



**DOSSIER  
EDUCATION  
CENTRES  
FOR PEACE  
2022-23**



**Save the  
Children**

**In this academic year 2022/2023 we present the following dossier** with the aim of contextualising the difficulties faced by children who are living in the midst of armed conflict.

**On the website you will find the lesson ideas to be carried out in the classroom, separated by educational stages and in different languages.**

**We want to bring the reality of the armed conflict closer to your students, as well as to raise their awareness and to join thousands of students who are mobilising to say YES TO PEACE.**

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## WELCOME, A NEW ACADEMIC YEAR!

Thank you for joining the school wave for peace that we are all making possible this year. This dossier, together with the activities and audiovisual resources available on the website, will help you to mobilise and inspire participation in the solidarity activity you have chosen (Solidarity Kilometres, Bookmarks for Solidarity, Run for the Right to be a Girl, or Christmas Jumper Day).

We live in turbulent and uncertain times, and thousands of children are caught in areas of armed conflict. In the following pages you will find an overview of the reality they are living through, with significant data on the lack of protection for these most vulnerable children. How does it affect their health or education, and how is it exacerbated for girls? How does war affect childhood, and how does the ripple effect of the direct consequences go far beyond and across borders?

Save the Children was born in the aftermath of World War I and our role, with your help, is even more relevant today. This is why you will learn more about our role in education, nutrition and protection through actions and programmes in the field.

The solidarity activity you are going to carry out is very important. It will put the focus of action on your students who, by getting involved, will become champions in giving a voice to the most vulnerable. We can think of no better way to prepare them to be part of a global citizenship that builds on dialogue, empathy and peace.





**WE NEED  
A SCHOOL PEACE  
MOVEMENT**

# CHILDREN IN WAR ZONES SUFFER SITUATIONS THAT THEY SHOULD NEVER HAVE TO LIVE THROUGH

Many children know nothing but bombing, the need to flee and the impossibility of leading a normal life. Their homes, schools and playgrounds have become battlegrounds for years. The month of February 2022 saw the outbreak of war in Ukraine, and in March came the anniversaries of **7 years of conflict in Yemen and 11 years of war in Syria**. Unfortunately, if it's not in the media, it is forgotten, so here are some of the most shocking facts you need to know:

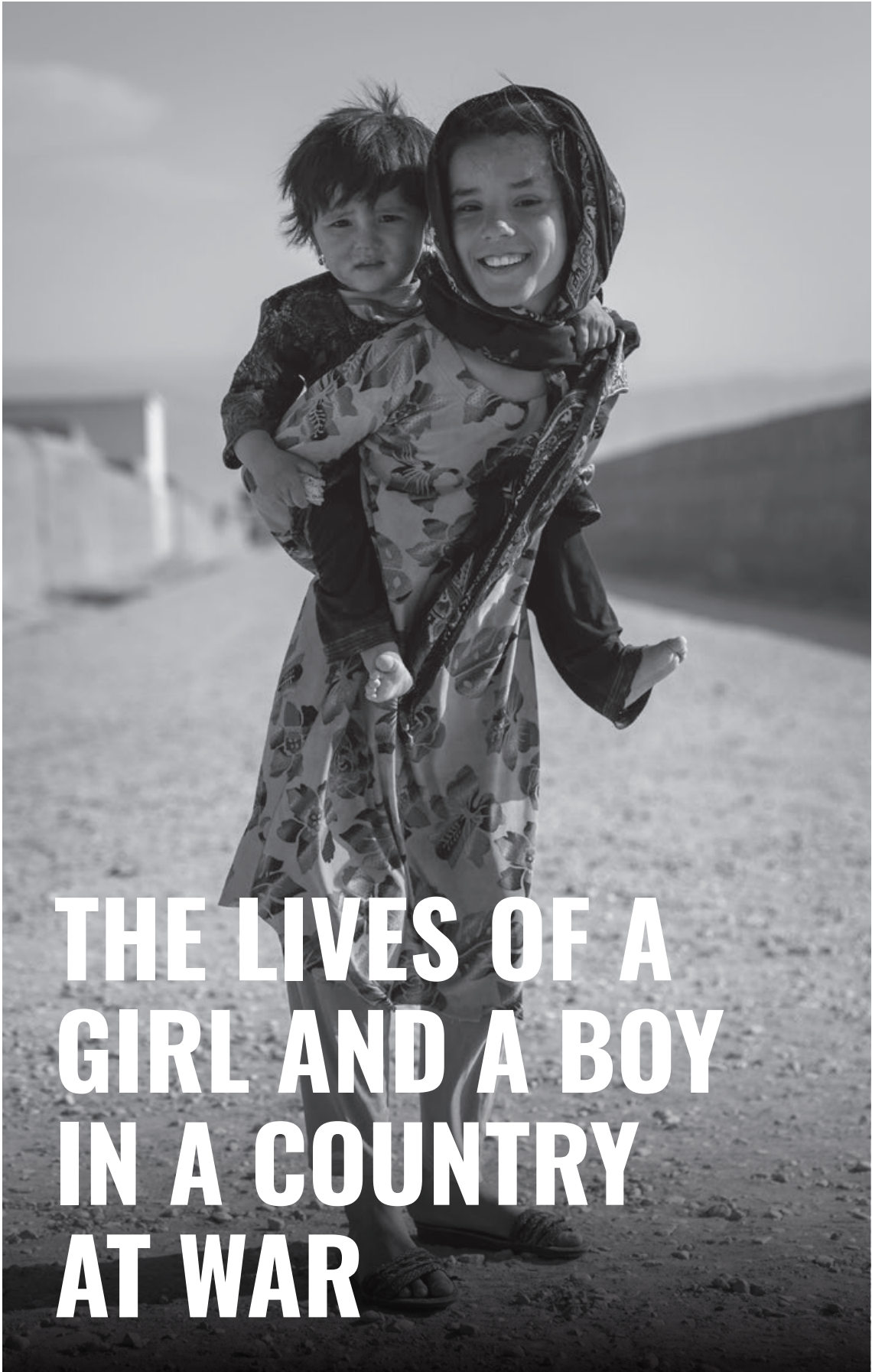
**The data from Ukraine is shocking. Two thirds** of the country's children have fled their homes, and **more than 6.6 million people** have left the country. Thousands of children remain trapped underground in metro stations, school basements and bunkers as violence continues. According to the Ukrainian Ministry of Education and Science, Save the Children warns that at least 2,400 schools have been attacked since the conflict intensified on 24 February. Up to 180 schools have been completely destroyed, disrupting the education of Ukraine's 7.5 million children living in Ukraine in early 2022. Only half of the country's schools will open this year so that their students can attend in person.

**Syria's children remain in catastrophic conditions** in unsanitary and unsafe camps. **Exposed to bombardment and air strikes**, they suffer from hunger, disease and malnutrition. Conflict in the north continues to cause civilian casualties, forcing families to **flee their homes**. In 2021, we documented **15 attacks on schools** in the north-west of the country, and in October **three children and a teacher were killed** in an attack on their way to school. In Syria, **6.5 million children are in need of humanitarian assistance**; 2.5 million children do not attend school, and some 800,000 children are malnourished.

Behind every fact and figure is the life of an innocent victim of war.







**THE LIVES OF A  
GIRL AND A BOY  
IN A COUNTRY  
AT WAR**

# CHILDREN ARE IMPACTED MOST BY WAR'S EFFECTS

**Save the Children is aware of hundreds of cases where children have suffered directly from the effects of war:** Children have been attacked while playing football, sitting at their school desks, in their hospital beds, in their homes and in the marketplace. **They are being killed by the thousands, maimed, displaced and traumatised,** and most live in constant fear and anxiety.

In a place where schoolyards are in the line of fire of snipers and playgrounds become graveyards, **children are slowly withdrawing from public spaces,** no longer playing outdoors or interacting with their classmates. This situation undermines their ability to **develop their personality,** it is depriving them of the main mechanism to cope with stress.

One example is Ukraine, where persistent air strikes and explosions have damaged schools and hospitals, killing civilians and making it difficult for children to access medical care and safe education.

