



# Haiti Earthquake: Five Years On

**Results & Lessons Learned**

Save the Children works in more than 120 countries. We save children's lives. We fight for their rights. We help them fulfill their potential.

Cover Photo:

Oswaldynyo, 9 years old - still has scars where a block of cement fell on his head during the 2010 earthquake.

"I am Oswaldynyo, I am nine. When I grow up I want to study mathematics and to work. I was four when the earthquake happened. I was sleeping, I saw people running and houses were falling down and a big block of cement fell on my head. I was scared. I had stitches.

My father is a taxi driver. My wish is to continue to come to school and to learn but it is expensive for my parents because they have to buy uniforms, socks, shoes and books. I feel safe at school. At home where I live a lot of people throw rocks. I still dream about the earthquake. They told me that if there is an earthquake to run with another child and to hide under a desk away from the blocks of cement. My favourite soccer player is Neymar."

Cover photo: Haiti, Riccardo Venturi / Save the Children

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## A message from Haiti

In 2008, on my first visit to Haiti for hurricane relief work, I remember traveling from the airport to the Save the Children office and seeing the narrow roads, the congestion, the development challenges, and the houses perched perilously on the hillsides. I said to myself “I hope there is never a major earthquake.” I could never have known that I’d be back as Country Director in 2014, nearly five years after that unthinkable event actually happened.

Like people the world over who have gone through a traumatic event, most Haitians can tell you exactly where they were and what they were doing on that fateful day, at 4:53 PM on January 12th, 2010—the day their world came crashing down around them, the day they lost brethren in the tens of thousands and, for many, the day their country and lives changed forever.

As we look at Haiti now, a full five years after that catastrophic earthquake, we have to ask ourselves what we have done to make things better for the survivors. What have we done to assist Haitians on their path to recovery and the country on its path to development?

I see a Haiti in many respects, better than 2008. Infrastructure has, to a certain degree, been rebuilt, in many cases better and stronger than before the quake; houses and businesses have been rebuilt or are in that perpetual state of building; school attendance is on the increase; health statistics are improving; technology has advanced; the development and aid community, both local and international, appears to be more collaborative; and government is taking a more active and beneficial role in the development of the country.

Are there still major problems in Haiti today? Of course. Haiti is still the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere; it still has unacceptably high infant, child, and maternal mortality rates; cholera has emerged as a new threat; and it suffers from low levels of education, extreme poverty, and endemic corruption. Though services, businesses, and opportunities have expanded, the quality and equality of each hasn’t.

As we enter 2015, we’ve clearly moved from lifesaving relief and recovery to programs driving more sustainable outcomes. We will continue to increase children’s and families’ ability to cope with disasters while supporting their development and well-being, and we will always champion new national policies and activities that make the lives of children better, such as significantly stronger education and health systems. As we look toward new programming we will prioritize education, nutrition, clean water, sanitation, protection, and resiliency; all of which take time, but when done in collaboration with individuals, communities, partners, and government, bring lasting results that save lives and reduce suffering.

None of our activities would be possible without the generosity of our donors and the commitment of our staff. Since 2010 we have reached over one million Haitians with lifesaving relief, recovery, and development assistance. With your continued support, we can help the children of Haiti to build a better future.

On behalf of the Save the Children Haiti team and Save the Children members the world over, I thank you for your generosity and your faith in our ability to do the work you expect of us.

Kevin Novotny  
Country Director



Mary\* and Jeanine\*, age 12, are best friends. They are currently living in a centre for vulnerable children. This foster care centre looks after orphans, former street children and former domestic servants providing them with shelter, food, health care, education, and life skills training. The centre also assists in reuniting them with their families when possible. At time of visit there were 78 children at the centre. Until very recently Mary and Jeanine were child domestic workers. They ran away from the families that they were working for and were put into an orphanage. The orphanage closed because of a lack of funding and the children were moved by IBESR (Haitian child welfare and social services agency) to this centre.

