

Indonesia



Article

After losing her father, Marta's life is forever changed. But her future awaits.

UNICEF and partners continue to provide psychosocial support to children who have lost their parents and caregivers during the pandemic.

Dinda Veska



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In July 2021, Marta, 10, was watching over her brother Febri, 2, unaware that their father was fighting for his life as the children played just outside his bedroom. Several days later on her birthday, Marta saw her father take his last breath as he lost his battle against COVID-19.

Marta and Febri continue to live under the care of their mother, who runs a shop on a main road in Klaten. Now, Marta's daily routine includes watching Febri while their mother prepares meals to sell at her shop.

"There is no one to take care of my children when I work, so I have to bring them with me. Now, Marta has less time to play because she has to help with Febri,"

said Marta and Febri's mother.

At home, Marta has had to adjust to her new situation. The house has become quieter without her father's presence, and she now has to step up as a big sister to play with and take care of her little brother. All of this happened within days, which barely gave Marta any time to digest what was happening or even grieve for her father.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, over 35,000 Indonesian children have lost one or both of their parents to COVID-19. The pandemic has brought an abrupt change in the lives of children – one that they are forced to accept.

Like Marta and Febri, many young children do not understand that the passing of their mothers or fathers means that they are gone forever.

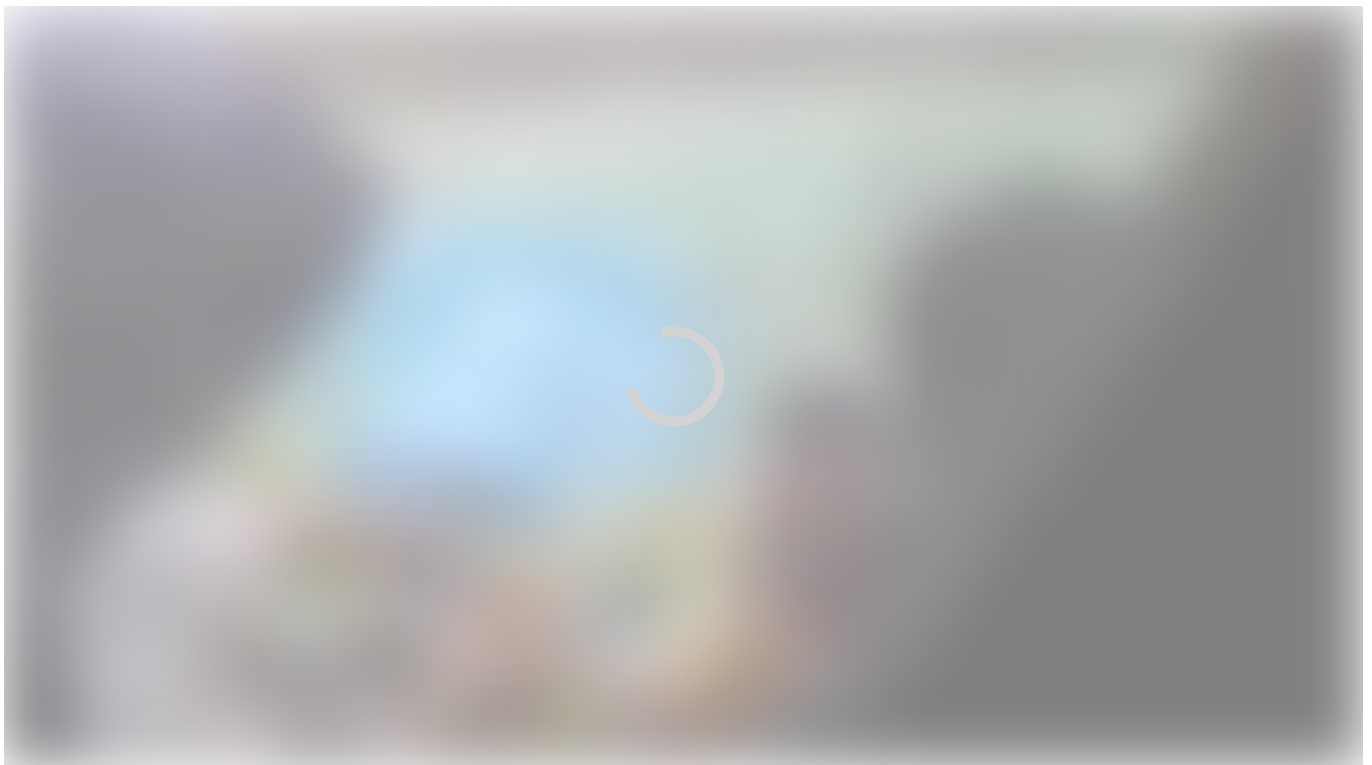


Children like Marta are vulnerable to experiencing issues to their development, mental health, and other challenges to their rights.

