

Congressional Meeting Briefing Document: Fiscal Year 2021 Appropriations

LEADING THE WAY ON MIGRATION & HUNGER

OVERVIEW

This document is meant to assist you in preparing to meet with the offices of your members of Congress by providing background information on the issues you will be discussing.

CRS believes that our work together in the United States is the outward expression of missionary discipleship. Together, we are called to encounter Christ in the members of our human family most in need and to share the Good News with others, becoming prophetic advocates for justice and the common good.

We have launched campaigns to *lead the way* on the global issues of hunger and forced displacement and migration. Our Lead the Way on Migration campaign is focused on ensuring our brothers and sisters on the move can exercise their right to lead dignified lives, and ultimately thrive. Our Lead the Way on Hunger campaign calls forth a vision where all people have the conditions they need to access regular, healthy food, ensuring optimal nutrition to ultimately thrive. **Your congressional meetings, and other forms of communication with offices, will be an opportunity to take part in these campaigns to support our human family suffering from poverty, hunger, forced migration and displacement.**

As an opportunity to stand with migrants, refugees and those experiencing hunger, your congressional meetings will focus on protecting international poverty-reducing development and humanitarian assistance in the Fiscal Year 2021 federal budget.

The talking points on pages 3 and 4 can serve as a guide for how to structure your meeting with the offices of your members of Congress so that you can highlight this issue in your conversation. The most important part of your preparation is to reflect on how you will express why you and your community care about these issues—as well as the stories you can share with the offices you meet with about how you and your community are engaged on these issues of importance and support those most vulnerable around the world.

BACKGROUND: MIGRATION & HUNGER

The unprecedented global challenge of COVID-19 will require a comprehensive and extraordinary international response to save lives, care for those affected and ensure human dignity. COVID-19 is particularly dire for communities that are already vulnerable, including refugees, migrants and those suffering from food insecurity. According to the UN, there are almost 80 million people forcibly displaced around the world, 26 million of whom are refugees, and 135 million people requiring emergency food assistance. The international community already faced daunting challenges in 2020, and COVID-19 exacerbates these existing hardships. As COVID-19 continues to spread around the world, CRS and our partners are adapting programs to address the needs of older adults and vulnerable children, refugees and migrants, people with compromised immune systems and their caregivers, as well as other high-risk populations.

Pope Francis reminds us, “solidarity today is the road to take towards a post-pandemic world, towards the healing of our interpersonal and social ills. There is no other way. Either we go forward on the path of solidarity, or things will worsen.” Serving more than 159 million people in 114 countries in 2019, CRS can attest first-hand to the significant challenges poor and vulnerable communities encounter, especially those who are hungry or have been displaced, and to the impact of poverty-reducing foreign assistance. To end poverty, hunger and disease, and to support migrants and the forcibly displaced, CRS provides shelter to refugees, helps farmers to grow better crops in the face of climate change or drought, promotes peace in communities divided by differences, creates opportunities for parents and caregivers to learn about nutrition and how to support their children’s development and provides immediate response in emergencies. CRS is proud to partner with the U.S. government to bring hope and safety to communities—from refugees fleeing Syria to farmers seeking opportunity in El Salvador.

MIGRATION: In Central America, which has some of the highest rates of violence outside of war zones, CRS works on community development and youth empowerment, creating opportunities for youth and families to thrive in their communities and not feel compelled to flee north. In Bidibidi Refugee Settlement in Uganda, where almost 300,000 South Sudanese refugees reside, CRS focuses on livelihoods, water, sanitation and hygiene, shelter and housing for people with special needs. With no end in sight to the ongoing conflict in South Sudan, the humanitarian efforts are critical to meet the needs of the population. Furthermore, across the Middle East and Europe, CRS and our local partners have helped more than 1.4 million Syrians. In partnership with Caritas Jordan, CRS provides Syrian refugee children with access to safe, quality educational opportunities. These opportunities are important not only for the educational purposes, but also for the healing space they provide for children impacted by the conflict. Lastly, CRS and Caritas Iraq are helping displaced Iraqis return home and rebuild their lives. This includes the repair of war-damaged homes, livelihoods support and access to quality education.

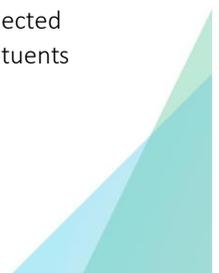
[Visit this link for individual stories about the experiences of migrants and refugees around the world](#) or crs.org/leadtheway.

HUNGER: 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 within 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 rainwater 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.

