

ECONOMIC SUPPORT FUND

MINIMUM REQUIREMENT FY 2021

\$4.10 BILLION

FY 2020 President's Request: \$70.6 Million

FY 2020 Enacted: \$3.045 Billion

WHAT IS THE ECONOMIC SUPPORT FUND?

The Economic Support Fund (ESF) account provides economic assistance to advance U.S. political and strategic interests by helping countries meet political, economic, and security needs. The ESF addresses needs through a range of activities, including increasing the role of the private sector in the economy, assisting in the development of effective, accessible, and independent legal systems, supporting transparent and accountable governance, and empowering citizens.

WHAT DOES IT BUY?

Funds are provided to partners through grants, cooperative agreements, and other mechanisms to implement programming to support trade and capacity building, strengthen independent judiciaries, protect human rights and freedom of the press, combat human trafficking and corruption, increase public accountability and access to justice, and protect civil society activists and journalists.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

- ▶ Promotes democracy and human rights programs, which are integral to sustainable development and lasting peace. Countries with ineffective government institutions, rampant corruption, and weak rule of law have a 30% to 45% higher risk of civil war and extreme criminal violence than other developing countries.
- ▶ Protects and promotes the rights of people with disabilities in developing countries.
- ▶ Facilitates direct communication between individuals of different ethnic, religious, and political backgrounds in countries affected by civil strife and war, including the Middle East and North Africa.
- ▶ Strengthens independent judiciaries, protects human rights and freedom of the press, combats human trafficking and corruption, and increases public accountability and access to justice.
- ▶ Supports the Office of International Religious Freedom and the Special Envoy to Promote Religious Freedom of Religious Minorities in the Near East and South Central Asia.

WHY SHOULD AMERICANS CARE?

- ▶ Programs promote bedrock American values. They support developing countries' efforts to achieve economic and political self-determination and realize individual rights.
- ▶ Stable democracies are good for business. Corruption and poor governance fuel economic instability. Investments in these programs ensure better worldwide market stability allowing American businesses to thrive and expand their investments.
- ▶ Programs supported by these funds promote systems and structures to prevent conflicts that could require costly military interventions.



WHAT MORE COULD BE DONE?

- ▶ Additional funding could enable the U.S. government to better respond to the root causes of conflicts that drive increasing humanitarian need around the world and contribute to greater stability in countries of strategic interest to the U.S., including Jordan, Iraq, Myanmar, and Colombia.
- ▶ 821 million people go to bed hungry every night—a number that continues to climb. Additional funds could help combat food insecurity worldwide. Combined with the Development Assistance account, ESF supports Feed the Future, which alleviates food insecurity by building stronger food systems.
- ▶ ESF funds support better governance and greater civil society participation in some of the most fragile countries around the world. Increased funds could decrease the likelihood of preventable violence.
- ▶ Additional funds could strengthen efforts in fragile contexts where economic instability and hunger cause fragile environments to worsen. As the U.S. continues to face threats from abroad, ESF works to mitigate these concerns.

6 YEAR FUNDING HISTORY

(In billions)

