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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. 133: Senate Foreign Relations Committee confirmation, House Foreign Affairs subcommittee hearing, and Decolonizing Education Financing.

May 15, 2023

Quick Summary

**The Senate Foreign Relations Committee confirmed [Dr. Geeta Rao Gupta](#), former Deputy Executive Director at UNICEF, as the U.S. Ambassador for Global Women's Issues.** Previously, she helped convene a HIV/AIDS international initiative, commissioned by UNAIDS, which made plans for the global HIV/AIDS for the next 25 years. Additionally, she was “appointed by the Secretary-General to the role of Deputy Executive Director of UNICEF. She has served on an oversight committee for the World Health Organization’s Health Emergencies Programme, and co-chaired the World Bank’s Global Gender-based Violence Task Force. In addition, Gupta served as the President of the International Center for Research on Women.” To learn more about Dr. Geeta Rao Gupta, click [here](#).

**The House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations held a [hearing](#) on the “Implementation of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act.”** This bill ([S.1862](#)) introduced changes to the criteria used for evaluating a country's compliance with minimum standards in combating human trafficking. Bill modifies the Department of State's annual report to require explanations for rank changes, concrete actions taken by countries, and the preparation of action plans for countries on the Tier 2 watch list. When a country is downgraded, the State Department must provide the Foreign Minister with a report and explanations and the Department of the Treasury is directed to promote anti-human trafficking policies in multilateral development banks.

Witnesses included Bella Hounakey, Trafficking survivor; Gina Cavallo, Trafficking survivor; Robert Lung, Trafficking survivor; Becky Murray, Founder and CEO One By One; Martina E. Vandenberg, President The Human Trafficking Legal Center; Cindy Dyer, Ambassador-At-Large to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons U.S. Department of State; and Johnny Walsh, Deputy Assistant Administrator U.S. Agency for International Development. Trafficking victims spoke about their experience being trafficked at a young age while officials from the U.S. Department of State and USAID highlighted their work around online child trafficking and exploitation. Ambassador Dyer stated that “In recent years, we have seen increased online recruiting and exploitation of trafficking victims—especially online sexual exploitation of children, more forced criminality and forced begging cases, and rapidly growing forced labor in scam centers based in Southeast Asia that exploit victims worldwide.” USAID is assisting in combating this through its “revised C-TIP [Countering Trafficking in Persons] policy [which] emphasizes rigorous research methodology to better understand what is working and what is not, and to continually learn five lessons and adapt to changing threats such as the rise in online sexual exploitation of children.”

To read more about this hearing, click [here](#).

## Spotlight

**Global Campaign for Education- European and North American Campaign for Education ([GCE- ENACE](#)), the Swiss Network for Education and International Cooperation ([RECI](#)), the Network for International Policies and Cooperation in Education and Training ([NORRAG](#)) held a webinar on “Decolonizing Education Financing.”** This webinar focused on what decolonizing financing is, why it is important for global education, and the challenges and opportunities.. Guest speakers included [David Archer](#), Senior Lead of Economic Justice at ActionAid; [Will Brehm](#), Associate Professor of Education and International Development at the University College London

Institute of Education; [Dr. Moira Faul](#), Executive Director of NORAAG; and [Thibaut Lauwerier](#), Senior Research Associate at the Université de Genève and President/Senior Expert at eduCoop.

The event was kicked-off with emphasizing the need for financing education globally. That “there has been a chronic underfunding of public education for decades which means continuing violations of the right to education and a failure to achieve global goals. The latest GEM [Global Economic Monitoring] Report estimates a \$100 billion annual gap. Domestic Resource Mobilization makes up 97% of the financing for education. Yet most global attention to education financing focuses on the 3% in aid and loans.” Education is one of the largest spending items in any government budget and thus often suffers significantly from austerity and overall public spending constraints. Post-WWII international organizations such as the IMF and the World Bank have a lot of influence on government spending on education in poor countries.

