

# Advancing Protection and Care for Children in Adversity

## IMPLEMENTATION PLAN





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# Executive Summary

*Advancing Protection and Care for Children in Adversity: A U.S. Government Strategy for International Assistance (2019–2023)* (the *APCCA Strategy*) outlines the commitment and approach of the U.S. Government (USG) to investing in the development, care, dignity, and safety of the world's most-vulnerable children and their families. It builds on the progress achieved since the 2005 enactment of Public Law [P.L.] 109-95, *The Assistance for Orphans and Other Vulnerable Children in Developing Countries Act*, in delivering better outcomes for highly vulnerable children and families around the world.

USG Partners involved in implementing the *APCCA Strategy* include the U.S. Departments of Health and Human Services, Labor, and State; the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID); and the Peace Corps.

In response to the *APCCA Strategy*, the USG Special Advisor on Children in Adversity and the USG Interagency Partners have developed the following Implementation Plan, which outlines specific activities they will undertake over the next five years, and describes the following:

- Governance and accountability mechanisms, including specific responsibilities for the Special Advisor, the Secretariat, and the APCCA Interagency Working Group (IWG);
- New cross-cutting collaborative areas that will be the initial focus of the implementation of the *APCCA Strategy*;
- Monitoring and evaluation (M&E); and
- Communications and engagement.

Through a five-month implementation planning and consultative process, the USG IWG identified several critical areas of focus:

- Increasing knowledge, capacity, and policies on child safeguarding and child protection;
- Investing in strategies to support the social-service workforce; and
- Promoting positive parenting and family-strengthening policies and programming.

Annex A contains descriptions of each USG Partner's current and future contributions to the *APCCA Strategy*, which reinforce the APCCA interagency coordination process and align with other complementary USG strategies and investments. A chart in Annex B shows USG contributions broken down by objectives and approaches.

# Introduction

On June 17, 2019, U.S. Government (USG) Departments and Agencies (USG Partners) launched *Advancing Protection and Care for Children in Adversity: A U.S. Government Strategy for International Assistance (2019–2023)*, referred to as the *APCCA Strategy*, which outlines the USG's commitment and approach to investing in the development, care, dignity, and safety of the world's most-vulnerable children and their families.

The *APCCA Strategy* builds on the progress achieved since the enactment of Public Law [P.L.] 109-95, *The Assistance for Orphans and Other Vulnerable Children in Developing Countries Act* on November 8, 2005, in delivering better outcomes for children around the world who face significant deprivation and danger. It also provides a shared basis for continued, technically sound, collaborative action.

The *APCCA Strategy* is the culmination of a year-long engagement with multiple USG Partners, civil society, faith-based organizations, professional networks and associations, and public and private donors who assist and provide support to vulnerable children and their families. Collectively, these parties reflected on ideas, contributions, and lessons learned on how best to develop and implement policies and programs to assist these populations. The *Strategy* builds on the following three interrelated, interdependent, and mutually reinforcing, evidence-based strategic objectives that inform the USG's policies and programs: (1) Build Strong Beginnings; (2) Put Family First; and (3) Protect Children from Violence.

In addition, the *APCCA Strategy* applies five guiding principles when funding and supporting programs for vulnerable children and their families: (1) Adapt Approaches; (2) Strengthen Systems; (3) Generate and Use Evidence-Based Information; (4) Create Synergies; and (5) Promote Strategic Partnerships.

With the expertise and bold commitment of USG Partners, including the U.S. Departments of Health and Human Services, Labor, and State; the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID); and the Peace Corps, the *APCCA Strategy's* mandate for action is realistic and achievable.

The *APCCA Strategy* states that the USG Special Advisor on Children in Adversity (Special Advisor) will work with USG Partners to develop an Implementation Plan for the *APCCA Strategy*. The Implementation Plan outlines how the USG Partners will work together to achieve the *APCCA Strategy's* objectives, and how we will monitor progress and impact. The Implementation Plan is the product of input and feedback from the USG APCCA IWG, collected from a series of in-person meetings and workshops, phone calls, and formal consultations.

The Implementation Plan details the following:

- Governance and accountability mechanisms, including the specific responsibilities of the Special Advisor and the Secretariat, which is the administrative body for the *APCCA Strategy*, as well as the IWG, which is the group of technical experts who represent the USG Partners;
- New cross-cutting collaborative focus areas to address during implementation;
- The system for monitoring and evaluating the *APCCA Strategy*, including key indicators; and
- Efforts in communications and engagement.

The Implementation Plan also highlights each USG Partner's unique contributions and new commitments to the implementation of the *APCCA Strategy*.

The USG Partners will revisit the Implementation Plan annually and revise it as necessary based on feedback from partners, programmatic monitoring and evaluation, and ongoing learning.

# Governance of the U.S. Government's Implementation Plan for the *APCCA Strategy*

To promote a continued, comprehensive, and coordinated whole-of-Government implementation of the *APCCA Strategy*, USG Partners will adopt the following structure:

## USG Special Advisor

P.L. 109-95 mandates the appointment of a Special Advisor to coordinate USG interagency foreign assistance for vulnerable children and their families. The Special Advisor will lead coordination and collaboration efforts across USG Partners throughout the implementation process. The Special Advisor will do the following:

- Account for resources and expertise as well as lessons-learned;
- Produce an *Annual Report to Congress* to highlight the impact of the *APCCA Strategy* and whole-of-Government coordination;
- Implement a system for measurement and accountability that allows for the assessment and evaluation of progress; and
- Coordinate communications and engagement with stakeholders to raise the visibility of the *APCCA Strategy*.

## USG APCCA Interagency Working Group

The IWG will consist of technical experts from across USG Partners committed to fulfilling the requirements of P.L. 109-95 and implementing the agreed-upon commitments outlined in the *APCCA Strategy*.

The IWG will do the following:

- Set priorities to align activities;
- Identify cross-cutting opportunities and focus areas for collaboration;
- Improve efficiencies throughout implementation;
- Enhance measurement and accountability;
- Communicate with and engage key stakeholders, including Congress;
- Align funding resources; and
- Identify, develop, and promote technical best practices.

USG Partners will designate a representative(s) to participate in the IWG, with responsibilities to do the following:

- Facilitate communications, engagement, and coordination with their respective Departments or Agencies;
- Ensure completion of Congressional requirements for reporting and measurement;
- Identify areas for programmatic, technical, and communications collaboration;
- Identify priorities and develop opportunities for interagency training; and
- Share research, data, evidence, and best practices.

