

# Changing the Way We Talk About Hunger

Viewing Hunger  
through Different Lenses

A Collection of Messaging Strategies  
from the Alliance to End Hunger

Foreword by Dr. Rev. David Beckman and  
Ambassador Tony Hall



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# Foreword

## Ambassador Tony Hall

The name of this book comes from a comment I made to a colleague when I was in the Dedaab Refugee camp in Kenya near the Somalia border. More than fifteen hundred refugees arrived each day from war torn Somalia and devastated by the famine in the Horn of Africa.

My colleague asked me what the difference was between now and 1980 when I watched Ethiopian refugees die by the minute in refugee camps. I replied that the infrastructure was so much better to process the overwhelming numbers of desperately hungry refugees, yet I made the observation that the international community wasn't responding now like it did in 1980. I said, "We must change the way we talk about hunger."

When I asked members of The Alliance to End Hunger to create an Advocacy Committee in 2013, they decided their first order of business was to change the way we talk about hunger. They did this by creating messaging about hunger that was relevant to different stakeholders which could be communicated easily both at grass-top and grass-root levels. The committee divided into working groups such as agriculture, health, national security and international health and nutrition.

The talking points created by these working groups were designed to assist you in communicating the issue of hunger simply but intelligently. Furthermore, these points represent a collective voice of people from numerous businesses, nonprofits, civic organizations, faith-based organizations, educational institutions and government agencies.

This booklet is a tool for you to use generously. Please share it with as many people as you can.

We need you to help us change the way we talk about hunger.

# Foreword

## Rev. Dr. David Beckman

We have made many advances in fighting global poverty and hunger which should encourage us to do even greater work. As our nation makes the transition to a new president, we have the opportunity build even greater political and public will to end hunger.

First, can help build political will by ensuring the new administration and Congress hears about the importance of ending hunger. The creation of these talking points in this booklet is to assist you and/or your group in talking to members of Congress about how hunger relates to issues they care about. Please reach out to your elected officials at the national, state and local levels and communicate these messages to them. If you are in DC to visit your elected official and would like someone to accompany you, please reach out to the Alliance to End Hunger. Or, if you visit your elected official in your own district, please take these talking points along with you.

Second, you can help build public will by using these talking points to engage and educate those in your sphere of influence. These messages were created to help businesses educate employees; nonprofits and civic organizations to inform their volunteers and members; teachers and professors to use in classrooms; and faith-based leaders to empower their followers. Please distribute this booklet generously.

I am confident we can end hunger by building political and public will, but we must do it with one voice. Join your voice with others to raise the volume and finally end hunger.

# What is Hunger

## A Fact Sheet for Members of Congress

Hunger is the inability to consume necessary amounts of food for daily sustenance because of the lack of funds and/or access to nutritional food.

## Hunger is not a partisan issue

Hunger affects all 50 states, all 435 Congressional districts, and every country on earth.

## Hunger in the United States

- Hunger costs the U.S. \$167.5 billion annually



49 million Americans, or

**1 in 6,**

live at risk of hunger

15.8 million children, or

**1 in 5,**

are food insecure



# Hunger Around the World

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- Over 800 million people never get the necessary calories their bodies need to function properly
- Worldwide, 1 in 3 children is malnourished

Hunger kills more  
people than



AIDS, Malaria, and TB  
**COMBINED**

- Hungry people outnumber the combined populations of US, Canada, and EU
- Around 25,000 people die each day of hunger; that's equal to 84 - 747's crashing into the ground every day
- A child dies of hunger ever 6 seconds
- 180 million children are stunted by hunger and, consequently, will never have a normal life
- 19 million children are severely wasted - low weight for height

## How Hunger is Solved

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- Build political will
- Create a culture where the elimination of hunger is the everyday norm
- Create jobs and economic development
- Provide short-term assistance and aid: Relief
- Provide long-term sustainability and self-reliance: Development
- Educate, empower, and engage all American in the fight against hunger

# The Good News

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The world is making unprecedented progress against hunger, poverty and disease. Our generation can end hunger in the United States and worldwide

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## Changing the Way We Talk About Hunger

The Alliance to End Hunger is a collaboration of corporations, agencies, non profits, NGOs, universities, and individuals who believe the solution to domestic and global hunger is through collaboration.

