

Haiti

Update on the context and situation of children

Ranked 170th out of 189 countries on the Human Development Index (2020), the Republic of Haiti is the poorest and most unequal country in the western hemisphere. Current World Bank estimates forecast a poverty rate of nearly 60 per cent in 2021. The richest 20 per cent of its population hold more than 64 per cent of its total wealth, while the poorest 20 per cent hold barely 1 per cent. Haiti is also the country third most affected by extreme weather events.[1]

In 2021, the situation in the country worsened significantly due to increased political turmoil, deteriorating socioeconomic conditions, mounting insecurity and gang violence in the Port-au-Prince metropolitan area, as well as major natural disasters, further compounding an already dire humanitarian situation and hindering progress towards the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The year was marked by two watershed events: the assassination of President Jovenel Moïse on 7 July, and an earthquake with a magnitude of 7.2 that struck south-western Haiti on 14 August (later compounded by heavy rains from tropical depression Grace on 17 August), affecting more than 800,000 people, including 340,000 children,[2] and causing an estimated US\$1.6 billion in economic losses[3] and a devastating impact on assets and livelihoods. Both events further delayed the overdue election and significantly disrupted government action and development and humanitarian assistance programmes. Even before these developments, the economy had contracted by an estimated 3.8 per cent in 2020, and the country's currency had experienced extreme volatility and runaway inflation.

Bolstered by the socio-political crisis, the surge in gang violence has affected 1.5 million people, 1.1 million of whom are in need of assistance, and caused the displacement of some 19,000 people in the communes of Carrefour, Cité Soleil, Croix-des-Bouquets, Delmas and the Port-au-Prince neighborhood of Martissant (West Department).[4] Gang violence also resulted in an increase in kidnappings and restricted road access to the four southern departments – triggering shortages in essential goods such as fuel and further crippling the earthquake humanitarian response and economic activities.

The number of forced and voluntary international migrations and of individuals deported to Haiti increased in 2021. The increased repatriation of Haitian migrants from across the Latin America and Caribbean region since mid-September 2021 has also compounded humanitarian needs. More than 14,000 migrants have been returned, among them over 2,500 children who are in need of access to basic services, including education, and have been exposed to child protection risks such as family separation, trafficking and gender-based violence (GBV).

Children and women are, as always, the most affected by these events, as deep vulnerabilities are still preventing many children from getting a fair start in life. In urban areas, 82 per cent of children experience at least one deprivation of their basic needs, while in rural areas the rate reaches 97 per cent. According to the 2021 Humanitarian Response Plan, 4.4 million people were food insecure and in need of humanitarian assistance, including 2.2 million children.[5] Over a fifth of children are at risk of cognitive and physical limitations.

Health – Maternal and infant mortality remain unacceptably high, at 529 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births and 59 child deaths per 1,000 live births and routine vaccination coverage has regressed by 4.2 per cent since 2017.[6] An estimated 1 million children and 315,000 pregnant women and adolescent girls require emergency primary health care.[7] While vaccination against

COVID-19 began in Haiti in July, only 1% of targeted people have been vaccinated due to vaccine hesitancy.

WASH – While the cholera epidemic remains under control, with no laboratory-confirmed cases since 2019, a quarter of the population has no access to improved water sources, only a third of households have access to adequate hand-washing facilities, and a quarter of households are still practicing open defecation.[8]

Nutrition – Together with rising levels of food insecurity in Haiti, the estimated number of children suffering from acute malnutrition increased from 167,000 in 2020 to 224,000 in 2021.[9]

Education – Over 3 million children have been unable to attend school for months at a time, due to political and security challenges and COVID-19 lockdowns over the past two years. The Ministry of Education (MoE) estimates that over 70 per cent of school children may have lost a complete school year. In earthquake-affected areas, preliminary assessments by the MoE indicate extensive damage to 925 schools, affecting more than 300,000 children. The MoE is unable to provide specific numbers of out-of-school children; however, UNICEF statistics from UNICEF-supported projects show a 13 per cent decrease in enrolment in 2021.

Child protection – Haiti ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1994; however, the country has yet to adopt a child protection code.[10] As families struggle to make ends meet, children and women are at heightened risk of abuse, exploitation and violence, including GBV. Around 85 per cent of children are exposed to violent discipline, while one in four girls and one in five boys are affected by sexual violence.[11] Children, especially adolescents, are vulnerable to gang recruitment, and are at risk of both being victims of violence and perpetrating violence. One in five children do not live with a parent. Expelled children and children living in poor conditions in earthquake-affected areas are exposed to protection risks and psychological distress.

