

# Our Faith Calls Us to Address Global Poverty

## The Role of U.S. Foreign Aid

“ **All economic life should be shaped by moral principles. Economic choices and institutions must be judged by how they protect or undermine the life and dignity of the human person, support the family, and serve the common good.** ”

—*A Catholic Framework for Economic Life*, United States Catholic Conference, 1996



Called by the Gospel message of hope and the vision of Catholic Social Teaching, we, as people of faith, must protect and promote the sacredness of human life and the dignity of the human person by acting in solidarity with people around the world who suffer at the economic margins.

Foreign aid is a crucial component of our federal budget because helping our impoverished global neighbors makes the world a better and safer place. When countries are healthy and strong they are less likely to be taken over by authoritarian and corrupt regimes that threaten their own people and other nations.

**We are all called to serve the global common good,  
and these U.S. foreign aid initiatives are helping:**

### 1. Feed the Future

In order to address the root causes of global hunger and food insecurity, this initiative focuses on agricultural growth and better nutrition through long-term development.

### 2. Global Health

Working with partner countries, this initiative focuses in particular on improved health outcomes for women, infants and children by combating infectious diseases and providing quality health services.

### 3. Global Climate Change

This initiative works to create a global response to climate change by focusing on the most vulnerable countries and strengthening the world's transition to more ecologically sustainable energy.

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# Making “Cents” of Foreign Aid

## How Much Do We Really Spend? How Much Should We?

THE NUMBER-ONE MYTH ABOUT FOREIGN AID is that it constitutes a large portion of our federal budget. In fact, only a tiny percentage of the budget goes toward international development.

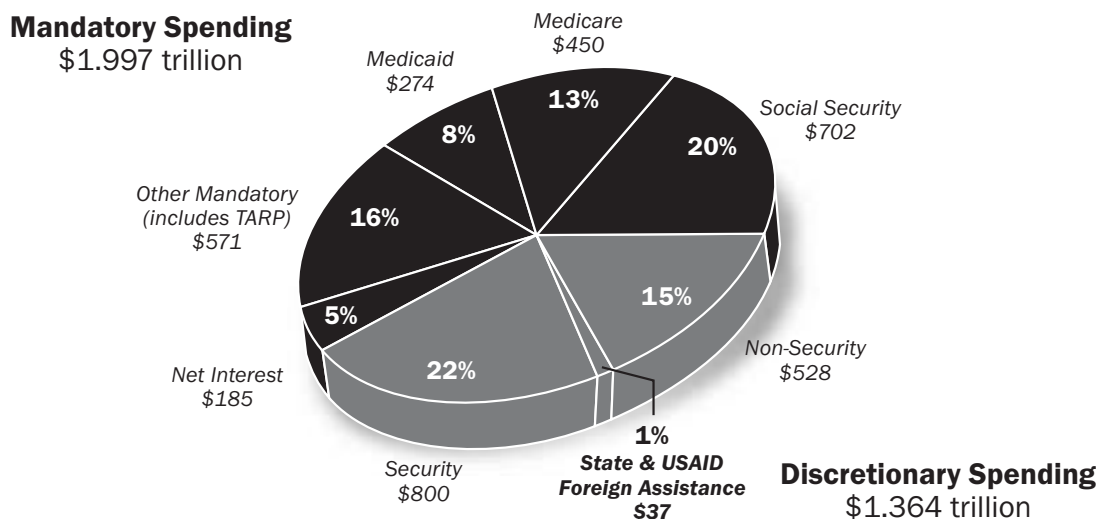
A Gallup Poll showed that most Americans estimate the United States gives 10 to 20 percent of our federal budget toward international development efforts. When asked

what portion of federal spending should be dedicated to foreign aid, the majority answered up to 10% of our total budget.

THE TRUTH IS the United States allocates less than 1% of our federal budget to foreign aid, and a significant percentage of foreign aid goes to military assistance rather than poverty-alleviation.

### Major Categories of Federal Spending, FY 2010 Outlays

In \$ billions



Source: <http://foreignassistance.gov/AboutTheData.aspx>

AS CONGRESS CONSIDERS DRASTIC CUTS to already limited poverty-focused international assistance, it is time for people of faith to speak out in opposition. Our nation cannot afford to turn our backs on our brothers and sisters in need. We deserve a federal budget that truly focuses on the common good.

For more information about just distribution of global assistance visit these sites:

- ★ U.S. Catholic Bishops’ statement on foreign aid: [www.usccb.org/sdwp/2011-3-22\\_TakingAMoralStand-backgrounder.pdf](http://www.usccb.org/sdwp/2011-3-22_TakingAMoralStand-backgrounder.pdf)
- ★ Catholic Relief Services / Giving Hope to a World of Need: <http://crs.org/>
- ★ InterAction, A United Voice for Global Change: [www.interaction.org/](http://www.interaction.org/)
- ★ U.S. Government website on foreign assistance: <http://ForeignAssistance.gov>

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