Highlights

- Even over a week after the 14 August 7.2 of magnitude earthquake hit the southwestern region of Haiti, the death toll continues to grow. As of 21 August, the National Centre for Emergency Operations (COUN) reports 2,207 deaths and more than 12,268 wounded.
- Since 14 August, UNICEF has been on the ground delivering a first round of lifesaving supplies such as pre-positioned emergency stocks within the first 24h from UNICEF Haiti. Teams and partners on the ground jump-started initial distributions of health and WASH supplies, along with mattresses, blankets and tarpaulins to fulfill the initial needs of 30,000 persons, for a period of three months.
- On 22 August, a first batch of additional offshore medical and WASH supplies (40 tons) reached Port au Prince and are rapidly being transported to the affected departments to strengthen main health facilities.
- UNICEF is appealing for US$15 million to respond to the most urgent, lifesaving needs of affected children and families for the first 4-8 weeks.

Situation Overview

On Saturday 14 August 2021 at 08:30am EDT, a 7.2 magnitude earthquake struck Haiti’s southern departments, with the epicenter near Petit Trou de Nippes (125km to the west of Port-au-Prince). The South, Grand’Anse and Nippes departments, particularly the cities of Les Cayes, Jérémie and Anse à Veaux, were hardest hit, suffering extensive damage and destruction of buildings and homes. On 14 August, Prime Minister Ariel Henry declared a one-month national state of emergency and 3 days national mourning (17-19 August).

Official figures of victims are growing fast. As of Saturday, 21 August the country counts 2,207 deaths and 12,268 wounded. Approximately 52,953 houses were completely destroyed and 77,006 severely damaged, while 650,000 people are in need of humanitarian assistance including 260,000 children1. Severe damage to infrastructures such as hospitals, schools, water systems, roads have left basic social services in a dire situation.

Tropical storm Grace reached the country on Monday, 16 August, triggering mudslides, hampering relief efforts and weakening the already fragile telecommunication system.

The quake could not have come at worst time for Haiti, which is still reeling from the assassination of President Jovenel Moïse on 7 July and escalating gang violence which has resulted in the internal displacement of around 19,000 people in the metropolitan area2, while some 4.4 million were already in need of humanitarian assistance prior to the quake, including 2.2 million children.

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1 COUN Situation Report #8, Saturday, 21 August
2 OCHA, Situation Report #6, 8 August 2021
Programme response

Coordination
The response to the earthquake is under the leadership and coordination of the Government. The National Centre for Emergency Operations (COUN) and the Departmental Centres for Emergency Operations (Coud), under the leadership of the Haitian Civil Protection General Directorate (DGPC), are leading the humanitarian coordination with all key stakeholders. Government and UN partners are working closely to conduct post-impact damage and needs assessments and have activated rapid response mechanisms. UNICEF is supporting government partners needs assessments notably in the Nutrition, Health, WASH, Protection and Education sectors as well as response monitoring. UNICEF is the sector co-lead in WASH, education, child protection and nutrition.

A UN delegation, led by Helen La Lime United Nations Special Representative of Haiti, in the presence of Amina Mohammed, Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations, highlighted the importance of empowering the COUN in the coordination of the humanitarian response as well as the requirement of investing for long-term development.

Summary Analysis of Programme response

UNICEF staff already based in the Les Cayes (South department) sub-office were immediately on the ground following the earthquake and assessed needs, damages and casualties report analysis. They initiated first response activities in coordination with the government and humanitarian partners. Around 20 additional UNICEF staff travelled from Port-au-Prince to the South to support immediate emergency response and coordination, and Surge deployments of UNICEF support staff are underway, including a dedicated Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) specialist.

A U-Report survey on the earthquake impact and needs at the community level was launched on 17 August. A total 5,940 people have answered the first poll. Among the respondents from the 3 most affected departments\(^3\), 28% expressed needs in shelter and food. 55% say they are still staying in destroyed houses feeling insecure with their families, while 17% are living with foster families and 14% are homeless. 21% had their houses severely damaged while 13% have their houses completely destroyed. A second U-Report poll launched on 18 August was answered by 2,264 people. In the 3 departments, 72% answered that the health institutions near their home was damaged by the earthquake and 60% answered that health services were interrupted, mainly because no doctor or nurse is available (29%), no medical equipment is available (28%) or the building has collapsed or been damaged (12%). 63% of the respondents said they had access to safe drinking water and 75% declared the school in their neighbourhood was affected by the earthquake\(^4\). More detailed assessments are currently ongoing.

