

Save the Children's Response to Earthquake-affected Children in Haiti

Fact Sheet *January 18, 2010*

The Emergency: The January 12 earthquake that rocked Haiti – triggering destruction on a massive scale in the capital of Port-au-Prince – is the worst disaster in that nation in over 200 years. The death toll has been estimated at 50,000 to 100,000, and there was widespread damage to buildings homes and the area's infrastructure. While the international aid community continues to expand relief, the situation

for children and families affected by the quake remains dire. Damage is also significant in the nearby communities of Jacmel, Leogane and Petite Goave.



A mother and child at a camp in Port-au-Prince on January 17. Adriana Zehbrauskas photo.

The Impact on Children: Children are always among the most vulnerable during emergencies. The earthquake has forced untold numbers families whose homes were damaged or destroyed into the streets and makeshift “camps” in open areas. Needs of children and families are enormous in all respects: food and water supplies are limited; hospitals and other medical facilities were damaged or destroyed and health care personnel are struggling to provide even the most basic medical care to the vast numbers of injured. The threat of disease and illness is constant for children. They are also at risk of family separation and abuse and exploitation, as well as psychosocial distress. While the Haitian people are extremely resilient and are exhibiting patience and generosity, their circumstances remain difficult.

Save the Children's Response: Save the Children has worked in Haiti continuously since 1978 and launches immediate relief for children affected by the island's frequent natural disasters. Local staff members in Port-au-Prince have been joined by our international disaster response experts and are working around the clock and in coordination with the Haitian government, donors, non-governmental organizations and communities to provide relief.

- On January 18, Save the Children opened the first Child Friendly Space in a church serving as a temporary shelter. Child Friendly Spaces allow children to take part in structured, supportive activities and recover from what they've experienced. Kits for us to open 70 other spaces arrived in the Dominican Republic on January 18 for immediate transport to Port-au-Prince. Save the Children plans to open hundreds of these essential sites for children.
 - Two mobile health clinics will begin serving the basic health needs of children and families right in their neighborhoods on January 19.
 - Supplies of water and other materials arrived in the Dominican Republic on January 18 and are being forward to our Port-au-Prince office by truck.
 - On January 17, we received as shipment of 16.5 tons of medical supplies from AmeriCares.
 - On January 16, Save the Children distributed food and water to the L'Hopital de l'Espoire (Hope Hospital), that focuses on pediatric medicine and helps support two orphanages. The food was enough for 2,000 people; 40 families taking refuge near the hospital also received hygiene kits (containing such items as rubbing alcohol, soap, towels, baby wipes, sanitary napkins, shampoo, toilet paper, toothbrushes, toothpaste, disinfectant gel, chlorine, diapers and water). were distributed to vulnerable families taking refuge near the local hospital,
 - Medical supplies were distributed by Save the Children's response team and a partner agency on January 15 to 14 hospitals and clinics throughout the Port-au-Prince region.
- On January 17, a Save the Children health staffer assisted in the delivery of a baby while visiting the Champs de Mars camp. Our staffer ensured that mother and baby girl received emergency care; both were reported to be fine.***
- Our staff continues to assess the situation in Leogane and Petit Goave, both west of Port-au-Prince and Jacmel, all of which have sustained heavy damage.
 - In Jacmel, Save the Children staff is participating in coordination meetings, leading the coordination of the health relief effort and has been asked by UNICEF to work in two camps.
 - Save the Children has committed to a five-year "build back better" initiative, which will take us from the relief and recovery phase to working with families to rebuild their communities. The strategy is similar to the five-year rebuilding initiative Save the Children launched in Aceh Province, Indonesia following the epic December 2004 tsunami.

Save the Children has issued an appeal for a minimum of \$50 million to initiate and sustain relief and recovery work. Please support our responses by visiting www.savethechildren.org to make a gift or learn more.



Save the Children.

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