The growing awareness of domestic and global hunger gives us opportunity to change the way we are talking about the issue. For many, the idea of fighting hunger is to start a food drive, make a donation to a charity, or rely on the government alone to take care of it. This assumes the way to solve hunger is through relief efforts that are short-term. However, the solutions to hunger should be framed in the context of Relief and Development. Relief is the short-term safety net that is critical to provide for the vulnerable. Development is the strategy to economic sustainability. They are both/and; not either/or.

Furthermore, our desire is to create Hunger Champions in Congress; men and women who will insert the cause of hunger into various conversations, platforms and solutions. The most critical component to solving global hunger is policy focused on improving the lives of people impacted by hunger and poverty.

The members of the Alliance to End Hunger are ready to assist you in whatever ways we can to help educate, empower and engage you, your staff and your constituents in the war against hunger.

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## How to Reach Out to a Member of Congress

- [Link to Federal, State and Local Elected Officials](#)
  - Call the office in your district
  - Call the office in DC
  - Write a letter using some of these talking points
  - Visit your rep at a town hall meetings
  - Invite the rep to see your work in action
  - Build a relationship with your rep's staff
  - Send an email
- 

## What You Can Suggest to Your Member of Congress

- Meet with Alliance to End Hunger Members to better understand their perspectives and solutions to hunger
- Explore hunger in your district or state
- See hunger firsthand overseas
- Start a Hunger Free Community Coalition in your state or district
- Maintain adequate funding for life saving domestic and global nutrition and development programs
- Designate a member of your staff to focus on hunger
- Join your chamber's Hunger Caucus

# Hunger is an Agriculture Issue

## WHY?

With the global population expected to top 9 billion people by 2050, farmers around the world will have to nearly double agricultural production to meet demand in the face of climate change, land and water scarcity and the demands for more protein-rich diets by populations with increasing incomes.

Yet, since 1990, aggregate farm yield growth has stagnated and even reversed course in some areas. The USDA projects that growth in global farm yields will continue to fall, threatening the welfare of a large share of the world's population.

70% of the world's extreme poor in rural areas are farmers, mostly women, who depend on agriculture for their livelihoods, yet they do not produce enough to feed their families.

As economies develop, they become customers for US commodities, products and services, so it's in U.S. agriculture's interest to help develop more efficient food systems;

11 out of 15 of our top agricultural trading partners are former U.S. aid recipients. (Source: USAID Frontlines)

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In the last 10 years, U.S. farm exports to Africa have increase by more than  
(Source: USDA)

200%

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No country does agriculture as well as the United States and therefore no nation is better positioned to help.

The agriculture community has an important role to play in helping to develop more efficient food systems here in the U.S. and abroad.

## Hunger and Agriculture in the U.S.

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- In 2015, 1 in 4 Americans participated in 1 or more of 15 domestic food and nutrition programs (WIC, SNAP, School lunch, etc.).  
(Source: USDA)
- 



1 in 7,  
Americans received  
SNAP benefits

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- In 2014, SNAP usage was approximately the same in urban and rural areas. 82% of all eligible participants received SNAP benefits in urban areas, and 84% received them in rural areas.

