

# RECONCILIATION PROGRAMS

MINIMUM REQUIREMENT FY 2021

# \$30.6 MILLION

FY 2020 President's Request: N/A

FY 2020 Enacted: \$30 Million

## WHAT IS RECONCILIATION PROGRAMMING?

Reconciliation programs support “people-to-people” conflict mitigation, convening individuals of different ethnic, religious, class, or political backgrounds from areas affected by armed conflict to meaningfully interact. The programs provide opportunities for adversaries to reconcile differences, build trust, and work toward shared goals of resolving potential, ongoing, or recent conflict—also known as peacebuilding. They address divisions that stem from unequal levels of power and access to resources and create opportunities to build productive relationships.

## WHAT DOES IT BUY?

Funds are provided to partners working in a range of fragile and conflict-affected countries that in recent years have included Kenya, Colombia, Kosovo, Ethiopia, Burkina Faso, Georgia, Honduras, Jamaica, Macedonia, Mali, Niger, and Senegal.

## WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

- ▶ Reconciliation programs support broader U.S. efforts to mitigate and prevent violent conflict. Since 2004, funding has supported over 300 peacebuilding projects in over 40 countries, including dedicated funding for the West Bank and Gaza.
- ▶ Evaluation consistently finds that reconciliation programs increase trust, enhance cooperation, increase conflict resolution values, decrease aggression and loneliness, and mitigate hazardous environmental and health conditions among project participants.
- ▶ Reconciliation programs are effective. A new report, “Does Peacebuilding Work in the Midst of Conflict,” measured the effectiveness of a people-to-people approach in the Mercy Corps/USAID funded “Engaging Communities for Peace” program in Nigeria. The study found that as regional tensions increased, trust and contact in program communities improved or held steady. In the non-program communities, trust and contact deteriorated or stayed the same.
- ▶ Programs lay the foundation for peace in some of the most pressing conflict-affected areas. As groups build better relationships and break patterns of prejudice, the likelihood of violence between them declines.

## WHY SHOULD AMERICANS CARE?

- ▶ Reconciliation programs support other U.S. activities to stabilize target countries. These programs build the resiliencies necessary for diplomatic efforts to take hold.
- ▶ More resilient and less violent societies reduce the need for future U.S. assistance. Resilient and peaceful communities are more likely to participate in the global economy and create new markets for U.S. goods.



### WHAT MORE COULD BE DONE?

- ▶ Greater U.S. effort to address violent conflict through reconciliation programs could mitigate the current 25-year peak in global violence. Additional investment in conflict prevention and resilient societies could reduce future military and humanitarian involvement, empower communities, and propel countries toward self-reliance.
- ▶ Additional investment could scale up reconciliation programs by both expanding the reach within current target countries and growing the number of countries served.
- ▶ People-to-people work can be successful through a wide range of activities, from face-to-face or virtual dialogue to sports and arts programs. Expanded programs could reach more people in target communities, both through direct programming and the strong potential for program-related media and communications.
- ▶ Additional support could bolster implementing organizations’ monitoring and evaluation, as well as research evidence, which is critical for establishing an evidentiary foundation to assess which program models are most effective in preventing conflict and violence.

### 6 YEAR FUNDING HISTORY

(In millions)

