

March 19, 2020

Senator Richard Shelby  
Committee on Appropriations  
Room S-128, The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20510

Representative Nita Lowey  
Committee on Appropriations  
H-307 The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

Senator Patrick Leahy  
Committee on Appropriations  
Room S-128, The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20510

Representative Kay Granger  
Committee on Appropriations  
H-307 The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman Lowey, Chairman Shelby, Ranking Member Granger, and Vice Chairman Leahy:

We write to thank you as leaders of the House and Senate Appropriations Committees for your efforts to act swiftly to provide support for key global humanitarian and development programs in response to the COVID-19 outbreak. H.R. 6074, the Coronavirus Preparedness and Response Supplemental Appropriations Act, provided the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Department of State with key flexible funding to address the global pandemic, which has already begun hitting developing countries.

Unfortunately, the pandemic is outpacing the global response and threatens to collapse health systems and imperil vulnerable people worldwide. As you develop supplemental appropriations bills, we ask that you provide significant flexible funding to USAID and State responding to the new and increased challenges communities face from the spread of COVID-19. American leadership on the scale of PEPFAR is needed now to help initiate the kind of preparedness actions by governments and INGOs to address the threat of subsequent waves of this virus that would threaten our homeland. We ask that future legislation include:

- Additional flexible funding to USAID through the Economic Support Fund that can be used to support prevention and treatment efforts for COVID-19; global health security efforts including support for health systems, critical health infrastructure, public education, and rapid response efforts; and economic support that will be needed to mitigate economic impacts, and support stabilization.

- Additional funds for International Disaster Assistance and Migration and Refugee Assistance to adapt ongoing humanitarian efforts and meet increased challenges we expect to arise in the coming months.
- Flexible funding for the U.S. Department of Agriculture to expand the effectiveness of P.L. 480 and McGovern-Dole to ensure that the U.S. government is able to provide key food assistance to those impacted by the pandemic.
- Continued flexible operations funding for USAID and the Department of State to ensure the safety of their staff and programs.
- Expedited hiring authority for USAID.
- Authorities that allow USAID and the Department of State to transfer COVID-19 funds between accounts only to respond to the pandemic.
- Authority much like that provided during the Ebola outbreak, for the U.S. to support an advanced market commitment and other measures to spur R&D for a COVID-19 vaccine and treatments.
- Extended 6-month authority for fiscal year 2020 appropriations to ensure that the agencies are able to invest the resources wisely in this disruptive time.

As organizations responding to the COVID-19 pandemic in the developing world, we write to assure you that we are committed to remaining engaged on the ground as the pandemic emerges in Africa, Latin America and lower income countries in Asia. Our staff are already taking precautionary measures to protect themselves and those they serve to ensure that they are able to respond effectively. We are equipped to respond and in many cases already are. We will join with USAID and the Department of State to slow the spread and save lives.

Sincerely,

Bread for the World  
 CARE USA  
 Catholic Relief Services  
 IMA-World Health-Lutheran World Relief  
 Global Health Council  
 Habitat for Humanity International  
 InterAction  
 International Rescue Committee  
 Mercy Corp  
 ONE  
 PATH  
 Plan International USA  
 Save the Children  
 World Vision