[1] Germanwatch, Global Climate Risk Index 2019. <<https://www.germanwatch.org/en/16046>>.

[2] IA Flash Appeal, Haiti Earthquake Response (August 2021).

[3] United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA). situation report as of 7 September 2021.

[4] UNOCHA situation report as of June 2021.

[5] UNICEF 2021 Humanitarian Response Plan.

[6] 2017 Demographic and Health Survey.

[7] UNICEF 2021 Humanitarian Response Plan.

[8] 2017 Demographic and Health Survey.

[9] UNICEF 2022 Humanitarian Needs Overview.

[10] Committee on the Rights of the Child, ‘Concluding observations on the combined second and third periodic reports of Haiti’, United Nations, New York, 2016, <www.icj.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Concluding-Observations-CRC-Haiti-2016-eng.pdf>.

[11] Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, ‘Violence Against Children In Haiti: Findings From A National Survey 2012’, CDC, Atlanta, 2014, <www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/violence-haiti.pdf>.

Major contributions and drivers of results

In line with the United Nations Development Assistance Framework 2017–2021, UNICEF Haiti’s Country Programme Document (extended to February 2023) focuses on supporting the Government of Haiti in the areas of health, nutrition, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), education and child protection. Despite severe disruptions due to COVID-19 and insecurity, UNICEF delivered US\$14.9

million worth of development programmes in 2021 reaching approximately 1.3 million people (including approximately 917,000 children), as well as US\$17.4 million worth of humanitarian assistance in response to the 14 August earthquake, COVID-19, gang violence and other humanitarian needs reaching at least 968,000 people (including 483,000 children).

Every child survives and thrives

UNICEF Haiti continued working alongside the Ministry of Health (MoH) and departmental health authorities to provide vulnerable pregnant and breastfeeding women and children under five with an integrated package of preventive and curative health and nutrition services, as well as support in the fight against HIV/AIDS and syphilis.

UNICEF emergency response focused on providing integrated maternal, neonatal and child health, HIV and immunization care to people affected by the 14 August earthquake and internally displaced people in the metropolitan area. Over 32,500 people received emergency healthcare through health centres and mobile clinics. Psychosocial and mental health support was provided to those most in need through a network of mental health volunteers and health professionals. UNICEF supplied over 60 health facilities with medical kits and equipment and supported the deployment of 225 health professionals (doctors, nurses and community health workers) in public health facilities. Over 200 community health workers were trained on reproductive health and essential family practices.

With support from the Government of Japan, GAVI and the World Bank, UNICEF provided immunization services to 38 hard-to-reach communes. Over 328,000 doses of measles and rubella vaccines and 932,000 doses of PCV13 together with associated vaccination equipment were procured, 214,000 children under one year old were vaccinated against measles, and 96 per cent of the cold chain was converted to solar power to guarantee the availability of quality vaccines.

With support from Japan, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), GAVI and USAID, UNICEF supported the introduction of the COVID-19 vaccine in Haiti under the COVAX facility and provided logistical and financial support to the vaccination campaign and care management system. However, vaccine hesitancy remains a challenge with only 1% of the people targeted vaccinated to date.

In line with the National Policy and Strategy for Sovereignty and Food Security and Nutrition, and with support from Canada, France, Sweden, the European Union (EU), CERF and its own resources, UNICEF supported the MoH to prevent severe wasting and identify and treat over 34,000 children suffering from severe acute malnutrition. Over 496,000 children received at least one dose of vitamin A, while over 22,000 mothers received advice on infant and young child feeding.

UNICEF remained committed to supporting the fight against HIV/AIDS and syphilis in Haiti, in particular to prevent mother-to-child transmission and HIV in adolescents through the implementation of the ALL-IN strategy in the south of the country with a focus on promoting institutional delivery of HIV positive pregnant women

Every child lives in a safe and clean environment

With support from FCDO, the World Bank and Japan, UNICEF worked in close collaboration with the Directorate of Drinking Water and Sanitation (DINEPA) to support the extension of service coverage and the strengthening of management systems. UNICEF WASH work focused on strengthening the resilience of vulnerable children, women and their families to water-borne diseases and epidemics (including COVID-19), using improved, equitable and sustainable WASH services and promoting long-lasting sanitation and hygiene behavior change through community empowerment.