- There are 48 unique careers directly related to nutrition and food security in the U.S.  
(Source: AgExplorer.com)
- Improving food systems and reducing hunger has a higher return on investment than many of the other investments our country readily makes

SNAP dollars create a multiplier effect in terms of economic growth: Every SNAP dollar sent stimulates

**\$1.79**  
GDP GROWTH

Maintaining support for domestic nutrition programs adds value to American agriculture. USDA-ERS calculates \$1 billion in SNAP benefits generates:

**\$92.6**

million of  
agricultural  
production

**\$32.3**

million of  
agricultural GDP  
or value added

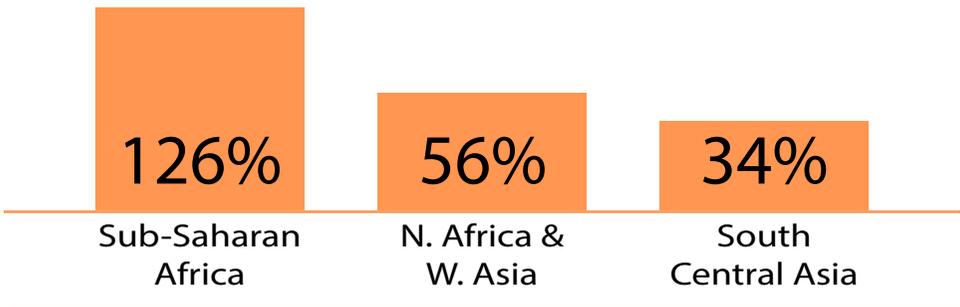
## International Hunger and Agriculture

- Reducing global hunger and poverty is an important U.S. foreign policy strategy for fostering long term economic opportunities, reducing political instability, advancing diplomacy and saving millions of lives

- More people continue to die each year from starvation and other nutritional deficiencies than from HIV/AIDS, malaria, and TB combined. Ironically, most of the extreme poor living in rural areas are smallholder farmers, and they do not produce enough to feed their families

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Most of the population growth will occur in least developed countries that are already food insecure.



- Without sustained progress, recurring price volatility and food shortages will contribute to political instability as witnessed by food riots and related events in 2008. Malnutrition likely will lead to mass migration and intensifying health issues. Diplomatic efforts to maintain peace will be far more difficult wherever food shortages contribute to extremism and conflict. The hopes of the United States and other developed nations for economic development in poor countries will continually be frustrated if populations are unable to feed themselves.
- Efforts are needed to close the yield gap between rich and poor countries through the adoption of productive agriculture systems, to ensure that all people have access to affordable safe and nutritious foods from both domestic and international sources.

Agricultural development is the most effective intervention to combating hunger and poverty. According to the World Bank, every dollar invested in agriculture is twice as effective in reducing poverty as investing in non-agricultural sectors. Every dollar spent on Ag research yields a \$20 dollar return over time according to USDA.

The economic opportunity spurred by agricultural development in emerging markets leads to growing demand for American agricultural exports and commerce in rural areas all over the world.

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## Nearly 50% of U.S. agricultural exports go to developing countries

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For example: Nigeria is the third-largest U.S. wheat market, Angola is the fourth-largest broiler meat market, and Ghana ranks as one of the top 10 rice markets.

In aggregate: U.S. international food security programs serve more than 73 million beneficiaries each year, plus the 173 million people the Millennium Challenge Corporation has served since 2003.

These programs include food aid donations of U.S. agricultural commodities, school feeding programs, emergency relief, and long term economic and agricultural development.

# Hunger is a U.S. Health Issue

The relationship between eating well and good health is solidly acknowledged. We learn from an early age that “you are what you eat” and consuming fruits and vegetables is important. With the growth of the obesity epidemic, much of the attention on food consumption in America has focused on the volume, calorie density and fat content of food consumed, with good reason. What’s often missing in our discussion of good health and food consumption is the tragic level of hunger in America.

In the richest nation, millions suffer the pangs of hunger and their health - and the health of the nation - suffers as a result.