Photo: Sarah Tyler / Save the Children

## Dedication



As we commemorate the 5th anniversary of the earthquake, we ask ourselves “why commemorate?” To some people, forgetting the tragedy would be an insult to the memory of those who had died. To others it’s a reminder which helps them cope with the trauma, and for some, disasters are commemorated to ensure that we are ready for it if it happens again. A commemoration is also time to pay our respects to the dead and be thankful for those that survived. The Save the Children family in Haiti was spared the pain of many Haitian families but still suffered one loss—Mr. MacKendy Similien. Recruited from a neighboring school as an intern in 2005, ‘Macen’ worked on and off for Save the Children for the next five years. He was bright, helpful, always smiling, and liked by all. On January 5th, 2010, he started as a full-time employee as an Accounting Assistant in the finance department. Tragically, his time as a permanent member of the team was short lived, and Macen is truly missed to this day. This report is dedicated to the memory of MacKendy Similien, and the more than 230,000 Haitians who lost their lives.



## Background

Since 1978, Save the Children has worked in Haiti to improve children's well-being through health care and education programs. Prior to the earthquake, Haiti faced serious challenges related to governance, health, nutrition, the environment, and the lack of a viable public education system. It was, and remains, the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere; 70% of Haitians did not have stable jobs, and 84% of those who had earned college degrees were living abroad. Nearly 78% of the population was living on less than USD \$2 per day. Children in Haiti also suffered from the impact of poverty and fewer than half of school-aged children were enrolled in school. The infant, child and maternal mortality rates were among the highest in Latin America and the Caribbean. The longstanding practice of child domestic servitude, in which more than 225,000 children are forced to work, threatens their rights on a daily basis, leaving children and youth at risk for neglect, sexual abuse and trafficking.

January 12th, 2010, marked a particularly tragic day in Haiti's history. The effects of the earthquake on the country's already impoverished population and infrastructure were immediate and catastrophic; out of a population of over 10 million, an estimated 3 million people were directly affected. The quake shattered the capital and neighboring cities, crippling the national government, leaving families to mourn the devastating loss of more than 230,000 lives, including an estimated 25% of civil servants. Nearly 400,000 homes and 5,000 schools were destroyed or damaged and more than 1.6 million people were rendered homeless.

For Save the Children, the numerous challenges encumbering Haiti and the sheer scale of this emergency made this one of the most difficult humanitarian responses in our history. Haiti presented—and still presents—a challenging environment for Save the Children and others addressing the needs of those who were impacted by the earthquake. With the government of Haiti taking the lead, Save the Children and other local and international nonprofit organizations as well as donor governments and multilateral institutions such as the World Bank and UN continue to work together to build strong national institutions and community infrastructure.

**Photo, opposite:**

Shanties like this one, in Port-au-Prince, precariously perched on steep hillsides, are at risk from landslides. Haiti is the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere and one of the poorest in the world (with a GDP per capita of US\$ 820 in 2013) with significant needs in basic services. Children in camps are growing up with limited or no access to everyday basic services such as water, sanitation, healthcare and schools. According to the World Health Organisation, the child mortality rate for children under 5 is 73 per 1000. In Haiti one child in 13 will die before they reach the age of 5. Riccardo Venturi / Save the Children

## A look back: Save the Children's impact by sector

At the outset of the crisis we initiated a multi-year recovery and development strategy. Backed by the generosity of our donors, we have reached over 1 million Haitian children and adults through earthquake relief and recovery programs. We have sheltered families; provided access to lifesaving health and water and sanitary services; have helped protect children from exploitation; and have helped re-open schools and make them better able to withstand disasters. When cholera raged—and the disease remains a serious threat to the health of every Haitian—Save the Children supplied hospitals with medicine, opened cholera treatment units and raised awareness of cholera prevention techniques.

