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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. 151: USAID Donor Statement, GEM Report, & UNGA Event.

September 25, 2023

## Quick Summary

**Announced at the 2022 Effective Development Cooperation Summit, USAID put out a Donor [Statement](#) on Supporting Locally Led Development that highlights the need for collaborative efforts to address complex global development, humanitarian, and peacebuilding challenges.** The statement underscores the importance of respecting the dignity, agency, priorities, knowledge, rights, and aspirations of individuals and communities impacted by these challenges. It commits to actions aimed at fostering locally sustained change tailored to each country's unique context. These actions involve shifting and sharing power to ensure local actors have ownership and meaningful engagement in development efforts, channeling high-quality funding directly to local actors, and advocating for locally led development through partnerships, networks, and international forums. The statement is endorsed by several countries, including Australia, Canada, Denmark, Estonia, France, Iceland, Ireland, Japan, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea, the Ministry of Foreign

Affairs of the Republic of Lithuania, the Netherlands, Norway, Slovenia, the Spanish Cooperation for Development, Sweden, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, the United Kingdom's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, and USAID.

Additionally, the following foundations have also endorsed this statement: Fundación Avina, Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, Conrad N. Hilton Foundation, David and Lucile Packard Foundation, Draper Richards Kaplan Foundation, Ford Foundation, GHR Foundation, Humanity United, Imaginable Futures, John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, McKnight Foundation, The Rockefeller Foundation, Segal Family Foundation, Skoll Foundation, and William and Flora Hewlett Foundation. This collective commitment represents a dedication to prioritizing locally led, inclusive, and sustainable approaches to development and humanitarian work. To read the full announcement, click [here](#).

**The 2023 Global Education Monitoring (GEM) Report was released**, offering vital insights into progress toward achieving Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4) on education since 2015. Drawing primarily from data provided by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS), this report sheds light on key aspects of global education. Notable highlights from the 2023 GEM Report include:

- Steady enrollment in early childhood education though with concerns about the out-of-school population, which increased in sub-Saharan Africa; an improvement in
- Completion rates have improved at various education levels, but progress in reading remains slow, particularly in countries with insufficient data.
- Higher education enrollment has risen, favoring women slightly, while adult education participation dipped in response to the COVID-19 pandemic
- Digital skills improved in several high-income countries.
- Gender parity in secondary education has improved globally, although disparities persist, especially in sub-Saharan Africa.

These findings underscore the urgency of addressing the education crisis and accelerating SDG 4 progress. The report highlights areas needing more significant efforts to ensure equitable access to quality education. To read the report, click [here](#).

**The United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child [issued](#) its first comprehensive interpretation of children's rights in relation to the environment, with a particular focus on climate change.** The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, [ratified](#) by 196 states in 1989, now sees a significant expansion as "General [Comment No. 26](#) on children's rights and the environment with a special focus on climate change" explicitly addresses the climate crisis, biodiversity loss, and pollution.

This guidance underscores that states are not only responsible for protecting children's rights from immediate harm but also for preventing foreseeable violations due to their actions or inactions. It also holds states accountable not just for harm within their borders but also for environmental damage and climate change impacts beyond them, with special consideration for children in disadvantaged situations.

The Committee calls upon the 196 ratified states to take urgent measures, including phasing out fossil fuels, improving air quality, ensuring access to clean water, transitioning to sustainable food production, and safeguarding biodiversity. The guidance emphasizes the importance of involving children in environmental decision-making and highlights the critical role of environmental education in empowering children to take action and protect themselves from environmental harm. Click [here](#) to learn more.

## Spotlight

**During the United Nations General Assembly, the CEOs of [Joining Forces](#)' member agencies made a powerful call to action on children's participation.**

These agencies include the [ChildFund Alliance](#), [PLAN International](#), [Save the Children](#), [SOS Children's Villages International](#), [Terre des Hommes International Federation](#), and [World Vision](#). This global [initiative](#), set to be officially launched in late 2023, highlights the critical role children play as agents of change and underscores their right to actively engage in decisions that affect them.

Despite representing over 30% of the world's population, children have been largely excluded from decision-making processes, even as they've passionately mobilized on various global issues. The Joining Forces CEOs advocated for children's inclusion in decision-making, emphasizing their rights and evolving capacities. The call to action seeks greater financial investments and political support from governments and the international community for systematic and sustainable child participation.

Key focuses include institutional engagement with children, increase investment in child participation, and the ratification of international child rights instruments. Joining Forces aims for concrete action by decision-makers to enhance child participation by November 2024, coinciding with the 35th Anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, with the goal of achieving effective, ethical, safe, and inclusive child participation at all levels.

To learn more and rewatch the event, click [here](#).

## Events

- U.S. Department of Labor [webinar](#) **“Protection in Practice: Lessons in Global Child Labor Enforcement.”** September 26, 2023, at 10 am ET.
- Alliance for Peacebuilding (AfP) and the Institute for Economics and Peace [hybrid event](#) **“Making Peace Everyone’s Issue: How Peacebuilders Can Tell the Story of Peacebuilding in Action to Any Audience.”** September 26, 2023, at 10 am ET.
- USAID YouthPower2 Youth Systems Strengthening (YSS) Community of Practice (CoP) [virtual event](#) **“Youth-Led Change: Transforming Mental Health and Child Protection.”** September 28, 2023, at 9 am ET.
- UNICEF and the RISE Institute [webinar](#) **“National Child Tracking Systems: Successful Systems of Chile and Colombia.”** October 4, 2023, at 9 am ET.
- USAID YouthPower Learning Network [webinar](#) **“YP2LE Learning Network Event: Tools for Cost Reporting and Analysis of Youth Development.”** October 10, 2023, at 9 am ET.
- UNESCO in-person [event](#) **“Global Media and Information Literacy Week 2023.”** October 23-25, 2023.

## Reports, Articles & Resources

- The Lancet [journal article](#) **“Global health burden and cost of lead exposure in children and adults: a health impact and economic modeling analysis.”**
- KFF [article](#) **“PEPFAR Reauthorization: The Debate About Abortion.”**
- Alliance Magazine [article](#) **“How funders can reach and support more youth-led groups.”**
- The Guardian [article](#) **“Younger people more likely to doubt merits of democracy – global poll.”**
- MDPI academic [article](#) **“The Right to Leave: Dissolution of Child, Early, and Forced Marriages and Unions.”**
- Human Trafficking: A Global Health Emergency [academic article](#) **“Violence Against Women and Girls as a Systemic Global Problem.”**



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