## A moral imperative

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- Every day, healthcare providers across the nation see the effects of hunger on health
- Hungry people are 2.9 times more likely to be in poor health and have a higher likelihood of chronic conditions
- They are also 2.45 times more likely to be obese as a result of poor nutrition

- Newborns are 1.81 times more likely to be underweight often leading to lifelong development and chronic conditions

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Experiences with hunger had a negative impact on the health of children

10-15 years later

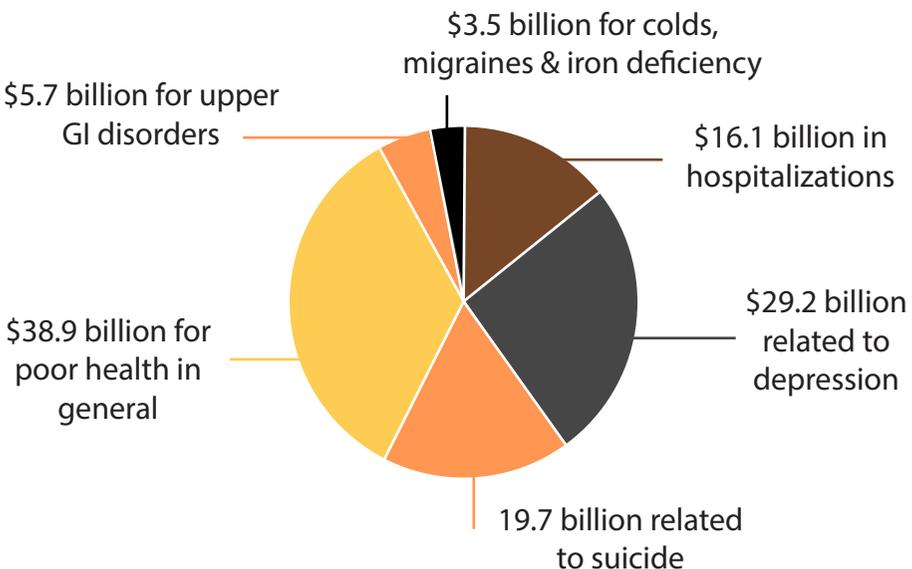
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- Children who are hungry are 4 times more likely to need professional counseling; and
- Hungry teens are 5 times more likely to commit suicide

... Meets a financial health crisis

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- Estimates put healthcare costs related to hunger, nationwide, at \$130.5 billion each year



- For every \$1 spent on food, and feeding an individual who is food insecure or experiencing hunger, approximately \$50 is saved in Medicaid expenses
- It is less expensive to feed an individual healthy food for a year, than to cover the costs of hospitalization and related medical expenses for one day.

## Hunger affects individuals at every age - from birth through end of life

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- 62% of Feeding America households with children younger than 18 reported participating in the national school lunch program, but only 14% reported having a child participate in a summer feeding program that provides free food when school is not in session during summer.
- In 2011, 8.4% of households with seniors (2.5 million) were food insecure; this number is projected to increase by 50% when the youngest of the Baby Boom generation reach age 60 in 2025.
- 30% of Feeding America households with seniors indicated they have had to choose between food and medical care and 35% have had to choose between food and paying utilities.

## Emotional and Behavioral Problems

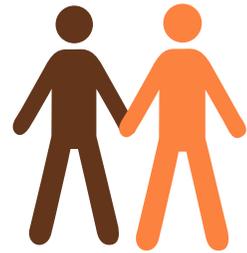
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Hunger causes emotional and behavioral problems, and limits social development. Children who are hungry, and who live in homes where finances cause a stressful environment, often have difficulty socializing with peers and exhibit troublesome behavior due to stress, fatigue, poor concentration and poor coping skills. Likewise, adults who are hungry have decreased ability to perform work and are at greater risk of losing and/or being able to maintain employment. Fatigue and malnourishment at all ages exacerbates chronic disease, mental health and overall general.

- Adults experiencing food insecurity are at greater risk of developing type II diabetes and more likely to experience mental and behavioral health problems, including higher levels of depression and anxiety.
- Among the elderly, malnutrition exacerbates diseases, increases disability, decreases resistance to infection, and extends hospital stays.
- Malnutrition results in increases costs for caregivers by increasing caregiver demands, and inflates national health care costs due to increased complication rates.
- Children who are hungry are 4 times more likely to need professional counseling; and

- Children experiencing severe hunger have higher levels of chronic illness and internalizing behavior problems.
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These linkages are important given the significant human and economic toll chronic diseases exact. Chronic diseases, such as diabetes, hypertension, depression, and heart and lung diseases affect nearly



**1 in 2**  
Americans

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and consume more than 80% of what we spend on health care every year.

