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INSTITUTE

DEVELOPMENT WORKS

MYTHS AND REALITIES



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Laura Elizabeth Pohl/Bread for the World

Bread for the World Institute provides policy analysis on hunger and strategies to end it. The Institute educates opinion leaders, policy makers, and the public about hunger in the United States and abroad.

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Development Works: Myths and Realities



Jim Stipe

Bread for the World Institute is pleased to introduce *Development Works*. Here, we tell the stories of real people around the world who are building better lives with the help of effective U.S. development assistance.

Development Works uses examples, photos, and graphics to illustrate what development assistance actually is and does. The seven short essays included here focus on some of the key questions—from why development assistance is so important and what impact it has, to whether America can afford it and where we should concentrate our efforts.

The United States has a long tradition of helping people around the world who are working to escape hunger and poverty. Americans know that hunger is not a partisan issue. This is why Bread for the World has a strong track record of working in partnership with people all along the political spectrum—both at the grassroots and in Washington, DC—to improve our country's policies so we make more progress against hunger in the United States and around the world.

Development Works invites you to join us.

Women collect water from the river adjacent to Kudeso Village in Terakeka, Sudan. Villagers drink water directly from the river, which often results in stomach ailments. Catholic Relief Services (CRS) is constructing a borehole that will provide enough fresh water for 500 families for 50 years. CRS is also training community members in hygiene promotion and water pump repair.



Sara A. Fajardo/Catholic Relief Services

Effective Development Assistance: Now Is The Time



Laura Elizabeth Pohl/Bread for the World

Jane Sabbi and her sister-in-law work in their garden in Uganda. Sabbi now cultivates beans and vegetables to help give her children the nutrients they need.

SNAPSHOT

- Development assistance enables people in poor countries to build a better life for themselves and their children.
- In developing countries, investing small amounts in training, tools, or start-up costs can yield significant improvements because people make good use of the resources available to them. Development assistance helps communities and nations strengthen their economies and create better living conditions—for example, by enabling people to buy seeds and fertilizers, establish small businesses, or meet public needs such as clean water.
- Countries develop successful strategies against hunger by using their own resources and development assistance to strengthen the essentials, such as more productive farms and access to nutritious food and basic health care, particularly for vulnerable groups such as pregnant women and young children.
- Effective development assistance saves millions of lives every year—and this is done through programs that the United States can afford. It is both the right thing and the smart thing to do.

Bread for the World and other organizations working to end global hunger frequently talk about development assistance and how it can help hungry people overseas. But what exactly is development assistance? And why should we support funding for it when many Americans are facing hard times?

Development Assistance Means....

Bees and chickens

Most of Alexander Appiah's friends had left his hometown, Nkwabeng, Ghana, to work in nearby cities. But at 28, Appiah wanted to farm. He had few resources; he and his wife were just scraping by with a quarter-acre of cassava and yams and his off-season job as a farm laborer.

A Heifer International farmers' program gave him the boost he needed. For Appiah, development assistance came in the form of five beehives, 20 laying hens, and agricultural training. He did the rest himself. Americans working with Heifer speak of the impressive work ethic of the farmers in the program. Four years after getting his start, Appiah earns nearly \$200 a month from his poultry alone—enough to build a concrete house with an iron roof and send his two daughters to a good school. He is now building a similar house for his parents, and his plans for the future include enabling his children to attend college and opening his own agricultural general store.

Moreover, Appiah has become a teacher and role model. As the elected Vice Secretary of his farmers' group, he's in charge of mobilization—spreading the word about the activities and services the group offers. He has shared what he learned in the Heifer training program with other farmers in the area. Appiah is a local man who started with very little himself—as a Heifer staff member pointed out, this gives him an advantage as a teacher. He is effective because he understands what people need to know and uses familiar language to communicate the information to them.

Training for health care volunteers—and songs



Scott Bleggi

Women with recent training in family nutrition and child health issues often make excellent educators, finding accurate, compelling ways to share their knowledge and experiences.

Another example of development assistance that includes education and training benefits two neighboring communities in Ghana. Like the Heifer International program that took a chance on Alexander Appiah and farmers like him, a U.S.-based organization, World Vision, is helping to ensure that the assistance offered is useful to the people in the region—in this case, participants in a mother and child health and nutrition program in western Ghana.

As in Nkwableng, resources are tight in Ghana's Salt-pong-Biriwa district. Many children are malnourished, and many adults have little formal education. Nonetheless, things are happening. At the health center shared by the communities, for example, about 60 mothers of babies and toddlers, plus some fathers and grandparents, attend a popular mother-to-mother support group.

For these communities, development assistance comes in the form of songs specially designed to convey important nutrition messages, training for community health volunteers, and support in analyzing local health information.

World Vision worked with Ghana's Ministry of Health to develop an education program to help mothers improve their diets, seek prenatal care, and raise healthier children. It works because it uses songs, a familiar and culturally-accepted teaching method, and because the women who participate quickly become enthusiastic and accurate communicators. Once people have sung a song a few times, they can easily pass its content along to others.

The women who attend the support group are involved parents who want to do what's right for their children but don't always have the information and

89 percent:
the share of the world population who now have access to safe drinking water.

3 billion: the number of people living on **less than \$2.50** a day.

resources they need to do so. The meetings offer opportunities to exchange experiences with others and learn more about health and nutrition. One of the most important songs—aimed at both new mothers and new fathers—is referred to simply as “the breastfeeding song.” The specially-developed “communication messages”—aka the verses of the song—are: breastfeed exclusively (no other food or drink) for six months; begin breastfeeding within 30 minutes of giving birth; breastfeed because it provides all the nutrition a baby needs; and give babies the best start in life by breastfeeding.

World Vision has trained respected older women, many of whom have served as midwives, as community health volunteers. Along with fathers and others who have also volunteered, they encourage good prenatal care and educate families in their communities on important postnatal topics such as exclusive breastfeeding and proper nutrition for new mothers. Cell phones have arrived in rural Ghana, so volunteers can report health data to a district coordinator and get answers to questions that come up in their work far more easily than in the past. Health supplies are delivered more quickly, and a doctor or midwife can be contacted immediately in an emergency.

Support for a country's own plans to reduce poverty

The leaders of Heifer International and Bread for the World, Jo Luck and David Beckmann, were named the 2010 World Food Prize laureates. The World Food Prize is the Nobel Prize of food and agriculture—given to individuals who improve the quality, quantity, or availability of food in the world.

Their successors in 2011 were former Presidents John Agyekum Kufuor of Ghana and Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva of Brazil. Under their leadership, both countries made striking progress against hunger and poverty. Ghana cut its poverty rate in half—the first sub-Saharan African country to do so. In 1991, 51.7 percent of Ghana's people lived in poverty. By 2008, just 25.5 percent did.

President Kufuor explained that two of the key factors that enabled Ghana to make such progress were development assistance and making agriculture a top priority.

Ghana's development assistance came partly through a grant from the U.S.

Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC), an agency started in 2004 as an initiative of the Bush administration. The MCC di-



World Bank/Curt Cernemark

Ghana's farmers are the key to ending hunger and extreme poverty in the West African nation.



40 billion:

the number of hours that women and girls in Africa spend fetching water each year.

5 percent:

the share of the world's income shared by the poorest 40 percent of the population.



Louis Stippel/USAID

Farmers in Janjori-Kukuo near Tamale, Ghana, store corn in mud silos. With agricultural support from USAID, these farmers have improved their crop production.

rects American assistance to poor countries that have democratic governments committed to reducing poverty. One of the most important things about the MCC is that countries develop their own plans to reduce poverty with feedback from different groups in society—members of Parliament, churches, nonprofits, business leaders, rural groups, and the like. The idea is that hearing from as many of those affected by the project as possible will make the plan stronger and more likely to succeed.

Ghana, like many countries that received MCC grants, chose to focus its development assistance on agriculture. Ironically, the majority of the country's hungry people were farmers. As Kufuor put it, "The best way to break the back of poverty is through agriculture."

Ghana significantly increased its investments in agriculture. Kufuor emphasized that a comprehensive approach was needed. It's not enough to make better farming tools available to families—they need a way to get their crops to market. They also need to be able to borrow money to grow next season's crops—for supplies such as seeds, for example—and pay it back once the crops are harvested.

Ghana's plan was a good one: not only has the country cut hunger and poverty in half, but its economic output ("Gross Domestic Product" or GDP) has quadrupled since 2000.

The United States has given Ghana development assistance before. For example, a program that provided schoolchildren with a nutritious lunch every day made a very direct contribution to today's successes. Ken Hackett, immediate past president of Catholic Relief Services, which helped carry out the school lunch program, explained, "Many of the schoolchildren [who partici-

pated] are now in the government of Ghana. Catholic Relief Services worked ourselves out of a job.”

“Graduating” from development assistance is actually its goal. If you look at the list of countries that used to receive emergency relief or U.S. assistance to provide school lunches, for example, you see Japan, South Korea, Brazil, Germany, Italy—not countries we now consider poor. Some “alumni” now fund school lunches in other countries themselves, and all purchase goods from the United States.

Why Support Development Assistance?

There are two main reasons.

First, it's the right thing to do. With the U.S. economy still struggling, many Americans have their hands full meeting their own family's needs and perhaps contributing to food pantries or charities that help their communities. But Americans have always cared about people who are hungry overseas, too. Even in tough economic times, the American government provides half the world's food aid, and Americans as individuals respond generously to appeals to help people such as survivors of the devastating earthquake in Haiti or, earlier, the Indian Ocean tsunami.

Sometimes, though, we see skeletal Somali babies and other suffering people in the news and realize that disaster assistance, crucial as it is, may be too little, too late. It's also important to help people prepare in advance. Development assistance may be used to build hospitals and roads or to train doctors and nurses—all important in normal times, but even more essential in case of disaster. Natural disasters happen in developed countries too, most recently in Japan, but resources and planning help make people more resilient. That's why there was widespread starvation in Somalia but not in Japan.

Several problems collided to cause the famine in Somalia—armed conflict played a huge role. But one key step in overcoming chronic hunger and preventing famine deaths is enabling people to develop a “plan B” or even a “plan C” for feeding their families when something goes wrong with “plan A.” This can work even in very poor countries. Ethiopia, noted for its devastating famines of the past, is currently suffering from the same drought as neighboring Somalia. However, peace and a measure of economic development mean that unlike Somalia, Ethiopia hasn't lost 100,000 of its people, mostly young children, to malnutrition.

Second, it's the smart thing to do. Already, half of U.S. exports go to emerging markets. People in developing countries become customers of the United States once they are able to develop their local economies and generate surplus income. It makes sense to invest in the future by ensuring that potential customers have sufficient nutritious food. After all, a malnourished population is ill-equipped to build a prosperous economy.

Many African countries, in particular, have enjoyed strong economic growth for several years now. For 2012, experts again predict high economic growth rates—5.75 percent for sub-Saharan Africa as a whole, far higher than anticipated for the United States and Europe. Eight of the world's 10 fastest-growing economies are in Africa.

Myths & Realities

Myth: Development assistance is a big part of the U.S. budget and is fueling our record budget deficit.

Reality: Development assistance is less than 1 percent of the U.S. budget, so cutting it would not help fix the deficit. It does, however, save millions of human lives every year.



Myth: Not much progress can be made against a problem as big as hunger.

Reality: In less than two generations, global hunger has been cut in half. Instead of one person out of every three suffering from hunger and malnutrition, it's now one person out of every six—still far too many, but a big improvement.

The global situation is now one where there's a heightened sense of momentum, more commitment and leadership, and better knowledge of “what works.” The United States is leading the way with new initiatives such as Feed the Future, which focuses on agriculture and nutrition.



Myth: It's a waste of time and money to give development assistance, because it never gets to the people who need it.

Reality: In recent years, there has been much more emphasis on transparency and adherence to strict accounting standards. It has become increasingly difficult for anyone to make aid money “disappear,” lost to corruption. There are many examples of children, families, and communities who have benefited from development programs. And, of course, there are the longer-term results just mentioned: the rate of global hunger has been cut in half.



World Bank/Arne Hoel

African governments, businesses, and nonprofits use technology routinely.

If you visit a developing country, it's hard to miss another potential asset: children are everywhere. Half of Africa's population is younger than 20, while half of India's population is under 26. (In comparison, half the people in the United States are younger than 37.) Today, young adults in developing countries are an energetic generation, better-educated than ever before. For many, technology is an integral part of life.

There are more cell phone users in Africa than in Europe. In Ghana, said social media entrepreneur and tech blogger Mac-Jordan Degadjor, 85 percent of the population subscribes to a digital service. Africa's Internet users, about 110 million now, are expected to grow exponentially in the next decade.

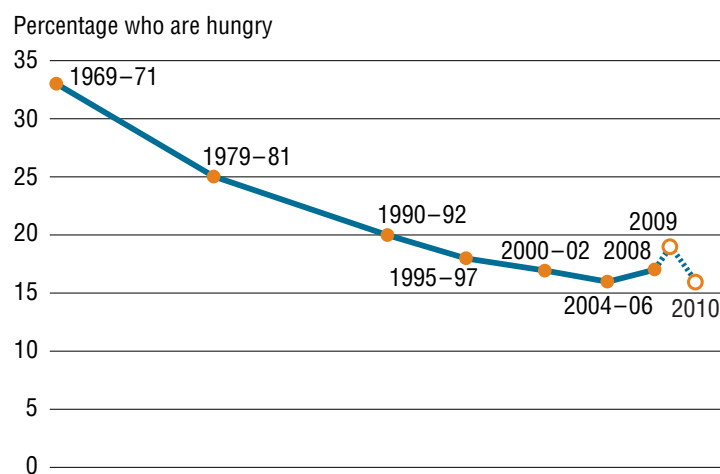
Here's how Degadjor, who is 26, sees the future: "The greatest opportunity for growth will come from technological innovation and the adoption of new technologies in service sectors, such as banking, insurance, health, education, and agriculture. These growths in technology are very important to me and my networks because they help shape the socioeconomic aspect of our lives and bridge the gap between people in Ghana and those in other parts of the world."

American businesses move quickly to invest in good prospects. To create an environment that attracts private sector investment, developing countries need assistance from the U.S. government and other donors to strengthen education, health, agriculture, and infrastructure. Businesses rely on government to provide them with an educated, healthy, well-nourished workforce and services such as reliable electricity and roads.

Ensuring that developing countries get the "hand up" they need to improve the lives of their people is not only the right thing to do—it's a smart investment, one that's now paying off in countries such as Ghana.

Further Thoughts

Percent of people in developing countries who are hungry, 1969-71 to 2010

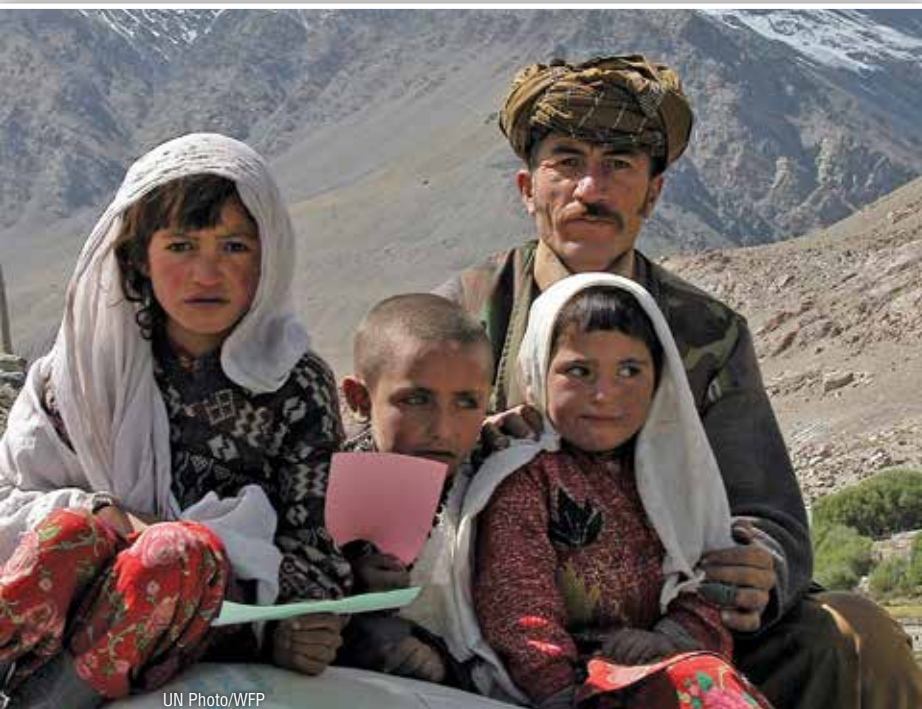


Source: FAO.



Catholic Relief Services/Laura Sheahen

Americans Reaching Out



Wheat from the World Food Program will help this family from Badakhstan in northeastern Afghanistan get through the winter.

