

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
09 June 2026

### **4.1 MILLION LEARNERS SHAKEN BY MINDANAO QUAKE, URGENT PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT NEEDED**

Around 4.1 million learners across five regions in Mindanao experienced a “destructive” magnitude 7.8 earthquake early Monday, disrupting the opening of School Year 2026-2027 and raising urgent concerns about children's safety and well-being.

According to the Department of Education's latest [situation report](#), classes in 8,624 schools across Regions IX (Zamboanga Peninsula), X (Northern Mindanao), XI (Davao Region), XII (SOCCSKSARGEN), and CARAGA were suspended Monday morning after a major earthquake struck off the coast of Sarangani Province at 7:37 a.m.

Videos and photos shared through news reports and social media showed children in school uniforms ducking for cover as the ground shook violently. Some learners were either arriving at school or attending their first flag ceremony of the school year when the earthquake struck. Reports also showed damage to buildings and other infrastructure in affected communities.

"We are deeply concerned about what children experienced today. What should have been a day filled with excitement and hope for the new school year quickly turned into fear and uncertainty," said Faisah Ali, Humanitarian Manager of Save the Children Philippines.

"We have received reports of children in distress, with some crying, panicking, or becoming physically overwhelmed by the experience. Their safety goes beyond protection from physical harm. Children also need support to process what they have seen, heard, and felt during this frightening event."

**Save the Children is urging parents, caregivers, teachers, and community members to provide immediate emotional support to children as families continue to monitor aftershocks and official advisories.**

Parents and caregivers can help children cope by:

- **Listening and answering calmly.** Ask children what they know or understand about the earthquake before explaining what happened. Give clear, age-appropriate information and encourage them to ask questions.
- **Reassuring them that they are safe.** Remind children that adults are doing everything they can to keep them safe and that emergency responders and community members are working to help affected families.
- **Spending time with them and checking in regularly.** Stay close to children, talk with them about how they are feeling, and make time for simple activities such as playing, reading, or drawing. Your presence and attention can help them feel secure after a frightening experience.

"We are closely monitoring developments and working with the government and our partners to identify and prioritize children's immediate needs. As we learn more from affected communities and from children themselves, we hope to support both their immediate recovery essentials and their emotional well-being so they can return to learning and regain a sense of normalcy as soon as possible," said Ali.

Save the Children, together with local partners engaged by our office at General Santos City, is assessing the situation on the ground to identify the immediate needs of children and their families. The organization has also readied emergency supplies, including education and household kits.

As response efforts continue, Save the Children calls on the public to support children affected by the earthquake. Visit our website at [www.savethechildren.org.ph](http://www.savethechildren.org.ph) and know more about how you can provide child-focused relief.

Faisah Ali, Save the Children Philippines' spokesperson, is available for media interviews.

## **ABOUT SAVE THE CHILDREN**

Save the Children believes every child deserves a future. In the Philippines and around the world, we do whatever it takes – every day and in times of crisis – so children can fulfill their rights to a healthy start in life, the opportunity to learn, and protection from harm. With over 100 years of expertise, we are the world's first and leading independent children's organization – transforming lives and the future we share.

## **FOR MORE INFORMATION**

**Paul John Domalaon**

*Information and Communications Coordinator*

Save the Children Philippines

**Mobile:** +639 45146 9907

**Email:** [paul.domalaon@savethechildren.org](mailto:paul.domalaon@savethechildren.org)