

## Media Release

Date: 7/8/18

**\*\*\*Strictly Embargoed till 6am Lombok time / 10pm GMT\*\*\***

### **Save the Children and partners concerned for children's mental health after second earthquake in a week hits Indonesian island**

Save the Children, through its partner in Indonesia, Yayasan Sayangi Tunas Cilik (YSTC), is warning about the psychological impact of Lombok's recent earthquake on children, as the death toll continues to rise.

Official figures put the current toll at 91, although that is expected to increase as search and rescue operations continue in coming days.

YSTC staff on Lombok have reported widespread devastation along the road from north Lombok to the capital, Mataram, with an estimated eight in 10 houses severely damaged, leaving thousands homeless. There is still no power in the most heavily impacted area.

Save the Children is extremely concerned about the safety of children when they return to school in coming days, as there is extensive damage reported to schools in the area as well.

Speaking from a makeshift office in a hotel – the organisation's local headquarters was badly damaged – Silverius Tasman, who works for Save the Children's local partner Yayasan Sayangi Tunas Cilik, said the organisation has launched an emergency response.

"There are high needs across a vast area. There are thousands of people sleeping outside, with as many as 80,000 people either in informal shelters or simply in the open air as they are too afraid to stay indoors.

"In coming days, we will distribute things like shelter kits, mosquito nets and jerry cans so people can at least fulfil their basic needs. But for children, our number one concern is their psychosocial wellbeing.

"Our team will provide psychological first aid to children, as well as train teachers to build psychosocial support activities into their curriculum. Our expert staff will work with parents and caregivers so they can recognise signs of distress in their children and provide comfort and support.

"We will also ensure children have safe spaces to play and relax in this very stressful situation, and we are supporting the government to ensure school structures are thoroughly assessed before children are allowed to resume classes there.

"In the meantime, we will support by providing alternative education options as they are needed, including providing some teaching kits as well as temporary learning spaces as a means of helping children to retain a sense of normalcy and routine."

## **ENDS**

### **About Save the Children**

Save the Children believes every child deserves a future. In New Zealand and around the world, we work every day to give children a healthy start in life, the opportunity to learn and protection from harm. When crisis strikes, and children are most vulnerable, we are always among the first to respond and the last to leave. We ensure children's unique needs are met and their voices are heard. We deliver lasting results for millions of children, including those hardest to reach. We do whatever it takes for children – every day and in times of crisis – transforming their lives and the future we share.

**Editor's note:** Save the Children have people on the ground available for interview please contact: Ally Clelland, Communications Specialist, Save the Children NZ, phone 022 531 9514 or email [ally.clelland@scnz.org.nz](mailto:ally.clelland@scnz.org.nz)