### **Shelter and Supplies, Safer Construction and Disaster Risk Reduction**

Shelter has been and will continue to be a major challenge facing Haiti. From the outset of its emergency response, Save the Children was on the ground distributing temporary shelter supplies and providing household toolkits to help families construct temporary and transitional shelters and improve their living conditions.

As recovery efforts got under way, Save the Children's focus was on safer construction, particularly in the rebuilding of schools in Port-au-Prince, Léogâne and Jacmel. Our team employed innovative design and construction techniques to ensure that school buildings are able to withstand moderate hurricanes and earthquakes, as part of disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation strategies.

### **Food Security and Livelihoods**

Getting food to the families living in spontaneous settlements was an immediate priority for Save the Children, which distributed food to nearly 300,000 children and adults.

In the long term, one of the major repercussions of the earthquake was the loss of income and assets belonging to small business owners. And in Haiti, where a large majority of the population is engaged in informal labor, loss of livelihoods meant that many parents could not provide food for their children, rebuild their homes or send their children to school.

Cash for work, cash grants and asset recovery vouchers were among the programs that Save the Children supported, specifically targeting the most vulnerable families as identified by their own communities. The most vulnerable include female-headed households, families with one or more chronically ill family members or persons living with disabilities.

## Health and Nutrition

Haiti has among the highest child and maternal mortality rates in the Western Hemisphere and struggled to meet the health and nutrition needs of its people well before the earthquake. The nation's already weak health infrastructure was shattered by the earthquake just as thousands of people sustained injuries and desperately needed medical care.

To meet the overwhelming demand for health care, Save the Children, working alongside the Ministry of Health and other health cluster organizations coordinated with local and international partners to open 80 clinics and nutrition support facilities in areas most affected by the earthquake. By December 2010, we had reached nearly 165,000 children and adults with medical services and more than 230,000 women and children with nutrition services. Where existing health services were insufficient, Save the Children sent teams, some traveling on foot for hours, to deliver medical services to remote populations that had no other access to medical care. Focusing on direct delivery of services in mobile clinics in rural and urban locations, in camps and in communities.

Improving Haitians' access to drinking water, helping them adopt hygiene practices such as washing their hands regularly and raising awareness of proper sanitation have been among our top health priorities. This work became even more urgent as cholera quickly spread through contaminated water and poor hygiene.

Through repairs, new infrastructure and community awareness campaigns, we made clean water available in vulnerable places such as Carrefour, Delmas, Martissant, Jacmel, Maissade and parts of Port-au-Prince.

We have also strengthened our partner, the Direction Nationale Eau Potable et Assainissement, (DINEPA), a government water and sanitation agency in charge of the metropolitan Port-au-Prince region, by training over 100 staff in safe drinking water practices. We built water kiosks in Port-au-Prince together, installed water filters at 13 schools and renovated DINEPA's water testing lab in Jacmel.

"Among all the NGOs we worked with, Save the Children is the most valuable partner because of its way of keeping its commitments to vulnerable communities in matters of drinking water and sanitation," said Paul Lydbenson Theodate of the DINEPA. "We value the dedication Save the Children has shown the institution and we hope to continue this collaboration."

## The Cholera Epidemic

In October 2010, still reeling from the earthquake, Haiti experienced a cholera outbreak. The deadly diarrheal disease spread quickly and by the end of the year over 3,300 children and adults had died. Today cholera remains one of the most serious health threats to every Haitian, with 14,000 cases in 2014.

Our health workers — reinforcing an intensive education campaign spearheaded by the government of Haiti and other international organizations — continue to broaden prevention and education activities to provide families with information

## Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)

Most Haitians had no access to clean drinking water after the earthquake. The cholera outbreak that began in October 2010 testifies to the vulnerability of communities due to lack of sanitation, as the outbreak originated in an area not directly affected by the earthquake.

In the first year after the earthquake, Save the Children reached nearly 348,000 people with critical water, sanitation and hygiene programs. In camps where children and their families are most vulnerable, Save the Children provided safe drinking water, and built and maintained latrines, showers and hand washing stations. In camps, in schools and at health clinics, children were taught how to wash their hands properly with soap — a simple action that can prevent life-threatening diseases.



