



# ISSUE BRIEF

## FROM AID TO IMPACT

# Foreign Assistance: A Smart Investment for Global Stability

As a global humanitarian organization working in 70 countries around the world, CARE knows firsthand how critical United States foreign assistance programs are to addressing the underlying causes of poverty and meeting basic human needs in developing countries. Supporting foreign aid programs represents a practical and smart investment in building a stable and secure world.

Strong investments in international development are critical to fighting extreme poverty and helping the more than one billion people around the world struggling to survive on less than \$1 a day. CARE has been witness to the profound difference these investments make, especially in the lives of girls and women. U.S. foreign assistance has saved the lives of millions of women by empowering them to raise healthy families, send their sons and daughters to school, and foster small businesses. Because of U.S.

aid, over the last 60 years, maternal and child mortality have dropped sharply, literacy rates have increased and economic opportunities have expanded in the developing world. Any significant cuts to foreign aid will dramatically impact the distinct progress so many countries have already achieved as well as hinder our ability to provide emergency assistance following major disasters.

**Foreign assistance is a down-payment for peace and global stability.** Even with significant strains on the federal budget, foreign assistance must remain strong. Foreign aid supports programs with low-cost interventions that generate high-impact results, saving lives in the fight against disease, poverty and hunger. These programs help foster a healthier, more stable world. For example, rising food prices have a broad and deep impact in many countries and affect global stability. It is critical that the U.S. lead in helping poor countries better manage potentially destabilizing events like volatile food prices and natural disasters, and support interventions helping those most vulnerable.

**“Development is a lot cheaper than sending soldiers.”**

—U.S. Secretary of Defense Dr. Robert M. Gates



**Foreign assistance also supports America's economic growth.** Developing countries have the fastest growing economies in the world. Today, one out of five U.S. jobs is export-related and nearly 50 percent of our exports go to the developing world. Development assistance spurs economic growth.

Americans are surprised to learn that **our country allocates just one percent of its federal spending to foreign aid.** Americans are a compassionate people and want to help the world's most vulnerable. Foreign aid is a small investment that yields big returns for our nation.

**What are the results of U.S. foreign aid?**

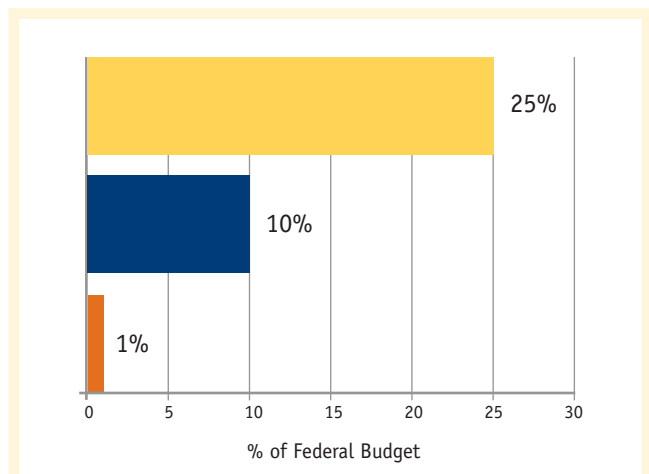
- More than 3.2 million men, women and children receive lifesaving antiretroviral treatment for HIV/AIDS.
- More than 100 million children receive basic immunizations each year, and tens of millions more receive supplemental immunizations against polio, measles and other killer diseases.
- Far more women and children are surviving childbirth and the first five years of childhood.
- Millions of people – a majority of them women – have greater opportunities for generating income, creating greater financial stability.
- For every \$1 invested in clean water and sanitation, approximately \$8 is returned in increased productivity and decreased health care costs.
- Every additional year a girl spends in school raises her income by 10 to 20 percent.



**Issue in Focus**

**A Small Price for a Big Return**

There is a common misconception about how much of the U.S. federal budget is spent on foreign aid. And for that matter, what Americans think we should spend on foreign aid. **The reality is that the foreign aid budget represents only one percent of the federal budget.**



- Amount Americans think we currently spend on foreign aid
- Amount Americans think we should spend on foreign aid
- Actual amount we spend on foreign aid

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