



# THE AMERICAS AND CARIBBEAN REGION

# UNICEF HUMANITARIAN ACTION THE AMERICAS AND CARIBBEAN IN 2009



The Americas and Caribbean region is prone to frequent natural disasters such as hurricanes, tropical storms and floods, which affect over 300 million children and women across the region. Pre-existing conditions of poverty, food shortages and violence aggravate the situation of children and women. The UNICEF Americas and Caribbean Regional Office will strengthen preparedness activities, work towards an effective implementation of disaster risk reduction activities and build the capacity of national and subregional entities. It will also work together with its partners to mitigate and reduce the impact of armed conflict in Colombia as well as the chronic unstable situation in Haiti.

## The Americas and Caribbean Emergency Needs for 2009\*

Sector	US\$
Strengthen the Americas and Caribbean Country Offices and National Counterparts' Capacity-Building on Issues Pertaining to the Humanitarian Reform, Including Clusters where UNICEF is Leader	1,100,000
Strengthen the Americas and Caribbean Region to Respond to Emergency Natural Disasters and Other Rapid Onset Emergencies	500,000
Support Disaster Risk Reduction Initiatives, with Focus on Education and Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Sectors	1,200,000
<b>Total**</b>	<b>2,800,000</b>

\* Funds received against this appeal will be used to respond to both the immediate and medium-term needs of children and women as outlined above. If UNICEF should receive funds in excess of the medium-term funding requirements for this emergency, UNICEF will use those funds to support other underfunded emergencies.

\*\* The total includes a maximum recovery rate of 7 per cent. The actual recovery rate on contributions will be calculated in accordance with UNICEF Executive Board Decision 2006/7 dated 9 June 2006.

## 1. CRITICAL ISSUES FOR CHILDREN AND WOMEN

The Americas and Caribbean region has been hit hard by natural disasters in 2008, ranging from hurricanes, tropical storms and flooding across the Caribbean to a drought in Paraguay and severely cold temperatures in Peru. Of special concern are those countries and populations made especially vulnerable to natural disasters by pre-existing conditions of poverty, food shortages, and/or violence.

Hurricanes Fay, Gustav, Hanna, Ike and Norbert have dramatically affected large swathes of the Caribbean in the second part of 2008. Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Jamaica, Mexico, and Turks and Caicos have all been affected by the storms mentioned above, while earlier in the year Bolivia and Ecuador have suffered from the impact of heavy rains. In the latest part of the year, Central American countries, such as Belize, Guatemala and Honduras, have been affected by heavy rains as well. All the countries have experienced varying degrees of loss of life and infrastructure. And they all have in common that the storms have left the poorest and most marginalized children and women in a still more precarious state.

In Haiti, which struggles with near-chronic instability under any circumstances, high food prices had already led to violent riots back in April 2008. Then, over a period of less than a month in August/September, four back-to-back tropical storms and hurricanes killed 800; washed away 22,000 homes; affected 153,000 families; destroyed already-poor infrastructure; and devastated food crops all over the country. The effect on children, women and families already weakened and made vulnerable by poverty and food shortages has been massive.

Cuba suffered massive damages to infrastructure after two successive hurricanes swept across the island; Gustav struck Cuba as a category 4 hurricane and is considered the greatest natural disaster to affect the country in the past 50 years.

Colombia is another example of a country made especially vulnerable to a series of natural disasters by pre-existing conditions. The country was struck, in 2008, by everything from an earthquake to a volcanic eruption to heavy rains and landslides, compounding the vulnerability of populations already affected by long-standing conflict in the country, which has displaced over 2 million people over the past 10 years.

Even in countries whose populations are not affected *en masse* by pre-existing problems of poverty and violence, the large disparity in wealth and access to services in much of the region makes recovery from the consequences of natural disasters much more challenging for the poorest and most marginalized populations – and, as always, children and women are the most vulnerable among these groups.

## 2. KEY ACTIONS AND ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2008

The UNICEF Americas and Caribbean Regional Office (TACRO) has supported throughout 2008 the region's Country Offices with technical and financial assistance. During the preparation phase TACRO has facilitated the revision and updating of emergency preparedness and response planning processes, providing staff with training on general and specific aspects and sharing important information; during the response phase, it has provided technical and financial support through rapid staff deployment and delivery of basic supplies which, in the majority of cases, reached the affected countries within 72 hours. Thanks to the assistance provided, Country Offices such as Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Nicaragua and Peru have, for example, improved their preparedness mechanisms.

