Congressional Research Service
Informing the legislative debate since 1914

International Food Assistance: FY2020 Appropriations

March 4, 2020

Congressional Research Service
https://crsreports.congress.gov
R46255

CRS REPORT
Prepared for Members and
Committees of Congress

Congressional Research Service
Informing the legislative debate since 1914

SUMMARY

R46255

March 4, 2020

Alyssa R. Casey
Analyst in Agricultural Policy

Emily M. Morgenstern
Analyst in Foreign Assistance and Foreign Policy

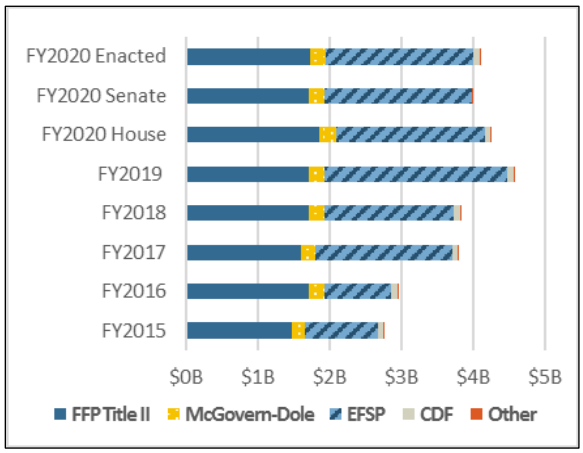
International Food Assistance: FY2020 Appropriations

U.S. international food assistance programs provide food, or the means to purchase food, to people around the world at risk of hunger. Congress funds these programs through two appropriations bills: the Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act—also known as the Agriculture appropriations bill—and the Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs (SFOPS) Appropriations Act. The Agriculture appropriations bill funds the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) except for the Forest Service. The SFOPS appropriations bill funds the U.S. Department of State, U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), and other non-defense foreign policy agencies. Both bills provide funding for U.S. international food assistance programs. Appropriations for agricultural development programs, such as Feed the Future or international agricultural exchange programs, are not considered part of food assistance spending.

For FY2020, the Further Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2020 (P.L. 116-94), provided an estimated $4.091 billion in funding for U.S. international food assistance programs. This was an 11% decrease from the $4.581 billion provided in FY2019. Division B of the act provided $1.945 billion in agriculture appropriations for international food assistance programs, including $1.725 billion for the Food for Peace (FFP) Title II program and $220 million for the McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program. Division G of the act provided an estimated $2.146 billion for international food assistance in SFOPS appropriations. This included $80 million in the Community Development Fund and an estimated $2.066 billion for the Emergency Food Security Program (EFSP). Congress funds EFSP within the International Disaster Assistance (IDA) account but does not designate a specific amount for the program. USAID allocates IDA funds to EFSP and other non-food humanitarian response programs. The estimated FY2020 EFSP appropriation is a CRS calculation based on a five-year average of the percentage of IDA funds allocated to EFSP.

In its FY2020 budget request, the Trump Administration proposed to eliminate the FFP Title II, McGovern-Dole, and Food for Progress programs, which Congress funds within Agriculture appropriations. The Administration proposed to consolidate multiple accounts, including accounts within Agriculture and SFOPS appropriations that fund international food assistance and other humanitarian assistance, into a new International Humanitarian Assistance account. Congress did not adopt these proposals.

Appropriations for U.S. International Food Assistance, FY2015-FY2020
(in billions of current U.S. dollars)



Source: Compiled by CRS, using enacted appropriations acts and FY2020 House and Senate Agriculture and SFOPS appropriations bills.

Notes: FFP=Food for Peace; EFSP=Emergency Food Security Program; CDF=Community Development Fund. *Other* includes FFP Title I Administration and Food for Progress. Congress funds EFSP within the International Disaster Assistance (IDA) account, but does not designate a specific amount for EFSP. FY2015-FY2019 EFSP amounts are actuals from USAID. The FY2020 EFSP amount is a CRS estimate based on the average IDA allocation to EFSP.

In addition to funding U.S. international food assistance programs, the FY2020 Agriculture appropriations bill included policy-related provisions that directed the executive branch how to carry out certain appropriations. The Explanatory Statement accompanying P.L. 116-94, as well as committee reports accompanying the House and Senate Agriculture and SFOPS appropriations bills, also included policy provisions related to international food assistance. For example, one provision directed that a certain amount of the funds appropriated for the McGovern-Dole Program be used for *local and regional procurement*—food assistance purchased in the country or region where it is to be distributed rather than purchased in the United States.

Contents

Introduction 1
International Food Assistance Programs 2
Agriculture-Funded International Food Assistance Accounts 3
Food for Peace Title I Direct Credit and Food for Progress Program Account 4
Food for Peace Title II Grants Account 4
McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program Grants Account 4
The Farmer-to-Farmer Program Set-Aside 4
Programs with Mandatory Funding 5
SFOPS-Funded International Food Assistance Accounts 5
International Disaster Assistance 5
Development Assistance 5
The Administration's FY2020 Budget Request 6
FY2020 Agriculture Funding Request 6
FY2020 SFOPS Funding Request 7
Potential Implications of the FY2020 Funding Request 7
Congressional Appropriations 8
FY2020 Agriculture Appropriations 9
FY2020 SFOPS Appropriations 10
Policy-Related Provisions 13

Figures

Figure 1. U.S. International Food Assistance Programs 3
Figure 2. Appropriations for U.S. International Food Assistance 9

Tables

Table 1. U.S. International Food Assistance Accounts 2
Table 2. Funding for International Food Assistance Programs in Appropriations, FY2018-FY2020 11
Table 3. Selected International Food Assistance Policy Provisions in the FY2019 and FY2020 Agriculture Appropriations Bill Text 13
Table 4. Selected International Food Assistance Policy Provisions in the FY2019 and FY2020 Agriculture Appropriations Report Language 15
Table 5. Selected International Food Assistance Policy Provisions in the FY2019 and FY2020 SFOPS Appropriations Report Language 17

Contacts

Author Information 17

Introduction

The U.S. government administers multiple international food assistance programs that aim to alleviate hunger and improve food security in other countries.[1] Some of these programs provide emergency assistance to people affected by conflict or natural disaster. Other programs provide nonemergency assistance to address chronic poverty and hunger, such as by providing food to people during a seasonal food shortage or training communities on issues related to nutrition.