Key emergency supplies are being sent by UNICEF Global Supply Division including medicines, surgical equipment, nutritional supplements, as well as over half a million masks, 15 tents that will ensure continuity of service in health centers, and more than 65,000 water purification tablets, water tanks and family hygiene kits, including soap and menstrual hygiene materials. The first cargo flights containing 40 tons of UNICEF medical and WASH supplies reached the country on Sunday, 22 August to strengthen the capacity and response in main health facilities. These supplies, which supplement UNICEF prepositioned supplies in the country, will provide for 23,350 children and families over a period of three months. UNICEF is working closely with WFP to organize joint distributions and complement the relief package offered to affected populations.

Health
With 43 health facilities partially damaged and 6 destroyed in the three departments and more than 12,000 wounded, the emergency health response is facing challenges to give appropriate care while the three main hospitals in the area (Immaculate Conception Hospital (HIC) in Les Cayes, the Office of Occupational Accident Insurance, Sickness and Maternity (OFATMA) Hospital in Les Cayes, Saint-Antoine Hospital (HAS) in Jeremie) are still overwhelmed after one week following the earthquake. The evacuation of the most severely wounded to Port-au-Prince is expected to further strain the already fragile health system in the country.

3 Responses from Nippes department were significantly fewer (93) than other 2 departments (Sud 729 / Grand Anse 1004). As Nippes department was close to the epicenter of the earthquake and its telephone network were shut down, damages to houses and essential services may be greater near the epicenter. Currently assessment is ongoing.

4 As the phone network was down near the epicentre of the earthquake (Nippes department), damages near the epicentre may be greater than the reported results of this phone-based U-Report polls.
UNICEF is targeting 385,000 children under 5 and women with emergency and basic health care services in the affected areas. Six emergency medical kits containing essentials medicines and renewables convoyed by UNICEF in less than 24 hours after the earthquake will allow treatment of 30,000 persons for a period of three months in the three main hospitals involved in victims’ emergency care. A 72 m² tent has been installed to OFATMA hospital to temporarily hospitalize patients and provide cares to ones under observation as the emergency wards have been damaged.

The deployment of national volunteer medical staff (orthopedics, surgeon, anesthetist) has been supported by UNICEF, along with essential medical supplies (renewables, medicines, materials) to support emergency care services. 18 hospitals and health centers have received additional batch of medical supplies for the continuity of basic health care services. 18 tents for health facilities, orthopedics and medical emergency kits, oxygen cylinders, electric generator, mattresses, blankets and an ambulance are being procured for next distribution.

With the influx of victims causing congestion in the main hospitals in the 3 departments affected, and the damage suffered by some hospitals, and the complications created by the current COVID-19 pandemic; the health sector immediate needs include orthopaedics supplies, essential emergency medical supplies (e.g., medicines, renewables, materials) including temporary health care points (e.g., tents) for emergency care of victims. Mobilization of different categories of health staff (including orthopaedist, surgeon, nurses, etc.) to reinforce the delivery of services at the hospitals is also required as well as ensuring proximity of emergency care to the victims in remote areas. Psychosocial support and community awareness raising must not be left aside.

**Nutrition**

The deterioration of the nutritional status of children and women, and a growing number of children suffering from malnutrition, are expected due to different factors: i) the high risk of disease, including water-borne diseases such as diarrhoea, due to structural damage of the water supply and compromised hygiene ii) the compromised access to preventive and curative nutrition interventions due to the destruction and damage to the health services, iii) the food insecurity due to the lean period. These precarious conditions put infants and young children at an increased risk of morbidity and mortality. Donations and poor preparation and dilution of donated breast-milk substitutes increase the risk of mortality associated with undernutrition among infants and young children due to lack of access to safe drinking water.

The Ministry of Health of Haiti (MSPP) has requested support to UNICEF in the purchase and management of ready-to-use infant formula (RUIF) to support non-breastfed children, particularly orphans. In this context, it is urgent to reinforce the protection, promotion and support of Infant Young Child feeding practices (IYCF-E), with a strong focus on breastfeeding counselling and support to non-breastfed children at community level. To this end, UNICEF has developed and proposed to the Nutrition sector lead, the Ministry of Health (MSPP), a joint statement on the need to protect infant and young child feeding in emergency situations and to avoid donations and untargeted distribution of breast-milk substitutes. This statement should be issued once the necessary approvals are obtained at the government level. UNICEF plans to set up safe spaces for mothers to breastfeed and separate spaces to support non-breastfed children in affected areas, for which funds are needed.

