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December 23, 2008

The Honorable Barack Obama, President-Elect of the United States  
Transition Headquarters  
451 6th St. NW  
Washington, DC

Dear President-Elect Obama:

Every day of the year, InterAction's 175 member organizations turn the American impulses to help people and get things done into action, working throughout the developing world and advocating here at home to fight global poverty, alleviate suffering, protect human rights, and maintain the natural resources upon which the world's poorest depend.

We write to you now to congratulate you on your election, to thank you enthusiastically for your far-sighted and bold pledge to double U.S. foreign assistance, and to present the attached document with our FY2010 funding recommendations for poverty-focused development and humanitarian accounts.

Our funding recommendations are based on our first-hand understanding of conditions abroad and our ability to improve those conditions, tempered somewhat by our sense of the political and fiscal environment here at home. We urge you to request the amounts we recommend for each account, and to request an overall international affairs account allocation sufficient to allow the recommended total increase of \$9.9 billion dollars (over FY2008 enacted levels) for these poverty-focused development and humanitarian accounts.

As you know, while the outgoing administration and the Congress have commendably increased our efforts to fight global poverty in recent years, the challenges we face require us to do more. At present, more than one billion people lack access to clean water and basic sanitation, and every day, 25,000 children under five die from preventable causes like pneumonia and diarrhea. Seventy-seven million children, most of whom are girls, do not have the opportunity to attend primary school. Fortunately, we know how to beat these challenges with affordable solutions that have been tested and have shown their effectiveness. All we need is the will to fund and implement them.

We fully understand the tough budget climate and the stresses the economic downturn have placed on our country. Yet the total needed for these accounts remains an exceedingly small portion of the overall federal budget (less than 1%), and the returns on the investments we recommend – in increased global stability, economic prosperity and good will, reduction of suffering and enactment of



American values – will be many-fold. In the coming tough budget years, those returns will be needed more than ever. The time to make the investments is now.

Increased investment in these accounts has wide bipartisan support. Secretary of Defense Robert Gates has called for “a dramatic increase in spending on the civilian instruments of national security – diplomacy, strategic communications, foreign assistance, civic action, and economic reconstruction and development...” General Anthony Zinni, Admiral Leighton Smith Jr., and 51 of their fellow retired military commanders have echoed this call. Opinion polls consistently show that solid majorities of the American public think our government should be investing a greater percentage of the federal budget in foreign assistance.

Adequately funding these accounts is also an important step in restoring fiscal responsibility and transparency in our international affairs spending and increasing the effectiveness of U.S. humanitarian programs. Funding of disaster relief and refugee programs in recent years has come in significant part through supplemental (off-budget) appropriations bills, after those accounts have been under-funded in the regular budget and appropriations cycle. This irregular process results in costly inefficiencies and disrupted programs with devastating human consequences that cannot be undone with last-minute mid-year funding. By requesting a robust funding level at the start of the budget process, you can demonstrate a renewed commitment both to the vital programming that these accounts fund and to fiscal responsibility and responsible budgeting.

We thank you again for your bold pledge and for your consideration of this request. We look forward to working with you to ensure our government's continued leadership in cooperating with the people of the world to create healthy and sustainable communities and a more stable and prosperous world.

Sincerely,  
The Undersigned Members of InterAction



Connecting People > Creating Change

- 1. Academy for Educational Development



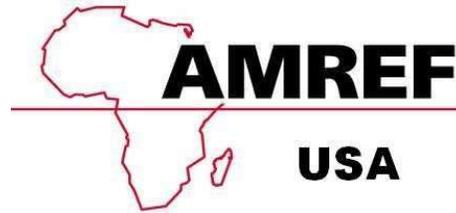
- 2. Action Against Hunger



- 3. Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) International



- 4. African Medical and Research Foundation (AMREF) USA



- 5. AfriCare



- 6. Aid to Artisans



- 7. Alliance to End Hunger



InterAction is a membership association of US private voluntary organizations engaged in international humanitarian efforts including relief, development, refugee assistance, environmental protection, population programming, policy advocacy, and education.