They define decolonizing aid as “challenging all the distorted power dynamics. It is about”:

- Challenging the cult of austerity that drives the IMF – which shapes the financing available for education.
- Changing how global tax policies are set and arguing for ambitious and progressive domestic tax reforms.
- Demanding global action on debt – wherever countries are spending more on debt servicing than they do on education and health.
- Revisiting power dynamics in national education reform processes to ensure national governments in consultation with their own citizens, shape the direction of reform.

The impact of “neo-colonial power dynamic is dramatic in framing the financing available for education in many low- and middle-income countries – and can even frame the mindset around education financing in high-income countries.” Mr. Archer ended the presentation by stating that “to decolonise education financing, education campaigners need to get out of the education bubble and take the case for transformative action to Heads of State and Ministers of Finance. We need to address the structural causes of the chronic underfunding of education - that lie in distorted power dynamics nationally and internationally.”

To learn more about this event, click [here](#).

Professional Opportunity

**The Institute for Research on Poverty (IRP) in partnership with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is seeking individuals for a year-long, full-time temporary assignment with the HHS Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (ASPE) to establish the new federal Children's Interagency Coordinating Council (CICC).** The CICC aims to reduce child poverty and improve child well-being by promoting coordination and transparency on child policy across agencies and addressing cross-cutting issues. The selected individual will serve as the CICC Coordinator and work with federal leadership, contractors, and partners both inside and outside of HHS to shape the interagency effort. To learn more and apply to this opportunity, click [here](#).

#### Events

- Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) [virtual event](#) **“INEE Meet-Up”**. May 15, 2023, at 10 am ET.
- House Foreign Affairs Committee [discussion](#) **“Roundtable – Members will hear from former Afghan Ambassador to the U.S. Roya Rahmani and former Afghan diplomat Hadeia Amiry.”** May 17, 2023 at 10 am ET.
- Women In International Security (WIIS) and the Embassy of Liechtenstein [webinar](#) **“Gendered Harm: The Disproportionate Impact of Weapons on Women and Girls.”** May 17, 2023 at 11 am ET.
- Society for International Development (SID) [hybrid event](#) **“SID Annual Conference- Power Shift: Defining the Next Decade of Development.”** May 23, 2023.
- Together for Girls. SVRI, and CDC [webinar](#) **“VACS webinar series: Data, action and the intersection between VAC + VAW for LAC region.”** May 24, 2023 at 10 am ET.
- Together for Girls. SVRI, and CDC [webinar](#) **“VACS webinar series: Data, action and the intersection between VAC + VAW for Africa region.”** June 28, 2023 at 9 am ET.
- U.S. Department of State, IREX, and Fulbright [virtual event](#) **“8th annual Global Teaching Dialogue.”** July 18-19, 2023.
- Young Professionals in Foreign Policy [virtual event](#) **“Young Leaders Series: What is the future of democracy in transatlantic relations?”** November 5, 2023, at 10:30 am ET.

#### Reports, Articles & Resources

- Human Rights Watch [article](#) **“Sierra Leone: Center Girls’ Voices in Education Reforms- New Law Should Require Greater Inclusion of Pregnant Girls, Young Mothers.”**

- UNICEF [report](#) **“A Brighter Digital Tomorrow: An equitable digital future built for, with and by today's children and young people.”**
- World Health Organization [report](#) **“Improving maternal and newborn health and survival and reducing stillbirth - Progress report 2023.”**
- Human Rights Watch [article](#) **“Legal Right to Free Education Grows Globally: Expanded International Law Could Accelerate Progress.”**
- U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants policy and advocacy [brief](#) **“Grave Violations: Children Affected by Armed Conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.”**
- Kids in Need of Defense (KIND) [report](#) **“Children on the Move: A Guide to Common Definitions and Terms.”**
- Al Jazeera op-ed [article](#) **“Healing from the trauma of childhood sexual violence is possible: But there are barriers that need to be broken.”**
- Reuters [article](#) **“Haiti conflict puts over 100,000 kids at risk of starving to death, UN says.”**



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