



Photo: Save the Children

EXPANDING ACCESS TO HIGH-IMPACT HEALTH SERVICES FOR CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES



Save the Children®

Save the Children USA
Department of Global Health



OUR 2030 AMBITION FOR CHILDREN

SURVIVE: NO CHILD DIES BEFORE THEIR FIFTH BIRTHDAY.

Because every child deserves a healthy start in life, Save the Children USA's Department of Global Health supports the delivery of high-impact health services to improve the health of children and their families living in areas of disproportionately low health service coverage, every day and in times of crisis.

Our goal is to ensure, by 2030, no child dies from preventable causes before their fifth birthday and that children have a healthy start in life. We collaborate with governments, academic institutions, national non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the private sector, and donors to strengthen health systems and accelerate access to quality services in low-resource settings to improve health. Save the Children, long at the forefront of worldwide efforts to end preventable child deaths, continues to be a global child health leader. Together with children, families and communities, as well as supporters around the world, we focus on programs and advocate for policies that improve maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health, and nutrition, end hunger, and prevent and treat childhood illnesses.

FOCUSING ON CHILD SURVIVAL IS NOW MORE IMPORTANT THAN EVER

While there has been significant progress in reducing child mortality over the past decades, 5.2 million children under five die each year from preventable causes—with 2.4 million dying in the first few weeks of life [1]. Two hundred and ninety-five thousand women die each year due to complications in childbirth [2]. Malnutrition contributes to 45% of under-five deaths [3]. Inequity and inequitable access to life-saving services and care is a substantial threat to child health and survival; children living in the lowest-income households are more than two times as likely to be stunted as other children [4], and are more likely to die before the age of five from preventable causes than children who live in the wealthiest households [5]. We also know that children living in fragile and conflict-affected areas face even greater risks, with three times as many children dying before their fifth birthday in these settings, compared to children living in non-conflict settings. Most of these deaths are preventable, but half of the world's population currently does not have access to basic health services, often because of the economic circumstances they are born into and where they are born [6].

COVID-19 has further exacerbated these threats and risks, undermining progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and children's right to survive and thrive, and it is the most at risk and hardest-to-reach children and their communities who are the worst affected. A recent study estimates that the impact of COVID-19 could result in an additional 9.3 million wasted and 2.6 million stunted children, and 168,000 additional child deaths – on top of the millions whose lives are already at risk due to malnutrition [7]. COVID-19 has also led to 23 million children missing out on routine vaccinations in 2020, 3.7 million more than in 2019 and the highest number since 2009 [8].

In addition, we know that climate change has and will continue to have a huge impact on the health and survival of children and their families. Data shows that children in many low- and middle-income countries will continue to bear the worst impacts of climate change – and these impacts will be greater for children living in conflict settings or displaced, and those put at risk by inequity, stigma and discrimination [9]. Now is a critical moment for us to act in order to save the lives of children, girls, and women who are facing extreme risks to their survival.

[1] <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/children-reducing-mortality>

[2] <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/maternal-mortality>

[3] <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/malnutrition>

[4] <https://globalnutritionreport.org/reports/2020-global-nutrition-report/inequalities-global-burden-malnutrition/>

[5] <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6688679/>

[6] <https://childmortality.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/UNICEF-2021-Child-Mortality-Report.pdf>

[7] <https://www.nature.com/articles/s43016-021-00319-4#:~:text=By%202022%2C%20COVID%2D19%2D,productivity%20losses%20due%20to%20excess>

[8] <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/immunization-coverage>

[9] <https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/pdf/born-into-the-climate-crisis.pdf/>

OUR THEORY OF CHANGE TO REACH OUR 2030 AMBITION FOR CHILDREN

We apply our theory of change to address key gaps and barriers to improve maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health, and nutrition.

BE THE INNOVATOR:

Develop and prove evidence-based, replicable breakthrough solutions to problems facing children.



