



# FEED THE FUTURE

The U.S. Government's Global Hunger & Food Security Initiative



A FOOD-SECURE  
**2030**

A GLOBAL  
VISION & CALL  
TO ACTION



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## UNPRECEDENTED PROGRESS AND MOMENTUM

For the first time in human history, the end of hunger, undernutrition and extreme poverty is within our grasp. Since 2000, the world has seen dramatic declines in each of these critical areas. Agricultural production in staple cereals, vegetables and animal-source foods has increased significantly, and food prices have returned to the more stable levels seen before the devastating food price spikes of 2007 and 2008.<sup>1</sup>

Significant progress toward achieving food security, reducing poverty and developing the agriculture sector over the last decade was made by developing and middle-income countries in the context of the Millennium Development Goals. President Obama led other world leaders to bolster this progress with their commitments at the 2009 G8 Summit in L'Aquila, Italy, where the global community committed to intensify its efforts to increase food security. L'Aquila marked a turning point in the fight against global hunger and poverty, injecting the political will and resources necessary to move decisively forward toward

a shared agenda for global food security. Since then, the U.S. Government's global hunger and food security initiative, Feed the Future, has been working with its partners around the world to help countries overcome agriculture and nutrition challenges with entrepreneurship, partnership and innovation. In 2015 alone, Feed the Future worked with over nine million farmers and producers (many of them women) to boost their incomes by more than \$800 million and reached nearly 18 million children under five with nutrition interventions. In several areas where Feed the Future works, childhood stunting<sup>2</sup> has dropped between 12 and 32 percent and poverty has decreased between 12 and 26 percent over recent years.

The U.S. Government's continued, bipartisan commitment to ending poverty and hunger around the world was codified in July 2016 with the enactment of the Global Food Security Act (GFSA), the largest development-related authorizing legislation passed by the U.S. Congress in a decade. Building on the momentum generated within the global community by the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the success of the World Humanitarian Summit, and the passage of the GFSA in the United States, it is time to champion a vision of a food-secure 2030.

## VISION FOR A FOOD-SECURE 2030

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Our vision for 2030 is a world free from hunger, malnutrition and poverty, where thriving local economies generate increased income for all people; where people consume balanced and nutritious diets and children grow up healthy and reach their full potential; and where resilience helps to reduce vulnerability. Achieving this vision will help accelerate inclusive sustainable economic growth and enhance global security.

## UNFINISHED BUSINESS

In today's world, no parent should have to choose which child to feed. Despite our collective progress on food security, there is still much to do. Nearly 800 million people around the world are chronically undernourished, two billion are micronutrient deficient, and 159 million children under five are stunted, robbing them of opportunities to reach their full potential and limiting economic growth in their countries. At the same time, the implications of emerging trends such as urbanization, migration, dietary changes and climate change require new approaches and a new commitment of resources and effort.

Food security is not just a humanitarian issue; it is also a matter of security. Growing concentrations of poverty and hunger—exacerbated by the effects of climate change, natural resource degradation and demographic trends—threaten global security, leaving countries and communities vulnerable to increased instability, conflict and the potential for violence.<sup>3</sup> Across the world, we have seen hungry crowds turn into angry crowds and economic desperation lead to instability.

Aggravating these risks, projections indicate that by 2030 more than two-thirds of the world's poor could be living in fragile countries, where state-society relations are already strained.<sup>4</sup> To achieve a more secure and peaceful world, we must address hunger and poverty, as well as their underlying drivers.

Food security and malnutrition are complex, systemic challenges, and we have learned that no single intervention, policy change or investment is sufficient to alleviate them. To end hunger and poverty, we must commit to a holistic and gender-equitable approach rooted in our learning and evidence to date. We must bring together the efforts of governments, international donors, civil society and the private sector, with the same sense of urgency and hope that spurred us to collective action at L'Aquila in 2009.

This vision is rooted in the global goals to reduce poverty, hunger and malnutrition and informed by the U.S. Government's experience and lessons learned to date. The causes and effects of food insecurity touch every Sustainable Development Goal. Reaching these 17 goals will require a holistic effort, which must include significant investments in food security that are designed to ensure progress in three main areas:



**Higher Incomes:** Increased incomes lift people out of extreme poverty and hunger, giving them the ability to move beyond subsistence and engage in their local economies. With higher incomes, people can build up savings and assets that help them manage complex risks, diversify their diets, secure essential health care and education, and invest in small businesses and commercial activities. Beyond the individual benefits, higher incomes also expand a country's revenue base, driving job creation and economic growth. To help raise incomes and expand inclusive employment and entrepreneurship opportunities, we must improve markets, trade, governance and skills development, with specific attention to youth and women's economic empowerment. With a majority of the developing world's poor reliant on agriculture, we must continue to invest in agriculture and food systems, knowing that higher agriculture incomes can support other goals.



