



# ANNUAL REPORT TO CONGRESS THE U.S. GOVERNMENT ACTION PLAN ON CHILDREN IN ADVERSITY

October 2014



Cover Photo  
Photographer: John Williamson  
Displaced Children and Orphans Fund | USAID

Detail from the mural, *Coming Home*, painted as part of a training exercise under the SAFE project (*Soins Appropriés pour les Familles et les Enfants/Appropriate Care for Families and Children*), implemented by Save the Children U.S. and funded by USAID's Displaced Children and Orphans Fund. The mural is at the Bena Center in Mbuji Mayi, Democratic Republic of Congo, which collaborates with SAFE as a transit center for children in need of family placement. SAFE prevents and responds to family separation of children.

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## Foreword

Dear Colleagues,

I am pleased to submit the Seventh Annual Report to Congress on Public Law 109-95, the Assistance for Orphans and Other Vulnerable Children in Developing Countries Act of 2005 and the U.S. Government Action Plan on Children in Adversity. I submit this report on behalf of colleagues in the U.S. Government and our partners, all of whom work tirelessly on behalf of the world's most vulnerable children.

The establishment and launch of the Action Plan in 2012 was a watershed moment, representing the first-ever U.S. Government framework for international assistance for children in adversity. The Action Plan is grounded in evidence that shows a promising future belongs to those nations that invest wisely in their children, while failure to do so undermines social and economic progress.

As this report outlines, much has been accomplished by U.S. Government agencies:

- More than 90,000 children engaged in or at high-risk of entering child labor provided with education or vocational services through 11 Department of Labor programs.
- 2.7 million children reached through the U.S. Department of Agriculture's McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program.
- 76,000 households caring for orphans and vulnerable children supported through the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief's economic strengthening activities.
- Close to 1,000 children moved from inadequate residential institutions and placed in family care through U.S. Agency for International Development-supported programs in Ethiopia.

While much remains to be done, U.S. Government resources are making a difference in the lives of orphans and vulnerable children. We remain committed to this important work in 2014 and beyond.

I thank you for your tremendous leadership on this issue. As this report clearly demonstrates, together we can have, and indeed are having, an impact. These programs reflect the essence of American values and her boundless generosity.

Respectfully,



Robert Horvath  
Interim U.S. Government Special Advisor on Children in Adversity



*The Action Plan is a whole-of-government strategy for helping children ... grounded in evidence showing a promising future belongs to those nations that invest wisely in their children.*



OFDA\_AITech

## ➤➤ Introduction

Millions of children throughout the world face adversity – conditions of serious deprivation and danger. Children who experience violence or are exploited, abandoned, abused, or severely neglected (in or outside of families) also face significant threats to their survival and well-being as well as profound life cycle risks that have an impact on human, social, and economic development. Children in the most dire straits include those without protective family care or living in abusive households, on the streets or in institutions, trafficked, participating in

armed groups, and/or exploited for their labor. Many more live within fragile families and face a multitude of risks posed by extreme poverty, disease, disability, conflict, and disaster.<sup>1</sup> Annex 1 includes a global profile on children in adversity, including relevant statistics.

This report outlines some of the substantial efforts and impact of the U.S. Government's work under the Action Plan on Children in Adversity (APCA) in Fiscal Year (FY) 2013, and progress to-date in these key areas.

Nine years ago, Congress passed Public Law 109-95: The Assistance for Orphans and Vulnerable Children in Developing Countries Act of 2005 (PL 109-95). The Act calls for a comprehensive, coordinated, and effective response on the part of the U.S. Government to the world's most vulnerable children. U.S. Government assistance to children in need is substantial and multi-faceted. Multiple offices within five federal departments – Agriculture, Defense, Health and Human Services, Labor, and State – as well as the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and Peace Corps – are involved in the U.S. Government response to children facing adversity overseas.

## ➤➤ The U.S. Government Action Plan on Children in Adversity

APCA is a whole-of-government strategy for helping children. Its goal is to ensure that more children grow up within protective family care, free from deprivation, exploitation, and danger. Launched from the White House in December 2012, APCA is grounded in evidence that shows a promising future belongs to those nations that invest wisely in

their children while failure to do so undermines social and economic progress. APCA focuses and coordinates programs throughout the U.S. Government to achieve three primary objectives: build strong beginnings, put family care first, and protect children. Annex 2 outlines the principal and supporting objectives of APCA.