SNAPSHOT

- Americans agree that helping hungry people is a high priority for our country. Both today and in the past, policies and resources that fight hunger earn the support of people across traditional lines—political, religious, economic, generational, and a range of others.
- The United States can use its history of successful development programs and emergency relief efforts to help make lasting progress against hunger and malnutrition.
- Building on past experiences is more important than ever as new factors, such as climate change and unpredictable shifts in food prices, further complicate the efforts of poor people to feed their families and improve opportunities for their children.
- U.S. international development efforts are now guided by both a new understanding of the importance of nutrition, particularly in early childhood, and a renewed appreciation of agricultural development as a vital ingredient in the “treatment” of global hunger.

Concern for those who are less fortunate is a value that resonates with Americans. Many of us, aware of all we have, are very willing to help people in need. Using common sense—being practical—can be considered an American value as well. A quick “reality check” to be sure the assistance is needed and wanted is important to many people who are motivated to help.

In the past, U.S. geography meant that if the national mood or national leadership favored withdrawing from the rest of the world, it wasn’t too hard to do that. But the United States has a strong record of engagement beyond our borders. And perhaps just as important today, the clichés are true: it’s a small world that’s getting smaller.

What does all this mean for our mission at Bread for the World—ending hunger? It’s encouraging: the will to engage with people globally in order to solve a serious global problem is supported by values that many if not most Americans embrace.

An American Heritage: Taking Action on Hunger

Several times during the 20th century, Americans supported efforts to reduce widespread hunger overseas. The largest of these was the Marshall Plan after World War II. Hunger and malnutrition in Europe had

reached crisis proportions. Secretary of State George C. Marshall won approval for a major investment of resources to help revive the European economy. “Our policy,” he explained, “is directed against hunger, poverty, desperation, and chaos.”

President Harry Truman acknowledged the plan’s high price tag (in today’s dollars, the Marshall Plan would cost \$115-\$120 billion), but concurred: “I

know every American feels in his heart that we must help to prevent starvation and distress among our fellow men in other countries.” Ultimately, the Marshall Plan assisted 270 million people in 16 countries in Western Europe.

In 1954, not long after the Marshall Plan was completed, President Dwight D. Eisenhower established the current American food aid program, Food for Peace. In its first decades, recipients included now-prosperous South Korea, Italy, Austria, Germany, Poland, and Japan. In 2010 alone, the program provided food to 55 million refugees, survivors of natural disasters, and others in need. The program that President Ronald Reagan called “an instrument of American compassion” has inspired a second generation—several countries that were once recipients are now themselves donors of food aid.

The United States is the world’s largest donor of food aid. In 2011, the bulk of our spending went to help people

facing starvation in the Horn of Africa. It saved the lives of people elsewhere as well—among them a little girl in Guatemala. Gilma is 5 years old. When drought struck her part of the country, all Gilma had to eat was whatever was left over from her four brothers’ meal. She developed Severe Acute Malnutrition—otherwise known as life-threatening hunger. U.S. food aid in the form of Plumpy’nut—a nutrient-dense peanut-based food—helped her recover. Within a few days, Gilma was much stronger. Before long, she will be starting school.



U.S. food aid, such as the rations distributed to women forced from their homes by the 2011 Horn of Africa drought, can literally save a human life for \$40.

A Companion Tradition: Promoting Health

Sufficient nutritious food and good health go together. Unfortunately, malnutrition and disease also reinforce each other, since the immune system of a person weakened by hunger cannot effectively protect her from illness. A person weakened by illness cannot efficiently absorb the nutrients he consumes.

More than

99 percent:
reduction in cases
of polio, worldwide,
since 1988.



NEARLY HALF:

people in developing countries who, at any given time, have a health problem caused by unsafe water or inadequate sanitation.

Lack of access to clean water and poor sanitation are also common in environments where hunger and disease are major problems, and they exacerbate both.

Diseases such as measles and pertussis are very rarely fatal in developed countries, where nearly everyone receives immunizations against a host of diseases in early childhood. Childhood diseases are still a deadly danger in many poor countries.

Through the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), established by President John F. Kennedy in 1961, the United States has supported mass immunization campaigns that have made a big difference. In the 1980s, efforts became more focused with the creation of the Child Survival Initiative within USAID. To this day, the program provides basic immunizations for 100 million children annually; it has already saved millions of lives.

Communicable diseases don't respect national borders. In 1977, history was made when smallpox became the first disease to be eradicated by human effort. Eradication has prevented further suffering and death from this age-old plague; as a bonus, the United States saves about \$150 million every year because smallpox vaccinations are no longer necessary.

In 1988, the Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI) was formed by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Rotary International, UNICEF, and the World Health Organization. In one generation, the number of cases has been reduced by more than 99 percent. The struggle to contain polio—reducing the countries where it is endemic from 125 in 1988 to four in 2010—has included the vaccination of more than 2.5 billion children so far.

Eradiation of polio seems within reach. One of the four countries that still had new polio cases in 2010 was India, which recently announced a breakthrough: there have been no new cases for a full year. But eradication is all-or-nothing. China had not seen a new case of polio since 1999 until the past couple of years, when the virus apparently traveled from Pakistan. The United States is supporting what will hopefully be the final push under a new GPEI plan.

Americans are also supporting new campaigns against other deadly diseases, such as tuberculosis and malaria. But the most well-known effort of recent



Catholic Relief Services

A child near Cubal, Angola, receives a polio vaccination in the form of two drops.

8 million:

Ethiopians who needed emergency assistance during the 2002-2003 drought who did NOT need it during the even more severe 2011 drought.

35 percent:

proportion of deaths among young children caused by malnutrition.

years has been the struggle to prevent and treat global HIV/AIDS. As with polio, HIV anywhere poses a threat to people everywhere. Infections that were later determined to be the result of HIV were first noted in 1981 in the United States. By 1985, there were people on remote Pacific islands who were HIV-positive.

Gradual improvements in treatment meant that many HIV-positive Ameri-

cans were living far longer and in better health than at the beginning of the pandemic. In Africa, however, the outlook had not improved. Many HIV-positive people were unaware of their status, so the virus spread rapidly, and very few people could afford the new antiretroviral (ARV) medications. Several nations saw dramatic drops in life expectancy. Millions of orphaned children strained the ability of grandparents and extended family to care for them. There was a new phenomenon, “child-headed households,” where eldest siblings as young as 11 struggled to grow food and care for younger children.

Early in 2003, President George W. Bush announced the President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), with initial funding of \$15 billion for HIV prevention, treatment, and care in 15 of the hardest-hit countries. Bush declared, “We have a chance to achieve a more compassionate world for every citizen. America believes deeply that everybody has worth, everybody mat-

ters....” He said that helping people with AIDS is part of a legacy of American compassion, just as the Marshall Plan was.

Today, 40 times as many Africans receive ARV treatment as before PEPFAR began. By the hundreds of thousands, people in their twenties, thirties, and forties have gotten well enough to return to work and parenting. Far fewer newborns contract HIV from their mothers. The AIDS pandemic is not over, but there is hope that the tide is turning.

PEPFAR’s priority now is to support countries in strengthening their health care systems to provide HIV treatment on their own. PEPFAR is part of the U.S. Global Health Initiative established by President Barack Obama; the initiative’s other components share this emphasis on building health care systems able to provide the medical services needed for a healthy population.

Making Progress That Will Last

Norman Borlaug, an American scientist, has been called “the father of the Green Revolution,” an enormously successful effort in the 1960s to increase the yields of staple crops. In many Asian and Latin American countries, new high-yield seeds and techniques brought a tripling of production. The proportion of people in Asia who were malnourished fell from 51 percent in 1960 to 16 percent in 2000.

Success may have brought complacency, however. In the years that followed, the United States and other developed countries cut back sharply on investments in global agriculture. Many developing countries followed suit as



Todd Post/Bread for the World

At an AMPATH (Academic Model for Providing Access to Healthcare) workshop in Eldoret, Kenya, a woman on antiretroviral medication is now well enough to learn new livelihood skills.

attention shifted to manufacturing, extraction of resources such as minerals, or other sectors thought to be faster, more direct paths to development. For decades, agriculture was largely neglected.

Fortunately, in the past few years, momentum has been building to re-focus attention on agriculture and food security. Many African countries committed to spending 10 percent of their budget on agriculture. Then came the food price crisis of 2008, when the cost of staple grains such as rice, wheat, and maize rose suddenly and dramatically. Because poor families spend up to 80 percent of their entire income on food, their options are limited. When prices spiked, they had to sacrifice the quantity and quality of food they ate.

The crisis pushed an additional 100 million people into hunger—and pushed developed countries to act. In 2009, the United States proposed a new global food security initiative. A group of eight developed countries pledged to contribute a total of \$20 billion over three years in new funding to strengthen agriculture.

Another sign of hope is the effort to improve development assistance to make it more effective. The United States has been placing increasing emphasis on country-led development plans and long-term solutions. The Bush administration established the Millennium Challenge Corporation, which makes multi-year grants to poor countries committed to reducing hunger to carry out projects they develop through consultations with their citizens. Participating countries frequently choose to concentrate on their agriculture sectors. A key Obama administration effort is Feed the Future, which seeks to improve agriculture in poor countries by considering solutions all along the way—from better soil quality to accessible markets for crops. Feed the Future is the American component of the new global food security initiative.

Two Feed the Future partner countries are Ethiopia and Kenya. There is no doubt that people in Ethiopia suffered greatly during the 2011 drought that caused famine in neighboring Somalia. Up to 5 million people needed emergency food assistance. But, as Secretary of State Hillary Clinton pointed out in a visit to the region, the country was able to cope far better than it had during the last such drought, in 2002-2003.



After three years of participation in a development program that provided support and training, this woman from Ethiopia's Tigray region has escaped from deep poverty and now teaches the agricultural techniques that helped her to others in her community.

Myths & Realities

Myth: In the United States, support for reducing world hunger is a political issue.

Reality: As individuals, Americans are known for contributing generously—both our money and our time—to help people in need, whether in our own neighborhoods or halfway around the world.

In opinion polls, majorities of Republicans, Democrats, and Independents consistently support the idea that America should do more to help hungry people around the world—even when times are tough at home. Regardless of political party or ideology, U.S. administrations from Presidents Harry Truman and Dwight D. Eisenhower to George W. Bush and Barack Obama have championed significant efforts to ease the suffering of hungry people, fight deadly diseases, and give people around the world the tools to build a better life.



Myth: Strong economic growth, by generating more resources for a country, will significantly reduce hunger and malnutrition among its people.

Reality: Economic growth is essential to a country's efforts to reduce hunger. But by itself, it is simply not enough—because the main reason people are hungry is that they cannot afford to buy food. Along with fostering growth, countries must make reducing poverty a top priority.

The majority of the world's poor people actually live in "middle-income" countries. Although these nations have enough resources to protect most if not all of their people from hunger, there are still many hungry people—for example, those whose incomes are far below average and/or members of vulnerable groups such as women, young children, and ethnic/religious minorities.



African Agricultural Technology Foundation/USAID

A farmer discusses the performance of a new variety of insect-resistant maize planted on her farm in Kisumu, Kenya.

One reason is that the Ethiopian government has used its own resources and development assistance to help establish a “safety net” of nutrition programs for people at risk of hunger. Another is that Feed the Future is supporting programs to improve agriculture even in difficult environments. For example, the Tigray region in northern Ethiopia suffers from severe soil erosion and frequent droughts. A U.S.-funded program to help small farmers improve their irrigation and horticultural techniques is beginning to pay off. Girma, a 50-year-old farmer, is one of those who built hillside terraces to prevent erosion and dug wells to help irrigate crops.

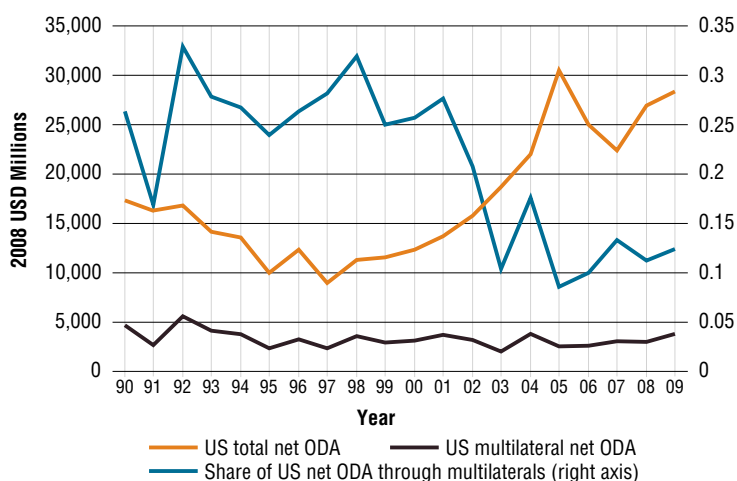
It has brought better harvests. “Three years ago, there was not enough water for drinking or irrigation,” Girma said. “Now with our conservation methods... I can buy cereals for my family.”

Similarly, Leonard and Marion Manga, who live in central Kenya, participate in the U.S.-funded Kilimo Hai (Swahili for Living Earth) program, where farmers are learning techniques for trapping rainwater and beginning to work with seeds that are treated to help control pests.

The United States can be proud of our history of successful programs to reduce global hunger, poverty, and disease, carried out under widely different circumstances under presidents from both political parties, and our recent efforts to make development assistance more effective to meet new challenges and make lasting progress. In these ways, we are combining our concern for others with our solid common sense to create solutions.

Further Thoughts

U.S. Bilateral and Multilateral Foreign Assistance



Source: OECD, DAC.



Laura Elizabeth Pohl/Bread for the World

Leadership and Teamwork: The U.S. Role in Development



Richard Lord

U.S. development partnerships complement the efforts of people working toward a better life, such as this Nepali woman on one of her daily trips to bring home clean water.

SNAPSHOT

- Strengthening global partnerships for development can help the United States make a deeper impact on hunger and extreme poverty around the world. These issues require collective action; no one country has enough power or resources to solve the problem.
- Multilateral cooperation enables the global community to pool resources, share knowledge of what is working well, and identify and fill funding gaps in the most promising programs. In international development, the whole is greater than the sum of its parts.
- U.S. leadership is essential to global action on food security—it persuades others to act. A 2009 U.S. proposal to invest significantly more resources in agriculture won support from donors in the “Group of 8” (G-8) developed nations, who committed to providing \$22 billion to improve agricultural productivity over three years. In contrast, when the United States reduced its support for agricultural development in the late 1980s, the efforts of most other developed countries waned as well.

The United States has spent much of its 250 years of independence as a leading industrial nation, and for the past several decades, it has enjoyed “superpower” status. Today, most Americans see the country as a global leader—it’s part of our national identity. Opinions vary, though, as to what this type of leadership means in practice—how it should affect the nation’s actions.

What does leadership mean in the field of international development? Creating, strengthening, and sustaining global partnerships for development can help the United States make a wider, deeper, and more long-term impact on a problem most Americans care about: global hunger and extreme poverty.

International Development: Who Are Our Partners?

Some international partnerships are “bilateral,” or between the United States and one other country. Others are group or “multilateral” efforts. These can range from supporting and participating in large organizations such as UNICEF or the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization to working in teams with fewer partners and a narrower focus—perhaps preventing and curing dengue fever, or developing better ways to capture and purify rainwater.

Two important partnerships are the G-8 and G-20, shorthand for the “group of 8” and

“group of 20” countries. The G-8 countries are mainly traditional development donors, such as the U.K., France, and Canada, while the G-20 brings together many of the world’s largest economies. Brazil, India, Mexico, South Africa, the United States, and the European Union are all G-20 members. Both groups were created in the recognition that many issues require collective action: no single country has enough power or influence to solve the problem.

Since 2008, when sudden steep increases in the cost of basic foods resulted in tens of millions of newly hungry people, the G-8 has focused on enabling developing countries to build food security. In May 2012, just before the United States hosted the most recent G-8 summit, President Obama gave the first speech on global hunger ever given by an American president while in office. He announced a new partnership to speed efforts to end hunger and improve child nutrition, particularly in the 1,000-day “window of opportunity” between pregnancy and a child’s second birthday. The president also reaffirmed the commitments made by the G-8 at the 2009 summit in L’Aquila, Italy, to strengthen agriculture and food security. The United States initiated the L’Aquila plan, and our country is on track to fulfill its financial commitment, largely through the relatively new Feed the Future initiative.

Increasingly, countries with “emerging” economies—such as China, India, Brazil, and South Africa—are starting their own development assistance programs, augmenting the resources provided by traditional donors such as the United States. Many of these new donors are middle-income countries (meaning those with incomes ranging from about \$1,000 to \$12,000 per person per year). Often, they are “graduates” of development assistance themselves. Some still receive assistance with specific projects but are experienced donors in other areas. Many emerging donors have the advantage of being able to share their own recent experiences with efforts to build a stronger economy and enable more people to benefit from it. New donors are also important because aid budgets from traditional donors are constrained.