As co-lead of the Nutrition sector, UNICEF is working with the MSPP and sector partners to develop a sectoral response plan, has supported the preparation of the Flash Appeal, and has developed and proposed an initial methodology and questionnaires on maternal and child nutrition to inform the rapid nutrition assessment. It is expected to be reviewed and used as soon as the government gives the go-ahead to begin the needs assessment.

UNICEF is also investigating the best possible solutions for purchase of needed supplies such as RUIF for non-breastfed infants less than 6 months, UHT Milk for non-breastfed infants 6-11 months, Lipid-based-Nutrient Supplements for children under five and potentially pregnant and lactating women (PLWs), as well as other associated needed supplies (feeding cups, spoons, etc.). At this moment, 31 cartons of therapeutic milk (18 cartons of F75 and 13 cartons of F100), 1100 cartons of ready to use therapeutic Food (RUTF) and medicine are available in the 3 affected departments. These were made available at the beginning of August to cover for treatment of acute malnutrition. UNICEF expects that the needs of these supplies will increase in the next weeks.
WASH

The first rapid WASH assessments conducted by the National Directorate for Water and Sanitation (DINEPA) with the support of UNICEF within 24 hours of the earthquake reported 25 water supply piped systems severely damaged and more than 1,800 with minor damages, including reservoirs cracked and pipes leaked, in addition to the urgent needs for safe drinking water, hygiene and sanitation for the most affected population, and to the needs for WASH response in healthcare facilities receiving injured patients. The rapid WASH assessment results indicate that 60% do not have access to safe water. The assessments are ongoing with UNICEF WASH staff deployed in the affected departments, in addition to the staff of partner NGOs in support to the Government. Widescale displacement and poor living conditions with restricted access to safe water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) services is major concern, especially in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and with a particular concern over water-borne diseases. Pre-earthquake gaps in WASH services further compound the situation noting that only 52% in Grand Anse, 59% in Nippes and 60% of healthcare facilities in the South had basic access to water services with 33% of health care facilities in Grand anse and 15th in the South with no water service.

WASH Sector Coordination is led by DINEPA and actively supported by UNICEF with daily meetings. A Post-Disaster Needs Assessment is planned for with the key authorities and contributions from donors and IFIs. A new Haiti WASH Sector webpage and repository was created to host key coordination materials including real time dashboards of the WASH rapid assessment and response monitoring/4W (https://www.washlac.com/fra/cluster-sectoriel/caraibes/haiti). Meetings were conveyed with WASH donors.

In addition to the prepositioned WASH supplies in the South being distributed based on assessments, and additional supplies received in the South from UNICEF warehouse in Port au Prince, UNICEF is purchasing complementary WASH stocks to strengthen and expand the response with considerations to gender, age and special needs.

UNICEF is supporting DINEPA to provide the first response on provision of safe drinking water to communities. UNICEF supports with water storage (5 bladders with total volume of 35,000 Liters), fuel and technical support for installation and rehabilitation of water treatment for water trucking activities. So far 698,000 Litres of safe water have been distributed through water trucking with an estimated 37,591 people benefiting. Moreover, UNICEF coordinated an inventory of existing water treatment units nationally and facilitated the transportation of part of the units to the South for immediate response. Two out of the 16 water treatment units were installed to serve the affected population with 30,000 litres of safe water to communities. As of August 24, another five water treatment units were planned to be installed which will serve affected communities.

UNICEF is also distributing 5,040 hygiene kits to benefit 25,200 people (comprising household water treatments products, soap, water storage, handwashing devices, hygiene pads and other items) and tarpaulins that were prepositioned in South (2,300 kits) and Port au Prince (2,740 kits). On Monday, 23 August, 800 hygiene kits to benefit 4,000 people were distributed by UNICEF in Maniche during a joint distribution with WFP and IOM.