PL 109-95 establishes that USAID should be the primary U.S. Government agency responsible for identifying and assisting orphans and other vulnerable children in developing countries. USAID is also the home of the U.S. Government Special Advisor, a position mandated by the Act. In the fall of 2014, USAID merged the Center on Children in Adversity (CECA) with the Displaced Children and Orphans Fund (DCOF) within the Center of Excellence on Democracy, Human Rights, and Governance in the Bureau for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance. This strategic move aligns policy, program, staff, and budget resources to better fulfill the legislative mandate set forth under PL 109-95 and to implement APCA.

<sup>1</sup> Shonkoff, J.P., et al. (2012). Technical Report: The lifelong effects of early childhood adversity and toxic stress. *Pediatrics*, 129(1). pp. e232–e246. <http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/129/1/e232.full.pdf+html>.



*Mothers and their babies participate in an interactive play session supported by Future Families (South Africa) aimed at teaching single mothers the importance of attachment, stimulation, and proper nutrition for young children's healthy development.*

## ►► Build Strong Beginnings

Under the first objective, build strong beginnings, we have achieved remarkable results in combating preventable child death and helping all children reach their 5th birthday. Yet we know the challenge is to ensure children not only survive, but also thrive. In low- and middle-income countries, an estimated 200 million children under 5 years of age fail to reach their developmental potential,<sup>2</sup> limiting their ability to contribute to society. U.S. Government international assistance supports comprehensive programs that promote sound development of children by integrating health, nutrition, and family support.

USAID is working with CARE International to implement a multi-faceted program targeting working mothers with young children in rural Kamonyi District in southern Rwanda. The program includes home-based daycare, community-based child development centers for preschoolers, parenting education on child development topics, and income-generating activities designed to strengthen vulnerable families and help children remain in family care. The daycare and preschool centers not only provide meals for the attendees, but also serve as venues for community health workers to conduct monthly check-ups that ensure children who become ill or whose growth falter are quickly identified for treatment.

In an effort to attend to the youngest children affected by HIV and AIDS, the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), through the Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC) portfolio, supports comprehensive programming to promote sound development of children living with and affected by HIV and AIDS. A growing understanding of the importance of early childhood development (ECD) and the impact that HIV and AIDS have on the development of an HIV-exposed child has prompted PEPFAR to examine how best to increase attention to the health and developmental needs of these young children and their mothers. In Malawi, PEPFAR supported the establishment of 68 community-based childcare centers and trained 285 caregivers for delivery of ECD activities. PEPFAR has also launched an OVC-led special integration initiative for the youngest children in the epidemic that brings together OVC programming with the pediatric treatment and prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV platforms. Four countries – Lesotho, Malawi, Swaziland, and Zimbabwe – have been chosen to participate in the initiative.

A number of investments are being made in young children globally. To connect the best science on how to support children's growth and development with practices and policies

on the ground around the world, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the National Institutes of Health (NIH), and PEPFAR are supporting the Institute of Medicine's Board on Children, Youth, and Families to conduct an international, 3-year forum on investing in young children globally. Forum activities highlight the science and economics of integrated investments in young children living in low-resourced regions of the world across the areas of health, nutrition, education, and social protection. Additionally, USAID's Food and Nutrition Technical Assistance (FANTA) Project is working in Malawi with Tampere University to study the cognitive and social development of young infants in low-income settings. Nutritional status will also be measured in this pilot study to determine the association between nutrition and cognitive development.

In 2013, USAID convened internal and external stakeholders to develop a new Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Strategy (2014–2025), which launched in May 2014. The strategy specifically mentions childcare and development as part of the conceptual framework. In addition, the strategy outlines how to integrate child development components into nutrition-specific and -sensitive services, including actions to promote protective and responsive caregiving and feeding, stimulation, and caregiver-child attachment.

<sup>2</sup> Grantham-McGregor, S., et al. (2007). Developmental potential in the first five years for children in developing countries. *The Lancet*, 369(9555). pp. 60-70.

## ►► Put Family Care First

The second objective of APCA is to put family care first. There are an estimated 150,000,000 children ages 0–17 globally who have lost one or both parents.<sup>3</sup> Evidence clearly shows that families – parents, grandparents, relatives, foster families, or adoptive families – are the best source of support for children. An NIH-funded study of children in institutions in Romania, for example, showed significant deficits in IQ for children in institutions versus those in families.<sup>4</sup> The study also showed that when these children were placed with families at a young age, their IQ rebounded to nearly match that of their peers; however, when left in institutions, there was little or no gain. Globally, the vast majority of children outside of family care do have parents or relatives, and in many regions of the world, there is a rich tradition of kinship care. Therefore, ensuring children are with their families and strengthening their caregiver’s ability to care and protect is a top priority. Although the vast majority of children orphaned by AIDS are living in families led by single surviving parents and kinship-carers, PEPFAR programs do have special interventions for children outside of family care. Organizations like Friends International and Retrak work with street children in Cambodia, Uganda, and elsewhere, helping those who want to go home return to family, and ensuring those families have follow-up support (e.g., parental skills building and economic opportunities) to ensure children can remain with them.

