

## Congress must fund global health and poverty programs

The Trump Administration's dismantling of foreign aid has had swift consequences. Congress can and must use its power of the purse to shape what comes next. The fiscal year 2026 (FY26) appropriations bills this summer will set the trajectory.

The rescissions package passed this summer included harmful cuts to global health funding. It backtracked on FY25 spending already approved by Congress. President Trump himself had already signed that spending into law. This sets a dangerous precedent for congressional power of the purse.

**Now, Congress has the opportunity to protect and continue these longstanding bipartisan investments.** They have chosen to invest in children, health, and communities for a reason. Legislators of all parties agreed: wherever a baby is born, they deserve access to care in the earliest moments of their lives. They agreed education was a path to a brighter future. They agreed everyone deserved clean drinking water. They agreed letting people die of preventable, curable diseases is unacceptable.

Bipartisan leadership created these programs and needs to make sure their impact continues. Congress must set a high bar with their FY26 spending bill, and ensure funds they've already appropriated have maximum impact.

*Decisions by Congress this summer will shape the future of U.S. foreign aid:*

**Reassert congressional authority over spending. Congress should make bold investments in health and poverty programs for FY26.** Existing funding must also be spent as directed, on high-impact work.

## Congressional leadership for the future

In 2023, a staggering 238,000 newborns weren't breathing at birth but were then resuscitated. That's more than 650 every day, thanks to U.S. funding.

What else did U.S. funding accomplish that year? More than 113,000 people sick with antibiotic-resistant tuberculosis (TB) started lifesaving treatment. Almost 30 million children under age 5 received quality nutrition. Twelve million women had access to a safe facility for childbirth.

These outcomes are not coincidental. They follow the policy direction and transparency mandated by Congress. **They must be the minimum baseline for the future of U.S. foreign aid.** Yet the administration has tried to end huge swathes of high-impact work that Congress already funded. Some examples include:

- Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, supporting lifesaving vaccines for half the world's children
- TB programs in Pakistan, Cambodia, and 20 plus other countries
- All global education work, jeopardizing basic education for over 40 million kids
- Access to lifesaving child nutrition across Asia, Africa, and Latin America
- Neonatal care in at least five countries, saving newborns from asphyxiation

Congress should work with the administration to make effective use of existing funds. And the FY26 appropriations bills should reinvest and recommit to impact. This includes:

- ✓ **Focusing on evidence and outcomes.** Foreign aid should be targeted based on need and evidence. And the administration should report its outcomes to Congress.
- ✓ **Supporting pooled global funds that stretch U.S. resources.** Partnerships like Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria are "turn-key" investments. They can make swift, lifesaving impact as long as funding comes through. This work is even more key with U.S. programs in disarray.
- ✓ **Prioritizing humanitarian and development programs.** Maternal and child survival must be a priority. Fighting infectious disease, lifesaving nutrition, education, and poverty-focused work must be as well. This follows congressional authorization and appropriation.

Secretary Rubio said he would ask three questions about our foreign aid. "Does it make America safer? Does it make America stronger? Does it make America more prosperous?" Health, humanitarian, and poverty-focused development programs all unquestionably do.

**Congress must maintain their bold,  
bipartisan investments in global health and education for FY26.**