

Public Law 109-95
109th Congress

An Act

To amend the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 to provide assistance for orphans and other vulnerable children in developing countries, and for other purposes.

Nov. 8, 2005
[H.R. 1409]

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Assistance for Orphans and Other Vulnerable Children in Developing Countries Act of 2005”.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress makes the following findings:

(1) As of July 2004, there were more than 143,000,000 children living in sub-Saharan Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Caribbean who were identified as orphans, having lost one or both of their parents. Of this number, approximately 16,200,000 children were identified as double orphans, having lost both parents—the vast majority of whom died of AIDS. These children often are disadvantaged in numerous and devastating ways and most households with orphans cannot meet the basic needs of health care, food, clothing, and educational expenses.

(2) It is estimated that 121,000,000 children worldwide do not attend school and that the majority of such children are young girls. According to the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), orphans are less likely to be in school and more likely to be working full time.

(3) School food programs, including take-home rations, in developing countries provide strong incentives for children to remain in school and continue their education. School food programs can reduce short-term hunger, improve cognitive functions, and enhance learning, behavior, and achievement.

(4) Financial barriers, such as school fees and other costs of education, prevent many orphans and other vulnerable children in developing countries from attending school. Providing children with free primary school education, while simultaneously ensuring that adequate resources exist for teacher training and infrastructure, would help more orphans and other vulnerable children obtain a quality education.

(5) The trauma that results from the loss of a parent can trigger behavior problems of aggression or emotional withdrawal and negatively affect a child’s performance in school and the child’s social relations. Children living in families affected by HIV/AIDS or who have been orphaned by AIDS

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Orphans and
Other Vulnerable
Children in
Developing
Countries Act
of 2005.
22 USC 2151
note.
22 USC 2152f
note.

often face stigmatization and discrimination. Providing culturally appropriate psychosocial support to such children can assist them in successfully accepting and adjusting to their circumstances.

(6) Orphans and other vulnerable children in developing countries routinely are denied their inheritance or encounter difficulties in claiming the land and other property which they have inherited. Even when the inheritance rights of women and children are spelled out in law, such rights are difficult to claim and are seldom enforced. In many countries it is difficult or impossible for a widow, even if she has young children, to claim property after the death of her husband.

(7) The HIV/AIDS pandemic has had a devastating affect on children and is deepening poverty in entire communities and jeopardizing the health, safety, and survival of all children in affected areas.

(8) The HIV/AIDS pandemic has increased the number of orphans worldwide and has exacerbated the poor living conditions of the world's poorest and most vulnerable children. AIDS has created an unprecedented orphan crisis, especially in sub-Saharan Africa, where children have been hardest hit. An estimated 14,000,000 orphans have lost 1 or both parents to AIDS. By 2010, it is estimated that over 25,000,000 children will have been orphaned by AIDS.

(9) Approximately 2,500,000 children under the age of 15 worldwide have HIV/AIDS. Every day another 2,000 children under the age of 15 are infected with HIV. Without treatment, most children born with HIV can expect to die by age two, but with sustained drug treatment through childhood, the chances of long-term survival and a productive adulthood improve dramatically.

(10) Few international development programs specifically target the treatment of children with HIV/AIDS in developing countries. Reasons for this include the perceived low priority of pediatric treatment, a lack of pediatric health care professionals, lack of expertise and experience in pediatric drug dosing and monitoring, the perceived complexity of pediatric treatment, and mistaken beliefs regarding the risks and benefits of pediatric treatment.

(11) Although a number of organizations seek to meet the needs of orphans or other vulnerable children, extended families and local communities continue to be the primary providers of support for such children.

(12) The HIV/AIDS pandemic is placing huge burdens on communities and is leaving many orphans with little support. Alternatives to traditional orphanages, such as community-based resource centers, continue to evolve in response to the massive number of orphans that has resulted from the pandemic.

(13) The AIDS orphans crisis in sub-Saharan Africa has implications for political stability, human welfare, and development that extend far beyond the region, affecting governments and people worldwide, and this crisis requires an accelerated response from the international community.