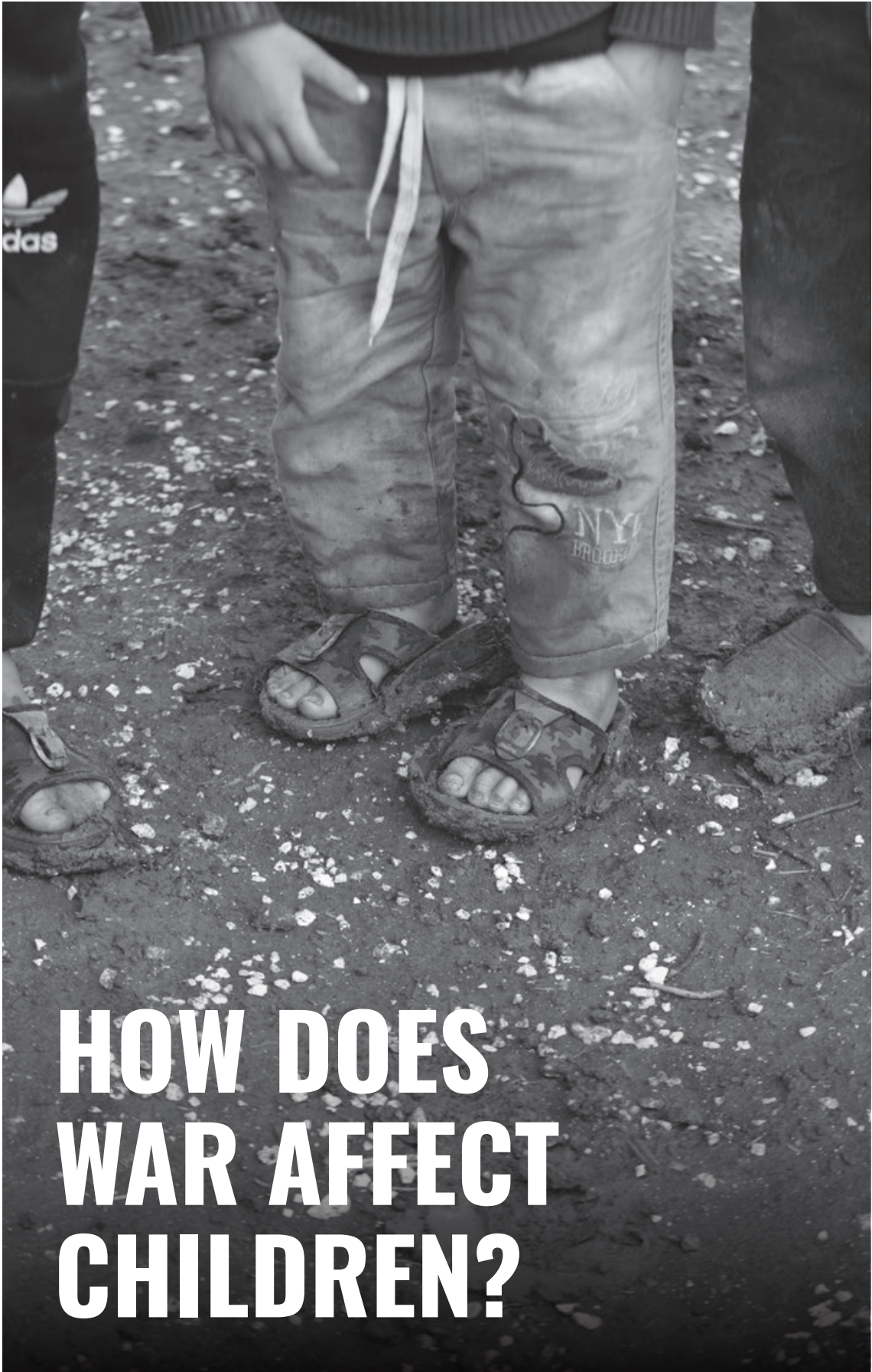
As violence continues, children are at risk of suffering devastating consequences as adults from the trauma of loss and displacement.



**The best way to understand this reality is through life stories.**

Layla, Yousef and Samir are Syrian refugee children who have recorded a day in their lives:





**HOW DOES  
WAR AFFECT  
CHILDREN?**



## HEALTH AND NUTRITION

**Access to clean drinking water** becomes a vital issue in a conflict zone. Fighting destroys sanitation infrastructure, preventing children from accessing clean water for proper hygiene. Without it, diseases such as diarrhoea, a major cause of death of under-fives, are no longer prevented.

