

# CHILDREN & YOUTH



Children and youth constitute **over half** of the world's population and are the **majority population** in many countries. This increases the urgency of prioritizing the lives of millions of young people who have witnessed setbacks to decades of progress in their countries due to the recent cycle of global crises (such as the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change, mounting food insecurity, and ongoing conflicts).

U.S. foreign assistance funding, policies, and programs must recognize the interconnected needs of children and youth regardless of where they live. Young people need to be supported at every stage of their lives to achieve their full potential. Programs and policies must invest in their most critical needs because the health, wellbeing, and economic security of an entire generation of children and youth are at stake.

## FAST FACTS

- ▶ In low and middle-income countries, **70%** of 10-year-olds cannot read a simple sentence, potentially costing this generation of students \$11 trillion of their lifetime earnings.
- ▶ Department of Labor projects rescued close to **2 million** children from the worst forms of child labor and provided them with an education.
- ▶ In the past 10 years, the United States Agency for International Development's (USAID) focus on preventable deaths **saved the lives** of more than 9.3 million children and 340,000 women.
- ▶ U.S. foreign assistance provided **27,756,461** children with family tracing and reunification and 1,797,650 parents/caregivers with psychosocial support.

## KEY U.S. LEGISLATION, POLICIES & PROGRAMS

- ▶ **Legislation:**
  - **Public Law 109-95: The Assistance for Orphans and Other Vulnerable Children in Developing Countries Act (P.L. 109-95)**
  - **Global Child Thrive Act**
- ▶ **Policies:**
  - **Advancing Protection and Care for Children in Adversity**
  - **USAID Youth in Development Policy**
- ▶ **Programs:**
  - Basic Education
    - **Education Cannot Wait** (ECW)
    - Early Childhood Education
    - **Global Partnership for Education** (GPE)
  - Maternal and Child Health
    - Maternal and newborn childcare in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs)
    - Immunization programs via Gavi and the global plan for polio eradication
    - Health systems strengthening in **69 countries**
  - Vulnerable Children
    - Support for children living in conflict zones, experiencing extreme poverty, or experiencing loss of primary and secondary caregivers [Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC) program]

InterAction's **Children and Youth Working Group** works to ensure good development outcomes for children and youth in LMICs, with a focus on U.S. government policies, programs, and funding which address and support their needs, especially those experiencing the multiple impacts of poverty.