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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. 141: FY 2024 Appropriations Bill, International Children with Disabilities Protection Act, & Georgetown Event.

July 17, 2023

## Quick Summary

**The Fiscal Year 2024 Appropriations bill** includes positive and negative developments. The House and Senate bills will eventually need to be reconciled before adoption. Currently, the Senate's Foreign Operations Appropriations (SFOPS) report language that instructs implementation of the bill contains positive developments for children and youth. The language aligns with the proposals by key organizations that engage in joint planning through the Children's Policy and Funding Initiative. At the same time, programs relating to girls, gender-based violence, and women's empowerment are under attack and at risk of serious backsliding. Among the positive developments contained in the SFOPS bill:

- 1. Children and youth: The Committee directs the Secretary of State and Administrator of USAID to ensure that embassy and mission staff, partners,**

**and field personnel receive proper training and resources to track and report the funds allocated for supporting children and youth.** Moreover, their meaningful engagement in United States foreign assistance programming should be emphasized. Additionally, the Secretary of State is expected to comply with the requirements outlined in Diplomatic Programs, as mentioned in House Report 117–84, with regards to youth engagement. The House Report 117-84 states the following in relation to youth engagement: The Committee has directed the Secretary of State to collaborate with all government agencies managing foreign assistance in order to develop a strategy that specifically addresses the needs and engagement of youth.

**2. Tracking of funding for children and youth: Within 90 days of the Act's enactment, the Administrator of USAID is required to submit a report to the appropriate congressional committees detailing the actions taken over the past 12 months to implement programs benefiting children and youth, including infants and other children under school age.** The report should also address efforts to improve the tracking and disaggregation of funding allocated for the benefit of children and youth. This includes programs primarily and secondarily related to the protection, education, support, and safety of children and youth.

Click [here](#) to read the FY24 House SFOPs appropriations bill.

**The Senate Foreign Relations Committee on Thursday, July 13, voted favorably in support of the International Children with Disabilities Protection Act (S. 847).** This bill aims to establish the International Children with Disabilities Protection Program within the Department of State. The program's purpose is to support organizations of persons with disabilities and family members of children with disabilities in advocating for policies that ensure the inclusion of children with disabilities in families and their transition to independent living as adults. The bill recognizes the global population of children and youth with disabilities, emphasizing the need to protect their rights and provide them with necessary support. It highlights the negative impact of placing children with disabilities in residential institutions and emphasizes the importance of family-based care. The bill also emphasizes the role of the United States in promoting disability rights globally and calls for capacity-building programs, technical assistance, and international cooperation to advance the policy goals. The bill authorizes appropriations for the program and requires regular briefings and reports on its implementation. Additionally, the bill urges that all programming related to childcare, health care, education, disability rights, and human rights be consistent with the policy of family inclusion and disability rights. It also stresses the importance of maintaining

family connections for children in conflict, emergency, or displacement situations. To learn more about this bill, click [here](#).

**In an opinion [piece](#) by former Representatives Nita Lowey (D-NY) and Ed Royce (R-CA), they emphasize the importance of renewing the READ Act (H.R. 681) and maintaining international education as a priority.** The READ Act, passed in 2017, aims to strengthen education systems worldwide, improve learning outcomes, and support vulnerable populations, especially young girls. They wrote about how access to quality education is crucial for various aspects of life, such as health, economic development, and political stability. USAID has made significant progress through the READ Act, assisting millions of children and youth with education and training initiatives. However, the COVID-19 pandemic has severely impacted education systems globally, exacerbating existing challenges. Millions of children have suffered not only learning loss but also negative consequences on their mental health, skills, and safety. Even before the pandemic, many children in crisis settings faced barriers to education. They emphasize that by reauthorizing the READ Act for another five years, Congress can address these issues, hold the administration accountable, and ensure a continued focus on international education. The former Representatives highlighted the bipartisan support for the legislation and urged their former colleagues to vote in favor of reauthorization, as it is a straightforward and non-controversial decision. To read the op-ed, click [here](#).