**Improved Nutrition:** Food security means well-nourished populations. Malnourishment, unsafe food and food-borne diseases lead to increased health costs, lower economic productivity and higher rates of mortality. Undernutrition, particularly during the 1,000

days from pregnancy to a child's second birthday, leads to lower levels of educational attainment, productivity, lifetime earnings and broader economic growth rates.<sup>5</sup> Fostering well-nourished communities means continuing our multi-sectoral efforts to increase access to safe, nutritious foods and expanding the prevalence of nutrition-specific and -sensitive interventions,<sup>6</sup> with a particular focus on educating and empowering women alongside men.



**Increased Resilience:** Households and communities will increasingly experience frequent and intense shocks and stresses, which threaten a food-secure 2030.<sup>7</sup> These threats include drought and floods, price volatility, health crises, population pressure, clean water shortages and environmental degradation. Without the ability to mitigate, adapt to and recover from these shocks, households that have escaped poverty risk backsliding. Political instability, inequality and conflict can heighten, and even be driven by, food insecurity. To thrive in this environment, a food-secure 2030 necessitates more resilient individuals, families and communities.

Improving resilience not only requires reducing risk, but also strengthening formal and informal support systems; improving the uptake of risk management activities; expanding the use of risk management products such as mobile money and insurance; increasing access to markets; reducing conflict; diversifying livelihood opportunities in and beyond the agriculture sector; and empowering women and other marginalized groups. In addition, governments and development partners need to continue to strengthen institutions and respond to shocks that overwhelm resilience capabilities at the household and community levels with better alignment and coordination between development and humanitarian interventions.

*"ACHIEVING FOOD SECURITY, IMPROVING NUTRITION AND BUILDING INCLUSIVE, RESILIENT AND SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS ARE CENTRAL TO THE SUCCESS OF THE 2030 AGENDA."*

– UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, October 2015

## CHARTING THE PATH TO SHARED PROSPERITY

Effective and efficient food systems, in which agriculture plays the most critical role, will continue to drive poverty reduction, food security and economic growth. Agricultural development helps increase and sustain incomes for smallholder farmers and other producers, boost households' own production of nutritious foods, and empower women working throughout the agricultural value chain. Investments in rural agriculture are approximately three times more impactful than investments in other sectors—including investments in industry and urban infrastructure—at reducing extreme poverty in low-income countries.<sup>8</sup>

A majority of the world's poor live in rural areas, and a majority of the poor depend on the broader food system for their livelihoods.<sup>9</sup> A resilient, competitive, inclusive, nutritious and sustainable food system will lower food prices and help improve people's access to adequate nourishment year-round, which is essential for the vast number of people who spend the majority of their incomes on food. Well-functioning, connected food systems and markets also spur job creation in the service delivery, transportation, food processing, storage, retail and trade sectors. Many of these off-farm jobs are found primarily in rapidly growing secondary and tertiary

