

P R E S S E M I T T E I L U N G

Afghanistan: Save the Children welcomes announcement that girls will be returning to secondary school

Kabul, 8 March 2022 – Officials from Afghanistan’s Ministry of Education said on Sunday that girls will be returning to secondary schools later this month. Secondary schools for girls in Afghanistan have been closed since September, forcing millions of girls out of school.

A three-part proposal submitted to the Prime Minister’s office for approval will see girls return to school in gender segregated facilities. Where these segregated facilities are not available, they will be supported to return to a mixed schooling environment.

It is estimated that 8 million school-aged children need support to access education right now in Afghanistan – an increase from 2.6 million compared to last year.

Save the Children’s Director of Advocacy and Campaigns, Athena Rayburn, said:

“We welcome the news from Afghanistan’s Ministry of Education that girls will be returning to secondary school when the new school year starts later this month. Every day that girls are not in school, they face increased risk of violence, exploitation and abuse.

“It is essential for the future of Afghanistan that girls are given the tools and knowledge to help their country thrive. We particularly welcome the news from the Ministry of Education that, if gender segregated schooling facilities are not available, girls will be supported to return to a mixed schooling environment in the interim.

“The announcement from the Ministry yesterday is an important first step – now it needs to be put into practice. For that to happen, the international community must also step up now and ensure funding for girls’ education is provided at the upcoming pledging conference on 31 March.

“As the economic crisis has deepened, the education system in Afghanistan has all but collapsed. Without international support and solidarity that translates into funds, girls will not be able to return to school, even if they are open.”

Save the Children has been supporting communities and protecting children's rights across Afghanistan since 1976, including during periods of conflict, regime change, and natural disasters. The organisation has programmes in 10 provinces and work with partners in an additional three provinces. Since the crisis escalated in August 2021, Save the Children has been scaling up its response to support the increasing number of children in need, delivering health, nutrition, education, child protection, shelter, water, sanitation and hygiene and food security and livelihoods support.

To ensure children can still access education during the last six months, Save the Children has been running Community Based Education classes and providing children and teachers with learning and classroom kits. The organisation has also been working with female secondary school graduates to support them to become teachers and to pass the university entrance exam.

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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 rund 120 Ländern tätig. Save the Children setzt sich ein für Kinder in Kriegen, Konflikten und Katastrophen. Für eine Welt, die die Rechte der Kinder achtet. Eine Welt, in der alle Kinder gesund und sicher leben und frei und selbstbestimmt aufwachsen und lernen können – seit über 100 Jahren.