**In terms of access to nourishing food**, living in a war zone means that adults lose their jobs and have no money to buy food, or that food prices have risen so high that they are unaffordable for households. Their own production is compromised, and the necessary ability to import or export is impossible. Without adequate nutrition during the first three years of life, child development will be affected with irreversible consequences.

**Keeping hospitals and health centres functioning in these areas is essential**, but not always possible. When all resources are focused on issues related to those wounded in combat, everything else is put on hold. Disruption of childhood immunisation programmes poses problems that would be preventable with proper health care.

**The mental health of millions of children is at risk** under continuous stress. There are thousands of children who were born in a country at war and know nothing else, and others who have seen their lives change from one day to the next. So many traumatic experiences, such as fleeing from home, living in hiding or being left unprotected, represent a turning point that requires immediate psychological attention. Anxiety, fears, sleep disturbances and even suicide are problems faced by children in conflict zones.

8 out of 10 children  
experience emotional  
distress



9.6 out of 10 caregivers  
feel unhappy and anxious

9 out of 10 children  
feel less safe alone



## EDUCATION

**Although school is one of the safest places for a child to be**, nearly 50 million children are kept out because in war these spaces become targets to be destroyed. **Opportunities for quality education diminish in conflict zones, especially for girls, who are the first to drop out of school.** If the situation continues over time, we are talking about “lost” generations of young people who become left behind in their education without access to skilled jobs in the future.

Maintaining education, especially in remote areas, is almost impossible for a weakened government. Sometimes the difficulties are extreme because the attacks are part of a direct strategy against education: the aggressors seek to occupy or destroy schools and threaten or attack teachers and students themselves.

Aya is 7 years old. The Syrian conflict broke out when she was still a child and she has never been able to go to school. Tomorrow is her first day and she's excited.



## PROTECTION

**Every year millions of children around the world become victims of an unspoken violence that takes many different forms.** In areas of armed conflict, the dangers for children include the risk of sexual violence, trafficking or recruitment into armed groups.

Many children as young as 8 years old are abducted or forced to join armed groups, although there are cases where they join voluntarily in exchange for clothes, money or protection. Others do it because of pressure from friends or family, to protect their own, or to avenge the death of parents and siblings. Such extreme violence causes fear, anxiety, depression and insecurity in children, who will need specialised psychological support to overcome trauma.

**In the case of girls, sexual violence or forced marriage** puts both their physical and psychological health at serious risk. Prevention by ensuring safe spaces and working with governments to establish protection mechanisms is essential.

## PLUS...

**The climate crisis has accelerated a global economic crisis** that exacerbates the consequences for child victims of war, affecting thousands of children beyond vulnerable conflict zones. *“Those who are already falling behind will fall further behind. Climate disruption is already causing displacement around the world”*, according to the UN Secretary-General. Low rainfall and recurrent droughts increase food insecurity and competition for resources. In northeastern Syria, communities are suffering a growing water crisis due to drought, and the Sahel and Horn of Africa are experiencing the worst drought in 40 years. **The consequences are particularly devastating for women and girls**, who are forced to walk further to collect water and are thus at greater risk of sexual violence.

We are in the midst of a global economic crisis with increasing financial hardship for families in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic, currency devaluation and commodity shortages.

**For countries at war, coronavirus has brought with it a double humanitarian crisis**, adding even greater challenges to people’s lives, pushing them to take extreme survival measures. During 2020 and 2021 the number of international migrations decreased, but wars are now reversing this trend. According to the World Bank, the number of international migrants and refugees may reach 286 million by 2022.

## WAR BREAKS DOWN BORDERS

The conflict in Ukraine and the resulting refugee crisis in Europe aggravates the difficulties in many countries. **In addition to soaring fuel and staple food prices and disruption of supplies, many countries are heavily dependent on imports from Russia and Ukraine.** Fourteen low- and lower-middle-income countries, with already high levels of hunger and debt, import more than 50% of their wheat from Ukraine (Eritrea 100%, Somalia 92% and Yemen almost half). In addition, some humanitarian funding is being diverted from emergencies such as the Sahel, Syria and Yemen (which are already underfunded) in favour of the European situation.

