

March 30, 2023

The Honorable Christopher Coons
Chairman
State, Foreign Operations, and Related
Agencies Subcommittee
Senate Appropriations Committee
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Lindsey Graham
Ranking Member
State, Foreign Operations, and Related
Agencies Subcommittee
Senate Appropriations Committee
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Coons and Ranking Member Graham:

As you determine priorities for the Fiscal Year 2024 State, Foreign Operations and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, we respectfully urge you to provide robust funding for global nutrition and food security programming. This includes **\$300 million** for **Nutrition** within the Global Health Programs Account, **\$1.2 billion** for the **Global Food Security Strategy**, **\$5.3 billion** for **International Disaster Assistance**, **\$82 million** for the **International Fund for Agricultural Development**, and **\$40 million** for the **Global Agriculture and Food Security Program**. Any increases in these programs should not come at the expense of other poverty reduction accounts.

This Committee has a long-standing commitment of supporting these programs which are critical to fighting global hunger and malnutrition and putting people on the road to food and nutrition security. We are facing an unprecedented global food crisis compounded by conflict, climate-related extreme weather events, and the lingering effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Famine Early Warning System (FEWS NET) estimates that 126 million people in the most vulnerable countries in the world are acutely food insecure, representing a 70 percent increase from pre-pandemic levels in 2019.

The Global Food Security Strategy, recently reauthorized in the 2022 Global Food Security Act, continues the successful Feed the Future (FTF) program. By bringing partners together to invest in agriculture, resilience, and nutrition, the U.S. has enabled millions of families around the world to achieve the basic necessity and dignity of food to eat. USAID reports that in areas where FTF is implemented, an estimated 23.4 million more people are living above the poverty line, 3.4 million fewer children are stunted, and an estimated 5.2 million fewer families are hungry.

The International Disaster Assistance (IDA) account provides critical humanitarian assistance to civilian populations in response to natural hazards, conflict and insecurity, and other sudden onset emergencies in their home countries. The IDA has been critical in responding to recent disasters, such as the earthquake in Turkey and Syria. With the ongoing war in Ukraine, extended severe drought in the Horn of Africa, and other unforeseen crises it is important to provide USAID with a robust IDA account.

The Nutrition account supports nutrition programs for women and children, focusing on the first 1,000 days between pregnancy and a child's second birthday. It is crucial to reach children and their caregivers early in life with interventions like breastfeeding support and vitamin A supplementation to prevent malnutrition. When children are malnourished, early detection and access to therapeutic foods can save lives. Since 1990, the number of preventable child and maternal deaths occurring annually has fallen by half, due in part to U.S. leadership and investments. However, progress has slowed over the last 12 years. In 2021, 5 million children died from preventable and treatable diseases such as pneumonia, diarrhea, and malaria. If these sick children had been well nourished, half of them would have survived. Robust funding of the nutrition account is critical for saving lives and reaching USAID's goal of ending preventable child and maternal deaths.

Two more important programs to combatting global hunger and malnutrition are the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the Global Agricultural and Food Security Program (GAFSP). IFAD is dedicated to eradicating poverty and hunger in rural areas of developing countries, providing global investments in agriculture-dependent communities. IFAD invests in rural people, empowering them to increase their food security, improve the nutrition of their families, and increase their incomes. IFAD helps communities build resilience, expand businesses, and take charge of their own development. GAFSP, a multilateral trust fund launched by the G20 in response to the 2007-2008 food price crisis, provides critical investments in agriculture and food security to improve the livelihoods of small-scale farmers. In FY2020, GAFSP reached 16 million smallholder farmers, their families, and their broader communities.

The U.S. role in fighting world hunger and malnutrition remains an important reminder of this country's global leadership. Investments in these programs not only help alleviate global hunger and malnutrition worldwide, but they also support our national security. Where hunger and malnutrition persist, instability grows.

Thank you for your serious consideration of this request.

Signed:

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Alliance to End Hunger
Bread for the World
Cantera Partners
Cargill
Congressional Hunger Center
Edesia
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
Global Child Nutrition Foundation (GCNF)
GrainPro Incorporated
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Islamic Relief USA
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Rise Against Hunger
World Food Program USA