FOOD. FARMING. FUTURE.

BREAKING THE CYCLE OF MALNUTRITION AND POVERTY
ONE is a grassroots organization backed by more than 3 million people who fight extreme poverty and preventable disease, particularly in Africa, by raising public awareness and pressuring political leaders to support smart and effective policies and programmes that save lives, help put kids in school, and improve futures.

FOOD. FARMING. FUTURE.
BREAKING THE CYCLE OF MALNUTRITION AND POVERTY
THE CHALLENGE:
A VICIOUS CYCLE OF HUNGER AND POVERTY

Despite extensive global economic growth in recent decades—including in some of the poorest countries in Africa—millions of people remain locked in a vicious cycle of hunger and poverty. Poverty means parents can’t feed their families enough nutritious food, leaving children malnourished. Malnutrition leads to irreversibly stunted development and shorter, less productive lives. Less productive lives mean no escape from poverty. We have to break this cycle.

1.4 billion people—or 20 percent of the world’s population—live in extreme poverty, earning less than $1.25 a day.1 That is the equivalent of more than four and a half times the population of the US, or nearly three times the population of all the countries in the European Union—combined.

More than two-thirds of these extremely poor people, or nearly 1 billion of them, do not have enough food to eat.2 For them, going to bed hungry is part and parcel of their everyday life. But it’s not just about hunger. This lack of food and nutrition will result in around 178 million young children being stunted and suffering irreversible damage to their development this year alone, limiting their ability to learn and to grow. This seriously affects their chances of earning a good living so they can support themselves and their families as they get older. In fact, the World Bank estimates that on average individuals suffering from malnutrition lose 10 percent of their potential lifetime earnings. This has a much broader impact too; in the same report the World Bank found that countries can lose 2-3 percent of their GDP because of undernutrition.3

The most dramatic manifestations of hunger and poverty are food crises and famines. Since the devastating Ethiopian famine of the 1980s, the world has acted to put in place measures to prevent the worst impacts of drought and natural disasters, including early warning systems, safety net programmes and coordinated humanitarian responses. Yet so far we have not managed to eradicate them. The famine in Somalia in 2011, and the wider food crisis across the Horn of Africa region, led to the deaths of thousands of people, most of them children. And there is now an emerging crisis in the Sahel region of West Africa, with the UN estimating that at least 15 million people are at risk of food insecurity.4 While the causes of these crises are often complex, with factors ranging from political instability and weak governance to unpredictable weather patterns, it is incomprehensible that in this age of plenty mothers are forced to watch their children die simply because they can't get enough food to eat.

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4 FAO press release, 9 March 2012
CASE STUDY: MALAWI

WELLNESS AND AGRICULTURE FOR LIFE ADVANCEMENT PROJECT

In a very remote village set on a steep hillside in the Zomba district of Malawi, Save the Children is working with communities to improve their wellbeing and livelihoods through improved nutrition, sanitation and access to savings and credit.

The community built a contour trench along the hillside to prevent top-soil run-off and mud slides from destroying their maize crops. Farmers trained in conservation agriculture, together with Save the Children, built a dam and more than 100 meters of canal to channel the water to the fields of the most vulnerable households in the community. Families also receive training in nutrition, health and sanitation. Seedlings for mango, guava, papaya, orange and tangerine trees help to sweeten the benefits of healthy eating.

The impacts of these investments were evident from the beaming, shining smiles of the children and women as they showed-off their hard work. Malawi is highly dependent on agriculture with smallholder farmers and their dependants making up about 85% of the population.

WALA forms part of Malawi’s agriculture investment programme, the Agriculture Sector Wide Approach (ASWAp), and is operated by Save the Children under the US Feed the Future Initiative. The programme is aligned with CAADP principles, with Malawi signing a CAADP compact in April 2010.
THE OPPORTUNITY: 30 COUNTRIES READY TO GO

The good news is that there is a way to break out of this cycle of poverty and hunger. We know what needs to be done to increase the amount of food that is produced, to increase people’s incomes so they can access this food, and to ensure that children are well fed so they can grow and prosper. Investing in agriculture—and the financial and infrastructure systems that support it—is one of the best ways to reduce poverty across the developing world, but especially in Africa. Earnings from agriculture make up around 30 percent of GDP across the continent and more than two-thirds of Africans depend on farming for their incomes. When connected to markets, smallholder farmers can generate an income, send their children to school and help lift their community out of poverty for the long term. This ‘multiplier effect’, catalysed by agricultural growth, is the reason that investments in agriculture are estimated to be around to two times more effective in reducing poverty than growth generated from other sectors.1

