

Action Sheet

SEPTEMBER 2021

Bless each act of welcome and outreach that draws those in exile into the “we” of community and of the Church, so that our earth may truly become what you yourself created it to be: the common home of all our brothers and sisters. (Pope Francis)

SKILL AND RELATIONSHIP BUILDING ACTION

The Senate will continue to markup and negotiate the twelve Senate appropriations bills in September. Our Action Sheet action this month is coach a friend or family member to write letters to their U.S. Senators urging them to increase international poverty-reducing development and humanitarian assistance in Fiscal Year 2022 (FY22). We 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.

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 continue to consider the annual budget process to have three key phases: prioritization, negotiation and finalization. Advocacy on the FY22 budget and appropriations process this month continues to fall into the negotiation phase, as members of both the House and Senate compromise to form budget proposals. As the Senate returns from August recess and begins to markup and negotiate the Senate bills, this is a critical time to ensure that the priorities you have advocated for are included in the Senate bills.

Reimagining U.S. Global Leadership to Address the Needs of the Forcibly Displaced

The number of forcibly displaced persons is at an all-time high and only continues to grow. Conflict and fragility have caused a 50 percent increase in displacement over the last ten years.¹ Furthermore, climate disruptions, altering people's ability to

¹ Migration Data Portal. [Forced migration or displacement](#). 30 June 2021. Migration Data Portal online.

grow food, pursue viable jobs, and fundamentally survive, have displaced an estimated 20 million people per year over the same time period.² The coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has created a more perilous environment for the displaced.

U.S. funding for humanitarian assistance has held due to bipartisan congressional support. However, humanitarian needs, including needs of the forcibly displaced, continue to grow. Increasing foreign assistance for these needs, while continuing to deliver effective and efficient aid will be imperative. While the United States must work to address the displacement crises that exists today, we also need to take important measures to address future crises before they begin. As most forced migration results from either conflict or natural disasters, the United States should focus its efforts on these two push factors.³ USG investment and implementation in peacebuilding and social cohesion approaches, will be a wise investment to stall future displacement. Similarly, the United States must prioritize addressing global climate change, which is a large driver of displacement. U.S. Government investment in these priority areas supports the work of international organizations, such as Catholic Relief Services, and their local partners to work with especially vulnerable communities to strengthen their preparedness, mitigate impact and loss and build their resilience. CRS recognizes the interconnection of the spiritual, human, social, political, financial, natural and physical aspects of people's lives. For families and communities to fully recover from crisis, the investment in comprehensive solutions is critical.

World Day of Migrants and Refugees

We celebrate World Day of Migrants and Refugees on September 26. Continuing to advocate on the FY22 budget and appropriations process works to ensure that those forced to flee their homes, like [Majd](#), can develop, grow and thrive. CRS and Caritas Iraq programming has served nearly 88,000 individuals over the past year from the support of public and private funding. While the school Majd attends is supported by private funding, U.S. Government funding has provided funds through the Migration and Refugee Assistance account and International Disaster Assistance to provide food assistance and safe shelter, among other programs, to families like Majd's.

TAKE ACTION: Coach a friend or family member to write Senate-focused letters with the steps below

- 1. Go to the website of your U.S. Senators and see how they want to be emailed** (e.g., by filling out an online form or by emailing a specific email address from the website).
- 2. Introduction:** Provide personal information to root yourself in the community (e.g., I am active in my local parish, I volunteer at our local food bank, 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, etc.
- 3. Express gratitude to your U.S. Senators:** 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 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](#).] We 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. Urge them to take the next step by speaking with leaders of the key subcommittees outlined in the chart (SFOPs, Agriculture and LHHS).
- 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, 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 decision.

² Migration Data Portal. [Forced migration or displacement](#). 30 June 2021. Migration Data Portal online.

³ United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. [UNHCR Global Trends 2020](#). 18 June 2021. UNHCR online.

