



Condemn the Use of Hunger as a Weapon

Support H. Res. 922 and S. Res. 669

Introduction

Almost three-quarters of the 193 million people who experienced crisis levels of food insecurity in 2021 lived in environments where conflict is the main driver of food crises.¹ Conflict affects food insecurity by disrupting livelihoods, markets, trade, and crop production. In many cases, insecurity limits humanitarian access, leaving communities without vital assistance. At World Vision, we believe that all people have a right to accessible, healthy, and nourishing food. House Resolution 922 and Senate Resolution 669 will reinforce the tools the US Government has to continue its leadership, fight global hunger, protect lifesaving humanitarian assistance, and hold accountable those who use hunger as a weapon in conflict.

Why it matters

Conflict drives hunger and forces families from their homes, leaving crops and livestock unattended. Conflict can also disrupt existing global market systems, leading to increased food prices or decreased access to supplies such as water and fuel. For example, the conflict in Ukraine has already caused global supply chain interruptions, contributing to the price of wheat and oil rising by 300% in Somalia.² In some conflict scenarios, armed actors may intentionally or recklessly destroy materials needed for food production and distribution through aerial bombing, landmines, or scorched earth warfare, as a tool of war.¹

Hunger and conflict can have long-lasting effects on the mental and physical health of vulnerable populations, including women, children, and people with disabilities. Under-nutrition in children causes stunting, which can have devastating long-term effects including poor educational performance, lost productivity, and increased risk of disease.³ In the face of extreme hunger, families may turn to negative coping mechanisms to survive, such as child marriage or child labor.

“Children are the most vulnerable victims of conflict. It is critical for U.S. Government leaders to recognize the effects of conflict on hunger and continue to support humanitarian assistance for children trapped by conflict.” – Margaret Schuler, World Vision’s Senior Vice President of International Programs

ASK

Please cosponsor the bipartisan House Resolution 922 and Senate Resolution 669 to condemn the use of hunger as a weapon in conflict, ensure continued humanitarian response in areas affected by conflict and food insecurity, reinforce inter-agency preparedness and integration, and promote global accountability for individuals, governments, and militias who use hunger in conflict.

About the resolution

House Resolution 922 is a bipartisan resolution led by Rep. Jacobs (D-CA), Rep. Meijer (R-MI), Rep. Rush (D-IL), and Rep. Mann (R-KS). Senate Resolution 669 is a bipartisan resolution led by Sen. Merkley (D-OR), Sen. Young (R-IN), Sen. Booker (D-NJ), Sen. Thune (R-SD), Sen. Menendez (D-NJ), and Sen. Risch (R-ID). The resolution will:

- **Condemn the use of hunger as a weapon in war**, including the intentional and reckless destruction of materials for food production and distribution, the willful interruption of market systems, and the denial of humanitarian access.
- **Recognize the importance of continued US leadership** in humanitarian food assistance response.
- **Ensure inter-agency preparedness** to respond to potential targeting of food systems through utilizing crisis modifiers, quickly injecting emergency funds into existing development programs to prevent livelihood loss and respond to humanitarian needs.
- **Reinforce diplomatic efforts** to address instances where hunger is being used as a weapon of war, including the use of the Global Magnitsky Human Rights Accountability Act.

Worsening Hunger in Northern Ethiopia

Conflict erupted in northern Ethiopia in November 2020 as people were preparing for harvest season, forcing them to flee their homes and livelihoods,⁶ Ongoing conflict and access challenges have prevented the delivery of humanitarian aid⁷ and caused further displacement and food insecurity. According to the latest UNOCHA estimate, more than 9 million people are currently in need of food assistance across the region.⁸

Since December 2020, World Vision has partnered with the USAID Joint Emergency Operation for Food Assistance consortium (JEOP) to aid more than 2.6 million people in the region.⁹ Genzeb, a single mother of two, recalls the worst days of the conflict, “I was worried about my children’s mental and physical safety. I had nothing to feed them, and they are [still] traumatized. The support helped me put food on the table for my children. It means everything for me and my kids.”



World Vision is a Christian humanitarian organization dedicated to working with children, families, and their communities worldwide to reach their full potential by tackling the causes of poverty and injustice. We serve all people, regardless of religion, race, ethnicity, or gender.

QUICK FACTS



One in six children (an estimated 426 million children) live in conflict zones.⁴



By 2030, up to two-thirds of the world’s extreme poor could live in areas affected by fragility, conflict, and violence.⁵



Roughly 80% of the world’s 144 million children affected by stunting live in countries affected by conflict.⁶



Genzeb, a single mother of two, receives food assistance from World Vision through its partnership with USAID.
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References

¹ https://docs.wfp.org/api/documents/WFP-0000138913/download?_ga=2.61635311.21776711.1655840562-485281369.1640811270

² <https://reliefweb.int/report/somalia/ukraine-conflict-soaring-food-and-fuel-prices-threaten-wellbeing-millions-east>

³ <https://www.who.int/news/item/19-11-2015-stunting-in-a-nutshell>

⁴ <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/children-affected-armed-conflict-1990-2019>

⁵ <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/fragilityconflictviolence/overview#1>

⁶ <https://www.worldvision.org/disaster-relief-news-stories/ethiopia-tigray-conflict-facts>

⁷ <https://www.bbc.com/news/57929853>

⁸ <https://reports.unocha.org/en/country/ethiopia>

⁹ <https://www.wvi.org/stories/hunger-crisis/world-vision-provides-food-assistance-12-million-conflict-affected-people>

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