UNICEF continues to expand its presence and partnerships in Haiti to better meet the needs of children. Bases are already established in the quake-affected urban areas of Léogane and Jacmel – while mobile teams are extending UNICEF’s reach in vulnerable rural communities.

At a glance: Six-month milestones made possible through your support

- 333,000 people reached daily with safe water.
- More than 275,000 children immunized against major vaccine-preventable diseases.
- 126 outpatient therapeutic feeding programs and 28 stabilization centres providing life-saving care to malnourished children.
- 185,000 children reached with basic education materials and 1,297 school tents for 155,000 students.

UNICEF presence in Haiti
A message from UNICEF’s representative in Haiti

Words fail to describe the scale of the devastation caused by the earthquake that struck Haiti six months ago. More expressive than the facts and figures of damages and losses incurred however, is the potent imagery of children who still talk superstitiously of le grand serpent—the great snake—that slithered angrily underground, bumping up against their homes and schools, reducing them to dust and rubble. Even now streets remain littered with the debris of destroyed buildings, making it difficult for children to find a visual escape from their memories of disaster.

UNICEF was blessed none of its staff were among the victims, but all were directly affected, as many lost close family members or someone they knew or loved. I am humbled by their exemplary dedication to the cause of children in Haiti, as they spared no effort to get relief organized from the very first days—when often they were themselves sleeping in the streets, in tents, in cars and among the displaced.

We are in debt for the unparalleled show of support UNICEF received from its partners, donors and supporters. Millions of people responded and sent contributions to help us help the children and women of Haiti. This global wave of solidarity also testifies to the strong confidence UNICEF inspires through its mission for children and its readiness to deliver in the face of daunting challenges. It also underlines the obligation we have to direct these resources towards those children that need it the most.

Some of the milestones at six months are truly remarkable. So far no increase in malnutrition has been recorded and we have also not seen any major disease outbreaks despite huge challenges in health and sanitation. At the same time, the earthquake exposed the divides within society and the deep-seated vulnerabilities of those who for so long had been invisible and were on the brink of being forgotten, inspiring a common aspiration for change.

What has emerged is a strong sense of momentum that we need to carry forward. With this new momentum there is ground to be optimistic, but our optimism must be guarded, as for many the situation remains more than precarious. Children still need our undivided attention and efforts must continue with the same sense of urgency. Too many children are still living in unacceptable conditions, exposed to vaccine-preventable diseases and vulnerable to physical and sexual violence, exploitation and child trafficking. Too many youth and adolescents are seeing opportunities and livelihoods pass them by.

One thing is certain however, not only are Haitians resilient, they are also proud and hopeful. Surrounded by rubble, people are standing up—women, mothers, fathers, children—and UNICEF’s role will be to help Haitians stand up together, to turn their hopes into reality, and to ensure that children grow up with access to the full range of services they need to survive and thrive, reaching their full potential to contribute meaningfully to the development of their nation.

As we stood among the victims of the earthquake on January 12, we stand alongside the Haitian people today, with renewed commitment to realizing their dream of a Haiti fit for children.

Françoise Gruloos-Ackermans
Representative, UNICEF Haiti
Overview

Six months on, the dramatic destruction caused by the January 12, 2010 earthquake in Haiti continues to impact over three million people. More than 220,000 people lost their lives in the earthquake, 300,000 were injured and some 1.6 million people are living in makeshift settlements.

In a country where nearly 46 per cent of the population is under 18, the earthquake has triggered an unprecedented emergency for children. Some 500,000 children are extremely vulnerable and require child protection assistance. Millions of children have experienced an interruption in their schooling, with close to 20 per cent of schools in the country damaged or destroyed. The number of children who died in the earthquake will probably never be known.

Since day one, UNICEF has been reaching children and families with life-saving assistance, collaborating with multiple partners to help set up schools, latrines, water points and help protect children and keep them healthy. We have also worked to support the government in coordinating emergency response, leading key humanitarian activities on the ground, including in the areas of nutrition, education, water, sanitation and hygiene, and child protection. And we continue to work closely with the government to initiate early recovery efforts and to help pave the way for a transformed Haiti that is fit for children.

While the situation in Haiti remains extremely precarious for so many children, we are happy to report on some incredible milestones at the six-month mark thanks to the generous support of donors like you. To date, no increase in malnutrition has been recorded and despite the challenges of sanitation in overcrowded settlements and the damage caused to an already weak health system, epidemic outbreaks have been averted.

Your support has been crucial to achieving these successes, helping to drive humanitarian efforts to support the health and well-being of Haitian children amid the most difficult circumstances.

This report highlights the key achievements for children we have made together, and the lives that have been touched through your generous support. Thank you for your commitment and generosity.

