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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. 53: The U.N. General Assembly, The Frederick Douglass Trafficking Victims Prevention and Protection Reauthorization Act of 2021, & Tigray.

27 September, 2021

Call to Action

**Child Health Initiative, Plan International, UNICEF, UN Major Group for Children & Youth, The Partnership for Maternal, Newborn & Child Health, UNFPA, WHO, and UNESCO** published a [call-to-action](#) to make adolescent well-being a priority. They call on governments, donors, and the international community to “engage adolescents in all legal, policy and programme processes that affect them”, “go beyond the health sector and develop strong multisectoral, whole-of-government policy approaches that truly address adolescent health and well-being”, and “strengthen political commitment and funding for adolescents to accelerate action towards 2030”. This initiative also argues that in order to reach the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals, adolescent well-being needs to be addressed. To learn more about this initiative and to sign the call-to-action, click [here](#).

**The Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health** circulated a [call-to-action](#) to advocate for “urgent action to respond to the devastating effects of the pandemic on the health and well-being of women, children, and adolescents, as well as the societies and economies that support them”. They are calling on governments and international organizations to address multiple issues revolving around gender equality, quality care to women, children and adolescents, and clean and accessible bathroom and hand-washing facilities. To learn more about this initiative and call-to-action, click [here](#).

#### Quick Summary

**The United Nations General Assembly** [kicked off this week](#) with speeches from multiple world leaders including [President Biden](#) and [President Xi Jinping](#), regarding climate change and COVID-19. President Biden called for “ending this pandemic and making sure we’re better prepared for the next one; staving off climactic climate change and increasing our resilience to the impacts we already are seeing; and ensuring a future where technologies are a vital tool to solving human challenges and empowering human potential, not a source of greater strife and repression”. Additionally, President Xi Jinping pledged to [stop building coal powerplants abroad](#), which will affect many generations to come.

**Amnesty International, the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH), and the World Organization Against Torture (OMCT)**, published a [brief](#) that describes how the Taliban is dismantling 20 years of human rights gains. Children are at the forefront of these human rights abuses. During the first half of 2021, there was a “recorded 5183 civilian casualties (1,659 deaths and 3,524 injuries), of which 32 per cent were children”. There have also been multiple reports of civilians being killed in front of their children. For example, a former Afghan women police officer being killed in front of her children. Amnesty International, FIDH, and OMCT recommend that governments ensure safe passage for all people trying to leave Afghanistan, protect and allow safe evacuation for human rights defenders and other at-risk groups, and to secure a commitment to human rights guarantees from the authorities in Afghanistan.

**National Public Radio (NPR)** published an [article](#) on the growing famine that is affecting civilians, especially women and children, in the Tigray region of Ethiopia. According to NPR, “More than 350,000 metric tons of food aid are positioned in Ethiopia, but very little of it can get into Tigray”. This is because the Ethiopian government is highly skeptical of humanitarian aid workers and is suspicious that they are bringing weapons to rebels in Tigray. Aid workers cannot bring “Dental flossers. Can openers. Multivitamins. Medicines, even personal ones”. A list obtained by the

[Associated Press](#), also shows a ban on “[all] means of documenting the crisis, including hard drives and flash drives”. The AP reports that “photos and video from Tigray have disappeared from social media since June as aid workers and others, facing intense searches by authorities, fear being caught with them on their devices”.

**CORRECTED DATE:** The Girls LEAD Act NGO Working Group is holding a [Girls LEAD Act Virtual Lobbying Day](#) **October 7th** for the [The Girls LEAD Act](#). This event is leading up to the International Day of the Girl on October 11th.

#### Virtual Events

- The Secretary’s Office for Global Women’s Issues, U.S. Department of State, Search for Common Ground and Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace & Security UNGA [side event](#) “Preventing and Addressing Conflict-Related Sexual Violence (CRSV) as a Tool of War” **29 September, 2021 at 9:30am EST.**
- Human & Inclusion Advocacy and the Global Health Council [community focus group](#) on “People with Disabilities and COVID-19” **30 September, 2021 at 8am EST.**
- USAID, IDEAL, The Movement for Community-Led Development & Charles Darwin University [virtual event](#) “Local Means Local: Community Leadership and Facilitation in CLD” with keynote speaker Ambassador Don Steinberg **6 October, 2021 at 8am EST.**
- PLAN International [virtual event](#) on “Gender-Based Violence: Costly, corrosive, pervasive, and preventable” **6 October, 2021 at 3pm EST.**
- UNC, University of Denver, Marsico Institute, & U.S. Department of Education Office of Special Education Program [annual](#) “STEMIEFest: Innovation for Early Childhood Education” **6-8 October, 2021**
- World Vision and Childhood & Youth Studies at the University of Edinburgh [virtual panel](#) “Child activism to end child marriage” **11 October, 2021 at 9am EST.**
- The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Iris Group, Girls Not Brides, UNICEF, Population Council, Fraym, the Center for Gender Equality & Health, and UnChained [virtual event](#) “The Diversity and Complexity of Child Marriage” **12 October, 2021.**

#### Legislative Updates

**The Frederick Douglass Trafficking Victims Prevention and Protection Reauthorization Act of 2021** ([H.R. 5150](#)) was reintroduced by Congresswoman **Karen Bass (D-CA)** to support victims and vulnerable people of human trafficking. The

legislation includes substantial language about preventing child sexual exploitation and child trafficking. This bill proposes changes to Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act, including “by striking ‘a victim of’ and all that follows through the end of the paragraph and inserting ‘a victim of ‘child abuse and neglect’ and ‘sexual abuse’ if the child is identified, by a State or local agency employee of the State or locality involved, as being a victim of sex or labor trafficking in accordance with severe forms of trafficking in persons, as such terms are defined in section 103 of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000.”. Cosponsors of this bill include **Rep. Susan Wild (D-PA), Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA), Rep. Andra Carson (D-IN), Rep. Ashley Hinson (R-IA), Rep. Juan Vargas (D-CA), Rep. Derek Kilmer (D-WA), and Rep. Burgess Owens (R-UT).**

#### Reports, Articles & Resources

- USAID Maternal and Child Health and Nutrition [information center](#).
- End Violence Against Children [Parenting Tips for COVID-19](#).
- Together for Girls [article](#) on Preventing Sexual Violence Against Children.
- World Bank [Course](#) on “Data for Better Lives: A New Social Contract

**For more information, visit the Children’s Policy and Funding Initiative website:  
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