



# August Recess 2019

## OVERVIEW & TALKING POINTS: HUNGER

### BACKGROUND

With more than 800 million people suffering from chronic food insecurity, that's 1 in 9 people worldwide, we face humanitarian and development challenges in every corner of the globe. From Syria to Central America, South Sudan to Burma, poverty, conflict, natural disaster, lack of opportunity, and climate shocks plague nations and communities alike, causing an unprecedented amount of forced migration, global health challenges, and staggering levels of food insecurity. Privileged to serve more than 127 million people in 114 countries in 2018, CRS can attest first-hand to the significant challenges poor and vulnerable communities encounter and to the impact of poverty-reducing foreign assistance. To end hunger, poverty, and disease CRS helps farmers to grow better crops in the face of climate change or drought, promotes peace in communities divided by differences, and provides immediate response in emergencies. CRS is proud to partner with the U.S. government to bring hope and safety to communities—from farmers in Ethiopia to youth seeking opportunity in El Salvador.

CRS implements a multi-sectoral approach to addressing food security that starts with better management of natural resources. Soil degradation and lack of water are common obstacles facing the small farm families CRS works with in our food security programming. To reverse years, and even decades, of poor land and water management practices, CRS works with communities to adopt proven conservation practices that slow rain water runoff and improve its absorption into the water table. This improves access to water which allows for the introduction of irrigation farming, and is coupled with better farm practices like intercropping, cover crops, and agroforestry which improve soil quality. Together, these interventions have shown to improve agricultural yields for small farm families, and generally help insulate them against some of the effects of climate change. In addition to better land and water management, our food security programming also helps farm families better engage with markets, gain access to microfinancing, and adopt better mother-child nutrition practices. The cumulative effect of these strategies improves food security, raises farm incomes, and moves people out of poverty.

### CURRENT STATE OF PLAY

#### **Fiscal Year 2020 International Poverty-Reducing Humanitarian and Development Funding**

On February 15, the President signed into law Fiscal Year 2019 appropriations to avoid another US government shutdown. Included in this package were spending bills that fund poverty-reducing international development and humanitarian aid for which CRS advocates on Capitol Hill. We are pleased to inform you that Congress again rejected the administration's proposed cut to foreign assistance, and instead, provided a slight increase (less than 1%) to all poverty-reducing foreign aid. The accounts we prioritize, including food insecurity, life-giving global health, development, and humanitarian accounts fared very well.

Nevertheless, on March 11, the administration released their Fiscal Year 2020 budget request, calling for a 24% cut to foreign assistance, including deep and disproportionate reductions to poverty-reducing humanitarian and development assistance. The House of Representatives has rejected the administration's proposal, passing bills that protect, and in some cases increase, poverty-reducing assistance. We continue to work with Congressional partners, including the Senate as they develop their FY20 proposal, to ensure we maintain U.S. leadership and investments in poverty-focused humanitarian and development work.

Furthermore, on March 29, the administration announced plans to revoke all foreign assistance to the Northern Triangle of Central America, which is deeply concerning to CRS and our ongoing work in the region to help address the root causes of migration: violence, lack of economic opportunity, and food insecurity.

## TALKING POINTS

- **Thank you for your time to discuss international development and humanitarian aid.**
  - *The introduction is an opportunity to share a little about yourself, your work in the state/district, and your connection to CRS.*
- **As Catholics, we believe the United States must continue to be a global leader in addressing the root causes of hunger and meeting the immediate needs of those suffering from hunger around the world.**
  - *Share your personal story of why you support eradicating global hunger and Catholic Relief Services' international humanitarian and development work, to illustrate your concern about this global issue.*
- **The U.S. government has the responsibility and capacity to address the needs of the poor and hungry and to promote opportunity so communities and families can thrive.** By helping communities with humanitarian assistance and development programs today, we can avoid catastrophes in the future. Pope Francis has said, "Our faith in Christ, who became poor, and was always close to the poor and the outcast, is the basis of our concern for the integral development of society's most neglected members."
- **We are pleased that Congress protected international assistance in Fiscal Year 2018 and Fiscal Year 2019.** Nevertheless, we are deeply concerned about the Administration's Fiscal Year 2020 budget request, which proposed a 24% cut to foreign aid. **We urge Congress to protect international funding that supports poor and marginalized communities to at least Fiscal Year 2019 levels.** CRS is proud to partner with the U.S. government to provide assistance overseas. U.S. leadership is critical in our collective effort to end poverty, hunger, and disease.
  - *Share a story about the importance and impact of these programs overseas. In Guatemala, for example, CRS' USAID-funded maternal and child health project (SEGAMIL) helped reduce chronic malnutrition in children (under age 5) five times more than the national average and decreased the number of people living on less than \$1.25 per day by more than half.*
  - *Think of how you can tell your community's story about how they organize to support CRS because of their call as Catholics to support our human family most in need—this might be connected to CRS Rice Bowl or it could be about some other type of activity they've done.*
- **We oppose the administration's plan to cancel all foreign assistance funds to the Northern Triangle of Central America.** We are concerned that an absence of U.S. investment and engagement will not only impede development, but also create a vacuum where poverty, instability, and forced migration will grow. We urge Congress to ensure poverty-reducing programs continue and that the U.S. effectively and humanely addresses food insecurity, violence, lack of protection and economic opportunity in the Northern Triangle countries of Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras.