U.S. international food assistance programs originated in 1954 with the Food for Peace Act (P.L. 83-480), also referred to as *P.L. 480*. Historically, the United States has provided international food assistance primarily through *in-kind aid*, whereby U.S. commodities are shipped to countries in need. Congress typically funds in-kind food aid programs through the Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act—known as the Agriculture appropriations bill. The Agriculture appropriations bill funds the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) except for the Forest Service.

Food Assistance Terminology

In this report, key terms are defined as follows:

Food assistance refers to both in-kind aid and market-based assistance.

In-kind aid refers to U.S. commodities shipped to recipient countries.

Market-based assistance provides cash transfers, vouchers, or food procured in the country or region where it is to be distributed.

In 2010, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) began providing *market-based assistance* to supplement in-kind aid in emergency and nonemergency situations. Market-based assistance provides cash transfers, vouchers, or *local and regional procurement* (LRP)—food purchased in the country or region where it is to be distributed rather than purchased in the United States. Congress funds most market-based assistance through the Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs (SFOPS) appropriations bill. The SFOPS appropriations bill funds the U.S. Department of State, USAID, and other non-defense foreign policy agencies.

For FY2020, the Further Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2020 (P.L. 116-94) provided approximately $4.091 billion for U.S. international food assistance programs. This was an 11% decrease from the $4.581 billion provided in FY2019. Division B of P.L. 116-94 provided $1.945 billion for international food assistance programs in Agriculture appropriations, including $1.725 billion for the Food for Peace (FFP) Title II program and $220 million for the McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program. Division G of P.L. 116-94 provided an estimated $2.146 billion for international food assistance programs in SFOPS appropriations. This included an estimated $2.066 billion for the Emergency Food Security Program (EFSP) and $80 million for the Community Development Fund (CDF).[2]

This report provides an overview of accounts in the Agriculture and SFOPS appropriations bills that fund international food assistance programs. It summarizes the Trump Administration's FY2020 budget request for international food assistance. The report then details the international

[1] For more information on international food assistance programs, see CRS In Focus IF11059, *Overview of U.S. International Food Assistance*, by Alyssa R. Casey.

[2] Congress funds EFSP within the International Disaster Assistance (IDA) account but does not designate a specific amount for the program. USAID allocates IDA funds to EFSP and other non-food humanitarian response programs. The estimated FY2020 EFSP appropriation is a CRS calculation based on a five-year average of the percentage of IDA funds allocated to EFSP.

food assistance provisions in the FY2020 enacted Agriculture and SFOPS appropriations bills—Division B and Division G of P.L. 116-94, respectively.[3]

International Food Assistance Programs

Congress funds most U.S. international food assistance programs through two annual appropriations bills—the Agriculture appropriations bill and the SFOPS appropriations bill. The following sections detail each account in the Agriculture and SFOPS appropriations bills that funds international food assistance and the programs funded through these accounts. **Table 1** lists each international food assistance account along with the respective appropriations bill, funded programs, primary delivery method, and implementing agency. **Figure 1** depicts each U.S. international food assistance program by authorizing and appropriations committee jurisdiction and implementing agency.

Table 1. U.S. International Food Assistance Accounts

Account	Appropriations Bill	Funded Programs	Primary Delivery Method[a]	Agency
Food for Peace Title I Direct Credit and Food for Progress Program	Agriculture	FFP Title I administrative expenses; Food for Progress administrative expenses	In-kind	USDA
Food for Peace Title II Grants	Agriculture	FFP Title II	In-kind	USAID
McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program Grants	Agriculture	McGovern-Dole	In-kind	USDA
International Disaster Assistance	SFOPS	Emergency Food Security Program	Market-based	USAID
Development Assistance	SFOPS	Community Development Fund	Market-based	USAID

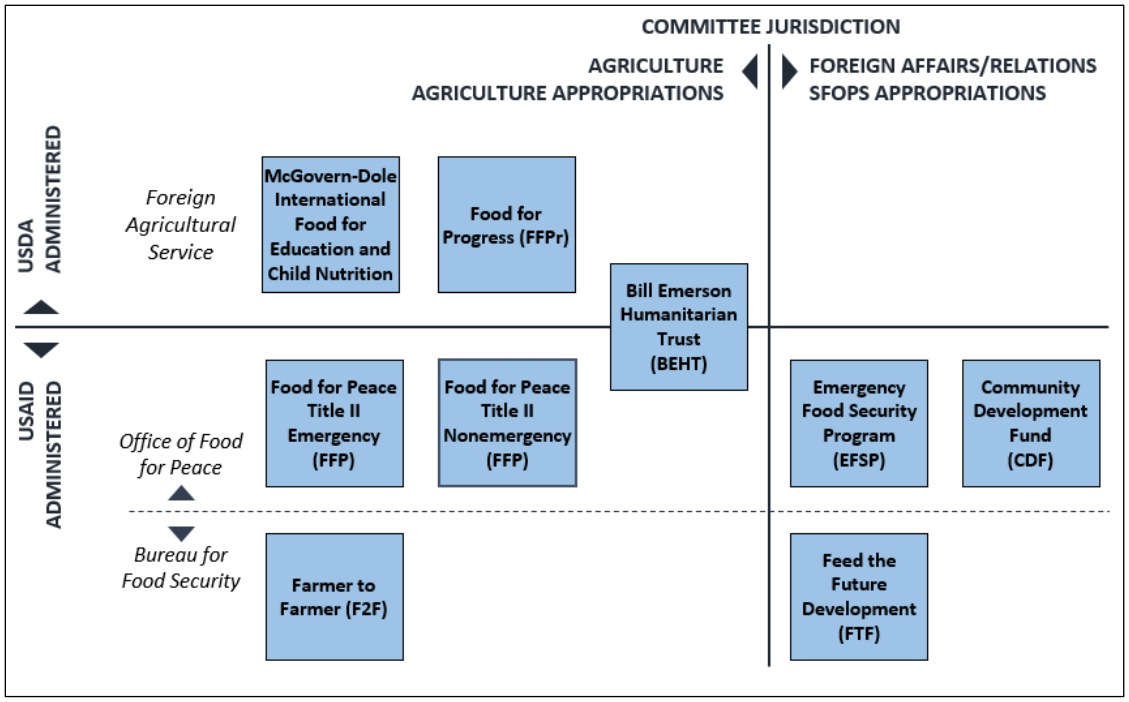
Source: Compiled by CRS. FFP = Food for Peace; USDA = U.S. Department of Agriculture; USAID = U.S. Agency for International Development; SFOPS = State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs.