The Special Advisor will serve as Chair of the IWG and facilitate coordination and collaboration among USG Partners, key stakeholders, and other governments, and lead the IWG in setting shared goals and priorities. This coordination will focus on maximizing impact and efficiencies to align efforts and minimize duplication. Under the leadership of the Special Advisor, USG Partners will work together to address priorities in a new way with shared accountability. To implement the *APCCA Strategy*, regular communications across the IWG will allow for transparency; shared knowledge; and technical exchange about programs, policies, or initiatives.

The Special Advisor will also convene meetings of the IWG, lead processes, and facilitate technical subgroups. The IWG's meetings will provide a forum to collaborate on new ideas, communicate current progress, identify challenges and opportunities, and coordinate activities. The meetings will also enable members of the IWG to share information, discuss best practices, plan learning events, and identify new opportunities to invest in programming that focuses on addressing the needs of vulnerable children and their families. The IWG will promote technical exchange through various fora, such as brown bag meetings, training sessions, yearly gatherings of APCCA stakeholders and partners, and regional conferences.

The Secretariat and the Special Advisor, hosted and supported by USAID, will provide logistical and technical support to the IWG, together with other USG Partners, as appropriate. The Secretariat will focus on aligning resources, leadership, overarching policy, and communications and engagement with the USG interagency and external stakeholders.

The strategic objectives, approaches, and guiding principles outlined in the *APCCA Strategy* will guide the IWG in working toward achieving greater effectiveness and whole-of-Government collaboration and coordination. Inherent in this is a commitment to do the following:

- Leverage the extensive knowledge and expertise of USG Partners in the focus areas outlined in the *APCCA Strategy's* strategic objectives, approaches, and guiding principles:
  - The USG is one of the leading funders of programs that target vulnerable children and their families, and the work it funds is vast and intricate.
  - The IWG will use this expertise to provide technical assistance and guidance to help coordinate the implementation of programs.
  - USG Partners with core expertise in priority areas will provide leadership in these areas.
- Develop strategic partnerships as outlined in the *APCCA Strategy* as a core guiding principle:
  - The IWG will work together to identify and cultivate public, private, government, multilateral, and civil-society partnerships that enhance its work and improve outcomes.
- Assess, identify, and use technology to map and align the USG's efforts and investments that support vulnerable children and their families and facilitate in-country coordination.
- Engage national governments and other stakeholders to fill data gaps across the *APCCA Strategy's* strategic objectives, approaches, and guiding principles:
  - Recognizing that data and accountability are critical to the implementation of the *APCCA Strategy*, the IWG will develop a learning agenda to inform progress.

## Initial Collaboration Areas for the IWG

Through a five-month implementation planning and consultative process, the IWG identified and prioritized several cross-cutting areas that are critical to the work of multiple USG Partners and in which a more focused, collaborative effort could result in significant impact.

As it begins to carry out its mandate, the IWG will focus on these key areas, by identifying gaps; developing and aligning programming and resources; and providing technical guidance, shared knowledge, and best practices to USG Partners. The IWG could identify additional areas over the course of implementation, as needed.

## Increasing Knowledge, Capacity, and Policies on Child Safeguarding and Child Protection

**Child-Safeguarding Initiative.** All USG employees and implementing partners who support the *APCCA Strategy* are working, either directly or indirectly, with very vulnerable populations at high risk of exploitation, abuse, and violence. To protect these children from harm, it is essential to establish clear policies and guidelines and develop and implement a standard code of conduct for all USG personnel, contractors, and funding recipients who could come in contact with these children. The Child-Safeguarding Initiative will draw from best practices, both from across the USG and internationally, and set clear, uniform standards and procedures to guide employment screening; the supervision of the conduct of staff and partners; and reporting on potential violations for the safety of children included in, or affected by, USG-funded programming. Each USG Department or Agency will review its current child-safeguarding policies and procedures to ensure they meet minimum standards.

**Capacity-Building in Child Protection.** The IWG recognizes the need and desire for USG employees to understand better the fundamentals of child protection and its implications for the work across the USG. Training and developing the capacity of staff from the Federal Agencies and Departments that participate in implementing the *APCCA Strategy* will help establish a deeper understanding of child protection among the workforce. This work will draw from pre-existing materials and will use a series of methodologies (in person, on-line, webinars, and e-learning). The IWG will leverage expertise from within the USG Interagency and build on existing efforts.

## Invest in Strategies to Support the Social-Service Workforce

The social-service workforce includes governmental and non-governmental professionals and paraprofessionals who play critically important and varied roles at individual, family, and community levels in making programs work and helping vulnerable children and their families gain access to essential services to address and overcome challenges. While the work is fundamentally important to enhance the delivery of early childhood development services, support family-based care, and increase the capacity to prevent and respond to violence against children, the workforce has been historically under-funded.

Social-service workforce development efforts will identify gaps, assess strategies, and develop opportunities to support this workforce better. This can include identifying ways to enable governments to recognize the strategic value of hiring and mobilizing social-service personnel, linking to existing models in the public and private sectors, and developing standards of practice. It also could include engaging educational institutions to enhance curricula and increase training.

## **Promote Positive Parenting and Family-Strengthening Interventions, and Align Resources and Services**

Families and parenting are consistent threads across all three of the *APCCA Strategy*'s strategic objectives. The development of positive parenting skills profoundly affects the early life of a child, preserves nurturing family care, and strengthens a protective environment. Positive parenting has the potential to change a child's lifetime trajectory. Strengthening protective, nurturing family care is imperative, not just for the safety and development of individual children, but also for the long-term prosperity of the communities in which the children live. USG interagency collaboration through the Implementation Plan is an opportunity to align Federal resources to implement effective interventions that strengthen positive parenting and build stronger families.

The IWG will review and assess evidence-based approaches and interventions to identify gaps in existing programming and resources and develop strategies for alignment, coordination, and joint programming. The IWG will engage colleagues who are working with USG-funded parenting programs to use existing resources to better serve diverse groups of parents and children. The IWG will also develop and share a central repository of information on such topics as parenting and transition

to care in order to serve these audiences, ensure the consistent use of evidence-based parenting curricula, and provide implementing partners with opportunities to build their internal capacity. Engaging external stakeholders and developing private-sector partnerships will help enhance the reach and impact of parenting initiatives implemented under the *APCCA Strategy*. The IWG will increase awareness, information, and public diplomacy to help protect children from online violence through public-service-announcement campaigns and other behavior-change and awareness campaigns.

