



Written by [R. Cort Kirkwood](#) on July 28, 2018

Obama Administration Funded al-Qaida Front

The Obama Administration OK'd a \$200,000 grant to a terrorist front with the help of World Vision, the Christian evangelical aid organization. And at least \$115,000 of it actually went to the terror group.



That's the latest news from a long parade of Obama's blunders, except this time the result is even more shocking than his garden-variety foul-ups, given the group that received the money: an affiliate of al-Qaida.

Terror Designation

The funding story opens, [wrote Sam Westrop in *National Review*](#), "in October 2004, when the U.S. Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) designated the Khartoum-based Islamic Relief Agency (ISRA), also known as the Islamic African Relief Agency (IARA), as a terror-financing organization. It did so because of ISRA's links to Osama bin Laden and his organization Maktab al-Khidamat (MK), the precursor of al-Qaeda."

Summary: OFAC declared that ISRA, which was connected to Osama bin Laden, was a terror group.

That designation included all of ISRA's American affiliates, one of which "illegally transferred over \$1.2 million to Iraqi insurgents and other terror groups, including, reportedly, the Afghan terrorist Gulbuddin Hekmatyar. In 2010, the executive director of IARA-USA and a board member pled guilty to money-laundering, theft of public funds, conspiracy, and several other charges."

But that didn't stop the administration or World Vision from eventually passing money to ISRA, Westrop reported. USAID sent \$723,405 to World Vision to "improve water, sanitation and hygiene and to increase food security in Sudan's Blue Nile state," with \$200,000 of that total promised to ISRA.

Amazingly, a USAID official told Westrop that "World Vision had alerted it in November 2014 to the likelihood of ISRA being on the terror list," which prompted USAID to order World Vision to "suspend all activities with ISRA." World Vision would have to wait to distribute the money until OFAC decided whether ISRA was on the terror list.

World Vision, Estrop reported, tired of waiting for OFAC's decision and threatened to disburse the money within a week if it didn't hear anything.

[Reported Estrop:](#)

World Vision's statement stunned USAID officials, who complained that World Vision's behavior "doesn't make sense." USAID official Daniel Holmberg emailed a colleague: "If they actually said that they wanted to resume work with ISRA, while knowing that it was 99% likely that ISRA was on the list then I am concerned about our partnership with them, and whether it should continue."

OFAC's decision did not please World Vision. In January 2015, OFAC denied World Vision the license to do business with ISRA. World Vision appealed that decision to "Obama-administration official Jeremy Konyndyk (who then served as director of USAID's Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance) to apply to OFAC for a new license from USAID to pay ISRA 'monies owed for work performed.'"



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World Vision claimed that “their whole program will be jeopardized” if they didn’t cough up the money to the terrorists.

Threat Made, Money Transferred

After Sudanese officials threatened to kick World Vision out of the country, supposedly as “punishment” for canceling the grant, the Obama Administration caved:

Incredibly, on May 7, 2015 — after “close collaboration and consultations with the Department of State” — OFAC issued a license to a World Vision affiliate, World Vision International, authorizing “a one-time transfer of approximately \$125,000 to ISRA,” of which “\$115,000 was for services performed under the sub-award with USAID” and \$10,000 was “for an unrelated funding arrangement between Irish Aid and World Vision.”

The decision was a “great relief,” a World Vision official said, because the ISRA terrorists had threatened a lawsuit. That of course, “would have damaged our reputation and standing in Sudan.” A senior USAID official thought funding the terrorists was “good news and a great relief, really!”

Then, to put something of a galling period on this story, an ISRA official actually asked USAID how it could get off the terror list.

For its part, [World Vision denies](#) any wrongdoing, claiming in a lengthy post at its website that it paid money owed for services performed.

The bottom line? “Obama-administration officials *knowingly approved* the transfer of taxpayer dollars to an al-Qaeda affiliate, and not an obscure one but an enormous international network that was often in the headlines.” (Emphasis added.)

Estrop offers more details about the transaction, but the key point is that the Obama Administration not only approved the the \$200,000 grant but did so knowing that at least \$115,000 of it was going to a terrorist front.

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