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# *The Weekly Pulse*

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NEWS FROM ORGANIZATIONS AND COALITIONS IN GLOBAL CHILD ADVOCACY



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**Vol. 100: First Focus Sign-On Letter, U.S. Strategy Toward Sub-Saharan Africa, & The End Tuberculosis Now Act of 2022.**

September 6, 2022

Call to Action

**First Focus is asking organizations to sign their letter, urging U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Xavier Becerra to establish a Children’s Interagency Coordinating Council housed in the Office of the HHS Secretary.**

Reps. Lucille Roybal-Allard and Barbara Lee added language directing HHS to establish this council “in the accompanying reports to both the FY 2022 House and Senate Labor/HHS appropriations bills (H.R. 4502/S. 3062), as well as the accompanying reports to the FY 2023 House-passed Labor/HHS bill (H.R. 8295) and FY 2023 Senate-released bill, which also included \$3 million for the creation of the council.

[Secretary Becerra also testified to Congress last spring](#) that HHS is moving forward on

the council, and he is anxious to get it going.” First Focus emphasizes that a “children’s interagency coordinating council housed in the Office of the HHS Secretary will create a permanent and ongoing mechanism to improve both domestic and international policymaking for children.” These asks directly affect children, especially children who are affected by sexual abuse on and offline. [See here to view the full letter and add your organization](#) by **COB Friday, September 9<sup>th</sup>**. If you have any questions, please email Cara Baldari at [carab@firstfocus.org](mailto:carab@firstfocus.org).

## Quick Summary

**The White House released its U.S. [Strategy](#) Toward Sub-Saharan Africa.** The strategy “articulates our new vision for a 21st Century U.S.-African Partnership. It recognizes the tremendous, positive opportunities that exist to advance shared interests alongside our African partners. At the same time, we acknowledge that Africa’s potential will continue to be challenged as long as deadly conflicts divide societies, corruption impedes economic progress, food insecurity heightens the risk of famine and malnutrition, and repression stifles human rights and democratic expression.” The strategy is broken down into four main objectives; Foster Openness and Open Societies; Deliver Democratic and Security Dividends; Advance Pandemic Recovery and Economic Opportunity; and Support Conservation, Climate Adaptation, and a Just Energy Transition. The strategy specially mentions children under Advance Pandemic Recovery and Economic Opportunity, stating **“The United States will strengthen efforts to address losses, prevent further declines, address vulnerabilities in household income and food security, help children—, particularly girls—return to school, and prepare African youth to gain the skills and expertise to participate in a 21st-century economy.”** The report also addresses sexual and gender-based violence, which affects children. The report states that **“There are strong linkages between poor and exclusionary governance, high levels of corruption, human rights abuses, including sexual and gender-based violence, and insecurity,** which are often exploited by terrorist groups and malign foreign actors. By simultaneously addressing these challenges and reaffirming that democracy delivers tangible benefits, the United States can offer choices to Africans as they determine their own future, limit openings for negative state and non-state actors, and obviate the need for costly interventions.” To read the full strategy, click [here](#).

**The End Tuberculosis Now Act of 2022 legislation was [introduced](#) by Representatives [Ami Bera, M.D. \(D-CA\)](#) and [María Elvira Salazar \(R-FL\)](#).** This bill “directs the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to align U.S. tuberculosis control efforts with goals established by the international community.” The End TB Now Act will “prioritize U.S. tuberculosis response to target the diagnosis and

treatment of adults and children with TB and to prevent new TB infections in countries with high burdens of TB.” Senators [Bob Menendez](#) (D-NJ) and [Todd Young](#) (R-IN) introduced companion legislation to the U.S. Senate. To read the introduced legislation, click [here](#).

## Youth Opportunity

**The White House is currently accepting [applications](#) for its first-ever PAID Internship Program for Spring 2023.** The White House Internship Program is a “public service leadership and development program that provides emerging leaders with an opportunity to gain valuable skills while supporting the work of the White House and furthering the priorities of the Biden-Harris Administration.” **The application portal will close Friday, September 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2022. To learn more and apply, click [here](#).**

## Spotlight

**USAID, YP2LE, and Youth Excel held a virtual event on “Intergenerational Solidarity: Inclusion, Protection, and Mental Well-Being.”** This event was focused on key themes outlined by the UN surrounding intergenerational solidarity. Youth and adult speakers highlighted the “importance of building strong foundations for international solidarity through inclusive safe spaces, supporting mental well-being, and addressing power differentials.” Additionally, participants heard from young and seasoned professionals from all over the world, including “remarks from USAID’s Deputy Assistant Administrator, an intergenerational dialogue on inclusion, protection, and mental well-being; young professionals, and young leaders currently involved in USAID programming; and important announcements from Youth Excel and YP2LE.”

