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EDUCATION FACT SHEET

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BACKGROUND

Currently, the majority of Haitians lack access to quality education; a prerequisite for sustained social and economic development. Despite improvements in enrollment and the commitment of the Haitian government to strengthening public education, challenges in funding, teacher training, and access remain widespread. These issues put a generation of Haitian youth at risk of lacking the knowledge and basic skills necessary to succeed in the labor force. To address education issues facing the country, the Government of Haiti's Ministry of National Education and Vocational Training (MENFP) initiated a sector-wide operational plan in 2011 and, in 2016, instituted a national training policy for teachers and educational personnel to improve educational services in schools nationwide.

KEY CHALLENGES

Low enrollment: Primary school enrollment is roughly 85 percent – an improvement from earlier years but still low. The average Haitian, age 25 years or older, has less than 5 years of schooling. School fees can be prohibitively expensive for low-income families.

Poor literacy rates: A U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) early grade reading assessment revealed that roughly 75 percent of children at the end of first grade and nearly half of students finishing second grade could not read a single word. Further, only 61 percent of the adult population is literate.

Lack of government oversight: Most schools in Haiti receive minimal government oversight and are expensive relative to average earnings. More than 85 percent of primary schools are privately managed by non-governmental organizations (NGOs), churches, communities and for-profit operators.

Shortage of qualified teachers: Half of public sector teachers in Haiti lack basic qualifications and almost 80 percent of teachers have not received any pre-service training.

USAID STRATEGY & ACTIVITIES

USAID supports the Government of Haiti's education efforts and is committed to improving the quality of, and access to, education for Haitians.

Developing a new model for early grade reading and teaching: USAID directly supports approximately 420 schools to improve early grade reading and writing in Haitian Creole and French for Haitian children in the first four grades. USAID activities also train teachers and school staff in modern instruction techniques and involve communities through outreach and partnership programs. In

addition, USAID's unique materials and innovative instructional model indirectly reach many more students through numerous partnerships with the Ministry of Education, other donors, NGOs and the private sector.

Promoting education for students with visual impairments: Collaborating with a local NGO, USAID is increasing access to quality education for children who are blind and visually impaired in Port-au-Prince and Cap-Haïtien. This project integrates 250 students with visual impairments into mainstream classrooms as well as provides needed resources, including computer rooms with equipment for the visually impaired and 150 books in braille and audio.

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Overhauled early-grade reading instruction: Since 2010, USAID has provided more than 60,000 children and 2,000 teachers with innovative reading curricula that meet international standards for literacy instruction, and trained teachers and administrators on how to implement the curricula for Haitian Creole and French speakers. These critical resources were specifically designed for Haiti to best address unique challenges in the country's education system.

Supplied books and teaching materials: USAID designed, published, and distributed more than 468,000 books and workbooks, 23,800 teacher guides, and over 1,400 posters to first- and second-grade students at more than 1,000 primary schools since 2011.

Boosted capacity at the Ministry of Education: USAID strengthened the capacity of the Ministry of Education, with a focus on facilitating its reading improvement unit to coordinate donor resources and promote national-level implementation of reading activities.

Provided immediate response to damage caused by Hurricane Matthew: Coordinating with the Ministry of Education and UNICEF, USAID provided educational kits and materials for 45,000 students and 1,000 teachers, purchased school furniture for 50 schools and supported school cleanings, decontamination, and minor repairs in Matthew affected areas.