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Large earthquake strikes Sichuan, China; Save the Children ready to respond if needed

BEIJING – A 7.0 magnitude earthquake rocked the Sichuan province of China on Saturday morning, in a location close to the devastating quake in 2008 that killed nearly 70,000 people and left 4.8 million people homeless.

The earthquake was felt by hundreds of millions of people and initial reports say up to seven million people could be affected in the earthquake.

“Save the Children responded to the 2008 earthquake in Sichuan, providing life-saving aid as well as building baby care centres, child friendly spaces, and supporting kindergartens and schools reopening. A year later, we started a disaster preparedness and risk reduction programme for families in Sichuan, working with teachers, students and communities to prepare for and reduce the impact of future disasters such as these,” said Pia MacRae, country director for Save the Children in China.

“Save the Children’s field office in Chengdu is now closely monitoring the situation in Sichuan and stands ready to respond to the needs of affected children and their families. We are especially concerned about young children as they are always vulnerable in emergency situations with the possibility of being separated from their parents as they may not know where to go or what to do. More aftershocks can be expected.”

Save the Children has been working in China for two decades, responding to over 17 disasters in that time, such as the 2010 Yushu earthquake and 2008 Sichuan earthquake; and more recently the 2011 twin earthquakes in Yiliang and Zhaoyang Counties (Yunnan Province).

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Save the Children has spokespeople available for interviews. Please contact Pia MacRae at +86 139 1031 0343 or pia.macrae@savethechildren.org.

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