## **Commitments to the APCCA Strategy from U.S. Government Partners**

USG Departments and Agencies committed to the implementation of the *APCCA Strategy* provide diverse and complementary technical, programmatic, in-kind, and financial contributions toward achieving its three strategic objectives. Each USG Partner will use its funding, technical expertise, and resources, according to its specific legislative mandates, to inform programs that support vulnerable children and their families. Commitments should reinforce the USG interagency coordination process for the *APCCA Strategy* and align with other complementary USG strategies and investments. Details on each USG Partner's commitment appear in Annex A.

# Monitoring and Evaluation

The IWG has agreed to a framework for measurement and accountability for the *APCCA Strategy* in response to the requirements set forth in P.L. 109-95. This law requires that the Special Advisor measure the effectiveness of the *APCCA Strategy* by adopting a whole-of-Government system for M&E, and by publishing results in an *Annual Report to Congress*. The Special Advisor will work closely with the IWG to implement the new M&E system to track progress in implementing the *APCCA Strategy*. The Special Advisor will also explore avenues to map USG programs and activities relevant to APCCA.

The Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) system for the *APCCA Strategy* includes key indicators, data sources, and processes for monitoring and reporting. Designed to be practical and simple to use, it leverages existing indicators and definitions and builds on existing data sources and data-collection processes. The M&E system will include a combination of the following:

1. Output and outcome indicators<sup>1</sup> that report on the contributions of individual USG Partners to the strategic objectives of the *APCCA Strategy*; and
2. Process indicators that report on the degree of coordination between USG Partners during the implementation of the *APCCA Strategy*.

The IWG will report the results of the implementation of the *APCCA Strategy* by using the standard indicators identified to measure the programs of USG Partners. Each Department and Agency will report these indicators, as available and relevant to their mandates, to USAID, which will share the results in the *Annual Report to Congress* and on the Children in Adversity website.

## Output and Outcome Indicators

The USG will use a diverse set of indicators to collect information on APCCA programs. These indicators represent legislative mandates and are not designed to be broadly applicable across sectors and programs. However, some common outputs can be aggregated across USG Partners. The Departments and Agencies will report annually on output-level indicators. The IWG selected output indicators to reflect USG Partners' contributions to the three strategic objectives of the *APCCA Strategy*. The IWG prioritized indicators that leverage existing routine project- or program-level data tracked by USG Partners to meet their individual programmatic needs, and indicators that provide a sufficient level of comparability across USG Partners when aggregated to represent the *APCCA Strategy's* whole-of-Government approach.

In addition to the aggregated output-level indicators, USG Partners will report on a handful of Department-/ Agency-specific indicators to provide information on the results and impact of individual contributions to the strategic objectives. These indicators will help demonstrate the breadth of efforts the USG is making to improve outcomes for vulnerable children and their families.

While the IWG will report on the results and impact of the *APCCA Strategy* from the onset of implementation, the lack of commonality across outcome-level indicators will produce limitations. As implementation of the *Strategy* gains momentum, the IWG will consider developing or tracking additional indicators, which could include harmonizing and coordinating common outcome-level indicators across USG Partner organizations for programming and reporting.

## **Process Indicators**

The M&E system for the *APCCA Strategy* will include process indicators to measure the operationalization and effectiveness of USG whole-of-Government coordination and collaboration.

# Communications and Engagement

The IWG, in collaboration with internal communications and engagement counterparts from the respective USG Partners, will identify pivotal outreach opportunities to amplify the success stories connected with programs funded by the Partners. This will bring greater understanding among key stakeholders about the need to invest in the development, care, dignity, and safety of children in adversity.

The IWG agrees to the following activities to support outreach and message-alignment around the key deliverables of the *APCCA Strategy* over the next five years:

- Manage and maintain the *APCCA Strategy*'s digital platforms, by updating content to reflect the latest results; messaging; and information highlighted in reports, blogs, and other news and stories:
  - This includes the Children in Adversity website, which will be the primary platform for all public-facing information about the *APCCA Strategy*, as well as the @USGforChildren Twitter handle;
- Develop and maintain a master event and content calendar:
  - The Secretariat will update the calendar regularly with input from the Special Advisor and IWG representatives on key opportunities tied to the *APCCA Strategy*;
- Develop and manage a repository of communications and knowledge products on the implementation of the *APCCA Strategy*, including talking points, answers to Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ), and internal Questions and Answers (Q&A);
- Create new communications materials that demonstrate the impacts of the *APCCA Strategy* through compelling narratives and visuals:
  - An illustrative list of products includes success stories, blog posts, fact sheets, photos, and videos;
- Identify and maintain reliable dissemination channels and the best pathways to amplify messages and distribute materials, including social media, e-newsletters, events, and speaking opportunities; and
- Lead regular communication calls to bring together USG interagency expertise around key opportunities for outreach.

In addition to strategic communications, the IWG recognizes the importance of engaging a broad range of new and existing stakeholders to support country-level partners as they build, manage, and finance their own solutions to protect and promote care for children and their families. The IWG is committed to raising the visibility of the *APCCA Strategy* with new and existing partners, by prioritizing community-level engagements to strengthen country- or local-level opportunities to foster and increase collaboration and increase the scale and effectiveness of the USG's efforts. Early and continuous engagement will generate strong and substantive alliances and lead to better collaboration, programming, and decision-making.

The IWG agrees to engage with the following key stakeholders on a deliberate and ongoing basis.

## Congress

In light of the mandates of P.L. 109-95 and Congressional funding directives, Congress remains an important stakeholder for USG Partners that are

working on the implementation of the *APCCA Strategy*. The Special Advisor and Secretariat will ensure that policy-makers and Congressional staff are regularly informed of the significant work undertaken to ensure effective stewardship of USG investments on behalf of the world's most vulnerable children and their families.

The Special Advisor, with active input from the IWG, will engage with Congress through the following mechanisms, to show how targeted funding can catalyze action to address the three strategic objectives of the *APCCA Strategy*, and support consultation and collaboration with USG Partners:

- The *Annual Report to Congress*, which will highlight results and outcomes;
- Briefings at all levels, such as regular meetings with House and Senate staff by leadership from USG Partners; and
- Visits to regional hubs and target countries by Members of Congress and their staff.

