

TITLE III

Reconciliation Programs

Minimum Requirement F.Y. 2022

\$40 million

F.Y. 2021 Enacted

\$25 million

To date, programs have supported **nearly 330 peacebuilding projects** across 42 countries, awarding over \$430 million in program grants.

DESCRIPTION

Reconciliation programs support “people-to-people” conflict mitigation, convening individuals of different ethnic, religious, class, or political backgrounds from areas affected by armed conflict. Programs provide opportunities for adversaries to reconcile differences, build trust, and work toward shared goals of resolving potential, ongoing, or recent conflicts; addressing divisions that stem from unequal levels of power and access to resources; and creating opportunities to build 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?

- To date, reconciliation programs have supported nearly **330 peacebuilding projects** across 42 countries, awarding over \$420 million in program grants, including dedicated funding for the West Bank and Gaza.
- As the causes of conflict continue to grow, including the current pandemic, and ongoing climate shocks and stresses put pressure on communities, reconciliation programs targeting pandemic shocks, climate stressors, and a growing global youth population will be vital.
- Approximately **one out of four young people** live in fragile and conflict-affected settings.
- **Evaluations** consistently find 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 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.
 - » Youth peacebuilding programs in South Sudan led to a 28% increase of community members who identified more strongly with their national identity over ethnicity.
 - » These programs also contributed to a **78% increase** in program participants who said they trusted other ethnic groups.

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. Violent conflicts drive **80% of humanitarian needs** worldwide. Resilient and peaceful communities are more likely to participate in the global economy and create new markets for U.S. goods.
- Evidence shows that reconciliation programs are successful.
 - » According to a recent report evaluating the effectiveness of a USAID-funded reconciliation project in Nigeria, **perceptions** of security increased by 15% by the end of the program’s first phase. The study further found that as regional tensions increased, trust and contact in program communities improved or held steady. In non-program communities, trust and contact deteriorated or stayed the same.

COVID-19 IMPACTS

- Without practitioners operating in many conflict zones and post-conflict states due to the COVID-19 pandemic, funding for these programs will take on a renewed importance once they can operate in full-capacity again.

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WHAT MORE COULD BE DONE?

- Greater U.S. effort to address violent conflict through reconciliation programs could mitigate the current high levels of conflict, which are likely to be further exacerbated by COVID-19. Additional investments 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 expanding the reach within current target countries and growing the number of countries served.
- Additional support could bolster implementing organizations' monitoring and evaluation and research evidence, which is critical for establishing an evidentiary foundation to assess which program models are most effective in preventing conflict and violence.

FUNDING HISTORY



■ House ■ Senate

Funding levels may not exactly reflect those in the appropriations bills and/or reports due to rounding