If aid is slow to arrive or fails to arrive, the number of undernourished people in the world will increase rapidly, and for millions of children will not receive treatment for severe acute malnutrition. Their lives are in danger.



**SAVE  
THE CHILDREN'S  
RESPONSE**



# HELPING CHILDREN SINCE 1919

Save the Children was founded in 1919 to help child victims of the First World War. Today, more than 100 years later, the organisation continues to work to alleviate the impact of conflict on health, nutrition, education and child protection.

## Health and nutrition

**We run feeding programmes for children and adolescents** in refugee camps, and support the delivery of food supplies in conflict areas. **We have vaccination campaigns** for hepatitis, polio and other easily preventable diseases.

However, the consequences of famine and death are not limited to conflict zones at the moment. The war in Ukraine is causing the biggest humanitarian crisis in recent years in parts of the Sahel and the Horn of Africa, and our teams are taking action with feeding and livelihood programmes to prevent thousands of children from dying of hunger and malnutrition.



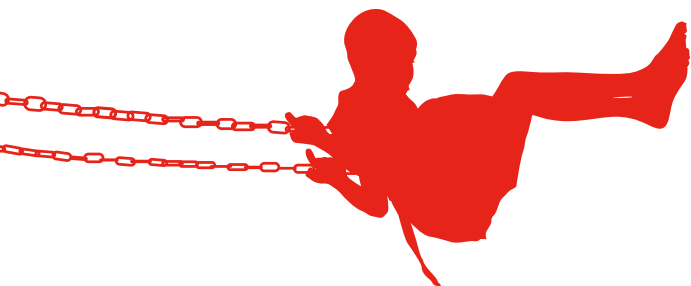
## Education

We devote a lot of our resources to getting children back to school as quickly as possible, although this is not always easy. **We understand that education is not only a tool for learning, but can help rebuild peace.** We work to influence governments and the international community to commit to prioritising education and protecting schools to make them safe and free from violence.



## Protection

**A very important part of our work is to put in place safe spaces for children,** where through leisure and free time activities, we can observe and identify their needs, and help them to continue to live normal lives as children without fear.



## Shelter

**People living in refugee camps have to cope with falling temperatures with very little,** which makes them more vulnerable. Children suffer the most from the harsh winters, and that's when we distribute blankets and warm clothes. Also basic materials such as kitchen and hygiene kits and, of course, tents to ensure shelter from the cold.



## Cash transfers

**These programmes provide cash to families affected by emergencies.** This meets their basic needs and those of their children, provided the right conditions are in place and markets are functioning. It also benefits the local economy, and empowers the families themselves, as they are the ones who decide on their needs. Their dignity is not being undermined, given they already live in a very difficult situation.

**Cash transfers also improve their resilience in the event of future crises,** by preventing them from incurring debt, or taking actions such as child marriages, or reducing daily food rations.

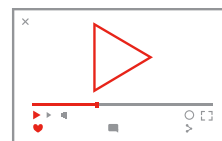


## WHAT IS OUR EMERGENCY FUND?

**Although we may not know when an emergency will occur, we do know how important it is to be prepared for it.** The war in Ukraine is a clear example; in just a few days many families who were living quiet peaceful lives had to flee their homes and cross the border to survive. If we were able to respond to their situation from the outset, it was because we had funds that enabled us to be ready to help.

Thanks to the emergency fund, we can ensure the protection and safety of affected children. **Through our family reunification programmes,** we begin to establish safe spaces where children can play with other children and where they receive psychological care from the very beginning. **We ensure as soon as possible that children regain access to basic rights such as education, healthcare, water and hygiene.** Ultimately, the emergency fund enables us to save lives.

**You can access the educational activities to work in the classroom, and more audiovisual content at [savethechildren.es/recursosdidacticos-coles](https://savethechildren.es/recursosdidacticos-coles)**



# FOR A SCHOOL WAVE THAT SHOUTS YES TO PEACE

**Save the Children cannot stop wars**, but it can help children suffering from conflict through cash transfers for families, and by rebuilding schools and creating safe spaces for children.

**Want to go one step further in your solidarity run for children's rights?  
Get involved at: [savethechildren.es/  
movilizacion-coles](https://savethechildren.es/movilizacion-coles)**



**IF YOU MOVE,  
THE WORLD MOVES TOO**



**Save the Children**