## Civil Society

Civil society plays an important role in the success of the *APCCA Strategy*, as it implements USG-funded programming and advocates for, and provides valuable insights on, practices to strengthen and protect families. Civil society is also responsible for identifying gaps in services and programs, resources, local capacities, and in-country policies that inform programs and policy decisions. The IWG will promote participation across civil society and leverage its members' technical expertise, resources, skills, and technologies to ensure partners have clear ways to inform the priority-setting processes of Federal Departments and Agencies and

provide input into the design and evaluation of their APCCA programs. The IWG agrees to engage and consult regularly with civil-society partners through calls and in-person meetings to ensure a feedback loop that will benefit and inform the implementation of the *APCCA Strategy* over the next five years.

## Country-Level Partners

In-country partners, host governments, local leadership, and private-sector and faith-based organizations are instrumental in supporting vulnerable children and their families. The IWG agrees to provide support to these partners to improve coordination, increase capacity and accountability, and strengthen working relationships that are mutually beneficial. Programming should be responsive to the needs and challenges vulnerable children and their families face, and each project should convey at the community and individual levels how it will achieve this. Projects should also establish feedback mechanisms so the experiences and responses of those they should benefit inform programming in real time.

## Private Sector

The private sector can be an engine for economic growth and the empowerment of vulnerable communities, and private philanthropy can mobilize unique expertise and resources to help achieve the strategic objectives of the *APCCA Strategy*. The IWG agrees to communicate often with these private partners, by incentivizing engagement throughout planning and programming processes, looking for opportunities where business and philanthropic interests align with the strategic objectives of the *APCCA Strategy*, and mobilizing domestic resources and other investments in support of the care and protection of children.

# Annex A: Commitments by U.S. Government Partner Departments and Agencies to the *Advancing Protection and Care for Children in Adversity Strategy (APCCA Strategy)*



## U.S. Agency for International Development

### Contribution to APCCA

As the lead development actor for the U.S. Government (USG), the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) provides assistance to help save lives, build communities, and establish self-sufficiency in our partner countries. USAID prioritizes addressing the needs of vulnerable children in our programming across sectors and our Bureaus, Missions, and Independent Offices (B/IOs). The Congressionally mandated Vulnerable Children account at USAID, otherwise known as the Displaced Children and Orphans Fund (DCOF), finances catalytic, cross-sectoral programming for vulnerable children worldwide, focused specifically on the objectives of the *APCCA Strategy*. USAID's Bureau for Resilience and Food Security leads the Feed the Future initiative, which advances global food security and helps families meet their needs for a reliable source of high-quality food. The Office of Education (ED) in the Bureau for Economic Growth, Education, and the Environment (E3) advances high-quality education, primarily at the basic and tertiary levels, and increases access to education in conflict and crisis settings. The Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) within the Bureau for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance (DCHA, soon to be the Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance) coordinates the USG's response to disasters overseas, and works to protect and support conflict- and disaster-affected

children, families, and communities; and minimize and respond to specific risks faced by children and other vulnerable groups. DCHA/OFDA also works with the Office of Food for Peace within the same Bureau to reduce hunger and malnutrition and ensure children and families have adequate, safe, and nutritious food in both conflict and humanitarian settings. The Office of the Youth Coordinator in the Center for Excellence in Democracy, Human Rights, and Governance (DRG) within DCHA oversees youth engagement and youth-development issues across the Agency. Finally, the Bureau for Global Health supports children in adversity with programs that address nutrition; maternal and child health; the prevention and treatment of HIV under the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief; and other indirect services, including strengthening health institutions that benefit children and families. In addition to programming for vulnerable children and families, numerous USAID B/IOs have developed directives, policies, and initiatives that advance the provision of services to support and assist highly vulnerable children and their families.<sup>2</sup>

### USG Special Advisor

Within DCHA/DRG, USAID's Center on Children in Adversity (CECA) serves as the Secretariat for the *APCCA Strategy*, and is the body responsible for the oversight and coordination of the whole-of-Government response to P.L. 109-95, *The Assistance for Orphans and Other Vulnerable Children in Developing Countries Act*. The Secretariat provides stewardship of the goals and objectives of the *APCCA Strategy*; coordinates USG interagency activities; convenes meetings of USG Partners at both the technical and leadership levels;

manages the DCOF; and leads communications and engagement efforts, including the coordination of internal and external reporting requirements, such as the whole-of-Government system for monitoring and evaluating the *Strategy* and the *Annual Report to Congress*.

The Special Advisor on Children in Adversity, a position mandated by Congress under P.L. 109-95, leads the Center and Secretariat. As USAID's Transformation<sup>3</sup> advances, the Special Advisor and the Secretariat will move to the new Bureau for Development, Democracy, and Innovation.

The Secretariat, with input from the IWG, will establish and oversee an interagency governance structure and working groups based on shared technical expertise, to ensure the effective implementation of the goals and objectives of the *APCCA Strategy*. The Secretariat will facilitate an interagency system for monitoring and evaluation to measure the effectiveness of the *APCCA Strategy*. It will also include a mechanism for communications and knowledge-management to support the IWG's outreach through an integrated, multi-channel approach that includes a website, an e-newsletter, and social media channels.

## New Strategic Commitments

Through the DCOF, USAID will promote the nurturing care skills of families and service-providers within health and nutrition platforms; disseminate guidance and provide technical assistance on how to enumerate and develop a profile of the characteristics of children in residential-care settings; and provide technical and

implementation support to countries to move from data to action in response to findings from the Violence Against Children and Youth Surveys (VACS) led by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

USAID/DCHA/OFDA and E3/ED will develop guidance for USAID staff on building greater coherence and collaboration among our humanitarian and development teams to promote safe, high-quality, equitable education, and support emotional and psychological well-being and the resiliency of children and youth in crisis. USAID/DCHA/OFDA will also fund the creation of a parenting curriculum to help caregivers protect children from recruitment by armed actors and promote their reintegration into their communities.

USAID's Bureau for Africa will support a secondary analysis and application of VACS data for the education sector to identify the prevalence of, and risk factors for, school-related, gender-based violence, as well as details on the perpetration of violence, the risk of victimization, and protective factors and post-violence behaviors in seven selected countries. The Africa Bureau then will develop a dissemination strategy that will leverage key, high-level events to disseminate the findings, and support an in-country, policy-development workshop. USAID plans to extend the activity to conduct additional analyses that link VACS data to existing datasets (Demographic and Health Surveys, Afrobarometer, global education datasets, *etc.*) by using geographic information at the community level.



## U.S. Department of State

### Contribution to APCCA

The U.S. Department of State has been a pivotal Interagency Partner in USG foreign assistance to advance protection and care of the world's most-vulnerable children. Through numerous Bureaus and Offices, the Department of State has contributed to the well-being of children in adversity in alignment with all three of APCCA's Strategic Objectives.