In response to the earthquake, gang violence and involuntary repatriations, UNICEF provided access to safe water to over 618,000 people, and basic sanitation and hygiene services to over 30,000 people. In the immediate aftermath of the earthquake, UNICEF distributed hygiene kits (including soap, household water treatment products and menstrual hygiene kits) to over 23,000 families reaching over 120,000 people. Over 73,000 students (33,000 girls) gained access to hand-washing facilities with soap and hygiene promotion activities, and materials were procured for the rehabilitation of 22 damaged water supply systems to serve over 120,000 people.

With support from FCDO and the World Bank, UNICEF has been promoting and advocating for community-approaches to total sanitation through its Accelerating Sanitation and Water for All 2 programme. Over 43,000 people gained access to basic sanitation through the self-construction of household latrines in 65 newly verified open defecation free localities in rural areas of the Artibonite, Centre and West departments. Another 250 new localities were triggered this year to adopt safe sanitation and hygiene practices through the mobilization of 144,000 people.

The National Information System for the Water and Sanitation Sector (SIEPA), an online information management system lead by the National Office of Water and Sanitation (ONEPA), was rolled out and used to inform the earthquake response. Technical and financial support to DINEPA's Emergency Response Department on preparedness and emergency response continued, and a capacity-building needs assessment of DINEPA and its subnational entities was conducted.

With support from ECHO, disaster preparedness was strengthened in 7 municipalities (Gonaives, Carrefour, Petit Goave, Les Irois, Chardonnières, Les Anglais and Tiburon) through contingency planning and upgrading of WASH infrastructure and awareness raising, enabling 300,000 people living in vulnerable areas of these municipalities to improve their capacity to face emergency situations.

Every child is protected from violence and exploitation

In line with the 2016 recommendations from the Committee on the Rights of the Child[1] with support from Canada, the EU, Germany, the Peacebuilding Fund and USAID, and working closely with the Institute of Social Welfare and Research (IBESR), as well as the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor (MAST) and the Ministry of Justice and Public Security (MJSP), UNICEF supported civil society actors and national authorities to prevent family separation and promote family reunification and family-based care, including the national foster care system, with a focus on unaccompanied expelled and deported children, child domestic workers and addressed violence against children through prevention and by strengthening access to services.

To support the deinstitutionalization process, UNICEF continued to support IBESR in expanding foster care, and 150 accredited foster families cared for 120 children in 2021. The children all received psychosocial support, as did 34,998 children affected by armed violence and the earthquake, and 2,698 child survivors of violence.

UNICEF provided emergency protection assistance to children and families affected by the 14 August earthquake, and 1,689 unaccompanied children expelled and deported from the United States, the Bahamas and the Dominican Republic (with 1,070 children receiving assistance through UNICEF).

UNICEF provided technical and financial support to personnel in the juvenile justice sector[2] to improve working practices in line with the rights and best interests of the child. Parents of minors in conflict with the law have also been made aware of and financially supported to prevent recidivism and better protect minors in the community.

Every child learns

UNICEF continued to work in support to the Ministry of Education (MoE) and other partners to ensure access and learning for children from preschool to early grades 1 to 4, and to provide over-age and out-of-school children with learning opportunities adapted to their needs.

The ‘Haiti wins: read, write and succeed’ programme, supported by USAID since 2016, came to an end, with notable progress made in improving learning outcomes in the early grades as well as in increasing teachers’ skills. Over 20,200 children (48 per cent girls) in 106 public schools were assisted with their reading, writing and communication practices. UNICEF has demonstrated that with the right package in schools and classrooms, such as the provision of adequate reading materials (in Creole), continued community participation and engagement, training of teachers, controlling students’ and teachers’ absenteeism, and the distribution of materials, children are able to reach higher levels of achievement.

In 2021, UNICEF humanitarian work focused on preventing an increase in the dropout rate caused by repetitive school closures over the last three years. UNICEF supported 145,000 children and adolescents aged 5–19 and 4,190 vulnerable families affected by humanitarian crisis, including more than 2,000 children with disabilities and 1,100 internally displaced children, through the distribution of learning materials, classroom furniture, cash transfers, psychosocial support and non-formal education.

In response to the earthquake, UNICEF started the reconstruction of 11 destroyed schools (with 66 fully equipped semi-permanent classrooms including WASH facilities) to return 3,000 children to school, and distributed school kits to 5,756 students whose families lost everything. 27 more school constructions will start in early 2022 with a goal of rebuilding 150 schools and school kits distribution will aim to reach 100,000 children.

