

Ending Global Hunger: The Global Food Security Act

BACKGROUND

Globally, approximately around 1 in 9 people are chronically hungry. Poor nutrition causes nearly half (45%) of deaths in children under five (3.1 million children each year). The growing global population is expected to reach 9.6 billion, and by 2050 many of the least developed countries will have to double their access to food. Put simply, sustainably feeding and nourishing the population of today and tomorrow is perhaps the greatest challenge we currently face.

But, we know what we need to do to help us get there: invest in women, small-scale food producers, and natural resource management. Small-scale food producers provide up to 80% of the food consumed in Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa. Research shows that women farmers could increase their yields by 20-30% if they had the same access to productive resources as men. Investing in increased access to knowledge, weather information, and farming techniques for small-scale and women farmers lays the foundation for these farmers to not only produce enough food to feed their own families, but the world.

CARE believes that the U.S. can, and should, play a more effective role in ending hunger. The **Global Food Security Act (GFSA)** requires a coordinated U.S. strategy in addressing hunger by empowering women and small-scale farmers and by leveraging natural resource management practices. This bill would bring much needed oversight to current programs and improve U.S. global food security programs by meeting the needs of small-scale and women farmers, all at **no extra cost**.

THE ASK

House Ask:

- Take up and support the Senate's Global Food Security Act (S. 1252) so it can go to the President's desk. This legislation is very similar to that which the House passed on April 12th with overwhelming support (H.R. 1567).

BACKGROUND ON THE BILL

What does the GFSA do, and why is this important?

1. **It demands coordination within the U.S. government:** The GFSA will require a coordinated and transparent U.S. strategy for global food security. Currently, 11 government agencies are working to address food security, which results in a lack of coordination and lost opportunities for maximum impact.
2. **It requires transparency and accountability:** The GFSA will also require mandatory public reporting that requires specific data, which will help ensure American tax dollars are being used most efficiently.
3. **It's no added cost:** The GFSA demands sustainability from existing global food security programs through better strategies and oversight. This is about the U.S. doing its work better, all with no additional cost to taxpayers.
4. **It puts women where they need to be – at the center:** The GFSA will increase sustainability by focusing on women, small-scale producers, and natural resource management so that communities can be empowered to feed themselves.
5. **It updates the law and brings oversight to our International Disaster Assistance programs:** The GFSA reauthorizes life-saving humanitarian programs, which help millions of people in emergencies and conflict around the world. These programs have been running for *decades* without formal authorization from Congress, and GFSA would update the law to reflect the needs in today's world!

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6. **It strengthens our commitment to the gains made:** GFSA will lock in gains made under Presidents Bush and Obama, which repositioned the U.S. as a leader in addressing global hunger, by codifying those programs into law with standards and oversight requirements for all future presidents.

Current State of Play:

- The GFSA (H.R. 1567) was introduced in March 2015 in the House of Representatives by Representatives Betty McCollum (D-MN-4) and Chris Smith (R-NJ-4). **The GFSA passed out of the House on April 12, 2016 with overwhelming support.**
- The GFSA (S. 1252) was introduced in the Senate in May 2015 by Senators Johnny Isakson (R-GA) and Bob Casey (D-PA). **It was passed by unanimous voice vote on April 20, 2016.**
- Only one bill can go to the President, and the House and Senate bills are slightly different. Because the Senate calendar is full, we need the House to pass the Senate version of the legislation so it can become law. The House and Senate bills are very similar, so this is one more procedural hurdle to overcome in order to make history!

TALKING POINTS

The Global Food Security Act of 2015 is not a hand-out—it will sustainably reduce global hunger by supporting those in need to feed themselves at NO EXTRA COST.

- The GFSA **requires a coordinated U.S. strategy and provides oversight** that would **improve existing U.S. programs** in order to increase sustainable and equitable agricultural development, reduce global hunger, and improve nutrition.
- The GFSA **provides much needed transparency and accountability to existing program and demands that those programs** empower women and small-scale farmers and leverages natural resource management practices.

Women and small-scale farmers are critical to addressing global hunger and poverty and creating a secure world. They must be at the center of the U.S. response to global hunger.

- The 2014 Worldwide Threat Assessment specifically cited **food insecurity as a "destabilizing" threat to U.S. national security**. Hunger is a humanitarian and security crisis, and it must be addressed with the most effective interventions.
- Small-scale farmers, working with an area smaller than two U.S. football fields, **produce 80% of the food consumed** in Asia and sub-Saharan Africa. **If women farmers had the same access to productive resources as men, they could increase yields on their farms by 20–30%— and the number of hungry people in the world could be reduced by 100-150 million, reducing chronic hunger by 17%.**
- Investing in smallholder agriculture lays the foundation for these farmers to not only produce enough food to feed their families, but the world.