

# Feeding the Hungry: A Fundamental Christian Calling

## A Time of Unprecedented Crises

The world is facing its largest humanitarian crisis since World War II due to near famine conditions in four countries. Over 20 million people in Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan and Yemen are on the brink of starvation.

## Christian Calling to Feed the Hungry

Helping people in need answers God's call to serve others. Scripture such as *"And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased."* (Hebrews 13:16 NIV) show the importance of serving and helping others, especially vulnerable people who do not have enough to eat. Hunger is an especially common topic in the Bible and scripture calls us repeatedly to provide food to the hungry. One of the most well-known verses *For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink* (Matthew 25:35 NIV) goes so far as to say that we serve Jesus himself when we feed the hungry.

## Faith Community Efforts Strengthened through U.S. Leadership

While feeding the hungry is fundamental to Christian values, and many church and Christian organizations are already providing food through their own programs, we need the partnership of the U.S. government to address the overwhelming challenge facing us today.



## Help from the U.S. Saves Lives

There is a common misconception that the United States spends a large proportion of its budget on foreign assistance, without making much of an impact. This is simply not true.

Foreign assistance makes up less than 1 percent of the U.S. Federal budget, according to the U.S. Global Leadership Coalition, yet has saved millions of lives.

A family at a United Nations camp for internally displaced persons in Malakal, South Sudan. © 2016 Charles Lomodong, Courtesy of Photoshare

## Lifesaving Food Relief Improves U.S. National Security

In addition to answering our Christian and humanitarian calling to feed the hungry, strong and effective food and nutrition security programs help address the root causes of conflict and violent extremism and bolster national security.

## Protecting Children, Mothers and Unborn Babies

Hunger has negative impacts at every stage of life. Even short bouts of hunger and malnutrition in the critical 1,000 days between when a mother becomes pregnant and her child's second birthday can have devastating lifelong consequences for children, impacting their health and reducing their ability to learn and earn an income.

## We Call on Policymakers to Help Christians Reach those in Need

As Christians who care about our vulnerable brothers and sisters across the globe, we call on our leaders to:

Support robust funding for U.S. food security and nutrition programs, specifically

- the Senate State and Foreign Operations (SFOPS) Appropriations levels for the Nutrition subaccount within Global Health
- the Feed the Future program (Development Assistance/SFOPS)
- the Emergency Food Security Program (International Disaster Assistance/SFOPS)
- Food for Peace (Agriculture Appropriations) and
- McGovern-Dole (Agriculture Appropriations)



### Examples of Impact

**Food for Peace** reached over 60 million people in need in 52 countries in 2016 alone through the delivery of U.S. commodities. The **Emergency Food Security Program** delivers emergency food assistance using market-based approaches, like cash transfers and vouchers, instead of commodities. Between these two programs, we are able to reach people with emergency food assistance with the most cost-effective approaches that are appropriate to local needs. **Food for Peace** and **Feed the Future** work together to help even the poorest subsistence farmers grow more food, strengthen their resilience to droughts, and engage in markets more effectively so they can ultimately stand on their own without outside assistance.

*Women in Uganda carrying supplies and food to feed their families.*