Until fairly recently, developing countries were commonly referred to as aid



David Snyder

A woman weeds crops by hand. Coordination among development partners is particularly important in agriculture programs, including this one that focuses on equipping farmers in Malawi to increase food supplies by planting crops year-round.

About 85 percent:
amount of Kenya’s public spending
paid for by Kenyan taxpayers.



Percentage of
U.S. budget spent
on development
assistance.

“recipients” and too often relegated to the passive role that this term suggests. They rarely had much influence when decisions were made about priorities for foreign assistance programs or strategies for carrying them out. But this model of development assistance is changing rapidly.

Creating More Effective Partnerships

The “donor-led” model of development has important disadvantages. Development programs may be less effective, since they were often not part of a well-thought-out plan and the people who were supposed to benefit were rarely consulted. The governments of developing countries missed opportunities to develop the skills and experience needed to reach their national development goals independently. In addition, governments had to devote significant staff time and resources to fulfilling the varied requirements of a host of donors. Two examples of this: Vietnam received 752 missions from donors in 2007, while a study in Tanzania found that some district health officials spent 25 working days each quarter (100 working days every year) writing reports for donors—time that could have been spent delivering services.

The “aid recipient” approach is being replaced with more collaborative forms of development assistance, often called the “country-led” approach. Since the goal of development assistance is ultimately to help countries reach the point where they no longer need outside assistance, country-led programs make perfect sense. When countries are in charge of their own development plans, they can also take advantage of opportunities to work with emerging economies and other developing countries toward development goals.

Such cooperation is becoming increasingly frequent. For example, former Brazilian president Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva—a 2011 World Food Prize laureate for his leadership in reducing hunger in his nation—visited Africa more than two dozen times in three years, supporting efforts to build food security. India is also active in Africa, through both public and private sector initiatives.



Bangladesh, despite poverty and routine extensive flooding, now grows nearly enough rice to feed all its people and is making good progress in improving child nutrition.

About **10 percent:**

Amount of donor assistance dedicated to food, agriculture, and nutrition.

More than triple:

Rate of school enrollment in Ethiopia in 2009 compared to 1991.

In keeping with the idea of country-led programs, the United States is also supporting multilateral initiatives created by developing countries. One of the strongest is the Comprehensive All Africa Development Program (CAADP), an entirely African-led effort to significantly reduce chronic hunger, malnutrition, and poverty through coordinated work in agriculture. The pillars of CAADP's work include supporting agricultural research in Africa and extending the area under sustainable land management.

CAADP member countries recently set the goal of a 6 percent average annual growth rate in agriculture. Since CAADP's inception, development partners have worked together closely to facilitate its policies and programs. The New Partnership for Africa's Development, the African Union, other multilateral organizations, and a number of individual donor and African governments continue to work to coordinate support and identify funding gaps.

Another example of American support for partnerships with developing countries and communities is the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC), a U.S. government agency established in 2004. This was the first U.S. development program to use a country-led approach; partner governments propose projects that reflect their needs to the MCC. To receive funding, governments must consult with key stakeholders in their country, including civil society groups, the private sector, and beneficiary communities. Early signs of progress in MCC projects led the administration to adopt a country-led approach for its Feed the Future global food security initiative as well.

A Wider Influence

U.S. leadership has proven essential to global action on food security. When the United States cut back on its support for agricultural development at the end of the 1980s, the efforts of most other developed countries waned as well. This was then followed by reduced investments in agriculture by developing countries themselves—after all, the international community did not consider it a high priority and advised aid recipients to develop manufacturing and other sectors.

On the flip side, U.S. action persuades others to act. For example, from the Green Revolution's beginnings in the 1960s, the United States supported this key effort—generating momentum that over a few years ended hunger for millions of people in Asia. The U.S. proposal to invest significantly more resources in agriculture made in L'Aquila, mentioned earlier, won support from other G-8 members, who committed to providing \$22 billion in financing for agricultural productivity over three years.

The Global Agriculture and Food Security Program (GAFSP) grew out of this U.S.-led multilateral initiative. GAFSP supplies funding for country and regional agriculture and food security strategic plans. Since it began in April 2010, the effort has received about \$1 billion in pledges and continues to attract new donors. The U.S. Treasury Department called it a “com-



Agricultural assistance programs that help improve soil, irrigation, storage, and access to markets often benefit two generations, including Pedro and his daughter Eloisa in Nicaragua.

elling example of how the United States can internationalize” efforts to respond to urgent global problems, adding that an initial U.S. contribution of \$302 million “directly leveraged \$579 million from others.” GAFSP estimates that these resources will improve the food security of 7.5 million smallholder farmers.

The idea behind leading and supporting multilateral development efforts is that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. We can see this when we look at what is already being accomplished through newer efforts such as the President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), the L’Aquila food security commitments and the GASFP grants that L’Aquila made possible, the Millennium Challenge Account, and CAADP. Multilateral cooperation enables the global community to pool its resources, share knowledge of what is working well, and identify and fill funding gaps in the most promising programs.



A South Africa agriculture program covers research and increasing the productivity of small farming businesses to cope with the persistence of chronic hunger, malnutrition, and threat of famine, particularly in a region reeling from the effects of HIV/AIDS.

A Question of Leadership

Until 2005, the United States was the largest donor to every multilateral development fund, but a shift toward more bilateral assistance through efforts such as PEPFAR and Feed the Future means that this is no longer the case. In fact, the share of U.S. foreign assistance that is channeled through multilateral programs has fallen to 11 percent of our country’s total assistance—less than half of its level in 2000. The average for donor countries is 30 percent.

Financial contributions are a way to show leadership in multilateral initiatives. Moreover, influence on important decisions

Myths & Realities

Myth: The United States provides more than its fair share of development assistance.

Reality: Multilateral programs are supported financially by a variety of donors. For example, the L’Aquila global agriculture initiative includes not only pledges of \$3.5 billion over three years from the United States and \$3 billion each from Germany and Japan, but also \$2 billion from the Netherlands (population 16.7 million) and \$1 billion from Canada (population 34.7 million).

The United States saves millions of lives every year with programs like child immunizations, PEPFAR, and food aid. There is no doubt that our efforts make a big difference. But the amount the United States gives per person is less than average for donors and far less than Scandinavian countries. Preliminary data for 2011 indicate that Sweden and Denmark devoted more than 1 percent of their national incomes to development assistance. The U.K. gave 0.56 percent, the average for 23 donor countries was 0.46 percent, and the United States was near the bottom of the list at 0.2 percent.



Myth: U.S. leadership on development assistance isn’t really essential.

Reality: U.S. leadership leverages additional funding from other donors. Recently, USAID administrator Dr. Rajiv Shah told members of Congress that the agency is increasing its contributions to the Global Fund for AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria “to make sure that we’re investing in those multilateral vehicles that allow us to leverage our dollars with the dollars of other donors and generate \$2 or \$3 or \$4 of investment for every \$1 we put in.”

Conversely, U.S. withdrawal from development initiatives sends a signal that often leads to a decrease in support from other donors as well. For example, when the United States cut back on its support for agricultural development at the end of the 1980s, the efforts of most other developed countries waned as well.

Agriculture remained a relatively neglected area until as recently as 2008, when the global food price crisis and other factors, such as new information on the damage caused by early childhood malnutrition, brought leaders’ attention back to the necessity of improving farming if we are to reduce hunger.



UN Photo/Martine Perret

Most of the hard work of development is done by people in developing countries themselves.

women do much of the essential work to grow crops and feed their families nutritious foods but too often lack access to resources. Another is the move toward more “transparency” in assistance programs—meaning that everyone concerned with a development project, from officials of donor countries to local beneficiary families, knows exactly what its objectives are and how the money is being spent.

within multilateral organizations is often linked to funding. For example, the United States contributes 15 percent of the funding for the World Bank, which provides loans and grants to developing countries to promote growth and poverty reduction.

As Dr. Rajiv Shah, administrator of the U.S. Agency for International Development, says, “This [15 percent] threshold is critical, as it enables the United States to block amendments ... on critical issues.” He points out that the United States is the only country with this veto power.

Maintaining and strengthening U.S. support for multilateral development efforts and institutions complements the renewed American emphasis on focusing development assistance on top priorities and achieving results. This way, the United States can specialize in particular programs and issues while still having a voice in the allocation of resources to projects around the world.

One area where U.S. influence can be critical to the effectiveness of development assistance is the recognition that

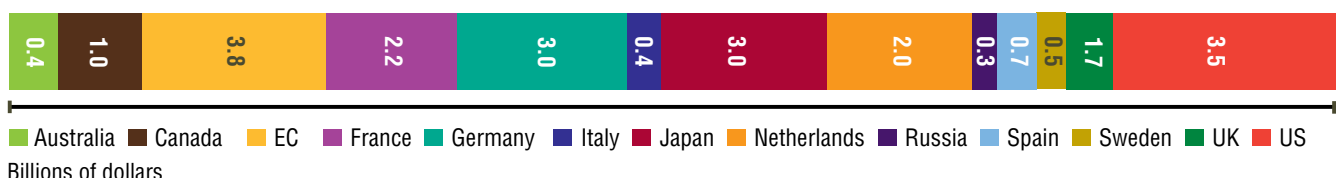
Further Thoughts

Development Is a Global Effort

Few medium-sized or large development programs are supported by a single donor. Most are a “team effort.” For example, the L’Aquila Food Security Initiative, named after the 2009 international meeting in L’Aquila, Italy, where it began, focuses on improving agricultural systems. This has proven to be the most effective way to help communities build their ability to respond to spiking food prices, climate change, and other factors that contribute to hunger and malnutrition.

As the graphic shows, 12 countries plus the European Commission pledged billions of dollars in funding to support the food security initiative. Some donors made especially generous commitments given their own relatively small population—for example, Canada and the Netherlands. The United States and Germany were the individual countries who contributed the largest dollar amounts.

L’Aquila Financial Pledge Breakdown by Donor



Source: ONE

Farmers: The Key to Ending Global Hunger



Laura Elizabeth Pohl/Bread for the World

Martha Togdbba of Kpaytno, Liberia, grows vegetables, including tomatoes and chili peppers. She irrigates her small farm by carrying a watering can to and from a nearby stream.

SNAPSHOT

- Local farmers, most with less than five acres of land and little or no animal or mechanical power, bear most of the responsibility for feeding people in developing countries. Enabling small-scale farmers to increase their productivity is essential to reducing hunger or even maintaining recent progress.
- More than 75 percent of the world's hungry people are small-scale farmers or landless laborers. Fortunately, growth in the agriculture sector is very effective in reducing poverty.
- Gender bias is a principal cause of hunger since women produce well over half of the global food supply and are more likely to spend additional income on food.
- Nonetheless, few female farmers own the land they work, have the authority to make decisions about crops and livestock, or control their own incomes. New tools such as the Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index help track progress toward gender equity.

Every year, U.S. humanitarian assistance, such as food aid, eases the hunger of millions of people who have fled natural disaster or conflict. These are clearly emergencies. But worldwide, most hungry people are hungry or malnourished as a fact of their everyday lives. Chronic hunger and malnutrition sap the strength of adults trying to earn a living and the potential of children trying to learn.

The 2012 *Africa Human Development Report* identifies two areas of bias as “principal factors in explaining Africa’s food insecurity”—a bias toward towns rather than rural areas and a bias toward men rather than women.

After decades of neglect in favor of developing manufacturing or extractive industries, agriculture in developing countries has begun to receive much-needed attention. A big part of solving chronic hunger is enabling and equipping small-scale farmers to be as effective as possible. It’s true that the world produces enough food for everyone—but that truth doesn’t make dinner appear on everyone’s plate. Local farmers, most with less than five acres of land and little or no animal or mechanical power, bear most of the responsibility for making food available to their communities and nations.

Producing the grains, protein sources, and vegetables people need clearly requires a very

practical understanding of local agricultural conditions. Development efforts should focus on increasing small farmers' access to information and tools and on building their resilience, particularly given the uncertainties inherent in agriculture. For at least the next several decades, most developing countries will

need productive small farmers to feed their increasing, and increasingly urban, populations. Ensuring that even the most remote farm communities and the poorest farmers have the supplies and techniques they need will be essential to making further progress on global hunger.

There's a second reason farmers must be fully engaged in efforts to end global hunger: ironically, most of the world's hungry people, more than three-fourths, are smallholder farmers, landless farm laborers, and their families.

Fortunately, boosting agricultural productivity has proven to be one of the best ways of reducing global poverty. Feed the Future, the U.S. global hunger initiative, reports that growth in the agriculture sector is at least twice as effective in reducing poverty as growth in other sectors. In fact, improvements in agriculture deserve the credit for much of the recent significant prog-

ress against hunger—which was at 14.9 percent of the world population in 2010-2012, down from 23.2 percent in 1990-1992.



Laura Elizabeth Pohl/Bread for the World

Ensuring that small-scale producers, such as this Mexican farmer, are able to grow enough food to meet their families' needs must be a key part of the effort to end hunger and malnutrition.

Needs That Are Literally Down to Earth

In developing countries, most obstacles to producing enough nutritious food are rooted in poverty. Anti-hunger leader Nana Ayim Poakwah of Ghana explains that about 40 percent of what is grown goes to waste because farmers cannot get crops to market before they spoil. Farm families eat some of the food they grow, sell some locally—and then have no option but to abandon the rest in the field.

Poakwah and others at Ghana's Food Aid Network developed ways of providing farmers with simple storage facilities and arranging transportation to bring their crops to market. In return, farmers donate 10 percent of their harvests. "It works for both sides," Poakwah says. "Without the program, farmers would lose much more of their harvest. And we get the food to vulnerable people, especially children."

90 percent: the share of rice cultivation work done by women in India, Nepal, and Thailand.

10 percent: share of female farmers who own land in India, Nepal, and Thailand.

Philanthropist Bill Gates, discussing the importance of helping small farmers become more productive, identifies another need: “The question is, how do we continue to do the research needed to develop these new tools? Poor countries are investing more in their own agricultural sectors, but they don’t have the resources to lead on research and development... and right now the entire research budget of the group responsible for agricultural science for the poorest people is just \$300 million per year.”

Feed the Future has made reducing hunger and poverty an explicit goal. “We are focused on measuring results—as opposed to inputs—so we better understand what works,” noted its 2012 progress report, *Boosting Harvests, Fighting Poverty*. “What we have now are steps in the right direction.” Feed the Future has specific five-year targets that include reducing poverty by 20 percent in the countries where it works, and reducing stunting—which indicates chronic malnutrition—by 20 percent as well.

A Gender “Lens”

The effects of gender bias go beyond not respecting the rights of individual women, important as that is. The 2012 *Africa Human Development Report* identifies gender bias as a principal cause of hunger in Africa.

Why? The short answer is that worldwide, the major responsibility for providing for families falls to women. Female farmers produce well over half of all the food grown in the world, including up to 80 percent in Africa and 60 percent in Asia. Thus, barriers to women’s full participation in farming contribute to lower agricultural growth rates, smaller harvests, and more malnutrition among children.

As the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation notes, “Expansive literature suggests that women are much more likely than men

A Rural Focus

People affected by hunger are already working as hard as they can to find ways to feed their children and themselves. And, as philanthropist Bill Gates notes, the governments of developing countries are committing more national resources to food production efforts. Increasingly, decision makers in the United States are aiding these efforts.

The U.S. Feed the Future program is part of an American-led global initiative to invest a higher percentage of foreign assistance in small farmers’ productivity and nutrition.



30 minutes:

Minimum walking time to an all-weather road for 70 percent of Africa’s rural farmers.

22 percent.

Median return on Feed the Future’s investments in agriculture (so half had an even higher rate of return).

to spend additional income on food and health care.” Increasing women’s income, in other words, is likely to be an important part of a strategy to improve children’s nutrition, health, and lifelong potential.

These are two good reasons to prioritize the needs of female farmers—they do much of the actual farming, and they are likely to put any additional resources to good use, creating a multiplier effect that strengthens families and communities and helps them build resilience over time.

Yet, as the American organization Women Thrive Worldwide points out in “Women and Agriculture: Growing More Than Just Food,” women tend to lack access to tools, animals, and machines that would increase their productivity. The assumption that farmers are men is pervasive, extending, for example, to the many tools best suited to use by men. Hoes are a case in point: women work more effectively with hoes that are not only lighter weight, but have longer handles than those intended for “everyone.”

“Knowledge is power,” in agriculture as in anything else, but women receive only about 5 percent of all agricultural extension services. Legally recognized rights to land and



Small-scale farmers in Kenya, about a third of whom are women, nearly tripled their maize yields with the help of ACDI/VOCA’s Kenya Maize Development Program. New technologies like improved seeds helped farmers realize these gains.

water increase a woman’s influence in the family, enabling her to ensure that more of the household resources benefit children. Yet women hold title to only about 2 percent of the world’s land.