Note:

a. The Food for Peace Act authorizes a portion of FFP Title II funding to be used for enhancing in-kind projects, including through market-based assistance. That legislation also authorizes up to 10% of McGovern-Dole funding for local and regional procurement. The Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended by the Global Food Security Act of 2016 (P.L. 114-195), authorizes EFSP to provide market-based or in-kind assistance. In practice, EFSP has provided primarily market-based assistance.

[3] For an analysis of the FY2020 Agriculture Appropriations Act, see CRS Report R45974, *Agriculture and Related Agencies: FY2020 Appropriations*, by Jim Monke. For an analysis of the FY2020 SFOPS Appropriations Act, see CRS Report R45763, *Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs: FY2020 Budget and Appropriations*, by Cory R. Gill, Marian L. Lawson, and Emily M. Morgenstern.

Figure 1. U.S. International Food Assistance Programs



Source: Created by CRS using information from USDA and USAID.

Notes: This graphic includes Feed the Future development programs but does not include all programs within the Feed the Future initiative. The Feed the Future initiative is a whole-of-government global food security effort that includes international food assistance programs as well as other international agricultural development programs. SFOPS = State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs; USDA = U.S. Department of Agriculture; USAID = U.S. Agency for International Development.

Agriculture-Funded International Food Assistance Accounts

Some international food assistance programs under the jurisdiction of the Agriculture appropriations committees receive *discretionary* funding, while other programs receive *mandatory* funding. Congress authorizes *discretionary* funding levels in authorizing legislation. A program's receipt of any of the authorized funding then awaits congressional discretion in annual appropriations. With *mandatory* funding, Congress authorizes *and provides* funding in authorizing legislation. Thus, programs with mandatory funding do not require a separate appropriation.

The Food for Peace Act (P.L. 83-480) is the primary authorizing legislation for international food assistance programs funded through agriculture appropriations. Congress reauthorizes discretionary and mandatory funding levels for these programs in periodic farm bills, most recently the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018 (2018 farm bill; P.L. 115-334).[4] Congress provides discretionary funding for international food assistance programs through three accounts in the Foreign Assistance and Related Programs title of the Agriculture appropriations bill: the Food for Peace Title I Direct Credit and Food for Progress Program account, the Food for Peace Title II Grants account, and the McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program Grants account. Congress has periodically provided additional discretionary

[4] For more information on the farm bill, see CRS In Focus IF11126, *2018 Farm Bill Primer: What Is the Farm Bill?*, by Renée Johnson and Jim Monke.

funding for international food assistance in the General Provisions title of the Agriculture appropriations bill.

Food for Peace Title I Direct Credit and Food for Progress Program Account

The Food for Peace (FFP) Title I Direct Credit and Food for Progress Program account provides administrative expenses for the FFP Title I and Food for Progress programs. FFP Title I provides *concessional sales*—sales on credit terms below market rates (loans)—of U.S. commodities to governments of developing countries and private entities. USDA administers FFP Title I. Congress has not appropriated funds for new FFP Title I sales since FY2006 but continues to appropriate funds to administer the FFP Title I loans provided before FY2006.

Food for Progress donates U.S. agricultural commodities to governments or organizations to be *monetized*—sold on local markets in recipient countries to generate proceeds for economic development projects. Congress has authorized Food for Progress to receive both mandatory and discretionary funding.[5] This account receives annual appropriations to cover administrative expenses. Congress primarily funds programmatic activities through mandatory funding.

Food for Peace Title II Grants Account

The Food for Peace Title II Grants account funds the FFP Title II program. FFP Title II donates U.S. agricultural commodities to recipients in foreign countries. FFP Title II provides both emergency and nonemergency aid. Typically, the majority of FFP Title II funds support emergency aid. USAID administers FFP Title II. Congress appropriates FFP Title II funds to USDA, which then transfers the funds to USAID. Since the mid-1980s, FFP Title II has received the majority of funds appropriated to international food assistance in the Agriculture appropriations bill. FFP Title II also receives some funding for nonemergency assistance from the Community Development Fund in the SFOPS appropriations bill (see "SFOPS-Funded International Food Assistance Accounts").

McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program Grants Account

This account funds the McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program. McGovern-Dole donates U.S. agricultural commodities to school feeding programs and pregnant or nursing mothers in qualifying countries. USDA administers McGovern-Dole. Since FY2016, Congress has set aside a portion of McGovern-Dole funds for LRP. The 2018 farm bill authorized USDA to use up to 10% of annual McGovern-Dole funds for LRP.[6]

The Farmer-to-Farmer Program Set-Aside

Congress funds the Farmer-to-Farmer Program, also known as FFP Title V, through a set-aside of the total appropriation for Food for Peace Act programs. This program finances short-term placements for U.S. volunteers to provide technical assistance to farmers in developing countries. USAID administers the Farmer-to-Farmer Program. Statute sets minimum program funding as the greater of $10 million or 0.5% of annual funds for Food for Peace Act programs and maximum

[5] 7 U.S.C. §1736o(f); 7 U.S.C. §1736o(l).

[6] Prior to the 2018 farm bill, Congress set aside McGovern-Dole funds for LRP in annual Agriculture appropriations bills based on the authority of the Local and Regional Food Aid Procurement Program (7 U.S.C. §1726c).

program funding as the greater of $15 million or 0.6% of annual funds for Food for Peace Act programs.[7]

Programs with Mandatory Funding

Congress has authorized certain U.S. international food aid programs to receive mandatory funding. Food for Progress relies primarily on mandatory funding financed through USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC).[8] Food for Progress does not typically receive discretionary funding beyond funding for administrative expenses provided by the FFP Title I account. However, in FY2019, Congress provided discretionary funding for Food for Progress in the General Provisions title of the Agriculture Appropriations Act.[9]

The Bill Emerson Humanitarian Trust (BEHT) is a reserve of funds held by the CCC.[10] USDA can use BEHT funds to supplement FFP Title II activities, especially when FFP Title II funds alone cannot meet emergency international food needs. If USDA provides aid through BEHT, Congress may appropriate funds to the CCC in a subsequent fiscal year to reimburse the CCC for the value of the released funds. USDA did not release funds from BEHT in FY2019, and Congress did not appropriate any BEHT reimbursement funds to the CCC in FY2020.

