

WHAT IS THE BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS PROCESS?

Every year, the U.S. Congress prepares and sets a federal budget for the next fiscal year. Through this annual budget and appropriations process, Congress agrees on spending priorities and allocates taxpayer dollars to fund federal programs. The budget and appropriations process significantly impacts food aid programs that are vital to the work of the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP).

Here's how the process plays out:



February-March

President Proposes Budget for the Next Fiscal Year

The budget process starts when the President of the United States submits recommendations on spending levels for the next fiscal year to Congress. The President's proposal outlines which programs, from international food aid to school meals programs, should be funded and at what level.



April-May

Congress Responds to the President's Budget

After the White House releases its budget proposal, Congress uses it as a guide and responds with their own. The Appropriations Committees then analyze the President's budget, hold informal briefings with agency personnel, and begin a series of budget hearings. This process is called "appropriations" because Congress is "appropriating" or allocating money to different federal agencies and programs.



June-August

Congress Drafts Appropriations Bills, Holds Hearings and Negotiates

The Appropriations Committees continue to hold budget hearings and begin the work of writing, negotiating, and passing annual appropriations bills through the legislative process. Through 12 subcommittees, the House and Senate Appropriations Committees hold hearings to examine the budget proposal and needs of federal programs. Each of the 12 subcommittees is responsible for a proposal for federal programs that fall under their jurisdiction, including the agriculture committee and state/foreign operations. If the House and Senate have different bills, they come together in a "conference committee" to negotiate until they agree on the final version of the bill. When all Members of Congress agree on the allocation of funds, they vote to finalize the budget. The final bill must pass by a majority vote in the House and Senate before moving on to the final step.



September-October

Budget Reaches President's Desk for Signature

Once the House and Senate reach an agreement and vote, the final bill is sent to the White House for the President's signature.

How Does the Budget and Appropriations Process Support WFP's Work?

The U.S. government is the largest financial donor to WFP. Through the appropriations process, Congress allocates funds for federal programs and agencies that contribute to WFP's work. The three primary food aid programs that directly support WFP are: Food for Peace Title II, the McGovern-Dole International Food for Education Program, and the Emergency Food Security Program (EFSP).

The Food for Peace Title II program is funded through the annual appropriations process and is at the core of America's response to global hunger. Through Food for Peace, the U.S. provides WFP with American-grown agricultural commodities including rice, corn, wheat and soybeans. WFP distributes this food to people facing extreme hunger around the world.

The Emergency Food Security Program (EFSP) allows the U.S. to compliment the humanitarian in-kind donations of U.S. commodities by using a flexible, cash-based approach. EFSP provides direct cash, food vouchers, and nutritional food to people in countries facing emergency circumstances, such as famine or conflict. This program is crucial to WFP's work to save lives in emergencies and protect those who have been displaced because of conflict.

McGovern-Dole supports education and food security in low-income countries. It's through McGovern-Dole that the United Nations World Food Programme implements many of its school meals programs around the world. These school meals:

- improve children's, especially young girls', access to education.
- increase school enrollment and retention rates.
- boost children's health and nutrition, which allows them to focus on their studies.

How Can WFP USA Advocates Help?

Congress is in the midst of the appropriations process. We need your help to ensure robust funding is allocated for vital food aid programs.

Write to your Members of Congress now urging them to continue their historic support to WFP by funding international food aid programs. The need for funding of international food aid programs is greater than ever and we need your help to secure funding to end global hunger.
Write to your Members of Congress now!