The United States and other donors have become increasingly aware of gender-based barriers to productive farming—and their cost in hunger and poverty. Evidence has been coming in from all over: In Burkina Faso, shifting existing resources between men’s and women’s plots *within the same household* could increase output by up to 20 percent. If Kenyan women had the same agricultural supplies and instruction as men, they could increase their yields by more than 20 percent. In the Indian state of Andhra Pradesh, sustained access to credit for female and male smallholder farmers led to a tripling of family assets between 2000 and 2006.

New “women in agriculture” development projects began to appear as these findings became widely known. Some efforts were criticized as providing more lip service to equal opportunity than actual resources, but this has begun to change as local priorities play a more significant role in shaping projects. Including men and women not just in theory, but in reality, requires a careful look at when and how programs need to support women’s leadership and full participation—plus a plan to provide this support.

Empowerment and Reducing Hunger

The Women’s Empowerment in Agriculture Index was launched in 2012 by Feed the Future in cooperation with the U.S.-based International Food Policy

Research Institute (IFPRI) and the U.K.-based Oxford University Poverty and Human Development Initiative. The Index evaluates the effectiveness of agriculture programs by tracking changes in different aspects of female farmers' decision-making power. Examples of what goes into "empowerment" scores include influence in decisions as to what to plant, if and when to buy or sell assets, and how to organize work schedules.

Women's empowerment scores are compared to those of men in the household, since there are situations where no one has a particularly high empowerment score and other cases where there is a sharp "empowerment gap" between men and women. The Index was piloted in Guatemala, Uganda, and Bangladesh. They were chosen so data from three continents could help verify that the idea of measuring something called "empowerment in agriculture" made sense.

Americans rarely hear much about Bangladesh beyond the occasional news story about widespread flooding. But while it's a poor country already coping with climate change, Bangladesh has also achieved steady economic growth, become self-sufficient in rice production, and is on track to lower child mortality by two-thirds by 2015, as called for in the U.N. Millennium Development Goals.

Aysha, Seema, and Naju are three young Bangladeshi farmers, ages 25-35, who participated in the pilot phase of the Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index. Aysha had an arranged marriage at the age of 13 and has two children. She says that although she and her husband discuss matters related to their land or livestock, he makes the final decisions on all issues. Seema left school at 12 because her mother died. She considers empowerment the ability to work, gain assets, and send her three children to school; she does not believe that women should aspire to influential positions. Aysha's and Seema's scores on the Index indicated that they are disempowered overall and also less empowered than their husbands.

Naju, who is divorced with one child, says that ideally, both husband and wife should be involved in making decisions. Naju has a high school diploma, but her father-in-law did not allow her to continue in college after she married. She says that men make the important decisions in Bangladeshi society, but also believes that women who work and make decisions as farmers are powerful because they themselves grow crops. Naju's score was high enough to put her in the "empowered" category on the Index.

As these women, their neighbors, and thousands of others participate in Feed the Future programs intended to reduce hunger in rural areas, they will be scored again on the Index to help determine whether and how changes occur—and how their empowerment status influences their success in farming and their children's nutritional status.

Bread for the World Institute staff visited Bangladesh in April 2012 to see how U.S. development assistance is enabling rural communities to improve nutrition, especially among young children. For all the country's progress, malnutrition is still its major development challenge. While nutrition programs have interlocking components designed to bring change over time, two examples of activities that visitors can show up and watch are "courtyard talks" and monthly growth monitoring sessions.

Myths & Realities

Myth: Agricultural productivity receives a large enough share of U.S. development assistance. It is not important to make it a higher priority; investing in industries like mining or manufacturing clothing is just as useful.

Reality: Until recently, donors had neglected agriculture for decades. But smallholder farmers and laborers are vital to feeding a growing population, and they are also the majority of the world's hungry people.

Given the limited development funding available, investments that make agriculture more productive—and farmers' livelihoods more resilient in the face of crises such as drought—should be a top priority. Productive use of available land is essential to making further progress on global hunger and poverty.



Myth: Opening an agricultural development program to both male and female farmers is enough to ensure that it is successful.

Reality: Many societies have a "separate and unequal" system of allocating work, family responsibilities, and access to resources based on gender. Simply indicating that women are eligible to participate in programs will not necessarily ensure that they actually participate.

Identifying factors that reduce women's likelihood of benefiting from programs—and strategies to ease those barriers—is essential to effective agricultural development.

Barriers can be powerful whether they are practical (tools, supplies, the authority to make decisions, time to spare from work and children) or cultural (perhaps women generally do not attend classes with men, or it is seen as a husband's role to interact with outsiders and pass along to his wife the information she needs).



Laura Elizabeth Pohl/Bread for the World

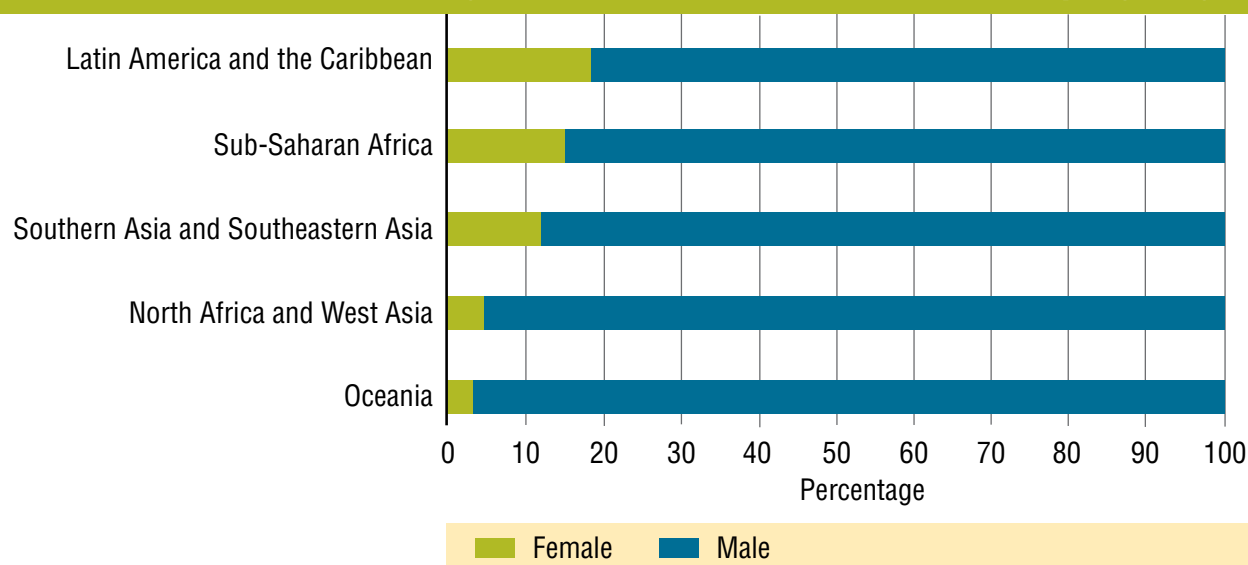
Tohomina Akter, 18, picks amaranth in Barisal, Bangladesh. She is part of an effort to help prevent stunting by cultivating vegetables.

Young women accompanied by babies and toddlers come to courtyard talks to learn, from facilitators and each other, about the nutrients people need and ways of making sure their children get foods that contain them. Every participant in one such meeting could name local foods that are rich in vitamin A, for example. (If anyone forgot, she could turn to the group's set of laminated nutrition cards, which are labeled by nutrient and show photos of good sources). Growth monitoring sessions—familiar to many American parents as well—verify that a baby is gaining enough weight to stay on his or her growth curve. Fortunately, mild to moderate malnutrition generally shows up on the curve before it is clearly visible to parents or health professionals, so it can be detected and treated earlier.

Long-term investments in agricultural productivity, with a particular focus on female farmers, will have a transformative impact in developing countries, helping them to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and build more resilient and empowered communities.

Further Thoughts

Share of Male and Female Agricultural Holders in Main Developing Regions



The “agricultural holder” is the person who has management authority over a particular piece of land.

Within each continent average, women's land holdings can vary widely by country. For example, Africa's average (15 percent of agricultural holders are women) includes data from Mali (where less than 5 percent are women), and from Botswana and Malawi (where more than 30 percent are women).

Source: The State of Food and Agriculture 2010—Women and Agriculture: Closing the Gender Gap for Development. Data: FAO Gender and Land Rights Database, FAO, 2010.

Why Development Assistance Can't Wait



Peter Verbiscar-Brown/Photoshare

At the Punwami Child Feeding Program run by Crescent Medical Aid in Kenya, children receive their noon meal. There are usually more than 30 children given a meal each day.

SNAPSHOT

- Foreign assistance focuses on prevention. This is critical in the case of early childhood nutrition and, of course, when there is a possibility of famine.
- Malnutrition is most dangerous during the 1,000-day window between pregnancy and age 2, when it can cause death or irreversible physical and cognitive damage. Early childhood malnutrition can also drain a country's development potential.
- Yet early malnutrition can be prevented at a modest cost with basic nutrition care.
- Famine early warning systems are now sophisticated, forecasting accurately up to a year in advance. Foreign assistance cannot prevent natural disasters, but it can help save many lives.
- The potential human consequences of inaction—particularly for children under 2—should be weighed carefully in decisions about emergency relief.
- U.S. development assistance should focus on resilience—equipping people to develop strategies to cope with threats to their food security.

We've all heard the old adages on procrastination: a stitch in time saves nine and so forth. The temptation is to just pay lip service. Maybe this latest problem isn't truly urgent. A homeowner, for example, may say to herself, maybe I'll have more time/money/enthusiasm for repairing the gutters next week—or next month.

It's quite possible that nothing will go wrong if the gutter repairs are put off. On the other hand, a bad storm could cause water damage to the interior of the house. The homeowner is playing the odds: what is the likelihood of the worst-case scenario, and how bad would it be if it did happen?

Development Works explains why U.S. development assistance is important. This essay offers two examples—each affecting hundreds of millions of people—of why development assistance cannot wait until we have more money or enthusiasm for it.

Opening the Window of Opportunity

We all know that very young children develop quickly. One day they can barely sit up, and three months later, they're walking. It's almost literally "blink and you miss it."

The scientific consensus is that this period—from pregnancy through a child's second birthday—is the most important time

not to go hungry, precisely because of this rapid pace of development. It's often called the 1,000-day window of opportunity.

Children who are malnourished during the window don't really get a second chance. They have a much higher risk of infections, illnesses, and death.

One-third of all deaths among young children are caused by malnutrition. Those who survive will not be able to catch up by eating healthy meals and taking extra vitamins in kindergarten. Damage from malnutrition during the 1,000 Days lasts a lifetime.

The percentage of children with stunted growth is an accurate indication of the severity of a nation's malnutrition burden. Being very short for one's age is the most obvious sign of chronic malnutrition, but stunting has far deeper implications. For their entire lives, stunted children will be more susceptible to both infectious and noninfectious diseases. Their cognitive development has also been stunted; they will finish fewer grades in school and earn less income.

This is obviously a tragedy for the children and their families. It also drains the potential for development of entire countries. In some developing countries, more than 40 percent of all children are stunted. The world—particularly developing countries—faces complex problems. We can't afford to miss the window of opportunity, tilting the odds permanently against so many children who are still toddlers.

The Copenhagen Consensus is a group of world-renowned economists who named fighting malnutrition the top priority and best use of development resources. As Nobel laureate economist Vernon Smith put it, "The benefits from [reducing malnutrition]—in terms of increased health, schooling, and productivity—are tremendous."

The good news is that we now know how to ensure that children are well-nourished at age 2—and it's not complicated. It requires straightforward actions such as ensuring that pregnant women get essential nutrients, supporting new mothers in breastfeeding exclusively for six months, treating children for worms and diarrheal diseases, and providing supplemental vitamins and minerals.

This may sound expensive, but the dollar figures, both in absolute terms and in the "return on investment" of giving children a fair chance in life, are



Laura Elizabeth Pohl/Bread for the World

Janaki Rana, 20, holds her 2-year-old daughter Binti outside the Nutrition Rehabilitation Hospital in Dhangadhi, Nepal, where Binti was once a patient.

2034 By now, drought in Ethiopia is projected to strike three years out of four. It will be the new normal.



The drop in students reaching their final year of school when stunting increases by 10 percent.

modest. For example, recent research by IFPRI shows that a specific package of nutrition actions could reduce chronic malnutrition by 36 percent. The cost? Just \$100 per child.

More good news—that child nutrition efforts can bring quick results—comes from the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Movement, a group of developing countries (31 at last count) and international organizations working together to expand effective nutrition actions during the 1,000 Days. SUN countries each develop a plan that includes specific targets to improve maternal/child nutrition.

SUN reports, “Countries which have taken concerted action to reduce [malnutrition] have shown remarkably fast rates of reduction. Brazil, Peru, Thailand and China are among these. This shows what can be done with the right policies and [programs] in place. Through SUN, these countries can influence and support others to do the same.”

SUN is part of the energy—the increased global leadership and political commitment of recent years—that is fueling progress against hunger. Many of the poorest countries are sharing in this progress.

The SUN Framework for Action includes tasks such as increasing children’s consumption of vitamins and minerals. “Making Snacks More Nutritious” was the theme of a meeting attended by Bread for the World Institute staff in Chaumala, a village outside the city of Dhangadhi in western Nepal. The gathering of about 25 women with young children was made possible by U.S. development assistance, which funded Nepal’s Action Against Malnutrition through Agriculture (AAMA) project.

Young women demonstrated how to prepare and cook the snack, cutlets made of potatoes and seasonal green vegetables coated in an egg-based batter. They are a more nutritious but still affordable alternative to plain fried potatoes. Afterward everyone sampled the cutlets, served with sliced sweet potato. Luckily, they were a hit with their most important critics—the toddlers who most need those nutrients.

Another key “component” of AAMA could be heard quite clearly: several squawking hens in a wooden coop. Parents need information (for example,



Laura Elizabeth Pohlt/Bread for the World

Sarmin Begum and her child Sun, 24 months, in Char Baria village, Barisal, Bangladesh.

15 percent:

The “emergency threshold” malnutrition rate, according to the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

36 percent:

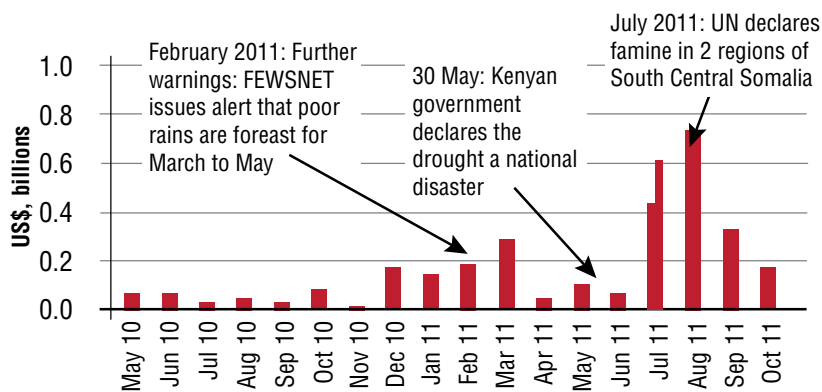
Malnutrition rate in southern Somalia when humanitarian aid began to rise significantly.

growing children need protein) and skills (how to incorporate two eggs into a family meal). But, of course, children won't actually consume more protein unless families can produce or purchase protein-rich foods. Training in poultry management is what makes it feasible to include eggs in the diets of young children from families of modest means. Once an AAMA participant receives training in how to keep poultry healthy, she is given a gift of five laying hens so her children can begin to benefit from eggs, a "renewable resource."

In Nepal, AAMA is implemented by U.S. nonprofit Helen Keller International. Its staff, almost all Nepali, keep careful records and use them to determine how well strategies or activities are working. During the five-year project, this region of Nepal improved by 42 percent to 92 percent in categories such as "the percentage of children ages 6 to 24 months who eat four or more food

groups a day" and "the percentage of women and children who eat a plant-source food rich in iron and Vitamin A every day." That translates into many more children who will be able to contribute fully to their communities.

Humanitarian funding for Ethiopia, Somalia, and Kenya, May 2010 to October 2011



Source: OCHA Financial Tracking Service

Hunger Emergencies: Hindsight Is 20/20

If there's one time when prompt international assistance is urgently needed to save lives, it is when famine strikes. The most devastating recent example is Somalia in 2011. How did as many as 100,000 Somali children die of hunger in just months? Will the world be able to prevent future famines?

Development assistance has no power to change many of the factors that contributed to the famine in Somalia. Two of these are armed conflict and the absence of a functioning national government; there are others.

But this does not mean there is nothing the global community can do to respond effectively to hunger emergencies and save many lives. One reason for hope is progress on developing early warning systems. U.S. development assistance funds the Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET), which relies on sophisticated



UN Photo/Stuart Price

In Mogadishu, Somalia, in July 2011, women wait for the distribution of food rations. They live in a camp for internally displaced people, having come to the capital city from other parts of Somalia in search of food.

methods of gathering and analyzing data (trends in weather, food prices, malnutrition rates, livestock mortality, and so on).