Huge progress has already been made in many areas of the world. The Green Revolution in the second half of the last century saw agricultural yields increase dramatically thanks to the introduction of new technologies, farming practices and major public and private investments in agriculture. India alone saw its wheat production rise from about 10 million tonnes in 1961 to just under 50 million tonnes in 1990, a five-fold increase.2 Research has shown that this investment in agriculture saved the lives of an estimated 30 million children in poor countries between 1970 and 1990.3

But some parts of the world have not benefited from this revolution as much as others. While many countries in Asia and Latin America prospered, Africa failed to see the same levels of focus on farming and rural development. Not enough was done to look into adapting technologies for the diverse and unique agro-ecologies found in Africa, while international aid dedicated to investment in agriculture in sub-Saharan Africa fell by 72 percent between 1988 and 2003.4

Similarly, African governments failed to invest sufficiently in their agricultural sector or provide enough support for smallholder farmers. Total domestic spending in the African agricultural sector remained stable at around $4 billion in both 1980 and 1990, compared to domestic spending in Asia that exceeded $70 billion in 1980 and rose to $100 billion in 1990.5

This is beginning to change. Since 2003 aid targeted towards agriculture in Africa has started to increase largely due to stronger African leadership on the issue, and the championing of it by leaders like former UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, who chairs the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA). There is now increasing recognition that aid levels need to be higher and sufficient state support put in place in order to nurture innovations and experimentation at a local and regional level within Africa to find solutions most appropriate to local African climates.

But there is still a legacy left over from the lost decades of underinvestment in African agriculture, a legacy that is evident in the overall poverty levels in poorer countries. While the world as a whole is on track to meet the first part of Millennium Development Goal (MDG1a)—to halve the proportion of people living on less than a dollar a day—this is largely because of the remarkable progress in Asia. Over a 25-year period, the poverty rate in East Asia fell from nearly 60 percent to under 20 percent.6 It is a different story in sub-Saharan Africa where progress has been much slower. Here, the overall poverty rate declined by just 7 percent, from 58 to 51 percent, between 1990 and 2005. Yet this masks huge discrepancies between countries. For example, in Nigeria the proportion of people in poverty actually increased by 56 percent between 1990 and 2005. This contrasts with other countries such as Kenya, which achieved a reduction of over 50 percent in the proportion living on less than a dollar a day over the same time period.7

Despite real progress in poverty reduction in large parts of the developing world, hunger still blights the lives of nearly 1 billion people. The third part of MDG1, to halve the proportion of people going hungry, is in grave danger of being missed completely, and is way off track in many countries. Again, sub-Saharan Africa as a whole is faring badly, despite some notable progress in many countries; in sub-Saharan Africa 17 countries have seen hunger rates reduce by 30% or more since 2000. According to the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the UN, 217 million people in sub-Saharan Africa were undernourished during 2006-8.8 That’s 27 percent of the total population, or one in four people, and compares to 31 percent between 1980 and 1992. So while some progress has been made, it is clear that we have to go much further, much faster.

The consequences of not acting are immense. Hunger and poor nutrition have a disproportionate effect on children, and undernutrition is linked to more than one in three of the 7.6 million deaths of children under five each year. That’s over 2.5 million children who would have a much better chance of survival if they had access to more and better food.9

For those who survive, many become stunted as a result of poor nutrition, meaning that they suffer irreversible damage to their bodies and brains. According to the most recent figures from UNICEF, 29 percent of children in developing countries are stunted. In sub-Saharan Africa, this rises to 38 percent.10

It is clear that real and sustained investment in agriculture, together with a focus on ensuring children are well-nourished, will have a huge impact on the lives of millions of people, helping them to pull themselves out of poverty and putting them on a path to prosperity.

2012 presents a momentous opportunity to address these problems, and kick-start a final push towards the MDG deadline in 2015.

The starting point for action must lie in country ownership. In line with the first of the Paris principles on aid effectiveness, we know we have the best chance of success when the world unites behind good national leadership. ONE has identified 30 low-income countries that have internationally endorsed agriculture investment plans in place.

