
The Weekly Pulse

NEWS FROM ORGANIZATIONS AND COALITIONS IN GLOBAL CHILD ADVOCACY



Vol. 168: Senate Judiciary Committee, U.S. Government Strategy on International Basic Education, & Georgetown University event

February 5, 2024

Call to Action

The U.S. government has issued a request for public comment on the draft of the updated U.S. Government Strategy on International Basic Education 2024-2029.

The strategy aims to address learning loss due to the COVID-19 pandemic and ongoing disruptions in education caused by humanitarian crises and natural disasters. It envisions resilient education systems in partner countries enabling individuals to acquire the necessary skills for societal productivity. Various government agencies, including the Department of Education, Department of Defense, and USAID, are involved in a whole-of-government approach. The public is encouraged to provide feedback on areas needing clarification, major gaps, strong support, and essential elements. **Comments can be submitted through this [form](#) by February 13, 2024. To learn more, click [here](#).**

Quick Summary

USAID Administrator Samantha Power recently met with InterAction President and CEO [Tom Hart](#). During the discussion, they acknowledged the longstanding bipartisan Congressional support for USAID and emphasized the significance of the President's supplemental budget request in tackling urgent humanitarian crises globally. Administrator Power commended the dedicated efforts of humanitarian workers and expressed gratitude to InterAction's members for their ongoing contributions to development, particularly through local actors. The meeting also addressed the pressing necessity to enhance humanitarian assistance levels reaching Gaza. To read more, click [here](#).

At a Feed the Future Program Expansion Event in Nampula, Mozambique, USAID Deputy Administrator Isobel Coleman expressed gratitude to Governor Rodrigues Alberto and Government partners. She acknowledged the Swiss Development Corporation, TechnoServe, and other representatives from the Government of Mozambique. Coleman highlighted the success of Feed the Future, a global hunger and food security initiative launched by USAID 16 years ago, with an emphasis on lessons learned. Coleman visited a local poultry company, Lovemore Frango e Ração, which received grants to expand business and generate jobs. She underscored the importance of investments in women to address food insecurity and malnutrition, emphasizing the centrality of women and youth in the new USAID Mozambique's strategy. Click [here](#) to learn more about the Feed the Future event.

Georgetown University Collaborative on Global Children's Issues held an event titled "The War Against Ukraine's Children," shedding light on the dire consequences of Russia's war on children in Ukraine. With over 7 million children affected, facing violence, family loss, displacement, and disrupted education, the situation is alarming. Thousands of Ukrainian children have been forcibly moved to Russian-occupied territories or deported to Russia and Belarus, some even placed in Russian foster families. Despite international law advocating for the protection of children in conflict, enforcement and accountability mechanisms are proving inadequate. The event, moderated by Gillian Huebner, Executive Director of the Collaborative on Global Children's Issues at Georgetown University, discussed Ukrainian efforts to protect children and outlined measures for international partners to take to effectively respond to Russia's aggressive policies. The panel included representatives from the U.S. Department of State, Global Affairs Canada, Save Ukraine, the Ukrainian Parliament, and more. The discussion aimed to address vulnerabilities and propose solutions. To learn more about this event, click [here](#).

Spotlight

On January 31st, 2024, the Senate Judiciary Committee held a hearing titled “Big Tech and the Online Child Sexual Exploitation Crisis,” addressing the rise in online sexual abuse and exploitation affecting millions of children globally. CEOs of [Meta](#), [Discord](#), [TikTok](#), [Snapchat](#), and [X](#) (formerly Twitter) testified about their companies' insufficient actions to protect children on their platforms. The hearing aimed to garner support for legislative measures to enhance online child protection, including a proposal allowing victims to sue platforms enabling exploitation.

The CEOs faced intense questioning, with the committee [highlighting](#) the increasing prevalence of online child sexual abuse, which rose from 32 million reports in 2022 to over 36 million in 2023. Despite widespread belief in available technology to protect children, the CEOs' responses indicated a reluctance to take necessary actions. While some progress was noted, such as X's public support for the STOP CSAM Act ([S.1199](#)), the overall impression was that CEOs failed to commit to the comprehensive action needed to address the crisis. The act expands protections for child victims and witnesses in federal court; facilitates restitution for victims of child exploitation, human trafficking, sexual assault, and crimes of violence; and empowers victims by making it easier for them to ask tech companies to remove child sexual abuse material and related imagery from their platforms and by creating an administrative penalty for the failure to comply with a removal request.

The hearing underscored the disparity between the scale of the crisis and the micro-level solutions offered by the CEOs. Senators highlighted the lag in legislation compared to the rapid advancements in technology over the past two decades. Despite calls for the technology leaders to take bold action, there was a sense of disappointment and concern among parents and survivors in the room, as the CEOs fell short of demonstrating a commitment to the necessary scale of action needed to make the internet safe for children and prevent online sexual exploitation and abuse.

ChildFund International launched the #TAKEITDOWN campaign, aimed at garnering public support to encourage tech companies to proactively remove child sexual abuse content from their platforms. The campaign addresses the surge in online child sexual abuse and advocates for proactive measures by tech companies to combat this alarming trend, emphasizing the need for transparency, accountability, and public education on the matter. To learn more about this campaign, click [here](#).

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

Events

- Women in International Security [webinar](#) “**Pop Culture, Terror Warfare & Sexual Violence: The Case of Sierra Leone.**” February 6, 2024, at 10 am ET.
- GCE-US [hybrid event](#) “**GCE-US Networking and US Government Strategy on Intl. Basic Education Draft Strategy Feedback Session.**” February 6, 2024, at 2 pm ET.
- The Overseas Development Institute (ODI) & International Organization for Migration (IOM) [hybrid event](#) “**From Evidence to Action: Understanding Climate Mobility.**” February 7, 2024, at 10 am ET.
- USAID [virtual event](#) “**Advisory Committee on Voluntary Foreign Aid (ACVFA) Public Meeting - February 2024.**” February 7, 2024, at 10:30 am ET.
- The Harriman Institute of Russian, Eurasian, and East European Studies at Columbia University [hybrid event](#) “**Kidnapped Childhood: Russia’s War on Ukraine’s Children.**” February 8, 2024, at 6 pm ET.
- Razom & Kyiv Independent movie [screenings](#) “**Uprooted: An Investigation into Russia’s Forced Deportation of Ukrainian Children.**” February 14-24, 2024.

Reports, Articles & Resources

- UNESCO & Global Education Monitoring [report](#) “**Global Education Monitoring Report: Technology in Education, A Tool on Whose Terms?**”
- Engender Health [tool](#) “**Gender, Youth, and Social Inclusion (GYSI) Marker and Guidance.**”
- Al Jazeera YouTube [video](#) “**Ukraine conflict: Camps help children cope with war trauma.**”
- The Lancet Journal on Child & Adolescent Health journal [article](#) “**Young health-care workforce shaping adolescent health.**”
- Aid Market Podcast [session](#) “**USAID, Global Health, and PEPFAR.**”
- The UN Major Group for Children and Youth & MYCP [report](#) “**Global Youth Report: Working to End Child Immigration Detention.**”



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