With support from the Global Partnership for Education (GPE), in response to school closures caused by COVID-19 and civil unrest, UNICEF supported the MoE to set up catch-up classes for 52,000 children to fill the learning gaps linked to school closures including those sitting for exams (grade 9 and terminal) UNICEF supported back-to-school efforts for more than 15,000 children and provided sanitation and hygiene facilities for more than 100,000 when schools reopened.

UNICEF also continued to support access to education through the promotion of non-formal education. With support from GPE, CERF and thematic financing, UNICEF provided technical and financial assistance to the MoE to strengthen the non-formal education policy framework, including the finalization of the first comprehensive non-formal education curriculum, and provided non-formal education and vocational training to 3,700 excluded adolescents.

Every child has an equitable chance in life

UNICEF remains committed to promoting social protection initiatives in Haiti. To support the institutionalization and operationalization of the National Social Protection and Promotion Policy adopted in 2020, UNICEF supported the United Nations Country Team joint mission to design the social assistance package, including capacity development, strengthening of the social protection institutional framework, elaboration of the national and local action plans, and strengthening of the coordination mechanisms. The fiscal space is too restricted to drive structural changes towards the 2030 Agenda to remain on track on the SDGs road map. Increased revenues are needed to finance critical sectors, including education, health and social protection, where the country is still far below the recommended benchmarks and must achieve greater spending efficiency.

A prospective evaluation of social safety nets (cash transfers) on the most vulnerable children in

emergency and development interventions in Haiti", helped develop a "Multipurpose cash" business model to bridge emergency and development interventions. To better understand the impact of child deprivation in Haiti, UNICEF supported the Institut Haitien de l'Enfance to undertake a multidimensional child poverty study, alongside an equity-focused risk-informed situation analysis of children and women, which fed into the Common Country Assessment to enhance the child sensitivity of the new United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework.

Cross-cutting priorities

Humanitarian action

While humanitarian needs increased in 2021 – with more than 40 per cent of the population and more than 2 million children in need of support by the end of the year[3] – and mounting gang violence and insecurity caused significant challenges to humanitarian access and consequent disruptions to operations, UNICEF has been on the front line of relief efforts from the outset, working with the government and other partners to provide life-saving relief and recovery support to those most in need, with a focus on maintaining the continuity of essential health, nutrition, WASH, education and child protection services, and strengthening disaster risk reduction and emergency preparedness.

In the aftermath of the 14 August earthquake, a Corporate Emergency Procedure with Level 2 Emergency was declared, triggering organization-wide support to scale up the response in line with the UNICEF Core Commitments for Children. Some 26 UNICEF staff (including staff members from the Emergency Response Team and Rapid Response Team mechanism) were mobilized to oversee more than 30 implementing partners providing supervision, technical support and field monitoring, as well as strengthening community-based accountability and prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA). UNICEF supply chain and contingency stocks were mobilized to cover key institutions including hospitals, children's homes, Z prisons) and communities, distributing emergency supplies and equipment to those most in need. UNICEF supported a government-led post-disaster needs assessment to undertake a more detailed assessment of damage, losses and needs.

As sector co-lead on humanitarian WASH, education, child protection and nutrition, UNICEF maintained its support to the Directorate-General of Civil Protection (DGPC) and other line ministries and institutions (DINEPA, MoE, MoH, IBESR), with the aim of strengthening emergency preparedness and response. Contingency agreements were maintained with non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and stocks of key supplies were pre-positioned to cover at least 50,000 people.

Gender equality

UNICEF integrates gender as a cross-sectoral component of all of its regular programmes. All field partners working on emergency responses received GBV prevention and referral training, and GBV analysis was conducted in earthquake-affected areas. U-Report was also widely used to gain a better understanding of young people's perspectives on gender, as well as in support of the rapid gender assessment led by UN Women.[4]

The EU Spotlight Initiative continued. Approximately 6,941 survivors of sexual violence (2,698 girls and 4,243 women) benefited from support services, and 7,945 people were reached by awareness-raising and training activities to combat GBV, particularly against women and girls.

