



## **Addressing the root cause of poverty**

Submitted by Sergio Lopez

Despite polarization, we can still get good things done.

Whatever your feelings may be about impeachment, recalls, immigration or gun control, I still believe that it is possible for people to come together to get good things done. The opportunities may admittedly be few and far between, but they exist if we look for them. One such opportunity involves integrating early childhood development (ECD) into U.S. foreign aid programs serving children around the world. Recently, I had the privilege of traveling to Malawi in East Africa to see how humanitarian organizations like Catholic Relief Services are using U.S. tax dollars to address the root causes of poverty and conflict around the world.

There is no doubt about it; poverty-reducing foreign aid makes the world a better and safer place to live. That is why both political parties have come together year after year to protect humanitarian aid. As I write this, U.S. Reps. Joaquin Castro (D-Texas) and Brian Fitzpatrick (R-Pa.) are preparing themselves to introduce legislation that would direct USAID to integrate ECD into its existing child-focused programs around the world. Since 1990, international aid has saved nearly 100 million children. But children need to do more than survive—they need to thrive.

Equipping caregivers with age-appropriate techniques such as singing, reading and playing with colorful objects stimulates young minds and sets children on a path toward success. For just 50



cents per child per year, we can help millions of children around the world build the resilience necessary to overcome the most damaging effects of violence and poverty which are threatening to rob them of their God-given potential. I strongly urge readers to reach out to our area representatives, Katie Hill and Julia Brownley, to encourage them to become original co-sponsors of this important and bipartisan legislation.

Imagine what would happen if we channeled just 10% of our attention to issues that bring us together rather than the issues that divide us? In this case, we might just significantly improve the quality of life for years to come for millions of children around the world.

Link: <https://www.simivalleyacorn.com/articles/addressing-root-cause-of-poverty/>