



**4TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
FINANCING FOR DEVELOPMENT**

**INVESTING IN
ENDING HUNGER
AND MALNUTRITION
FUELS HUMAN
DEVELOPMENT AND
SECURITY**

BECAUSE

Hunger affected 733 million people worldwide in 2023 – an increase of 152 million since 2019.

This reflects the prevalence of undernourishment, a form of multidimensional vulnerability that arises from the intersection of multiple deprivations. It is rooted in structural causes and is mainly driven by factors such as conflicts, weather extremes, and economic shocks.

2.33 billion people – around one-third of the **global population** – **are moderately or severely food insecure, and do not have regular access to adequate food**. Additionally, 295 million people face acute food insecurity, which threatens lives, livelihoods, or both – at least 60% of these individuals live in conflict-affected areas.

Food insecurity, which is understood as the lack of stable, sufficient, safe, and nutritious food across six pillars (agency, access, availability, utilization, stability, and sustainability), is a central cause of hunger. It is also directly linked to other critical factors such as health, livelihoods, and water security – including access to safe drinking water, adequate hygiene systems, and sanitation.

Adequate nutrition is essential for the physical and mental development of all

individuals and **is a fundamental human right**. It is a key factor in ensuring that children thrive and reach their full potential, with lifelong benefits. These include improved cognitive function, academic performance, educational outcomes, future productivity, and economic potential.

Moreover, for millions of people, achieving adequate **nutrition is key to breaking the cycle of poverty**, given the deep interconnections between food security, social equity, and environmental sustainability. Environmental challenges like water scarcity and ecosystem degradation disproportionately impact vulnerable communities, compounding poverty and environmental decline while exacerbating hunger and malnutrition. These dynamics highlight the centrality of water – not only in food production, but also in **climate resilience and social stability**. As such, guaranteeing safe, equitable, and sustainable access to water is not only a matter of basic human need but a cornerstone of long-term development and territorial cohesion.

The cycles of hunger and poverty remain unbroken due to chronic underfunding, inadequate food systems, and systemic inequalities. Therefore, food security, nutrition, and water must be recognized as top development priorities and placed at the heart of the new global financial architecture.

Without ending hunger and malnutrition, achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is not possible.



WE RECALL THAT

FINANCING MECHANISMS

1. **Public financing is a moral and legal imperative** to uphold international commitments to **leave no one behind** – and it must be safeguarded from suspension or disruption due to political or other conditionalities.
2. Unfulfilled Official Development Assistance (ODA) commitments must be renewed and met, including the clearance of past arrears. This is critical to reaching the people most in need – particularly in contexts where no other public-private financing mechanisms or impact-driven private investments are available.
3. **Innovative financing mechanisms** – such as investments for impact, debt-for-nutrition swaps, blended finance, and the strategic use of multilateral development bank funding – **should be leveraged to address hunger and all forms of malnutrition.**
4. Debt relief and cancellation should be pursued to unlock resources for food systems, nutrition, health, and education in low-income and heavily indebted countries.
5. Trade policies must support food security and nutrition for all by promoting fair, equitable market access and avoiding measures that undermine local food systems in developing countries.
6. Financing policies must support equitable growth, enabling countries to invest in food security, nutrition, health, water and sanitation and education without worsening fiscal stress.

EVERY DOLLAR SPENT COMBATING UNDERNUTRITION YIELDS A \$23 RETURN

SYSTEMS STRENGTHENING

1. Sustainable and predictable financing for hunger and nutrition interventions must be guaranteed.
2. Ending child malnutrition and preventable child deaths must be supported by long-term, strategic investment that is aligned across sectors and funding sources to scale effective interventions, strengthen systems, and ensure that no child suffers or dies from undernutrition.
3. Low-income countries and the most vulnerable populations, including those affected by conflict and climate shocks, must be prioritized in allocation criteria, funding frameworks, and development agendas. This must not be compromised in the transition to new funding mechanisms, particularly those driven by private capital.
4. Middle-income countries are home to the majority of people experiencing food insecurity (IPC Phase 2 and above), and many of the world's poorest. Financing frameworks and programme design must address inequality and poverty.
5. Humanitarian action must be safeguarded and funded, as it is essential to reach populations in crisis and serves as a catalyst for operationalizing the Humanitarian-Development-Peace (HDP) Nexus. Long-term, integrated financing is critical to address both immediate needs and the root causes of hunger and malnutrition, as short-term emergency funds alone are insufficient to create a sustainable, lasting impact, especially in fragile contexts.
6. Investment in social spending, including food and livelihoods assistance, and social safety nets, must be protected and increased to prevent crisis-induced setbacks and accelerate SDG progress.

7. Financing should address the gender-nutrition gap, ensuring women and girls' equal access to food, resources, and decision-making opportunities.
8. Enhancing climate resilience is essential to protect communities from increasingly frequent extreme events such as droughts and floods. Investments must be made in sustainable, climate-resilient, and agroecological food systems that promote biodiversity, reduce emissions and ensure access to affordable, nutritious, and culturally appropriate food.
9. Strengthening local capacities is critical to ensuring the continuity of essential services and safeguarding public health during crises. Basic services such as water, sanitation, and hygiene must be adapted to local realities, respecting community knowledge, values, and organizational forms to enhance sustainability, strengthen social cohesion, and foster more just and resilient solutions, especially in fragile and rural settings.

INVESTING IN FOOD SECURITY IS A STRATEGIC DECISION WITH HIGH SOCIAL, ECONOMIC, AND POLITICAL POSITIVE IMPACT. IT ENSURES HUMAN SECURITY, DRIVES SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, GUARANTEES FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS, AND STRENGTHENS SOCIAL COHESION.

FINANCING GOVERNANCE

1. **Financing governance must be transparent, inclusive, and democratically governed** to ensure accountability and guarantee that funding is responsive to peoples' needs and addresses the systemic issues essential for advancing development.
2. Inclusive and territorially grounded governance must be promoted, recognizing the eco-social and cultural dynamics that shape development outcomes.
3. Civil society must be recognized and integrated as a key actor in the financing architecture, contributing knowledge, accountability, and close connection to affected communities.
4. Organizations with technical expertise in vital areas such as food security, nutrition, health, and water and sanitation, and the promotion of other human rights, should be systematically included in financing for development agreements to ensure efficiency, accuracy, and impact.



ENDING HUNGER IS A POLITICAL DECISION

This document – *4th International Conference on Financing for Development. Investing in Ending Hunger and Malnutrition Fuels Human Development and Security*, aims to guide how development financing should contribute to ending hunger and malnutrition — and how doing so is essential to achieving sustainable human and global development.

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This document has been developed by the Advocacy Teams at Action Against Hunger International Network