SFOPS-Funded International Food Assistance Accounts

Congress funds international food assistance programs through two funding accounts in the SFOPS appropriation using discretionary funds.

International Disaster Assistance

The International Disaster Assistance (IDA) funding account provides for EFSP, which USAID first employed in FY2010 to supplement its emergency FFP Title II in-kind aid. Congress permanently authorized the program in the Global Food Security Act of 2016 (P.L. 114-195). Congress does not specify the exact funding level for EFSP in its annual appropriation; rather, USAID determines the allocation of IDA funds in response to humanitarian need in any given year. Between FY2015 and FY2019, EFSP represented an average of 47% of the whole IDA appropriation.

Development Assistance

Congress designates funding within the Development Assistance (DA) account for CDF. CDF funds complement FFP Title II nonemergency programs. USAID first used CDF in FY2010 to reduce its reliance on *monetization*—the practice of implementing partners selling U.S. commodities on local markets and using the proceeds to fund programs. As with EFSP, CDF offers USAID the flexibility to pursue market-based interventions including cash transfers, food

[7] 7 U.S.C. §1737(d).

[8] The CCC is a government-owned financial institution that procures commodities and finances domestic and international programs to support U.S. agriculture. For more information on the CCC, see CRS Report R44606, *The Commodity Credit Corporation: In Brief*, by Megan Stubbs.

[9] P.L. 116-6, Division B, §743. The FY2019 conference report stated that "this increase is a restoration of funding from reductions occurring in prior years and does not indicate support for expanding or continuing the practice of monetization in food aid programs." See H.Rept. 116-9, Division B, Title V.

[10] Previously, BEHT also held commodities. In 2008, USDA sold the BEHT's remaining commodities. Currently, BEHT holds only funds.

vouchers, and LRP. Today, CDF continues to complement FFP Title II nonemergency programming but is no longer needed to offset monetization, as the practice is no longer a legislative requirement.[11]

Congress designates the level of CDF in its reports accompanying annual appropriations (often referred to as a "soft earmark"). For more information on CDF, see CRS Report R45879, *International Food Assistance: Food for Peace Nonemergency Programs*, by Emily M. Morgenstern.

The Administration's FY2020 Budget Request

For the third year in a row, the Trump Administration's FY2020 budget request proposed eliminating McGovern-Dole and FFP Title II. However, unlike in the FY2018 and FY2019 requests—in which the President proposed shifting all funding for international food assistance to the IDA account within the SFOPS appropriations bill—the President's FY2020 request proposed creating a new International Humanitarian Assistance (IHA) account. The proposed IHA account would have consolidated four humanitarian assistance accounts—the IDA, Migration and Refugee Assistance, and Emergency Refugee and Migration Assistance accounts that are funded in SFOPS appropriations, along with FFP Title II within Agriculture appropriations—into a single account within the SFOPS appropriations bill. The FY2020 budget request also repeated past proposals to eliminate Food for Progress and merge the DA account with the Economic Support Fund (ESF), Democracy Fund (DF), and Assistance for Europe, Eurasia, and Central Asia (AEECA) accounts to create a new Economic Support and Development Fund (ESDF) within SFOPS appropriations.

Congress did not adopt the Administration's FY2020 proposals to eliminate FFP Title II, McGovern-Dole, or Food for Progress or create the new combined IHA and ESDF accounts. The following section summarizes the Administration's FY2020 budget requests for U.S. international food assistance programs in the Agriculture and SFOPS appropriations bills.

FY2020 Agriculture Funding Request

For FY2020, the Trump Administration requested discretionary funding for one international food assistance program account. The Administration requested $135,000 for the FFP Title I account to carry out existing FFP Title I loans and Food for Progress projects.[12] This amount would have been $14,000 less than the FY2019 enacted amount for the FFP Title I account. The Administration's FY2020 budget request stated that the workload to administer FFP Title I was "significantly less than previously estimated" and that "funds were redirected to meet higher priorities."[13]

[11] Monetization used to be a requirement. However, the 2018 farm bill (P.L. 115-334) eliminated the monetization requirement, instead replacing it with a permissive authority. Analysts have found that in practice, monetization loses 20-25 cents on the dollar (see, for example, Erin C. Lentz, Stephanie Mercier, and Christopher B. Barrett, *International Food Aid and Food Assistance Programs and the Next Farm Bill*, American Enterprise Institute, October 2017, p. 8, http://www.aei.org/publication/international-food-aid-and-food-assistance-programs-and-the-next-farm-bill/).

[12] USDA, *FY2020 Explanatory Notes Foreign Agricultural Service*, p. 33-48, https://www.obpa.usda.gov/FY20explan_notes.html.

[13] USDA, *FY2020 Explanatory Notes Foreign Agricultural Service*, p. 33-49.

The FY2020 request also repeated the FY2018 and FY2019 proposals to eliminate FFP Title II, and McGovern-Dole and the FY2019 proposal to eliminate Food for Progress.[14] Regarding FFP Title II, the Administration stated "To replace the inefficient food aid provided through Title II, the 2020 request includes funding for emergency food needs within the new, more efficient International Humanitarian Assistance (IHA) account."[15] Eliminating FFP Title II would fund all emergency food assistance through the SFOPS appropriations rather than jointly between the SFOPS and Agriculture appropriations bills.

Regarding the proposed elimination of McGovern-Dole, the Administration's FY2020 request stated, "In kind food aid is associated with high transportation and other costs and is inefficient compared to other types of development assistance. In addition, the McGovern Dole program has unaddressed oversight and performance monitoring challenges."[16]

Food for Progress primarily receives mandatory funding. The FY2020 request proposes to eliminate mandatory funding authority, estimating that this would result in $1.7 billion in savings over 10 years.[17]

FY2020 SFOPS Funding Request

The FY2020 SFOPS budget proposal included a combined IHA account that would have consolidated the four humanitarian assistance accounts. According to budget documents, the IHA account would have supported "all aspects of humanitarian assistance, including shelter, protection, emergency health and nutrition, the provision of safe drinking water, livelihoods supports, emergency food interventions, rehabilitation, disaster risk reduction, and transition to development assistance programs," among other activities.[18] The account would have been managed by the newly consolidated Humanitarian Assistance Bureau at USAID but with a "senior dual-hat leader" under the policy authority of the Secretary of State reporting to both the Secretary of State and the USAID administrator. The Administration proposed $5.97 billion for the IHA account, a 37% decrease from the combined FY2019 appropriations for IDA, FFP Title II, Migration and Refugee Assistance, and Emergency Refugee and Migration Assistance.