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4 ODA figures downloaded from the OECD-CRS database in March 2012 show that ODA for agriculture fell from $4.115 billion in 1988 to $1.155 billion in 2003 (in 2009 constant prices).
5 FAO, Omilola, and Lambert, Public Spending For Agriculture in Africa: Trends and Composition, ReSAKSS Working Paper No. 28, April 2009
7 Annan, who chairs the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA). For more information, see Food Security Data: Prevalence of Undernourishment in Total Population, October 2011.
Together these countries are home to around 26 percent of the 1.4 billion people in extreme poverty, and 90 percent of the poorest people in sub-Saharan Africa. If fully funded, these 30 country investment plans could lift an estimated 50 million people out of poverty within the coming decade.14

Of these 30 countries, 18 are also aligned with the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) movement, which aims to support national plans to substantially reduce undernutrition. It brings together a range of organisations, including Governments, civil society, the private sector, research institutions and the United Nations, to help ensure that the necessary financial and technical resources are in place to deliver these plans. The plans are ready to be implemented by governments, but urgently need support and additional resources.

The 18 SUN countries we have identified are home to 24 percent of the world’s stunted children. If these countries had sufficient resources to deliver the SUN—endorsed national plans for nutrition, alongside the investment in agriculture, ONE estimates that 100 million young children would be less malnourished, and 15 million children under 5 could be saved from stunting.

Taking Africa alone, 31 million people could be pulled out of poverty, while 12 million children could be saved from stunting. Some countries in particular could see huge returns. For example if Ethiopia—which despite making huge progress against hunger has still suffered from repeated food crises over recent decades—had sufficient resources to expand implementation of its investment plan for agriculture, we estimate that 3.1 million more people could be lifted out of poverty. In Niger, which is currently suffering drought and food shortages, 2 million people could be lifted out of poverty—nearly 13 percent of the population.

However, ONE’s analysis has identified a significant funding gap. Just 50 percent of the total funds required to implement the agriculture investment plans has been identified. This leaves a gap of around $27 billion that needs to be filled between now and 2015. These plans should be financed through a combination of contributions from donors, national governments, the private sector, and in some cases non-governmental organizations. ONE recommends that the financing gaps for the country investment plans are split evenly between donors and national governments, with a more modest, but still very important, role for the private sector and NGOs.

In order to fully fund the nutrition interventions required to prevent 15 million children becoming stunted, ONE estimates that a further $6.9 billion is needed in the 18 countries identified. The private sector should contribute a significant proportion of this—around 7 percent—which would fund increased iron fortification and salt iodization of their products. These are crucial interventions to prevent a deficiency of nutrients that the private sector is best-placed to deliver.15 The remainder should be split evenly between donors and national governments.

This combined investment in agriculture plans and nutrition interventions could have a significant impact on overall levels of poverty and hunger. However, it is important that countries without endorsed country investment plans are also supported. Some of these countries need help to build capacity so that they can formulate their own national agricultural investment and nutrition action plans.

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14 The exact timescale will vary from country to country depending on the readiness and type of investments through which financing is delivered. Channeling funding through the Global Agriculture and Food Security Program (GAFSP) could speed up implementation substantially.

15 The World Bank in Scaling Up Nutrition: What Will It Cost? estimates the private sector share to be 7 percent for iron fortification and salt iodization based on the package of Phase 1 interventions.
CASE STUDY: TANZANIA

COUNTRY INVESTMENT PLAN

Tanzania has a population of around 45 million people, 74 per cent of whom live in rural areas. While the economy has been growing consistently since the early 1990s, 42 per cent of children under five suffer from severe or moderate stunting.\(^{16}\)

In July 2010, Tanzania signed a compact under the framework of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) and since then has developed a 10-year Agriculture and Food Security Investment Plan (TAFSIP)—dubbed 'Kilimo Kwanza' in Swahili (Agriculture First). Its aim is to transform the agricultural sector to create wealth, reduce poverty and achieve food and nutrition security. It seeks to address issues around agricultural productivity, rural development, and food and nutrition.

The Tanzanian government estimates that this plan will cost $8.3 billion to implement over 10 years, with around $3.3 billion required in the first 5 years. They currently have a $1 billion financing gap.

ONE’s analysis suggests that, if the first stage of Tanzania’s plan is fully funded, a further 2.2 million people could be lifted out of poverty over the next decade—equivalent to five per cent of the current population.