Within the framework of humanitarian reform and the regional Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Risk, Emergency and Disaster Task Force for Latin America and the Caribbean (REDLAC), TACRO has actively participated in the efforts to develop a more coherent and coordinated response to emergencies in the region as well as a better understanding and an enhanced capacity related to the cluster coordination in the sectors where UNICEF is the cluster lead, especially in water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), education and protection. The activities of this inter-agency working group at regional level included also the production of documents like the *Panorama de Tendencia*, which aims at highlighting the changes occurred in Central America in specific sectors, like education, where UNICEF has played a major role. UNICEF has also participated in the roll-out of global cluster materials and tools in WASH and education in partnership with other humanitarian partners, such as Action contre la Faim/Action Against Hunger (ACF/ACH), the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), Oxfam, the Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization (PAHO/WHO), Plan International, Save the Children etc.

In partnership with the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR), TACRO implemented a project initiative in Central America to develop national capacity for emergency planning and preparedness and disaster risk reduction in the education sector and involved national authorities in Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama. The

initiative took a regional, multilevel approach that focused on supporting regional and national coordination mechanisms for disaster management and strengthening knowledge and skills related to child rights, education in emergencies, and school-level disaster risk reduction (DRR). The overarching achievement of this project has been the increased understanding by ministries of education of the fact that they have a role to play in responding to emergencies and in DRR to ensure the right to education in emergency situations. The project also demonstrated to ministries that it is possible to work concretely at the community level with specific schools in order to implement disaster risk reduction measures. A key lesson that emerged is that UNICEF has a niche role in supporting middle-income countries that have a generally high level of capacity to incorporate a child rights perspective and approach, such as Minimum Standards for Education in Emergencies, into their planning and preparedness measures.

In 2008, TACRO has mainly supported the Country Offices of Cuba, Dominican Republic, Haiti, Jamaica, Mexico and Turks and Caicos (Barbados Country Office), which have been dramatically affected by Hurricanes Fay, Gustav, Hanna, Ike and Norbert. Support ranged from technical and financial to the facilitation of missions and rapid deployment.

On the preparedness side, TACRO has supported seven Country Offices (Belize, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Honduras, Nicaragua and Peru) to further develop their capacities to better plan their response by conducting trainings and sectoral meetings and prepositioning key humanitarian relief items.

### 3. PLANNED HUMANITARIAN ACTION FOR 2009

#### Coordination and Partnership

Important progress has been made on the coordination within the UN and with key partners as well as with subregional intergovernmental platforms – Central American Disaster Prevention Centre (CEPREDENAC), Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency (CDERA), Andean Committee for Disaster Prevention and Assistance (CAPRADE) – in order to include the *Core Commitments for Children in Emergencies* into emergency preparedness and response. The functioning of UN Emergency Technical Teams (UNETTs) at country level and IASC-REDLAC at regional level are clear examples of these advancements. The strengthening of these mechanisms is a priority for UNICEF's cooperation.

Emergency preparedness and response, the continuing development of risk reduction activities focusing on WASH and education and the strengthening of national counterparts' and subregional bodies' capacities will be the main pillars of TACRO's activities in 2009. UNICEF's *Humanitarian Action Report* allows for the continuation of work processes that will benefit the most vulnerable groups of population.

#### **Strengthen the Americas and Caribbean Country Offices and National Counterparts' Capacity-Building on Issues Pertaining to the Humanitarian Reform, Including Clusters where UNICEF is Leader (US\$ 1,100,000)**

For 2009, the overall goal is to ensure that the most vulnerable groups benefit from improved preparedness capacity and emergency aid processes of national institutions and other key partners. Key activities will include:

- Provide technical assistance and training to government counterparts and other partners regarding the rights of children in emergencies, UNICEF's *Core Commitments for Children in Emergencies* and the specific area response;
- Produce information materials and engage in advocacy on the main subject matters to be considered when responding to emergencies from the standpoint of rights;
- Provide technical support to enhance UNICEF Country Offices', governments' and humanitarian partners' capacity/understanding of humanitarian reform issues, especially in those sectors where UNICEF is cluster lead;
- Develop a strategy on how to link middle-income countries' social/public policies to emergency preparedness and response and disaster risk reduction (DRR).

### **Strengthen the Americas and Caribbean Region to Respond to Emergency Natural Disasters and Other Rapid Onset Emergencies (US\$ 500,000)**

For 2009, the overall goal is to improve the region's capacity to respond to emergencies, which will allow for greater support to Country Offices and directly benefit affected populations. Key activities will include:

- Ensure that emergency stocks of relief items are available and regularly replenished;
- Identify major suppliers of relief items and pass arrangements at regional/subregional levels;
- Ensure regular update of roster for surge capacity, including internal and external experts in all sectors relevant to *Core Commitments for Children in Emergencies*, and coordinate clusters in those sectors where UNICEF has the coordination role;
- Ensure rapid deployment of staff in emergency situations and participate in inter-agency missions;
- Establish enhanced early warning systems at regional level that integrate those of other UN agencies.