The FY2020 SFOPS budget proposal also included a combined ESDF account that would have merged the DA, ESF, DF, and AEECA accounts. The FY2020 proposal included $5.23 billion for ESDF, a 32% decrease from the FY2019 appropriations for the four accounts combined.

Potential Implications of the FY2020 Funding Request

Moving funding from FFP Title II to a new IHA could have changed how the United States delivers food assistance to recipient countries. Statute requires that nearly all assistance distributed under FFP Title II be in-kind aid.[19] By contrast, EFSP, which Congress currently funds

[14] USDA, *FY2020 Budget Summary*, pp. 12 and 32, https://www.obpa.usda.gov/budsum/budget_summary.html.

[15] USDA, *FY2020 Explanatory Notes Foreign Agricultural Service*, p. 33-50.

[16] USDA, *FY2020 Explanatory Notes Foreign Agricultural Service*, p. 33-52.

[17] USDA, *FY2020 Budget Summary*, p. 90.

[18] *FY2020 International Affairs Congressional Budget Justification*, p. 75.

[19] The Food for Peace Act requires assistance provided under FFP Title II be agricultural commodities produced in the United States (7 U.S.C. §1732(2)). However, Section 202(e) of the act (7 U.S.C. §1722(e)), as amended, states that not less than 7.5% and not more than 20% of FFP Title II funds shall be made available for activities including storage, transportation, and establishing and enhancing FFP Title II projects. USAID has used the authority provided in Section 202(e) to provide some cash-based assistance to complement FFP Title II in-kind aid.

through the IDA account but which the Administration proposed to fund through the new IHA, does not have a statutory requirement to provide a portion of assistance as in-kind aid. EFSP can provide in-kind aid or market-based assistance. Therefore, under current statutes, shifting international food assistance funding from FFP Title II to IHA would have meant this funding would not have needed to adhere to the FFP Title II requirement to provide in-kind aid. This could have increased the portion of food assistance provided as market-based assistance rather than in-kind aid and would have shifted implementation from USDA to USAID.[20]

Proposals to shift U.S. international food assistance funding from in-kind food aid to market-based food assistance are not new. Both the Obama and George W. Bush Administrations proposed increasing the portion of U.S. international food assistance delivered as market-based assistance.[21] Some proponents of increasing the use of market-based assistance argue that it could improve program efficiency.[22] However, some interested parties assert that the Trump Administration's proposed decrease in overall funding for international food assistance could offset potential efficiency gains, resulting in fewer people receiving assistance.[23] Some opponents of increasing the share of food assistance that is market-based rather than in-kind maintain that in-kind aid ensures that the United States provides high-quality food to recipients.[24] Certain stakeholders, such as some agricultural commodity groups, may also oppose such changes due to their implications for U.S. government purchase of U.S. commodities.[25]

In addition to the implications above, there are a number of international food assistance issues in which Members of Congress have expressed interest. These include the share of in-kind and market-based food assistance, cargo preference requirements, and congressional jurisdiction, among others. For more information on the broad range of international food assistance-related issues, see CRS Report R45422, *U.S. International Food Assistance: An Overview*, by Alyssa R. Casey.

Congressional Appropriations

The FY2020 Agriculture Appropriations Act provided funding for U.S. international food assistance programs in the Foreign Assistance and Related Programs title (Title V). This included funding for FFP Title II and McGovern-Dole. The act also provided funding for administrative

[20] For a detailed discussion of in-kind and cash-based food assistance, see "Issues for Congress" in CRS Report R45422, *U.S. International Food Assistance: An Overview*, by Alyssa R. Casey.

[21] For more information on previous Administrations' budget proposals, see "Administrative and Legislative Proposals" in CRS Report R41072, *U.S. International Food Aid Programs: Background and Issues*, by Randy Schnepf.

[22] Jeremy Konyndyk and Cindy Huang, "A Practical Vision for U.S. Development Reform," Center for Global Development, July 20, 2017, pp. 14-15, https://www.cgdev.org/publication/practical-vision-us-development-reform; and Oxfam America, "Reform Food Aid," https://www.oxfamamerica.org/take-action/campaign/food-farming-and-hunger/food-aid/.

[23] See U.S. Global Leadership Coalition, "Analysis of the Administration's FY19 International Affairs Budget Request," February 12, 2018, p. 16, https://www.usglc.org/the-budget/analysis-administrations-fy19-international-affairs-budget-request; and International Rescue Committee, "Real World Impacts of Cutting Poverty-Focused and Humanitarian Foreign Assistance," June 2017, https://www.rescue.org/irc-document/real-world-impacts-cutting-poverty-focused-and-humanitarian-foreign-assistance.

[24] See National Association of Wheat Growers, "Food Aid," https://www.wheatworld.org/policy-action/issues/food-aid; and American Soy Association, "Food Aid," https://soygrowers.com/key-issues-initiatives/key-issues/other/food-aid/.