## THE ASKS

1. At a time of unprecedented humanitarian need, we urge Congress to protect poverty-reducing international development and humanitarian assistance in Fiscal Year 2020. ***[The accounts which do this are enumerated in CRS' appropriations chart.]***
2. We urge Congress to communicate to the administration their opposition to redirecting and suspending foreign assistance funds to Central America and work to ensure poverty-reducing programs continue in the region.

## QUESTIONS/COMMENTS TO RAISE

- If the Senator/Representative travels abroad, please let us know if he/she would like to visit CRS programming. As you know, we are in 114 countries around the world and would welcome an opportunity to show the Senator/Representative the impact US dollars have on the ground.
- Please see CRS as a resource both here in Washington, DC and our group as a resource back home in the state/district.
- Express an interest in continuing to dialogue with the Senator/Representative, or his/her staff, on these and other issues of mutual interest.



## International Poverty-Reducing Development and Humanitarian Accounts



<b>Appropriations Accounts (\$ in thousands) (OCO included)</b>	<b>FY 18 Omnibus</b>	<b>FY 19 Omnibus</b>	<b>Administration's FY 20 Request*</b>	<b>USCCB/CRS FY 20 Request</b>	<b>FY 20 House Bill</b>
<b><i>State, Foreign Operations (SFOPs)</i></b>	21,788,823	22,231,438	-----	25,066,555	24,386,041
Maternal and Child Health (including GAVI)	829,500	835,000	619,600	850,000	850,000
Nutrition	125,000	145,000	78,500	145,000	145,000
Vulnerable Children (orphans and displaced children)	23,000	24,000	-----	27,000	24,000
HIV/AIDS (USAID)	330,000	330,000	-----	330,000	330,000
Malaria	755,000	755,000	674,000	755,000	755,000
Tuberculosis	261,000	302,000	261,000	310,000	310,000
Neglected Tropical Diseases	100,000	102,500	75,000	105,950	102,500
Global Health Security	72,550	100,000	90,000	100,000	100,000
PEPFAR (including Global Fund)	5,670,000	5,720,000	4,308,400	5,930,000	5,930,000
Development Assistance (including Water, Basic Ed) <sup>i</sup>	3,000,000	3,000,000	-----	4,164,867	4,164,867
International Disaster Assistance <sup>ii</sup>	4,285,312	4,385,312	-----	4,500,000	4,435,312
Migration and Refugee Assistance <sup>iii</sup>	3,359,000	3,432,000	365,000	3,604,000	3,532,000
Emergency Refugee and Migration Assistance	1,000	1,000	0	1,000	1,000
Complex Crises Fund	30,000	30,000	0	30,000	30,000
Millennium Challenge Account	905,000	905,000	800,000	905,000	905,000
Atrocities Prevention Board (ESF & INCLE)	5,750	5,500	-----	5,750	5,000
Contributions to International Peacekeeping Activities	1,382,080	1,551,000	1,136,000	2,128,414	2,128,414
Peacekeeping Operations	537,925	488,670	291,435	552,940	516,348
Green Climate Fund (Treasury)	0	0	0	500,000	0
U.S. Institute of Peace	37,884	38,634	19,000	38,634	38,600
Anti-Trafficking in Persons (DA, ESF, AEECA, INCLE)	78,822	80,822	-----	83,000	83,000
<b><i>Agricultural (Ag)</i></b>	1,923,626	1,926,255	0	2,135,000	2,085,000
Title II Food for Peace <sup>iv</sup>	1,716,000	1,716,000	-----	1,900,000	1,850,000
McGovern-Dole	207,626	210,255	0	235,000	235,000
<b><i>Labor, Health and Human Services (LHHS)</i></b>	86,125	86,125	18,500	89,825	89,825
Bureau of International Labor Affairs (DOL/ILAB)	86,125	86,125	18,500	89,825	89,825
<b>COMBINED TOTAL</b>	<b>23,798,574</b>	<b>24,243,818</b>	<b>-----</b>	<b>27,291,380</b>	<b>26,560,866</b>

\* ----- Indicates specific number is not included in the administration's request or the administration has proposed consolidating account.

