

# Haiti's Economy Has Been 'Africanized'

A summary review of some basic physical economic parameters in Haiti during the mid-2000s makes the point (see **Figure 1**):

- **Life expectancy:** In Haiti, it's 55-60 years (depending on the source); in Sub-Saharan Africa it is 46 years; in Ibero-America, 71.
- **Access to sanitation:** available to only 34% of Haitians; 36% of Africans; and 74% of Ibero-Americans.
- **Access to electricity:** available to 34% of Haitians; 25% of Africans; and 87% of Ibero-Americans.
- **Access to improved water:** 58% of Haitians; 58% of Africans; and 91% of Ibero-Americans.

In many categories, pre-earthquake Haiti was *worse off* than the average for Sub-Saharan Africa. For example:

- **Energy consumption:** Haiti consumes 251 kg oil equivalent per capita annually; Sub-Saharan Africa, 667; Ibero-America, 1,156.
- **Cereal yield:** In Haiti it is 868 grams per hectare; Africa, 1,071; and Ibero-America, 3,012.

Small wonder that Haiti has to import about 60% of its food, and has widespread malnutrition and infant mortality.