According to nonprofit development organizations Oxfam and Save the Children, in their 2012 report, *A Dangerous Delay: The Cost of Late Response to Early Warnings in the 2011 Drought in the Horn of Africa*, the early warning

system functioned well, raising concerns in August 2010 and again in November 2010. *A Dangerous Delay* argues that humanitarian relief would have done more good if donors and relief organizations had thought in terms of the likelihood and severity of a crisis (as the homeowner mentioned earlier did when considering gutter repairs).

“It would have been clear from around January 2011,” the report says, “that the high probability of poor March–May rains in the Horn of Africa, magnified by the failure of the previous rains in late 2010, would constitute a critical risk.”

Southern Somalia exceeded the U.N. trigger for emergency action—a malnutrition rate of 15 percent—in August 2010, when malnutrition reached 16 percent. By January 2011, it was 25 percent. But funding for relief did not rise significantly until August 2011, once famine was declared.

As the saying goes, “Hindsight is 20/20.” Donors may have worried that releasing emergency funding unnecessarily or prematurely would be worse. (“What if it’s not as bad as they say, and we look like we’re wasting money?”) Or: “What if we spend the money, and later there’s a *real* emergency?”). Decision makers should carefully weigh the details of the early warnings, and the potential consequences of not sending help in time, against these concerns.

As the *Dangerous Delay* report points out, record high malnutrition rates are not the early warning. They are the disaster itself. Not responding quickly means the costs are largely borne by children under 2, since even short periods of malnutrition can cause them long-term damage.

Where Prevention Really Starts

Southern Somalia had an acute malnutrition rate of 16 percent—higher among young children—“before” the crisis, when no one was calling the situation an emergency. Everyday life is perilous for most Somalis. In richer countries, we often consider disasters an exception to normal life. A “state of emergency” is declared, help is rushed in, and we expect that, even after major disasters such as Hurricane Sandy in 2012, things will return to normal.

In poor countries, where the lines are far more blurred, thinking of hunger caused by “disaster” as separate from “normal,” everyday hunger may interfere with the search for lasting solutions. After all, airlifts of emergency supplies won’t continue indefinitely, but cycles of “disaster” and “normal” may, particularly given climate change.

What’s needed, but not yet in place, is a bridge between assistance for emergencies and sustainable development. U.S. development assistance should focus on enabling poor communities to build resilience—equipping and supporting them to develop strategies to cope with the many factors beyond their control. Greater resilience is urgent now and will only grow more urgent. USAID took an important step forward in December 2012 with the launch of its first-ever Resiliency Policy.

Resilience can, in fact, be built. Ethiopia is Somalia’s neighbor and its people also suffered greatly during the 2011 drought. But because “building resilience” was already under way, Ethiopian children did not die by the thousands, and far fewer people needed emergency aid than during the previous drought.

Myths & Realities

Myth: Not much can be done to improve child nutrition without money—a lot of it.

Reality: For about \$8, a child can be provided with a package of nutrients and medications designed to help prevent irreversible damage from malnutrition. Thus, the United States helps large numbers of children even with our current modest nutrition assistance budget (about \$95 million a year).

Nutrition during the 1,000-day window is in the category of “things it’s too expensive *not* to do,” since it can cost a country as much as 11 percent of its economic output in lost productivity, not to mention significant extra healthcare costs.

Realizing how critical early nutrition is, national governments are the main investors in SUN countries’ nutrition initiatives. Ghana, Nepal, and Tanzania, for example, have tripled national resources dedicated to nutrition.



Myth: There’s nothing we can do to prevent famine. It’s been happening for thousands of years.

Reality: Drought, hurricanes, and the like are natural phenomena. People cannot prevent or control them. Famine in the 21st century is a human failure. It happens simply because people who need help do not receive it in time.

In many instances, prevention is far less costly than post-famine recovery efforts. In Ethiopia, for example, studies showed that restocking sheep and goats cost at least 6 times more than providing food for animals so they could survive drought. Restocking cattle cost 14 times more than supplementary feeding.



Todd Post/Bread for the World

A person's development starts with good nutrition in the 1,000 Days; a nation's development includes economic opportunity, the rule of law, and safety net programs.

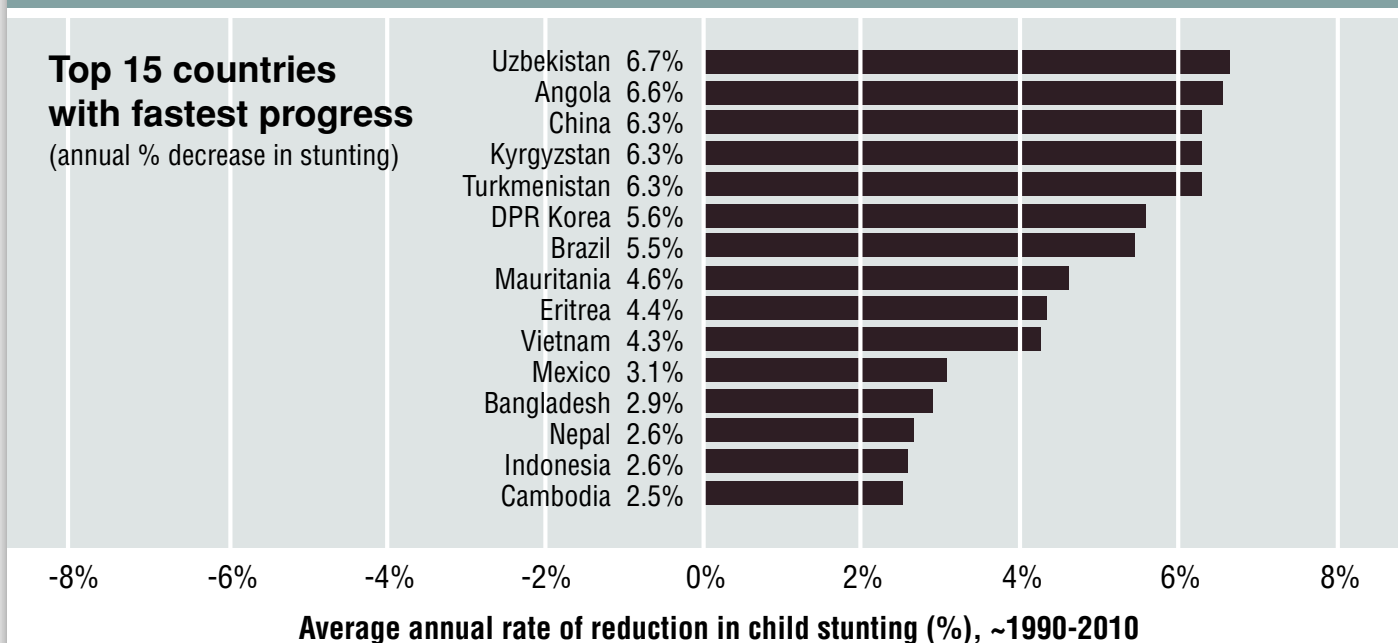
In the intervening years, Ethiopia established a Productive Safety Net Program, established new health centers that enabled many more people to reach nutrition support in 2011, and made efforts to help the most vulnerable diversify their ways of earning a living.

U.S. development assistance helped. A Pastoralist Livelihood Initiative project improved livestock survival rates by 10 percent, which made a big difference as families started over. Another U.S.-funded project, in Ethiopia's Oromiya region, gave participants food in exchange for clearing an access road to the nearest town. The road is making a lasting difference to the local economy because it cuts the time to get crops to market from about three days to only half a day.

Development assistance can't wait for a more convenient time because it is about human beings and our basic needs—needs that cannot be changed. U.S. development assistance can help people become well-nourished and resilient, but only if we don't put off making it available.

Further Thoughts

Countries Making the Fastest Gains Against Child Malnutrition



Source: Save the Children, State of the World's Mothers 2012, using data from WHO, UNICEF, and national surveys.

Development Assistance: A Key Part of the Immigration Puzzle



Laura Elizabeth Pohl/Bread for the World

Development agencies are beginning to recognize the importance of programs that ease migration pressures and assist farmers like Mario Espinosa, shown on his land in Chiapas, Mexico.

SNAPSHOT

- Undocumented immigrants frequently leave their families behind, go into debt to pay for difficult journeys, risk being victimized by organized gangs or dying of dehydration in the desert while attempting to cross the U.S. border, and are confined to low-paying work because they do not have the legal right to work here.
- Unauthorized immigrants, arriving from rural communities in Mexico and Central America, are primarily healthy people in their teens, twenties, or thirties. Yet poverty combined with lack of economic opportunity at home lead them to see migration to the United States as their best option.
- U.S. immigration has both domestic and international dimensions. To make the best decisions on immigration policies, we need to consider how the U.S. assistance going to immigrants' home countries can best contribute to lasting improvements in rural economies and living conditions. Development agencies are beginning to incorporate into their Latin American projects the easing of pressures to migrate.

This resource, *Development Works*, focuses on effective international development assistance and why Americans should support it. At first glance, immigration may seem like a completely unrelated topic, since people tend to think of it mainly in terms of its impact inside the United States. For most of us, immigration is less about international policy than about hot-button national, state, and local political questions. The reality is that it is both a domestic and an international issue. To make the best decisions as a nation on the complex questions of immigration policy, we need to see both dimensions. The crux of the missing international half is “Why do immigrants leave their home country and come to the United States?”

The common description of the United States as a “nation of immigrants” is, of course, quite accurate. From the time impoverished people in England paid for a fresh start in the American colonies by working as indentured servants, the country has been shaped by the waves of immigration that gave us the population mix we have today. Throughout U.S. history, immigrants have made long, sometimes dangerous journeys here for a variety of reasons. Some were brought here against their will (e.g., during the Atlantic slave trade in the 1700s), while others sought to escape hunger (e.g., during the Irish potato famine

in the 1840s), or violence (e.g., in the 1930s and 1940s, before and during the Nazi genocide).

First-generation immigrants of any era have often faced difficulties, struggling to earn a living while adapting to a new language and culture. People who were already living here sometimes viewed them with disdain or outright hostility. Their legal situations varied as well. Sometimes new arrivals entered legally in large numbers—through Ellis Island, for example. Sometimes laws prohibited an entire group, such as people from China, from entering the country at all.

Life as an “Illegal”

In recent years, of course, it has primarily been immigrants from Mexico and Central America, particularly those who are here without authorization, who are at the heart of the immigration debate. In many cases, they have become integral parts of their new communities—particularly children and teenagers, who soon sound just like everyone else in school. But all too often, their reception is influenced by anxiety about social and economic changes and what these might mean for American citizens. Such concerns are one of the primary motivations behind proposals such as building a fence along the entire southern border or requiring all non-citizens to produce on demand proof that they are here legally.

The position of today’s unauthorized immigrants is rarely an enviable one. Many people have left all their family members behind, whether that means preschool children, spouses, or elderly parents. They generally have few available resources to make their travel easier. In fact, many arrive

already deeply in debt from efforts to obtain a legal work permit and/or from fees charged by “coyotes,” guides who promise to help people cross into the United States illegally. Those coming from Central America face particularly long journeys and the additional risk of being detained and deported by Mexican authorities. They come chiefly from Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras.

The U.S.-Mexico border is a dangerous one. Criminals, including organized gangs associated with drug trafficking, abuse would-be immigrants and extort money from them. The natural environment, particularly the desert that is the burial ground of dozens of people every year, is another enemy. The “coyotes”



Jeffrey Austin

Deported immigrants are dropped off by U.S. officials along the Arizona-Mexico border.

11.7 million:

the number of people in Mexico living in extreme poverty, unable to meet their basic food needs.

More than half:

the number of Honduran children ages 6 months to 2 years who are anemic.

sometimes prove unscrupulous and abandon immigrants to find their own way through a barren landscape.

Once in the United States, unauthorized immigrants must quickly find a place to stay and a job that doesn't require "papers" to get hired. Most often, this work turns out to be in agriculture, construction, or the low-wage service sector.

People who were born here rarely work as hired farm laborers, while immigrants, whether documented or undocumented, may already be skilled farmers and are, in any case, usually not in a position to turn down work of any kind. Many farm laborers work seasonally, lowering their annual incomes to an average \$11,000. Not surprisingly, they suffer food shortages and hunger far more frequently than the overall U.S. population.

Other unauthorized immigrants find jobs as dishwashers or kitchen assistants in restaurants, house or office cleaners, babysitters, casual "day" laborers, or construction workers.

Because they usually have little flexibility to change jobs and are seldom eligible for promotions, undocumented workers have less control over their working conditions and schedules than other workers. They run the risk of being detained and deported if their worksite comes under scrutiny or they are simply in the wrong place at the wrong time. They cannot leave the country for any reason—the death of a parent, a child's serious illness—without gambling on whether they will be able to return safely.

Despite all of this, illegal immigrants view migrating to the United States as the best option they have. They are not so much going to a place as they are escaping from a place. Generally, unauthorized immigration is prompted by poverty and the lack of opportunities to earn a living either at home or in a nearby city. Unless conditions at home change, most of the difficult decisions to migrate to the United States will not change either. One way for U.S. immigration policy to address this issue is through development assistance, which can offer a cost-effective, humane response.



Richard Leonard/Bread for the World

Families often use remittances from relatives working in the United States to help pay for basic needs such as food and children's school fees.

"The Face of Reality"

Mexico, Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala are considered "lower middle-income" countries, meaning that their annual income per person falls between approximately \$1,000 and \$4,000. The problem of poverty is com-



About **78 percent**: the percentage of Guatemala's indigenous children who are stunted (a sign of long-term malnutrition).

More than **6 times** as high: the rate of stunting among children in the poorest 20 percent of Salvadorans, compared to children in the richest 20 percent.

plicated by severe economic inequality in all four countries, particularly in the rural areas that are home to most people who migrate to the United States. This is why it's important to put average income statistics in context. Simply stating that a given country has an average income of \$2,500 masks the numbers used to arrive at this figure. Was the figure calculated by combining one person's income of \$16,000 with 14 other people's incomes of less than \$1,500? Or with income levels that are more equal than this? Less equal than this?

In San Marcos, a poor region of Guatemala that borders Mexico, the top 1 percent of the population owns close to half (47 percent) of the land, while 85 percent of the population lives in poverty. Low incomes combined with inequality on this scale are a recipe for hunger and malnutrition. The number of malnourished people in Guatemala more than doubled between 1990 and 2008. In 2009, nearly half of all children under 5 were malnourished, a situation that will have a devastating impact not only on individual children and their families, but on the future of the country. Malnutrition in early childhood—particularly before age 2—causes lifelong damage that is reflected in a person's health, educational achievements, and even lifetime earnings.

Parents whose children aren't getting enough to eat are generally searching intensively for ways to earn enough money for food. Chuck Barrett works on economic development in Mexico for Catholic Relief Services (CRS). He talks about immigration without mincing words: "[Immigration is caused by] the devastation in the rural economy in Mexico. To work in [Mexico] without thinking about this link would be turning away from the face of reality." In interviews conducted by Bread for the World Institute, other specialists working in-country concurred with Barrett's assessment.

Development agencies are actually just beginning to recognize that their programs in Mexico and Central America could be designed to help ease migration pressures. There are, however, at least a handful of models that show how these programs could work.

Apples and Poultry

In the village of Avila Camacho, Mexico—about 200 miles south of El Paso, TX, in the state of Chihuahua—CRS is working with several partners to help apple growers increase their incomes. The partners include the Frente Democrático Campesino (FDC or Farmers' Democratic Front), an organization that represents 5,000 small and medium-sized farmers in the state, and the Vista Hermosa Foundation—the charitable arm of a sizeable orchard in Washington state, most of whose workers come from Mexico.

"It was such a natural fit for us as apple farmers to be working with these farmers in Mexico who were living well below the poverty line," said Suzanne Broetje, Vista Hermosa's executive director and a Bread board member. "[They were] caught up in losing their land and migrating north in search of work."

CRS and Vista Hermosa support technical assistance for the apple farmers, some of it provided by people from the area who have years of experience in U.S. orchards. Mexican apple growers are learning strat-

A woman feeds chickens as part of a diaspora investment project in Verapaz, El Salvador.



Courtesy of Andrew Walner

egies proven to improve apple quality. With improved produce and better knowledge of the market, farmers can increase the income generated by their orchards—giving them a potential alternative to migration.

The international funding provided by CRS and Vista Hermosa helped the FDC secure matching funds from the Mexican Ministry of Agriculture for a cold storage facility, so that apple farmers don't have to pay others to store their crops. "We now have the 'hook' to get the resources we need," said FDC advisor Jesus Emiliano. "Now that we have some money for the project, we ask [the government], 'How much are you going to put in?'"

Another potential example of how to develop alternatives to migration is found in a chicken coop in the village of Verapaz, about 30 miles east of El Salvador's capital, San Salvador. This project brings together the government of El Salvador, the Ford Foundation, the Salvadoran immigrant community (or diaspora) in Los Angeles, and a Salvadoran nongovernmental organization. The poultry program is specifically intended to generate employment and provide alternatives to unauthorized migration.