Strategies to unify or reunify and support families struggling to provide care for vulnerable children include deinstitutionalizing separated children; increasing family income generation; providing conditional cash transfers; meeting urgent

material needs such as food, clothing, and shelter; linking families to appropriate treatment or services; and ensuring parents and caregivers have the knowledge and skills needed to decide what is best for themselves and their families.

In Ethiopia, at least 7,000 children live in orphanages. With support from USAID’s DCOF, the Ethiopian Ministry of Justice conducted a study of more than 100 residential institutions, resulting in the government’s immediate declaration to close 45 substandard institutions. In the last 2 years, close to 1,000 children have been moved from these inadequate institutions and placed in family care.

Also in Ethiopia, the PEPFAR/USAID supported *Yekokeb Birhan*, the second largest OVC program in Africa, has supported 76,000 households caring for orphans and vulnerable children through economic strengthening activities. Seventy-five percent of those households now have regular income and improved access to education, health and other critical services. School attendance has increased by 14 percent, with a 71 percent increase in the number of children enrolled in pre-school programs. Full immunization rates jumped from 34 percent at the start of the program to 58 percent – higher than the national average. In addition, PEPFAR OVC programs have supported more than 13,000 village savings and loans groups in 15 countries. As a result, more than 1 million children affected by HIV and AIDS are living in families with improved economic stability. All of these family-strengthening activities help support families to stay together and reduce the chances of family separation for highly vulnerable children.

Accurately accounting for how many children are separated from their families is challenging. In response, the U.S. Government is supporting the development of innovative tools and partnerships that can help us better understand, account for, and track the number of children outside of family care, especially in situations of crisis and conflict. Working with Save the Children, for example, USAID’s Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) is developing methods to estimate the number of children living outside of family care in disaster settings and testing them on the ground in North Kivu, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Separately, in collaboration with Columbia University, USAID’s CECA is working to identify children outside of family care and to develop a scorecard that governments and organizations can use to measure their success in reducing the number of children outside of families across a broad set of development contexts.

In an effort to improve and streamline the family reunification process, USAID’s OFDA has invested in UNICEF’s Rapid Family Tracing and Reunification tool – an open source application for handheld devices that assists child protection workers in the field. With this application, humanitarian workers can use cellphones and other mobile devices to input data and quickly share information with other child protection workers throughout the affected country and across borders. As a result, the length of time children are separated from families and vulnerable to exploitation, violence, and abuse is greatly diminished.

<sup>3</sup> UNICEF. *Toward an AIDS-Free Generation. Children and AIDS: Sixth Stocktaking Report.* 2013.

<sup>4</sup> Nelson, Charles; Fox, Nathan; Zeanah, Charlie. *Romania’s Abandoned Children: Deprivation, Brain Development, and the Struggle for Recovery.* Boston: Harvard University Press, 2013.



*Violence against children knows no geographic, ethnic, economic, or cultural boundaries.*

## ►► Protect Children from Violence, Exploitation, Abuse, and Neglect

The third objective of APCA is to protect children. Mounting evidence suggests that more than 1 billion children are exposed to violence each year – including physical, sexual, and emotional forms of abuse or neglect – and witnessing violence between adults. Violence against children knows no geographic, ethnic, economic, or cultural boundaries. It occurs in homes, in schools, on the street, in the workplace, and in institutions. Children experiencing interpersonal violence may live in settings also afflicted with armed conflict. Such exposure causes immediate harm to children and has the potential to have a lasting, compounded impact over their lifetime.<sup>5</sup> Global studies show about 36 percent of girls and 29 percent of boys worldwide have been sexually abused and more than 100 million children are engaged in hazardous work.

We know that neglect, abuse, and violence have lifelong impacts on children. Those who experience violence at a young age are likely to die at an earlier age, to engage in risky behaviors, to be more prone to alcoholism and drug abuse, and to spend time incarcerated. With the burgeoning

youth populations in low- and middle-income countries, this is a threat to the development gains being made across the globe and the stability and prosperity of the world. Under APCA's framework, we are facilitating the efforts of national governments and partners to prevent, respond to, and protect children from violence, exploitation, abuse, and neglect, including human trafficking and child labor.

