

P R E S S   R E L E A S E

## **SYRIA: AT LEAST FOUR CHILDREN KILLED IN INTENSE SHELLING ACROSS IDLIB**

### ***School run by partner of Save the Children hit***

*Beirut, November 4, 2020* - Save the Children is saddened by the deaths of four children who died during intense shelling in the Syrian province of Idlib this morning. Two staff members of a partner organisation were also killed during the attacks.

One girl, aged four, died on her way to school in the town of Ariha, south of Idlib. Two more children were killed in Kafraya, and a fourth, a 10-year-old boy, in the city of Idlib. Dozens of other people were wounded.

A primary school in Kafraya, run by a partner of Save the Children, was hit with shelling and shrapnel while around 150 children were in their classrooms. Although no one at the school was hurt in the incident, a student of the school and his brother were killed at home.

### **A teacher at the school said:**

"The school was hit... Shelling struck one of the school walls. Another projectile fell a metre or two away from the outer wall. Shrapnel filled the playground and also reached the indoor parts of the school. If there had been any children outside, this would have been a disaster.

"One of the shells hit the home of one of our students, killing him and his brother and injuring his mother and father."

Following these incidents, as a precautionary measure, Save the Children suspended the work in two vaccination centres it supports in Idlib. As a result, the delivery of vaccines to children will be impacted, requiring more efforts to follow up with children who had appointments. The centres provide vaccination support for 500 children each month.

### **Sonia Khush, Save the Children's Syria Response Director said:**

"This is extremely saddening news. Children have lost their lives and others have endured a terrifying incident on a morning they were expecting to have a normal school day. It is appalling to see schools and civilian areas coming under attack – schools should be places of learning and safety, not of war. The people of Syria continue to pay a heavy price for violations committed.

“Civilians continue to bear the brunt of attacks like this. We call on all warring parties to make sure children and civilians are protected and to respect international and humanitarian law.”

The latest attacks could not have come at a worse time for people in Idlib, with fears of a new wave of displacement if the violence persists. The past two days have brought heavy rains and caused flooding in nine camps for displaced people. Around one million people have been displaced this year already and are facing harsh winter ahead.<sup>[1]</sup>

The recent weeks have seen an escalation of conflict in several areas in the northwest, which threatens to derail any chances of a lasting peace.

Save the Children is calling for an immediate cessation of hostilities. All sides must respect International Humanitarian Law and protect schools, hospitals and other vital civilian infrastructure from attack. Children are particularly vulnerable to the impact of explosive weapons, and warring parties should make a particular effort to protect them.

Children continue to be killed in conflict, despite the adoption of a UN Security Council resolution calling for a global cessation of hostilities earlier this year. Instead of a ceasefire, ongoing violence is pushing the children of Syria and their communities to the brink and hindering the battle against the COVID-19 outbreak.





[1][https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/documents/files/nws\\_flash\\_update\\_20200305\\_final.pdf](https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/documents/files/nws_flash_update_20200305_final.pdf)

**Bei Fragen oder Interviewwünschen wenden Sie sich bitte an unsere Pressestelle.**

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**Über Save the Children**

Im Nachkriegsjahr 1919 gründete die britische Sozialreformerin und Kinderrechtlerin Eglantyne Jebb Save the Children, um Kinder in Deutschland und Österreich vor dem Hungertod zu retten. Heute ist die inzwischen größte unabhängige Kinderrechtsorganisation der Welt in über 110 Ländern im Einsatz. Save the Children ist da für Kinder in Kriegen, Konflikten und Katastrophen – seit 100 Jahren und darüber hinaus. Diese Kinder zu schützen, zu stärken und zu fördern ist das zentrale Anliegen der Organisation. Die Schwerpunkte der Arbeit liegen in den Bereichen Schule und Bildung, Schutz vor Ausbeutung und Gewalt sowie Überleben und Gesundheit. Save the Children setzt sich ein für eine Welt, die die Rechte der Kinder achtet. Eine Welt, in der alle Kinder gesund und sicher leben und frei und selbstbestimmt aufwachsen können.