### **Support Disaster Risk Reduction Initiatives, with Focus on Education and Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Sectors (US\$ 1,200,000)**

For 2009, the overall goal is to boost capacity to mobilize and organize government players as well as the international cooperation of NGOs at regional, subregional, national and local levels in order to implement risk reduction activities in education and WASH sectors. Key activities will include:

- Strengthen working relationships between subregional prevention and emergency aid authorities;
- Support national/subregional initiatives regarding risk reduction;
- Provide technical support to Country Offices on risk reduction activities in education and WASH sectors;
- Conduct lessons learnt process on disaster risk reduction (DRR) and education in emergency in the three subregional areas where DRR education project was implemented.

# UNICEF HUMANITARIAN ACTION COLOMBIA IN 2009



Core Country Data	
Child Population (thousands) (National Census, 2005)	15,187
U5 mortality rate 2007 ( <i>The State of the World's Children 2009</i> )	20
Infant mortality rate 2005 (National data from the Ministry of Social Protection – 2005)	15.9
Maternal mortality (National data from the Ministry of Social Protection, 2006)	73.1
Primary school enrolment ratio, 2000–2007, net, boys ( <i>The State of the World's Children 2009</i> )	89
% U1 fully immunized, DPT3 (National data from the Ministry of Social Protection, 2006)	93.5
% population using improved drinking-water sources (1) (National Census, 2005)	83.4
% HIV/AIDS prevalence (UNAIDS, 2005)	0.6
% U5 suffering moderate and severe malnutrition 2005 (Demographic and Health Survey 2005)	7

(1) This figure refers to the proportion of population covered with water facilities (aqueduct). The survey does not have registers indicating whether other sources of water are secure or not.

Colombia has been affected by more than four decades of violence generated by illegal armed groups, and is especially vulnerable to natural disasters deriving from its geographic conditions. UNICEF is working in close coordination with other UN agencies and within the framework of the humanitarian coordination processes to respond to the needs of children and their families affected by these situations. In 2009, UNICEF's assistance will reach 248,000 children and their families as part of its humanitarian action.

Summary of UNICEF Emergency Needs for 2009*	
Sector	US\$
Assistance to Internally Displaced Persons	2,500,000
Emergency Assistance	1,000,000
Humanitarian Mine Action	750,000
Prevention of Child Recruitment and Protection of Children Demobilized from Armed Groups	1,200,000
<b>Total**</b>	<b>5,450,000</b>

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## 1. CRITICAL ISSUES FOR CHILDREN AND WOMEN

Colombia suffers from a long internal armed conflict. Even though there has been significant change in the dynamics of this situation of violence in recent years, the conflict still affects a large part of the population. During 2008, armed fighting between the illegal armed groups and the Colombian military forces escalated in different areas of the country, affecting many communities in South and West Colombia.

Internal displacement is the most evident humanitarian consequence of this situation. Based on official records, 1,976,970 persons have been internally displaced over the past 10 years – of which 2 per cent are indigenous people and 5.5 per cent Afro-descendants.<sup>1</sup> Official data indicate that 48 per cent of the displaced are women and 36 per cent children.<sup>2</sup> However, as per unofficial data, there are an estimated 3 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Colombia today. According to preliminary estimates, more than 83,900 persons have been displaced during the first semester of 2008.<sup>3</sup>

The presence of landmines and unexploded ordnance (UXO) represents a grave and growing concern in Colombia. Official government statistics show a cumulative total of 7,204 victims between 1990 and 26 September 2008, with approximately 38 per cent of all victims being civilians and 10 per cent casualties<sup>4</sup> being children.

There are no official estimates on the number of children recruited by illegal armed groups, although the recruitment of under-18-year-olds is common practice among all these groups.<sup>5</sup> The average recruitment age is estimated at 13 years. A total of 3,786 children have been formally demobilized from illegal armed groups since 1999.

Colombia's geographic and climatic conditions make it particularly vulnerable to natural disasters. During the first nine months of 2008, 713,980 persons were affected by earthquakes, flooding, landslides or storms with high winds.<sup>6</sup>

## 2. KEY ACTIONS AND ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2008

Coordination of humanitarian action among UN agencies and main international and national actors has significantly improved in 2008, with a UN Inter-Agency Coordinating Committee (ICC) established at national and regional levels.

