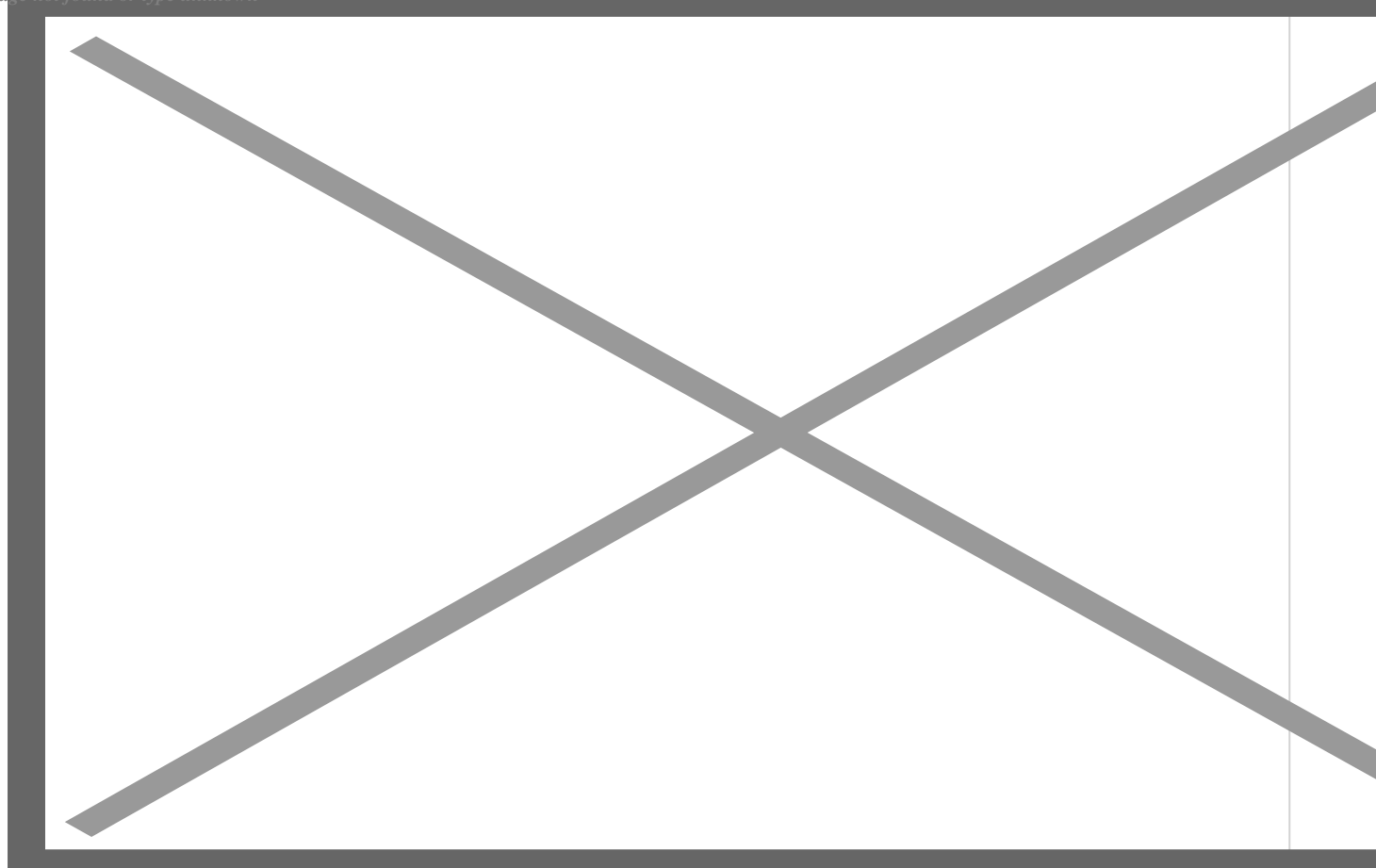


International donors release \$280 million in aid to Afghanistan

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A World Bank-administered trust fund says it will transfer \$280 million to the World Food Program and UNICEF in Afghanistan in an effort to ease a looming humanitarian catastrophe.

Washington, December 14 (RHC)-- A World Bank-administered trust fund says it will transfer \$280 million to the World Food Program and UNICEF in Afghanistan in an effort to ease a looming humanitarian catastrophe.

The funds for food security and healthcare are a fraction of what Afghanistan lost after the Taliban seized power in August and the United States and other donors cut off financial aid. The United Nations warns nearly 23 million people in Afghanistan -- or more than half the population -- face potentially life-

threatening food shortages this winter, with nearly 9 million already on the brink of famine.

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