The idea for the project came from Salvadorans living in the diaspora in Los Angeles. Their organization, the Emergency Committee for Aid to El Salvador, was originally focused on disaster relief. Later, its members became interested in supporting efforts to create jobs and livelihoods in their home communities in El Salvador's rural areas.

The Verapaz project began in 2010 with the participation of the local government and the Ministry of Agriculture. The project is managed by 15 local women who maintain the chicken coop; gather, clean, and package the eggs; and sell them at a local market. Participants said the eggs generate about \$1,300 a month. They earned a small profit in 2011 but seek to expand so that the operation provides a viable job for all 15 participants. To serve as a realistic alternative to immigration, the poultry program needs to enable each woman to earn at least \$300 a month.

This project is a small work in progress. But its partnerships and innovative channeling of contributions from immigrants in the United States make it a potential model for job creation.

A Role for U.S. Development Assistance

The projects in Avila Camacho and Verapaz are not the only projects seeking to produce jobs and reduce poverty in the migrant-sending communities of Mexico, El Salvador, and their neighbors. Projects may be supported by local people themselves through groups like the FDC, by U.S. nonprofit groups such as Vista Hermosa, and/or by diaspora groups such as the Salvadoran

Myths & Realities

Myth: Immigrants are taking jobs away from U.S. citizens.

Reality: It seems like a good bet that "subtracting immigrants" from the workforce would lower America's stubbornly high unemployment rates. After all, then there would be job openings. But only about 2 percent of Americans work on farms. The reality is that there have been numerous attempts to recruit citizens to do field work—even at jobs that pay more than minimum wage—but none of them have been successful on a large scale.

In our abandonment of farm labor as a common occupation, Americans are not alone. Other developed countries—and developing countries that are a bit wealthier than their neighbors—also have agricultural work forces dominated by immigrants. El Salvador, while the source of many workers on U.S. farms, is itself home to about 200,000 unauthorized immigrants who work on its own farms.



Myth: The United States doesn't need to worry about immigration issues beyond just deporting the unauthorized immigrants themselves.

Reality: Immigration enforcement is expensive—for example, in 2010 it cost the Department of Homeland Security an estimated \$1 billion to detain and deport 76,000 Central Americans.

Yet if conditions in their home communities have not improved, people who have been deported don't "stay deported." In recent surveys, for example, 43 percent of those deported to Central America say they plan to return to the United States within a year. The figure is even higher among those who left family members behind in the United States.

When workers are deported, the money they are saving from their U.S. jobs and sending home stops—worsening the situation in impoverished migrant-sending communities. This is not a minor concern—for example, in 2011 the money sent home (called "remittances") comprised 17 percent and 16 percent, respectively, of Honduras' and El Salvador's total economic outputs.

In reality, we can only ease our concerns about unauthorized immigration by helping to stop what is causing it: hunger and poverty in the communities of those willing to risk illegal border crossings.



Laura Elizabeth Pohl/Bread for the World

Marvin Jesus and his family, in a small town near Comitán, Mexico. Mexico has a fairly young population, so creating new jobs is an important part of making progress on development.

million, or .01 percent of total U.S. assistance. Yet because the cause of most unauthorized migration is poverty and lack of jobs in Mexico's rural areas, projects that create more opportunities in poor communities can help ease the pressures to migrate.

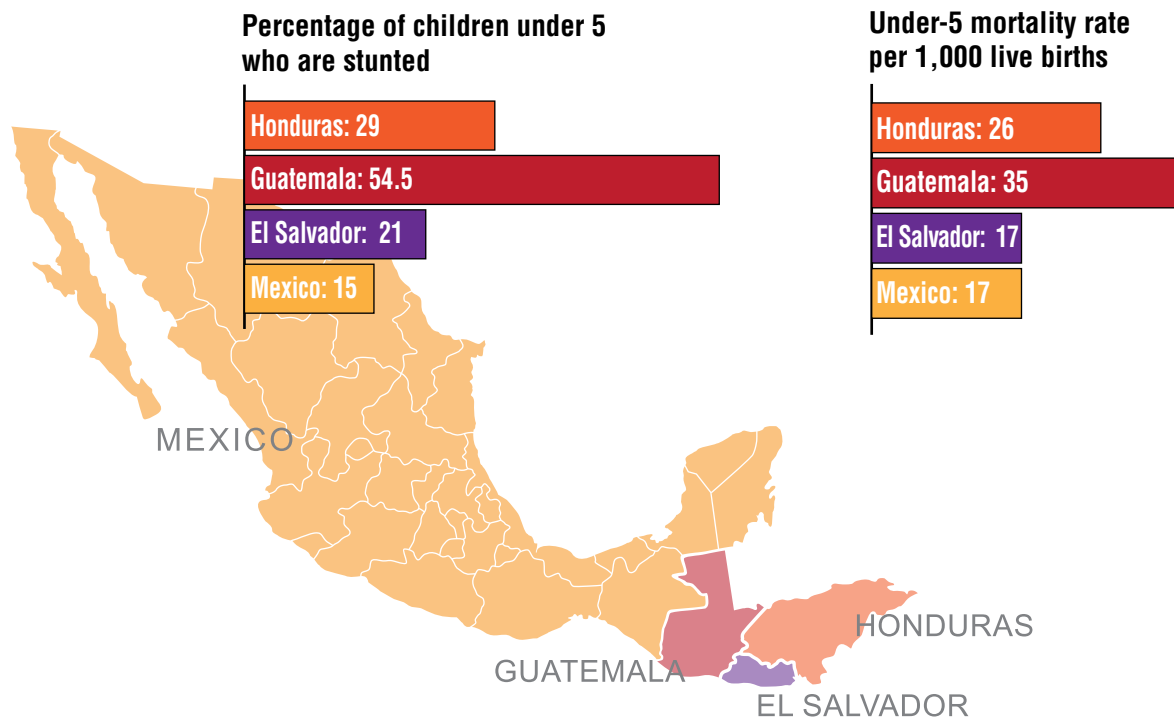
community in Los Angeles. But there could be many more—and U.S. development assistance could help design and support them.

One way for U.S. development agencies to help is by providing ingredients that evaluations of some of these job-creation efforts have identified as most needed—particularly technical assistance. Potentially, financial resources could be targeted to expand successful programs. Just one possibility is thinking more broadly about the use of the U.S. assistance that goes to Latin American immigrant-“sending” countries.

In 2009, for example, 96 percent of U.S. assistance to Mexico was spent on military and drug enforcement assistance. Assistance that could be directed toward job-creation projects totaled \$11.2

Further Thoughts

Children and Hunger: A Reason to Migrate



Sources: FAO, Country Profile: Food Security Indicators, Mexico; World Bank, Nutrition at a Glance fact sheets, Central America series. Data from 2008.

Development Assistance: Where Does It Lead?



Laura Elizabeth Pohl/Bread for the World

Sandesh Rai (leaning forward), 5, and his mom Sapana Rai (in yellow) wait for a nutrition education seminar to start in Bandarkharka, Nepal. An increasing share of Nepali children are surviving to celebrate their fifth birthdays thanks to better nutrition and basic health care.

SNAPSHOT

- Today, one in six people around the world is malnourished—far too many, but only half as many as 50 years ago. In just the past 20 years, the percentage of people living in extreme poverty has been cut in half.
- Such dramatic progress shows that it is now well within human capabilities to end mass hunger and extreme poverty within a generation.
- The idea of “building resilience” is simply that poor communities can better fight hunger by identifying potential threats to their livelihoods and developing workable alternatives before they are desperately needed.
- Safety net programs are a key part of building resilience. Emergency feeding programs, too, can distribute food in exchange for work that contributes to the community’s future food security.
- Country-led plans to reduce hunger help build the resilience of the country itself. U.S. assistance helps support these plans. Countries with effective governments and strong civil societies are also more resilient.

Just 50 years ago, one person in three around the world was malnourished. Now, hunger is less common, affecting one in six people. Has there been enough progress if “only” one-sixth of the global population is hungry? No. But it’s a big improvement over a time—still in living memory—when twice as many people were hungry.

In just the past two decades the global community has also made impressive progress:

- The percentage of people living in extreme poverty (on less than \$1.25/day) has been cut in half.
- Low-income countries as well as wealthier nations are making rapid progress against child mortality. For example, Liberia, Rwanda, and Bangladesh have each reduced their child death rate by more than two-thirds.
- In 1990, an estimated 12 million children younger than 5 died of preventable causes, while by 2011, this number was less than 7 million. Measuring child mortality in the millions means there is a long way to go. Still, each year 5 million young lives are being saved, children who would have died in 1990.
- About 80 percent of the global population now has access to safe drinking water close to their homes.
- Polio is near eradication: this deadly and disabling disease is vying with guinea worm disease to become the second dis-



Laura Elizabeth Pohl/Bread for the World

Friends who are part of the jjajja (grandmother) group at St. Francis Healthcare Services in Jinja, Uganda, laugh over their lunch. The group provides health care, education and income-generating opportunities for grandmothers, many of whom take care of grandchildren orphaned by HIV/AIDS.

ease, after smallpox, eradicated through human effort. The number of polio cases has fallen by more than 99 percent since 1988.

- The President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) began in 2003. In 2012, the United States supported life-saving antiretroviral treatment for more than 5 million people. The cost of a year's worth of antiretroviral medication has dropped to \$100. 2012 was also the year that, for the first time, health officials said that an AIDS-free generation was possible.
- Africa will have the world's highest rate of economic growth for at least the next five years, propelled by several of the 10 fastest-growing economies. Ethiopia, Mozambique, Tanzania, Ghana, Zambia, and Nigeria are all expected to expand their economies by more than 6 percent a year until 2015.

The dramatic reductions in global hunger and extreme poverty over the past two generations prove that—now, if not in the past—it is well within human capabilities to end mass hunger and extreme poverty within a generation. The deaths from malnutrition of hundreds of thousands of young children year after year can become not just “preventable,” but prevented.

\$1

Recent U.N. estimate of cost of keeping a child from slipping into malnutrition.

\$80

Recent U.N. estimate of cost of treating a child for malnutrition.

In Search of Options

In essay 5, we mentioned the importance of enabling people to become more resilient to outside shocks. People in poor countries often need exceptional flexibility and creativity just to secure the very basics. To be truly resilient in the difficult conditions they face, the poorest people may need not only a “plan B,” but a “plan C,” a “plan D,” and the ability to combine plans as necessary.

With no possibility of putting money aside for emergencies, families are extremely vulnerable. A minor injury or illness, an increase in food prices, the death of a sheep or goat—any of these may force a family to cut back on food, take children out of school, and sell anything of value. Some possible ways of earning more money—perhaps by buying a sewing machine or taking a training course—are now out of the question. For these families, even a “minor” drought or flood is beyond catastrophic. Life may become literally impossible.

The 2011 Horn of Africa hunger crisis made headlines here. It was immediately followed by a drought that received far less Western media coverage—even though it led to serious food shortages for 18 million people in the Sahel, the region that borders Africa’s Sahara Desert. It was the Sahel’s third drought in four years.

How can the cycles of one emergency after another be interrupted? The 2012 U.N. High-Level Meeting on the Sahel Crisis concluded that the first order of business is to establish social safety nets, particularly for women and children. A way to get help before children become severely malnourished would save lives, suffering, and money.

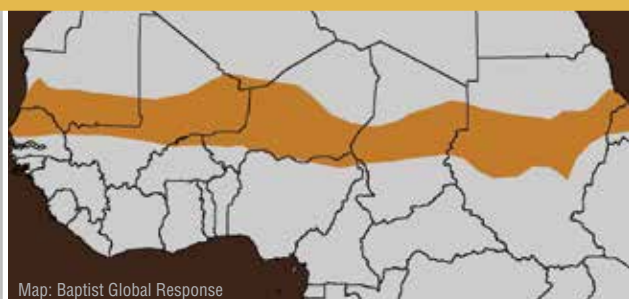
People need to have their present-day needs met before they can put energy into a future goal such as preventing next year’s crisis. Safety net programs are thus a key part of building resilience since they enable people to keep assets such as livestock and to pause long enough to consider how they can diversify the ways they earn a living.

Even during an acute hunger crisis, some emergency programs can simultaneously help make the next crisis less severe. A program called “food for work” is just what it sounds like: everyone in need receives food, and in exchange,



Jean-Philippe Debus/Catholic Relief Services

Women carrying home water in Miel, Abala district, Niger, where Catholic Relief Services is helping improve the village wells.



Map: Baptist Global Response

3 Years out of the past four that the Sahel region has suffered a severe drought.

18 Million People at risk in nine African Sahel countries in early 2012.

those who are able to work do so. The work contributes to the community's future food security—for example, improving a road used to reach a market town or clearing a pond that can then be stocked with fish.

Communities should also seek to use their human resources as effectively as possible. Young adults often have new ideas and the energy and enthusiasm to try different ways of doing things. Women are another group with unique strengths: “Despite the fact that women ... often bear the heaviest burden of shock and stresses,” USAID notes, “they also possess enormous individual and collective capacity to help themselves, their families, and their communities.” A recent study in Sudan found that women were more likely than men to effectively use available local resources in diversification strategies.

The thinking behind “resilience” programs is simply that poor communities can better fight hunger and malnutrition by identifying potential threats to their main ways of earning a living and developing workable alternatives—*before* they are desperately needed.

David Gressly, U.N. Regional Humanitarian Coordinator for the Sahel, lists some actions that, along with safety net programs, help communities build resilience: reducing chronic child malnutrition, improving irrigation and drainage systems, diversifying food sources, finding better ways to preserve food stocks, and constructing dams to store water that will later irrigate crops.

For four Sahel farmers in Burkina Faso, West Africa, the key to resilience was a viable alternative to rain-fed crops. In early 2012, drought destroyed most of their maize crop. But thanks to an earlier U.S.-funded program to expand the options of rain-fed crop farmers, the farmers had plots of land where they had planted more resilient crops. The development program had helped secure the farmers' access to land and also provided training for new crops and funding for small-scale irrigation efforts. USAID reports that the women continue to support their families with the profits from their dry season gardens. One member of the group, Safieta, explains: “We chose onions because if the water pump fails for a few days, they're strong enough to survive.” She adds: “I am resilient now. Just like the onions.”

Al Hassan Cisse, the Sahel regional food security advocacy coordinator for the development organization Oxfam, added that another key to resilience is better grain storage. “Building the resilience of poor people means investing in food reserves because one of the [aggravating] factors of food crisis over the past year is the high food prices,” he said.

Another agricultural priority, as identified by the High-Level Meeting on the Sahel Crisis, is promoting drought resistant production, which will require preserving ecosystems and eliminating pests and locusts.

It's also important to plan for resilient development program—for example, when donor funding ends. Nepal's Action Against Malnutrition through Agriculture (AAMA), whose nutrition and poultry programs were mentioned earlier in *Development Works*, is preparing for sustainability using strategies such as training trainers, seeking modest resources from village councils, and encouraging successful participants to give chicks to women just getting started.



A man in Senegal demonstrates the use of a handcrank water pump.

USAID's Resilience Policy focuses on the root causes of vulnerability and on coordination with local partners (for example, as a member of the Global Alliance for Action for Drought Resilience and Growth in the Horn of Africa and of the Global Alliance for Resilience in the Sahel, both formed in 2012). Its five-year goal in the Horn of Africa is to benefit 10 million people directly and reduce the need for emergency relief by 1 million people. One example of work toward this goal is extending the impact of the Arid Lands Recovery Program in Kenya by strengthening drought adaptation efforts.

In the Sahel as well, USAID will concentrate on the most vulnerable ecological zones. One project will help build on local communities' work against desertification: together, water harvesting and a technique for regenerating native vegetation from the mature root systems of cleared trees and shrubs have already "re-greened" more than 5 million hectares (12.5 million acres) of semi-desert land.

Country-Led Development: Building Resilient Nations

The concept of resilience also applies, more broadly, to nations. It's a little more abstract than family efforts to build resilience—which might be learning which plants can grow alongside maize yet prosper with less rain, or organizing a group of neighbors to start a beekeeping business—but it's the same idea. How do countries become more resilient?

The Great Recession and very slow economic recovery showed that our country's own capacity to "bounce back" is not always quick or complete. High poverty rates also show that the country's resilience does not extend to all who live here. Still, previous experience gives Americans reason for optimism that the country can manage to rise to its challenges. Although we have far too many hungry people for such a wealthy country, there is also a social safety net. Starvation deaths are very rare here.

Many factors contribute to the United States' relatively strong ability to cope with shocks—including a diversified economy, good governance, financial and human resources, and the rule of law. From the framers of the Constitution onward, building and maintaining resilience has been a process led by Americans—people who live here and understand local conditions.

Today, the need for such "country-led" development is recognized as a necessity for effective foreign assistance. Many low-income countries have developed their own detailed plans to reduce hunger and extreme poverty but lack the resources to carry them out fully. U.S. assistance helps support such country-led development plans.

