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CARE on Capitol Hill

WASHINGTON, D.C.



FY24 Funding for International Affairs Budget

To prevent irreparable backsliding on global development Congress must provide at least \$72.9 billion for the FY24 State and Foreign Operations Appropriations Account.

Extreme poverty is on the rise for the first time in two decades. One person is estimated to be dying of hunger every four seconds. 339 million people need humanitarian assistance to survive – a 25% increase over the last year.

The world's most vulnerable communities face historic challenges: COVID-19, food insecurity and hunger, disruptions to women's health care, rising gender-based violence, and more. United States leadership must meet the current moment and commit to addressing rising humanitarian needs and preventing irreparable backsliding on global development.

These lifesaving programs improve millions of lives, represent the face of America abroad, and help to promote a safer world. Foreign assistance funding represents roughly one percent of the federal budget – just one cent of the federal budget dollar – yet it is critical to the U.S. being a reliable partner and leader in the world.

CARE has witnessed the profound difference foreign assistance makes, especially in the lives of women and girls. For example, over the past six decades, global maternal and child mortality rates have dropped sharply, literacy rates have increased, and economic opportunities have expanded.

As the world faces unprecedented challenges, now is not the time for budget cuts. These low-cost programs change lives, address the root causes of poverty and build stronger, more resilient societies. Our own nation is benefited by alleviating global suffering and decreasing poverty when we create a more stable and prosperous world.

Robust funding for gender equity and equality action fund in FY24

To advance the rights of women and girls and their access to economic opportunities, Congress must provide no less than \$400 million for the Gender Equity and Equality Action Fund.

Globally, Women Still Don't Have Access to the Same Economic Opportunities as Men.

The compounding impacts of COVID-19, rising inflation, and emerging food crises have exacerbated the inequalities and restrictions that women and girls face. However, by investing in gender equality programs and funding, not only can the U.S. government address a critical human rights issue, but also has the opportunity to spur economic growth, create longer lasting peace, and increase food security at a time when all such things are critically needed. Investments in programs that strengthen women's access to employment opportunities, support entrepreneurship, create market linkages, and break down barriers to women's participation in the economy creates far-reaching benefits.

- Women participate in labor markets at a much lower rate that men do. When they do, they get paid less than men for the same work.
- Women bear disproportionate responsibility for unpaid care work. Women devote 1 to 3 hours more a day to housework than men; 2 to 10 times the amount of time a day to care (for children, elderly, and the sick). This limits their ability to engage in income generating opportunities and forces them into less stable and protected jobs.
- Discriminatory laws and norms bar women from accessing the resources they need to increase their livelihoods, including access to land rights, equipment for land cultivation, and limitations on their movement.

Global health funding saves lives

To be prepared for the next pandemic and to protect decades of U.S. global investments, we urge Congress to robustly fund the global health programs administered by USAID and the State Department. These include programs that improve nutrition, maternal health, and health system strengthening, as well as those that prevent, screen, and treat both non-communicable health challenges and infectious diseases like HIV/AIDS and malaria. Frontline health workers, 70% of whom are women and largely unpaid or underpaid, must also get the support they need to continue meeting their communities' needs.

It is vital to fully fund global health programs that are particularly critical for the health of women and girls, and to add a new funding line for frontline health workers:

- Family Planning: \$1.74 billion (including \$116 million for UNFPA)
- Maternal and Child Health: \$1.15 billion
- Nutrition: \$300 million
- Global Health Worker Initiative: \$200 million

These investments go a long way

- These accounts work to end preventable maternal and child deaths globally and have huge returns on investment.
- Every \$1 invested in nutrition yields up to \$35 in economic returns and improved economic activity.
- Access to family planning and reproductive health services save the lives of 1.4 million children each year, and result in a \$6 return for every \$1 invested.
- Children who receive optimal nutrition in their first 1,000 days of life are 10 times more likely to overcome life-threatening childhood diseases such as malaria.
- Health workers are the backbone of health systems: we need them to be properly supported, paid, and trained in order to meet our health goals.