

*the* World Food Summit  
five years later



United States of America  
Position Paper  
2002





“We fight against poverty because hope is an answer to terror. We fight against poverty because opportunity is a fundamental right to human dignity. We fight against poverty because faith requires it and conscience demands it. And we fight against poverty with a growing conviction that major progress is within our reach.

The task of development is urgent and difficult, yet the way is clear. As we plan and act, we must remember the true source of economic progress is the creativity of human beings. Nations’ most vital natural resources are found in the minds and skills and enterprise of their citizens. The greatness of a society is achieved by unleashing the greatness of its people. The poor of the world need resources to meet their needs, and like all people, they deserve institutions that encourage their dreams.

I call for a new compact for global development, defined by new accountability for both rich and poor nations alike. ...The United States will lead by example.”

President George W. Bush

March 2002

# The Global Challenge

The world has far to go to meet the Millennium Development poverty reduction and food security goals that are basic to alleviating hunger. Poverty reduction has proceeded at well below the required rate to reduce the number of undernourished by half no later than 2015, as endorsed by the international community at the World Food Summit in 1996.

Since the early 1990s, only one out of three countries has reduced its number of hungry (those with an inadequate intake of energy and related underweight). In the rest of the developing countries, the number of hungry has not been reduced significantly or has risen, especially in much of sub-Saharan Africa. This trend is expected to continue because of the anticipated increase in

the world's population and the pressures placed on natural resources.

More than 800 million people worldwide, three-quarters of whom live in rural areas and are largely dependent on local agriculture, are seriously malnourished. Over 2 billion people experience micronutrient deficiencies and hundreds of millions suffer from diseases related to inadequate, unbalanced, and unsafe food intake; children are particularly vulnerable and adversely affected. Chronic poverty, malnutrition, and disease contribute to the conditions under which drought or conflict becomes the trigger for famine to manifest itself. Hunger, malnutrition, and famine are three faces of the challenge addressed in *The World Food Summit: Five Years Later*.

Undernourishment as a result of poverty is rare within the United States, but food security—assured access by all people at all times to enough food for active, healthy lives—has not yet been fully achieved. We have made progress, but we still have work to do.

The cost in terms of lost human potential is enormous: The persistence of widespread chronic hunger and malnutrition and threat of famine are simply unacceptable. The United States proposes to join with partner countries and other donors to implement a three-pronged effort to cut hunger in half by 2015 that addresses food access, availability, and use: 1) increasing agricultural productivity, 2) ending famine, and 3) improving nutrition.

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# What Has the United States Done to Improve Food Security?

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U.S. bilateral assistance programs for health advance women's status and mainstream gender in national institutions, policies, and budgets around the world.

At home and abroad, the United States has taken steps designed to achieve the World Food Summit target. A few highlights are shown below.

## **International Food Security**

The U.S. government has reversed its steep decline in foreign assistance funding for agriculture<sup>1</sup> projects that began in the late 1980s among all donors.

*Renewed commitment to agriculture and food security in Africa:* Initiatives like the 1998 Africa Seeds of Hope Act, the 2000 Africa Growth and Opportunity Act, and the 2001 Africa Food Security Initiative support trade and investment, civic institution building, microcredit finance, agricultural research and extension, private enterprise in agriculture, community participation in development programming, and entrepreneurial opportunities for women, especially in small-scale agriculture, with particular attention to Africa.

*Agricultural research and biotechnology:* In 2001, the United States contributed approximately \$45 million to international agricultural

research centers in the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR), approximately \$20 million to Collaborative Research Support Programs (CRSPs), and about \$20 million for biotechnology and biosafety capacity building in developing countries.

*Trade capacity-building activities:* The U.S. government committed more than \$1.3 billion to trade capacity-building activities in developing countries in FYs 1999–2001. Of that amount, 12 percent went to least developed countries. This assistance helps least developed countries take advantage of the zero or near-zero duties on most exports of agricultural products to the United States, which they can use to increase their foreign exchange earnings to produce or import food.