**Assistance to internally displaced persons.** UNICEF has continued carrying out humanitarian response mainly directed at families that have been forcibly displaced or are at high risk of displacement, as well as at communities severely affected by armed conflict. The programme includes integrated interventions addressing crisis recovery and capacity-building/development to dealing with and overcoming crises. UNICEF Colombia has supported the provision of health-care services and education for approximately 60,000 children and adolescents in communities with high levels of violence and destruction deriving from the conflict. Research has been carried out jointly with the World Food Programme (WFP), the Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization (PAHO/WHO) and the UN Development Programme (UNDP) on the health conditions of the indigenous communities of the Chocó that are totally or partially isolated by the armed conflict. Although preliminary information has not yet been completed, it shows that a large-scale, joint intervention will be necessary in the zone.

**Emergency assistance.** On 7 December 2007, the Government appealed for emergency assistance from the United Nations System to respond to flooding in the region of La Mojana. Based on this appeal and the information provided by the Directorate of Disaster Prevention and Response (DPAD), the UN Emergency Technical Team (UNETT) prepared coordinated response proposals for the most affected zones. The International Organization for Migration (IOM), WFP and UNICEF, with support from the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), prepared requests for rapid response grants from the Central Emergency Revolving Fund (CERF) to provide food aid (WFP), shelter (IOM), and water and basic sanitation (UNICEF). As part of UNICEF's response, the water, sanitation and hygiene conditions of 4,441 families in 56 rural communities, including a school population of 3,887 students and teachers from urban areas, were improved in La Mojana and the lower Chocó Departments (northern Colombia). UNICEF provided assistance in the areas of health,

1 Registro Único de Población Desplazada, Acción Social, Presidencia de la República, febrero 2007.

2 Percentages sourced from Agencia Presidencial para la Acción Social y la Cooperación Internacional (June 2002-31 May 2006).

3 Registro Único de Población Desplazada. Agencia Presidencial para la Acción Social y la Cooperación Internacional.

4 Of the total 6,426 victims, 2,198 were civilians.

5 *Informe Defensorial sobre niñez vinculada a grupos armados ilegales*, Defensoría del Pueblo de Colombia, 2006. (Ombudsperson's report on the situation of children associated with illegal armed groups).

6 Dirección de Prevención y Asistencia a Desastres (National System for Disaster Prevention and Response).



nutrition, education and protection for 8,500 (45 per cent coverage) child and adolescent victims of the floods and earthquakes that hit the country as of May 2008. Ten temporary classrooms, education kits, teaching aids, impregnated mosquito nets and filters to improve the quality of water were distributed. Teachers and community health workers were trained to provide integral attention to children (thus ensuring the continuity of school activities), including psychosocial support, early detection of risks, promotion of healthy habits and hygiene and environment care in emergency situations.

**Humanitarian mine action.** UNICEF is currently supporting mine action activities in the most contaminated municipalities of the departments of Antioquia, Cauca, Nariño, Bolivar, Sucre and Chocó through mine-risk education (MRE) programmes that include the training of trainers and direct intervention in affected communities. During 2008, almost 40,000 people have been provided with knowledge on how to protect themselves and others against the dangers of landmines and UXO in their daily lives.

UNICEF and its partners have developed community-based methodologies for Municipal Needs Assessment and for relevant MRE data collection (using a specifically designed methodology) as well as a participatory design for MRE activities and materials at the community level. Early 2009, UNICEF will apply a Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices (KAP) survey, in conjunction with the Centres for Disease Control and Prevention and the Presidential Programme for Mine Action. This baseline data will assist the mine action sector in planning and programming activities, as it will provide a better understanding of how communities interpret the threat of explosive devices and the mechanisms they use to protect themselves.

**Prevention of child recruitment and protection of children demobilized from armed groups.** UNICEF has supported and promoted activities to prevent the recruitment of children by illegal armed groups, especially in indigenous communities and in populations with high levels of violence generated by illegal armed groups. It has also supported strategies for the reintegration and protection of demobilized adolescents. In 2008, UNICEF has developed programmes aiming at the prevention of recruitment in 18 of the most affected departments, benefiting 57,798 children and adolescents. Since the launch of the programme, 258 out of a total of 529 demobilized children (48 per cent) have participated in the family setting modality 'Hogares Gestores' (Foster Homes) (30 per cent boys, 70 per cent girls). UNICEF has supported the creation by the Colombian Institute for Family Welfare (ICBF) of eight departmental units for the care of demobilized children. A Task Force is being established, with acceptance of the Government of Colombia, to monitor child recruitment and other grave child rights' violations under Security Council Resolution 1612.