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Today, these illnesses cause  
**7 out of 10 deaths.**

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# Hunger and Malnutrition are International Health Issues

Hunger and malnutrition are prevalent worldwide. Currently 805 million people, or 11.3% of the world's population, are considered "food insecure", with a population projected to grow over 2 billion by 2050. Of these, an estimated 3.1 million children under the age of five die annually due to under-nutrition. In the first 1,000 days of a child's life - from conception to the age of two - over 40 vitamins and minerals are required for healthy development. The resilience of individuals, families, and communities therefore depends on adequate food intake and nutrition.

## Malnutrition around the World

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- According to UNICEF, there are at least 51 million children in our world under the age of five suffering from acute malnutrition, a condition directly responsible for at least 1 million young child deaths each year.

- Stunting occurs in children who have access to food but for whom nutrition and hygiene are inadequate; 165 million children are stunted and will experience lifelong cognitive and physical deficits that cannot be overcome.
- Malnutrition contributes to an estimated 45% of all

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child deaths as it makes a child more susceptible to other life threatening diseases and illnesses.

Malnourished children are

9.4 X  
more likely to die  
from diarrhea

6.4 X  
more likely to die  
from pneumonia

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- Micronutrient deficiencies affect 2 billion people on our planet; these deficiencies can lead to a variety of preventable health issues.

## An Economic Problem

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- There is a direct correlation between poverty and malnutrition in developing nations.
- According to the World Bank, childhood under-nutrition can cost a country 2-3% of their annual GDP.
- Adults who were malnourished as children often earn up to 20% less income as adults.

# Solutions

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- Intervening early, during the first 1,000 days of life, with proper nutrition is vital to preventing irreversible health and economic damage.
- The 2008 Lancet Series on Maternal and Child Under-Nutrition reported that breastfeeding counseling and fortification or supplementation with vitamin A and zinc have the greatest potential to reduce the burden of child morbidity and mortality.
- Improvements in complimentary feeding through counseling and/or provision of food supplements for young children in food-insecure situations could substantially reduce stunting.
- Management of Severe Acute Malnutrition according to the World Health Organization (WHO) guidelines, with outpatient treatment of uncomplicated cases using ready-to-use therapeutic foods, has been shown effective in reducing mortality of young children.
- Maternal nutrition interventions, such as micronutrient supplementation and balanced energy and protein food supplements, can improve outcomes for maternal and child health.
- To help eliminate preventable child deaths, UNICEF, WHO, and others are calling for the support of Child Survival Programs that combine immunizations against basic childhood diseases with basic nutrition programs.
- School feeding programs encourage students, especially girls, to attend school and become educated - and help students stay focused while in school.

- Programs, like those supported by PEPFAR and the World Food Program, which improve medical treatment, help treat malnutrition, and improve access to food for families living with HIV/AIDS, TB, and malaria, are vital to improving health outcomes in communities affected by these diseases.

# Hunger is a Defense and National Security Issue

Hunger and poverty contribute to instability at the local, national and international levels and pose national security risks for the United States and the international community. Programs which build food security and reduce poverty help create vital, stable and resilient communities here and abroad.

## Hunger and Malnutrition Affects Troop Readiness

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- One-third of Americans between ages 17 and 24 are too overweight to serve in the military.
- Obesity in the military rose 61% since 2002.
- 1.5 billion a year from the Defense budget is spent on health care and recruiting replacements for those unfit to serve.
- 85% of girls and 58% of boys are not getting enough calcium.
- Nearly 50% of boys and girls are not getting enough vitamin D.

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Congress passed the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, “so that millions of students are now eating healthier school meals with more whole grains, fruits, vegetable, and lean proteins.”

