

July 11, 2018

The Honorable Richard Shelby  
Chairman  
U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations

The Honorable Rodney P. Frelinghuysen  
Chairman  
U.S. House Committee on Appropriations

Patrick Leahy  
Vice Chairman  
U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations

The Honorable Nita M. Lowey  
Ranking Member  
U.S. House Committee on Appropriations

Lindsey Graham  
Chairman  
State, Foreign Operations, and Related  
Programs Subcommittee

The Honorable Hal Rogers  
Chairman  
State, Foreign Operations, and Related  
Programs Subcommittee

We, the undersigned organizations, collectively working across the maternal and child health, nutrition, basic education, child protection, early childhood development, water/sanitation/hygiene, and disability inclusion sectors, write to thank you for protecting the foreign affairs budget and anti-poverty programs in your Fiscal Year 2019 Appropriations bills.

We urge you to support the House funding level of \$800 million for Basic Education and to include the early childhood development (under Basic Education and Nutrition) and Vulnerable Children language from the House Fiscal Year 2019 State and Foreign Operations Report in any final reports.

We commend the House Committee on Appropriations for encouraging the U.S. Agency for International Development to support early childhood development through its Nutrition and Basic Education programs, as well as for supporting the agency's efforts to develop an updated strategy for children in adversity that maintains the goals of strong beginnings, putting family care first, and protecting children from violence, abuse, and neglect—particularly the most marginalized children, such as children with disabilities and children in crisis contexts.

Supporting and aligning USAID's child-centered programs with the three goals of the children in adversity strategy will improve their impact.<sup>1</sup> This is true for the Maternal and Child Health account as well, which should be included in the future. As the World Bank has stated, "Investing in the early years is one of the smartest things a country can do to eliminate extreme poverty, boost shared prosperity, and create the human capital needed for economies to diversify and grow. Early childhood experiences have a profound impact on brain development—affecting learning, health, behavior and ultimately, income...an additional dollar invested in quality early childhood programs yields a return of between \$6 dollars and \$17 dollars."<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> For summaries of the latest research, please see *The Lancet* (<https://www.thelancet.com/series/ECD2016>) and UNICEF ([https://www.unicef.org/publications/index\\_100862.html](https://www.unicef.org/publications/index_100862.html)).

<sup>2</sup> The World Bank. "Early Childhood Development."  
<http://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/earlychildhooddevelopment>.

Thank you for your leadership, and for everything you are doing to create a more prosperous and stable world.

Sincerely,

American Academy of Pediatrics  
American Speech-Language-Hearing Association  
Basic Education Coalition  
Bethany Christian Services  
ChildFund  
Disability Rights International  
Early Childhood Development Task Force  
EDC  
GlobalPartnersUnited  
International Rescue Committee  
Maestral  
March of Dimes  
Partnership for Early Childhood Development & Disability Rights  
PATH  
Progressions: Development Pediatrics  
RESULTS  
The RISE Institute  
RTI International  
School-to-School International  
Sesame Workshop  
UNICEF USA  
WaterAid  
Whole Child International