

## Fundación Occident and UNICEF Spain join forces to support children in humanitarian emergencies

**They have signed a three-year partnership to ramp up the immediate response in emergencies as well as in forgotten crises suffering from a severe lack of funding such as Sudan, Syria and Haiti**

UNICEF Spain and Fundación Occident have signed a new three-year strategic partnership to support children and adolescents hard hit by humanitarian emergencies around the world at a time when more than 200 million children are in need of humanitarian aid this year.

Under the agreement, Fundación Occident is to back UNICEF's Global Emergency Fund which makes it possible to sustain programmes in protracted humanitarian emergencies while also rolling out immediate assistance within 48 hours of new natural disasters, conflicts or other crises to save lives and meet the essential needs of affected children and families. Fundación Occident will additionally foster charitable initiatives with its employees and insured customers to support humanitarian action and raise awareness about the plight of children caught up in emergencies.

This help is especially significant now that children are facing several overlapping crises – violence, hunger, disease outbreaks and poor access to education and protection – which threaten their survival and long-term development.

At the same time, many emergencies are still chronically underfunded. Situations such as Sudan, Haiti, Syria and the crises in the Sahel and Central Africa receive far fewer resources than they need, meaning that interventions have to be prioritised and response capacity is limited. In this scenario, flexible and sustained funding from the private sector is crucial for taking swift action and protecting the most vulnerable children where they need it most.

Fundación Occident's backing for UNICEF Spain comes after it joined several companies and organisations for the presentation of the [Humanitarian Action for Children report](#), in which UNICEF made an urgent appeal to deliver essential aid to 73 million children across 133 countries and territories this year.

The partnership was sealed today by José María Vera, Executive Director of UNICEF Spain, and Laura Halpern, Chair of Fundación Occident. "Given the unprecedented increase in children's humanitarian needs and the strong pressure on international funding, support from the private sector and its foundation system is essential," said José María Vera. "The business community's engagement already accounts for almost 10% of humanitarian aid contributions, but there is still much to be done with new committed partners such as Fundación Occident. Their input is critical to securing flexible funding which enables us to act quickly to protect the most vulnerable children, especially in protracted crises which receive less attention."

"We are dealing with an extremely challenging global scenario in which humanitarian crises are having a severe impact on children," added Laura Halpern, Chair of Fundación Occident. "With this in mind, at Fundación Occident we are keen to play an active and ongoing role in making a real positive difference. This partnership with UNICEF Spain shows how serious we are about helping millions of children regain hope for a better future filled with opportunities."

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### About Fundación Occident

Fundación Occident, formerly Fundación Jesús Serra, is a private non-profit entity, created in memory of Jesús Serra Santamans, a renowned businessman and patron, who was the founder of GCO (Grupo Catalana Occidente). Its activity consists of developing and supporting initiatives in the fields of research, business and teaching, social action, sport, and promotion of the arts, with a common objective: responsible commitment to society.

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## About UNICEF

UNICEF works in some of the toughest places to reach the world's most disadvantaged children. Across 190 countries and territories, we work for every child, everywhere, every day, to build a better world for everyone.

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