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Together against child mortality: Save the Children and Novartis launch health project in the slums of Nairobi

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Zurich, 2. August 2021 – Save the Children partners with Novartis to launch their first common health project in Kenya tackling the problem of under-five child mortality through treatment of malaria, pneumonia, diarrhoea and malnutrition.

Children's rights organisation Save the Children partners with Swiss based global healthcare company Novartis to launch their first common health project tackling child mortality in Kenya's Kibera and Mathare slums. The project is a first step in their collaboration with the objective to provide affordable and effective healthcare to the most deprived children in Kenya. The project starting in the beginning of August will help improve the case management of common childhood diseases like pneumonia through trainings of community health volunteers in Nairobi.

Adrian Förster, CEO of Save the Children Switzerland says: *"This project is the start of a powerful partnership that will improve the living conditions of the most deprived children. We see that high-density urban centres are very challenging for children and their ability to grow up healthy. We are very happy to join our expertise and our capacity with Novartis to improve the access to medical treatment and the health of children in this particular context."*

Dr. Lutz Hegemann, Group Head of Corporate Affairs and Global Health at Novartis says: *Novartis is committed to delivering sustainable healthcare solutions to help transform the lives and health of underserved populations. We are excited to join forces with Save the Children to help reduce the number of children under the age of 5 dying from preventable and treatable diseases."*

The planned health project is located in Kenya's urban slums including Kibera and Mathare in Nairobi County and aims to improve access to medical support. Local community and health volunteers are trained to diagnose and treat common diseases in children. Malaria, pneumonia, diarrhoea and malnutrition cause the majority of preventable deaths among children under the age of five. Through the project, Save the Children and Novartis aim at tackling under five mortality and improving support for the most deprived children in urban, high-density centres.

Notes to the editors:

Mathare and Kibera are home to thousands of the urban poor, living in deprived sanitary conditions and inadequate shelter. Inhabitants of these slums lack access to basic water and sanitation, paucity of health care facilities and vulnerability in getting infectious diseases. This holistic program, targeting the main causes of morbidity and mortality amongst children, will go a long way in reducing the incidence of communicable diseases. The project also seeks to improve the social economic conditions of the communities, through timely response, accessing care and economic empowerment through a community savings scheme. Health education, prevention of disease and early treatment are some of the key interventions that will bring change in the community. This program supplements what other organisations are doing to improve the lives of the urban poor.

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About Save the Children

Every child deserves a future - whether in Switzerland or around the world. With this conviction, the Save the Children Switzerland association uncompromisingly and tirelessly supports the most disadvantaged children. Rooted in Switzerland, Save the Children has been the world's leading children's rights organisation since 1919. Thanks to our local roots in 120 countries, we know the situation on the ground, adapt our projects accordingly and can help immediately in an emergency. We make a lasting and positive difference to children's lives, especially in crises, on the move and in slums. www.savethechildren.ch

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