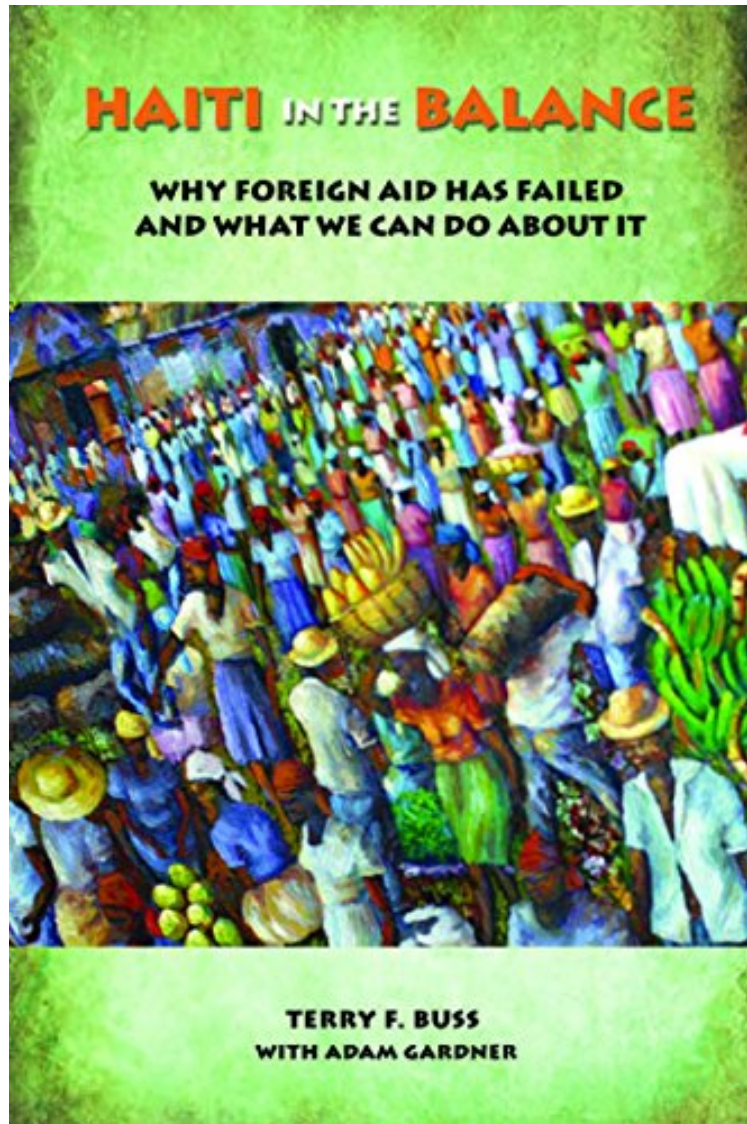


# Haiti in the Balance: Why Foreign Aid Has Failed and What We Can Do About It

*Terry F. Buss*

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**Terry F. Buss : Haiti in the Balance: Why Foreign Aid Has Failed and What We Can Do About It** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Haiti in the Balance: Why Foreign Aid Has Failed and What We Can Do About It:

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Maybe, there is an end to Haiti's suffering!By Claude Emile MacajouxEven though I make my home in the US for the past 40 years, the situation in Haiti, my homeland, continues to trouble me. So, I was sold by the subtitle of this book and I must admit, I was not disappointed at the end of my

reading. Exploration of the causes of the failure of foreign assistance and the remedies proposed make this book a must reading. A presentation of Haiti's economy, society, environment and political history, (mainly during the last 30 years or so) gives a clear -albeit depressing - understanding of the situation. Foreign assistance flows - "on again, off again" - to Haiti since the early 40's. ( Figure 5-1, page 70 ). The authors identify " at least four drivers within Haiti itself (which) contributed to aid ineffectiveness: -lack of government capacity generally and in aid administrations specifically; -lack of government support for or ownership of programs funded; -excessive aid dependency; -and widespread dissension between (the) president and (the) parliament". But, "Haitians should not be blamed exclusively for the failures of foreign assistance in their country " write the compassionate authors. From " faulty aid priorities to donor fatigue " they point out and discuss a slew of conditions (Chapter 6 ) which constitute failures "from the part of Donors". Consequently, in Chapter 7: "Lessons learned: reforming foreign assistance" and Chapter 8 " Lessons learned: governance and democracy in progress", Terry F. Buss and Adam Gardner thoughtfully offer possible corrections to both the Haitian misconduct and the foreign miscalculations. This book was published more than 2 years ago (mid 2008). The opening sentence of the foreword reads: " The publication of this book is timely and urgently needed, because it adds fresh insights into ongoing discussions regarding what is an appropriate development assistance approach for Haiti". After the January 12, 2010 earth-quake and now the cholera epidemic, this book should constitute a manual for everybody interested in helping Haiti. 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. A sorry state of affairs By Buyer anonymous If you are interested in the subject please read the many books about the same lines "The crisis caravan" by L. Polman, the book by D. Moyo and "U.N. a Cosa Nostra" all sold on .com U.N. a Cosa Nostra: The workings of an organization 'helping' the poorest of the world (Volume 1) 10 of 16 people found the following review helpful. A great pick for international studies collections By Midwest Book Review A country in chronic crisis. "Haiti in the Balance: Why Foreign Aid has Failed and What We Can Do About it" is a look at where four billion of United States taxpayer's money has went in the past decade - the crisis of the country of Haiti. The money, though, has proven ineffective, and Terry F. Buss will explain why within this volume and presents many interesting facts and ideas. "Haiti in the Balance" is a great pick for international studies collections, and those who want to better understand Haiti in general.

Even after years of receiving considerable foreign aid, Haiti remains an impoverished, tremendously fragile state. Over a span of ten years, the United States spent over \$4 billion in aid to Haiti, yet the average Haitian still has to survive on one dollar a day. Why has assistance been so ineffectual, and what can we learn from Haiti's plight about foreign aid in general? Haiti in the Balance tackles those questions by analyzing nearly twenty years of Haitian history, politics, and foreign relations. Terry Buss and his colleagues at the National Academy on Public Administration found a general failure to reinforce the capacity of institutions at all levels of Haitian government. Building up that system of institutions appears to be a necessary precursor to a nation using foreign aid in the most effective manner. Such an effort demands improved security, a more professional (and less corrupt) bureaucracy, and eventually decentralization and perhaps even some privatization. Different levels of government must be willing to learn how best to work with one another: according to Buss, "Haitian governments seemed consumed by politics, rather than good governance." People still matter, and so does administration. Until we learn that lesson, even the most generous foreign aid will not fulfill its intent.

"This book stands out in the literature on Haiti because it fully and competently addresses the topic of the subtitle, "Why Foreign Aid Has Failed and What We Can Do About It.""; CHOICE About the Author Terry F. Buss is the director on international programs at the National Academy of Public Administration. He has published 12 books on a number of policy issues, most recently Modernizing Democracy: Innovations in Public Participation, written with F. Steven Redburn and Kristina Guo (M.E. Sharpe, 2006). Adam Gardner is currently a graduate student of public administration at the University of Southern California.