Will, 3, is examined by Save the Children nurse Elina at our health post in the Gaston Morgan camp. The post supported the health needs of thousands of earthquake survivors.

Photo: Susan Warner/Save the Children



This one-month old baby girl, Shomi, has pneumonia. Her mother brought her to this hospital in Dessalines for urgent care. Photo: Riccardo Venturi / Save the Children

Edrine, 14 years old, lives with her family of six in a makeshift hut, in a camp for people displaced by the 2010 earthquake. She moved here the day after the earthquake.

“We used to live in a house but it was completely destroyed. We are not comfortable living here, when it rains there is so much water flowing through here. As much as it rains outside it rains inside my house. There is no security in the camp, people are robbing each other, there are no police officers so there is no one to call for help. We would like shovels and picks so we can clean the ground and build canals for the water. I would like to become a great mathematician when I grow up.”

Photo: Riccardo Venturi / Save the Children



## Education

Education is a core factor in building a better future for Haiti's children, and it remains one of our top priorities. Prior to January 12, 2010, more than half of Haiti's school-aged children did not have access to education. Save the Children provided tents, furniture and supplies so schools could reopen as quickly as possible, allowing children to learn in safe surroundings and regain a sense of normalcy.

In partnership with the Ministry of Education and UNICEF, Save the Children co-led the UN Interagency Education Cluster, coordinating the efforts of partners across the country to help schools reopen and continue functioning. By 2013 Save the Children had supported more than 270 schools, enabling more than 45,000 children to return to their studies.

By 2014 we had rehabilitated or built classrooms and latrines at over 50 schools; taught teachers, school directors and parents from 40 schools in Port-au-Prince and 23 schools in the Southeast Department on child-focused emergency preparedness; and rolled out a literacy project in 55 schools to address a language barrier that prevents young children from learning to read.

The UN reports that there are now over 70 percent of primary-school-age children in school compared to only 50 percent before the earthquake. This is a significant achievement for the many organizations, schools and families that made education such a high priority.



Dieusel was reunited with his father, Jean-Nico, by one of Save the Children's protection teams. Jean-Nico had sent Dieusel to live in Port-au-Prince with someone who promised to take care of him and put him in a good school. But the boy was instead passed on to someone else who made him work and treated him badly. Dieusel was living in a camp when he was found by our team and registered as an unaccompanied child – action that ultimately helped us to reunite father and son. Photo: Hannah Reichardt/Save the Children.

## **Child Protection**

Even before the earthquake, some 1.2 million children were vulnerable to violence, abuse and exploitation. The earthquake made children more vulnerable than ever. Many children were separated from their families or caregivers, and the rugged living conditions in the camps often lacked security. To address this immediate need, Save the Children established more than 50 child friendly spaces where children could play and start to regain a sense of normalcy in safe environments supervised by trained facilitators. These child-friendly spaces were important to helping children understand and believe that life can return to normal.

For the many children separated from their families by the earthquake, Save the Children also stepped in to protect them through family tracing and reunification programs. Additionally we educated committee members, teachers and other adults about the medical and counseling services that are available for abused children; encouraged parents to reduce their children's vulnerability by accompanying them to latrines and asking for lighting around these areas; were instrumental in creating a database of thousands of unaccompanied children used by several agencies; and helped the government's social welfare department launch a national hotline for vulnerable children in June 2012.

## Save the Children in Haiti Today

Today, we continue to concentrate our expertise in three program areas where we can make the greatest impact for vulnerable children and their families: health, nutrition, and WASH; education; and child protection. We are working from the ground up – beginning with children, parents, schools, communities and local groups – to build their capacity and resiliency and, wherever possible, strengthening our government partners and transitioning programs and services to them. By empowering Haitians to identify needs and take action, we are setting the stage for durable solutions for a country with limited government infrastructure.