While the multilayered emergencies have exacerbated existing PSEA risks, UNICEF has been at the forefront of the response, with a dedicated PSEA specialist and a comprehensive in-country

action plan. UNICEF work focused on community engagement and awareness-raising, mobilizing U-Reporters, and supporting the inter-agency community feedback mechanisms led by WFP. All UNICEF partners abide by the same requirements, and their capacity on PSEA is continually evaluated using standardized tools, followed by technical support aimed at improving their safeguarding level. UNICEF has become a technical reference on matters related to developing inter-agency resources, the Action Plan of the National Task Force, as well as on survivor assistance.

[1] Committee on the Rights of the Child, ‘Concluding observations on the combined second and third periodic reports of Haiti’, United Nations, 2016, <www.icj.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Concluding-Observations-CRC-Haiti-2016-eng.pdf>.

[2] Including magistrates, police, social workers and lawyers.

[3] UNICEF 2022 Humanitarian Needs Overview/Humanitarian Response Plan.

[4] U-Report, ‘Participation des jeunes: Parlons des filles et de leurs droits’, 1 October 2020, <<https://haiti.ureport.in/opinion/4602/>>.

UN Collaboration and Other Partnerships

UNICEF values its partnerships with governments, United Nations collaboration mechanisms, CSOs and other stakeholders in support of the realization of children’s rights. UNICEF Haiti warmly thanks all the partners who provided support in 2021 to reach the most vulnerable children in Haiti.

In 2021, funds received amounted to US\$41 million. The top donors to UNICEF Haiti were Canada, the United States, GPE, the World Bank, Japan and the EU. In addition, implementation partnerships were signed with 59 CSOs and 7 government entities: the MSPP, MAST, IBESR, the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (MENFP), DINEPA, the Ministry of Environment and the Directorate-General for Civil Protection.

UNICEF maintains a strong partnership with the Government of Haiti to better address children’s critical needs and protect their rights. UNICEF works closely with the MSPP, DINEPA and the MoE at the central and departmental level to ensure multisectoral support to health, nutrition, WASH, education and child protection. As a key United Nations partner, UNICEF provided financial and technical assistance to strengthen national efforts in these key sectors. In addition to national authorities, financial and technical support was provided to NGO partners to implement key interventions on the ground.

In support of United Nations reform, UNICEF Haiti is engaged in a number of joint United Nations initiatives, including the UNICEF–International Labour Organization project to prevent and respond to child domestic work in the Grand Anse, West and South departments (Global Affairs Canada); the Southern Maternal Health Project (UNICEF, UNFPA with Canadian funds); Peacebuilding Funds for Rule of Law (UNDP, UNICEF and UN Women); the Spotlight Initiative with support from the EU (Resident Coordinator Office, UN Women, UNFPA, UNDP and UNICEF); and a disaster risk preparedness project with the International Organization for Migration, supported by ECHO. These projects contributed to programme results achieved in 2021 and to the United Nations system-wide humanitarian response. Through the COVAX Initiative – led by Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, WHO and CEPI – UNICEF worked to support the procurement of COVID-19 vaccine doses, as well as freight, logistics and storage.

UNICEF actively engaged with the private sector through the Business Continuity and Risk Management Alliance (AGERCA) in Haiti. With the support of the Business and Community Resilience (BCR) Initiative, a mapping of potential private sector partners was conducted, leading to the contracting of several local companies for school reconstruction.

As the UN Country Team Operation Management Team vice-chair, UNICEF supported the

implementation of the UN Operational reform in achieving efficiency gain on common premises in the South Department and laying the foundations for the establishment of common premises with UNAIDS in Port-au-Prince. UNICEF led the basic services, including financial Business Continuity Plan preparedness for the UN, and contributed to efficiency gains and costs saving for common logistics services with WFP, access to fuel and common storage with UNOPS, as well as joint satellite border presence with IOM. UNICEF led the UN inter-agency M&E Working Group, contributing to surveys, evaluations and facilitating trainings to UN and national counterparts.

Lessons Learned and Innovations

Recognized as one of the 13 countries with the most fragile contexts in the world, Haiti is in the midst of a complex crisis shaped by a worsening socio-political situation, rising gang violence and insecurity, developmental challenges and extreme poverty, natural disasters and climate change. The 14 August earthquake was a stark reminder of the country's severe vulnerability to natural disasters.

In light of Haiti's fragility and exposure to shocks, UNICEF needs to be fit for purpose to operate in this complex programmatic environment, and strengthening emergency preparedness and capacity remains a key priority. In the aftermath of the earthquake, UNICEF was able to count on the presence of its South Office in Les Cayes, which enabled the rapid deployment of surge teams and relief work using pre-positioned contingency stocks. As it embarks in the reconstruction phase, UNICEF has increased its footprint in the South, and capacity to manage construction work to rebuild schools and health centers.