### 3. PLANNED HUMANITARIAN ACTION FOR 2009

#### Coordination and Partnership

UNICEF's humanitarian action is implemented in close coordination with the other UN agencies in Colombia, within the framework of the Inter-Agency Coordinating Committee. Partnerships have been established with national, local and non-governmental organizations. The Catholic Church and indigenous communities of different ethnicities have been strategic partners of UNICEF.

#### Linkages of HAR with the Regular Programme

The 2008–2012 Country Programme will contribute to ensure that Colombian children live in a country where state and society guarantee the full realization of their rights, social inclusion and non-violence as established in the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). The new programme has four components: child survival and development; quality education, adolescent development and prevention of HIV/AIDS; protection and humanitarian action (which includes all activities related to the protection of children and women in natural or complex emergencies); and evidence-based public policies.

In 2009, UNICEF's humanitarian action will focus on the protection of children and adolescents affected by the armed conflict, aiming to strengthen their protective environments and to provide an institutional response based on local public policies and specific national policies. UNICEF will work jointly with the National System for Disaster Prevention and Attention to strengthen national response to natural disasters with special emphasis on the protection of children and adolescents. UNICEF's planned humanitarian action will benefit a total of 248,000 children.



### **Assistance to Internally Displaced Persons (US\$ 2,500,000)**

Some 48,000 displaced persons, host communities and impoverished persons will benefit from the following key activities:

- Provide psychosocial care, through the 'Return to Happiness' methodology, to 15,000 forcibly confined or displaced children;
- Procure school kits for 5,000 children forcibly confined or displaced;
- Provide temporary water and sanitation solutions for 3,000 forcibly confined or displaced families (approximately 15,000 people);
- Identify 20,000 displaced children and register them in civil birth registries;
- Provide basic health assistance (integrated management of childhood illness (IMCI) strategy) and nutritional supplementation to 5,000 indigenous children forcibly confined or displaced by the armed conflict in Chocó Department.

### **Emergency Assistance (US\$ 1,000,000)**

Some 50,000 persons, particularly children and women, will be reached through the following key activities:<sup>7</sup>

- Construct/rehabilitate wells and adequate sanitary facilities in 40 schools for approximately 4,000 children;
- Provide 3,000 school kits for children affected by natural disasters;
- Rehabilitate/construct water and basic sanitation systems for 5,000 families affected by natural disasters;
- Provide psychosocial care through the 'Return to Happiness' methodology to 5,000 children affected by natural disasters.

### **Humanitarian Mine Action (US\$ 750,000)**

A total of 75,000 persons living in areas where there is high risk of landmine/UXO-related accidents will benefit through the following key activities:

- Share information among 75,000 people on the dangers of landmines/UXO and the adoption of safe behavioural practices; train teachers in five departments to disseminate mine-risk education messages;
- Provide support to approximately 80 per cent of all new civilian landmine/UXO survivors<sup>8</sup> on routes to access health care and claim their rights;
- Train public servants and those in charge of landmine survivors' attention on legal procedures governing victim assistance in five departments.

### **Prevention of Child Recruitment and Protection of Children Demobilized from Armed Groups (US\$ 1,200,000)**

Some 75,000 children associated with armed groups and/or at risk of recruitment are targeted through the following key activities:

- Support/implement activities to prevent the association with and recruitment into illegal armed groups of 75,000 children living in areas with high level of violence generated by armed groups, providing technical support to the National Plan for the Prevention of Involvement of Children in Armed Groups in 50 municipalities, and implementing specific interventions with local counterparts in the most conflict-affected areas (this strategy will strengthen children's protective family, educational and community environments, in order to prevent their recruitment by illegal armed groups);
- Consolidate and institutionalize the modality of social/family reinsertion of children demobilized from armed groups called '*Hogares Gestores*' (Foster Homes);
- Establish a recognized system of signs indicating schools as protected humanitarian spaces to prevent their use by legal or illegal armed groups;
- Develop a system to monitor the situation of children affected by the armed conflict, as per Security Council Resolution 1612;
- Facilitate awareness-raising and train 60,000 military and police personnel on international humanitarian law, children's rights and procedures for receiving children demobilized from illegal armed groups.

<sup>7</sup> An average of approximately 750,000 persons is affected by natural disasters in Colombia each year. Of these, 44 per cent are less than 18 years old. UNICEF's estimates are sourced from the National System for Disaster Prevention and Attention.

<sup>8</sup> In 2007, there have been 191 civilian victims. As of 26 September 2008, 146 new victims have been registered.