Many children who have been orphaned due to COVID-19 have received material assistance. But beyond that, they also urgently need psychosocial support so that they can continue their lives without any fear or concern about their future.

Psychosocial support is instrumental to helping children understand their situation, ensuring their voices are heard, providing a safe space for them to express their feelings, and helping them to move on.

While the lives of these children who lost their parents changed completely, their future still awaits. UNICEF and its partners will continue to work tirelessly so that children like Marta and Febri will never lose hope in reaching for their dreams.



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Marta and Febi play with a recreational kit from UNICEF.

Since UNICEF, the Ministry of Women Empowerment and Children Protection, and partners started to track and identify children orphaned due to COVID-19, as many as 20,800 children have received psychosocial support in the form of recreational kits to help them transition and resume their daily activities at home



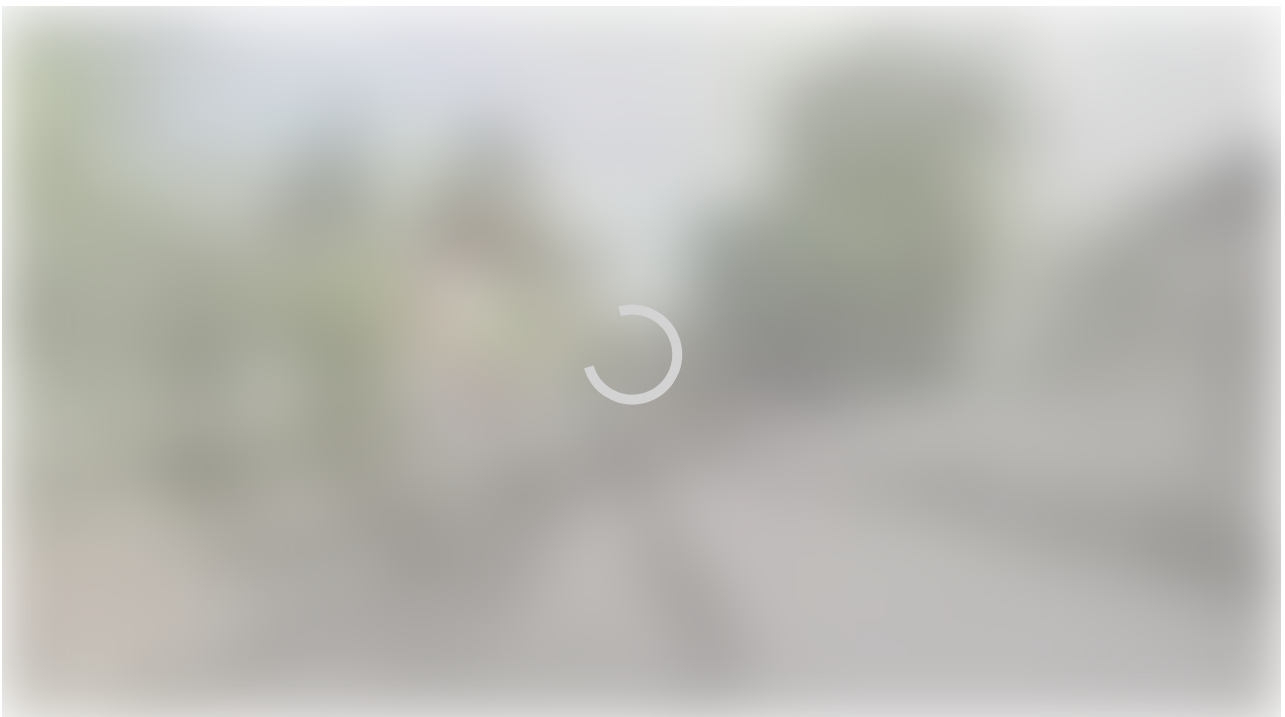
How You Can Help

Thanks to the monthly contribution from our regular donors, the Pendekar Anak, as well as other donors, UNICEF is able to deliver much-needed support to children like Marta and ensure they can access social and protective services.

However, apart from the 20,000 children who have received assistance, there are many children in other parts of Indonesia who have had similar experiences with Marta and Febri.

If you want to help keep vulnerable children safe and support them to build a bright future, **please consider donating to UNICEF.** We very much appreciate your contribution.

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Marta poses with her beloved bicycle.

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