Innovative Approaches for First-Time and Young Parents

Globally, 12 million adolescent girls, and many more young women, give birth each year. Becoming a parent is one of the most significant changes in a young woman's life and provides a window of opportunity to influence life-long practices, including use of life-saving health services. The Connect project is testing innovative approaches to increase use of postpartum family planning (PPFP) and postnatal care among first-time mothers. In Bangladesh, a targeted postnatal care approach prioritizes at-risk moms and babies, including adolescent and first-time mothers, for enhanced facility-level care and postnatal home visits. In Tanzania, home visits integrate both timely nutrition and family planning information and referrals for first-time mothers. Results from Tanzania found that receiving a community health worker (CHW) visit, attending more than one community support group meeting or receiving a short message service (SMS)/text message via mobile phone were all associated with a large and statistically significant increase in PPFP adoption.

BUILD PARTNERSHIPS:

Collaborate with children, adolescents, civil society organizations, communities, governments, and the private sector to share knowledge, influence others, and build capacity to ensure children's rights are met.

Strengthen Organizational Capacity to Respond to Future Outbreaks

We lead the USAID-funded READY initiative, a consortium of operational and academic partners strengthening the capacity of NGOs worldwide to respond to large-scale infectious outbreaks of epidemic or pandemic potential, including COVID-19. READY conducts focused activities to support and strengthen outbreak coordination, build NGO operational capacity to respond to major outbreaks, and develop technical readiness across humanitarian sectors using an integrated and community-centered approach.

ACHIEVE RESULTS AT SCALE:

Support effective implementation of best practices, programs, and policies for children, leveraging our knowledge to ensure sustainable impact at scale.



Community Support to Reach More Children with Lifesaving Health Services

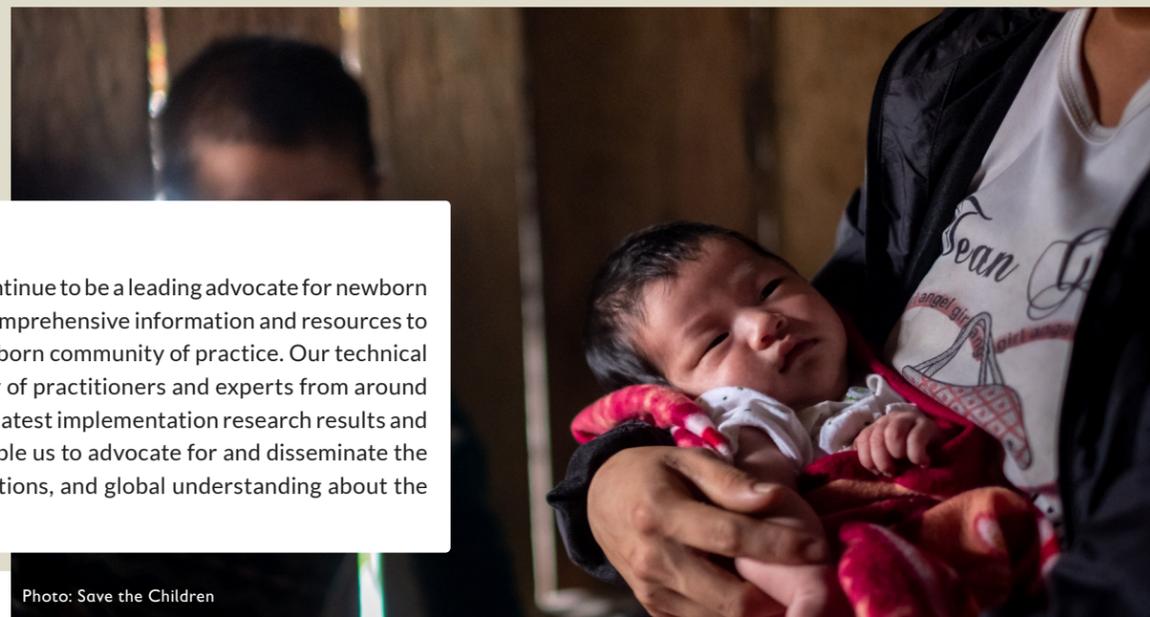
We continue to focus efforts on scaling up effective interventions for identifying and treating some of the leading causes of death in children under five years old—malaria, pneumonia, and diarrhea. Since 2018, with support from The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, we have contributed to the scale-up and institutionalization in Côte d'Ivoire of integrated community case management (iCCM)—a proven and effective approach for identifying and treating these diseases in children in some of the hardest-to-reach places. Through this project, we have enhanced collaboration between child health and malaria teams within the Ministry of Health, resulting in the mobilization of 8,500 CHWs in hard-to-reach communities of 53 health districts, serving 5.8 million people including 895,627 children under five. Between January and September 2021, the CHWs tested and treated 431,837 children under five with malaria, 36,578 with pneumonia, and 20,289 with diarrhea.

