

The United Nations has supported community-based hygiene campaigns through the training of over 1,400 trainers and 5,200 community workers who have reached over 700,000 families. The Organization has also provided logistical support for the movement of personnel and supplies, including 400 metric tons of health, water and sanitation materials to areas facing cholera outbreaks. The United Nations has devoted more than US\$140 million on cholera treatment and prevention activities since 2010.

These efforts have helped to decrease the rate of new infection by 90 per cent since the outbreak began. The mortality rate has been brought down to around 1 per cent. Still, further progress must be made.

In early 2011, I convened a panel of independent experts to determine the source of the cholera outbreak and to provide the United Nations, the Government of Haiti and the international community with specific recommendations on how to respond to the outbreak and avoid future epidemics. This report was made public by the United Nations.

The lack of access to clean water and sanitation infrastructure pointed out in your letter was identified in the report as a key factor that facilitated the epidemic. The majority of its recommendations have been adopted and are being implemented by the United Nations system. Following the approval of the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) procured 200,000 vaccines and is working closely with the Haitian Ministry of Health on an upcoming vaccination campaign.

In 2012, following the launch of my special effort to support the Initiative for the Elimination of Cholera in the Island of Hispaniola, I appointed Dr. Paul Farmer of Harvard University as my Special Adviser on Community-Based Medicine and Lessons from Haiti. Dr. Farmer has spent the last 30 years delivering healthcare to poor communities in Haiti and other difficult settings.

As my Special Adviser, he was instrumental in convening a WHO/PAHO-sponsored donors meeting in Washington, D.C. on 31 May 2013, at which more than US\$29 million in new funds were pledged, bringing total current pledges in support of the Hispaniola Initiative to US\$207.4 million. Outreach to donors will continue during the World Bank ministerial meeting in October of this year. Meanwhile, UNICEF, following a request by the Government of Haiti, is in the process of setting up a trust fund that will allow for the disbursement of cholera funds through Haitian national and local institutions, including civil society organizations.