entrepreneurs.

At the second level, for further research, three points warrant particular emphasis. First of all, there is a need to research how to develop enterprises supported by the government that are exclusively focused on solving social, economic and environmental problems in Haiti. Secondly, it is important to understand why despite the proof of social enterprises success in Haiti, there is still no public policy covering the subject? Thirdly, due to all of the difficulties that social entrepreneurship faces in Haiti but successful, what are the strategies that professionals can develop to motivate the youth to be interested in the topic.

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### Table des illustrations

Titre | Figure 1. From Motivation and passion to social entrepreneurship

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