Delivering for children starts with delivering for our staff. In 2021, amidst growing insecurity, gang violence and a rise in occurrence of kidnappings, UNICEF staff received trauma support together with regular counselling sessions and security awareness. An international Staff Counsellor was recruited to promote a speak out culture and conflict resolution. Thanks to its track record in handling lifesaving medevacs, UNICEF was assigned as the UN system-wide Medevac Co-coordinator.

Education will remain a key area of focus in 2022. The validation of the first national alternative education policy in 2020 opened the way for an improved educational offer for half a million Haitian children outside the school system. A key area of focus will be to strengthen vocational training and non-formal education to improve the employability of young people. There is also a need to strengthen the involvement of the private sector (chambers of commerce) in the training and professional reintegration of adolescents.

A key lesson learned from cholera and, more recently, from COVID-19, was the role of prevention and response to waterborne disease outbreaks. There is an acute need to prevent outbreaks of waterborne diseases through awareness-raising on hand washing, essential emergency WASH, and to better prepare for climate-related emergencies through resilience and disaster preparedness with vulnerable communities. In line with the evaluation of the UNICEF WASH project in the departments of Artibonite and Center (2014- 2019), UNICEF adopted a strategy to ensure the quality and sustainability of sanitation where water system users pay. This strategy will contribute to strengthen the capacity for maintenance of school sanitation facilities and hygiene awareness.

The 2017-2021 Country Programme evaluation was conducted to strengthen UNICEF organizational learning, strategic positioning, and value proposition in Haiti in line with the Haiti United Nations Integrated Strategic Framework and a Humanitarian and development-oriented (nexus) approach. Key recommendations included a greater focus on "public policies" (including social policies, "social protection", "fight against urban violence" and "protection against sexual exploitation and abuse") addressing the structural causes of fragility in Haiti; the need to strengthen inter-sectoral integration

in UNICEF word to create systemic change; evidence and scaling up strategies; the need to maintain a regional presence to work with decentralized structures, (with a view to operationalizing national policies at the decentralized level); and the requirement to include humanitarian response success and quality benchmarks.

The need for integrated programming is particularly acute in the metropolitan area around Port-au-Prince, where vulnerable communities affected by extreme poverty and gang violence have very limited access to basic social services. While Port-au-Prince, Cité Soleil, Gonaïves, Saint Marc and Carrefour alone account for 42 per cent of unvaccinated children (penta 3), UNICEF is working with the government, departmental authorities and partners to develop an integrated programme on immunization, maternal and child health and nutrition, education and child protection for vulnerable children and their families.

Producing reliable data and evidence on the situation of children is critical to advocate for and drive child-focused policies and programmes. UNICEF was a key supporter of the government's post-disaster needs assessments in the aftermath of the earthquake. To support an integrated response in vulnerable areas in the metropolitan area of Port-au-Prince, UNICEF supported the Institut Haitien de l'Enfance to assess health facilities in the region and is working with the MoH to conduct a rapid health and nutrition assessment in the metropolitan area in early 2022. A new SMART survey is also in the works to assess the extent of the malnutrition crisis in Haiti.

Close collaboration and direct support to decentralized structures and communities is a key pillar of UNICEF programming. In response to the earthquake, UNICEF worked closely with departmental authorities. The community approaches to total sanitation and the polyvalent community health worker approach have particularly contributed to the achievement of concrete results. The establishment of UAS will help operationalize the community health strategic plan and decentralize the health-care system.

In line with the country programme evaluation recommendation, UNICEF will strengthen efforts to mainstream the gender dimension and youth participation. In December, the Ministry on the Status and Rights of Women in Haiti (MCFDF) launched and revitalized the Gender Thematic Table, in which UNICEF takes part. Working under the Generation Unlimited (GenU) initiative, which brings together the UN, governments and the private sector, UNICEF has been strengthening its outreach towards adolescents and young people. In 2021, UNICEF partnered with local NGOs such as Kids Club Haiti, Ecolo Jeunes and SAKALA to help give adolescents and youth a voice. UNICEF works closely with Digicel in campaigning to boost U-Report while strengthening ties with the MCFDF to better promote adolescents' and young people's rights.