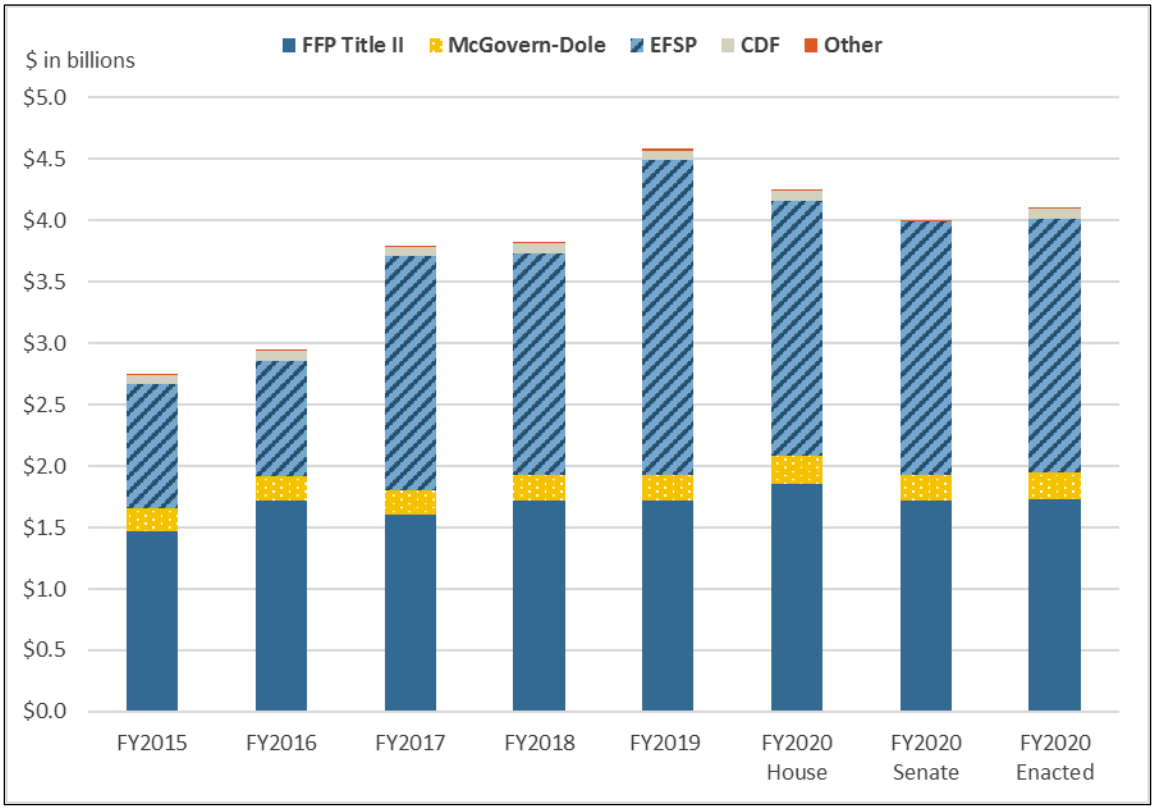
[25] USA Rice, "USA Rice Briefs House Ag on Rice in Food Aid Programs," April 11, 2018, https://www.usarice.com/news-and-events/publications/usa-rice-daily/article/usa-rice-daily/2018/04/11/usa-rice-briefs-house-ag-on-rice-in-food-aid-programs; and U.S. Wheat Associates, "U.S. Wheat: A Vital Food Aid Tool," https://www.uswheat.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/U.S.-Wheat-A-Vital-Food-Aid-Tool-FACT-SHEET.pdf.

expenses to manage existing FFP Title I loans that originated while the FFP Title I program was active. Unlike in FY2019, Congress did not provide discretionary funding in FY2020 for the Food for Progress program.

The FY2020 SFOPS Appropriations Act provided funding for international food assistance programs in Bilateral Assistance (Title III). **Figure 2** shows funding trends for international food assistance programs for FY2015-FY2020. **Table 2** details appropriations for international food assistance programs for FY2018-FY2020, including proposed funding levels in the FY2020 Administration's request and House and Senate Agriculture and SFOPS appropriations bills.

Figure 2. Appropriations for U.S. International Food Assistance

(FY2015-FY2020)



Source: Compiled by CRS using enacted appropriations act and FY2020 House and Senate Agriculture and SFOPS appropriations bills.

Notes: FFP = Food for Peace; EFSP = Emergency Food Security Program; CDF = Community Development Fund. Other includes FFP Title I Administration and discretionary appropriations for Food for Progress. Congress funds EFSP within the IDA account but does not designate a specific amount for EFSP. FY2015-FY2019 EFSP amounts are actuals from USAID. The FY2020 EFSP amount is a CRS estimate based on the average IDA allocation to EFSP.

FY2020 Agriculture Appropriations

The Further Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2020 (P.L. 116-94, Div. B) provided $1.945 billion for international food assistance programs, roughly level with the FY2019 enacted amount of $1.942 billion. The FY2020 enacted amount was less than the $2.085 billion in the House-passed Agriculture appropriations bill (H.R. 3055) but more than the $1.926 billion in the Senate-passed

bill (H.R. 3055). Congress did not adopt the Administration's FY2020 proposal to eliminate FFP Title II, McGovern-Dole, and Food for Progress.

The FY2020 act provided $1.725 billion for FFP Title II, a 0.5% increase from the $1.716 billion provided in FY2019. In FY2020, Congress provided all FFP Title II funding in the Foreign Assistance and Related Programs title (Title V) of the Agriculture appropriations bill. This was a change from FY2019, when Congress provided the majority of FFP Title II funding ($1.5 billion) in the Foreign Assistance title but provided additional funding for FFP Title II ($216 million) in the bill's General Provisions title (Title VII).

The FY2020 act provided $220 million for McGovern-Dole, a 5% increase from the FY2019 enacted amount of $210. Congress directed a minimum of $20 million of McGovern-Dole funding and a maximum of 10% of total program funding ($22 million) be set aside for LRP. This was an increase from the $15 million set-aside in FY2019. The FY2020 act also provided $142,000 for FFP Title I and Food for Progress administrative expenses, equal to the FY2019 enacted amount.

Unlike in FY2019, the FY2020 act did not provide discretionary appropriations for Food for Progress. Congress typically funds this program through mandatory funding. The 2018 farm bill (P.L. 115-334, §3302) authorized new pilot agreements within the Food for Progress program to directly fund economic development projects rather than funding the projects through monetizing commodities. The 2018 farm bill authorized $10 million per year for FY2019-FY2023 for pilot agreements, subject to annual appropriations. Congress did not appropriate funding for Food for Progress pilot agreements in FY2019 or FY2020.

FY2020 SFOPS Appropriations

Division G of the Further Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2020 (P.L. 116-94) provided funds for international food assistance programs appropriated under the SFOPS measure. The enacted IDA appropriation level grew by 0.2%, from $4.385 billion in FY2019 to $4.395 billion in FY2020. As in prior fiscal years, the measure did not determine a specific level for EFSP. IDA funds are designated to "carry out the provisions of section 491 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 for international disaster relief, rehabilitation, and reconstruction assistance."[26] Because the account is meant to respond to international emergencies, Congress tends to appropriate funds in a lump sum instead of directing funds toward specific countries or crises.

As in previous fiscal years, the final FY2020 act included $80 million for CDF under DA.

[26] P.L. 116-94, Division G, Title III.