In the Dominican Republic, the U.S. Department of State's (DOS) Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons (J/TIP) is funding the International Justice Mission to implement a model of targeted training and collaborative casework for law enforcement and service providers on the identification, rescue, investigation, and prosecution of child sex trafficking cases. In Haiti, J/TIP, through its partner the International Organization for Migration, is increasing the number of victims assisted. Their focus is on children exploited as domestic servants and on enhancing the capacity of local partner organizations to assist in the return and reintegration of child victims of trafficking. In Honduras,

J/TIP's partner *Casa Alianza* is providing comprehensive shelter and other essential services to children and adolescents who are victims of sex or labor trafficking or at risk of human trafficking, as well as strengthening social services to meet the needs of vulnerable lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender youth.

The U.S. Department of Labor's (DOL) Office of Child Labor, Forced Labor, and Human Trafficking (OCFT) is working to reduce the worst forms of child labor through research, policy engagement and technical cooperation. In FY 2013, OCFT funded 11 projects in more than 20 countries aimed at combating exploitative child labor and forced labor. OCFT provided more than 23,000 households with services to improve livelihoods, and at least 90,000 children engaged in labor – or at risk of entering labor – received OCFT-supported educational or vocational services. In addition, the capacity of 29 countries was increased to address child labor through the adaption of legal frameworks; formulation and adoption of specific policies; establishment of a child labor monitoring system; and institution-

<sup>5</sup> Stein, A., et al. (2014). Predicting long-term outcomes for children affected by HIV and AIDS: perspectives from the scientific study of children's development. *AIDS*, 28:S261-S268.

alization of child labor and forced labor research and training within government agencies.

The U.S. Government, through USAID and DOS's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration, is the single largest contributor to programs focused on addressing the safety and well-being of children in humanitarian situations around the world. In FY 2013 alone, USAID allocated more than \$17 million in funding to support programs aimed at building knowledge, tools, and capacity to address child protection in 15 conflict- and disaster-affected countries – 11 of which are in Africa.

Since 2011, USAID's child protection work with UNICEF in the DRC has removed more than 3,257 children from their associations with armed groups – including 202 girls – in North Kivu, South Kivu, Orientale, and Katanga provinces. USAID and UNICEF have provided separated children with temporary care in transit centers or foster families and with support for reintegration into their communities and have helped an additional 5,000 conflict-affected children to enroll in school or obtain vocational skills training. Additionally, 15 local organizations have strengthened capacity for assisting children associated with armed groups, and more than 70 community committees have been created or strengthened to promote child rights at the grassroots level and prevent child recruitment into armed groups in the DRC.

The U.S. Government through PEPFAR takes part in Together for Girls, a public-

private partnership dedicated to ending violence against children, especially sexual violence against girls. PEPFAR funds the CDC's Violence Against Children Survey (VACS) in multiple countries. These national household-level surveys, which document the magnitude, nature, and impact of all forms of violence against children, serve as an entry point for the partnership to provide comprehensive data on the scale and consequences of all forms of violence against children. The data gathered from the surveys provide the foundation for action, mobilizing countries to lead a response and inform solutions that are evidence-based. Currently, 14 countries, most of them with generalized HIV epidemics and a strong PEPFAR presence, either have completed or are in the process of conducting these surveys. There is a growing demand for VACS around the world – 14 additional countries have requested CDC technical assistance for VACS implementation. Importantly, PEPFAR OVC is also supporting programs that respond to the complexities of childhood violence revealed by the data of VACS. This response is critical and requires action from multiple stakeholders.

In an effort to enhance food security and promote equitable access to educational opportunities in safe and appropriate learning environments, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program (MGD) issues approximately nine MGD program awards annually, reaching up to 2.7 million school-age children each year.

Typical activities include providing school meals, teacher training, community capacity building, sustainable school-gardens, water and sanitation improvements, and nutrition training. USAID's Africa Bureau has commissioned research to explore the relationship between safe learning environments and educational achievement. The report highlights the prevalence of school-related gender based violence (especially in developing countries) and its negative impact on children's well-being and learning.

DOS supports ethical and transparent intercountry adoptions that are in the best interests of children. DOS is also the U.S. Central Authority for the Hague Convention on the Protection of Children and Cooperation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption (Hague Convention), as designated by the Intercountry Adoption Act. DOS's Bureau of Consular Affairs, Office of Children's Issues carries out the Department's responsibilities as U.S. Central Authority and the day-to-day oversight and implementation of the Hague Convention in the United States. In Hague Convention and non-Convention countries, DOS, in partnership with the Department of Homeland Security's U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, interacts daily with the adoption authorities and accredited bodies in foreign countries in the processing of inter-country adoptions and performs its function as a central authority, including promoting the goals of the Hague Convention. In FY 2013, DOS issued 7,094 visas to children adopted abroad or coming to the United States to be adopted by U.S. citizens.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> U.S. Department of State. FY 2013 Annual Report on Intercountry Adoption. March 2014. Available at: [http://adoption.state.gov/content/pdf/fy2013\\_annual\\_report.pdf](http://adoption.state.gov/content/pdf/fy2013_annual_report.pdf).