## Spotlight

**Georgetown University's [Collaboration](#) of Global Children's Issues held a [webinar](#) titled "The Forcible Transfer and Deportation of Ukrainian Children by Russia: Search for Solutions".** They addressed the issue of children affected by the war in Ukraine being separated from their families and forcibly moved to Russian-occupied territories or deported to Russia. Some of these children have been placed in Russian foster and adoptive families and given Russian nationality. There are reports of Ukrainian children being transferred to camps and facilities in Russia and occupied territories, where they receive patriotic education as claimed by Russian officials. The UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights emphasizes that such forced transfers and deportations violate international humanitarian law and may amount to war crimes.

The webinar featured various [speakers](#), including Vladyslav Havrylov, Research Fellow, Collaborative on Global Children's Issues; Daria Herasymchuk, President's Commissioner for Children's Rights and Rehabilitation, Ukraine; Gillian Huebner (moderator), Executive Director, Collaborative on Global Children's Issues; Mykola

Kuleba, Founder and CEO, Save Ukraine; Anastasiia Marushevskaya, Founder, Where Are Our People?; Nadia McConnell, Co-founder and President, U.S.-Ukraine Foundation; Katya Pavlevych (moderator), Policy Advisor on Child Deportation, Razom for Ukraine; Kateryna Rashevskaya, Legal Expert, Regional Center for Human Rights; Erin Farrell Rosenberg, Visiting Scholar, Urban Morgan Institute for Human Rights, University of Cincinnati College of Law; David Schlaefter, Principal Director for Ukraine, Office for Global Criminal Justice, U.S. Department of State; Steven Schrage, Executive Director, U.S. Helsinki Commission; and Bogdana Yakovenko, Executive Board Member, Helping to Leave. These speakers, who shared their perspectives on the issue, represented Ukrainian organizations, human rights experts, and governmental bodies.

The webinar explored the current situation and provided historical context. Ukrainian organizations involved in the frontline response will share their perspectives on the issue. Participants also discussed and considered ways in which the international community can support efforts related to family tracing and reunification for these affected children. The webinar served as a platform for examining the situation and searching for solutions to address this humanitarian crisis.

To re-watch and learn more about this webinar, click [here](#).

#### Events

- Youth Systems Strengthening (YSS) Community of Practice (CoP) [webinar](#) **“Lessons Learned: Measuring Child and Youth Systems Change Around the Globe.”** July 18, 2023, at 9 am ET.
- USAID Leading Through Learning Global Platform [webinar](#) **“Connect, Learn, and Share: Strengthening Education Systems.”** July 18, 2023, at 10 am ET.
- Fulbright hybrid [event](#) **“Global Teaching Dialogue.”** July 18-19, 2023.
- World Vision UN Food Systems Summit [webinar](#) **“Power of Faith communities in equitable, resilient and sustainable food system transformation.”** July 25, 2023, at 12 pm ET.
- First Focus on Children [webinar](#) **“It’s Time for Adults to Listen: A Youth-Centered, Policy-Focused Discussion on the Nation’s Youth Mental Health.”** July 25, 2023, at 1 pm ET.
- MenEngage Africa [hybrid event](#) **“3rd MenEngage Africa Symposium 2023.”** August 14-17, 2023, hybrid in Ubumwe Grand Hotel, Kigali, Rwanda.

#### Reports, Articles & Resources

- We Trust Youth [blog post](#) **“Best practices in supporting young people to attend conferences: In-person conferences are back. Are you sponsoring**

**young people to attend? Here are the Do and Don'ts from We Trust You(th)!"**

- Europe PMC academic [paper](#) **"An atlas on Female Genital Mutilation/ Cutting among children and adolescents."**
- Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology academic [paper](#) **"Youth Friendly Health Services in Kenya: Characteristics, Knowledge, Attitude, Practices and Experiences."**
- USAID YouthPower2 [resource](#) **"How to do Digital Advocacy."**
- The Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action technical [note](#) **"Education Interventions for Children Associated with Armed Forces and Armed Groups."**
- The Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action technical [note](#) **"Livelihood Interventions for Children Associated with Armed Forces and Armed Groups."**



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