Table 2. Funding for International Food Assistance Programs in Appropriations, FY2018-FY2020

(in thousands of dollars)

Program	FY2018	FY2019	FY2020			
	P.L. 115-141	P.L. 116-6	Admin. Request[a]	House-Passed	Senate-Passed and Reported	P.L. 116-94
Agriculture Appropriation						
FFP Title II	1,716,000	1,716,000	0	1,850,000	1,716,000	1,725,000
McGovern-Dole	207,626	210,255	0	235,000	210,255	220,000
LRP set-aside[b]	*10,000*	*15,000*	*0*	*25,000*	*15–21,000*	*20–22,000*
FFP Title I Administration	149	142	135	142	142	142
Food for Progress[c]	0	16,000	0	0	0	0
SFOPS Appropriation						
Emergency Food Security Program (within IDA)[d]	1,809,000	2,559,000	0	2,074,000	2,061,000	2,066,000
Community Development Fund (within DA)	80,000	80,000	0	80,000	0	80,000
International Humanitarian Assistance[e]	0	0	2,387,200	0	0	0
Total Agriculture appropriations	1,923,775	1,942,397	135	2,085,142	1,926,397	1,945,142
Total SFOPS appropriations	1,889,000	2,639,000	2,387,200	2,154,000	2,061,000	2,146,000
Total appropriations for international food assistance	**3,812,775**	**4,581,397**	**2,387,335**	**4,239,142**	**3,987,397**	**4,091,142**

Source: Compiled by CRS, using enacted appropriations acts, the Administration's FY2020 budget request, the FY2020 House- and Senate-passed Agriculture appropriations bills (both bill numbers H.R. 3055) and the FY2020 House-passed and Senate-reported SFOPS appropriations bills (H.R. 2740 and S. 2583).

Notes: FFP = Food for Peace; LRP = local and regional procurement; SFOPS = State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs; IDA = International Disaster Assistance; DA = Development Assistance.

a. The FY2020 Administration's budget request proposed eliminating FFP Title II, McGovern-Dole, and the Emergency Food Security Program (EFSP) and moving all international food assistance funding (except FFP Title I administrative expenses) to a new International Humanitarian Assistance (IHA) account in the SFOPS appropriations bill.

b. Congress provides funding for LRP through a set-aside within McGovern-Dole appropriations. The LRP set-aside is included in the total funding amount for McGovern-Dole. P.L. 116-94 directed that a minimum of $15 million and a maximum of 10% of McGovern-Dole funds be set aside for LRP. The FY2020 Senate-passed bill directed that a minimum of $20 million and maximum of 10% of McGovern-Dole funds be set aside for LRP.

c. These amounts are in addition to mandatory funding financed through the Commodity Credit Corporation.

d. Congress does not designate a specific level for EFSP within IDA. FY2018 and FY2019 EFSP levels are actuals from FFP annual reports, while the FY2020 level is a CRS estimate based on the five-year average IDA allocation to EFSP.

e. In its FY2020 request, the Administration proposed consolidating the four humanitarian assistance accounts—IDA, Migration and Refugee Assistance, FFP Title II, and Emergency Refugee and Migration Assistance—into a single IHA account. FFP Title II and EFSP accounted for an average of 40% of the total funding for the four accounts in FY2018 and FY2019. CRS therefore estimates the share of IHA for international food assistance at 40% of the requested level of $5.968 billion.

Policy-Related Provisions

In addition to providing funding, the Agriculture and SFOPS appropriations bills may contain policy-related provisions that direct the executive branch how to spend certain funds. Provisions included in appropriations act text have the force of law but generally only for the duration of the fiscal year for which the act provides appropriations. Policy-related provisions generally do not amend the *U.S. Code*. **Table 3** compares select policy-related provisions pertaining to U.S. international food aid programs from the Foreign Assistance and Related Programs (Title V) and General Provisions (Title VII) titles of the FY2019 and FY2020 Agriculture Appropriations Acts. There was no language from the SFOPS bills for a similar table.

The explanatory statement that accompanies the appropriations act, as well as the committee reports that accompany the House and Senate committee-reported bills, can provide statements of support for certain programs or directions to federal agencies on how to spend certain funding provided in the appropriations bill. While these documents generally do not have the force of law, they can express congressional intent. The committee reports and explanatory statement may need to be read together to capture all of the congressional intent for a given fiscal year.[27]

Table 4 compares selected policy-related provisions pertaining to U.S. international food aid programs from the FY2019 and FY2020 House and Senate committee reports and explanatory statement for the FY2020 Agriculture Appropriations Act. **Table 5** compares one selected policy-related provision pertaining to U.S. international food assistance programs from the FY2019 and FY2020 House and Senate committee reports and explanatory statement for the FY2020 SFOPS appropriation.

Table 3. Selected International Food Assistance Policy Provisions in the FY2019 and FY2020 Agriculture Appropriations Bill Text

FY2019	FY2020		
P.L. 116-6	**House-Passed (H.R. 3055)**	**Senate-Passed (H.R. 3055)**	**P.L. 116-94**
McGovern-Dole. Authorizes the Commodity Credit Corporation to provide services and facilities to implement the McGovern-Dole program subject to reimbursement from the appropriated program funds (Title V).	Identical to FY2019 enacted (Title V).	Identical to FY2019 enacted (Title V).	Identical to FY2019 enacted (Title V).

[27] According to the FY2020 explanatory statement, "The statement is silent on provisions that were in both the House Report (H.Rept. 116-107) and Senate Report (S.Rept. 116-110) that remain unchanged by this conference agreement, except as noted in this statement. The House and Senate report language that is not changed by the statement is approved and indicates congressional intentions. The statement, while repeating some report language for emphasis, does not intend to negate the language referred to above unless expressly provided herein." U.S. Congress, House Committee on Appropriations, *Committee Print on H.R. 1865*/P.L. 116-94, committee print, 116th Cong., 2nd sess., H.Prt. 38-679, https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CPRT-116HPRT38678/pdf/CPRT-116HPRT38678.pdf.