(14) Although section 403(b) of the United States Leadership Against HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria Act of 2003 (22 U.S.C. 7673(b)) establishes the requirement that not less

than 10 percent of amounts appropriated for HIV/AIDS assistance for each of fiscal years 2006 through 2008 shall be expended for assistance for orphans and other vulnerable children affected by HIV/AIDS, there is an urgent need to provide assistance to such children prior to 2006.

(15) Numerous United States and indigenous private voluntary organizations, including faith-based organizations, provide assistance to orphans and other vulnerable children in developing countries. Many of these organizations have submitted applications for grants to the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development to provide increased levels of assistance for orphans and other vulnerable children in developing countries.

(16) Increasing the amount of assistance that is provided by the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development through United States and indigenous private voluntary organizations, including faith-based organizations, will provide greater protection for orphans and other vulnerable children in developing countries.

(17) It is essential that the United States Government adopt a comprehensive approach for the provision of assistance to orphans and other vulnerable children in developing countries. A comprehensive approach would ensure that important services, such as basic care, psychosocial support, school food programs, increased educational opportunities and employment training and related services, the protection and promotion of inheritance rights for such children, and the treatment of orphans and other vulnerable children with HIV/AIDS, are made more accessible.

(18) Assistance for orphans and other vulnerable children can best be provided by a comprehensive approach of the United States Government that—

(A) ensures that Federal agencies and the private sector coordinate efforts to prevent and eliminate duplication of efforts and waste in the provision of such assistance; and

(B) to the maximum extent possible, focuses on community-based programs that allow orphans and other vulnerable children to remain connected to the traditions and rituals of their families and communities.

SEC. 3. ASSISTANCE FOR ORPHANS AND OTHER VULNERABLE CHILDREN IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES.

Chapter 1 of part I of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2151 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following section:

“SEC. 135. ASSISTANCE FOR ORPHANS AND OTHER VULNERABLE CHILDREN.

22 USC 2152f.

“(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

“(1) There are more than 143,000,000 orphans living sub-Saharan Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Caribbean. Of this number, approximately 16,200,000 children have lost both parents.

“(2) The HIV/AIDS pandemic has created an unprecedented orphan crisis, especially in sub-Saharan Africa, where children have been hardest hit. The pandemic is deepening poverty in entire communities, and is jeopardizing the health, safety,

and survival of all children in affected countries. It is estimated that 14,000,000 children have lost one or both parents to AIDS.

“(3) The orphans crisis in sub-Saharan Africa has implications for human welfare, development, and political stability that extend far beyond the region, affecting governments and people worldwide.

“(4) Extended families and local communities are struggling to meet the basic needs of orphans and vulnerable children by providing food, health care including treatment of children living with HIV/AIDS, education expenses, and clothing.

“(5) Famines, natural disasters, chronic poverty, ongoing conflicts, and civil wars in developing countries are adversely affecting children in these countries, the vast majority of whom currently do not receive humanitarian assistance or other support from the United States.

“(6) The United States Government administers various assistance programs for orphans and other vulnerable children in developing countries. In order to improve targeting and programming of resources, the United States Agency for International Development should develop methods to adequately track the overall number of orphans and other vulnerable children receiving assistance, the kinds of programs for such children by sector and location, and any other such related data and analysis.

“(7) The United States Agency for International Development should improve its capabilities to deliver assistance to orphans and other vulnerable children in developing countries through partnerships with private volunteer organizations, including community and faith-based organizations.

“(8) The United States Agency for International Development should be the primary United States Government agency responsible for identifying and assisting orphans and other vulnerable children in developing countries.

“(9) Providing assistance to such children is an important expression of the humanitarian concern and tradition of the people of the United States.

“(b) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

“(1) AIDS.—The term ‘AIDS’ has the meaning given the term in section 104A(g)(1) of this Act.

“(2) CHILDREN.—The term ‘children’ means persons who have not attained 18 years of age.

