



NEWS
RELEASE



ABOUT MERCY CORPS

- Leading global organization powered by the belief that a better world is possible
- Empowering people to survive through crisis, build better lives and transform their communities for good
- Meeting the urgent needs of today through emergency response and disaster preparedness
- Building a stronger tomorrow by connecting people to the resources they need to strengthen their community from within
- About 5,500 team members reaching nearly 28 million people
- \$471.8 million total operating revenue in FY2018; 86% channeled directly into programs in more than 40 countries

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CUTTING AID TO CENTRAL AMERICA IS SHORTSIGHTED AND COUNTERPRODUCTIVE

Statement from Mercy Corps' Chief Executive Officer Neal Keny-Guyer on Trump Administration suspension of U.S. aid to El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras

April 2, 2019

Slashing U.S. aid to El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras is a shortsighted and counterproductive move that undermines the goal of creating a safer and more prosperous Central America. Addressing the challenges of Central American migration should begin with examining the underlying factors that force many people to migrate.

Through our work in the Northern Triangle over the past 30 years, Mercy Corps has seen that the choice to migrate is complex. Families risk leaving their homes only when desperation has set in, when they feel physically unsafe and when they see no hope for their future. But the research shows that when we work alongside communities to make life safer at home, fewer people feel the same pressure to make that impossible choice.

Indeed, U.S. government investments in the region — only 2 percent of the U.S. international affairs budget — are alleviating economic disadvantage; fighting corruption; building strong institutions and fighting cycles of violence.

This is important work that holds the promise of breaking the cycle of despair and allowing people to find safety and prosperity in their home countries.

Rather than cut assistance, the Administration would be wise to use the funds that Congressional leaders — both Republican and Democrat — have championed and appropriated.

Notes to editors:

- [Surveys](#) reveal that USAID programs in the Northern Triangle countries have improved economic conditions by creating tens of thousands of jobs and increasing revenue for small and medium businesses.
- Following a two-year rural development initiative in Guatemala's Western Highlands, funded by the United States Government and implemented by Mercy Corps, young people who participated told us that as they find economic opportunity and employment at home, they are less likely to be drawn north to the U.S.
- A multi-year, four-nation study by the Latin American Public Opinion Project at Vanderbilt University showed a 51% decline in reported murders and a 51% decline in extortions in neighborhoods where USAID-funded programs operate.