### **Sponsorship**

In 2013, Child Sponsorship phased out of Maissade after 28 years. The objective of this phase out was to work with local partners, schools and government in order to ensure a continued focus on quality education after Save the Children has gone. As programs wound down in Maissade, the Child Sponsorship program in Déssalines, which began in 2012, has grown. Working holistically in Basic Education, School Health and Nutrition, and Adolescent Development, we reached over 37,000 children and adults in 2013. In 2014 with over 5,800 sponsored children in 59 schools we've reached over 21,000 children in basic education and over 26,000 in School Health and Nutrition, and aim for an additional 3,000 sponsored children for 2015.

Through our Basic Education activities in Dessalines, the percentage of children in Save the Children-supported schools who passed their end-of-primary school exams increased from 59% in 2012 to 89% in 2013; children's time spent learning increased in 2013 (the number of days the school was open increased by 20% and children's attendance improved by five percentage points, from 76% to 81%).

Also in the School Health and Nutrition work Save the Children has helped deworm 38% of the school children in Dessalines up from 25% in 2012, trained more than 203 teachers and principals on waste management and hygiene education, and began construction on water kiosks and sanitation blocks in select schools. We expect to increase and strengthen these activities in 2015.

### **Health**

Haiti continues to host the largest cholera epidemic in the western hemisphere. According to the Haitian Ministry of Health from 2010, at the height of the cholera outbreak, through to November 2014, there has been an estimated 706,089 suspected cases and 8,092 deaths. One of the first cases of cholera was detected in the area of Marchand Dessalines. Since the outbreak began in 2010, Save the Children has been responding by setting up cholera treatment units in vulnerable areas as well as ramping up hygiene promotion activities that are necessary in order



Children sit exams at a Save the Children supported school in the Port-au-Prince metropolitan area.  
Photo: Riccardo Venturi / Save the Children

to reduce the rate of transmission. In 2013 Save the Children strengthened the ability of the Communal Health Unit in the town of Déssalines and its Cholera Treatment Center to provide health care services and prevention campaigns in communities to prevent this deadly epidemic. In parallel, SC intensified its cholera awareness campaign in schools and communities.

Starting in 2014, and as the number of cases have decreased, we increased our focus on prevention and mitigation of the outbreak. In 2014 we have trained 239 Health workers on case management and preventive measures to control cholera; reached 17,716 people with health education on the importance on washing hands; 4,008 people with education sessions on the importance of potable water; 4,052 people with education sessions on proper waste management; and 480 people on the preparation of oral rehydration salts.

## **WASH**

Working with communities and schools and alongside the government of Haiti's National Directorate of Potable Water and Sewage (DINEPA) to build their capacity, Save the Children is implementing an innovative Replicable Urban Sanitation project in Jacmel. Focusing on community and school hygiene and sanitation education, public and school latrine construction, and sanitation social marketing, this project strives to reach 40,000 beneficiaries by 2016.

By the end of 2014, the project had reached 10,500 beneficiaries. We created and initiated work of community and school hygiene clubs; organized training for school children and community members on hygiene education; created a network of community volunteers to sensitize the communities about cleaning the communities, proper storage of waste, using latrines, and basic hygiene. The marketing campaign is in full swing with a song developed by a popular Haitian artist, banners, pamphlets and a plan to highlight sanitation at the 2015 Jacmel Carnival.

In addition, we've built or rehabilitated sanitation blocks in 13 schools and five public spaces in the town of Jacmel.

## **Education**

Education has long been a focus area of Save the Children activities in Haiti, and increasing children's access to quality education in safe environments remains a top priority. In Haiti, approximately 85% of schools are privately run due to the limited national education system. The centerpiece of our work is the Quality Education Initiative (QEI) wherein we are creating safe learning environments, training teachers, mobilizing communities to support children's education and building local, regional and national capacity to improve the quality of basic education.

