



Global Fragility Act

OVERVIEW & TALKING POINTS

BACKGROUND

Global levels of violence are at a 25-year peak, undercutting global stability, reversing development gains and driving record levels of forced displacement: 68.5 million people—22 million of whom are refugees. There are also over 30 million people suffering severe food insecurity across Africa and part of the Middle East. The international community is facing challenges unseen since World War II. From Central America to Myanmar, conflict, natural disaster, and poverty are forcing people to flee their homes and communities, and seek safety and opportunity elsewhere.

In fact, violence and violent conflict are now the leading causes of displacement and food insecurity worldwide, driving 80 percent of humanitarian needs. By 2030 about 80% of those people living in extreme poverty will be in 31 countries where fragile states exist due to the prevalence of corruption, poor economic conditions and violent conflict. Global fragility and violence are drivers of displacement, exclusion, and poverty: they are fundamental to conversations about ending extreme poverty.

Serving more than 127 million people in 114 countries in 2018, CRS can attest first-hand to the significant challenges poor and vulnerable communities encounter and to the impact of poverty-reducing foreign assistance. In Central America, which has some of the highest rates of violence outside of war zones, CRS works on community development and youth empowerment, allowing youth and families to thrive in their communities and not feel compelled to flee north. In Bidibidi Refugee Settlement in Uganda, where almost 300,000 South Sudanese refugees reside, CRS focuses on livelihoods, water, sanitation and hygiene, shelter, and infrastructure construction for people with special needs. With no end in sight to the ongoing conflict in South Sudan, the humanitarian efforts are critical to meet the needs of the population. Furthermore, across the Middle East and Europe, CRS and our local partners have helped more than 1.4 million Syrians. In partnership with Caritas Jordan, CRS provides Syrian refugee children with access to safe, quality educational opportunities. These opportunities are important not only for the educational purposes, but also for the healing space they provide for children impacted by the conflict. Lastly, CRS and Caritas Iraq are helping displaced Iraqis return home and rebuild their lives. This includes the repair of war-damaged homes, livelihoods support, and access to quality education.

Pope Francis recently reminded us that, “God is peace: let us ask him to help us to be peacemakers each day.” Fragility, conflict and violence are multi-dimensional, and solutions require contributions from political, diplomatic, security, civil society, and humanitarian-development actors: the Global Fragility Act works to bring these solutions together.

CURRENT STATE OF PLAY

The Global Fragility Act

The Global Fragility Act (GFA) will help our government tackle the root causes of conflict and violence by mandating an inter-agency strategy to coordinate conflict prevention activities in priority countries and regions around the world. These activities will strengthen the capacities of local government and civil society to address the root causes of conflict. This legislation also provides mechanisms to finance this strategy along with tools and reporting requirements to monitor and evaluate the results.

In other words, the Global Fragility Act creates a framework to help the US government promote peace in a strategic, tangible and measurable way.

On May 20, 2019 the Global Fragility Act was passed in the House of Representatives. Our attention now turns to the Senate to build support for the Global Fragility Act. The original co-sponsors of this bill in the Senate are Senators Lindsey Graham (R-SC), Jeff Merkley (D-OR), Marco Rubio (R-FL) and Chris Coons (D-DE).

CRS continues outreach to Senate offices whose positions on the GFA are not yet solidified to ask them to review and sponsor the legislation. These are the [current Senators who have cosponsored the bill](#).

TALKING POINTS FOR MEETINGS WITH CONGRESSIONAL OFFICES

- **Thank you for your time to discuss international development, humanitarian aid, and the Global Fragility Act.**
 - *The introduction is an opportunity to share a little about yourself, your work in the state/district, and your connection to CRS.*
- **As Catholics, we believe there is a moral obligation to provide assistance and address the root causes of poverty, conflict, and forced migration.**
 - *Share your personal story of why you support international humanitarian and development work, to illustrate your concern about how conflict and violence are impacting those most vulnerable around the world.*
- **The U.S. government has the responsibility and capacity to address the needs of the poor to prevent conflict, promote opportunity and keep all people safe.** By helping communities with humanitarian assistance and development programs today, we can avoid catastrophes in the future. Pope Francis has said, *“Our faith in Christ, who became poor, and was always close to the poor and the outcast, is the basis of our concern for the integral development of society’s most neglected members.”*
- **In order to address poverty and humanitarian needs the US Government must address the root causes of violence, conflict and fragility.** Global levels of violence are at a 25-year peak, undercutting global stability, reversing development gains and driving record levels of forced displacement: over 68 million people. Violence and violent conflict are now the leading causes of displacement and food insecurity worldwide driving 80 percent of humanitarian needs.
- **The Global Fragility Act creates a framework to help the US government promote peace in a strategic, tangible and measurable way.** The legislation mandates an inter-agency strategy to coordinate conflict prevention activities in priority countries and regions. These activities will strengthen the capacities of local government and civil society to address the root causes of conflict. This legislation also provides mechanisms to finance this strategy along with tools and reporting requirements to monitor and evaluate the results.
- **We are pleased that the House passed the Global Fragility Act and welcome such swift progress in the Senate.**

THE ASK FOR SENATORS YET TO COSPONSOR THE GLOBAL FRAGILITY ACT

At a time of unprecedented displacement and humanitarian need, we urge you to cosponsor the Global Fragility Act and help advance the cause of peace.

THE ASK FOR SENATOR WHO HAVE COSPONSORED THE GLOBAL FRAGILITY ACT

Thank you for cosponsoring the Global Fragility Act of 2019 (S. 727) which will help address the root causes of forced displacement and hunger.

Please continue to support the Global Fragility Act (S. 727) and help advance the cause of peace.