

## P R E S S   R E L E A S E

### **7 Millionen Kinder von Flutkatastrophe in Kerala betroffen**

*Berlin, 21.08.2018* Save the Children warnt vor verheerenden Folgen der Flutkatastrophe im indischen Bundesstaat Kerala für Millionen von Kindern. 23 Millionen Menschen sind nach Angaben von Regierungsstellen in Kerala von der schlimmsten Flutkatastrophe in der Region seit hundert Jahren betroffen, 7 Millionen davon sind Kinder. Unzählige Familien mussten ihre Häuser verlassen und sind in Evakuierungszentren, Lagern oder provisorischen Zufluchtsorten untergebracht. Die Fluten haben eine Spur der Verwüstung durch Kerala gezogen.

„Das ganze Ausmaß dieser Krise ist schwer zu ermessen. An einigen Orten ist jedes einzelne Haus schwer beschädigt oder total zerstört“, meldete Ray Kancharla, Humanitärer Manager bei Save the Children in Indien aus Chengannuru, einem der am schwersten betroffenen Orte in Kerala.

„Dies ist besonders für Kinder eine erschreckende Situation. Sie wurden aus ihrem Alltagsleben gerissen und haben jeden Sinn für Normalität verloren. Viele der Kinder dürften unter Angstgefühlen leiden und wissen nicht, was aus ihrem Haus, ihren Habseligkeiten oder ihren Nachbarn geworden ist.“ sagte Ray Kancharla.

Die vollständige Pressemitteilung und Ansprechpartner in Englisch:

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

#### **Seven million children affected as Kerala floodwaters recede, revealing trail of destruction**

**20 August, 2018** – Save the Children is warning of the devastating long-term impact of Kerala’s deadly flooding on children. In the past two weeks the Indian state has been hit by its worst flooding since 1924, with entire communities devastated and more than 350 people killed.

New figures from the state government estimate that 70 percent of Kerala’s population – some 23 million people – have been affected, including 7 million children. Save the Children believes that close to one million people are severely affected, having been forced to flee their homes and stay in temporary accommodation like evacuations centres, camps or makeshift shelters.

“The scale of this crisis is hard to fathom. In some communities every single house has suffered heavy damage or is totally destroyed. Roofs and walls have collapsed; roads have been completely washed away. Some people are still sheltering in the top storey of their home because the bottom floor is flooded,” Save the Children India’s Humanitarian Manager Ray Kancharla said from Chengannuru, one of the worst affected places in Kerala.

“While it’s pleasing to see rains reducing and flood waters receding, it’s leaving behind an enormous trail of destruction. Access is still extremely difficult because of road conditions, with fallen trees and landslides commonplace.

“Given every district in the state has suffered, it could take well over a week before we have a clear picture of the true scale of the disaster. We know the humanitarian needs are enormous, but it will be some time before we know just how big that is.”

Mr Kancharla said he was particularly worried about the long-term impact of the flooding on children.

“This is an especially distressing situation for children, who have had their lives and sense of normality totally uprooted. Lots of children will be feeling varying degrees of anxiety, unsure of what’s left of their home and belongings such as books, and what has happened to their neighbours,” he said.

“While immediate needs like food, shelter and clean drinking water are pressing, longer-term it’s clear that children are going to need a great deal of emotional support to recover.”

Save the Children is set to open five child friendly spaces in the next 48-72 hours, providing a place for children to take part in therapeutic activities and games, regain a sense of normality and be with their friends.

“It’s amazing to see the impact a child friendly space can have on children who’ve been through an ordeal like this. It can have a huge effect on their self-confidence and ability to cope with adversity,” Mr Kancharla said.

Save the Children will focus its response on the most affected and marginalised people, and has a team of staff on the ground conducting assessments to determine where the greatest needs are.

The aid agency has a long history responding to humanitarian crises in India, including the devastating floods in Assam, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal last year.

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**About Save the Children**

Save the Children believes every child deserves a future. 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.