“(3) HIV/AIDS.—The term ‘HIV/AIDS’ has the meaning given the term in section 104A(g)(3) of this Act.

“(4) ORPHAN.—The term ‘orphan’ means a child deprived by death of one or both parents.

“(5) PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT.—The term ‘psychosocial support’ includes care that addresses the ongoing psychological and social problems that affect individuals, their partners, families, and caregivers in order to alleviate suffering, strengthen social ties and integration, provide emotional support, and promote coping strategies.

President.

“(c) ASSISTANCE.—The President is authorized to provide assistance, including providing such assistance through international or nongovernmental organizations, for programs in developing countries to provide basic care and services for orphans and other vulnerable children. Such programs should provide assistance—

“(1) to support families and communities to mobilize their own resources through the establishment of community-based organizations to provide basic care for orphans and other vulnerable children;

“(2) for school food programs, including the purchase of local or regional foodstuffs where appropriate;

“(3) to increase primary school enrollment through the elimination of school fees, where appropriate, or other barriers to education while ensuring that adequate resources exist for teacher training and infrastructure;

“(4) to provide employment training and related services for orphans and other vulnerable children who are of legal working age;

“(5) to protect and promote the inheritance rights of orphans, other vulnerable children, and widows;

“(6) to provide culturally appropriate psychosocial support to orphans and other vulnerable children; and

“(7) to treat orphans and other vulnerable children with HIV/AIDS through the provision of pharmaceuticals, the recruitment and training of individuals to provide pediatric treatment, and the purchase of pediatric-specific technologies.

“(d) MONITORING AND EVALUATION.—

“(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—To maximize the sustainable development impact of assistance authorized under this section, and pursuant to the strategy required in section 4 of the Assistance for Orphans and Other Vulnerable Children in Developing Countries Act of 2005, the President shall establish a monitoring and evaluation system to measure the effectiveness of United States assistance to orphans and other vulnerable children.

President.

“(2) REQUIREMENTS.—The monitoring and evaluation system shall—

“(A) establish performance goals for the assistance and expresses such goals in an objective and quantifiable form, to the extent feasible;

“(B) establish performance indicators to be used in measuring or assessing the achievement of the performance goals described in subparagraph (A); and

“(C) provide a basis for recommendations for adjustments to the assistance to enhance the impact of assistance.

“(e) SPECIAL ADVISOR FOR ASSISTANCE TO ORPHANS AND VULNERABLE CHILDREN.—

“(1) APPOINTMENT.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of State, in consultation with the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development, shall appoint a Special Advisor for Assistance to Orphans and Vulnerable Children.

“(B) DELEGATION.—At the discretion of the Secretary of State, the authority to appoint a Special Advisor under subparagraph (A) may be delegated by the Secretary of State to the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development.

“(2) DUTIES.—The duties of the Special Advisor for Assistance to Orphans and Vulnerable Children shall include the following:

“(A) Coordinate assistance to orphans and other vulnerable children among the various offices, bureaus, and field missions within the United States Agency for International Development.

“(B) Advise the various offices, bureaus, and field missions within the United States Agency for International Development to ensure that programs approved for assistance under this section are consistent with best practices, meet the requirements of this Act, and conform to the strategy outlined in section 4 of the Assistance for Orphans and Other Vulnerable Children in Developing Countries Act of 2005.

“(C) Advise the various offices, bureaus, and field missions within the United States Agency for International Development in developing any component of their annual plan, as it relates to assistance for orphans or other vulnerable children in developing countries, to ensure that each program, project, or activity relating to such assistance is consistent with best practices, meets the requirements of this Act, and conforms to the strategy outlined in section 4 of the Assistance for Orphans and Other Vulnerable Children in Developing Countries Act of 2005.

“(D) Coordinate all United States assistance to orphans and other vulnerable children among United States departments and agencies, including the provision of assistance relating to HIV/AIDS authorized under the United States Leadership Against HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria Act of 2003 (Public Law 108-25), and the amendments made by such Act (including section 102 of such Act, and the amendments made by such section, relating to the coordination of HIV/AIDS programs).

