
The Weekly Pulse

NEWS FROM ORGANIZATIONS AND COALITIONS IN GLOBAL CHILD ADVOCACY



Vol. 169: International Day of Zero Tolerance for FGM, UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, & Safer Internet Day.

February 12, 2024

Quick Summary

The International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation was [observed](#) on February 6, 2024, with a focus on the imperative need to accelerate progress in eliminating this harmful practice. Female genital mutilation, recognized globally as a human rights violation, continues to impede women and girls in realizing their full potential and exercising their rights. Despite some advancements, the pace of progress remains insufficient to achieve the goal of ending female genital mutilation by 2030. The theme for the day emphasized the significance of women-led and survivor-led organizations, particularly at the grassroots level, as crucial resources in understanding and addressing the challenges faced by women and girls. With over 200 million survivors globally, the urgency to end this practice is underscored by the fact that nearly 4.4 million girls, over 12,000 per day, are at risk in 2024. According to the [UNFPA](#), without intensified efforts, this number is projected to rise to 4.6 million by

2030. To effectively end the practice in 31 priority countries, they estimated \$2.75 billion is deemed necessary by 2030. Recognizing the leadership of women and girls as essential to accelerating progress, the day called for amplifying survivors' voices and investing in survivor-led movements. Click [here](#) to learn more.

The United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child recently [called](#) on Russia to cease the "forcible transfer" of children from occupied areas of Ukraine, urging their return to their families. Kyiv alleges that 20,000 children have been taken to Russia without family or guardian consent, leading the International Criminal Court (ICC) to seek the arrest of Russian President Vladimir Putin for illegal deportation accusations. Russia claims the evacuations are consensual, asserting protection for vulnerable children in a warzone. The UN committee demanded Moscow investigate war crimes allegations against Russia's commissioner for children's rights, Maria Lvova-Belova. The committee expressed concerns about the impact of Russia's war in Ukraine on children, highlighting indiscriminate attacks resulting in deaths and injuries. Russia denies forcible removal claims, stating that millions, including 770,000 children, have sought refuge in Russia. The communication gap between the UN committee and the Russian delegation was acknowledged, with differing terminology regarding adoption and fostering. In the past year, the UN included Russia on a list of countries violating children's rights in conflicts, citing casualties during attacks on schools and hospitals in Ukraine. To learn more, click [here](#).

Spotlight

Safer Internet Day [occurred](#) on Tuesday, 6 February 2024, with the overarching goal of promoting a safer and improved internet experience for everyone, particularly children and young people. The annual celebration encourages participation from various stakeholders, including children, parents, teachers, policymakers, industry professionals, and others, urging them to unite under the theme "Together for a better internet."

In recognition of Safer Internet Day, USAID held its 2nd [annual](#) "Protecting Children and Youth from Digital Harm Virtual Symposium." The event highlighted the significant impact of digital technologies on children worldwide, affecting various aspects of their lives such as play, learning, work, communication, and access to information. While these technologies offer numerous benefits, they also pose risks, both online and offline, exposing children and youth to harm.

Organized as part of the Protecting Children and Youth from Digital Harm [initiative](#) within USAID's APCA and Digital Strategies, the symposium aimed to address and

confront digital harm issues. It provided a platform for learning, sharing, and engagement, bringing together youth leaders, government representatives, civil society members, donors, and private sector stakeholders. The focus of the symposium was on incorporating global perspectives and intentionally designing interventions to safeguard children and youth, involving their active participation in the process.

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

Events

- The ChildFund Alliance [webinar](#) **“Empowering Communities for Inclusive Development: Breaking Barriers, Fostering Social Justice, and Strengthening Resilience.”** February 12, 2024 at 9:45 am ET.
- The Ending Violence Against Children (EVAC) Taskforce and Thrive Coalition in-person [event](#) **“Ending violence against children: Using data to drive action.”** February 12, 2024 at 12 pm ET.
- American Council on Women, Peace & Security, Student Consortium on Women, Peace & Security, and the Gender Equality Initiative in International Affairs at the Elliott School of International Affairs at George Washington University in-person movie [screening](#) **“The Wound is Where the Light Enters.”** February 13, 2024 at 6:30 pm ET.
- The UN Chemicals & Waste Youth Platform [event](#) **“Chemicals & Waste Youth Platform 2024 Annual Strategy.”** February 25, 2024 at 8:30 am ET.

Reports, Articles & Resources

- The Guardian [article](#) **“Three girls die after FGM rituals in Sierra Leone.”**
- Human Rights Watch [article](#) **“The Taliban and the Global Backlash Against Women’s Rights.”**
- UNICEF [report](#) **“Collecting Data on Early Childhood Development in Household Surveys.”**
- UNESCO [article](#) **“Over half a billion children missing from education data.”**
- ITU [article](#) **“Sango’s Adventures and AskMe, Your Online Safety Friend.”**

Professional Opportunity

The U.S. Department of State Virtual Student Federal Service program has opened for students for 2024. The program requires a commitment of approximately 10 hours per week during the school year and offers diverse opportunities, ranging from data visualization to political analysis. Eligible participants include U.S. citizen high school graduates enrolled at least half-time in college, from rising freshmen to PhD students. As a virtual program, students have the flexibility to intern from any location. The

application period runs from February 1 to February 29, allowing students to apply for up to five internships. Selections are made by internship mentors in March and April, with the internships commencing in September and continuing throughout the academic year. To learn more about the U.S. Department of State VSFS program, click [here](#).



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