Prior to the earthquake, Save the Children worked with the Ministry of Education to assess children's reading skills and to create a Haitian Creole literacy program, called *Lekti se Lavni* ("Reading is the Future"). In 2012 we created a similar program for French literacy called *Lire c'est l'Avenir*. These programmes were well received and their tools were adapted and refined through partnership with other literacy stakeholders. Save the Children implements this approach in the Sponsorship program in Dessalines as well as in Port-au-Prince whilst also supporting schools in the Central Plateau and North of Haiti. We advocate for children in primary school to learn to read in Creole, their mother tongue. We are also training teachers on positive classroom management, pedagogy and on age appropriate tools for teaching reading in Creole and French; and variously support and lead an education coordination committee comprised of 46 NGOs. Our materials have been adopted and refined with Ministry of Education and other stakeholders – being scaled up nationwide in 2014/2015.

Through our basic education work in 100 schools we are reaching over 30,000 children nationwide and have doubled literacy rates in SC supported schools.

## **Child Protection**

As of September 2014, over 85,500 people or 22,741 households, still live in camps for persons displaced by the 2010 earthquake. Of these more than half are children. There are approximately 123 camps still in existence, and thousands of families face forced eviction from camps as the Government moves to close them.

Working in 14 of the remaining camps for Internally Displaced People, and targeting 12,600 child beneficiaries, Save the Children is working to ensure children's long term safety and well-being through support for children's clubs, community-based child protection groups and networks. These network will enable community members to identify vulnerable children, link them with support services, and monitor and address child protection issues. This is particularly important as more people move from camps to community settings.

We are also working with the government protection services to help children stay with their families and out of orphanages, and to prevent the exploitation and abuse of vulnerable children. Through our work we have empowered 480 children, especially adolescent girls and children in domestic servitude, to protect themselves against violence and abuse.

At the end of 2014 in an attempt to strengthen our protection activities for 2015 and enhance our relationship with the Government of Haiti, we signed a partnership protocol with the Institute of Social Welfare and Research, the entity within the Ministry of Social Affairs charged with the protection of children.

## Lessons Learned and Perspectives

As we review the work of the past five years we once again thank our multiple donors, partners, and the government of Haiti. Our work would not be possible without your generosity and confidence in our ability to manage successful programming for Children. As we close this chapter on the five year commemoration of the 2010 earthquake we take a moment to express what we have learned:

- At the outset of disaster, short-term measures to keep children safe, reunite families, improve institutional care and develop viable alternative care must be implemented immediately;
- Prioritizing improved access to and the dependable delivery of quality primary health care, with an emphasis on maternal, infant and child health and nutrition and related hygiene and sanitation is an essential priority;
- The international response must support the Ministry of Health and partners to restore and expand access to basic health care for women and children, as well as access to potable water, sanitation and hygiene infrastructure and facilities;
- Expanding universal access to basic education must be an immediate goal of the government and development partners, particularly for the minority of children who still have not enrolled at the beginning of the school year;
- Longer-term, substantial and sustained investments are needed to strengthen the education sector and enable the Ministry of Education to assume the leadership and oversight role required to achieve the constitutionally mandated goal of universal coverage at the primary level and the initiation of an Early Childhood Development component;
- The transition from recovery to development must include strategies to include the beneficiaries, particularly children, in the design and implementation of the programs and activities that affect their future;
- Over the long term, the government and development partners must invest the financial and technical resources in building a national system to protect children from abuse and trafficking, including activities in disaster risk reduction and resiliency.