*Advances toward APCA outcomes require prioritization of countries in which collective assistance across vulnerability categories can be harnessed at national scale and where U.S. Government interagency partners, host country governments, and national and international partners are committed and willing to work together to achieve results.*

## »» Focus Country Approach

While APCA applies to U.S. Government assistance globally, it also identifies a more targeted starting point for these efforts: to achieve three core outcomes in at least six priority countries over a span of 5 years. Advances toward APCA outcomes require prioritization of countries in which collective assistance across vulnerability categories can be harnessed at national scale and where U.S. Government interagency partners, host country governments, and national and international partners are committed and willing to work together to achieve results. In these countries, through U.S. Government collaboration with other government, international, private, faith-based, and academic partners, APCA is attempting to achieve significant reductions in the numbers of:

1. Children not meeting age-appropriate growth and developmental milestones
2. Children living outside of family care
3. Children who experience violence or exploitation

Cambodia was the first priority country identified under APCA. Three teams

visited Cambodia in FY 2013 and 2014 to facilitate an open and proactive discussion with the government on national target-setting, identify successful interventions for scale-up, and convene donors in an effort to increase investment in the APCA framework and achieve results for children in adversity. A full-time coordinator is facilitating APCA implementation and building partnerships with the Royal Government of Cambodia, the private sector, and civil society.

Setting national targets is a defining step in the APCA framework. Nutrition and education feature prominently in existing national goals in Cambodia, creating opportunities for measuring progress of APCA-related interventions moving forward. For example, the Cambodian Government has a reduction target for the prevalence of stunting in the country – from 40 percent in 2010 to 25 percent by 2018. USAID recently awarded a new 5-year, \$16 million project that supports the Cambodian Government's nutrition strategy. In addition to improving nutrition, the project is putting scientific evidence into action by integrating nutrition-sensitive activities that promote ECD in line with APCA Objective 1. In addition, other U.S. Government programs support

Cambodia's stunting reduction target; examples of such programs include USDA's school-feeding programs and Peace Corps' community health and nutrition programs.

Cambodia's Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation has set the goal of reducing the number of children in residential care with a corresponding target to increase the number of children in alternative family-based care. A limiting factor at present is the lack of a complete snapshot of children living outside of family care from which the reduction targets can be set and tracked. USAID is helping the Government of Cambodia to estimate the total number of children outside of family care.

Through its Global Development Lab, USAID is advancing innovation programming to address the various barriers and challenges that have limited developing nations' ability to prevent the separation of vulnerable children from families and to make or sustain significant reductions in the number of children residing in institutions. By inviting diverse stakeholders to co-create and collaboratively implement local solutions, USAID aims to foster inclusive, creative, evidence-based solutions and to leverage funding in Cambodia.

Since deciding to suspend inter-country adoptions in 2002, Cambodia has made a concerted effort to reform its adoption laws and procedures with the goal of implementing a comprehensive alternative care system that would ultimately bring the country into compliance with the Hague Convention. The United States will continue to support the Cambodian Government as it establishes a regulatory framework for alternative care, including intercountry adoption. One example of this support is a Voluntary Visitor program to demonstrate to Cambodian officials U.S. child welfare and alternative care systems and the functions and practices of a central authority.

Cambodia also has a national goal to reduce child labor. DOL is spearheading a 4-year, \$10 million project aimed at helping the government achieve this goal by reducing exploitative child labor. Given the overlap between poverty, migration, and child labor, this essential work furthers APCA Objective 3. Finally, CDC worked with UNICEF and the Royal Government of Cambodia to administer the VACS, a national household level survey documenting the magnitude, nature and impact of all forms of violence against children. The results are being released in 2014, marking the first time Cambodia will have national statistics on sexual, physical, and emotional violence

against children. Not only will these data allow for national-level surveillance of this epidemic of violence, but also they will create opportunities for advocacy, discussion, and a coordinated national response that did not exist previously.

In addition to Cambodia, Rwanda and Moldova have been approved as priority countries. Multi-sectoral and multi-agency field visits have been conducted, and preliminary workplans are being developed.

## ➤➤ U.S. Government Coordination

Under APCA, a senior-level group has been formed to map out a whole-of-government operational plan within which specific department and agency plans will be implemented. The Senior Policy Operating Group on Children in Adversity is convened biannually. In addition, a large technical-level interagency working group meets quarterly to review and strengthen coordination of activities that support APCA objectives. Moreover, U.S. Government agencies are looking to strengthen their own responses under APCA. DOS, for example, has established a Task Force on Children in Adversity to facilitate intra-departmental coordination.