8. American Friends Service Committee (AFSC)



**American Friends  
Service Committee**

9. American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee

**American Jewish  
Joint Distribution  
Committee**



10. American Jewish World Service



11. American Near East Refugee Aid (ANERA)



12. American Red Cross International Services



**American  
Red Cross**



13. American Refugee Committee



14. Amigos de las Americas



15. Ananda Marga Universal Relief Team (AMURT)



16. B'nai B'rith International



**B'NAI B'RITH  
INTERNATIONAL**

17. Bread for the World



**breadfortheworld**  
HAVE FAITH. END HUNGER.

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18. Brother's Brother Foundation



19. Campaign for Innocent Victims in Conflict (CIVIC)



20. CARE



21. Catholic Medical Mission Board



22. Center for Health and Gender Equity





23. Centre for Development and Population Activities

Christian Children's Fund

24. Christian Children's Fund



CRWRC

25. Christian Reformed World Relief Committee-U.S.

CHRISTIAN REFORMED  
WORLD RELIEF COMMITTEE



26. Church World Service

**CHURCH WORLD SERVICE**



27. Concern America

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28. Congressional Hunger Center



29. Episcopal Relief & Development



30. Ethiopian Community Development Council



31. Floresta



32. Food for the Hungry



33. Friends of Liberia



34. Global Health Council

35. Global Links



36. Habitat for Humanity



37. Handicap International



38. Heart to Heart International





39. Heartland Alliance for Human Needs & Human Rights



40. Heifer International



41. Helen Keller International



42. Humane Society



43. INMED Partnerships for Children



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44. Institute for Sustainable Communities



45. International Aid



46. International Center for Research on Women



47. International Housing Coalition



48. International Medical Corps



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49. International Reading Association



50. International Relief and Development



51. International Rescue Committee



52. International Social Service-United States of America Branch, Inc.



53. International Youth Foundation



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54. Interplast



55. Islamic Relief USA



56. Joint Aid Management



57. LIFE for Relief and Development



58. Lutheran World Relief



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59. Management Sciences for Health



**MANAGEMENT SCIENCES *for* HEALTH**

*a nonprofit organization strengthening health programs worldwide*

60. Medical Teams International



61. Mercy Corps



62. Mercy-USA for Aid and Development



63. Minnesota International Health Volunteers



**Minnesota International Health Volunteers**

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64. National Association of Social Workers



65. Operation USA



66. Oxfam America



67. Pact



68. PATH



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a global leader in reproductive health

69. Pathfinder International



70. Perkins School for the Blind



PHYSICIANS *for* PEACE

BUILDING PEACE AND INTERNATIONAL FRIENDSHIPS THROUGH MEDICINE

71. Physicians for Peace



Plan

Helping children since 1937.

72. Plan



Population Action

INTERNATIONAL

73. Population Action International

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74. Population Communication

75. ProLiteracy



76. Refugees International



77. RELIEF International



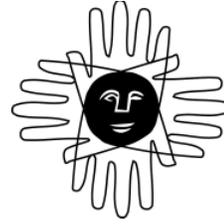
78. Save the Children



79. SEVA Foundation



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80. Solar Cookers International



81. The Hunger Project



82. Trickle Up

83. United States Committee for the United Nations Development Program



84. US Fund for UNICEF



85. Winrock International



86. Women Thrive Worldwide



87. Women's Environment and Development Organization



88. World Cocoa Foundation



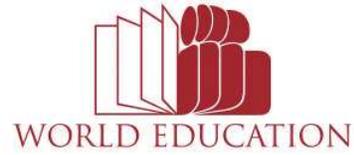
89. World Concern



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90. World Education



91. World Learning



92. World Neighbors



93. World Wildlife Fund