In 2003, the Millennium Challenge Account (MCA) was established. It gives additional development assistance based on countries' commitment to "root out corruption, respect human rights, and adhere to the rule of law." Applicants receive help in identifying their key weaknesses in qualifying for MCA funding. The MCA requires countries to consult with their civil societies to ensure that funding is responding to problems that are top priorities of local people.

Many critical factors in development are beyond the control of low-income countries themselves—whether it's restrictive trade policies, climate change,

Myths & Realities

Myth: There is little that very poor people can do to reduce their vulnerability. The only thing we can do is keep sending humanitarian assistance to ease their suffering when disaster strikes.

Reality: Low-income people are as eager as others to improve their lives when they have an opportunity. Just one example is the popularity of "microlending," the practice of making modest loans, as little as \$50, to individuals or groups to start small businesses. The original program was in Bangladesh; microlending later spread to many other countries. Overall, there has been an excellent track record of repayment on the microloans, and many borrowers have been able to expand their businesses and later qualify for larger loans.

Experience shows that committed leadership can bring about rapid reductions in hunger and extreme poverty. Notably, Brazil reduced the percentage of its people living in extreme poverty from 10 percent to 2 percent in just five years, 2004-2009. Also in 2009, the country's income inequality hit a 50-year low. In November 2012, Luiz Lula da Silva, former president of Brazil and 2011 World Food Prize laureate, agreed to work with the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the African Union to pursue their "shared vision" of a hunger-free Africa through a coordinated campaign against malnutrition and food insecurity.



Myth: Development assistance is a big part of the U.S. budget and is fueling our record budget deficits.

Reality: Development assistance is less than 1 percent of the U.S. budget, so cutting it would not fix the budget deficit. It does, however, save millions of lives every year.



Assistance from USAID micro-loan programs and agricultural programs has improved crop production, including income growth for these farmers and vendors in Sudan.

volatility in global food prices, an economic downturn in industrialized economies that means less money sent home by immigrants, or something else.

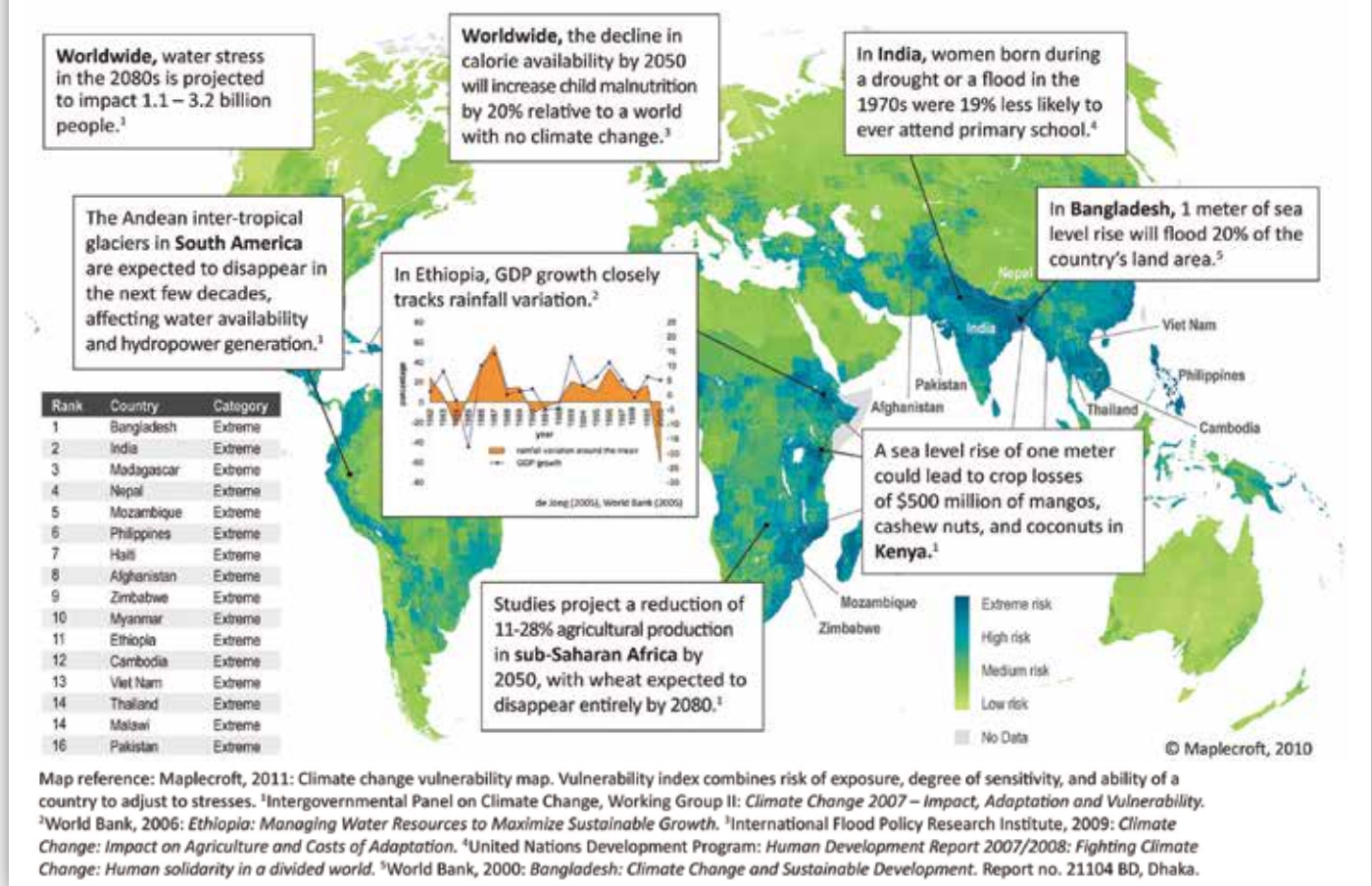
But government leadership in seeking and implementing solutions for hunger and poor people can mean even more. Countries with effective governments are more resilient. The United States provides some technical support to national and local governments in matters such as regulation, purchasing policies, improving services, and engaging more closely with citizens. This type of capacity-building program could be expanded in the future to build further government capacity to be effective.

In turn, a strong civil society is important to help ensure effective governance and hold governments accountable. U.S. government engagement with civil society overseas supports, for example, efforts to establish an independent media and strengthen local nongovernmental organizations so they can better advocate for their communities.

Building resilience in families and communities and building resilience in countries reinforce each other. It becomes easier to establish a resilient national government when there are fewer poor and desperate people, and it is easier for families and communities to become more resilient when government is there to support their efforts and protect the most vulnerable.

Further Thoughts

Anticipated Global Impacts of Climate Change on Key Development Measures



Development Needs All Hands on Deck



UN Photo/Tobin Jones

A trainee police officer in Somalia. Both opening professions to women and increasing women's presence in visible public roles improves a woman's ability to hold a job that pays enough to support her children.

SNAPSHOT

- Gender inequality is a main cause of hunger. Fortunately, it's also true that improvements in women's status have brought significant progress against hunger.
- Conditions that interfere with women's ability to earn a living—such as lack of education—contribute directly to hunger and disease in their families. Thus, greater workplace equality and economic opportunities for women are essential to making lasting progress against hunger.
- Today more than ever, global, regional, and national economies don't have the “luxury” of wasting time and talent simply because they are women's time and talent.
- The United States is supporting women's empowerment by integrating gender considerations into all aspects of development assistance. Recent policies recognize that in order to be effective, development assistance must treat women as full participants.

What are the most important causes of hunger and poverty? Gender inequality might not be among your first guesses—but it is in fact one of two principal factors behind Africa's continued food insecurity, according to the 2012 *Africa Human Development Report*. (The second is bias against rural areas).

There's more and more evidence that gender inequality is a leading cause of hunger. Fortunately, it's equally true that *reducing* gender inequality *reduces* hunger.

Analysts at the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) looked back at the years 1970-1995, a period of significant decline in child malnutrition. What made this progress possible? A larger supply of food available per person certainly seems like a good explanation, and this was in fact something that helped. But the IFPRI analysis found that it was responsible for only about 26 percent of the improvement. Gains in women's education explained 43 percent of it.

Think about it: sending girls to school was more effective against child malnutrition than *having more food available*. Why? It's largely because worldwide, women carry the major responsibility for providing for their families. Conditions that interfere with women's ability to earn a living—such as lack of education—contribute directly to hunger and disease among their children, both boys and girls.

“Work” Versus “Women’s Work”

Better economic prospects for women benefit entire families. There’s solid evidence from all over the world that women are much more likely to spend any additional income on food, health care, and education for their children. This means, of course, that workplace equality is essential to making lasting progress against hunger.

In both industrialized and developing economies, many people still work in jobs heavily dominated by one gender or the other. This is changing in some countries and in some professions. But enabling women to work to their full potential doesn’t require a society to achieve gender balance in every job category. Rather, what’s needed is respect for the contributions of every worker and a commitment to removing barriers so that no job is completely closed to either women or men.

The world is starting from a very low point on women’s engagement in the workforce. Most women continue to struggle with heavy workloads, low pay, and few opportunities to improve their lives. For many, “gender equality” is just a phrase—it’s not something that’s real.

The impact of women’s economic empowerment reaches beyond improving the lives of individuals and their families, important as that is. Today more than ever, global, regional, and national economies don’t have the “luxury” of wasting time and talent because of gender bias. As then-Secretary of State Hillary

Clinton said in 2011, “To achieve the economic expansion we all seek, we need to unlock a vital source of growth [women’s work] that can power our economies in the decades to come.”

“We have to move “women’s issues” from the margins... and recognize that the issues are not only about women’s roles, but are about the kind of world we want to create,” said Ambassador Melanne Verveer, the first-ever U.S. Ambassador-at-Large for Global Women’s Issues. Development depends on the kinds of economic activities that a nation or community chooses to prioritize. That’s where the resources—financial, material, human, political—will be directed. That’s what will *actually get done*. To spur economic development, “women’s work” must be treated as simply “work.”

Ambassador Verveer’s job is to promote women’s empowerment in the ways U.S. foreign policy is put into practice. Another new tool in this American



UN Photo/Stuart Price

A shoe seller displays her wares in Hamar Weyne market, Mogadishu, Somalia, August 2013.

97

Girls in high school for every 100 boys in high school, worldwide, 2010

1 in 2

Mothers ages 30-35 in Kenya with sole financial responsibility for their children



effort is the U.S. Agency for International Development's (USAID) Policy for Gender Equality and Female Empowerment, released in February 2012. Its main goal is to make women, girls, and gender issues central to U.S. development assistance.

The policy recognizes that in order to be effective, development assistance must involve women fully in food security, health, economic development, technology, government, climate change, and other areas. It also guides USAID in organizing foreign assistance under one umbrella—gender equality.

As Ritu Sharma, president of Women Thrive Worldwide, explains, “It is a big step forward from special, small, separate women’s projects and towards true integration of half the world’s population in our country’s international assistance.”

A similar coordinated effort for gender equality in U.S. assistance is under way at the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC). In March 2011, MCC released its Gender Integration Guidelines. In 2012, the agency added a Gender in the Economy item to the list of criteria it uses to choose partner countries. It assesses women’s legal status—whether they can legally sign a contract, open a bank account, and carry out other activities related to earning a living.

Of course, economic development depends primarily on a country’s own initiatives—a combination of the work of national and local governments, the private sector, communities, and individuals. In low-income countries, development assistance from the United States and others can also contribute to progress.

Traditionally, the global private sector has been far less active in countries seen as too poor to provide a new customer base. The exceptions tend to be oil, minerals, or other natural resource interests. But this is changing—particularly when it comes to women.

Christine Lagarde, managing director of the International Monetary Fund, said in a January 2013 presentation that while early corporate initiatives focused on philanthropy and on industries that market specifically to women, such as consumer packaged goods, “Now, even industries traditionally considered men’s—automotive, oil, investment banking—are finding common cause with women and girls.”



Sudanese women use a press to extract oil from lulu nuts. A U.S.-funded livelihoods program helps support dozens of processing centers, owned and operated by women, that produce shea butter moisturizer and soap and provide a significant source of income for 850 Sudanese women and their families.

17 percent • 20 percent • 10 percent

Percentage of India’s doctors, dentists, and pharmacists, respectively, who are female

1 in 7

Girls in developing countries who are married **before their 15th birthday**

Lagarde urges the private sector to share with national governments the compelling evidence that women are not only valuable workers, but crucial economic actors as well.

From “Women’s Projects” to Economic Development

When it comes to women’s economic empowerment, it’s important to work on two fronts: enabling women to get access to land, job opportunities, child care, access to credit, extension services, and/or other basic ingredients for economic participation the conditions essential to establishing a more equitable economic “playing field” for women.

One of these conditions is education. Girls are now attending primary school at almost the same rate as boys. The gap is also narrowing in high school. Globally, in 2010, 97 girls were enrolled in secondary education per 100 boys—up from 88 girls in 1991. The disparity remains wide at the college level and beyond, however.

The United States has helped support programs to expand opportunities for women with college degrees. In agriculture, where so many women in developing countries work, it is especially important to have more female scientists. At CGIAR (previously the Consultative Group for International Agricultural Research), a Gender & Diversity Program helps advance the careers of female scientists from all over Africa—including Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Nigeria, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia.

CGIAR President Kathy Sierra said, “We wanted to ensure that the results of our work are reaching African women.” Vicki Wilde, head of the Gender



André Roussel/USAID

The Ambassadors Girls Scholarship Program (AGSP) puts a smile on Rachida Moussa, right, and her mentor, Madame Bernadette Ouinin Mora. The program provides meals and mentors to help keep Benin’s poorest girls in school.

& Diversity Program, added: “We cannot fight hunger and poverty in sub-Saharan Africa, unless women have a strong voice not just on the farm, but in the lab.”

Another “prerequisite” to full economic participation is the ability to work, and to travel to and from work, without a constant threat of violence. Gender-based violence is all too common, all over the world. Instead of a list of statistics, here we’ll give a brief example of a creative response. Women in Cities International promotes women’s safety in four major cities (in India, Tanzania, Argentina, and Russia). In 2009, the organization started a “gender inclusive cities” program that engages women and girls in creating safer cities. In order to protect women’s rights in an urban context, the program targets the circumstances that make women vulnerable and gets local communities involved in changing conditions in public spaces.

Women with Skills Spur Economic Development

All over the world, we can find models that illustrate various strategies women have used to enter and succeed in fields that their communities still consider “nontraditional.”

For example, a growing number of rural women—largely from an older generation and with limited formal education—are working as solar engineers after a six-month training program at Barefoot College in India’s Rajasthan state.

Participants in the training program come from remote areas where conventional electricity has never been readily available. Program coordinators have found that these women are more likely than men to return to their communities to work and to share their knowledge with others. This is because the accepted applicants are deeply involved in local life.

The solar engineering classroom at Barefoot College illustrates the college’s guiding principle: solutions to rural problems lie within the community. Program advisor Anu Saxena described the scene one morning: “30 participants, from various countries, sit side by side on benches, working with concentration to connect wires on a circuit board, assemble a solar lantern, or draw what they have just created in a small notebook.

“A short distance from the classroom, two impressive-looking 2.5-square-meter parabolic solar cookers glisten in the sunlight. The cookers are attended by Shahnaz and Sita, two Barefoot Solar Engineers.” Both women specialize in the production of cookers, traditionally a male task since it involves metal work and welding. They are now training other women to make the cookers.

Villages that have switched to solar power have reduced environmental pollution and forest degradation, and enabled women to do income-generating work and students to study after sundown. As women become leaders in environmental management, they also gain more influence in local politics. In some countries, Barefoot College alumni have started women’s associations—for example, the Solar Warriors of Bhutan.

There are many other examples that illustrate our point—that women from impoverished backgrounds are often motivated students who quickly acquire skills that enable them to contribute fully to their country’s economic

Myths & Realities

Myth: Low-income women are not important to their country’s economic growth. By definition, they have their hands full doing low-skill work to survive.

Reality: Much of the progress against hunger in the past 25 years (43 percent) can be attributed directly to additional years of education for girls and young women. Researchers for the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) found that an additional 12 percent of the reduction in hunger is due to improvements in women’s status in society. Sending girls to school actually did more to reduce malnutrition among children than having more food available.

Women who have completed fifth grade or eighth grade, even if they are as impoverished as their less educated neighbors, are more knowledgeable, confident, and resourceful. They can and do seize opportunities to improve economic conditions for themselves, their families, their communities, and their countries.



Myth: Simply opening all jobs to both men and women is enough to ensure that women have equal economic opportunity.

Reality: An equal opportunity approach can bring significant economic development only if there is a relatively equitable “playing field.” Identifying barriers to women’s actual participation in various economic spheres—and strategies to overcome those barriers—is essential. Barriers are often quite concrete. They may include disproportionate responsibility for time-consuming cooking tasks, collecting water, making clothes, or other household chores; less access to resources; less authority to make decisions; more restricted travel due to safety concerns; more responsibility to care for elderly family members and children; and the list goes on.