BE THE VOICE:

Advocate and campaign for better practices and policies to fulfill children's rights and to ensure that children's voices are heard (particularly those of children living in poverty and fragile and conflict settings).

Accelerating Action for Newborns

Building on the foundation of our two-decade Saving Newborn Lives program, we continue to be a leading advocate for newborn health through the Healthy Newborn Network, our online platform that provides comprehensive information and resources to improve the survival and care of newborns, and the Care of the Small and Sick Newborn community of practice. Our technical leadership and coordination efforts in newborn health bring together a community of practitioners and experts from around the world to exchange ideas, share lessons learned, and disseminate and discuss the latest implementation research results and evidence in the management of small and sick newborns. These platforms also enable us to advocate for and disseminate the latest best practices for improved monitoring and evaluation of newborn interventions, and global understanding about the causes and burden of newborn mortality and what works to save newborn lives.



OUR APPROACH

To achieve our breakthroughs for children, we prioritize the integration of core thematic priorities with key cross-cutting areas. Our success is contingent upon our collaboration with partners, including national civil society and NGOs, local and national governments, and communities to scale up health service delivery to improve access to and use of effective, sustainable behavior change and health interventions.

THEMATIC PRIORITIES



Adolescent Sexual & Reproductive Health & Rights

We provide comprehensive sexual and reproductive health information and services for adolescents, with special attention to the needs of very young adolescents (10-14 years), young mothers, and their male partners, emphasizing gender equality throughout all of our work. Our programs engage adolescents in promoting equitable social and gender norms and behaviors and access to high-quality adolescent-responsive health services.



Child Health

We collaborate with governments and other partners to train, equip, and support both community and facility-based health workers to improve access to and delivery of preventative and curative care for three of the main killers of children under age five: pneumonia, diarrhea, and malaria. These frontline health workers deliver lifesaving and cost-effective care including immunizations, oral rehydration solution, zinc, antibiotics, and malaria diagnosis and treatment, and work closely with communities and governments to improve the health and survival of children.



Emergency Health & Nutrition

Our health and nutrition programs in humanitarian settings focus on proven life-saving maternal, newborn, child, and adolescent services, including management of common childhood illnesses, communicable disease prevention and control, the Minimum Initial Service Package for Reproductive Health in Crises, family planning, detection and treatment of acute malnutrition, and breastfeeding promotion. We respond to the world's major epidemics, including yellow fever, cholera, diphtheria, Ebola, measles, Zika, and the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, with 130 humanitarian responses in 63 countries in 2019 followed by 136 humanitarian responses in 77 countries in 2020 and 103 humanitarian responses in 61 countries in 2021. Save the Children leads a global consortium that brings together operational, technical, academic, and communications expertise to fill critical gaps in capacity and capability in global infectious disease outbreak response in humanitarian settings.



HIV, AIDS & Tuberculosis

We work globally to expand access to comprehensive HIV prevention, care, treatment, and support services for children, women, and families affected by HIV and AIDS, focusing on countries with a high burden of disease and/or low health service coverage. Our key strategic priorities include eliminating pediatric and adolescent HIV infection by implementing prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV services; providing treatment, care, and support services to infected and affected children, adolescents, and key populations; and reducing the burden of tuberculosis among children and communities affected by discrimination or in low-income settings.



Nutrition

We help women and young children access quality nutrition services from frontline health workers and community volunteers. Our multi-sectoral, integrated programs encourage adequate and quality food intake, optimal infant and young child feeding and care practices, and protections against diseases by supporting breastfeeding, complementary feeding and hygiene, healthcare seeking, and maternal nutrition behaviors during a child's first 1,000 days. We are seeking effective interventions to prevent and mitigate the impact of undernutrition in adolescent girls.