*Debt relief for heavily indebted poor countries (HIPC):* In FY 2002, Congress appropriated \$768 million for debt relief, which allowed the United States to forgive 100 percent of bilateral debt owed by eligible countries and

contribute \$600 million to the HIPC Trust Fund. This will free up resources to implement growth and poverty reduction programs and invest in key sectors such as health, education, and rural development.

*HIV/AIDS:* The Global Fund to Combat AIDS, TB, and Malaria has been established with total pledges from all donors of roughly \$1.9 billion, including a pledge of \$500 million so far from the United States. The Bush Administration has requested over \$1 billion to combat HIV/AIDS in 2003. This is an increase of more than 50 percent since 2000 to address diseases that have heavy impacts on productivity throughout the developing world, especially in Africa.

*Efforts to promote gender equality:* Recognizing the important and often neglected contribution of women to agricultural productivity and household welfare, U.S. bilateral assistance programs for health—including family planning, education, skills training, property rights, agriculture, microcredit, and business and leadership

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<sup>1</sup>In this paper *agriculture* and *agricultural* include livestock, fisheries, and aquaculture.

development training— advance women’s status and mainstream gender in national institutions, policies, and budgets around the world.

*International food assistance:* In FY 2001 the United States provided food aid to approximately 90 countries, reaching millions of people worldwide. The Bush Administration is instituting reforms of U.S. government food aid programs to improve the effectiveness of resources and make food aid less reliant on U.S. crop surpluses.

*The Global Food for Education multilateral school feeding pilot program:* This program is using \$300 million in commodities to provide immediate nutritional benefit and expand access as well as attendance and performance for as many as 9 million schoolchildren, especially girls. The 2002 Farm Bill provides \$100 million in FY 2003 to continue the pilot program. The United States is reviewing the cost effectiveness of the program in meeting its educational and food aid objectives.

*Micronutrients:* The United States provides more than \$30 million per year to address micronutrient deficiencies of public health importance, including enhancing the quality of diets through fortification, dietary diversification, and other community and household nutrition practices.

### **Domestic Food Security**

The United States has a strong record in support of domestic food security, which is in large part a credit to the success of the nation’s agricultural, fisheries, and aquaculture production, processing, and distribution sectors. The U.S. government, as a part of its response to the World Food Summit, set an objective of reducing food insecurity at home by half by 2010. The United States is on track to meet its domestic food security target with reductions in the prevalence of both food insecurity and hunger among American households. The reduction in food insecurity and hunger were associated with the strong economic growth of the late 1990s.

In addition, a coordinated effort by federal, state, and local governments in collaboration with charities, businesses, and local communities has been mobilized to achieve this goal.

Food assistance for low-income, vulnerable women and children and legal immigrants was increased. Food banks and food recovery groups working with food companies and farmers have donated and distributed millions of pounds of food to hungry Americans.

The reform of U.S. domestic welfare programs to emphasize work and empowerment; the Empowerment Zone/Enterprise Community Initiative to provide incentives for investment in poor communities; early childhood development programs for low-income children; and expanded health care to uninsured children have all empowered people with skills and resources to meet their long-term food security needs. The National Food Safety Initiative has made substantial progress in assuring the safety of food and drinking water.

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# A Recommitment to Global Food Security

The FY 2003 budget request asks for a 25 percent increase for agricultural programs with a focus on cutting hunger in Africa.

The President's new "Compact for Development" proposes a new partnership between the United States and those governments in developing countries that are demonstrating a commitment to domestic reforms necessary for sustained growth.

The United States is committed to do more to address global food security and to do it better. Economic growth, agricultural development, and trade make up one of the pillars of the U.S. bilateral development assistance program. Sharing the Administration's sense of urgency to cut hunger in Africa, \$30 million has been reprogrammed to launch "Quick Start" programs that will boost agricultural efforts immediately. The FY 2003 budget request asks for a 25 percent increase for agricultural programs with a focus on cutting hunger in Africa. In FY 2003, the United States has budgeted \$1.3 billion for food aid for development and emergency activities, and we will continue to respond to natural and man-made disasters. A major review of the food aid program has just been completed. The American people are significant and generous partners in this very important task.