The Office of the U.S. Global AIDS Coordinator and Health Diplomacy (S/GAC) leads implementation of the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), the largest commitment ever by any nation for an international health initiative dedicated to a single disease. S/GAC provides funding and strategic direction for all PEPFAR programming that is implemented in partnership with other USG Agencies. The United States has helped save more than 17 million lives and prevented millions of HIV infections through PEPFAR. Working together with partners in more than 50 countries, PEPFAR has moved the HIV/AIDS pandemic from crisis toward control, and in the process enabled millions of children to be raised by their parents in the security and love of a family.

The Office of Children's Issues within the Bureau of Consular Affairs (CA) serves as the U.S. Central Authority for the Hague Convention on the Protection of Children and Cooperation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption. CA addresses the needs of children living outside of family care through liaison with many countries seeking to improve the transparency or administration of their intercountry adoption programs.

The Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM) addresses the unique needs of displaced and stateless children through global humanitarian assistance programs and humanitarian diplomacy to advocate for the world's most vulnerable children.

The Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor (DRL) leads the implementation of the Child Soldier Prevention Act (CSPA), which requires the Secretary of State to identify and include in the Department's annual Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report a list of foreign governments having governmental armed forces, police, or other security forces, or government-supported armed groups, including paramilitaries, militias, or civil defense forces, that recruit or use child soldiers as the term is defined in the CSPA. The Bureau also collaborates with the U.S. Department of Labor on gathering information for the report on the *Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labor*.

The Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons (TIP Office) leads the Department's global efforts to combat human trafficking through the prosecution of traffickers, the protection of victims, and the prevention of human trafficking. TIP Office programs include support for the removal of children who are victims from trafficking situations; provision of housing through shelter services; assistance with reintegration and family reunification; comprehensive services and training for child protection officers; legal support and training to advance justice for child victims; and awareness raising and community mobilization efforts to combat this crime. The TIP Office's Child Protection Compact Partnerships are multi-year plans developed jointly by the United States and a particular country aimed at strengthening the country's efforts to prosecute and convict child traffickers effectively, provide comprehensive trauma-informed care for child victims of these crimes, and prevent child trafficking in all its forms.

## New Strategic Commitments

PRM will support the *Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action* in its efforts to achieve more effective child protection interventions in humanitarian settings, namely, in improving the child protection response in refugee and mixed migration contexts by enhancing the skills of child protection personnel; promoting and facilitating knowledge sharing; and supporting evidence-based programming. PRM will also support the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) on youth engagement initiatives, and at the policy level on integrating child and youth protection in the implementation of core UNHCR policies, including the Global Compact on Refugees; Age, Gender, and Diversity; and Internally Displaced Persons policy, as well as through building the capacity of UNHCR staff and standby partners on child protection issues, such as strengthening child-protection systems and alternative care arrangements.

On World AIDS day 2018, PEPFAR launched the Faith and Community Initiative (FCI), to enhance PEPFAR's engagement with faith-based organizations and other traditional community organizations and structures. PEPFAR selected ten high-burden countries to receive funding for Fiscal Year 2020. One of FCI's two over-arching priorities is to prevent sexual violence against children and accelerate justice for children who have suffered from it. To that end, PEPFAR will seek to support expansion in four areas: (1) education about sexual violence against children for faith, traditional, and other community leaders; (2) implementation of evidence-based violence-prevention interventions through faith and traditional structures; (3) assisting all implementing partners to develop or strengthen child safeguarding policies; and (4) engagement of the justice sector to determine ways in which PEPFAR can support and complement efforts for responding to cases of sexual

violence against children. PEPFAR will also continue to: support new or repeat VACS in PEPFAR-supported countries; prioritize socioeconomic interventions to reduce the economic vulnerability of families and to empower them to provide for the essential needs of their children; deliver evidence-based parenting skills programs to promote healthy family relationships; and support an effective cascade of medical and psychosocial services that support the health and development needs of mothers and their infants.



## U.S. Department of Labor

### Contribution to APCCA

The U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of International Labor Affairs (DOL/ILAB) promotes a fair global playing field for workers in the United States and around the world by enforcing trade commitments; strengthening labor standards; and combatting international child labor, forced labor, and human trafficking. ILAB has been an acknowledged leader in protecting children from the worst forms of child labor for more than 25 years, working with governments, businesses, and civil society so that each can do its part to eliminate exploitative child labor. ILAB efforts have made a critical contribution in helping reduce the number of child laborers worldwide by 78 million over the past two decades.

ILAB projects adopt a holistic approach to promote sustainable efforts that address child labor's underlying causes, including poverty and lack of access to education. Project strategies include linking vulnerable groups to

existing government social programs; providing children with high-quality education or after-school services; helping families improve their livelihoods to meet basic needs without relying on child labor; and raising awareness about the risks of child labor, forced labor, and human trafficking.

ILAB also carries out research and reporting under Congressional mandates and Presidential directives, including *Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labor*, *List of Products Produced by Forced or Indentured Child Labor*, and *List of Goods Produced by Child or Forced Labor*. This reporting, which can be accessed through ILAB's mobile application, *Sweat & Toil*, provides specific, actionable information to various stakeholders about how to combat labor abuses in countries around the world. ILAP has a second mobile application called *Comply Chain: Business Tools for Labor Compliance in Global Supply Chains*, which contains best-practice guidance for companies on ways to develop strong social compliance systems to reduce child labor and forced labor in supply chains.

Results from ILAB's impact evaluations broaden the global knowledge base regarding effective strategies for combating abusive labor practices and allow governments and policymakers to make the best, evidence-informed decisions about programs that affect child laborers and their families.

## New Strategic Commitments

ILAB will continue to support technical assistance cooperation projects that make a difference in the lives of children and their families, including through education and livelihood support and by increasing the capacity of governments and stakeholders to combat child labor and forced labor. ILAB will broaden its outreach to

businesses and trade associations to promote the use of social compliance tools as a way to mitigate risks of abusive labor practices and highlight remediation strategies to address instances of child labor and forced labor in global supply chains. ILAB will support supply-chain-tracing research and continue to conduct in-depth research on child labor and forced labor, including as a means to support the enforcement of labor provisions in trade agreements and preference programs. In all of these efforts, ILAB will partner with governments, the private sector, and civil-society organizations to strengthen laws, enforcement, policies, and social programs to end child and forced labor.



## U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

### Contribution to APCCA

Through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has contributed to USG foreign assistance on children in adversity through numerous research grants and evidence-based interventions.