“...there's always a child that sticks in your memory and to whom you go back time and time again. There’s that child in Haiti, at a school in Narette I’ve been back to three times…I just melted. What a beaming smile she has.

We're a big organization – global scope. We make a difference on a huge scale. But it all comes down to “Are we making a difference individually?” And you can be assured that in Haiti, UNICEF is.”

Nigel Fisher, President and CEO of UNICEF Canada reflects on his experience visiting a UNICEF-supported school in the Narette neighbourhood of Port-au-Prince. Nigel is currently on leave from UNICEF Canada to lead the United Nations recovery efforts in Haiti.
How your support touches lives

Four-month-old Jameslay Petit lives with her mother and three siblings in a makeshift tent. The earthquake destroyed their home and killed her father. Little Jameslay is malnourished and is receiving care at the UNICEF-supported Hospital Universitaire de l’Etat d’Haiti in Port-au-Prince. She has been in the hospital for 23 days now, where she is gaining strength through life-saving therapeutic treatment. Because the hospital building was damaged by the earthquake, UNICEF is supporting the hospital’s nutrition program from a nearby tent.

14-year-old Alcema lost everything in the earthquake, and now lives in a crowded makeshift settlement home to more than 1,200 people. While life in the camp is hard, Alcema has benefited from a unique opportunity to learn about healthy hygiene practices – crucial to averting the spread of disease in cramped living conditions such as those in his camp. “Before living in the camp I did not know that it was important to wash my hands after using the toilet,” says Alcema. “One day I saw a woman holding up posters with pictures explaining that it was important to be clean and wash your hands all the time.” Alcema learned that poor hygiene can lead to sickness and vowed to take his health in his own hands. “Now I always wash my hands after using the toilet and before eating… My mother couldn’t understand until I explained it to her, and you know what, now she does the same thing as me.”

Sabrina is a lively five-month-old born shortly after the earthquake. Her mother passed away two days after her birth. She is now being brought up by her maternal aunt Beatrice, a single mother. Beatrice brings Sabrina to one of the UNICEF-supported baby-friendly tents and is thankful for the mixed baby formula that is provided to Sabrina. Beatrice is now dedicated to looking after Sabrina and ensuring her well-being. “I cannot think now that I could separate myself from her,” she says. The baby tent assists about 300 mothers and babies on a rotating basis. Like Sabrina, 10 of the babies have lost their mothers and come with female relatives like Beatrice.

Five-year-old Yglesias and his mother Yolette moved to a camp for displaced people on the evening of January 12, after they lost their home in the earthquake. Yolette is a single mother who, before the earthquake, ran a small business selling rice in her old neighbourhood. She no longer has resources to raise her child. A counsellor at the camp encouraged parents to send their children to the nearby child-friendly centre set up by UNICEF and its partners as a safe haven for children. Yglesias now attends the child-friendly centre, where he is fed and receives safe drinking water, in addition to benefiting from psychosocial care. “My son is provided with a decent meal. He is taken care of by trained counselors who help him deal with his recurrent nightmares about the quake. I just like to see him happy.”
Water, sanitation and hygiene:

Ensuring those displaced by the earthquake receive sufficient quantities of safe water, latrines, bathing facilities and hygiene items is critical to sustaining life and staving off disease outbreaks, especially among children.

- Today some 330,000 people are being reached with daily supplies of safe water through UNICEF and its partners, representing 25 per cent of the overall safe water supply operation in Haiti. To ensure families are better able to meet their daily washing, cleaning and cooking needs, UNICEF is aiming to increase the volume of water per person from five litres per person per day to at least 7.5 litres per day.
- Some 1.1 million people have benefited from improved sanitation through the installation of over 9,000 latrines constructed by UNICEF and partners. UNICEF is committed to supporting the completion of an additional 4,000 latrines over the next six months, and to covering operating costs for 15 de-sludging trucks, crucial for systemic maintenance of existing sanitation facilities.
- To maintain health for children within crowded makeshift settlements, 2,200 hygiene promoters and community mobilizers have been trained to disseminate messages on key hygiene practices.
- More than 213,000 people have benefited from UNICEF’s distribution of personal hygiene kits – which provide a basic package including soap, sanitary towels, toothpaste and toothbrushes, detergent and toilet paper.
- Some 20,500 children are now accessing safe water and sanitation facilities in school. UNICEF and partners have equipped 18 schools with latrines, water tanks, handwashing points and soaps. Plans are underway to reach another 30 schools by August.

Health

The close proximity of people living in overcrowded makeshift shelters without adequate water and nutrition has increased children’s susceptibility to acute respiratory infections and deadly childhood illnesses such as measles and diarrhoea.