In FY 2013, interagency partners developed an Operational Protocol to clarify strategies for coordination and communication, and we have worked together and with other partners to identify priority countries for implementation. Priority country selection is based on interagency dialogue and process. Under the leadership of the Interim Special Advisor on Children in Adversity, representatives of APCA agencies and the relevant embassies are working with the governments concerned and other private, bi-lateral, and multi-lateral donors to develop a collaborative plan of action in confirmed priority countries, as well as exploring such a process in other potential priority countries where there is interest. Promising initial visits have taken place in Uganda, Rwanda, and Moldova. Responses to these visits have been posi-

tive, with APCA receiving strong support as a tool to assist children in adversity. Partners are compiling in-depth summaries of U.S. Government programming by APCA objective in priority countries under consideration. With a focus on results, information on planned project-level evaluations is also being collected, specifically as they inform action to address the three principal objectives. With this foundation, and starting in Cambodia, national targets are being set and coupled with a map of what is needed for countries to meet targets, including additional funding. We continue to explore additional opportunities in countries from diverse geographic regions. We anticipate that 2–3 additional priority countries will be confirmed within the next 12 months.



*Parents in Hima, Uganda, share family photos with their children. One of their children, now 3 ½ years old, was rescued from a pit latrine where she was abandoned at birth. With the love of her adopted family and support from the USAID funded SUNRISE OVC Project, the child is happy and healthy.*

## ➤➤ Results Focused

U.S. Government and external partners are committed to measuring the effectiveness of assistance to children in adversity. Measurement efforts take place at a number of levels, including at the national- and project-levels. For example, the Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) currently being administered in Cambodia includes the Early Childhood Development module from UNICEF's Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey. By including questions from this module, the DHS will be able to provide national baseline data regarding child development outcomes. Moreover, if the module is repeated in subsequent surveys, data changes can be tracked over time. To measure the number of children outside of family care, action is underway to strengthen current governmental systems and to produce nationally representative data comparable across or within countries over time. The development with partners of a national surveillance tool for estimating the number of children in residential care institutions and on the street is also being undertaken. The survey methodology is initially being

tested in Cambodia and its potential use will be discussed with key national actors in other APCA priority countries.

CDC, with support from PEPFAR and in partnership with host-country governments, UNICEF, and others, developed the VACS. The survey has been completed in nine countries to-date to assess the prevalence of sexual, physical, and emotional violence against children. Results have been catalytic in prompting more effective local policy and programming responses to protect children. A VACS was recently completed in Cambodia, and plans are underway for it to be administered in Rwanda. In addition to the VACS, national Child Labor Surveys are routinely conducted in most countries, often supported by DOL, and will be used to track changes in the national prevalence of hazardous work by children.

Besides these national-level measurements, a growing number of U.S. Government partners are funding evaluations to establish reliable baselines and observe change

among targeted populations – either direct beneficiaries or the subpopulations where projects work. For example, DOL is currently funding a sectorally-representative baseline study on the prevalence of child labor in the tea sector in Rwanda. The survey will be repeated at the end of the project to measure change in the prevalence of child labor in the districts where DOL's assistance is focused. PEPFAR, as part of its new monitoring, evaluation, and reporting (MER) guidance, launched a set of outcome indicators for OVC programs. These required outcome indicators reflect internationally accepted developmental milestones and collectively measure holistic well-being for children and their families. Overall, partners are working to align evaluation efforts with outcomes under the three principal APCA objectives and to improve such efforts over time. This attention to measuring outcomes for children is crucial in demonstrating the impact of U.S. Government assistance and providing evidence-based practices that can be replicated and disseminated around the globe.

## »» Fiscal Year 2013 Programming Levels

In previous years, annual reports to Congress on PL 109-95 included estimated levels of funding to support programs reaching highly vulnerable children. Efforts to assist vulnerable children tend to target specific categories of need, for instance, children affected by HIV and AIDS, in emergencies, or in the worst forms of child labor, including those who are victims of human trafficking. Funding levels were estimated by U.S. Government offices based on each department or agency's understanding of how its work related to PL 109-95. Criteria for inclusion were not more specifically defined until the 2012 launch of APCA.

This year's review of the U.S. Government's portfolio of assistance to children overseas was redesigned to specifically reflect the objectives of APCA. Recognizing that individual agencies and departments have their own reporting systems, the review was administered across the seven agencies and departments that signed onto APCA. It sought details on overall funding and activities that contributed to APCA's objectives in FY 2013, in contrast to previous reports that aggregated all forms of assistance for children. A total of 13 offices within 6 departments and agencies responded to the data call. The portfolio of work dif-

fers dramatically across partners: 100 percent of resources spent by some offices are for APCA-related activities while others spend only a portion of their funding on APCA-related work. In some cases, APCA-specific funding levels could not be determined.