### Creating Jobs and Spurring Growth

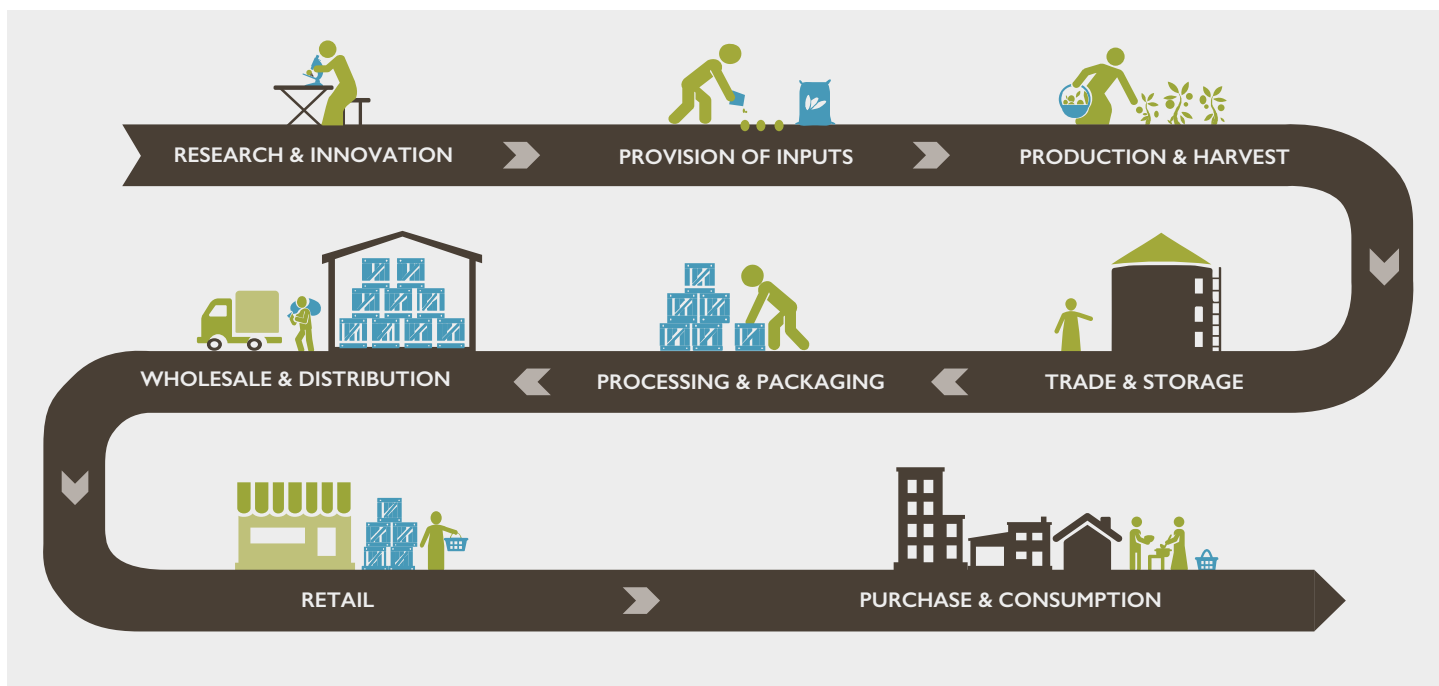






Photo credit: Greg Kahn for Feed the Future

cities, which are becoming critical focus areas for food security efforts. Increasingly, seed producers, transporters, processors, distributors, traders and retailers are just as important to strengthening food security as the smallholder producer herself.

A strong and resilient food system can have a transformational effect on people's lives and societies as a whole, not least by creating jobs and spurring growth in rural and urban economies. To achieve this, we will need to: adopt new technologies, including digital services and climate-smart, sustainable agricultural practices; strengthen market systems and connections at every step in the food system (e.g. aggregation, processing, storage, cold chain and marketing); increase access to finance;<sup>10</sup> promote national, regional and international trade; strengthen land and resource governance systems; and invest in a skilled workforce that can fully participate in a thriving economy. High-performing research, education and extension systems that develop human and institutional capacity, combined with improved infrastructure, are critical to fuel these improvements. As we focus on each of these areas, we must give particular attention to empowering women, who comprise 43 percent of the agricultural workforce in developing countries, but who continue to lack equal access to the inputs, capital, education and land ownership necessary for success.<sup>11</sup>

While we know that strengthening food systems is essential to achieving food security, it is not sufficient. The food security community must work more closely with colleagues across a wide range of sectors to create economic opportunity, both on and off the farm, as people continue moving to cities and youth unemployment levels rise. Expanding economic options for the poor provide buffers to the negative effects of shocks and stresses. Social safety nets also play a crucial role by protecting

lives, preventing malnutrition and protecting livelihoods by helping people avoid having to sell off critical assets, such as livestock, when shocks and stresses strike. Empowering women and strengthening social capital also help create resilient communities in which men and women can lean on each other during times of stress. Effective governance and policy systems, developed in partnership with civil society and the private sector, underpin all of these efforts to help ensure inclusive growth that also reaches the poor.

Supporting all of these efforts are two pillars: continued strong leadership by developing countries and more catalytic development assistance. Both will help mobilize significantly more capital from the public and private sectors which, when spent more effectively, can help close the estimated US\$260 billion annual shortfall in resources needed to achieve the SDG on hunger and food security.<sup>12</sup>

## Strong Country Leadership

The vision for a food-secure 2030 cannot be achieved without steadfast country leadership, political will and commitment to results, evidence-based action and accountability. Indeed, progress thus far has been underpinned by this leadership. When developing countries own, lead and guide these cross-sectoral, whole-of-government efforts, it ensures sustained success. Strong country leadership includes:

> **Developing Transparent Policy Agendas:** Good policy environments encourage good governance and private sector investment and activity. Multi-sectoral, evidence-based, targeted policy and regulation agendas can address food insecurity in a holistic way. Policy reforms should focus on facilitating business and resilience, among other key

aspects of a strong food system. Open trade policies can help ensure that smallholder farmers and local business owners can access national, regional and international markets where they can benefit from new technologies and inputs or sell their products. Nutrition policies can help expand food safety standards, micronutrient fortification and labeling. Policies that fully integrate women into all stages of the food system tap into the knowledge, time and resources of roughly one-half of the population. Finally, transparent policies that support secure land rights, efficient and transparent land markets, effective land management, and equitable access to land have a profound effect on the development and growth of inclusive, sustainable agriculture and food systems. Secure land rights and well-functioning land markets affect producers' ability to make resource allocation decisions, invest in equipment and land improvements, participate in input and buyer markets, and access credit and seek external investors.