# Thank You

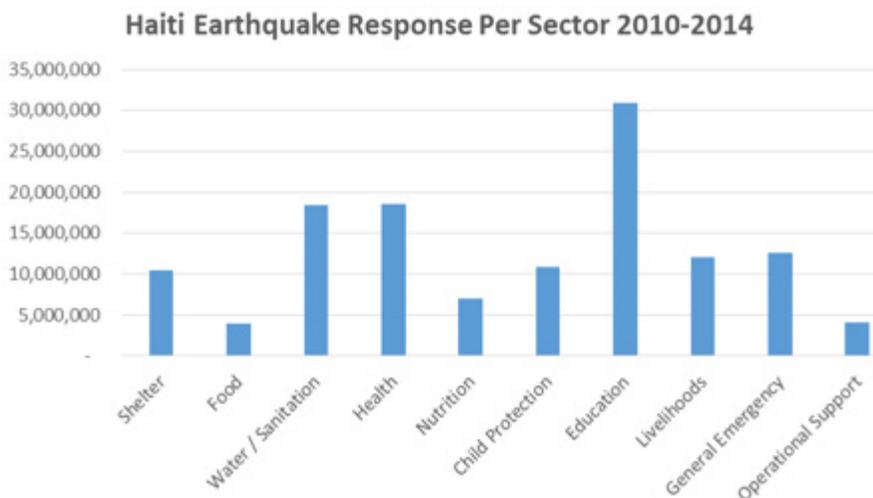
From the staff at Save the International in Haiti, and on behalf of the children of Haiti, we'd like to thank you for your generous support over the past five years. Together we have improved the lives of children impacted by this terrible disaster, and have seen the hope on children's faces once again. With you we have sheltered children from storms, rescued them from situations of abuse, helped them to eat better, learn to read, stay free of illness and laugh once more. Such progress was made possible by the power of your support, combined with our work and the incredible efforts of the Haitian people themselves.

Much remains to be done; a generation has grown up in camps – today's displaced five year olds have never known a traditional home, today's ten year olds do not remember life before displacement, today's fifteen year olds have spent their adolescence in camps – everything possible must be done for the 35,000 children still living this way. For those who have recovered from the impact of the earthquake, daily life remains a struggle. Birth is a risky process for mother and baby, often taking place far from healthcare facilities, and newborns face many threats to survival. Whilst cholera is declining, simple treatable diarrheal and respiratory diseases are the biggest killers of children under five. Whilst school attendance is up, many children leave without learning to read. Whilst the laws protecting children are strengthened, many children still face abuse on a daily basis. To be a child in Haiti is to go hungry at night, to walk miles to school, to fight to learn and to face an uncertain future. No child today should face such hardship simply to grow up healthy and happy. After the earthquake many promises were made to the children of Haiti.

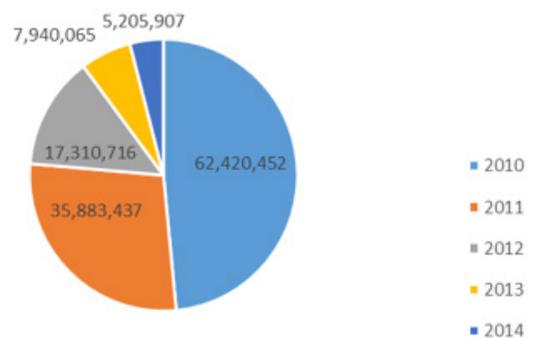
We intend to keep ours.

We hope you will join us.

## Financial Review



**Earthquake Response 2010-2014\***



\* US Dollars



Marie Darline, 15 years old, lives in a camp for people that were displaced by the 2010 earthquake.

“I have lived in this camp for 4 years. I don’t like living here but this is what we have. We have to survive. My mother used to have a boutique but because people never paid her it closed. Now she doesn’t work now. I don’t feel safe here at all because people don’t respect each other. Once a police officer was killed. They shot him and rode off by motorcycle. We have a police station but no police officers. We can’t walk out late, we’re afraid to because there are young men in the street who will grab us. I’m afraid of another earthquake because I remember I almost died in the last one. On that day I felt the earth trembling, I got up just in time before a block crushed my chair. Save the Children taught us that every child has a right to go to school. I like Celine Dion, she has a beautiful voice but when I grow up I want to become a doctor.”

Photo: Riccardo Venturi / Save the Children



**Save the Children**

[www.savethechildren.net](http://www.savethechildren.net)