

July 21, 2022

Director Shalanda Young  
Office of Management and Budget  
725 17th Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20503

Dear Director Young,

We, the undersigned organizations, are joining together in support of a common-sense approach to U.S. foreign assistance funding, policies and programs that recognizes the critical and interconnected needs of children and youth—no matter where they live. We respectfully ask that the President's FY24 Budget Request prioritize children and youth globally. We welcome the opportunity to meet with your office to discuss our recommendations.

We urge you to increase funding and adopt structures and mechanisms that put children and youth's interests at the forefront of foreign assistance. Young people do not live their lives in silos, and yet government funding and responses to their needs are often fragmented, uncoordinated, and opaque. The U.S. should track spending and disaggregate data by sex, age, and disability to assess the impact of development assistance on children and youth across the lifecycle. We further encourage you to adopt tools such as child impact statements, a cross-agency priority on child well-being, and high-level coordination across agencies.

Conflict and climate change were already devastating the lives of young people before the pandemic. The fallout of COVID is anticipated to [set hard-earned progress on children's issues back by 20 years](#), which will disproportionately impact marginalized young people:

- **COVID:** Approximately [7.5 million children](#) have lost a primary caregiver to COVID. The pandemic has also resulted in secondary impacts such as increased child labor [for the first time in 20 years](#) and [10 million more girls](#) at risk of child marriage.
- **Climate Change:** Nearly [half the world's 2.2 billion children are at extremely high risk for climate change impacts](#) including cyclones, extreme heat, flooding, and pollution.
- **Conflict:** [426 million of the world's children currently live in areas affected by conflict](#), half of whom will need some form of humanitarian assistance this year, a number that represents a dramatic 40% increase in less than a year.
- **Education:** School closures during the pandemic have disrupted the lives and education of [94% of the world's student population](#). This generation of students [risks losing \\$17 trillion in lifetime earnings](#), or about 14% of the total global GDP, due to COVID school-closure related losses alone.
- **Violence:** Last year [1 billion children](#) experienced physical, sexual, or emotional violence or neglect according to the WHO. As more young people were pushed online due to the pandemic, reports of [online sexual abuse and exploitation of children increased by 73% between 2019 and 2021](#).

Despite the startling effects of the pandemic on children and youth, data shows that foreign assistance funding on programs that benefit them has been on a downward trend in recent years. According to a 2021 First Focus on Children report, foreign assistance for children and youth is spread between 26 and 30 federal offices, depending on the fiscal year, and [less than 0.08% of federal funds go to children and youth abroad](#), leaving enormous gaps in support. Even for Congressional accounts that focus directly on children and youth or on the issues that most impact them, allocated funding does not adequately provide crucial support to the world's most vulnerable children and their families.

We know that you face many difficult budget choices and competing priorities. The health, wellbeing and economic security of an entire generation of children and youth is at stake. By investing now in their most critical needs, we can build a better present and a better future.

Thank you for your consideration. We welcome the opportunity to discuss our recommendations further and would be happy to meet at your convenience.

Signed,

[List in Formation - Names as of 7/20/22]

1. Action Against Hunger
2. Amal Alliance
3. American Academy of Pediatrics
4. Basic Education Coalition
5. Centre for Girls and Interaction (CEGI)
6. ChildFund
7. Feminist Majority Foundation
8. Friends of UNFPA
9. First Focus on Children
10. GHR Foundation
11. Girl Rising
12. Global Campaign for Education-US
13. GreeneWorks
14. Humanity & Inclusion
15. InterAction
16. International Rescue Committee
17. IYF
18. Just Like My Child Foundation

19. Maestral International
20. Mercy Corps
21. Restless Development
22. RESULTS
23. RISE Institute
24. Save the Children
25. Seeds to Sew International
26. Sesame Workshop
27. SPOON
28. The Hunger Project
29. Together for Girls
30. Too Young to Wed
31. UNICEF USA
32. United States International Council on Disabilities
33. Women's Refugee Commission
34. World Vision US