FY2019	FY2020		
P.L. 116-6	**House-Passed (H.R. 3055)**	**Senate-Passed (H.R. 3055)**	**P.L. 116-94**
Directs $1 million of program funds to be allocated for potable water technologies in school feeding programs (Title V).	No comparable provision.	No comparable provision.	No comparable provision.
Directs $15 million of program funds to be allocated for local and regional procurement projects (Title V).	Directs $25 million of program funds to be allocated for local and regional procurement projects (Title V).	Directs a minimum of $15 million and a maximum of 10% of program funds be allocated for local and regional procurement projects (Title V).	Directs a minimum of $20 million and a maximum of 10% of program funds be allocated for local and regional procurement projects (Title V).
FFP Title II. Prohibits providing FFP Title II aid to nations that lack adequate monitoring and controls to ensure food aid is not diverted to unauthorized or inappropriate persons (§733).	Identical to FY2019 enacted (§732).	No comparable provision.	Identical to FY2019 enacted (§731).
Provides $216 million for FFP Title II emergency and nonemergency aid in addition to the funds provided in Title V of the act (§777).	No comparable provision.	No comparable provision.	No comparable provision.
Food for Progress. Provides $6 million to the Commodity Credit Corporation for implementing the Food for Progress Program in addition to amounts otherwise made available (§743).	No comparable provision.	No comparable provision.	No comparable provision.

Source: Compiled by CRS based on appropriations bills.

Note: FFP = Food for Peace.

Table 4. Selected International Food Assistance Policy Provisions in the FY2019 and FY2020 Agriculture Appropriations Report Language

FY2019	FY2020		
Explanatory Statement for P.L. 116-6 (H.Rept. 116-9)	**House Committee Report (H.Rept. 116-107)**	**Senate Committee Report (S.Rept. 116-110)**	**Committee Print for P.L. P.L. 116-94 (H.Prt. 38-679)**
FFP Title II. Directs the USAID administrator to maintain the statutorily required minimum funding level for FFP Title II nonemergency aid. Directs the administrator to notify the Appropriations Committees within 15 days of action if the administrator waives the minimum nonemergency requirement in order to meet emergency food aid needs.	No comparable provision.	No comparable provision.	No comparable provision.
Food for Progress. States that the one-time increase for the Food for Progress Program is to restore funding reductions in prior years and does not indicate support for expanding or continuing monetization in food aid programs.	No comparable provision.	No comparable provision.	No comparable provision.
No comparable provision.	**International Food Security Technical Assistance.** Directs the Secretary of Agriculture to prioritize implementation of Section 3308 of the 2018 farm bill (P.L. 115-334), which authorizes USDA to provide technical assistance to international entities that develop and improve food and nutrition safety net systems. Directs USDA to report on implementation within 90 days of this act's passage.	No comparable provision.	No comparable provision.

FY2019	FY2020		
Explanatory Statement for P.L. 116-6 (H.Rept. 116-9)	**House Committee Report (H.Rept. 116-107)**	**Senate Committee Report (S.Rept. 116-110)**	**Committee Print for P.L. P.L. 116-94 (H.Prt. 38-679)**
No comparable provision.	**Food assistance modalities.** States that the committee supports expanding the utilization of various modalities, including vouchers, cash transfers, and local and regional procurement, in addition to in-kind aid.	No comparable provision.	No comparable provision.
No comparable provision.	**Farmer-to-Farmer.** States that the committee is interested in improving local food production around the world. Directs USAID and USDA to strengthen coordination in implementing Farmer-to-Farmer. Recommends USAID seek USDA expertise in developing streamlined program metrics. Directs USDA to brief the committee on coordination efforts.	No comparable provision.	No comparable provision.
No comparable provision.	No comparable provision.	**Food chain systems.** Encourages USDA to consider use of cold chain technologies in programs, policies, and strategic plans aimed at hunger prevention and food security in developing agricultural markets.	No comparable provision.
No comparable provision.	No comparable provision.	**McGovern-Dole.** Provides $15 million of McGovern-Dole funds to be used for local and regional procurement. States that new funding authorities would enable school feeding programs to proactively transition from direct commodity assistance to locally sourced agriculture products. Directs USDA to conduct local and regional procurement in accordance with the priorities of McGovern-Dole.	No comparable provision.

Source: Compiled by CRS, using H.Rept. 116-9, H.Rept. 116-107, S.Rept. 116-110, and H.Prt. 38-679. H.Prt. 38-679 is available at https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CPRT-116HPRT38679/pdf/CPRT-116HPRT38679.pdf.

Notes: FFP = Food for Peace; USAID = U.S. Agency for International Development; USDA = U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Table 5. Selected International Food Assistance Policy Provisions in the FY2019 and FY2020 SFOPS Appropriations Report Language

FY2019	FY2020		
Explanatory Statement for P.L. 116-6 (H.Rept. 116-9)	**House Committee Report** (H.Rept. 116-78)	**Senate Committee Report** (S.Rept. 116-126)	**Committee Print for** P.L. 116-94 **(H.Prt. 38-679)**
No comparable provision.	No comparable provision.	**Reporting.** Requires the USAID administrator to report to the Appropriations Committees detailing the amount of funds obligated and the unobligated balances for food security activities funded by FFP, IDA, and DA. The first report is to be submitted 30 days after enactment of the act and consequent reports every 60 days thereafter until September 30, 2020. It also requires that the reports be made publicly available.	**Reporting.** Requires the USAID administrator to report to the Appropriations Committees detailing the amount of funds obligated and the unobligated balances for food security activities funded by IDA and DA. The first report is to be submitted 30 days after enactment of the act and consequent reports every 90 days thereafter until September 30, 2020.

Sources: Compiled by CRS, using H.Rept. 116-9, H.Rept. 116-78, S.Rept. 116-126, and H.Prt. 38-679. H.Prt. 38-679 is available at https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CPRT-116HPRT38679/pdf/CPRT-116HPRT38679.pdf.

Notes: USAID = U.S. Agency for International Development; FFP = Food for Peace, IDA = International Disaster Assistance; DA = Development Assistance.

Author Information

Alyssa R. Casey
Analyst in Agricultural Policy

Emily M. Morgenstern
Analyst in Foreign Assistance and Foreign Policy

Disclaimer

This document was prepared by the Congressional Research Service (CRS). CRS serves as nonpartisan shared staff to congressional committees and Members of Congress. It operates solely at the behest of and under the direction of Congress. Information in a CRS Report should not be relied upon for purposes other than public understanding of information that has been provided by CRS to Members of Congress in connection with CRS's institutional role. CRS Reports, as a work of the United States Government, are not subject to copyright protection in the United States. Any CRS Report may be reproduced and distributed in its entirety without permission from CRS. However, as a CRS Report may include copyrighted images or material from a third party, you may need to obtain the permission of the copyright holder if you wish to copy or otherwise use copyrighted material.