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## Hunger Affects Members of the Active-Duty Military, National Guard and Reserves and Their Families

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- Despite the creation of the Family Subsistence Supplemental Allowance (FFSA) in 2001 in order to combat reliance on assistance programs such as SNAP for families on active duty,

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**only 285 families received these benefits as of 2010.**

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While the program’s benefit is up to \$1,100/month, lack of information about the program - and that it has more stigmas attached because applications have to clear commands - could be preventing more widespread participation.

- In 2014 more than \$84 million-worth of food stamp benefits were spent at military commissaries.

## Hunger Affects Veterans

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- Our nation's veterans experience homelessness, hunger, and unemployment at **alarming high rates**.
- In 2011, over half million veterans 60 and older received either home delivered or congregate meals. As more and more Vietnam, Gulf War, and post-9/11 veterans turn 60, the need for nutritious meals will increase.
- The USDA estimates that in 2012, more than 1.5 million veterans used food stamps, or about 7% of all veterans.

## Hunger Contributes to International Instability

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Support to sustainable development overseas and ending hunger and poverty is an important part of our national security strategy and expresses our nation's values and interests.

Alliance members carry out programs on several continents which collaborate with and compliment U.S. government contributions to this effort. As former Secretary of Defense, Robert Gates stated, "[T]he work performed by diplomatic and development professionals helps build the foundation for more stable, democratic and prosperous societies. These are places where the potential for conflict can

be minimized, if not completely avoided, by State and USAID programs.”

Without sustained progress, recurring price volatility and food shortages will contribute to political instability as witnessed by food riots and related events since 2008. Malnutrition likely will lead to mass migration and intensifying health issues. Diplomatic efforts to maintain peace will be far more difficult wherever food shortages contribute to extremism and conflict. The hopes of the United States and other developed nations for economic development in poor countries will continually be frustrated if populations are unable to feed themselves.

- From 2007 to 2008, the period when global food prices spiked, there were major riots in nearly 40 countries.
- Recent research suggests that an earlier drought was a key spark leading to the uprising against the Assad regime in Syria.
- Today a number of countries, even entire regions, face a triple threat of conflict, climate change and vulnerability to natural disasters which threatens the food security and income stability of millions.
- Lack of food security - whether caused by lack of jobs and income, natural disaster or conflict - contributes to political instability and the reverse is also true.
- Food insecurity and political instability together can lead to exactly the kinds of displacement and ungoverned spaces that U.S. national security strategy seeks to prevent.

# Who We Are

The Alliance to End Hunger believes that it takes the combined effort of all sectors in society to end hunger at home and abroad. In our efforts towards this goal, we have grown into a diverse coalition of 90 member organizations - corporations, non-profit groups, universities, associations, individuals, health care providers, foundations, and faith-based organizations - all working together in the fight against hunger. The Alliance to End Hunger develops innovative partnerships among our members; political commitment among our leaders; and connections among groups working to end hunger domestically and internationally.

## Our Approach

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- **Foster Strategic Partnerships:** We initiate unique partnerships among our members that expand their efforts to benefit the hungry people they serve. By establishing connections between our member organizations, we facilitate collaboration on the most effective solutions to combat hunger.

- **Building Political Commitment:** We elevate hunger on the national agenda by encouraging our political leaders to advocate on behalf of poor and hungry people. Alliance members are working together to urge some of the most influential anti-hunger leaders in Congress to use their political power to influence policy on both the national and international level.
- **Hunger Free Communities Initiative:** Through our establishment of the Hunger Free Communities Initiative, we help convene diverse community-led coalitions and support their work to better understand hunger within their communities. This initiative facilitates the start-up process, connects coalitions with members of Congress and other elected officials, initiates communication among groups, shares best practices, and supports the USDA Hunger Free Communities grant program in Congress.
- **The National Alliance Partnership Program:** The National Alliance Partnership Program (NAPP) is an effort by the U.S. Alliance to End Hunger to provide capacity building for Alliance organizations in six developing countries: Ghana, Guatemala, Malawi, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia. Following a grant by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the Alliance received additional funding from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) to continue work through 2016.