NIH-funded research and evidence-based interventions are often the basis for, or are incorporated into, other USG Partners' programs aimed at benefiting at-risk children around the globe. A number of institutions and centers within the NIH support research to build knowledge and support learning in areas related to APCCA priorities and objectives. Those include the *Eunice Kennedy Shriver* National Institute of Child

Health and Human Development, Fogarty International Center, the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences, and the National Institute of Mental Health.

CDC serves as the nation's health protection agency and supports work that saves lives and protects the public from health, safety, and security threats. CDC provides technical assistance to host governments in conducting national population-level VACS, critical tools for informing policy and monitoring progress toward the elimination of violence and its root causes. The main objective of these surveys is to generate evidence about the conditions during the early life of children and to identify modifiable factors that will further enhance strong beginnings. Identifying factors that increase children's vulnerability is a key first step toward developing and implementing preventative interventions. The VACS not only focus on generating evidence that is scarce globally, but more importantly contribute to translating children's life experiences into the basis for policies and evidence-based interventions that improve the experiences of children in their early lives. The VACS provide data on lifetime and past-year prevalence of violence against children; this information is critical for guiding partner-country governments to develop effective and scalable prevention responses.

## New Strategic Commitments

CDC will generate data to contribute to the overall understanding of conditions that increase vulnerability among children and youth in high-conflict areas, and provide useful insights into similar conditions in the United States and globally. CDC will also: increase supportive family home environments to reduce violence against girls and increase resilience among children and youth; operationalize policy and intervention strategies through evidence-based interventions aimed

at improving the resilience of home environments, increasing positive parenting, and changing norms about discipline; and identify barriers at the individual, family, and institutional levels to generate appropriate interventions and policies directed toward improving access to services, quality of protective services, and linkages between institutions that provide protective services such as health, education, and justice institutions.



## Contribution to APCCA

The Peace Corps strategically partners with countries to provide social and economic development abroad through technical assistance, while promoting mutual understanding between Americans and populations served. The Peace Corps plays a unique role on several key USG interagency programs, given its focus on building relationships with communities, families, and vulnerable children through its Volunteers. Peace Corps prioritizes partnerships to promote active engagement and enabling environments that strengthen and build the capacity of individuals, organizations, and communities in the countries where Peace Corps Volunteers serve. These partnerships enhance the education, health, and well-being of youth and their families across the Peace Corps' six programming sectors of Agriculture, Community Economic Development, Education, Environment, Health, and Youth Development. Working across 35 health-focused countries, Peace Corps' integrated approach to community development,

technical assistance, and training ensures that services reach the most vulnerable and that messages are disseminated and understood at the local level.

In addition to its engagement with APCCA, Peace Corps' Office of Global Health and HIV advances its efforts to assist children and their families through partnerships with USAID (Ending Preventable Child and Maternal Deaths, Feed the Future, and the President's Malaria Initiative); and with the Department of State and PEPFAR.

Peace Corps Volunteers who serve in the health sector provide critical links to comprehensive social services and primary health care in their clinics and community health networks that support APCCA objectives and outcomes. Volunteers coordinate the provision of services and develop health education strategies to change the way host communities approach HIV/AIDS; youth health and well-being; maternal, child, and adolescent health; nutrition; hygiene; water and

sanitation; and reproductive health. Peace Corps Volunteers partner with youth leaders, clinical service providers, and community influencers and members to provide interventions and training. These activities positively address behaviors for maternal health, prevention of gender-based violence, parent and child communication, economic strengthening, and HIV prevention and treatment for vulnerable children and their families.

### **New Strategic Commitments**

The Peace Corps will increase the knowledge and skills of women to adopt practices that contribute to a healthy pregnancy, safe delivery, good postpartum health, and newborn health; increase knowledge, skills, and access to gender-equitable care, life skills, and health care for vulnerable children and their families; and promote gender-based violence prevention at the individual and community level.

# Annex B: Current U.S. Government Contributions to the Advancing Protection and Care for Children in Adversity Strategy by Objective and Approach

## Acronym Key

**AFR:** Bureau for Africa (USAID/AFR) **CA/OCS/CI:** Office of Children's Issues (DOS/CA/OCS/CI) **CARSI:** Central America Regional Security Initiative (USAID/LAC/CARSI) **CDC:** Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (HHS/CDC) **CECA:** Children in Adversity (USAID/DCHA/DRG/EI/CECA) **DCHA:** Bureau for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance **DDI:** Bureau for Development, Democracy, and Innovation **DOL:** U.S. Department of Labor **DOS:** U.S. Department of State **DRG:** Center of Excellence in Democracy, Human Rights, and Governance **DRL:** Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor (DOS/DRL) **E3:** Bureau for Economic Growth, Education, and the Environment **ED:** Office of Education (USAID/E3/ED) **FFP:** Office of Food for Peace (USAID/DCHA/FFP) **GenDev:** Office of Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (USAID/E3/GenDev) **GH:** Bureau of Global Health **HHS:** U.S. Department of Health and Human Services **ILAB:** Bureau of International Labor Affairs (DOL/ILAB) **INL:** Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (DOS/INL) **IO:** Bureau of International Organization Affairs (DOS/IO) **MCHN:** Bureau for Global Health, Office of Maternal, Child Health and Nutrition (USAID/GH/MCHN) **NIH:** National Institutes of Health (HHS/NIH) **OFDA:** Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (USAID/OFDA) **OGHH:** Office of Global Health and HIV (Peace Corps) **OHA:** Office of HIV/AIDS (USAID/GH/OHA) **PC:** Peace Corps **PRM:** Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration (DOS/PRM) **RFS:** Bureau for Resilience and Food Security **S/GAC:** Office of the U.S. Global AIDS Coordinator and Health Diplomacy (DOS/S/GAC) **TIP:** Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons (DOS//TIP) **USAID:** U.S. Agency for International Development **YOUTH:** Office of the Youth Coordinator (USAID/DCHA/DRG)