[Visit this link for individual stories about the experiences of hunger and malnutrition around the world](#) or crs.org/leadtheway.

STATE OF PLAY: FISCAL YEAR 2021 APPROPRIATIONS

Each year, Congress negotiates how to spend U.S. taxpayer dollars through a process called appropriations. Of the \$4 trillion U.S. federal budget, about 1% is appropriated, or allocated for spending by Congress, to foreign assistance. *Half* of that 1% is directed toward poverty-reducing humanitarian and development aid. Through the U.S. Department of State, the U.S. Agency for International Development and the U.S. Department of Agriculture, organizations such as CRS partner with the U.S. government to implement programming funded by the U.S. government. While foreign aid has large bipartisan support, the administration proposed to reduce foreign aid by nearly 30% for three consecutive years. Fortunately, Congress rejected these cuts and largely maintained U.S. investments in poverty-reduction programming thanks to the work of constituents who call on Congress to prioritize protecting this funding.



On February 10, 2020, the administration released their Fiscal Year 2021 (FY21) budget request, calling for a 22% cut to foreign assistance, including deep and disproportionate decreases to international poverty-reducing humanitarian and development assistance. The House and Senate ultimately decide on funding levels for this budget. During the summer, the House of Representatives passed FY21 appropriations bills that largely maintain strong investments in the accounts we prioritize (see chart). In September, Congress passed a Continuing Resolution (CR) to fund the government at FY20 levels until December 11, 2020 because the Senate had not yet introduced their FY21 bills. The Senate introduced their spending bills in November (see chart). Congress is now negotiating the House and Senate proposed bills and will need to pass FY21 appropriations or another CR before the new December 11 deadline.

In addition to regular appropriations, Congress has passed legislation to respond to the growing threat of the COVID-19 pandemic, including the secondary impacts affecting food insecurity and people on the move. As of November 2020, Congress has passed four bills providing much-needed aid, particularly for U.S. workers and businesses and sick and vulnerable low-income persons. The first and third emergency packages also included initial funding, roughly \$1.6 billion, to support preparedness and humanitarian efforts abroad. CRS continues to urge Congress to provide at least \$20 billion in emergency funding for the overseas response to COVID-19. The threat of the virus and efforts to contain its spread have affected markets, businesses, schools and other institutions, and, most critically, the livelihoods and food security of households everywhere. Our experience from previous crises tells us that the most vulnerable communities will bear the brunt of these effects, and that existing inequalities and protection risks will be exacerbated. An additional \$20B will help meet immediate health needs, as well as mitigate second order humanitarian, economic, and social impacts. The U.S. must help lead the global effort to prevent, prepare for, and respond to COVID-19.

Advocacy on the Fiscal Year 2021 budget and COVID-19 emergency funding are critical to promote U.S. global leadership and to ensure an adequate response to humanitarian and development needs. As the Senate proposes their FY21 bills and both chambers negotiate FY21 and COVID spending, it is critical that Congress hears from interested stakeholders, such as CRS, about our priorities.

THE ASK

1. At a time of unprecedented humanitarian need, we urge Congress to protect poverty-reducing international development and humanitarian assistance in Fiscal Year 2021 [*the accounts which do this are enumerated in CRS' appropriations chart*] **and** to provide at least \$20 billion in emergency assistance for the international response to COVID-19.

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 there is a moral obligation to provide assistance and address the root causes of poverty, hunger and forced migration.**
 - *Share your personal story of why you support Catholic Relief Services' international humanitarian and development work, to illustrate your concern about our human family around the world and these global issues.*
- **The U.S. government has the responsibility and capacity to address the needs of the poor to prevent conflict and hunger, promote opportunity and keep all people safe.** By helping communities with humanitarian assistance and development programs today, we can avoid catastrophes in the future. Pope Francis has said, "The overriding consideration, never to be forgotten, is that we are all members of the one human family. The moral obligation to care for one another flows from this fact, as does the correlative principle of placing the human person, rather than the mere pursuit of power or profit, at the very centre of public policy."

- We are pleased that Congress protected international assistance in Fiscal Year 2019 and Fiscal Year 2020 and has provided an additional \$1.6B to prevent, prepare for, and respond to COVID-19 overseas. We urge Congress to protect international funding that supports poor and marginalized communities in FY21 to the levels indicated in the chart (Share Chart). Furthermore, we urge Congress to provide at least \$20 billion in emergency funding for the international response to COVID-19. CRS is proud to partner with the U.S. government to provide assistance overseas. U.S. leadership is critical in our collective effort not only to end poverty, hunger, forced displacement and disease, but to address their root causes and to prevent, prepare and respond to COVID-19.
 - *Share a story about the importance and impact of these programs overseas.*
 - *Think of how you can tell your community's story about how they organize to support CRS because of their call to support our human family most in need. This might be connected to CRS Rice Bowl participation or it could be about some other type of activity the community has participated in.*

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS TO RAISE

1. 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.