[Bama Athreya](#), the Deputy Assistant Administrator for the Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment Hub and the Inclusive Development Hub in USAID’s Bureau for Development, Democracy, and Innovation, and [Tevin Shepard](#), a Youth Specialist at USAID gave opening remarks, which were followed by a series of youth presentations. The first presentation was presented by [Krissia Jovel](#), a youth researcher at the Autonomous University of Santa Ana (UNASA) titled “Intersectional Rapid Gender and Protection Analysis (IRGPA) experience in El Salvador: Our experience as young researchers from UNASA University for Casa Torogoz Project.” The Casa Torogoz Project was born as a response to the pandemic. It aims to “benefit girls that have faced difficult situations like stress and GBV during the COVID-19 lockdown.” She explained that the IRGPA “informed a proposal for Casa Torogoz. We proposed specific actions to support the most vulnerable youth of Santa Ana.” Krissia emphasized the importance of youth participation in key spaces of the university and that, through this project, they

were able to break down intergenerational gaps. As a result of this project, the university “focused on and strengthened its existing protection policy” and “valued the input of young researchers.”

The second presentation focused on dance and therapy to strengthen youth mental health outcomes. [Denis Okello Lokoroma](#), the Monitoring & Evaluation Officer at THIRVE Gulu helped run a program titled “Dance + Therapy to Strengthen MHPSS (Mental Health and Psychosocial Support) for Marginalized Youth in Northern Uganda.” Through this program, “Youth conduct community sensitization on mental health issues, which resulted in Youth being seen as mental health champions and leaders,” worked across generations and “with civil society actors & government officers resulted in increased awareness/uptake of MHPSS services- individual, group and family counseling,” and “working with community stakeholders resulted in Close working relationship with police lead to fast-track arrest of perpetrators of SGBV.” To learn more and watch a recording of this event, click [here](#).

## Events

- Women In International Security (WIIS) and the Embassy of Liechtenstein [virtual event](#) “**Exploring the Nexus between Gender, Climate Security and Migration.**” September 9, 2022, at 1 pm ET.
- Foreign Policy and the National Democratic Institute (NDI) [virtual dialogue](#) “**Uniting for Democratic Equality: Reversing the Rollback on Women’s Rights.**” September 13, 2022, at 11 am ET.
- AMPLIFY Girls [virtual symposium](#) “**AMPLIFY Girls Agency Symposium: A two-part series of the global launch of AMPLIFY Girls’ Agency Report- September 13th and 15th.**” September 13, 2022, at 9 am ET and September 15, 2022, at 10 am ET.
- **Transforming Education Summit (TES) [list](#) of Activations, Campaigns, and Events.** September 13 - 24, 2022.
- Mercy Corps [webinar](#) “**Overview of Adolescent Girls’ Safe Space Guide for CBOs.**” September 14, 2022, at 8 am ET.
- Global Campaign for Education-US, World Vision, Jesuit Refugee Service USA, Plan International, 100 Million [spotlight session](#) during the “**UN Foundation’s Unlock the Future of Learning Festival**” Monday, September 19, 10 am ET.
- White House [conference](#) “**White House Conference on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health: Ending Hunger, Improving Nutrition and Physical Activity, and Reducing Diet-Related Diseases and Disparities.**” September 28, 2022.
- The Center for Strategy & International Studies (CSIS) [in-person event](#) “**2022 Global Development Forum.**” October 13, 2022, at 8 am ET.

## Reports, Articles & Resources

- Human Rights Watch [interview](#) **“Interview: New Niger Law Protects Girls’ Rights to Education.”**
- Save the Children [factsheet](#) **“Lead Like a Girl: Ensuring adolescent girls’ meaningful participation in decision-making processes.”**
- World Vision and the University of Edinburgh [report](#) **“Learning from Child Activism: Stopping Child Marriages in Bangladesh & Ghana.”**
- Vox [article](#) **“The fight to expand the child tax credit is not over: But in Congress, at least, Republicans are now in the driver’s seat.”**
- UNICEF USA [press release](#) **“Depriving Girls Of Secondary Education Translates To A Loss Of At Least \$500 Million For Afghan Economy In Last 12 Months.”**
- FHI360 & Global Education [report](#) **“Evidence and Strategies for Adolescent Girls’ Education Programming A Business Brief.”**
- UNICEF [toolkit](#) **“Skills4girls Partner Toolkit 2022: Unlocking The Potential Of Adolescent Girls.”**



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