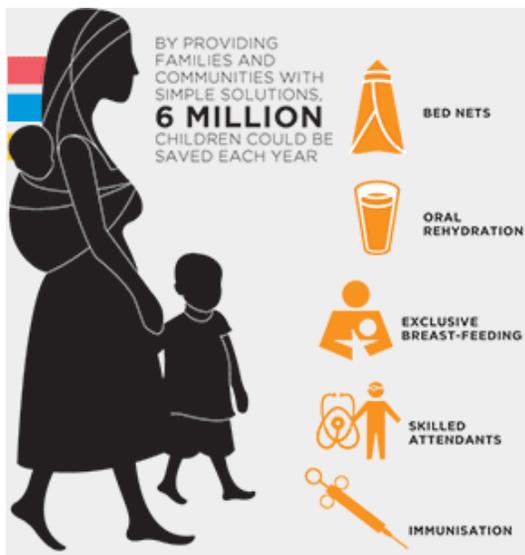


## facts and statistics

- Each year, **7.6 million children die before their fifth birthdays**, many in their first month of life and most from preventable and treatable causes. (UNICEF 2011)
- The top killers are **pneumonia, diarrhea, malaria and neonatal causes** such as birth complications and infections. Malnutrition also underlies at least a third of these deaths. (WHO)
- Children in the developing world are **10 times more likely to die of preventable diseases** than those in developed countries.
- Of all childhood deaths, **99% occur in low-income and middle-income countries**, with half in sub-Saharan Africa and 33% in southern Asia. (CDC)
- About **350,000 mothers die in or shortly after childbirth** each year, leaving their children up to 10 times more likely to die before age five. (WHO)
- Millions more children can be saved with low-cost, effective interventions like **bed nets** to prevent malaria; basic childhood **immunizations**; getting proper **nutrients**; clean drinking **water** and handwashing with soap to avoid diarrhea, and oral rehydration therapy to treat it.



## progress so far

Considerable progress has already been made. The number of newborns, babies and toddlers dying of preventable disease and malnutrition dropped 35% since 1990, when 12 million children died each year. In other words, 12,000 more child lives are saved every day. This considerable progress has been achieved because of increased investment and concerted effort, and although these diseases still threaten millions of lives around the world, there is evidence that cost-effective approaches are having impact.

**U.S. funding for child survival and other global health programs has helped save millions of lives and reduce the burden of several diseases over the past three decades.** For example:

- The President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) and the President's Malaria Initiative (PMI), established by President Bush in 2003 and 2005, **accelerated progress against preventable deaths** and illness, spurred other governments and private donors to contribute significant additional resources, and demonstrated American leadership and goodwill.
- More than **3.2 million HIV-infected men, women and children received life-saving treatment** with antiretrovirals worldwide, and **more than 114,000 infants were born HIV-free** because their mothers received appropriate treatment during pregnancy, supported by PEPFAR. (PEPFAR/PMI 2010)
- **Care and support were provided to about 3.8 million children** left orphaned and vulnerable by HIV and AIDS (PEPFAR 2010)
- Nearly **33 million people accessed HIV testing** and counseling made available through PEPFAR, an important entry point to prevention, treatment and care. (PEPFAR 2010)
- More than **700,000 children were saved from malaria across 34 African countries** in the past decade, most during the past 5 years, a time when U.S. leadership, commitment and funding to anti-malaria efforts intensified dramatically.

Global health investments from other donor governments and foundations, multilateral institutions and even the private sector have worked alongside American support and with resource-poor countries to make significant advances against child mortality:

- Malaria deaths dropped by over 20% globally over the last decade as more than one-third of 108 malaria-endemic countries successfully **cut their malaria cases by at least half**. Examples include Cambodia (50%), Philippines (76%), Eritrea and Zanzibar (80%), and Sao Tome and Principe (90%). (WHO/ Gates Foundation, *Progress Against Malaria: Winning the Fight Against a Deadly Disease*, February 2009.)
- **New HIV infections have slowed and AIDS-related deaths dropped**, as result of global prevention and treatment efforts
- During the first decade of the 21st century, an estimated **2.5 million deaths were prevented by vaccines** each year among children under age 5 during, through the use of measles, polio, and diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis immunization.
- Measles recently killed nearly 900,000 people a year (as of 1999), mostly children under 5—but expanded vaccine coverage resulted in a 78% drop in measles mortality from 2000 to 2008, and **averted an estimated 12.7 million measles deaths**. (CDC)
- Nutrition interventions and expanded vaccination coverage are two of the **most cost-effective ways to advance global wellbeing**, according to the economists of the Copenhagen Consensus. (Copenhagen Consensus 2008. Available at <http://www.copenhagenconsensus.com/home.aspx>.)

Simple interventions can reduce child deaths dramatically -- by as much as two thirds more by 2015, to achieve Millennium Development Goal 4. What's needed are further political will and resources to make it happen.



## why U.S. foreign assistance?

U.S. foreign assistance has been a crucial driver of recent successes against child deaths. As World Vision works on the front lines of human needs in nearly 100 countries, we witness the positive impact U.S. humanitarian accounts make on the lives of the world's most vulnerable people – especially in health and survival for children and their mothers.

**We call on American leaders to protect funding for cost-effective, life-saving international health programs.** Congress is considering cuts that would be disproportionate and devastating to America's humanitarian mission, slashing programs that are actually saving many lives. Among these are the **“nets, pills and shots”** that are proven to save lives, along with support to build the health worker capacity required to deliver interventions where most needed.

