

One Table: Advancing Agriculture to End Hunger



“We pledge to work alongside you to make your farms flourish and let clean waters flow; to nourish starved bodies and feed hungry minds.”

President Barack Obama, January 20, 2009

One billion people live with chronic hunger and half of all child deaths in developing countries result from poor nutrition. Persistent hunger decimates families and societies. It makes it difficult to study, work or care for others. Countries struggle to grow economically when large numbers of their citizens do not have enough food. Changing dietary habits, increasing population growth, and climate change pose new challenges to meeting the world’s demand for food.

There are many causes of hunger. Spending on agriculture in the developing world has decreased significantly in recent decades. Today, farmers in many developing countries use low quality seeds that have only 20% the yield of crops planted in the U.S. Many farmers lack access to key agricultural inputs such as fertilizer and irrigation. Policies that discourage private investment and development of the private sector also play a role. In certain cases, food crises are exacerbated by environmental events such as drought.

We seek a world without hunger. Our objective is to build sustainable agriculture systems so all people have reliable access to nutritious food. We seek open markets where businesses flourish and food is delivered efficiently from the farm to the table. We recognize, however, that for many people in the developing world, hunger remains an acute and immediate problem. Therefore, we will not back down from our commitment to provide emergency assistance when needed.

We do not have all the answers. But, we know that ownership and ingenuity are key ingredients to building long-term agriculture systems that reduce hunger and spur economic growth. We intend to learn and adapt as we go. In the spirit of partnership central to this effort, we will listen to all voices – from rural farmers, to chambers of commerce, to government and other leaders. We have identified six key principles that will guide our future efforts:

- **Support sustainable solutions to hunger** – we seek strong and sustainable agriculture sectors that produce and deliver food efficiently. From local scientists that design new technology to farmers that profit from their hard work. From small businesses that sell agriculture products to consumers that have sufficient income to purchase their own food. We envision strong agriculture sectors driving economic growth and reducing the need for emergency food assistance.
- **Invest in country-led plans.** We believe that the development of comprehensive food security plans must be led by the host country. We also believe that the collective process of developing an investment plan is as important as the final plan. That’s why we want to work

at one table, with all stakeholders, to develop plans in which we can invest and for which there is accountability.

- **Strengthen coordination.** Meeting the challenge of hunger demands the full participation of all stakeholders to ensure an efficient and effective response while eliminating duplication and gaps. As countries and organizations commit new resources for agriculture development, we propose this be done through a collective and collaborative process, including through the Global Partnership.
- **Adopt a comprehensive approach.** We have identified seven key areas that are collectively important for sustainable agriculture and efficient markets:
 - **Increase agricultural productivity** – for example, by improving access to quality seeds and fertilizer for rural farmers.
 - **Stimulate post-harvest, private-sector growth** – for example, through the investment in agricultural-related infrastructure, such as storage, to facilitate access to markets.
 - **Support women and families** in agricultural development.
 - **Maintain the natural resource base** by taking into account the impact of climate change on agricultural development.
 - **Expand knowledge and training** including support for research.
 - **Increase trade flows.**
 - **Support good governance and policy reform.**
- **Work together through multilateral institutions and mechanism.** We propose that development partners agree to seek multilateral development partnerships. Multilateral mechanisms are effective instruments for resource delivery and inclusive policy dialogue. We see the following organizations and funds as being particularly important.
 - The World Bank Global Food Response Program’s Multi-donor Trust Fund
 - The IFC Emergency Infrastructure Facility
 - The Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program Trust Fund
 - The Consultative Group for International Agriculture Research
- **Long-term commitment to achieve our goals.** Achieving our goals will require unambiguous sustained commitments of financial support and technical assistance, made by development partners and developing countries alike.

A new approach. Unlike previous efforts, we will focus comprehensively on agriculture. From the lab to the farm to the market to the table. We will coordinate at country, regional, and global levels by committing ourselves to collaborative and inclusive partnerships. Our commitment will be sustained and aimed at meeting medium and long-term needs. We will embrace the key roles that small holder farmers, the private sector, markets, and trade play in agricultural growth. Finally, we will establish peer-review systems that hold us, as well as our development partners, accountable to our goals.