On March 14, 2002, President George W. Bush outlined a major new vision for development based on the common interests of developed and developing nations in peace, security, and prosperity. The President's new "Compact for

Development" proposes a historic, shared effort to stop the cycle of poverty in the developing world. It defines a new partnership between the United States and those governments in developing countries that are demonstrating a commitment to domestic reforms necessary for sustained growth. The compact creates a separate development assistance account called the Millennium Challenge Account.

The account will be funded by increases in the budget beginning in FY 2004. The account is designed to rise up to \$5 billion a year starting in FY 2006. This amount is over and above the approximately \$10 billion in existing U.S. development assistance—better known as Official Development Assistance (ODA).

## The U.S. Response

*Maintaining current activities:* First, the United States will continue the significant activities it already has under way. Our agricultural exports feed millions of people, and our imports of agricultural products from developing countries generate livelihoods for millions more. Our bilateral development aid program makes significant contributions in our areas of

comparative advantage such as technical tools and approaches, graduate-level university training, agricultural research, policy analysis, and private sector development.

*Promoting policies that lead to successful development:* Second, in our new investments the United States will emphasize quality (performance) over quantity (dollar amounts) of assistance. We will aim for reduced poverty, universal basic education, reduced infant and child mortality, improved nutritional status, a cleaner environment, and the elimination of hunger. Reaching these objectives is only possible if governments adopt appropriate policies, including with respect to governance, investment in education and health, and promotion of economic freedom, including in the agricultural sector.

With a conducive policy environment, development assistance can be effective; without the right policy framework, however, aid will help address some of the problems but cannot get at the root causes.

Good governance is also a key to reducing the incidence of famine. We are the largest donor to the multilateral

development banks and a major source of their loan financing. In negotiations over the replenishment of the International Development Association (IDA), the World Bank's concessional window for lending to the poorest nations, the United States has secured key commitments from IDA to reform in the following areas: measuring results in reducing poverty and development effectiveness; increased use of grants; expanded collaboration with the International Finance Corporation, the World Bank's private sector affiliate; and improved public sector management. If the performance targets are met, the United States is prepared to increase its assistance to IDA by up to 18.2 percent over the next three years. Overall, this reform will help to alleviate poverty, improve health and education, and reduce hunger.

*Promoting increased agricultural productivity:* Third, promoting agricultural productivity in developing countries, especially the least developed, must be a core element in this agenda. Increasing agricultural productivity simultaneously addresses availability and access, two components of food security in market-

oriented agricultural growth. It is thus especially critical that African governments adopt policies and secure investments that will promote agricultural productivity.

Efforts to promote agricultural growth need to be complemented by targeted safety nets and social programs, including food aid, to reduce hunger among vulnerable groups and support improvements in nutrition, education, and health status to create the human capital needed for long-term productivity and economic growth.

Asset distribution and open markets in developed and developing countries are additional necessary components. Improving nutrition, bringing in qualitative aspects of food security, involves attention to diet, water, sanitation, health care (including family planning), and education, especially for girls. Ending famine directly targets the most vulnerable populations by addressing the shocks that too often derail well-intentioned development efforts. By bringing in conflict prevention, governance, early warning, food aid, and perhaps other

options for risk management, famine can be averted.

Also, because of women's critical role in agricultural productivity and food security, particular attention must be given to overcoming gender-based constraints and enhancing women's opportunities to increase their contributions to food security in development programs and initiatives.

*Targeting resources:* Fourth, the United States will focus its attention on food security where the problem is most severe: South Asia and, especially, sub-Saharan Africa. The largest numbers of poor and undernourished are in South Asia. That region has also made significant progress. We want to help continue that positive momentum. Sub-Saharan Africa is the only region where the number, perhaps even the proportion, of hungry and malnourished is projected to grow over the next decade. Agriculture dominates most African economies. Some three-quarters of Africans live in rural areas, and the agricultural sector employs almost two-thirds of Africa's total labor force, accounts for about one-third of GDP, and provides one-half of exports.