Based on these responses, U.S. Government contributions addressing APCA objectives totaled \$463,237,665 in FY 2013. This figure should not be compared with funding levels represented in previous annual reports, as the new parameters for reporting are framed by APCA's objectives. It is important to note that these funding levels do not represent funds used to support the maternal and child health, nutrition, pediatric AIDS treatment, or basic education portfolios, which are summarized in separate reports to Congress in accordance with other legislative mandates. Additionally, agencies and departments track and report funding in different ways. For example, USDA funding levels represent combined commodity and freight costs to support MGD, whereas other departments count direct program allocations. A table with U.S. Government self-reported funding in support of APCA objectives can be found in Annex 3.

APCA has inspired activity beyond the U.S. Government. The Children in Adversity Policy Partnership (CAPP) is a coalition of U.S.-based implementing and advocacy organizations dedicated to accelerating bold and strategic U.S. policy action concerning children in adversity. CAPP seeks to ensure that U.S. Government investments are strategically planned and implemented so that children in adversity worldwide have access to programs and services that enable them to grow and thrive. To date, CAPP's efforts have focused on increasing awareness of APCA among policymakers, civil society, and the public.

The Global Alliance for Children (Alliance) is a growing public-private partnership comprised of foundations, multilateral, and government funders, and catalytic organizations working to improve the lives of children. Its aim is to promote more effective investments aligned with country-led national plans to meet measurable targets. The Alliance's goals are aligned with APCA's principal objectives. DOL and USAID are founding members of the Alliance. Other Alliance partners include the Canadian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development (observer), GHR Foundation, Lumos Foundation, Maestral International, UBS Optimus Foundation, World Bank, World Childhood Foundation, and Save the Children.

## »» The Road Ahead

The U.S. Government is carrying forward its plan to build a world in which more and more children grow up within protective family care and free from deprivation, exploitation, and abuse. With APCA im-

plementation well underway in Cambodia, and an additional 2–3 priority countries expected to come on board this year, the U.S. Government is continuing to build on its shared commitment to children in

adversity. Success will require strategic action and targeted investments to increase the number of children who may emerge from adversity to become resilient youth and productive adults.

## ►► Annex I. Table I: A Global Profile of Children in Adversity

### Children in adversity

Millions of children throughout the world face adversity – conditions of serious deprivation and danger. Each year in low- and middle-income countries, close to 7 million children die before reaching their 5th birthday. More than 25 times

that number – nearly 200 million children – survive, but fail to reach their developmental potential as a result of extreme poverty, violence, exploitation, abuse, and inadequate access to health care, education, and protection. Children in the most dire straits include those without

protective family care or living in abusive households, on the streets or in institutions, trafficked, participating in armed groups, and/or exploited for their labor. Many more live within fragile families and face a multitude of risks posed by extreme poverty, disease, conflict, and disaster.

Indicators <sup>1</sup>	Year	Percent <sup>2</sup>	Number (rounded)	Coverage	*
<b>Population</b>					
Population children (aged 0–4)	2010	9.3%	642,200,000	Global	1a
Population children (aged 0–17)	2010	31.9%	2,204,000,000	Global	1b
<b>Poverty</b>					
Children living in extreme poverty (less than \$1.25 per day) (aged 0–14)	2010	20.6%	351,100,000	Developing countries	2
<b>Build strong beginnings</b>					
Children who are stunted (aged 0–4)	2008–2012	25.0%	164,800,000	Global	7
Children who are disabled (aged 0–17)	2002–2004	15.5%	341,600,000	Global	13
Children with blood lead levels above 10 µg/dl (aged 0–4) <sup>3</sup>	2004	16.0%	77,800,000	Global	14b
Adolescents living with HIV- female (aged 10–19)	2012	0.2%	1,200,000	Global	15a
Adolescents living with HIV- male (aged 10–19)	2012	0.2%	900,000	Global	15b
<b>Put family care first</b>					
Children who have lost one or both parents due to all causes (aged 0–17)	2012	6.8%	150,000,000	Global	23
Children who have lost one or both parents due to AIDS (aged 0–17)	2012	0.8%	17,800,000	Global	24
Children in institutional care (aged 0–17)	2003–2006	0.1%	2,000,000	Global, excluding West and Central Africa and South Asia	19
Children out of school (primary aged) <sup>4</sup>	2012	8.9%	57,800,000	Global	31
<b>Protect children from violence, exploitation, abuse, and neglect</b>					
Children uprooted due to conflict or natural disaster	2012	1.6%	35,300,000	Global	25
Children who have experienced violent discipline at home (aged 2–14)	2005–2006	76.0%	1,066,700,000	Developing countries	33
Children who have experienced sexual abuse- female (aged 0–17)	1980–2008	18.0%	191,700,000	Global	37a
Children who have experienced sexual abuse- male (aged 0–17)	1980–2008	7.6%	86,600,000	Global	37b
Women aged 20–24 who were married or in union before age 18	2005–2012	34.0%	80,800,000	Global, excluding China	38
Children in hazardous work (aged 5–17)	2012	5.4%	85,300,000	Global	42

\* Please see the online appendix at: <http://www.childreninadversity.gov> for further detail on calculations, sources, indicator definitions, and trends.