Reproductive, Maternal & Newborn Health

Our integrated reproductive, maternal, and newborn health programs aim to reduce maternal and newborn deaths, improve the health of women, including adolescents, and contribute to long-term benefits for their families and communities. We partner with governments, national NGOs and civil society, and other stakeholders to train and support healthcare providers, CHWs, and other actors to deliver quality services including family planning, pre and postnatal care, and emergency obstetric and neonatal care.

To address the increasing contribution of newborn deaths to under-five mortality, we prioritize programs that address the three main causes of newborn deaths (premature birth, infections, and complications during childbirth) through essential newborn care including immediate and exclusive breastfeeding, skin-to-skin contact, and neonatal resuscitation, if needed. We also address the long-neglected problem of poor quality of inpatient care for small and sick newborns that results in a considerable burden of preventable death. Our focus is on promoting kangaroo mother care through family-centered care, innovations such as simple devices to provide bubble continuous positive airway pressure, and infection prevention and management. We work in partnership to generate evidence, build consensus, and formulate policy and guidance to reduce global newborn mortality.

OUR APPROACH

CROSS-CUTTING WORK



Behavior Change & Community Health

We have developed an integrated and theory-based Social and Behavior Change (SBC) framework to identify and address key drivers of change at individual, small group, service delivery and community levels. This ensures that behavior change processes are community oriented while focusing community engagement programming more on behavior and social norm change outcomes. We link SBC with community health and local media approaches and tailor multi-sectoral SBC strategies for food security programming. We build on deep and effective risk communication and community engagement approaches for emerging infectious diseases, including COVID-19. Our capacity for SBC formative research and real-time monitoring includes complexity-aware approaches.



Climate Change & Health

Building on our multi-sectoral, integrated, and evidence-based programming, we leverage our technical expertise, country experience, and partnerships to address the impact of climate change on health through the main pillars of our global work – advocacy, programming, and operations. We are becoming a knowledge center on climate and health, linking evidence generation and its direct application to interventions that benefit both climate and health. We also support improved governance conditions, which enable the application of these interventions. As an accredited entity with the Green Climate Fund (GCF), we are working with GCF and country partners to develop projects and interventions to address the impact of climate change on health and health systems.



COVID-19

Since the start of the pandemic in 2020, Save the Children has been supporting countries in their response to COVID-19, including risk communication and community engagement around infection prevention and control measures, in addition to supporting efforts to address vaccine hesitancy and increase the uptake of COVID-19 vaccines. Our programs around the world are committed to addressing COVID-19 and mitigating the impact of the virus on health services and community outreach.



Digital Health

Recognizing the increased use and importance of digital technology in accessing and delivering quality health services, we support health providers and CHWs in using technology to collect, analyze, and report key health data as part of national digital health systems; to assess, diagnose, and manage common illnesses; and to deliver important health care guidance and messages. Our expanding digital health portfolio includes more than 39 digital health projects and over 30 technology partners in 25 countries, including in Bangladesh, Egypt, Kenya, Malawi, Niger, and Somalia. Our technology partners include in-country developers as well as global partners such as ThinkMD, Dimagi, and Viamo. In Malawi, we support CHWs in using phones and tablets to deliver improved integrated community case management. In Niger, we are using SMS and interactive voice response via mobile phones to deliver timely appointment reminders and provide targeted information about care-seeking practices and healthy behaviors to pregnant women.



Urban Health

With our strategic focus on equity, we are committed to expanding our footprint in the urban context and building the evidence base on delivering effective health and nutrition interventions for urban poor children and families. Our growing urban health portfolio spans across all areas of our health and nutrition work as well as the humanitarian/development spectrum. We aim to address the health and nutrition needs of the urban poor and those living in informal settlements who represent a critical and growing share of those facing the greatest health needs and vast inequities globally.



Water, Sanitation & Hygiene

Our water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) programming works to prevent maternal, newborn, and childhood infections in support of maternal, newborn, child, and adolescent health and nutrition, food security, education, and child protection. Our WASH work also contributes to cross-cutting priorities, including gender equity, child protection, and support to children with disabilities. Our WASH programs are implemented in communities, schools, and health facilities across development and emergency contexts.