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# Actions the United States Will Take

The United States will support the application of improved technologies and practices to reduce the gap between knowledge systems and technologies available to agronomists, plant breeders, and farmers.

The United States proposes to undertake increased actions that will raise agricultural output and productivity levels in developing countries and reduce the number of people facing the threat of hunger, famine, and malnutrition in the seven areas described below.

## Improving Policy Frameworks

*An effective enabling environment is fundamental to achieving food security for all. Only with sound policies in place can domestic and foreign private investment and development assistance catalyze growth by helping people solve the problems that all too often keep them food insecure.*

Under President Bush's Millennium Challenge Account initiative, we will allocate development assistance to developing countries that demonstrate a strong commitment to

- Governing justly (for example, upholding the rule of law, rooting out corruption, and protecting human rights and political freedoms),
- Investing in their people (for example, investing in education and health care), and

- Promoting economic freedom (for example, developing open markets, sound fiscal and monetary policies, appropriate regulatory environments, and strong support for private enterprise).

Efforts to improve the policy environment will not be restricted to Millennium Challenge Account programs. The United States, in partnership with other donors, will contribute to improving the policy framework in developing countries, including those that are not recipients of Millennium Challenge Account funds, by increasing technical collaboration with bilateral partner countries that seek assistance in strengthening their enabling environments through

- Developing and supporting conflict prevention and resolution mechanisms that provide the environment necessary to pursue food security,
- Promoting democracy and governance based on the principles of accountability and transparency in public institutions and the rule of law, and

- Supporting policies, with particular relevance to the agricultural sector, that promote a legal, regulatory, and judicial framework that ensures that private markets operate competitively and without distortions, ensure rights to asset ownership and transfer are effective and nondiscriminatory, provide an efficient and effective tax administration that can tap increased economic flows generated by development efforts, promote trade liberalization within the context of the multilateral system, respect principles of sustainability, promote gender equality, and help protect natural resources and ensure safe supplies of food and water.

## Boosting Agricultural Science and Technology

*Rising agricultural productivity drives economic growth.*

*Improved agricultural technology is a key component for boosting productivity.*

The United States will, in partnership with developing countries and other donors,

- Support agricultural research through 1) increasing support to the Consultative Group for



International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) international agricultural research centers; 2) increasing support to regional agricultural research organizations and networks in Africa and South Asia; 3) increasing interaction of U.S. agricultural, fisheries, and social scientists with scientists at universities and national agricultural research systems in low-income, food-deficit developing countries and at the international agricultural research centers; and 4) increasing the availability of biotechnology applications that address developing country food needs and agro-ecosystems, particularly those addressing biotic and abiotic stresses and micronutrient bio-fortification, involving both public and private partners and building the capacity of developing country governments and scientists to manage the regulatory, intellectual property, and research management issues associated with biotechnology.

- Support the application of improved technologies and practices to reduce the gap between knowledge systems and technologies available to agronomists, plant breeders, and farmers in developed and developing countries through 1) accelerating the roll-out of applied production packages developed by international and national research institutions, in partnership with other public institutions, the private sector, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs); 2) improving access to information necessary for boosting production using radio and other communications technologies to disseminate information and ideas on agricultural technologies, markets, and investors; and 3) using technologies and agricultural methods that help to protect natural resources, thus assuring the long-run sustainability of agricultural productivity.

### Developing Domestic Market and International Trade Opportunities

*Expanding farmers' commercial opportunities is critical for ensuring adequate returns. The United States, through various trade preferences programs, has opened its markets to developing country exports and will support efforts to liberalize trade between and within developed countries.*

The United States, in partnership with other countries, will

- Contribute to improving domestic market opportunities through 1) promoting the effective functioning of markets for inputs and products by such activities as facilitating free entry and exit of firms to markets; supporting interventions to strengthen women's participation in markets; ensuring honest weights and measures and other standards of commerce; and facilitating accurate, prompt, and open exchange of price and other market information; 2) promoting technologies and practices that reduce food waste and post-

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harvest losses;  
3) promoting fortified and other nutritious foods as value-added products in commercial markets; and  
4) supporting the establishment of efficient internal storage and distribution systems.

