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SAVE THE CHILDREN & ANZ PARTNER FOR APPEAL

Following on from their generous donation last week to the tsunami affected Solomon Islands, ANZ has again joined with Save the Children Australia in an effort to raise funds for the disaster.

ANZ customers across the country are encouraged to donate to the appeal via their local branch. Staff have been advised of the arrangement and they look forward to lending their support to Save the Children.

Mike Guerin, Managing Director Pacific for ANZ said today he was pleased they could assist in such a practical way in the relief effort.

"Last week ANZ donated SBD\$250,000 to the region, and we hope to generate additional funds through our customer network across the country.

"Like Save the Children, ANZ has had a strong presence in the Solomon Islands for a number of years. Many of our staff have been personally affected by the disaster and if we can help in any way to speed up the recovery process, we welcome the opportunity", he said.

Margaret Douglas, CEO, Save the Children Australia, praised ANZ for their support, both here and in the Solomon Islands.

"ANZ have been wonderful. From the outset they gave permission for our staff to work from their office in Gizo and provided additional staff, computers and office furniture as a first step to recovery, and now we have the ability to accept donations across the counter at all ANZ branches. It is this type of assistance that makes a difference," she said.

Save the Children has been focusing on emergency initiatives over the past week, supporting the provision of water and sanitation facilities, as well as providing water, sanitation and general logistical support. While these are vital in the initial phase to prevent disease, another important phase is just beginning. Child safe spaces are being established, supported by trained education and child protection specialists to provide a safe and stable environment that promotes resilience and coping mechanisms following a disaster. This importance was demonstrated following the tsunami in Aceh and has been further developed and implemented with a key focus on psychosocial programs with safe play areas, trauma counseling and educational activities.

Donations can be made at any ANZ branch, toll free on 1800 76 00 11 or online at www.savethechildren.org.au

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Save the Children Australia is part of the International Save the Children Alliance, made up of 27 member countries. Working in over 100 countries, Save the Children is the world's largest independent child rights development organisation.