

Action Sheet

JULY 2021

God, may the spirit of St. Kateri Tekakwitha animate our work, and may our care for our common home honor her legacy.

SKILL AND RELATIONSHIP BUILDING ACTION

Our Action Sheet action this month follows up on the June Action Sheet. During the month of July, write a personal email to your U.S. Senators urging them to speak with appropriations subcommittee leadership to increase international poverty-reducing development and humanitarian assistance in Fiscal Year 2022 before the Senate appropriations bills are drafted.

If you emailed your senators in June with the [appropriations chart](#), inquire in your email if your U.S. senators were able to submit any of the CRS/USCCB appropriations accounts in their official FY22 budget submission.

LASER TALK

Since 1990, 1 billion people have moved out of extreme poverty. U.S. sponsored international humanitarian and development aid has provided opportunities for countless millions around the world to move out of poverty. Of the more than \$4 trillion federal budget, Congress allocates half of 1% towards poverty-reducing international aid with strong bipartisan support. Beyond a belief in the moral imperative, the United States recognizes it is in our best interest to invest resources that foster peace and security and promote the common good.

The World Bank estimates that the impacts of COVID-19 will cause between 143 and 163 million people to fall into poverty in 2021, the first rise in extreme poverty globally in 20 years. Our faith compels us to uphold the dignity of individuals and communities around the world, especially those experiencing forced displacement and hunger. Therefore, it is critically important to increase funding that supports sustainable solutions to poverty, changing climates and disease.

Will you help increase international poverty-reducing development and humanitarian assistance in Fiscal Year 2022? The accounts which do this are outlined in [CRS and the USCCB's appropriations chart](#). The innovative programs that this funding supports can help ensure that decades of development gains are not lost during the COVID-19 pandemic.

BACKGROUND

Fiscal Year 2022 Budget Timeline

We can consider the annual budget process to have three key phases: prioritization, negotiation and finalization.

- **Prioritization phase:** In May, the president released his full budget proposal. Then, you weighed in with your members of Congress as the House and Senate appropriations subcommittees welcomed congressional offices to submit a list of funding levels for priority accounts they support. The prioritization phase, or the time where members of Congress making their funding priorities known, wrapped up with the deadlines for offices to submit their priorities for the budget to the respective appropriations subcommittees. The deadlines for Senate offices was at the end of June.
- **Negotiation phase:** CRS and USCCB continue to uplift the appropriations chart and ask to increase poverty-reducing humanitarian and development assistance as both the House and Senate move into the negotiation phase, or the time when members of Congress compromise to form budget proposals. They will draft, discuss and vote on the twelve appropriations bills. This is a critical phase to ensure that the priorities you have advocated for remain in the bills during the negotiation phase.

Integral Human Development and the Annual Budget Process

Historically, international development and humanitarian programming has received strong bipartisan support in Congress. It aligns with the expressed moral values of the United States and fosters good will around the globe. When the U.S. invests in

international assistance, our nation signals that the common good and solidarity with those experiencing poverty are critical components of our U.S. global leadership. The U.S. Catholic Church believes strongly that U.S. international assistance must prioritize integral human development, a model that places the dignity of the human person at the center of saving lives and alleviating suffering, accelerating the end of poverty and cultivating just and peaceful societies.¹ Understanding the material and social resources people have, the way they interact with systems and structures, the risks and vulnerabilities they face and the way each factor influences and affects the others is a vital part of people and communities being able to lead thriving lives. Getting through difficult periods, reducing vulnerability to environmental shocks and rebuilding assets lost in a disaster are examples of livelihood strategies that help people thrive.

Advocacy on the annual budget process helps ensure communities around the world can be catalysts of change in their own community and thrive. Advocacy on the annual budget process ensures that incredible women like [Birhan](#) living in Tigray, a region in Ethiopia at severe risk of hunger, can cope and reduce their vulnerability to shocks, cycles and trends. The Joint Emergency Operation Program, funded by the U.S. government's Title II Food for Peace account outlined in the [CRS/USCCB appropriations chart](#), has served as a valuable lifeline for more than 1.6 million people in times of need. Continuing to ensure that your U.S. Senators uplift an increase in all poverty-reducing accounts in the [CRS/USCCB appropriations chart](#) as they negotiate the twelve appropriations bills that make up the federal budget will help increase the more than 1.6 million people who benefit from emergency support such as this.

TAKE ACTION: Write personal emails to your U.S. Senators

- 1. Go to the websites of your U.S. Senators and see how they want you to email them** (e.g., by filling out an online form or by emailing a specific email address from the website) **or email the congressional staffer.**
- 2. Introduce yourself:** Provide personal information to root yourself in the community (e.g., I am active in my local parish, etc.) and briefly share why this issue matters to you. Share connections to your faith, activities you're involved with in your community to help children and families, how you've been communicating with the office recently, etc.
- 3. Express gratitude to your U.S. Senator:** Express gratitude for something related to global poverty or for their service in Congress. You can express gratitude that Congress provided \$10.8 billion of emergency funding in the American Rescue Plan for the international response to COVID-19.
- 4. Make the ask:**
 - Urge your U.S. Senators to take the next step by speaking with leaders of the key subcommittees outlined in the chart (State and Foreign Operations, Agriculture and Labor, Health and Human Services) while the Senate appropriations bills are drafted. Ask them to ensure these leaders increase poverty-reducing international development and humanitarian assistance in Fiscal Year 2022. [The accounts which do this are enumerated in the [CRS/USCCB appropriations chart](#).] Share that you strongly urge Congress to maintain the Helms Amendment in Fiscal Year 2022 appropriations, which prohibits the use of U.S. funded foreign assistance for abortion.
 - If you completed the June Action Sheet (i.e., submitted the CRS/USCCB appropriations chart via email to your senators before the end of June), ask your U.S. Senators if they were able to submit any of the [CRS/USCCB appropriations accounts](#) in their official submission of FY22 budget requests to the appropriations committee and if so, which accounts.
- 5. Provide some background to support your argument:** In your own words, share why it is important that the United States is a global leader in funding international humanitarian and development aid and how this funding addresses the root causes of issues such as forced displacement and hunger through innovative and sustainable programs.
- 6. Repeat the 'ask', say thank you, and request a response:** Leave your name, address, phone number and email address so the office can get back to you with their response. Consider calling the office to follow-up on your email a few days later.
- 7. Share the response:** Once you have a response from the office, share what you learned by completing [this form](#) to help CRS track if congressional offices across the country submitted CRS/USCCB funding levels for priority accounts for FY22.

¹ Catholic Relief Services. [CRS' Approach to Achieving Integral Human Development](#). January 2017.