Overview of services available to victims of sexual exploitation and abuse in Haiti

In Haiti, victims of sexual exploitation and abuse have accessed services through referrals to gender-based violence regular programming. Efforts have also been made to develop dedicated services and assistance to support victims of sexual exploitation and abuse. These include a project providing services tailored to victims of sexual exploitation and abuse, including educational support for children born as a result of such acts, supported by United Nations entities in the country and delivered by implementing partners. Since April 2019, a dedicated Senior Victims’ Rights Officer (SVRO) has sought to expand this support.

Findings and recommendations on United Nations assistance and support to victims of sexual exploitation and abuse

- In response to victims’ demand for immediate assistance, in 2018, the Field Victims’ Rights Advocate (FVRA) developed a joint project, with the United Nations Mission for Justice Support in Haiti (MINUJUSTH), UNDP, UNICEF and UN WOMEN to provide educational and livelihood support to victims and children born of sexual exploitation and abuse through an implementing partner. Support included a monthly allowance for childcare (food, school materials, lunchboxes), medical care, rental subsidies/shelter, as well as education and training in income-generating activities for victims. The FVRA/SVRO collaborates with United Nations entities in the country to guarantee sustainability of this support according to the victims’ needs.
- The SVRO cooperated with United Nations entities to expand the inclusion of victims of sexual exploitation and abuse in existing SGBV programming. She spearheaded work with lawyers and legal aid organizations to provide victims with legal services and facilitate the resolution of pending paternity and child support claims. She also facilitated the provision of information and updates to victims on the status of their cases, including through regular meetings with them.
- Gaps in service provision include shortage of safety and protection measures particularly for men, boys, quality medical care, and access to legal services. Dedicated assistance for victims of sexual exploitation and abuse by United Nations personnel is of limited duration and provided on an ad hoc basis.
- The Office of the Victims’ Rights Advocate recommends reinforcing victims’ assistance, including through follow-up, informed by victims’ feedback.
The adoption of a system-wide tracking and monitoring mechanism for victims’ assistance that is consistently used, and updated is should be considered. Such a mechanism should include details on referrals for assistance, assistance received and information on service providers.