# Resources

Hyperlinks to Alliance to End Hunger Resources

[Advocacy Playbook](#)

[Child Nutrition Reauthorization Act Brief](#)

[Global Food Security Act Brief](#)

[Hunger Free Communities](#)

[National Alliance Partnership Program](#)

Hyperlinks to Government Agencies

[USDA Nutrition Programs](#)

[United States Agency for Int'l Development \(USAID\)](#)

[List of Contacts for Elected Officials](#)

# Alliance to End Hunger Membership List

## *Private Sector*

American Peanut Council  
Cargill, Inc.  
Elanco Animal Health  
Global Food Exchange  
GrainPro, Inc.  
H-E-B  
Land O'Lakes  
Monsanto  
Mountaire Corporation  
Potatoes USA

## *Individuals*

David Beckmann  
Ethan Bergman  
Lisa Davis  
John Driscoll  
Kent Ford  
Stephen and Angela Groth  
Bill Guyton  
Ambassador Tony P. Hall  
Gerald Kolschowsky  
The Honorable Alan Larson  
Patti Marshman-Goldblatt  
Rebecca Middleton  
David Miner  
Terry Meehan  
Patricia Nicklin  
Taylor Pursell  
Ravi Sachdev  
Daniel A. Silverstein  
Franklin Taylor  
Jack Taylor

# Alliance to End Hunger

## Membership List

### *Nonprofits*

ACDI/VOCA  
Breadfruit Institute  
Congressional Hunger Center  
Counterpart International  
Edesia  
Farmers Feeding the World  
Feeding America  
Feeding Children Everywhere  
Food Bus  
Foods Resource Bank  
GAVI Alliance  
Global FoodBanking Network  
Global Volunteers  
Heifer International\*  
InStove  
InterAction  
International Relief and Development  
MANA Nutrition  
Meals on Wheels America  
Move for Hunger  
National Farmers Union  
National FFA Organization  
NO MAS HAMBRE/Latino Magazine  
One Acre Fund  
Opportunity International  
The Outreach Program  
ProMedica  
Puente a la Salud Comunitaria  
RESULTS  
Share Our Strength  
Stop Hunger Now  
The Campus Kitchens Project  
The Hunger Project

# Alliance to End Hunger

## Membership List

### *Faith-Based Organizations*

Bread for the World/ Institute  
Catholic Relief Services  
Christian Connections for International Health  
Church World Service  
Communities First Association  
Convoy of Hope  
Episcopal Relief & Development  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
Food for the Hungry  
Healing Waters International  
Islamic Relief USA  
Jewish Council for Public Affairs  
Lutheran World Relief  
The Society of St. Andrew  
U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops  
World Renew  
World Vision

### *Universities*

Auburn University  
Iowa State University Seed Science Center  
Monmouth College  
Universities Fighting World Hunger

### *Foundations*

AARP Foundation  
Eleanor Crook Foundation  
Fabretto Children's Organization  
Sodexo Stop Hunger Foundation  
GlobalWorks Foundation  
World Cocoa Foundation

# Alliance to End Hunger

## Executive Board Members

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David Beckmann, Bread for the World

### *EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR EMERITUS*

Ambassador Tony P. Hall

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The Honorable Eva Clayton

Former Member of Congress (D-NC)

Jim Morris

Vice Chairman, Pacers Sports and Entertainment

Former Assistant Director, General, UN World Food Programme

Former Executive Director, UN Food and Agriculture Organization

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Chair- Marv Baldwin, Foods Resource Bank

Vice Chair: Pat Nicklin

Secretary: Dave Miner

Treasurer: Rick McNary, The Outreach Program

Membership and Nominations Committee: Chair, Sue Schram

### *Co-Chairs, Advocacy Committees*

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Nick Arena, RESULTS

### *At-Large Members*

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Mitch Davis, Elanco

Claude Fontheim, Fontheim International

June Henton, Auburn University

Patti Marshman-Goldblatt

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