

World Vision® Advocacy

2023 policy priorities



Foreign assistance

U.S. foreign assistance accounts for less than 1% of the federal budget – yet this small amount enables the United States to work through trusted partners, including faith-based organizations such as World Vision, to implement programs that bring hope, opportunity, and improved well-being for children and families in the world’s toughest places. This assistance encompasses global health, child protection, food assistance, gender equality, education, economic development, water, sanitation & hygiene, and humanitarian response—all while partnering with communities and countries to build self-reliance.

Afghanistan

Over 28 million people require assistance to survive and 6 million people are on the brink of famine. Since August 2021, the price of food has shot up and immense humanitarian needs are on the rise. Families cannot buy fuel or wood to keep warm, there are water shortages and families have no other option but to use unclean water, child labor is increasing, and destitute parents are being left with no other choice than to consider their baby girls for future marriage in exchange for dowries.



Child Labor

Around the world, 152 million children are involved in child labor, including 73 million in hazardous forms of child labor in industries such as agriculture, mining, fishing, commercial sexual exploitation, and factories. Of these, 4.3 million are in forced labor. The U.S. International Labor Affairs Bureau (ILAB) has worked with nonprofits and communities since 1995 to protect and provide services to nearly 2 million children in or at risk of being in hazardous child labor. Continuing these programs means more children will be in school, children will be healthier, communities will be stronger, and as these children become adults, these communities will thrive!

Maternal and Child Health

Adequate funding for maternal and child health accounts is critical to preserving effective, evidence-based, poverty-focused assistance that saves lives and helps strengthen economies in developing countries. The U.S. has a long-standing record of supporting critical, life-saving investments in global child and maternal health and nutrition. In 2020 alone, USAID helped more than 92 million women and children access essential—and often lifesaving—health services, reaching 27 million children under five years old and 8 million pregnant women with high impact, life-saving nutrition interventions. Every March, members of Congress have a chance to co-sign a letter affirming the importance of funding for mother and child health through organizations like World Vision.



Child Marriage

Each year, 12 million girls are married before the age of 18. That's 22 girls every minute whose childhood, dreams, and education are cut short. Unless we accelerate our efforts to end child marriage, 150 million more girls will be married by 2030. This number will likely be much higher due to the secondary impacts of COVID-19. Child marriage is a human rights abuse that keeps girls from living into their God-given potential. We can support these girls by asking Congress to advocate for a funding level of \$30 million for combatting child marriage globally in the FY24 budget.

Hunger and Malnutrition

One in three people around the world did not have access to enough food last year, and The World Food Program estimates that the number of people on the brink of famine is now 41 million people, up from 34 million last year. World Vision is deeply concerned about the shocking increase of people affected by this in the past year – driven by a deadly mix of conflict, climate change and the socioeconomic impacts of COVID-19. We will be advocating to prevent and treat malnutrition globally by targeting resources and nutrition interventions to support the most vulnerable populations.





Keeping Girls in School

Globally, 130 million girls ages 6 to 17 are out of school. Child marriage, pregnancy, family pressures, violence and harassment, and poverty keep girls from reaching their potential. We must address the critical barriers that keep girls out of the classroom. We will work to pass the Keeping Girls in School Act to address gaps in current practices and supports teen girls' access to quality, inclusive education worldwide. Harmful social norms, violence, child marriage, and poverty keep girls in developing countries from learning.

Mental Health Support for Children

83% of children worldwide reported an increase of negative feelings due to COVID-19, and 14% experience mental health disorders. The Mental Health in International Development and Humanitarian Settings Act or MINDS Act is the first piece of legislation to address mental health and psychosocial support in U.S. foreign assistance. It elevates the need to address this issue while solidifying in law a new position at the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) to oversee the implementation of these critical interventions. The bill supports best practices, lays the groundwork for a U.S. government global mental health strategy, and emphasizes the needs of vulnerable populations – including children in adversity, those living in poverty and conflict zones, women and girls, and other marginalized communities.