UN Photo/Lamphay Inthakoun

Women weed their rice fields in Mokpon village, Bokeo Province, Laos. Many of the world's low-income women work as farmers.

development. Here are two brief stories from Latin America.

In Brazil, Zenaide Pereira da Silva is the first woman at the Santo Antonio hydroelectric dam to operate a gantry crane, a 20-meter-high crane that assembles the turbines necessary to construct a hydropower station. A 29-year-old single parent, Zenaide is earning about three times the country's minimum monthly wage—income that is needed to support and educate her daughter.

In Chile, as recently as 2000, women were simply not allowed in copper mines because of superstitions. Now, more than 7 percent of the industry workforce is female, and this proportion is rising quickly. As machinery operators, many are earning five times as much as in their previous jobs, according to Andres Leon, human resources manager at El Teniente mine. El Teniente is part of the largest copper producer in the world, CODELCO.

Ambassador Melanne Verveer emphasizes that hard data support the argument that the world cannot possibly end hunger and extreme poverty without the full participation of women. The numbers show that countries where men and women are closer to equality in areas such as education and political participation are far better off economically. U.S. development assistance programs that integrate women fully help partner countries move closer to the improved economic prospects that come with 100 percent participation in economic development.

Further Thoughts

The 10 Countries that Scored Highest on Wage Equality Between the Sexes



Dana Smillie/World Bank

An Egyptian businesswoman in Cairo.

Country	Cents for Every \$1 a Man Earns
Egypt	82 cents
Malaysia	82 cents
Singapore	81 cents
The Gambia	80 cents
Uganda	80 cents
Philippines	79 cents
Macedonia	78 cents
Ghana	77 cents
Mongolia	77 cents
Georgia	77 cents
United States	67 cents (61st in the world)

Source: 2012 Global Gender Gap Report

Act Locally: Families and Communities Face Global Forces



UN Photo/Marco Dormino

U.S. development assistance can enable people to farm effectively by helping them upgrade their agricultural systems and equipment.

SNAPSHOT

- Most of the dramatic progress against hunger in the past two generations is due to the hard work of low-income people themselves. They continue to take steps to improve farming, nutrition, education, basic living conditions, and more.
- Yet people in developing countries frequently confront barriers that they cannot overcome on their own. U.S. development assistance can help break the cycle of hunger and poverty by enabling communities to identify and implement good ideas that will prepare them for the future.
- Building “resilience” includes improving people’s ability to respond to new circumstances. Currently, USAID focuses on 10 action areas, including scaling up nutrition services; developing “livelihood strategies” (ways to earn a living); establishing social safety nets for hard times; and easing conflict by searching for solutions to its top causes.

It’s a famous photo from a generation ago: the hunger-ravaged face of a three-year-old girl, representing the hundreds of thousands of children who died or nearly died in Ethiopia’s 1984-1985 famine. The photo, shown at the immensely popular LiveAid concert, spurred ordinary people around the world to give generously to Ethiopia’s starving children.

The little girl, Birhan Woldu, had lost her mother and older sister to the famine. Her father carried her and a sibling hundreds of miles to find help. Healthcare workers told him that his daughter was very likely to die—perhaps within 15 minutes. Nonetheless, she survived, went to school, became a nurse, and now has a toddler daughter of her own.

In an Oxfam International report published 25 years after the famine, in 2009, Ms. Birhan reflected on emergency and development assistance. “My life was saved by Irish nursing sisters who gave me an injection and food from organizations like Band Aid. So it may seem strange for me to say now that to get food aid from overseas is not the best way,” she said. “[But] let us grow our own food and help manage our own systems so we are not hit so hard when the next drought or flood comes. We need to approach disasters in a different way.”

Many people with few material resources are determined to improve their own lives and their children's. But in the poorest areas, such as the community where Ms. Birhan was born, it is often not enough to simply work hard and adopt an attitude of "Where there's a will, there's a way." A constellation of obstacles may prevent even the most hard-working and creative people from making much progress. Thus, hunger and poverty have "structural" causes, meaning that "the system" is often much stronger than individuals and families.

How can the United States help people who are trying to move forward? It can provide assistance in a crisis, and it can help break the cycle of hunger and poverty. Food aid programs generally work to provide people with the necessities of life—food, clean water, medical care, shelter—in an emergency such as natural disaster or conflict. Bread for the World and others advocate both for sufficient funding for food aid and improvements to make it even more efficient. Recent reforms include greater flexibility to buy food from local or regional markets and to channel food aid resources where they are most needed.

The other main type of U.S. foreign aid is development assistance—the longer-term "help us help ourselves" support. Development assistance helps people overcome structural, systemic problems. For example, many low-income countries are not large enough producers or consumers to significantly affect the prices of staple grains. When these prices spike suddenly, development assistance can help governments prevent hunger among their most vulnerable people. Another problem: some nations have been suffering from the effects of climate change for years, but have the least power to slow or stop it since they contribute least to greenhouse gas emissions.

Hungry and poor people are taking steps to improve farming, health care, education, basic living conditions, and more. The good news is that U.S. development assistance can help them build better lives even under circumstances that anyone might find daunting.

In "Why Development Assistance Can't Wait" earlier in this *Development Works* series, we talked about why prevention is both more effective and less expensive—in terms of dollars, and in terms of human suffering—than waiting until a cure is what's needed. Ensuring that pregnant women and young



UN Photo/Staton Winter

Building resilience includes equipping young people, such as these students learning rice cultivation in Liberia, with skills they can use.



\$13 to \$24:
Cost of fully immunizing a child against TB, diphtheria, pertussis, polio, and measles

72-73 percent:
percentage of income spent on food by the poorest 20 percent of the population in Ghana, Tajikistan, and Pakistan

children have the nutrients they need during the 1,000 Days “window of opportunity” is sound prevention. The global community’s lack of attention to the early warnings of the 2011 famine in Somalia, conversely, meant that relief supplies arrived too late for many.

Resilience—A Rather New Name for a Very Old Idea

Humanitarian disasters prompt all of us to examine what went wrong and how the response can be improved next time. After the 2011 Somali famine, one result of the self-assessment was the appearance of “resilience” near the top of the U.S. development agenda. This included a new policy initiative from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), “Building Resilience to Recurrent Crisis,” launched late in 2012.

Of course, people have always needed to cultivate their ability to “bounce back.” The initiative simply brings the U.S. government, other donors, international agencies, developing country governments, local communities, and individuals and families together to look more closely at what it takes to build and strengthen resilience.

Resilience has at least two main ingredients—responding to new circumstances and reducing the risk of harmful events. Of course, a myriad of factors determine how well people can adapt to change or prevent a problem. For now, 10 action areas are USAID’s priorities. They include making nutrition and health services available; developing “livelihood strategies” (aka ways to earn a living); easing conflict by searching for solutions to some of its main causes; and establishing social safety nets for hard times.

The “Building Resilience” initiative also includes advice on programs—for example, focusing special attention on groups such as youth and women. According to the policy, “Investing in youth, who play increasingly prominent and intergenerational roles as agents of recovery and change, should be seen as foundational to reducing risk.” Women, although they are most deeply affected by shocks such as sudden surges in food prices, “also possess enormous individual and collective capacity to help themselves, their families, and their com-



UN Photo/Mark Garten

Entrepreneurs who are microfinance clients of Grameen Bank in Bangladesh display their hand-woven baskets at the local market.

\$920 million:

additional cost in 2008 to the World Food Program of the food price crisis

28 and 15:

significant drought and flood cycles, 1910-2010, Kenya



UN Photo/WFP/Phil Bejtán

munities.” As *Development Works* mentions earlier, in “Development Needs All Hands on Deck,” investing in women pays a double dividend because of their key roles as economic producers and family caregivers.

Global Forces

As we are all aware, the Great Recession hit the United States hard. The official recession years were 2008-2009, but many Americans are still struggling

years later. Families once firmly in the middle class no longer have a sense of security, while those who were poor before the recession have endured even harder times since. At this writing, nearly one in six Americans is participating in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly food stamps), which helps low-income families afford groceries. For more about the impact of the recession on American families and recommendations to reduce hunger in our country, see Bread for the World Institute’s 2014 Hunger Report, *Ending Hunger in America*.

But in early 2007, more than a year before the United States and other developed countries slipped into recession, hundreds of millions of the world’s most vulnerable people were hit by sudden major spikes in global food prices. Within just a few months, the prices of staple foods such as wheat, rice, and corn had more than doubled.

It’s not hard to see that low-income people would be most harmed by the rising prices of necessities such as food. What Americans may be surprised to

learn is that the world’s poorest families spend up to 80 percent of their entire incomes on food. So when prices double, it’s not just a significant hardship—it’s catastrophic. Families just can’t afford much more than half as much food as before, and even then, anything more than half must come from the remaining 20 percent of the household budget. That’s the money that has to pay for everything that’s not food, from giving a child an antibiotic to fixing a leaking roof. Millions of additional children fell into malnutrition in 2008.

Developing country governments and the international community made efforts to meet the increasing need for affordable food. But many countries had few options—they had to pay the asking price for grain. An independent evaluation of the response to the food price crisis of one donor, the World Bank, identified what worked and what didn’t in an effort to improve responses to future emergencies. The evaluation pointed out, first of all, that the whole effort was significantly hampered by a lack of resources. The World Bank’s fast-track program provided an average of just \$11 million to each developing country seeking assistance.

The evaluation also found that a lack of data hampered efforts to identify what was working best so that it could be expanded. Of 20 countries studied,



USAID

USAID is helping farmers’ organizations, like this group in Kano, Nigeria, to plant and harvest higher-yielding crops.

only three assessed the impact of the food price crisis on poor people: Bangladesh, Nepal, and Nicaragua. Worse, not one of the 20 countries tracked malnutrition rates, even though malnutrition rates among children are not only very important in their own right but also a reliable indication of the depth of need in a community.

It's clear from the food price crisis that nutrition safety nets must be established *before* an emergency arises. The process of putting safety nets in place would better identify and target people who are especially vulnerable. During the food price crisis, few countries concentrated on ensuring that babies, toddlers, and pregnant women had sufficient nutritious food—even though, as mentioned before in *Development Works*, we know that damage from malnutrition during the “1,000 Days” from pregnancy to age 2 is irreversible.

Volatility in global food prices appears to be the new normal. Food prices eventually leveled off, but never returned to 2007 levels. Prices spiked again between June 2010 and June 2011—but by that time, attention had shifted to the worldwide economic crisis and ensuing recession. The world's major economies, also facing hard times, concentrated more on their own problems. Poor people in low-income countries remained the most vulnerable to hunger and malnutrition.

Local Efforts

Any initiative to help people become more resilient to crisis depends, of course, on building on what people do have and can accomplish, not what they don't have and are unlikely to accomplish. The work that the international community, particularly the United States, has done to identify ways of making development assistance most effective is useful to efforts to strengthen resilience. Most development programs now enable developing countries to identify their needs and prepare plans to help solve their top-priority problems—an idea known as “country-led development.” Consulting with all stakeholders (all those affected by or interested in an issue) is another principle of effective development. It's easy to see the importance of these concepts to programs intended to help people become better prepared to cope with new threats to their livelihoods.

A great deal of progress against hunger has been made in the past two generations. Most of this progress came from the hard work of hungry and poor people themselves. One example of an idea that took hold and became a worldwide movement is microfinance—making very small loans to low-income entrepreneurs so they can build small businesses.

Nobel Laureate Dr. Mohammad Yunus is the founder of the Grameen Bank in Bangladesh and a pioneer in microfinance. During a visit to the United States in 2013, Yunus reflected on his work. Microfinance is a way for individuals or groups of borrowers, mostly women, to put themselves on a path to earning a better living for years to come. This means that microfinance businesses must reach a break-even point where they can sustain themselves—just like any other business.

Yunus said that some of the Grameen Bank's current clients are second-generation; their mothers were among Grameen's first clients. He referred to

Myths & Realities

Myth: Countries where most people are farmers produce enough food for themselves.

Reality: Poor countries often do not have the natural resources, supplies, and technologies needed to produce enough food, even with many farmers. African countries that import much of their food are vulnerable to any changes in global market conditions and were among those that fared worst during the 2007–2008 food price crisis.

Ironically, the majority of the world's hungry people are agricultural workers. Most often, they are working tiny plots of land with depleted soil. Poor-quality seeds and inadequate tools add to the difficulties of producing sufficient food.



Myth: It is simply too expensive to help people and countries already suffering from the impact of climate change.

Reality: The budget of CGIAR (formerly the Consortium of International Agricultural Research Centers) recently doubled. The new budget—still only about \$1 billion—pays for 15 research centers around the world that focus on developing improved varieties of crops such as rice, millet, and wheat.

Nations that face significant challenges from climate change are developing “low-tech” adaptation methods and skills. In Namibia, already the world's driest country, rainfall is expected to drop to less than 2 ½ inches a year, so schoolchildren are taught water conservation skills. At camps in the desert, for example, they learn to track and limit water usage for cooking and other household chores.

The cost of doing nothing to help poor countries cope with the effects of climate change is too high—both in dollars and in human suffering. The world simply can't afford “permanent emergencies.”

the businesses as “problem-solving companies.” Among the oldest is a solar energy company founded 16 years ago. Last fall, the company installed solar panels in its millionth house. That’s a lot of energy savings. And the second million is projected to take three years rather than 16.

Yunus said that he tells younger people, “Your mother was illiterate and scared, but she joined a Grameen group and built up a business and was able to send you to school. Instead of being a job-seeker, you are a job-giver. If your mother could build a business, you can build a business.”

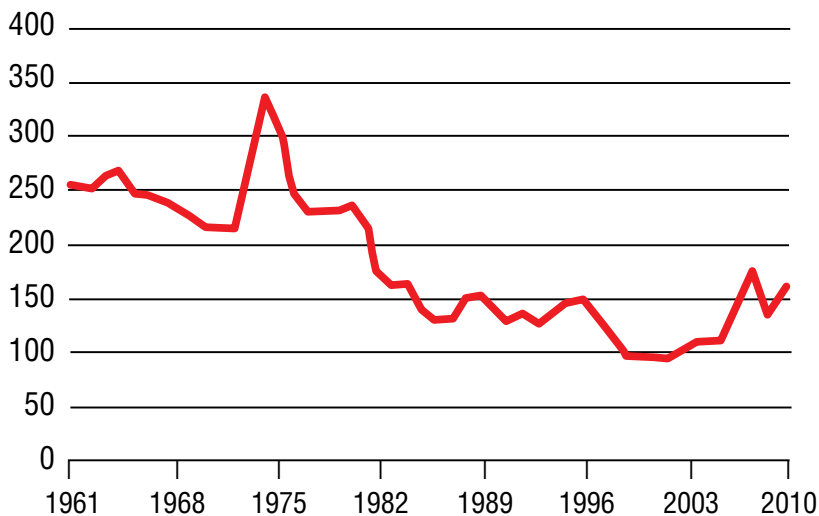
In another example of helping people help themselves by focusing on the bigger picture and adopting a longer time frame, USAID is turning its attention to a major problem that, while recognized only relatively recently, is already harming the livelihoods of poor people in a number of countries: climate change. Obviously, a problem that affects the entire planet is an immense challenge to human resilience. USAID’s Climate Change and Development Strategy, published in 2012, recognizes this, pointing out that “Climate change is a major stress that must be considered in designing strategies to build resilience...” The strategy seeks to increase the resilience of people, places, and livelihoods. More specifically, climate change adaptation efforts are to be integrated into a number of relevant development areas, including food security, health, governance, and disaster risk reduction.

Individuals, families, and communities in low-income countries frequently run into barriers they cannot overcome on their own. But they can often find “workarounds,” particularly when their national governments and the international community stand behind them, supporting their hard work with resources and knowledge aimed at helping them identify and implement good ideas.

Further Thoughts

Global food prices declined in most years between 1961 and 2010, reaching their most affordable around 2000 and spiking in 2007-2008.

Index (2002-04 = 100)



Note: FAO Food Price Index, adjusted for inflation, 1961-2010, calculated using international prices for cereals, oilseeds, meats, and dairy and sugar products. The official FAO Food Price Index has been calculated since only 1990; in this figure it has been extended back to 1961 using proxy price information. The Index measures movements in international prices, not domestic prices. The United States gross domestic product deflator is used to express the Food Price Index in real rather than nominal terms.

Source: FAO.



Margaret W. Nea

Farmer David Kpan, 51, from Wehplay, Liberia, harvests cocoa pods with his children. Here, four of his sons open the pods and scoop the beans into large buckets, while their sister leads them in song. With support and training from ACDI/VOCA Kpan has learned better farming practices and how to budget and record expenses and profits. With his profits, Kpan has been able to complete his family's home and buy a motorbike, which he uses to transport his cocoa to the market.





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