- While sprawling camps with shifting populations have made for a complex vaccination campaign, more than 228,000 children in hundreds of camps have now received life-saving vaccinations. Another immunization campaign is being launched in July to boost coverage to children nationwide. UNICEF is also working with the Haitian Ministry of Health and the World Health Organization to plan for the re-establishment of routine immunization activities in the future.
- UNICEF has begun distribution of insecticide-treated bed nets to 200,000 households to help prevent malaria.

Safe sanitation for more people—progress over time:

One month: 138,500 people benefiting from 1,000 latrines

Three months: 500,000 people benefiting from 5,350 latrines

Six months: 1.6 million people benefiting from 11,000 latrines

80% of this progress has been led by UNICEF and made possible through the support of donors like you.
The health needs of more than 1.7 million people are being met through the distribution of emergency kits – containing essential medicines to protect against major killers of children such as diarrhoea, pneumonia and malaria.

Obstetric kits have been distributed with drugs and supplies to ensure more than 12,000 safe births, including emergency kits to provide life-saving care for 1,200 mothers who run into complications during labour.

UNICEF supported the reconstruction of the National Nursing School in Port-au-Prince. With the installation of five temporary learning spaces and the distribution of furniture and basic equipment the school has now reopened to a new generation of nursing students.

Nutrition

The earthquake compounded an already critical situation in Haiti where one in three children under five was chronically malnourished. Preventing dropping nutrition levels, as well as tackling root causes of malnutrition remains a top priority moving forward.

To avert dropping nutrition levels among children immediately following the earthquake, UNICEF worked with partners to implement large-scale feeding programs in earthquake-affected areas. At the six-month mark, more than 550,000 children and women have benefited from ready-to-eat supplementary foods and more than 186,000 children have received vitamin A supplements to boost their immune systems.

To date, some 2,000 severely malnourished children under five in affected areas have received life-saving treatment at therapeutic feeding centres. UNICEF has provided nutrition supplies, equipment, financial and technical assistance to support this vital care for the most vulnerable.

Some 23,000 mothers and babies are also being assisted through ‘baby-friendly tents’ that provide counselling on proper infant and young child feeding. At least 150 baby-friendly tents will be established in total, with more than 100 already operational. Some 3,000 babies for whom breastfeeding is not possible have been receiving ready-to-use infant formula with guidance on proper use and practices.

Training on infant feeding and community management of acute malnutrition is being planned this year for 500 health professionals and community workers. This will help strengthen capacities of the government, NGOs and Haitian communities to prevent and treat malnutrition.

Since more than 60 per cent of children under five suffered from anaemia before the earthquake, UNICEF also plans to reach more than 350,000 children with micronutrient supplements by the end of the year.

Immunization for children—progress over time:

One month: 19,200 children immunized
Three months: 104,000 children immunized
Six months: 275,905 children immunized

83% of these children have been reached through UNICEF-supported immunization activities to prevent deadly illnesses.

Care for mothers and babies at baby-friendly tents—progress over time:

Three months: 1,700 mother-baby pairs in 19 tents
Six months: 23,000 mother-baby pairs in 107 tents

More than three quarters of existing baby-friendly tents have been set up through the support of UNICEF donors.
Education

During times of crisis, education provides children with a sense of safety and normalcy. There remains an immense thirst for learning, and getting children back to school is a top priority among Haitians.

- Some 80 per cent of the nearly 5,000 quake-affected schools have been supported through site clearance, set-up of temporary learning spaces, materials and teacher support.
- To help children get back to school as quickly as possible, UNICEF has helped establish 225 temporary learning spaces to date through the distribution of nearly 1,300 school tents (with another 2,000 on the way). In the longer term, UNICEF will support the construction of disaster-proof semi-permanent and permanent school buildings.
- To ensure children do not have to repeat their studies, UNICEF has helped the Haitian Ministry of Education develop an adapted curriculum for a condensed second semester. More than 5,000 teachers and education personnel have been trained on the curriculum, with training for 30,000 more planned this year.
- To encourage school enrolment and attendance, more than 185,000 school-aged children have been provided with school supplies, and more than 45,000 pre-schoolers have benefited from learning and play material through the distribution of early childhood development kits.
- Ensuring access to proper water and sanitation facilities while at school is an important component of UNICEF’s education activities. Eighteen schools have been improved to date, with more on the way. Plans are underway to support 600 priority schools with water and sanitation facilities and school feeding initiatives in partnership with the World Food Programme.

Child Protection

Threats of violence, sexual abuse, trafficking, exploitation and abandonment have increased as the earthquake collapsed already weak systems for protecting vulnerable children.

