



Title: US leadership needed to end world hunger

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Des Moines — 24 **World Food Prize** Laureates from across the globe, dedicated to driving change in food systems, are calling on the leadership of the United States Administration to help end world hunger. The **World Food Prize** Laureates submitted an open letter to the President of the United States of America, Joseph R. Biden Jr., calling on the new Biden-Harris administration to help achieve the global goals on food.

“Dr. **Norman Borlaug** envisioned a prize to elevate the innovations that would inspire current and future leaders to increase the quality, quantity and availability of food for everyone,” said Barbara Stinson, President of the **World Food Prize** Foundation. “At this critical juncture in the U.S. and globally, the Laureates’ call to leverage funding, alliances and leadership on behalf of transforming food systems is timely, focused on the urgency of U.S. action to achieve zero hunger by 2030.”

2018 **World Food Prize** Laureate, Dr. Lawrence Haddad, Executive Director of GAIN, said, “Our food systems are moving us in the wrong directions: hunger levels are rising, child

undernutrition levels are at severe risk of rising, obesity is increasing, we are off track to meet climate targets, biodiversity is being squandered, not enough decent jobs are being created and community resilience is being undermined. But this moment in time has created an opportunity for everyone to think and act differently: with ambition, with solidarity and with lasting impact.”

Pre-COVID-19, hunger was on the rise. In 2017, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) estimated that 3 billion people could not afford a healthy diet. While the world reduced absolute poverty from 2 billion people in 1990 to 800 million people before the COVID-19 pandemic, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) approximates that more than 1 billion people will live in extreme poverty by 2030.

The strong commitment of the United States can significantly impact achieving the goal of zero hunger by 2030. The **World Food Prize** Laureates have highlighted three steps:

1. Cast a wide-angle lens on our food systems that produce, distribute, process, market, and prepare food. Food systems in-

tertwine hunger, nutrition, food safety, biodiversity, resource use, climate emissions, jobs and livelihoods, as well as the resilience of families, communities, and economies. We know that improvements in food systems create huge benefits in all of these critical areas.

2. Strengthen and leverage our alliances to raise ambitions and find game changers for food. The COVID era is teaching us that the unimaginable is attainable, the unthinkable is in fact doable: vaccines in under a year; unprecedented economic relief packages; doing global business from home; digitised commerce even in the most fragile settings; unprecedented community solidarity; and increasing the number of people in food safety net programmes from 0.6 billion to 2 billion. The returns for imagination and boldness have never been greater.

3. Provide leadership for high impact. In September 2021, the UN Secretary-General will lead a Food Systems Summit to mobilize global action on hunger. The Summit involves civil society, business, and development agencies - everyone - to work with governments. It is the People’s Summit,

and its aim is action, not declaration. In addition, the United Nations named 2021 the International Year of Fruits and Vegetables to catalyze action on nutrition and health. The Nutrition for Growth Summit will be hosted in Tokyo in December this year to address deepening food insecurity and malnutrition globally, and the impacts of COVID-19 on donor aid and nutrition targets.

The **World Food Prize** Laureates are calling on the Administration of President Biden to:

- Re-establish American global leadership to end hunger,
- Play a leadership role in the upcoming UN Food Systems Summit and other global initiatives,
- Refresh U.S. evidence-based policy and investment to achieve the goal of ending hunger, and
- Expand the highly successful USAID Feed the Future initiative and Innovation Labs to reach more countries.

Every year, the **World Food Prize** has been privileged to announce a Laureate recognized for their inspiring work in improving access to, quality of, or amounts of food globally.