> **Mobilizing Resources Strategically and Efficiently:** While countries' own domestic spending in agriculture outstrips official development assistance by a rate of nearly 15 to 1 globally,<sup>13</sup> many governments have yet to increase and improve funding for food security or ensure that investments are transparent, sustainable and do not distort markets. Many government investments in public goods and services have the potential to create better operating environments for the private sector, such as: infrastructure development; research and development;

data systems; education and extension services for smallholder farmers; nutrition services; and social protection to help build the resilience of highly vulnerable groups. Every dollar spent on these investments is returned multiple times over by the growth it yields. Countries should, therefore, develop and publish multi-year, whole-of-government investment and spending plans for food security and nutrition that transparently detail investments and their time frame. These plans should address areas of potential growth as well as known risks in a country's food system, ensuring that commitments to resilience and inclusivity are reflected in investment and spending.

To make this increased, strategic investment more sustainable, developing country governments should also look toward broadening their domestic revenue base, improving revenue administration and compliance, and continuing to increase transparency and accountability to keep development agendas on track and encourage private investment. Improving public financial management and policy systems can also help governments tap into capital markets to finance projects.

> **Building More Capable, Responsive and Accountable Institutions:** To deliver on improved policy systems and spending plans, governments need to develop institutional capabilities, functional regulatory systems, and accountability mechanisms at international, national and sub-national levels.

## A GLOBAL CALL TO ACTION

We call upon all public and private sector stakeholders to invest in achieving a food-secure 2030. This will require:

- **Developing country governments** to put into place transparent, gender-sensitive policy systems designed to increase market efficiency and advance food security and nutrition priorities, multi-year spending plans targeting cost-effective investments, and accountability systems;
- **Development institutions, donors and technical agencies** to support country leadership and capacity building, while deploying their resources in ways that catalyze both public and private investment and advance development-humanitarian assistance coherence;
- **Civil society organizations**—from producer groups to private voluntary organizations and universities—to build capacity with proven and new approaches and hold the private and public sectors accountable; and
- **Private sector partners** to responsibly invest capital (particularly in small and medium-sized enterprises, smallholder farms and women-owned businesses), grow their businesses, spur innovation to accelerate inclusive, sustainable growth, and scale market-based solutions that reduce and mitigate risk for vulnerable populations.



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To increase legitimacy and market confidence, governments must proactively engage citizens, the private sector, civil society and international trade partners.

This means developing effective and transparent organizational structures, operating procedures, technical and management capacity, and intra-governmental coordination to support effective implementation and evaluation of food security, agriculture, ecosystem management, and nutrition policies and spending. Building and maintaining these systems will require investing in quality data and monitoring systems and making results publicly available and easily accessible.

*"FOR DONOR NATIONS LIKE THE UNITED STATES AND FOR ALL OF US WHO BELIEVE PASSIONATELY IN DEVELOPMENT, WE'VE GOT TO MAKE EVERY PENNY COUNT."*

— U.S. President Barack Obama, July 2016

## Catalytic Development Assistance

Development institutions and technical agencies also have important roles to play in bringing new and increased capital into food systems and broader nutrition efforts. By making more targeted investments, donors can have a more catalytic impact across sectors and better address the root causes of protracted and recurrent food crises. Key activities include:

### > **Strengthening Local Public and Private Sector Institutions:**

Donors and development banks have often successfully invested in technical assistance and capacity building services to support country leadership. Catalytic investments include supporting the public sector to enhance the policies as well as regulatory and legal frameworks needed to cultivate vibrant food systems; increasing coordination across government agencies; building the administrative and technical capacity of civil servants; supporting university and research systems; and improving the capacity of and engagement with the private sector and civil society. Many businesses in developing country food systems, especially those owned or managed by women, are small and cannot access the affordable finance needed to scale their efforts. Technical assistance can help them prove their business models, upgrade managerial talent and improve organizational capacity so they can better receive, manage and return capital. Local civil society organizations also need support to be

empowered and protected given the important roles they play in holding public and private institutions accountable, building capacity and providing services.