# UNICEF HUMANITARIAN ACTION HAITI IN 2009



Core Country Data	
Population under 18 (thousands)	4,211
U5 mortality rate	76
Infant mortality rate	47
Maternal mortality ratio (2000–2007, reported)	630
Primary school attendance ratio (2000–2007, net, male/female)	48/52
% U1 fully immunized (DPT3)	53
% population using improved drinking-water sources	58
Estimated adult HIV prevalence rate (aged 15–49)	2.2
% U5 suffering moderate and severe stunting	24

Source: *The State of the World's Children 2009*

The storms and hurricanes that affected 800,000 people, including 300,000 children, in August and September 2008, combined with the food prices riots earlier in the year, plunged Haiti in one of its worst humanitarian situations over the last decade, making the country even more dependent on external aid to preserve the already fragile social and political stability. With the funds raised, UNICEF's emergency programme will focus mainly on improving the nutritional situation of about 25,000 women and children in a context where 24 per cent of children under age five suffer from chronic malnutrition, and 9 per cent from acute malnutrition. In order to reduce the effect of diarrhoea on child mortality, the programme will also aim at improving access to drinking-water sources, hygiene and sanitation facilities for about 400,000 people, as well as providing access to education and protection for over 100,000 children.

Summary of UNICEF Emergency Needs for 2009*	
Sector	US\$
Emergency Preparedness	500,000
Health and Nutrition	5,000,000
Water, Sanitation and Hygiene	2,500,000
Education	2,900,000
Child Protection	600,000
<b>Total**</b>	<b>11,500,000</b>

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## 1. CRITICAL ISSUES FOR CHILDREN AND WOMEN

Over the year 2008, the already dire situation facing the poorest country in the western hemisphere has been compounded by a series of threats ranging from the overturn of Government on 12 April after a week of riots over high food prices, nearly four months of stalemates with no official approved Government to the huge devastation caused by an unprecedented row of four tropical storms and hurricanes (Fay, Gustav, Hanna and Ike). The 2008 storms and hurricanes have affected 165,337 families or nearly 800,000 people, including some 300,000 children, and with death toll amounting to nearly 800. In addition, 22,702 houses were totally destroyed and 84,625 partially damaged. The few existing basic social services were severely damaged. Across the country, 964 schools were reported either totally or partially destroyed leaving nearly 217,000 schoolchildren directly affected and facing hard conditions to return to schools in a context where nearly 400,000 school-aged children (around 15 per cent of the total number of children) had no access to education before. Sixty per cent of the damaged schools are government-owned. In a context where the public offer of schools is less than 20 per cent and school fees are high, critical numbers of children from destitute families could be even more denied of their right to education.

Because of the 2008 storms and hurricanes, the little that many Haitians were living with in the most affected areas was wiped out and turned almost to nothing leaving children even more exposed to higher risks of exploitation, neglect and abuses in a country where already more than 4 in 10 children (1.62 million) are living in absolute poverty.

## 2. KEY ACTIONS AND ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2008

In close collaboration with local, national and international partners, UNICEF has continued to respond to the humanitarian needs of the Haitian population affected by the very poor level of basic social services, high consumer food prices, natural disasters and political instability. It has mainly focused on the priority areas of health and nutrition, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), education and child protection. However, these interventions were hindered due to instability, insecurity and lack of access to some parts of the country, especially during the recent floods.

UNICEF is leading the nutrition sector (along with the Ministry of Health) and is an active member of the health sector. In collaboration with partners Action contre la Faim (ACF), Médecins du Monde-France, Médecins du Monde-Suisse, Médecins sans Frontières-Belgique, Terre des Hommes, Concern, Initiative Développement (ID), the World Food Programme (WFP) and the Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization (PAHO/WHO), UNICEF has ensured that at least 1,000 children were treated for severe acute malnutrition. At least 15,000 children and women received fortified meals (Sprinkles). During that period, approximately 10,000 children were screened for malnutrition. This represents about 40 per cent of children under age five in the affected areas. In order to respond to the ongoing emergency crisis, 30,000 people received basic care through mobile clinics in flood-affected areas. In addition, several local nutritional surveys have been conducted, in addition to a national survey, in order to update the baseline and guide the strategic choices. Cold chains at departmental level have been re-established after being destroyed by the floods. Furthermore, 50 post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) kits have been made available to partners.

UNICEF is the leader for the WASH cluster in the country and together with governmental and non-governmental partners a contingency plan has been prepared to face the upcoming hurricane season.