- The U.S. has a long-standing, solid bipartisan record of investment in combating hunger, extreme poverty and illness.
- **Disease-control efforts have benefited America's image abroad.** Of the ten countries with the most favorable opinion of the United States, eight were African countries where the United States has made the greatest health investment. (Pew Global Attitudes Survey, 2007)
- **Cutting international assistance jeopardizes existing initiatives.** Halting ongoing programs that people depend on for their lives would undercut America's moral credibility and put the most vulnerable at risk.
- **Tens of thousands of dedicated health workers** and volunteers across Africa, Asia, Latin America and elsewhere are enabled to serve in their own communities with training and support from the U.S. alongside their own governments, building their own country's capacities and turning the tide against needless deaths and illness.
- **Americans do care.** World Vision's 1 million donors across the United States come from every state and congressional district, demonstrating a broad base of voters and taxpayers who care enough about child wellbeing, feeding the hungry and promoting development that they provide support from their own pockets – which the U.S. government can leverage through its continued leadership
- **U.S. foreign humanitarian assistance is less than 1 percent of the US budget—far lower than most Americans realize!**

## what's at stake?

Resurgence of certain diseases is a real threat if prevention, treatment and elimination efforts let up too soon. Adequate, sustained investment for this fight is crucial to keep momentum and avoid backsliding.

- History shows that areas where malaria was once beaten back are still vulnerable if control programs lapse. In Sri Lanka, for example, malaria has resurfaced to infect 10,000 people a year, though it was nearly eliminated in 1963. (*The Economist, The fight against malaria intensifies, April 2008*)
- Where entire cohorts of children are protected from malaria, resurgence would hit especially hard. Because they now lack partial immunity, the disease's severity would be much greater.
- Inadequate or irregular use of medicines, such as for malaria or tuberculosis, raise the risk that the best drugs will become ineffective as the diseases develop resistance to medicines.

Examples of what's at stake if recent budget cut proposals are approved include:

- **47,410 more babies will be at risk of HIV** infection at birth from lack of preventive services
- Food, education and livelihood assistance may be lost for **more than half a million AIDS-affected orphans and vulnerable children**
- 7.4 million fewer people would be treated for malaria, and 3.2 million **fewer insecticidal bed nets** would be available
- **2 million fewer poor children would get vaccines** that prevent tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis, flu and hepatitis B

(Sources: estimates are from the American Foundation for AIDS Research, GAVI Alliance, Friends of the Global Fight against AIDS, TB and Malaria)

## World Vision's response

As a Christian child-focused organization, World Vision is a partner in the global response to combat these top causes of child and maternal deaths. The organization's Child Health Now campaign brings together hard-hit communities, individual supporters and other groups in a global movement to ensure children can grow up healthy in their communities, with access to basic health services, nutrition and disease prevention.

Among strategies World Vision implements or advocates for reducing child deaths:

- **Adequate international and national investment** in child and maternal health and strengthening health systems is essential. These resources must reach the countries with the highest rates and numbers of children under-five dying. Ensure all countries have a time-bound, costed and evidenced-based health plan and budget that prioritize child and maternal health.
- **Combating the diseases that kill the most children**, such as treating diarrhea with oral rehydration salts and zinc; combating malaria with insecticide-treated bed nets, indoor residual spraying and Artemisinin-based combination therapy; and prevention and care of HIV, especially ensuring access for pregnant women to prevent transmission to their children.
- **Ensuring mothers have skilled attendance at birth**, postnatal and newborn care—including exclusive breastfeeding for infants up to six months, followed by complementary feeding with Vitamin A and micronutrient supplements
- **Immunization of children and adequate nutrition**
- **Coordination with other social sector investments** in water and sanitation, education, agriculture development and food security must be prioritized for maximum impact.

## Recommendations for action:

**October 2011 Update:** Congress is about to negotiate the final funding levels for the FY12 International Affairs Budget, and the House proposal is a full \$5 billion below the Senate amount. Because such funding cuts will have grave implications for programs making an impact on global health and development, World Vision asks that you join us in **raising our voices to urge members of Congress to support no less than the Senate funding levels.**

We call on Congress and the President to follow through on existing commitments to global health, set forth in the 2008 Lantos-Hyde U.S. Leadership against HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria Act, and to support effective interventions that improve child health and survival. Congress is far behind meeting the \$48 billion it authorized over 5 years for global health, even if it fully funds the White House budget request for FY2012. In order to avoid reversing the life-saving gains made in recent years, we also call on Congress to:

- Fully fund PEPFAR with at least \$7.2 billion in fiscal year 2012 for bilateral HIV and AIDS, TB and malaria programs and research, as well as resources for the Global Fund.
- Ensure Child Health and Survival programs are adequately funded with at least \$1 billion
- Preserve vital programs and promote policies that tackle undernutrition and hunger, through food security and agriculture development as well as emergency response and assistance.

We also urge the U.S. to augment the impact for vulnerable children and mothers through ensuring best practices reach the community level and vulnerable households, using strategic integration and working alongside local community organizations, faith-based groups and the private sector to do so.

World Vision believes no child should die from preventable and treatable causes that can be stopped using proven measures. Alleviating the burden of disease and death among children and their mothers will help economic productivity flourish in some of the poorest places on earth that are now heavily afflicted. Cost-effective programs are generating real results.

Fostering global health while fighting extreme poverty, hunger and disease is in America's national interest. It's also the right thing to do. Today, millions of people around the world are alive and thriving because of America's historic investments in global health.

With your support, our nation's impact will continue.

**Together we can end preventable child deaths.**

World Vision is a Christian humanitarian organization dedicated to working with children, families, and their communities worldwide to reach their full potential by tackling the causes of poverty and injustice. World Vision serves all people, regardless of religion, race, ethnicity or gender.