Immediate needs include provision of safe drinking water, sanitation and critical hygiene kits to the households whose houses have collapsed, upgrade water storage capacities and construction/rehabilitation of the sanitation facilities in health centres receiving injured patients, provision of handwashing facilities, and soap and critical hygiene supplies complemented with hygiene promotion activities to affected communities and in health centres receiving injured patients and companions, to reduce the risks of spread of COVID-19 and rehabilitation of the damaged water supply systems including small and large repairs of WASH infrastructure and provision of water treatment such as chlorine (HTH).

Child Protection

UNICEF continues to closely work with the government division in charge of child protection (IBESR) at national and departmental level to conduct rapid assessment of children needs, identification of vulnerable ones and service provision along with planning of sensitization activities in the community to prevent family separation and ensure protection of children, as well as coordination of partners intervention and rapid responses.

Seventy per cent of the orphanages in the affected area were contacted and reported to be not affected. Distribution of tarpaulins, water purifiers in some children’s homes is in progress. Assessment for foster families continues, conducted by IBESR South: 31 out of 48 host families have already been assessed.

5 ONEPA/ Systeme d’Information sur l’Eau Potable et l’Assainissement (SIEPA)
Assessment of children incarcerated at the prison in Les Cayes continues for the collection of data on children and follow up on their status. Close follow up of injured separated children continues in the health facilities to prevent any risk of trafficking, and staff from partner IBESR are working continuously at the level of the Immaculate Conception Hospital (HIC) of Les Cayes.

Case management and psychological support remains an essential need that has to be addressed immediately in the first weeks to ensure proper recovery of children and their families. Psychosocial support activities are ongoing at the HIC hospital and at the local level with the partner Youth Development Initiative (IDEJEN). Child safeguarding is being taken into consideration as well through collaboration on PSEA activities to ensure staff are aware of the principles of conduct, and to allow immediate access of child survivors to quality services through the referral pathway.

In order to adequately protect children affected by the earthquake, urgent needs include psychosocial support for children affected by earthquake, assessment of children’s protection needs and identification of most vulnerable ones (including separated children, orphans, injured children, children with disabilities, children presenting some psychological distress, GBV survivors, etc.), referral and service provision for vulnerable children including GBV survivors and production and delivery of life-saving information on available services for GBV survivors and at-risk populations, including where and how to access those services, community and family sensitization on child protection risks and concerns, provision of blankets, child clothes, assistive technologies, and recreational kits, support to vulnerable families and implementing partners capacity building on child protection in emergencies.

**Education**

According to the initial assessments, 63 schools are destroyed and 39 damaged in Grand’Anse, 85 schools are damaged in Nippes, 74 damaged and 20 destroyed in South. These 281 schools in need (final figure expected to be higher) accommodate over 84,000 children.

The rapid assessment led by the Ministry of Education (MoE) and Departmental Direction for Education with UNICEF support started on Thursday 19th August. With the upcoming start of the new school year, alternative learning solutions and temporary learning spaces will have to be urgently deployed to allow children not to lose another school year. As school provides secure environment for children, protecting them from violence, sexual abuse and other protection concerns, there is an urgent need to evaluate damages to ensure rehabilitation of these damaged/destroyed schools. Losing another school year will put the girls and adolescents at risk of becoming victims of early pregnancy.

After the official visit to the South with UNICEF Representative, the Ministry of Education (MoE) emphasized the urgent need to rebuild the education system. Education should be considered as a priority as this is a human right. The Global Education Cluster (GEC) will deploy an Rapid Response Team (RRT) for cluster coordination start at the end of October/beginning of November. Rehabilitation of schools, WASH in schools, provision of school kits, school desks and furniture, hygiene kits, catch up classes, psychosocial support to for children at school and temporary learning spaces are the expected urgent needs. UNICEF will advocate to ensure that all response is accessible to children with disabilities, by providing reasonable accommodation (e.g., multiple formats for communication, inclusive activities, accessible CFS with inclusive activities, among others).

**Social protection**

UNICEF Haiti has mobilized the Multi-Partner Trust Fund (jointly implemented with FAO and WFP) to support the implementation of cash transfers in Grand’Anse department. These funds, originally planned for COVID-19 response, will be reprogrammed to prioritize families affected by the earthquake, as Grand’Anse is one of the affected areas. More funds are required to effectively reach with this support up to 6,000 families with children and/or pregnant women and/or with people with disabilities. The expected urgent needs include understanding feasibility in all locations and coordinated targeting of beneficiaries. UNICEF immediate actions currently include supporting needs and feasibility assessments, as well as determining most suitable targeting, in coordination with Government, WFP, FAO and other actors working with cash-based transfers.

