



Unprecedented Hunger and U.S. support for Global Food Security: *International food assistance overview and Farm Bill recommendations*

Introduction

World Vision is increasingly concerned about the rising levels of food insecurity around the globe. Populations are being driven to hunger by compounding crises like conflict, adverse effects of climate change¹, and global price hikes for commodities and agriculture inputs like food and fuel. Conflict remains the biggest driver of hunger, with 70% of the world's hungry² living in conflict zones. World Vision is working to respond to this crisis through immediate, emergency interventions as well as long term resilience programs. Our food assistance programming includes U.S. in-kind commodities, food commodities procured locally and regionally, cash transfers and other vouchers, school meals, and resilience-building programs that include interventions around climate-smart agriculture, water-shed management, community savings groups, sustainable livelihoods and local advocacy³.

Why it matters

In 2022, World Vision responded to 59 humanitarian emergencies⁴ in 52 countries and assisted 27.7 million disaster survivors, refugees, and internally displaced people worldwide. We offer life-saving aid and assistance when children are one step away from famine, living with acute malnutrition, and facing the threat of civil unrest and other vulnerabilities. In tandem with emergency response, development food assistance supports vulnerable communities by moving beyond chronic hunger toward greater self-sufficiency and long-term resilience. Evidence shows⁵ that long term investment in communities facing hunger can minimize the severity of the next disaster when it strikes and reduce the need for future humanitarian assistance.

This year, legislation that aims to curb the growing hunger crisis is up for reauthorization. **The Farm Bill** is a critical tool in fighting both acute and chronic hunger as well as investing in a community's ability to feed themselves and resist shocks. Title III of the Farm Bill authorizes several important international food aid programs, including Food for Peace Title II and the McGovern-Dole International Food for Education program. At a time when far too many people around the world are hungry, we support strengthening U.S. international food aid programs in the Farm Bill that support self-reliance.

U.S. Response to Food Insecurity

The U.S. government is a key stakeholder in the fight against hunger through funding for humanitarian and development assistance such as International Disaster Assistance, Food for Peace, and the McGovern-Dole International Food for Education program. Investment in these programs ensures that children and their families avoid devastating hunger that can lead to long-term consequences like unrest, fragility, increases in negative coping mechanisms such as child labor and child marriage, and displacement. These programs bolster strategic alliances, promote economic growth and stability, and attract new consumers around the world for U.S. goods and products.

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- » **McGovern-Dole:** Administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), McGovern-Dole provides U.S. agricultural commodities and utilizes local and regional procurement to reduce hunger and malnutrition and promote literacy and primary education in food-insecure countries. Parents in highly vulnerable communities have an incentive to send their children to school, as they receive the dual benefit of access to both education and nutritious food. Since 2002, McGovern-Dole has reached over 31 million children in 48 countries⁶ with school meals.
- » **Food for Peace:** As the largest U.S. food aid program, Food for Peace provides funding for non-emergency development programs that reduce poverty and build the capacity of families and communities to feed themselves. Food for Peace Title II also includes emergency response funds for distributing U.S. in-kind food to people in the grip of natural disasters, conflict, and other food security crises.



References

- ¹ <https://www.wvi.org/our-work/climate-change>
- ² <https://www.wfp.org/global-hunger-crisis#:~:text=The%20scale%20of%20the%20current,double%20the%20number%20in%202020>
- ³ <https://www.wvi.org/meero/publication/citizen-voice-and-action-model>
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- ⁵ https://cdkn.org/sites/default/files/files/Why-invest-in-resilience_A-BRACC-policy-brief.pdf
<https://www.fas.usda.gov/newsroom/20-years-usda-mcgovern-dole-program>
- ⁶ <https://www.wvi.org/somalia/about-us#:~:text=World%20Vision%20has%20been%20operational,well%20as%20address%20development%20challenges>
- ⁷ <https://www.wvi.org/somalia/about-us#:~:text=World%20Vision%20has%20been%20operational,well%20as%20address%20development%20challenges>

Emergency Food Assistance in Somalia

A humanitarian catastrophe, driven by the longest and most severe drought in recent history, is occurring in the Horn of Africa. Five failed rainy seasons have stretched livelihoods to a breaking point. Somalia is one of the countries that has been hardest hit, with famine-like conditions projected. This is especially concerning because a quarter of a million people lost their lives the last time famine was declared in Somalia. In response to this crisis, World Vision in Somalia⁷ has reached more than 1.3 million people – approximately 740,000 children – with lifesaving interventions in the past 12 months. This includes food distribution, treatments for children experiencing malnutrition, and water delivery. Through funding from USAID’s Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance, World Vision is implementing a multi-sector emergency response project in the Bay and Bakool regions. This project includes interventions such as supporting community management of malnutrition and outpatient therapeutic feeding programs for children with severe acute malnutrition.

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.

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