<sup>1</sup> Please visit <http://www.childreninadversity.gov> for additional indicators of children in adversity.

<sup>2</sup> The percent given represents the percentage of the child population affected within the specific age group, gender, and geographic coverage given for the indicator (with the exception of indicators 1a-1d, for which the percentage given is the percentage of the global or developing country population that is in the 0-4 or 0-17 age group).

<sup>3</sup> At lead levels above 10 µg/dl, acute lead toxicity can result in mental retardation, convulsions, coma, and death.

<sup>4</sup> Household poverty and the cost of education can be significant factors in a parent's decision to place a child in institutional care, exploitive labor situations, or early marriage.

## ➤➤ Annex 2. Table 2: APCA Objectives

The U.S. Government Action Plan on Children in Adversity (APCA) has three principal objectives and three supporting objectives to promote greater U.S. Government coherence and accountability for whole-of-government assistance to vulnerable children. They are as follows:

PRINCIPAL OBJECTIVES	SUPPORTING OBJECTIVES
<p><b>Objective 1: Build Strong Beginnings</b> The U.S. Government will help ensure that children under 5 not only survive, but also thrive by supporting comprehensive programs that promote sound development of children through the integration of health, nutrition, and family support.</p>	<p><b>Objective 4: Strengthen Child Welfare and Protection Systems</b> The U.S. Government will support partners to build and strengthen holistic and integrated models to promote the best interests of the child.</p>
<p><b>Objective 2: Put Family Care First</b> U.S. Government assistance will support and enable families to care for their children; prevent unnecessary family-child separation; and promote appropriate, protective, and permanent family care.</p>	<p><b>Objective 5: Promote Evidence-Based Policies and Programs</b> The U.S. Government will devote resources to building and maintaining a strong evidence base on which future activities to reach and assist the most vulnerable children can be effectively planned and implemented. This evidence base will assist in the cost-effective utilization of program funds as well as the monitoring and evaluation of program effectiveness and long-term impact on children.</p>
<p><b>Objective 3: Protect Children</b> The U. S. Government will facilitate the efforts of national governments and partners to prevent, respond to, and protect children from violence, exploitation, abuse, and neglect.</p>	<p><b>Objective 6: Integrate this Plan within U.S. Government Departments and Agencies</b> The U.S. Government will institutionalize and integrate the components of this plan in its diplomatic, development, and humanitarian efforts overseas.</p>

## ➤➤ Annex 3. Table 3: PL 109-95/APCA Data Call Responses, FY 2013

Department/Agency/Office	APCA Objectives	FY 2013 Funding Levels
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE (USDA)	1, 2, 4, 6	96,353,940
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES (HHS)		
National Institutes of Health (NIH)	1, 5, 6	*
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)	1, 3, 5, 6	*
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE (DOD)	-	-
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR (DOL)	3, 6	54,564,855
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE (DOS)		
Bureau of Consular Affairs (CA)/Office of Children's Issues (CI)	3, 4, 6	*
Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM)	1-4, 6	*
International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL)	3, 4, 6	*
Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons (J-TIP)	3, 5, 6	1,165,000
U.S. PRESIDENT'S EMERGENCY PLAN FOR AIDS RELIEF (PEPFAR)	1-6	280,560,642
PEACE CORPS**	1-3, 6	276,884
U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT (USAID)		
AFR/SD/Education Division (ED)	5, 6	27,500
DCHA/DRG/Displaced Children and Orphans Fund (DCOF)	2-6	13,000,000
DCHA/Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA)	1-4, 6	17,288,844

\*Some offices cannot determine or do not administer APCA-specific spending. NIH funds 20 research and training platforms with implications for child survival and development, while CDC reports total funding levels for child health areas more generally, without specific information being available for "Children in Adversity" as defined in the current report. DOS/PRM cannot disaggregate assistance for children from its broad humanitarian assistance activities, and DOS/CA does not administer U.S. foreign assistance resources or programs.

\*\*Amount represents non-PEPFAR funding.

- No response received at time of print from DOD.



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