#	Objectives and Approaches of the APCCA Strategy	USAID	DOL	HHS	DOS	PC
1.1	Recognize the family and home environment as the critical place to enhance the quality of care and development of infants and young children.	DCHA/OFDA <sup>4</sup>		CDC NIH	CA/ OCS/CI, S/GAC	OGHH
1.2	Fund and scale-up evidence-based, culturally appropriate parenting programs that promote loving, nurturing care; support mental health and well-being of parents and other family caregivers; and address issues such as conflict in relationships, intimate-partner violence, and substance abuse.	DCHA/DRG/CECA, <sup>5</sup> DCHA/OFDA		CDC	S/GAC, PRM	OGHH
1.3	Support livelihood interventions, economic-strengthening, and social-protection programs to increase the income and resilience of vulnerable households.	DCHA/DRG/CECA, E3/ED, <sup>5</sup> DCHA/FFP <sup>4</sup>	ILAB	CDC	S/GAC	OGHH
1.4	Strengthen systems to provide an enabling environment for raising children, including through the promotion of positive, family-oriented workplace conditions, policies, and programs that help parents, especially young parents, develop their skills and create strong families.	DCHA/DRG/CECA, E3/ED		CDC		
1.5	Promote developmentally supportive, family-centered care for medically fragile newborns in health facilities and in the home.	GH			S/GAC	OGHH
1.6	Develop and support systems and professionals to monitor the process of children's development over time; identify as early as possible any potential developmental lags in young children; and refer children and their families to appropriate services as needed.	DCHA/DRG/CECA, E3/ED, GH			S/GAC	

#	Objectives and Approaches of the APCCA Strategy	USAID	DOL	HHS	DOS	PC
1.7	Promote access to secure, caring, and safe places for young children, where they can learn, develop, and be protected, as a core component of humanitarian assistance.	E3/ED, DCHA/OFDA		CDC	PRM	
1.8	Promote health, nutrition, clean water, and sanitation, particularly for pregnant women and children under age five, and incorporate interventions that contribute to healthy child development, such as age-appropriate early stimulation and integration of developmental counseling and monitoring into routine health care and nutrition programs.	DCHA/DRG/CECA, E3/ED, DCHA/FFP, DCHA/OFDA		CDC NIH	S/GAC, PRM	OGHH
1.9	Improve the accessibility, safety, and quality of local early-childhood and pre-primary development and education programs.	E3/ED				OGHH
2.1	Assist countries to transition from relying on residential care settings for children to supporting family-based care, including through development of gatekeeping processes.	DCHA/DRG/CECA			CA/ OCS/CI	
2.2	Support community-based programs to strengthen families and keep them together through economic strengthening of households; develop parenting skills and healthy relationships; provide access to quality, inclusive education; and support health care and social services and programs to reduce alcohol- and substance-abuse, all adapted to address different family structures.	DCHA/DRG/CECA, E3/ED	ILAB	CDC	S/GAC	OGHH
2.3	Support the reunification and reintegration of children living outside of parental care, including those in residential care settings, trafficked, on the street, in armed groups, or affected by humanitarian emergencies, into safe, nurturing, and loving families. Where reunification cannot support safety and well-being of a child, other family-based care options will be promoted, such as kinship, foster care, or domestic and inter-country adoption, keeping siblings together whenever possible.	DCHA/DRG/CECA, DCHA/OFDA			IO, OCI, PRM, S/GAC, TIP,	
2.4	Support family tracing interventions for children who are unaccompanied during emergencies and humanitarian crises.	DCHA/OFDA			PRM	
2.5	Strengthen capacities of parents, other caregivers, and outreach support services to enable children with disabilities to live in family care, with access to inclusive education and other essential services.	DCHA/DRG/CECA, E3/ED		CDC	OCI	
2.6	Raise public awareness on the imperative that children should grow up in families and on the risk factors that cause children to live outside of family care.	CARSI, DCHA/DRG/CECA, GH		CDC	CA/ OCS/CI	

#	Objectives and Approaches of the APCCA Strategy	USAID	DOL	HHS	DOS	PC
2.7	Increase political will to strengthen national and local legislation, policies, and systems for family support and for the care and protection of children.	CARSI, DCHA/DRG/CECA, GH	ILAB		CA/OCS/CI, S/GAC	
2.8	Invest in the development of national systems to identify, enumerate, and document children who are, or at risk of, living in residential care settings, on the street, and associated with armed groups, or who are trafficked or are experiencing emergencies, including temporary separation from their families.	DCHA/DRG/CECA, DCHA/OFDA		CDC	CA/OCS/CI, PRM, TIP	
2.9	Support national governments to strengthen policies and practices as they relate to residential care settings, and increase domestic oversight of organizations that support residential care settings.	AFR, CARSI, DCHA/DRG/CECA, GH		CDC	CA/OCS/CI	
2.10	Strengthen and grow social-service workforces through training and other educational efforts to improve the retention and performance of professional and paraprofessional child-welfare and protection workers.	DCHA/DRG/CECA, GH			S/GAC	
2.11	Integrate evidence-informed, child-protection programming across sectors, including health, nutrition, education, labor, social welfare, security, justice, and humanitarian response, to reduce children's vulnerability.	CARSI, DCHA/DRG/CECA, DCHA/OFDA, GH		CDC	S/GAC, PRM	OGHH
3.1	Identify children and adolescents who are especially vulnerable to violence, exploitation, abuse, and neglect and provide effective, equitable, inclusive education and social-emotional learning opportunities for girls and boys to build resilience and counter the effects of violence.	CARSI, E3/ED, E3/GenDev, <sup>5</sup> GH, DCHA/OFDA	ILAB	CDC	S/GAC, PRM, TIP	
3.2	Fund and support programs that prevent violence and provide care, psychosocial support, high-quality education, and protection to survivors of violence, exploitation, abuse, and neglect, and efforts to prevent re-victimization.	CARSI, DCHA/DRG/CECA, E3/GenDev, DCHA/OFDA, GH	ILAB	CDC	PRM, S/GAC, TIP	OGHH
3.3	Equip parents and other family caregivers, teachers, social workers, and faith and community leaders to identify children who have been exposed to violence and link them to appropriate care to develop violence-free homes, schools, and communities.	CARSI, DCHA/DRG/CECA, E3/ED, DCHA/OFDA, GH	ILAB	CDC	PRM, S/GAC	
3.4	Strengthen child-welfare and child-protection systems, and support the strengthening, implementation, and enforcement of laws and policies to prevent, respond to, and protect children from all forms of violence, exploitation, abuse, and neglect, including children vulnerable to online violence and exploitation, human trafficking, and the worst forms of child labor including recruitment and use of child soldiers.	CARSI, DCHA/DRG/CECA, E3/ED, DCHA/OFDA, GH	ILAB	CDC	DRL, PRM, S/GAC, TIP	