- Contribute to improving international trade opportunities through  
1) providing assistance in conducting policy analyses that would illustrate for governments the opportunities that could result from opening their markets more widely to regional and global trade;  
2) negotiating further liberalization of agricultural trade in the World Trade Organization negotiations;  
3) providing policy analysis and project assistance to strengthen the capacity of the business development services sector as well as agricultural producers to respond to domestic, regional, and global trade opportunities; 4) expanding technical assistance to address sanitary, phyto-sanitary (SPS), and hazard analysis and critical control points (HACCP)/food safety issues; and

5) continuing to develop, implement, and promote science-based standards for trade in food and agricultural products and inputs, including providing support, within resource limits, to developing countries to develop animal, plant, and human health measures based on international standards and sound science.

#### Securing Property Rights and Access to Finance

*Asset distribution shapes broad-based progress because it determines the spread effects, that is, the multiplier, of economic stimulus. Asset distribution also contributes to empowerment, hence participation and ownership, by the larger proportion of the rural population. Rural women are responsible for much of the food production in developing countries, yet they control only a small proportion of the assets. Efficiency and economic growth improve when the poor get a larger share of asset control or benefits.*

The United States, will in partnership with developing countries and other donors,

- Contribute to improving security of property rights through building capacity to establish effective land

and water policy and administration systems—especially for women and other marginalized groups—including promoting efficient registering, titling, and surveying of land holdings; improved legal, institutional, and market infrastructure and rule of law; and the formalization of customary and communal use rights in ways that are transparent, enforceable, and consistent with community interests.

- Contribute to improving access to finance in developing countries through 1) participating in policy dialogues to assure the creation of a conducive macroeconomic environment for rural finance; 2) providing technical assistance to financial authorities to provide an appropriate policy and regulatory framework, including the legal environment, regulatory rules and procedures, property rights, and judicial procedures for institutional reform of rural and agricultural development banks; 3) supporting

innovation in the development of microfinance products (savings, insurance), business development services, and lending techniques that can help poor individuals, especially women, to better manage risks and their vulnerability to external shocks; and 4) improving mechanisms to reduce transaction costs for remittance transfers.

### Enhancing Human Capital

*Better education and improved health contribute to better scientific capacity, more productive farmers, and better decision-makers over a range of economic and non-economic activities.*

The United States will, in partnership with developing countries and other donors,

- Support higher education through strengthening developing country university faculties of agriculture and business to carry out both education and research functions and engaging U.S. universities in training agriculturalists at the graduate and post-graduate levels.

- Strengthen and broaden basic education, especially for girls, women, and other underserved populations, through supporting a range of activities including coordination and leadership with the development community through the Education for All (EFA) Initiative to improve education strategies, resources, and programs, address the social and cultural constraints to girls' education, get more children into school, and improve financial accountability.

- Review the effectiveness of school feeding programs to link nutrition and education and improve attendance and performance, especially for girls.

- Substantially increase use of improved, effective, and sustainable responses to reduce HIV transmission and mitigate the impact of the HIV/AIDS epidemic, with particular emphasis on Africa.

- Strengthen longer term food security through improved health by

reducing deaths from infectious diseases, increasing the use of cost-effective key child and maternal health and nutrition interventions, and increasing the use of voluntary practices to reduce fertility and improve reproductive health.

### Protecting the Vulnerable

*The challenge is to support governments and civil society in implementing strategies that reduce vulnerability in the short term and eliminate conditions that create vulnerability over the long term. Conflict prevention and resolution mechanisms and democracy and governance based on principles of accountability and transparency in public institutions and the rule of law are basic to these goals.*

The United States will, in partnership with developing countries and other donors,

- Enhance capacity to develop and use climate and other information for early warning to mitigate climate-related impacts, such as droughts, floods, and extreme climate events, and capacity to forewarn of civil strife and enable host governments and NGOs to use these

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The President's budget includes the largest-ever increase in the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children.

tools for their own planning and management of both public and private programs that cushion the social impacts of unforeseen events.