**Communication & C4D**

When the earthquake hit, youths who signed up on U-Report were among the first to bring critical information and assistance to their families.

U-Report Haiti counts 33,600 U-Reporters, including 8,385 in the three affected departments. Strengthening their capacity with training on basic emergency response and support to extend their action, will be critical.
In communes like Pestel and Jeremie in Grand’Anse, U-Report clubs set up by UNICEF have gathered to bring assistance to the injured or to help move the rubble in houses. They also continue to inform and advise communities. UNICEF is preparing to launch a U-Report poll to collect data on the impact and extent of the disaster and will also set an information bot about information on the earthquake.

In terms of Communication for Development (C4D), UNICEF developed key messages on the prevention of family separation, identification of children with disabilities, hygiene promotion, the use of basic health services, post-earthquake behaviors, including children surveillance, that are being broadcasted through the network of community radios (SAKS). A Hotline for better information and support is being put in service with the support of the Ministry of Health (MSPPMoH), as well as talking groups activities. On-going assessments are being held by Gender Based Violence (GBV) involved agencies and design of GBV prevention messaging are being designed.

**Funding Overview**

Based on preliminary analysis of needs in the affected area, UNICEF estimates that US$15 million are required to ensure immediate support to Government and humanitarian partners, in responding to the most urgent, life-saving needs of children and families in the affected areas, for the first 4-8 weeks.

A consolidated flash appeal by sector will be released this week and UNICEF Haiti Humanitarian Action for Children (HAC) will be revised shortly. A Level 2 Corporate Emergency Activation Procedure (CEAP) has been activated to scale-up UNICEF’s programmes and presence.

This funding requirement will be adjusted as additional information from the need assessment (currently ongoing) becomes available and the planning for a 6-month response progresses in collaboration with the government and partners. While UNICEF has drawn on its internal resources and contingency stocks to cover initial needs, urgent support is required to provide life-saving care to the affected children and their families.

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<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>Estimated Requirements (US$)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nutrition</td>
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<tr>
<td>WASH</td>
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<tr>
<td>Child Protection</td>
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<tr>
<td>Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social Protection</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>15,000,000</strong></td>
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*Estimated funding requirements, for 4-8 weeks.

**External Media**

UNICEF – Aug 21: Helping women and children recover from the earthquake
UNICEF Latin America and the Caribbean – Aug 20: New shipment of UNICEF humanitarian aid arrives earthquake-struck Haiti
UNICEF Latin America and the Caribbean – Aug 18: Early assessments show extensive quake damage to schools in Haiti
UNICEF Latin America and the Caribbean – Aug 17: Over half a million children affected by Haiti earthquake
UNICEF Latin America and the Caribbean – Aug 17: Photo Essay - How the earthquake in Haiti impacted the lives of children

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**International Press**

Washington Post - Aug 18: Haiti earthquake survivors, stranded by storm, search for shelter
CNN - Aug 18: Haiti is reeling: Earthquake survivors overwhelm hospitals in disaster-hit nation
ABC Online - Aug 17: Hospitals struggle with injured in Haiti as earthquake death toll surges toward 2,000
Radio France Internationale - Anglais - Aug 17: Earthquake, storm and floods: no relief in sight for Haiti as toll rises
Deutsche Welle - Aug 17: Haiti: Death toll from weekend earthquake nears 2,000
Forbes – Aug 17: Young UNICEF U-Reporters Step Up To Aid Earthquake Relief Efforts In Haiti
CNN - August 17: Haiti earthquake has affected 1.2 million people, says UNICEF
Manila Bulletin - Aug 17: Over half million children affected by Haiti earthquake: UNICEF
Next SitRep: 27/08/2021

Who to contact for further information:

Bruno Maes
Representative - Haiti
UNICEF Haiti Country Office
Tel: +509 3624 1777
Email: bmaes@unicef.org

Antonio Marro
Emergency Chief
UNICEF Haiti Country Office
Tel: +509 3775 1611
Email: amarro@unicef.org

Ndiaga Seck
Chief Communication
UNICEF Haiti Country Office
Tel: +509 3744 6199
Email: nseck@unicef.org