During the year, emergency interventions to improve water systems, the construction of community latrines and provision of drinking water have benefited a total of 400,000 people who can now have access to safe water and 2,500 people to sanitation facilities. More than 60,000 people are being sensitized on hygiene promotion and 70 community water committees have been created. Despite the great improvement that these interventions represent in a country where nearly half of population is deprived of water and sanitation facilities, there are still enormous challenges to face, such as coordination issues due to the weak capacity and accountability of governmental institutions as well as lack of monitoring and maintenance. Intersectoral interventions are ongoing, such as the rehabilitation of water and drainage systems in health institutions and schools.

In 2008, UNICEF provided basic knowledge on child protection in emergency for 60 people from the six focal points of the country's 10 departments (Haitian Red Cross, Civil Protection Directorate and Ministry of Social Affairs). As a result, the capacity of the focal points to monitor and report on the situation of children separated or unaccompanied due to the emergency has been strengthened, and the newly acquired skills have been used for the recent emergency situation. In addition, the identification and referral systems for children and families severely affected by the hurricanes have been improved for key non-governmental and governmental partners – Association of Volunteers in International Service (AVSI),

CARE, Catholic Relief Services (CRS), Haitian Women's Solidarity (SOFA) and Institute for Social Welfare and Research/Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour (IBESR/MAST). At least 3,200 children have benefited from improved parental skills, psychosocial support and access to basic services in three departments (West, South and Artibonite). At least three local networks of women's associations have been reinforced to sensitize the community on the prevention of gender-based violence (GBV), especially among displaced people.

In the education sector, in close collaboration with the Ministry of Education (central and decentralized levels), the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and NGO partners (Service and Development Agency, Episcopal Commission for Catholic Education (CEEC), CRS, CARE and Save the Children) UNICEF has provided support, since the start of 2008, to more than 100,000 vulnerable children, an estimated 35 per cent of children affected by man-made or natural crises. Some 1,200 children living in violence-affected urban area benefited from improved learning conditions, rehabilitation of schools, sanitary infrastructure, canteen, furniture, school supplies, and improved teachers' skills. More than 2,000 children in six out of the eight public schools affected by Tropical Storm Noel benefited from the rehabilitation of classrooms, sanitary facilities and water points. In West Department, 12,000 children from 20 public schools benefited from a hygiene and health education programme in the disaster-affected area. UNICEF purchased school furniture and supplies to accommodate 30,000 students, 498 teachers and 83 public schools in one of the most deprived areas of the country. UNICEF also procured 71 'school-in-a-box' kits to respond effectively to the urgent education needs of 5,680 affected schoolchildren. A total of 132 schools are being cleaned in the disaster-affected area of Gonaïves, thus enabling 50,000 children to resume schooling. Some 40,000 children are returning to school for the 2008–2009 academic year and are provided with student kits, while benefiting from the rehabilitation of school infrastructure. In addition, 700 teachers in 123 schools in West Department are improving their teaching skills.

### 3. PLANNED HUMANITARIAN ACTION FOR 2009

#### Coordination and Partnership

UNICEF leads and is responsible for coordinating four major sectors (nutrition, WASH, education and child protection). UNICEF has established and reinforced collaboration with governmental counterparts in those particular sectors and also with other UN agencies such as the World Health Organization (WHO), WFP and IOM. In September 2008, the WASH cluster has been activated.

#### Linkages of HAR with the Regular Programme

In the last four years, Haiti has been severely struck by natural disasters and political crises, thus impairing its capacity to provide basic services to the population. While emergency funds will enable UNICEF to respond to sudden or immediate crises, they will also complement the ongoing efforts of the Country Office to support and reinforce the Government's capacities to provide basic social services to a very deprived population.

In 2009, UNICEF's emergency programme will aim to provide nutritional support to an estimated 5,000 pregnant women and 10,000 severely malnourished children. The programme will endeavour to facilitate the return or first-time access to education for an estimated 100,000 most affected children, ensure access to drinking-water sources and sanitation facilities for some 200,000 people, and protect 3,000 children at risk or most vulnerable to family separation, sexual violence and other forms of violence, exploitation and abuse.

#### Emergency Preparedness (US\$ 500,000)

For 2009, the overall objective is to establish a strong basis for standing readiness that will help ensuring children's and women's basic right to survival and well-being in whatever emergency situation, through the following key activities:

- Ensure coordination among the various actors (Government, UN agencies and partner NGOs) in the areas of nutrition, WASH, education and child protection;
- Procure and preposition emergency supplies to ensure response in the first 72 hours for an estimated 2,000 families;
- Develop and strengthen partnership agreements and memoranda of understanding (MoUs) with the Government's emergency response agency, other UN agencies and partner NGOs;

- Reinforce the capacity of the Government, UN agencies and partner NGOs in emergency preparedness and response, particularly in the areas of nutrition, WASH, education and child protection.