### > **Incentivizing Investment Opportunities for the Private**

**Sector:** While domestic and international private entities are eager to invest in developing country food systems, they often view agriculture and related investments as risky due to weak policy environments and uncertainties posed by climate change. Development actors can help mitigate both real and perceived risk in various ways: participating in “blended finance” instruments that provide financing with favorable terms; issuing products that mitigate investment risk such as credit guarantees; and helping to identify and develop investment opportunities (e.g., conducting feasibility studies, funding capacity building to increase a company’s investment readiness, or bundling and/or linking capital supply and demand). In some circumstances, credit guarantees—essentially an insurance policy provided to an investor by a third party (e.g., governments, private financial institutions, donors, etc.)—can reduce risks by guaranteeing some form of repayment in the event that the investee fails to repay an investor.

### > **Strengthening Coherence between Humanitarian and**

**Development Assistance:** Our vision of a food-secure 2030 embraces the critical roles of emergency humanitarian response in addressing global food insecurity by: providing a crucial first response and hastening recovery in the context of natural disasters; mitigating the impacts of conflict and insecurity on displaced and refugee populations; smoothing consumption in households unable to meet their own food needs; and providing basic services when a government is unable or unwilling to act. A key theme of the World Humanitarian Summit was the need to improve coherence between humanitarian and development efforts to better address protracted and recurrent crises. This means drawing on the complementary expertise of life-saving humanitarian assistance and sustainable development strategies to tackle the root causes of these crises while addressing immediate needs. The United States joined with other governments, United Nations entities and civil society to commit to work together in a different way by better harmonizing and coordinating our development and humanitarian assistance. In countries and regions facing recurrent crises and weak governance, development actors can learn from our humanitarian partners, whose community-based approaches to improving food security and nutrition support and strengthen local capacities, promote transparency and social accountability, and provide an evidence base for civil society advocacy and policy dialogue.



Business as usual is not going to lead to the changes necessary for a food-secure 2030. Simply doing more and spending more are not enough to solve the challenges of hunger, extreme poverty and malnutrition. We must adapt and target our approaches to respond to new trends and prepare for the future while learning from our past successes and failures. Feed the Future has helped to generate that evidence-base. With strong country leadership and catalytic development assistance committed to empowering and unlocking the potential of the poor, we can meet our goals.

Ultimately, an agenda that brings more public and private capital to strategic investments, enabled by effective policy systems and strong institutions, will go a long way toward increasing

incomes, improving nutrition and building resilience. We must also expand our engagement in more fragile contexts, where a large and growing majority of the world's poor live. Rigorous monitoring, evaluation and learning will help ensure that our collective efforts lead to the most impact.

Effectively mobilizing resources and partnerships will enable small-scale producers to flourish, youth to find jobs, businesses to thrive, people to attain healthy and nutritious diets, women and disadvantaged groups to effectively contribute to and benefit from development, and natural resources and the environment to sustainably serve the needs of current and future generations. With all of us committed to doing our part, we can arrive at a food-secure 2030.



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ACHIEVING **A FOOD-SECURE 2030**  
& THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS  
MEANS THAT **TOGETHER...**

**Developing  
country  
governments**



**Donors and  
development  
institutions**



**Civil society  
and  
communities**



**Private  
sector**



MUST **ENGAGE & INVEST** TO



Raise  
Incomes



Improve  
Nutrition



Increase  
Resilience

SUPPORTED BY



**Strong Country  
Leadership**

**Catalytic  
Development  
Assistance**



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- <sup>5</sup> The Lancet's Series on Maternal and Child Undernutrition, Executive Summary (2013). <http://thousanddays.org/t-days-content/uploads/Lancet-Article-ExeSum.pdf>.
- <sup>6</sup> Nutrition-specific interventions refer to those designed to address the immediate causes of malnutrition. These include expanding vitamin A and zinc supplementation through fortified foods, pre-conception folic acid supplementation, the promotion of breastfeeding, management of severe acute malnutrition, and other evidence-based, proven interventions. Nutrition-sensitive interventions refer to those that address the more systemic, underlying causes of malnutrition. For example, we know that focusing on inclusive agricultural growth, water, sanitation and hygiene, family planning, strengthening economic livelihoods, and girls' and women's education all improve nutrition levels.
- <sup>7</sup> USAID (2012) defines resilience as the ability of people, households, communities, countries and systems to mitigate, adapt to and recover from shocks and stresses in a manner that reduces chronic vulnerability and facilitates inclusive growth.
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- <sup>10</sup> Finance refers to the way in which large amounts of money are used and handled by governments, businesses and individuals. This includes public, private and government financial systems.
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