- Provide timely, appropriate, and adequate assistance, including emergency food aid programs, international disaster response, and social safety nets, integrating these resources into overall development strategies through 1) monitoring, maintaining, and rehabilitating the nutrition and food security of persons affected by disasters; 2) targeting the most needy and limiting possible negative effects on building competitive and open markets for food and other agricultural products; and 3) ensuring that the provision of food aid is consistent with long-term sustainable development objectives and, in particular, collaborating with other donors in focusing efforts to promote a transition from relief to development.

- Reduce food insecurity and malnutrition in areas especially vulnerable to famine emergencies through 1) enhancing the capacity of NGOs to plan and implement programs to improve food security, especially in countries where success of government-to-government assistance is problematic; and 2) targeting a portion of agricultural and food security programs to these areas.

#### Improving Food Security in the United States

*The strong record of success in promoting food security in the United States reflects our nation's long-standing commitment to share its economic prosperity and agricultural and fisheries resource abundance widely among its people.*

Since Congress enacted welfare reform in August 1996, there has been a 56 percent overall decline in the number of people nationally receiving assistance under the Temporary Assistance for

Needy Families (TANF) program—an unprecedented decline in dependency representing nearly 7 million fewer recipients. TANF provides \$16.5 billion to provide cash assistance to needy families, support their transition to self-sufficiency through work and marriage, and promote the formation of two-parent families.

For groups and settings in which domestic markets alone cannot ensure adequate access to food for all those who need it—particularly children, the elderly, and low-income people—the U.S. government provides targeted food assistance. The U.S. government works with institutions of civil society to sustain and improve this national nutrition safety net. In FY 2002, the U.S. government committed over \$38 billion to domestic food assistance and anticipates increased funding in FY 2003. The President's budget includes the largest-ever increase in the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women,

Infants, and Children (WIC), with funding sufficient to serve an average 7.8 million women, infants, and children per month. In addition, the Administration is seeking policy changes to better promote food security and good nutrition in the United States, including:

- Restoring food stamps for legal immigrants. The 2002 Farm Bill enacted the President’s proposal to restore food stamp benefits to legal immigrants who have lived in this country for at least five years. The bill includes \$2.5 billion over 10 years.
- Expanding access to summer meals for children. The U.S. government is working to improve access to nutritious food for children in the summer months, when school is not in session and historically far fewer children have access to meals. It has launched a major initiative to expand the number of sponsors, feeding sites, and participants in the Summer

Food Service Program, and is exploring policy alternatives to streamline the program and reduce the administrative burden.

- Promoting breastfeeding. As an integral part of WIC, and through other initiatives, the U.S. government encourages and supports breastfeeding as the preferred infant feeding practice.
- Promoting nutrition among the elderly. The Administration is committed to finding new ways to eliminate barriers to Food Stamp Program participation for low-income elderly people. Pilot tests are under way in six states to test three different approaches to providing food stamp benefits to eligible elderly persons, including simplifying program eligibility rules, providing assistance with the application process, and offering an option for seniors to receive a monthly food package instead of food stamps.

- Promoting healthy food and lifestyle choices. The United States faces new health problems stemming from food consumption patterns that result in overweight and associated chronic problems. The U.S. government is committed to significant new efforts to improve dietary and physical activity habits.

Beyond national policy, states and local communities play a critical role in ensuring that these programs effectively serve all who need them. Success in achieving food security depends on the strength and range of partnerships with state and local governments, community organizations and advocates, and others concerned about hunger and nutrition.

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## Our Commitment

The United States is deeply committed to contributing to achievement of the World Food Summit goal of reducing the number of undernourished by half by 2015. We welcome the opportunity to join our partner countries and fellow donors in a recommitment to accomplish this most important challenge.





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