## Summary of Message to Congress and Account Descriptions

The Church views international assistance as an essential tool to promote human life and dignity, advance solidarity with developing nations, and enhance human security. The USCCB and CRS prioritize the accounts below because they are most focused on saving lives and reducing poverty. This assistance is just over one-half percent of the federal budget, not the 20-25% many Americans believe it constitutes. We urge Congress to **fund international poverty-reducing development and humanitarian programs to meet urgent needs and invest in peace.**

**Maternal and Child Health** programs provide low-cost, life-saving interventions such as micronutrient supplementation, nutritional support, newborn care, immunization, and treatment of pneumonia and diarrheal disease – addressing the biggest killers of mothers and children in the developing world. This account also provides funding for the U.S. contribution to GAVI, the Vaccine Alliance, which purchases vaccines for children in poor countries.

**Nutrition** programs provide interventions such as micronutrient supplementation and growth monitoring, which combined with an adequate diet and clean water and sanitation, improves outcomes during the first critical years of a child's life.

**Vulnerable Children** programs address the special needs of displaced children and orphans.

**HIV and AIDS PEPFAR (USAID & State Funding)** funding focuses on prevention, care and treatment, and the support of children affected and infected by HIV and AIDS. Although we have principled concerns about those PEPFAR prevention activities we find inconsistent with Catholic teaching and do not implement or advocate for these activities, we support PEPFAR's overall lifesaving mission and urge robust funding for the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria.

**Malaria** programs treat, prevent, and control this deadly disease which is one of the biggest killers of children under five worldwide.

**Tuberculosis** programs screen, diagnose, and treat millions of people each year. TB is the leading infectious killer globally.

**Neglected Tropical Diseases** programs focus on scaling up integrated treatment to prevent parasitic and bacterial diseases that cause morbidity and mortality.

**Global Health Security** programs prevent, prepare for, and respond to unanticipated and emerging global health threats.

<sup>i</sup> **Development Assistance** programs support an array of critical development activities, including basic education; Global Food Security Act implementation; clean water and sanitation; microfinance, democracy promotion and good governance, and conflict management and mitigation. *The Administration's FY20 request consolidates economic and development assistance into the Economic Support and Development Fund (ESDF) account, reducing overall funding by 23% from FY19 enacted.*

<sup>ii</sup> **International Disaster Assistance** funds emergency health, water, shelter and nutrition efforts, as well as disaster risk reduction and rehabilitation through the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA). It also supports cash and voucher-based emergency food security programming via the Emergency Food Security Program (EFSP). *The Administration's FY20 request consolidates IDA, part of MRA, and FFP into one account, reducing overall funding by 35% from FY19 enacted.*

<sup>iii</sup> **Migration and Refugee Assistance** protects refugees and internally displaced persons, helps them to repatriate when conflict ends or natural disaster responses permit, and supports resettlement to safe countries like the U.S. This level would fund the admission process for 75,000 refugees to the U.S. *The Administration's FY20 request eliminates funding for humanitarian assistance and funds the Refugee Admissions Program and administrative expenses for the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration.*

**Emergency Refugee and Migration Assistance** is a drawdown account used, with Presidential authority, to respond to humanitarian crises. The administration has not utilized this funding. ERMA is currently capped at \$100 million.

**Complex Crisis Fund** enables rapid investments to catalyze peace and mitigate conflict in the face of unforeseen crises or violence.

**Millennium Challenge Account** provides U.S. funding to countries with a commitment to good governance, focusing on infrastructure projects.

**Atrocities Prevention Board (APB)** improves collaboration, analysis and information sharing to mobilize U.S. efforts to prevent future atrocities and crises.

**Contributions to International Peacekeeping Activities** deploy peacekeeping troops to protect civilians in places like Sudan and Somalia. Based on UN assessed rates of contribution, the U.S. is currently in arrears estimated at more than \$750 million.

**Peacekeeping Operations** finances the training and equipping of peacekeeping troops and the professionalization of militia groups committed to protecting their people.

**Green Climate Fund** provides assistance to developing countries to adapt to and mitigate the impacts of climate change. In lieu of Green Climate Fund, other multilateral and bilateral program to address climate change adaptation and mitigation should be considered.

**U.S. Institute of Peace** works to prevent, reduce, and resolve armed conflict around the world by providing analysis, education, and resources to those working for peace.

**Combatting Trafficking in Persons** US assistance helps other nations to prevent trafficking, prosecute perpetrators, and support victims.

<sup>iv</sup> **Title II Food for Peace** provides U.S. food aid for emergencies and funds \$350 million in long-term development programs that support nutrition and build resilience. *The Administration's FY20 request consolidates IDA, part of MRA, and FFP into one account, reducing overall funding by 35% from FY19 enacted.*

**McGovern-Dole** provides school lunches and take-home food rations to encourage students, especially girls, to attend school, and other school support efforts. At least \$15 million should provide for local and regionally procured commodities for sustainability.

**Bureau of International Labor Affairs** funds programs to combat the worst forms of child labor, forced labor, and trafficking in persons.