#	Objectives and Approaches of the APCCA Strategy	USAID	DOL	HHS	DOS	PC
3.5	Foster coordination and strengthen interventions across sectors, including social work, education, maternal and child health, justice, nutrition, water, sanitation, and hygiene, to identify and respond to violence, abuse, exploitation, and neglect.	CARSI, DCHA/DRG/CECA, DCHA/OFDA, GH, DCHA/DRG/YOUTH <sup>5</sup>	ILAB	CDC	PRM, S/GAC	
3.6	Invest in national surveys and country-led data collection, including during humanitarian crises, to document the magnitude, nature, and effect of physical, emotional, and sexual violence and exploitation against children and adolescents, to inform and promote evidence-based responses from national governments and partners.	CARSI, DCHA/DRG/CECA, DCHA/OFDA, GH	ILAB	CDC	PRM, S/GAC	
3.7	Build national and local capacity to interpret and apply data to inform evidence-based action.	CARSI, DCHA/DRG/CECA, E3/ED, GH	ILAB	CDC	S/GAC	
3.8	Use a positive-youth-development approach to engage young people directly in action to promote their own safety.	RFS, GH, DCHA/DRG/YOUTH		CDC	PRM, S/GAC	OGHH
3.9	Recognize the gendered nature of violence, and raise awareness about the effects of violence, abuse, exploitation, and neglect on the development, mental health, and well-being of girls and boys, and address harmful norms and practices to reduce the prevalence of such violence and abuse in all settings.	CARSI, DCHA/DRG/CECA, E3/ED, DCHA/FFP, E3/GenDev, DCHA/OFDA, GH	ILAB	CDC	S/GAC, PRM	OGHH
3.10	Increase awareness of both the value and risks of online and mobile access for children, to reduce their exposure to disturbing or potentially harmful content, and to prevent exploitation.		ILAB	CDC	INL, TIP	

## Endnotes

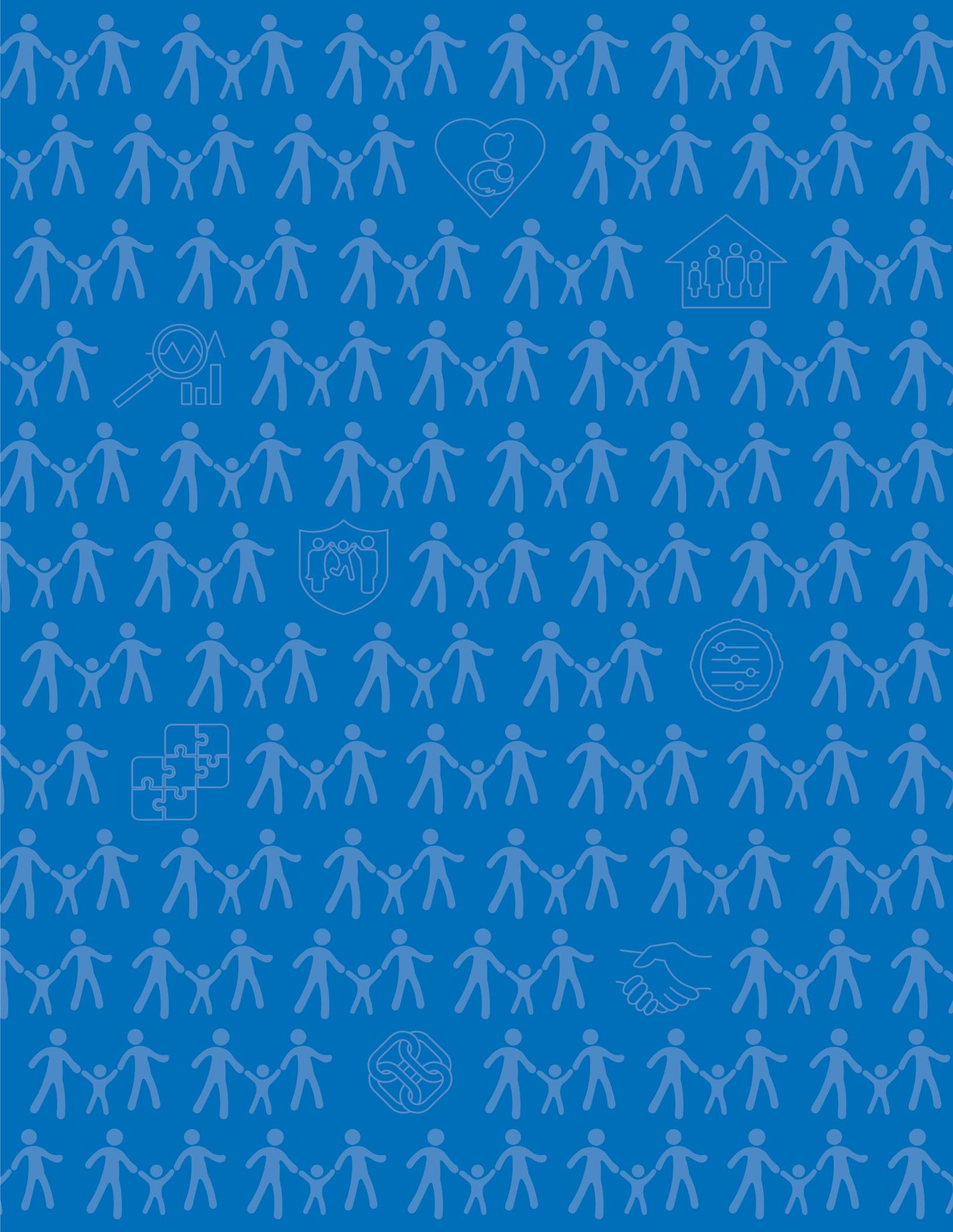
<sup>1</sup> Output and outcome indicators include: the number of beneficiaries who receive services funded by the U.S. Government; the number of national systems, service-delivery systems, or organizations strengthened; and the number of individuals trained.

<sup>2</sup> Policies include: the USAID Youth in Development Policy; U.S. Government Global Food Security Strategy FY 2017–2021; U.S. Government Strategy on International Basic Education, Fiscal Years 2019–2023; USAID Education Policy; and the Multi-sectoral Nutrition Strategy, 2014–2025.

<sup>3</sup> In fall 2019, USAID began implementing a series of reforms to its workforce, structure, programs, and processes in order to achieve greater development, foreign policy, and national security outcomes. For more information, visit <https://www.usaid.gov/what-we-do/transformation-at-usaid>.

<sup>4</sup> The Bureau for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance will be renamed the Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance by end of FY 2020.

<sup>5</sup> Children in Adversity will move to the Bureau for Development, Democracy, and Innovation by end of Calendar Year 2020.



[www.childreninadversity.gov](http://www.childreninadversity.gov)