- The needs of more than 500,000 vulnerable children affected by the earthquake are being met through identification, registration and family tracing processes for separated children. UNICEF is hosting and providing technical support to a call centre where cases of separated children are reported.
- More than 2,000 children separated from their caregivers have been registered through UNICEF and its partners, with 337 successfully reunited with their families to date. Remaining children have been assessed and supported to find appropriate family-based care options.
- Ensuring children moved across international borders are not being trafficked or exposed to other risks has been a key priority. UNICEF has helped national authorities strengthen assessment procedures and train personnel on the prevention of child trafficking and case management.
- More than 62,000 children and youth are accessing child-friendly spaces where they can play with peers, learn life-skills and access psychosocial care. To date, UNICEF and partners have set up more than 200 child-friendly spaces.
Financial summary

As the earthquake triggered a unique emergency for children, an estimated $350 million is required to cover the immediate and pressing needs of children in the first year, while also planning for early recovery, preparedness and disaster-risk reduction over a two-year time frame. Thanks to the tremendous generosity of donors, UNICEF has raised 70 per cent of needed funds to date. Canadian donors have shown their commitment to Haiti’s children, generously contributing more than $13 million of these funds.

To date, $116.5 million in donor funds has been spent or committed to planned programs for children and families. Below is a snapshot of total funds spent or committed by program area.

Emergency operations are set to continue over the next 18 months, and UNICEF is simultaneously supporting the Haitian Government’s three-year Action Plan for National Recovery and Development.

Total UNICEF donations (committed or spent) by program area as of June 25, 2010

- Education: 18%
- Nutrition: 13%
- Health: 5%
- Child Protection: 12%
- Water, Sanitation and Hygiene: 27%
- Coordination: 1%
- Cross-sectoral: 24%

Note: Cross-sectoral costs include supply operations and logistics, administration, planning, monitoring and evaluation, communications and external relations.

Reaching children with life-saving supplies:

As of June 25, UNICEF has supported 140 air and sea shipments of life-saving emergency supplies to Haiti valued at more than $35 million. To support local jobs and economic recovery, UNICEF has maximized opportunities for local procurement where possible.

Wè jodi-a, men sonje denmen

Live today, but think of tomorrow

This one Haitian proverb captures the essence of the challenge ahead. Alongside meeting urgent humanitarian needs, we also need to budget time and resources to plan for the future to ensure a transformed Haiti in which the rights of children are realized. One of the ways UNICEF is doing this is through emergency preparedness. UNICEF has worked to mitigate the pressing risk of hurricanes and has helped relocate displaced persons from areas that face rain-related hazards. To strengthen our ability to respond swiftly to another potential disaster, critical life-saving supplies have been pre-positioned in high-risk areas that can cover the basic needs of 83,000 affected persons for one month. An emergency field-support team has also been set up and is ready deploy anywhere in the country within 72 hours.

Solid emergency preparedness is crucial in disaster-prone regions, and a key reason why UNICEF was able to respond so quickly to the needs of Haitian children and families after the January 12 earthquake.
A brighter future for Haiti’s children

As we cross the six-month mark, immediate support for quake-affected people remains the key priority. Reaching the hardest to reach, the poorest of the poor, and the most vulnerable in every district is UNICEF’s goal.

While emergency operations are set to continue over the next 18 months, UNICEF is committed to supporting the Haitian Government’s recovery plans for the next three years. Aligning with priorities outlined by the Government of Haiti, UNICEF will be focusing its efforts to define and drive solid social protection mechanisms—to protect and empower children and vulnerable communities throughout the country.

One of UNICEF’s greatest strengths is an ability to bring together multiple stakeholders around a common cause – children’s rights. UNICEF will continue to act as a catalyst to convene partners at all levels to plan and realize a transformative recovery for Haiti’s children.

UNICEF is committed to ensuring children everywhere in Haiti can realize their rights to grow up healthy, educated and protected against harm. We are committed to building a Haiti fit for children, where children are shielded against economic, environmental and social shocks, and can grow up with dignity and hope in the future. Your commitment and generosity helps to empower these efforts each day.

Thank you so much for investing in positive transformation and a brighter future for Haiti’s children.

Only with people and the proper expertise can we make sure life-saving assistance reaches those in need, and that longer-term transformation for children in Haiti occurs.

Currently 229 UNICEF staff members are on the ground in Haiti, half of them Haitian nationals.

Tamara Bélizaire
Transport Unit Manager

“I started eight days before the quake and from eight drivers and a few cars, I’m now supervising 38 drivers. My team’s role is to get staff where they need to be to serve the children we all work for. We’ve all gone through tremendous suffering and grief—one of my drivers for instance lost three of his children—but we are working tirelessly as we feel like this is our way to help in the reconstruction of our country.”

Christina Torsein
Child Protection Specialist

“Much of our strength comes from our inter-agency partnerships, for example with our programs on family tracing and reunification. Our days vary between working on the ground making sure children are provided with the best possible options for care and assistance to also meeting with government counterparts and NGO partners to devise the best strategies to ensure children are protected. There is a heightened sense of urgency and commitment amongst all partners. We need to maintain the current momentum for children’s rights in Haiti.”