“(E) Establish priorities that promote the delivery of assistance to the most vulnerable populations of orphans and children, particularly in those countries with a high rate of HIV infection among women.

“(F) Disseminate a collection of best practices to field missions of the United States Agency for International Development to guide the development and implementation of programs to assist orphans and vulnerable children.

“(G) Administer the monitoring and evaluation system established in subsection (d).

“(H) Prepare the annual report required by section 5 of the Assistance for Orphans and Other Vulnerable Children in Developing Countries Act of 2005.

(f) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—There is authorized to be appropriated to the President to carry out this section such sums as may be necessary for each of the fiscal years 2006 and 2007.

“(2) AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS.—Amounts made available under paragraph (1) are authorized to remain available until expended.”.

SEC. 4. STRATEGY OF THE UNITED STATES.

(a) REQUIREMENT FOR STRATEGY.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the President shall develop, and transmit to the appropriate congressional committees, a

strategy for coordinating, implementing, and monitoring assistance programs for orphans and vulnerable children.

(b) CONSULTATION.—The strategy described in subsection (a) should be developed in consultation with the Special Advisor for Assistance to Orphans and Vulnerable Children (appointed pursuant to section 135(e)(1) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (as added by section 3 of this Act)) and with employees of the field missions of the United States Agency for International Development to ensure that the strategy—

(1) will not impede the efficiency of implementing assistance programs for orphans and vulnerable children; and

(2) addresses the specific needs of indigenous populations.

(c) CONTENT.—The strategy required by subsection (a) shall include—

(1) the identity of each agency or department of the Federal Government that is providing assistance for orphans and vulnerable children in foreign countries;

(2) a description of the efforts of the head of each such agency or department to coordinate the provision of such assistance with other agencies or departments of the Federal Government or nongovernmental entities;

(3) a description of a coordinated strategy, including coordination with other bilateral and multilateral donors, to provide the assistance authorized in section 135 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as added by section 3 of this Act;

(4) an analysis of additional coordination mechanisms or procedures that could be implemented to carry out the purposes of such section;

(5) a description of a monitoring system that establishes performance goals for the provision of such assistance and expresses such goals in an objective and quantifiable form, to the extent feasible; and

(6) a description of performance indicators to be used in measuring or assessing the achievement of the performance goals described in paragraph (5).

SEC. 5. ANNUAL REPORT.

22 USC 2152g.

President.

(a) REPORT.—Not later than one year after the date on which the President transmits to the appropriate congressional committees the strategy required by section 4(a), and annually thereafter, the President shall transmit to the appropriate congressional committees a report on the implementation of this Act and the amendments made by this Act.

(b) CONTENTS.—The report shall contain the following information for grants, cooperative agreements, contracts, contributions, and other forms of assistance awarded or entered into under section 135 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (as added by section 3 of this Act):

(1) The amount of funding, the name of recipient organizations, the location of programs and activities, the status of progress of programs and activities, and the estimated number of orphans and other vulnerable children who received direct or indirect assistance under the programs and activities.

(2) The results of the monitoring and evaluation system with respect to assistance for orphans and other vulnerable children.

(3) The percentage of assistance provided in support of orphans or other vulnerable children affected by HIV/AIDS.

(4) Any other appropriate information relating to the needs of orphans and other vulnerable children in developing countries that could be addressed through the provision of assistance authorized in section 135 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as added by section 3 of this Act, or under any other provision of law.

22 USC 2152g
note.

SEC. 6. APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES DEFINED.

In this Act, the term “appropriate congressional committees” means the Committee on Appropriations and the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate and the Committee on Appropriations and the Committee on International Relations of the House of Representatives.

Approved November 8, 2005.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY—H.R. 1409:

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, Vol. 151 (2005):
Oct. 18, considered and passed House.
Oct. 24, considered and passed Senate.

