



For Immediate Release

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Ahead of Secretary Tillerson's Budget Testimony, Humanitarian, Development and Global Health Organizations Release New Data Showing the Devastating Human Costs of Proposed Administration Cuts to Foreign Assistance

Washington, DC - As Secretary of State Rex Tillerson prepares to testify on the administration's budget, a leading group of humanitarian, development and global health organizations are releasing new data that shows just how devastating these proposed cuts to the United States' foreign aid budget would be to millions of people in the poorest countries.

The analysis finds that under the proposed budget:

- Proposed funding cuts to bilateral maternal and child health could result in more than 135,000 additional preventable and treatable maternal, newborn, and child deaths each year.
- The elimination of Title II Food Aid and a reduction in emergency food funding could cut off lifesaving food assistance to 20 million people facing emergencies, including Syrian refugees.
- Over 27 million bed nets would not be purchased and distributed by the President's Malaria Initiative, meaning over 54 million people would be at risk for malaria. Two people typically sleep under a net.
- Cuts to water and sanitation programs would mean more than 2 million people would not access safe and sustainable water sources as well as sanitation services that prevent the onset and spread of disease.
- Some 13 million children would be cut off from nutrition programs, leaving them vulnerable to stunting. Stunting would affect them for the rest of their lives, reducing their earning capacity and damaging their countries' economies.
- Almost 5.3 million farmers would lose access to programs that are helping them grow their way out of poverty, thus reducing their dependence on emergency food aid.
- The loss of Food for Peace non-emergency food assistance would end programs that now help some 8 million people work their way out of hunger and food insecurity as their communities become more self-sufficient.
- The elimination of the McGovern-Dole School Feeding Program would take meals and hygiene programs from almost 3 million children in nine countries, increasing malnutrition and reducing literacy.

The organizations -- Bread for the World, Catholic Relief Services, CARE USA, the International Rescue Committee, InterAction, Mercy Corps, Oxfam America, PATH, Save the Children, The ONE Campaign and World Vision -- called on Congress to reject the administration's request for drastic reductions in foreign assistance and instead maintain current funding levels.

From their long history and widespread experience, these leading international NGOs based in the U.S. have learned the benefit of helping the poorest and most vulnerable people. They know it is in the interest of the United States to maintain these poverty-focused aid programs, not only because they engender goodwill for

the U.S. around the world by saving lives, but also because that world is becoming more interconnected. Economic progress in the developing world means U.S. goods move into new markets easily, but it also means a disease outbreak anywhere around the globe can just as easily make it to our shores.

The group also urged Congress to protect the funding of other poverty-focused development, global health, and humanitarian programs.

Instead of cuts, the United States should maintain the global leadership that has played a pivotal role in the real progress being made. More people have emerged from extreme poverty in the last two decades than at any time in human history. Despite these enormous strides, climate change and violence continue to displace millions from their homes. As this week's marking of the seventh anniversary of the war in Syria makes clear, now is not the time to step back.

Many root causes of migration are also addressed by these programs, which enable people to live lives of dignity and, ultimately, to remain in their homes. These critical tools express in a concrete way our country's fundamental moral values and enjoy long-standing bipartisan support in Congress. Congress must continue this support by rejecting these drastic cuts.

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NOTE: High-level spokespeople and on-the-ground experts across the undersigned NGOs are available for comment. Please use contact information below:

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