
The Weekly Pulse

NEWS FROM ORGANIZATIONS AND COALITIONS IN GLOBAL CHILD ADVOCACY



Vol. 160: World Children's Day, Climate Change and Life Course, & Ukrainian Children.

November 27, 2023

Quick Summary

Last Monday was World Children's [Day](#), which served as a stark reminder of the challenges faced by children globally. Despite over 30 years since the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, children continue to suffer from violence, abuse, and oppression, especially in conflict zones. In 2022, the UN recorded 27,180 violations affecting 18,890 children, with a notable increase in attacks on schools and hospitals. Beyond armed conflict, the impact of climate change, pandemics, and other crises contributes to the general impoverishment of communities, prompting children to join armed groups or face sexual violence. Among the many organizations that took action for this commemorative day, were First Focus on Children. As part of the Children's Policy and Funding [Initiative](#), First Focus on Children published an [article](#) on World Children's Day underscoring the urgent need for a whole child approach when it comes to U.S. foreign assistance. This action aligns with complementary proposals featured at ["A Generation At Stake" website](#), calling on U.S. leaders to adopt a

comprehensive strategy encompassing all aspects of children's lives. The Children's Budget 2023 reveals the inadequacies and fragmentation in funding for children, with just 9 cents of every dollar in U.S. foreign assistance allocated to them. This fragmented approach, spread across various accounts and offices, hinders the effective addressing of children's needs. On World Children's Day 2023, the call is for U.S. leaders to prioritize a "whole child" approach in funding, recognizing the interconnectedness of various factors impacting children and ensuring their holistic development. To read the article, click [here](#).

Belarus's complicity in Russia's systematic removal of Ukrainian children has been exposed through a recent report released by the [Conflict Observatory](#), a U.S. Department of State supported program. The Yale Humanitarian Research [Lab](#), a program partner, reveals that over 2,400 children, aged six to 17, have been transported from Russia-occupied regions of Ukraine to facilities in Belarus. These children undergo political and cultural re-education, as well as military training, serving the political interests of both Belarus and Russia. The operations are orchestrated at the highest levels of both governments and involve security forces and ultranationalist militant groups. The report highlights that officials targeting children for relocation focus on vulnerable populations, including children with disabilities, from low-income families, with military parents, or purported orphans. The children are relocated without clear consent from their families, raising concerns about their ability to return home. This Belarusian involvement is part of a broader campaign directed by Russia, involving the deportation of hundreds of thousands of Ukrainian civilians, including children forcibly separated from their families. To learn more and read the report, click [here](#).

The United States is [collaborating](#) with global partners to advance technology governance that respects rights and ensures safety for vulnerable populations, including children and youth. U.S. Special Envoy and Coordinator for Digital Freedom, [Eileen Donahoe](#), recently [announced](#) U.S. support for the Children Online Protection Laboratory during a high-level year in review event led by the French government. This initiative focuses on enhancing the safety of digital services for vulnerable users, with a specific emphasis on protecting children online. To strengthen these endeavors, the United States, represented by Special Envoy Donahoe, will co-chair the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)'s DIS/MIS Information Resource Hub alongside France. This multi stakeholder platform will facilitate cooperation among OECD member states and non-member states to address challenges related to generative AI, share best practices, and develop rights-respecting solutions to counter misinformation and disinformation. Click [here](#) to read the full announcement.

Spotlight

The WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, PNMCH, and partners held a joint [event](#) titled “Climate change across the life course: Evidence to action”. The panel presented research on the impacts and crucial actions to protect and promote the health and rights of women, children, adolescents, and future generations, who bear the greatest burdens of the climate crisis. The [agenda](#) included opening remarks by Dr. Maria Neira, Director of Environment, Climate Change, and Health at the World Health Organization, a keynote address by H.E. Mitoha Ondo'o Ayekaba, Minister of Health, Equatorial Guinea, and reflections from Abheet Solomon of UNICEF and Willibald Zeck of UNFPA.

The moderated discussion involved participants such as Githinji Gitahi, CEO of AMREF Health Africa, Merette Khalil, Founder of Your Egyptian Doula, and Agnès Soucat, Director of Health and Social Protection at the French Development Agency. They explained that a growing body of epidemiological evidence linked climate hazards to adverse maternal, newborn, and child health outcomes. This ranged from gestational hypertension and pre-eclampsia to preterm births, respiratory diseases, and negative effects on learning and family function. Climate change also threatened maternal, newborn, and child health by disrupting the quality, provision, and use of health services and care practices in the home.

The climate crisis negatively impacted all five domains of adolescents' well-being, including good health and optimum nutrition, connectedness, positive values, safety, supportive environments, learning, competence, education, skills, employability, agency, and resilience. While there was growing recognition of climate change's health effects, more information was needed on how it happens, who is most at risk, and what works to reduce its impact, particularly in low- and middle-income countries.

A deeper understanding of the complex consequences of the climate crisis on women, newborns, children, and adolescents, as well as on sexual reproductive health, rights, and access to services, was deemed critical. This understanding is essential for developing targeted interventions and policies to reduce anticipated adverse effects and ensure equitable climate adaptation and mitigation. The event concluded with closing remarks from Dr. Maria Neira.

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

Events

- The Institute on Statelessness and Inclusion [webinar](#) **“PROTECTING FUTURES: Addressing lack of access to education for children without legal identity.”** November 28, 2023, at 7 am ET.
- The International Rescue Committee & Proteknôn [virtual event](#) **“Caregiving in Adversity Framework Launch.”** November 28, 2023, at 8 am ET.
- U.S. Department of State International Visitor Leadership Program [webinar](#) **“Youth and Civic Engagement.”** November 30, 2023, at 9:30 am ET.
- USAID’s Global Reading Network (GRN) [webinar](#) **“Scaling Remedial Education Programs to Elevate Learning.”** December 7, 2023, at 11 am ET.
- World Without Orphans [event](#) **“Global Forum for a World Without Orphans.”** February 29, 2023.

Reports, Articles & Resources

- Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation & UNICEF for the Global Coalition for Youth, Peace and Security Financing Taskforce [report](#) **“Investing and Partnering with Youth for Peace (IPYP) Inception Report 2023.”**
- Rejuvenate [resource](#) **“Participation For, With, and By Girls: Evidencing Impact.”**
- UNESCO & Together for Girls [blog post](#) **“Why education has to start with keeping children safe.”**
- BBC news [article](#) **“Obama, Clooney and Gates: 'We can end child marriage in a generation'.”**
- Save the Children International [report](#) **“Global Girlhood Report 2023: Girls at the Centre of the Storm – Her Planet, Her Future, Her Solutions.”**



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