

Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action

EDUCATION

STRATEGIC RESULT

Girls and boys access safe and secure education and critical information for their own well-being



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There was perhaps no worse symbol for the future of Haiti's children than the image of collapsed schools in the aftermath of the quake. But there was also no stronger commitment than making education the main avenue for rebuilding Haiti and securing a better future for its children. Still, more than half remain out of school, and children in camps face continuing challenges to access education. New challenges are also threatening the continuity of education for children who could go back to school, and dimming the hopes of those millions of children who were out of school and aspired to fulfil their right to quality basic education.

Improving Access to Quality Basic Education

Close to 5,000 schools were affected by the earthquake which caused the whole education system to shut down while the Ministry of Education itself collapsed. With children out of school, UNICEF and partners distributed 1,600 tents to set up more than 225 temporary learning spaces, while overall efforts helped 600 schools to reopen on 5 April with distributions of learning materials and school equipment benefiting more than 325,000 children and 42,000 teachers at the time. When schools closed for one month in the summer, UNICEF and partners in the Education Cluster were already preparing the start of the next school year, launching a new nationwide "All to School" campaign on 4 October targeting not only children who had suffered an interruption in their schooling as a result of the quake, but also children in sites, slums and neglected rural areas who had never before accessed education. With schools opening gradually since October, UNICEF has been working to roll out this campaign and is reaching 720,000 children nationwide (out of 2.2 million primary school age children at national level, with more than half out of school), 15,000 teachers and 2,000 schools in all ten departments, reaching 80 per cent of those children directly affected by the quake, with efforts coordinated with the World Food Programme and other partner's school feeding initiative.

Improving Quality of Education

After the earthquake, UNICEF worked with the Ministry of Education to strengthen the capacity of education personnel with a combination of trainings that reached more than 11,300 teachers and education personnel. Training focused on the adapted curriculum that was developed so children would not have to repeat a year, the detailed curriculum for the new school year, and psychosocial care for children with 6,000 teachers trained so classrooms could offer a space where children could be helped to overcome trauma caused by the disaster. Part of UNICEF's efforts to build national capacity has also been to invest in Early Childhood Development (ECD), with UNICEF supporting the work of the Early Childhood Bureau in the Ministry of Education, with trainings now underway for preschool animators on the national curriculum, while over 53,000 children benefited from ECD opportunities through distributions of ECD kits. UNICEF

Indicators	Education Cluster 2010 Targets	Education Cluster Progress to Date	UNICEF 2010 Targets	UNICEF Progress to Date
Children provided with learning materials*	700,000*	842,097	720,000	720,000
School tents to set-up temporary learning spaces	4,000	2,729	2,000	1,600
Semi-permanent schools (built/construction ongoing)	464	298	200	127
Education staff trained on psychosocial care for children	5,000	7,592	5,000	6,000
Children benefiting from ECD kits and opportunities	100,000	65,704	60,000	53,520

Source: Education Cluster, UNICEF programme. *Cluster target for the initial response and April re-opening of schools. Under the Ministry's plan for the 2010-2011 school year, the target was extended to the total of over 2.2 million primary school-age children, including children out-of-school before the quake.

also embedded experts at the Ministries of Education and Planning to support a planning and costing exercise for the Operational Response Plan for Education Sector Reform piloted by the Presidential Commission on Education, and to help in the development of Government proposals submitted to the Interim Haiti Recovery Commission in support of the education sector. UNICEF also worked to train 154 school inspectors, directors and teachers on disaster risk reduction and education in emergencies. Part of the effort included setting up local emergency coordination cells to help identify needs, organise trainings and sensitisations, monitor distributions in schools, and coordinate partners with the overall aim of ensuring continuity of education in emergencies. With the outbreak of cholera, UNICEF moved swiftly to support 5,000 vulnerable schools with distributions of soap and water purification tablets benefiting 1.5 million children, alongside social mobilisation efforts reaching school directors and teachers in 20,000 schools.

School Construction

Perhaps one area where bottlenecks where the greatest was school construction, with issues of rubble clearance leading UNICEF to constantly adapt to changing circumstances. To date, UNICEF has built 57 semi-permanent schools using hurricane and earthquake-resistant designs and including WASH facilities, with construction ongoing in 60 further schools benefiting more than 24,400 children. More contracts are being awarded and the target is to reach 200 semi-permanent schools. UNICEF will continue to coordinate with international development partners on permanent school construction to help restore the 5,000 schools damaged by the quake.

Education Cluster Coordination

Working to coordinate more than 196 organisations, UNICEF and Save the Children Alliance, as co-leads of the Education Cluster, helped organise emergency efforts and disseminated guidelines on minimum standards for Education in Emergencies in the aftermath of the quake. The Cluster also supported the Ministry of Education in developing norms for child-friendly schools, psychosocial support for children and WASH in schools. Recognising chronic vulnerability that characterised the education system long before the earthquake, the Cluster is also working on a transition plan to leverage emergency efforts as a starting point for longer-term planning and reform. A database with information on affected schools and attendance by displaced children is being developed in partnership with the UN Office for Project Services (UNOPS)

and will be handed over to the government to contribute to the development of an Education Information Management System to build capacity for planning and coordination.

Challenges and Looking Forward

With funds available in 2011, UNICEF will invest in three key priorities including improving access to education, improving quality of education, and investing in reform and regulation in the education sector. Overcoming bottlenecks in access means building more schools, but also advocating for the universal abolition of school fees as the main social barrier for children to access education in Haiti. Improving quality means strengthening government capacity to lead, plan and coordinate, training more teachers and education staff and unifying a fragmented system divided between private and public actors, marred by inequity, and where more than half all children remain out of school. Addressing the gaps that remain in the earthquake response—one in five affected children in school before the quake has indeed still not been able to regain access to education—and tackling these bottlenecks will be the way forward for UNICEF, alongside efforts to build capacity at the decentralised level for local management of schools, and advocating for a greater allocation of the national budget for education.

Funding

Total Allocation
US\$ 65.5 million

