



The Coalition for Adolescent Girls Applauds the Signage of the *Protecting Girls' Access to Education in Vulnerable Settings Act* into Law

The Coalition for Adolescent Girls (CAG) congratulates the sponsors of the, “Protecting Girls’ Access to Education in Vulnerable Settings Act” for the signing into law of this bipartisan legislation. The legislation was introduced by Representative Steve Chabot (R-OH-1) and Representative Robin Kelly (D-IL-3) in the House and Senator Marco Rubio (R-FL) and Senator Robert Menendez (D-NJ) in the Senate. We recognize and thank them for their leadership on ensuring displaced children, particularly girls, have access to education.

The legislation draws attention to the barriers displaced children, especially girls, face when trying to access primary and secondary education and notes the connection between access to education and risks of gender-based violence, including trafficking, child marriage, sexual exploitation, and economic disenfranchisement. Globally, over 68 million people have been forcibly displaced by conflict and persecution – the highest number since the end of the Second World War. Half of the population of displaced people are under the age of 18, and one third of displaced children do not receive primary education. The gross enrollment rate for primary school globally is 91%; however, among refugees it is only 61%. At the secondary schooling level, the global enrollment rate is 84%, and that figure drops to 23% among refugees.¹

Educating children is the bedrock to creating a thriving, successful, and peaceful economy. We believe all children should have access to safe, quality education, and that education must be included in the earliest phases of humanitarian response efforts, including in refugee contexts. As a global champion of girls’ education and rights, we know that by educating all girls we can break the cycle of poverty, support child protection and psychosocial support opportunities, and create an empowering environment for their economic empowerment, life-skills development, and overall wellbeing. Despite the evidenced benefits and need, the legislation notes the continued underfunding of education services in humanitarian aid.

The legislation authorizes the Secretary of State and United States Agency for International Development to prioritize efforts to support access to quality primary and secondary education for displaced children, especially girls, by working with multilateral, private, and civil society organizations. In addition, they are to increase capacity building in host countries to prevent discrimination against displaced children going to school, and to work with host countries’ governments to increase educational, economic, and entrepreneurial opportunities.

¹ *UNHCR Education*. <https://www.unhcr.org/education.html>

***About the Coalition for Adolescent Girls**

The Coalition for Adolescent Girls (CAG) includes more than 80 organizations committed to working together on research, program implementation, policy and advocacy with and for adolescent girls. The CAG provides a unique platform for organizations to share information, tools, and resources; to find points of intersection and opportunities for collaboration; build technical capacity; and to strategize on best practices. For more information about the Coalition for Adolescent Girls, please visit our website at www.coalitionforadolescentgirls.org or email our Steering Committee at cagsteeringcommittee@gmail.com

List of Organizations Supporting:

- 4Girls GLocal Leadership (4GGL)
- Advocates for Youth
- African Solutions to African Problems
- Aflatoun
- AGE Africa
- AJWS
- Be Girl
- BRAC
- CARE
- Child and Youth Finance International
- ChildFund International
- ChildVoice International
- Colors of Connection
- Educate Girls
- Education for Equality International
- Equality Now
- Every Mother Counts
- FHI 360
- Freely in Hope
- Futures Without Violence
- GADeF
- GirlForward
- Girl Effect
- Girl Scouts
- Girls Learn International
- Girl Up
- GreeneWorks
- GWU's Global Women's Institute
- Haiti Adolescent Girls Network
- Harpswell Foundation
- International Center for Research on Women
- International Rescue Committee
- International Youth Foundation
- IPPF/WHO
- Institute for Reproductive Health
- John Snow, Inc.
- Just Like My Child Foundation
- Kakenya's Dream
- Komera Project
- Let Girls Lead
- Lwala Community Alliance
- Maasai Girls Education Fund
- Making Cents International
- Marie Stopes International
- Mercy Corps
- Milaan Foundation
- Pathfinder International
- Plan International USA
- Population Council
- Population Reference Bureau
- Population Services International
- RefuSHE
- Restless Development
- Sacred Valley Project
- Save the Children
- Shadhika
- Starfish
- Together for Girls
- United Nations Foundation
- What Works Association
- Winrock International
- WomenStrong International
- World Education, Inc.
- Women's Global Education Project
- Women's Refugee Commission
- Women's World Banking
- World Vision International
- Zana Africa Foundation