

US lawmakers strike \$50B foreign assistance deal, surpassing Trump's plan. By Adva Saldinger, Devex, 12 Jan 2026

The compromise appropriations bill avoids deeper cuts proposed by President Donald Trump and Republican lawmakers, rebrands or consolidates major aid accounts and saves key programs.

By [Adva Saldinger](#) // 12 January 2026

After months of back and forth and uncertainty about when — and if — it would come to fruition, the U.S. House of Representatives and the Senate have released a compromise foreign assistance appropriations bill.

The funding bill would provide some \$50 billion for U.S. foreign assistance programs in fiscal year 2026, a roughly 16% cut from what was approved by Congress last year. Still, the total is higher than what the House Appropriations Committee approved in July and nearly \$20 billion above President Donald Trump's budget request, which recommended a 47.7% cut in foreign assistance funding.

Although the House and Senate appropriators have agreed to this package, the bill must still clear votes in both chambers before being signed into law, ahead of a Jan. 30 deadline when the stopgap funding bill expires.

For close readers of appropriations bills, the differences are notable. The legislation has been renamed the National Security, Department of State, and Related Programs Appropriations Act of 2026. More significantly, long-standing accounts — particularly those managed by the shuttered [U.S. Agency for International Development](#) — have been combined or eliminated and new ones created.

Cuts span most program areas, but the final compromise restores funding absent from the House bill, including support for [Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance](#), and the [International Development Association](#), the [World Bank](#)'s fund for the poorest countries.

Global health programs emerge as relative winners, retaining more than \$9.4 billion in total funding. Of that, approximately \$3.5 billion is allocated for general global health programs, including child survival, immunization, nutrition, public health, and more. The bill report specifies that \$300 million of that funding should be directed to Gavi. An additional \$5.88 billion is provided to HIV prevention, treatment, and control, including a \$1.25 billion contribution to the [Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria](#).

Congress also included language directing the administration to manage a transition of HIV programs under the “America First” global health policy, signaling continued congressional scrutiny and pressure for program evolution.

The bill includes about \$5.4 billion for humanitarian assistance, establishing a new consolidated budget line that merges funding previously split between the international disaster assistance and migration and refugee assistance accounts. Among the many reporting requirements attached to the package, Congress directs the State Department to outline how it will program, manage, and monitor humanitarian assistance funding. It also

called for Secretary of State Marco Rubio to implement a pilot program in three countries to assess the efficacy of humanitarian assistance delivery.

Questions remain about how the State Department will administer aid programs and whether it has sufficient staffing capacity to do so. The bill provides almost \$112 million for operating expenses tied to assistance administration, a sharp contrast to the nearly \$1.7 billion for USAID's operating expenses in fiscal year 2024. The bill also includes \$12.77 billion for the State Department for the administration of foreign affairs.

Two major bilateral assistance accounts — the \$3.93 billion development assistance account and the \$3.89 billion Economic Support Fund — are eliminated and appear to have been merged into a new national security investment programs account. The new account receives about \$6.77 billion for national security investment programs, at least 15% of which must be spent in Africa, with a focus on sub-Saharan Africa. Funding from that account will support everything from the Young African Leaders Initiative, family planning, peace process monitoring, trade capacity building, combating child marriage, the Arctic Council, the Caribbean Energy Initiative, and programs countering China.

Funding for international organizations, primarily the [United Nations](#), totals nearly \$1.4 billion, with U.N. peacekeeping receiving about \$1.23 billion.

The bill also lays out funding to international financial institutions — primarily the multilateral development banks. It includes \$1.06 billion for the World Bank's IDA. The account had been excluded from the House bill, but was included in the final bill. The Asian Development Fund receives \$43.6 million, the [African Development Bank](#) gets \$54.65 million, and the [European Bank for Reconstruction and Development](#) is slated to get \$87.5 million.

One apparent winner is the [International Fund for Agricultural Development](#), which receives a bump to \$54 million, up from \$43 million. The Global Environment Facility contribution remains flat at \$150.2 million.

The [U.S. International Development Finance Corporation](#) is allocated \$983.25 million, including \$243 million in administrative expenses, and an additional \$7.2 million for its inspector general, matching its funding for the past two years. The Senate report also calls on the DFC CEO to prioritize filling inspector general vacancies and includes funding for at least three full-time staff for DFC's Office of Accountability.

The [Millennium Challenge Corporation](#) saw a slight dip, with funding set at \$830 million. Other independent agencies fare better, with the [U.S. Trade and Development Agency](#) receiving \$87 million and the [Peace Corps](#) getting \$410.5 million — maintaining former funding levels.

Several agencies that have faced pressure from the Department of Government Efficiency and the Trump administration, including the [Inter-American Foundation](#) and the [U.S. African Development Foundation](#), continue to receive funding. The [National Endowment for Democracy](#) also maintains prior-year funding with \$315 million allocated, including some \$104 million for democracy programs.

This bill has been long-awaited, but it's not yet a done deal. And even if enacted, a central question remains: Will the Trump administration spend the money as Congress has directed?