

June 3, 2024

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

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

Dear Chairman Coons and Ranking Member Graham:

As you determine priorities for the Fiscal Year 2025 State, Foreign Operations and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, we respectfully urge you to provide robust funding for global nutrition and food security programming. This includes **\$300 million** for **Nutrition** within the Global Health Programs Account, **\$1.2 billion** for the **Global Food Security Strategy**, **\$4.85 billion** for **International Disaster Assistance**, **\$54 million** for the **International Fund for Agricultural Development**, and **\$20 million** for the **Global Agriculture and Food Security Program**. Any increases in these programs should not come at the expense of other poverty reduction accounts.

This Committee has a long-standing commitment to supporting these programs which are critical to fighting global hunger and malnutrition and putting people on the road to food and nutrition security.

We recognize the fiscal constraints placed on the subcommittee with significantly restricted allocations to cover critical programs in the State and Foreign Operations bill. However, we continue to face an unprecedented global food crisis, fueled primarily by conflict and climate-related extreme weather events. In 2023, record levels of acute food insecurity persisted due to protracted food crises and new conflicts around the world. In 48 countries, 238 million people faced high levels of acute food insecurity – 10 percent higher than in 2022.

Conflict was the biggest driver of hunger and food insecurity around the world in 2023, with 70 percent of the world's hungry people living in areas afflicted by war and violence. From the gang violence in Haiti blocking critical needed humanitarian food distribution, the eruption of conflict between two rivals in Sudan leading to the largest displacement and numbers of acute food security in the world today, to the war in Gaza, which witnessed the fastest deterioration of food security in history, conflict has wreaked havoc on the food security of millions around the world. Additionally, climate change continued to be another significant driver of food insecurity with weather extremes, including drought and flooding destroying crops and livelihoods in places like Ethiopia and Myanmar.

Robust funding to global food security related accounts is critical to addressing the global food crisis we face today. In this effort, we must robustly invest in not only the treatment of acute food

insecurity but provide robust funding for the prevention of severe hunger and malnutrition to get out the continued viscous cycle of shocks and response.

The Nutrition account supports nutrition programs for women and children, focusing on the first 1,000 days between pregnancy and a child's second birthday. When children are malnourished, early detection and access to therapeutic foods can save lives. Robust funding of the nutrition account is critical for saving lives and reaching USAID's goal of ending preventable child and maternal deaths. We appreciate the strong commitment of the Administration increasing the financial commitment to malnutrition treatment, including ready-to-use-therapeutic food (RUTF), and want to see prevention equally prioritized.

Feed the Future, the program which provides the primary funding for the Global Food Security Strategy helps more than 40 vulnerable countries reduce hunger, poverty, hunger and malnutrition while building resilience to recurrent crises. Acceleration and expansion of agricultural innovation and investment is critical to improve agricultural production around the world, strengthen resilience, and address the root causes of hunger, malnutrition, and poverty.

USAID reports that in areas where FTF is implemented, an estimated 23.4 million more people are living above the poverty line, 3.4 million fewer children are stunted, and an estimated 5.2 million fewer families are hungry.

The International Disaster Assistance (IDA) account provides critical humanitarian assistance to civilian populations in response to natural hazards, conflict and insecurity, and other sudden onset emergencies in their home countries. The humanitarian needs around the world have dramatically increased in recent years and a robust IDA budget is critical to addressing those needs.

Two more important programs to combatting global hunger and malnutrition are the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the Global Agricultural and Food Security Program (GAFSP). IFAD is dedicated to eradicating poverty and hunger in rural areas of developing countries, providing global investments in agriculture-dependent communities. IFAD invests in rural people, empowering them to increase their food security, improve the nutrition of their families, and increase their incomes. We appreciate the Administration's recent continued strong commitment to the IFAD-13 replenishment of \$162 million over three years.

GAFSP, a multilateral trust fund launched by the G20 in response to the 2007-2008 food price crisis, provides critical investments in agriculture and food security to improve the livelihoods of small-scale farmers. In FY2020, GAFSP reached 16 million smallholder farmers, their families, and their broader communities.

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

Thank you for your serious consideration of this request.

Signed