### **Health and Nutrition (US\$ 5,000,000)**

For 2009, the overall goal is to minimize the impact of the ongoing crisis on the health and nutritional status of children under age five and to ensure that pregnant women in affected areas are identified and provided with micronutrient supplementation. Some 50,000 affected persons, host communities and impoverished persons will benefit from the following key activities:

- Procure and distribute essential emergency drugs and equipment to 20 mobile clinics and temporary health dispensaries in addition to the existing health facilities in order to cover 50,000 people;
- Continue with the procurement and active distribution of all vaccination supplies in the country, with special focus on affected areas;
- Continue supporting at least 30 newly established outpatient therapeutic feeding centres run by partners to reach 10,000 severely malnourished children (about 40 per cent of the estimated load in the country and around 70 per cent of the children in the affected areas);
- Train 200 health agents in treating severe acute malnutrition;
- In collaboration with WFP distribute antihelmintic drugs and vitamin A to 300,000 school-aged children;
- Support supplementary feeding programmes in collaboration with WFP, targeting 15,000 pregnant women and children under age five in the affected areas (70 per cent of estimated load);
- Coordinate the nutrition cluster through the deployment of a nutrition specialist.

### **Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (US\$ 2,500,000)**

For 2009, the overall goal is to reach around 200,000 persons, focusing particularly on children and women through the following key activities:

- Undertake emergency rehabilitation/repairs of 10 existing water supply infrastructures benefiting an estimated 100,000 people;
- Support the emergency rehabilitation/repairs of sanitation infrastructures in affected communities at household, communal and municipal levels for about 20,000 people;
- Rehabilitate water and sanitation infrastructures at 50 schools and 2 health centres benefiting around 30,000 people;
- Drill 30 new boreholes and rehabilitate more than 60 existing boreholes to provide safe drinking water to some 50,000 people;
- Provide hygiene promotion and education to 200,000 people;
- Provide sanitary materials, water filters and hygiene items to 10,000 flood-affected people;
- Ensure the cluster coordination activities through the deployment of a water and environmental sanitation (WES) specialist.

### **Education (US\$ 2,900,000)**

For 2009, the overall goal is to guarantee access to education to children affected by the emergency crisis. A total of 40,000 crisis- and disaster-affected children and 125 schools will benefit through the following key activities:

- Provide 40,000 student kits (schoolbags, scholastic materials);
- Rehabilitate 50 schools that can be reopened with community-based input (including water and sanitation, cleaning, repair) accommodating approximately 20,000 children;
- Refurbish 125 schools (providing school kits, school furniture and textbooks) to provide a quality environment to more than 40,000 school-aged children;
- Undertake specific education support programme to facilitate the enrolment of 5,000 children of most affected families;
- Support quality early learning for 4,800 preschoolers in 80 preschool facilities by improving educators' skills, providing early learning materials, refurbishing classrooms and constructing age-adapted sanitation facilities;
- Provide technical support to the Ministry of Education to elaborate, execute and monitor a plan for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of disaster-affected schools.

### **Child Protection (US\$ 600,000)**

For 2009, the overall goal is to strengthen child protection in emergency preparedness and response, particularly in the areas of family separation, birth registration, and access to basic and social services for the affected children in three key departments (Artibonite, South and West), in close partnership. Key activities will include:

- Ensure that at least 3,000 children affected by the emergency situation of September 2008–2009 in Artibonite, South and West Departments, particularly orphaned and other vulnerable children (OVC), continue to benefit from referral systems for improved access to basic and social services;
- Ensure that at least five focal points from the Civil Protection Directorate, the Haitian Red Cross and the Ministry of Social Affairs in 10 departments are trained in rapid protection assessment methods, referral system, prevention of GBV and prevention of family separation, and are able to coordinate a child protection response within the departmental committee for risk management and reduction in the event of an emergency;
- Enhance the capacity of local counterparts of the Ministry of Social Affairs and of the Institute for Social Welfare and Research (IBESR) in targeted areas in monitoring, reporting, investigating child-care institutions in affected areas, and referring them to competent authorities;
- Ensure that 168,000 affected children (80 per cent) in targeted departments are reissued birth certificates that were destroyed/lost during the 2008–2009 hurricane season;<sup>1</sup>
- Support the protection mechanism currently ensured by a Senior Protection Officer under the Office of the Humanitarian Coordinator, particularly for women and children.

<sup>1</sup> Out of an estimated 300,000 children affected by natural disasters, about 30 per cent (90,000) did not have a birth certificate before the disasters. Eighty per cent of the 210,000 children (168,000) will be supported by UNICEF for the reissuance of their birth certificate.