2. Please see CRS and me as a resource both here in Washington, DC and 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.



A partnership between the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and Catholic Relief Services





International Poverty-Reducing Development and Humanitarian Accounts



Appropriations Accounts (\$ in thousands) (OCO included)	FY 19 Enacted	FY 20 Enacted*	FY 21 House	FY 21 Senate	USCCB/CRS FY 21 Request
<i>State, Foreign Operations (SFOPs)</i>	22,217,616	22,832,193	23,164,624	22,556,564	23,825,624
Maternal and Child Health (including GAVI)	835,000	851,000	850,000	865,000	865,000
Nutrition	145,000	150,000	145,000	150,000	150,000
Vulnerable Children (orphans and displaced children)	24,000	25,000	24,000	30,000	30,000
HIV/AIDS (USAID)	330,000	330,000	330,000	330,000	330,000
Malaria	755,000	770,000	755,000	785,000	785,000
Tuberculosis	302,000	310,000	310,000	325,000	325,000
Neglected Tropical Diseases	102,500	102,500	102,500	102,500	102,500
Global Health Security	100,000	100,000	125,000	275,000	275,000
PEPFAR (including Global Fund)	5,720,000	5,930,000	5,930,000	5,930,000	5,930,000
Development Assistance (including Water, Basic Ed)	3,000,000	3,400,000	3,800,000	3,000,000	3,800,000
International Disaster Assistance	4,385,312	4,395,362	4,395,362	4,395,362	4,395,362
Migration and Refugee Assistance	3,432,000	3,432,000	3,432,000	3,432,000	3,432,000
Emergency Refugee and Migration Assistance	1,000	100	100	100	100
Complex Crises Fund	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000
Millennium Challenge Account	905,000	905,000	905,000	912,000	912,000
Atrocities Prevention Board (ESF & INCLE)	5,500	5,500	5,000	5,000	5,000
Contributions for International Peacekeeping Activities	1,551,000	1,526,383	1,456,314	1,441,094	1,456,314
Peacekeeping Operations	488,670	457,348	457,348	406,508	457,348
Green Climate Fund (Treasury)	0	0	0**	0	500,000
U.S. Institute of Peace	38,634	45,000	45,000	45,000	45,000
Anti-Trafficking in Persons (DA, ESF, AEECA, INCLE)	67,000	67,000	67,000	97,000	97,000
<i>Agricultural (Ag)</i>	1,926,255	1,945,000	2,010,000	1,945,000	2,010,000
Title II Food for Peace	1,716,000	1,725,000	1,775,000	1,725,000	1,775,000
McGovern-Dole	210,255	220,000	235,000	220,000	235,000
<i>Labor, Health and Human Services (LHHS)</i>	86,125	96,000	96,000	96,125	96,125
Bureau of International Labor Affairs (DOL/ILAB)	86,125	96,000	96,000	96,125	96,125
COMBINED TOTAL	24,229,996	24,873,193	25,270,624	24,597,689	25,931,749

* COVID-19 Supplemental Legislation appropriated \$435M to GH-USAID, \$558M to IDA, \$350M to MRA, and \$250M to ESF. ** While not explicitly mentioning GCF, \$500 million is available in the House bill for a contribution or grant to an international fund to pursue adaptation and mitigation.

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 low and middle-income 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. We urge Congress to **fund international poverty-reducing development and humanitarian programs to alleviate suffering 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. Programs such as these have helped reduce the number of preventable child deaths worldwide from 12.6 million in 1990 to 5.3 million today.

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. Malnutrition is the underlying cause of 45 percent of preventable child deaths.

Vulnerable Children funding promotes family care for vulnerable children and seeks to reduce violence against children.

HIV and AIDS PEPFAR (USAID & State Funding) supports HIV and AIDS efforts in 50 countries to achieve epidemic control. Ten percent of PEPFAR funding focuses on mitigating the negative impact of HIV on orphans and vulnerable children affected and infected by HIV and AIDS. Also included is funding for the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria which works to prevent, treat and care for people with HIV, TB and Malaria and build health systems. The Global Fund is working in over 100 countries and has saved 32 million lives. 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.

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.

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.

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).

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.

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 \$956.2 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 adaption 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.

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.

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.