DEPARTMENT OF GLOBAL HEALTH SCOPE AND REACH

110

Employees & vacancies

\$137.2 million

2021 budget

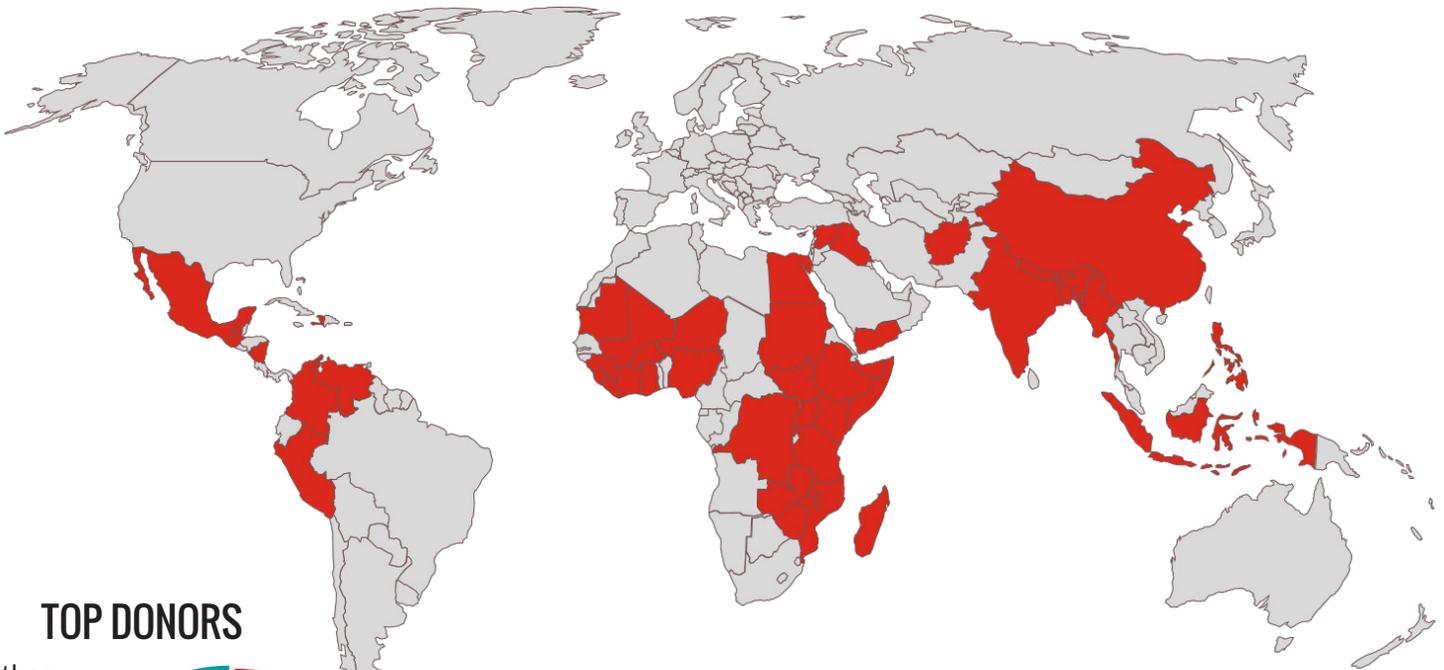
\$464 million

Life of award
portfolio value

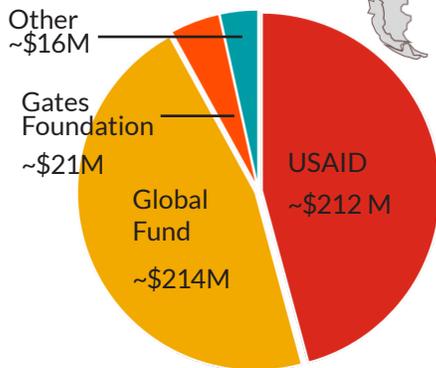
106

Active awards

45 Countries



TOP DONORS



Save the Children USA's Department of Global Health works throughout the world in more than 40 countries, supporting both emergency response and development programs.

Save the Children believes every child deserves a future. In the United States and around the world, we do whatever it takes – every day and in times of crisis – so children can fulfill their rights to a healthy start in life, the opportunity to learn and protection from harm. With over 100 years of expertise, we are the world's first and leading independent children's organization – transforming lives and the future we share.

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