

Mexico's Devastating Earthquakes Save the Children Deploys Child Protection Programs, Seeking Funds to Transition to Longer-term Recovery

September 25, 2017

Save the Children is responding to children and families in Mexico, where three earthquakes and several aftershocks have rocked the country.

Our goal is to raise \$5 million in new funding to drive programs for 27,200 children and 57,800 adults across Mexico City, Puebla, and Morelo who have been affected.

With this support, we will implement a comprehensive response strategy addressing child protection, education, shelter and the supply of clean water and sanitation.

Your generous contribution, pooled with other resources, will enable us to bring this essential help and hope to children and their families impacted by this disaster.

The Emergencies

On September 7, a powerful earthquake measuring 8.2 on the Richter scale struck in the southern area of Oaxaca, Mexico, causing widespread destruction. Just 10 days later, another violent earthquake measuring 7.1 rocked Mexico City and was felt across at least six states. This was followed by yet another earthquake of 6.1 on September 21. These earthquakes and their after-shocks caused over 300 deaths and 1,150 schools, homes and other buildings to collapse. Thousands of people were displaced.

Some families have found shelter in emergency shelters opened by the government – yet many children and their families continue sleeping rough - afraid to return to broken homes that are at risk of collapsing.

The Impact on Children

Children are always the most vulnerable in an emergency. Save the Children is deeply concerned about large numbers of girls and boys who are injured or affected by the loss of family members and their homes. Facing grave threats to their well-being, children urgently need food, clean water and shelter, and emotional support as they deal with conditions beyond their comprehension. Sanitation is also critical, and damaged health systems and schools must be repaired and re-supplied.



A family in Morelos State sets up shelter in the middle of a street next to homes damaged by the 7.1 earthquake on September 17.
Photo: AP Photo/Eduardo Verdugo

Save the Children's Response

With our 44 years of experience working in Mexico, we are exceptionally well positioned to respond to this emergency. As our national staff continues to provide immediate emergency assistance, we are beginning to plan our transition to support children's long-term recovery. Our response

strategy focuses on the following four areas: child protection, education, shelter and clean water/sanitation.

Contingent on available funds, we will:

- Continue protecting children in shelters and communities, monitoring children's well-being and referring families for specialized services as needed.
- Continue creating child-friendly spaces in shelters— safe spaces where children can play, do art, read and start to recover as their parents decide on next steps.
- Provide structured psychological support and educational activities in our child-friendly spaces.
- Improve children's living conditions in shelters by supporting facility improvements and providing infant care items to families with young children.
- Improve access to clean water, sanitation and hygiene.
- Work with government and community organizations to rebuild, repair and re-supply schools as soon as possible so children may return to the safety and comfort of education.
- Provide child protection training and capacity building to government and community organizations, educators and child protection monitors.
- Work with government and community organizations' long term recovery plans for schools and homes.

The Urgency

We know from decades of experience working in emergency relief after major disasters that Mexican children have experienced loss on a profound scale. They may face weeks and months of uncertainty and great stress. The risk for future earthquakes in this area is high and anxiety provoking. As well, children out of school living in insecure and unsanitary conditions are extremely vulnerable to illness, recurring traumas and exploitation. Often children in these situations are put to work to earn

money for their families trying to recover from losses. And studies show that the longer children are out of school, the less likely they are to return – perpetuating a cycle of poverty. It's critical that we ensure these children's health, safety and access to education as soon as possible.

Why Save the Children?

Save the Children is the world's leading child-focused humanitarian organization. We have nearly 100 years' experience responding to children and their families during and after crises. We are exceptional among aid agencies because we provide comprehensive emergency preparedness, relief and recovery programs that are specifically designed to meet the unique needs of children and their families. We have well-trained national staff ready to respond at a moment's notice and have pre-positioned relief supplies and medicines that can be distributed quickly. Our international experts in health, nutrition, food security, shelter, water and sanitation, education and child protection can join our local staff if needed, and we are willing to do what it takes to help children in need.

With your compassionate support, pooled with other resources, we can effectively respond to this crisis in Mexico – keeping children safe and healthy, help them recover from trauma and significantly improve their chances for a safe and successful future.

Please see this ABC News piece of our staff describing the rescue efforts [Click Here](#)

Nobody knows when the next crisis will strike. That's why 10 percent of your generous gift goes to helping our emergency teams prepare for and provide critical assistance when and where children need us the most.