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THE SOLUTION: A COMPACT ON FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION

Achieving change in these 30 countries will require sustained investment and political will, bringing together national leaders in developing countries with partners across the global development community. To enable this, world leaders should agree a new compact on food security and nutrition in 2012. If endorsed and implemented with the necessary urgency, this could help to halt the cycle of poverty and hunger in many of the world’s poorest countries. The compact has four important elements, all of which must be acted upon in a coordinated way:

1. A NEW G8 FOOD SECURITY INITIATIVE

In the wake of a global food crisis, which brought the issue of food security to the top of the agenda for the first time in decades, world leaders agreed the L’Aquila Food Security Initiative at the 2009 G8 Summit in Italy. The initiative set out plans to boost spending on agricultural development and food security by allocating $22 billion over 3 years to programmes to tackle these issues, all of which would be spent in line with the Rome Principles for Sustainable Global Food Security. The financial pledges of the L’Aquila Food Security Initiative are set to expire this year.

While L’Aquila as an initiative raised the profile of agriculture and food security on the political agenda and led to an increase in overall development assistance in the sector, it had significant shortcomings. Not only did it fail to include outcome targets, instead focussing solely on inputs, it also lacked a focus on country-led plans. In addition, it failed the crucial test by neglecting to build in sufficient transparency, so donors could not be held properly to account.

As a result, progress remains inadequate. As ONE identified in its Agriculture Accountability report last year, only 22 percent of their promised disbursements had been delivered by May 2011, and countries demonstrated mixed progress against the qualitative targets. While time remains, it is unlikely that the pledges will be met in full by several donors. This is a shocking indication of the lack of priority given to this vital route out of poverty and towards prosperity and self-sufficiency for many of the world’s poorest people.

But there is still time to change this. There is now a real opportunity to use the 2012 G8 Summit to support a new global compact on food security by agreeing a new and better initiative to build on L’Aquila, while also recommitting to meet the financial promises already made by the end of the year. Crucially, leaders should ensure that this new initiative is results-driven, with clear outcome targets for reducing poverty and child malnutrition.

It is essential that this agreement focuses on improving country ownership and long-term development results. Country ownership is particularly important for investment in agriculture because soils, climates, resources and capacities vary so significantly by country that no one-size-fits-all approach would be effective. Local knowledge and solutions are therefore exceptionally important for making the right decisions about smart agriculture and food security programmes. This agreement should therefore include a firm commitment to provide at least $12 billion in additional funding for the 30 endorsed country investment plans currently in place by 2015 to help fill the funding gap.

In addition, the initiative should:

- Create clear goals and outcome targets to reduce poverty and stunting linked to measurable indicators;
- Support small-scale, women producers, sustainable farming approaches, year-long access to markets, and proven solutions to reducing childhood malnutrition;
- Provide a greater role for African leadership, and ensure that traditional donors work with non-traditional donors and recipients to share knowledge and experience;
- Incorporate robust measures to improve transparency and accountability, and establish an independent monitoring and evaluation mechanism; and
- Reaffirm the Rome Principles and improve them by:
  - Clearly delineating all commitments, identifying specific, measurable actions for each;
  - Aligning each action with widely accepted indicators for measuring progress; and
  - Providing full transparency of all spending, interventions and meetings.

2. REVITALISING THE MAPUTO COMMITMENTS

Governments in developing countries have a crucial role to play in efforts to reduce poverty, hunger and malnutrition. In 2003, members of the African Union (AU) signed up to the Maputo Declaration on Agriculture and Food Security and promised to spend 10 per cent of national budgets on agriculture and rural development. While some countries have reached this target, many are off track. Average expenditure in Africa from 2003 to 2009 was 6.4 percent—roughly one-third of the percentage spent by many Asian countries during the Green Revolution.17

With the 10-year anniversary of the declaration approaching in 2013, African governments must seize the opportunity to renew their commitments to investing in agriculture and rural development and improve upon the Maputo goals.

Clear definitions for what constitutes an investment in agriculture and rural development should be established. Monitoring and evaluation frameworks can then follow. The African Union should use the Malawi Summit in June 2012 as a starting point to revitalise these commitments and outline concrete country-specific timetables for achieving them. Crucially, they should also redouble efforts to improve the transparency and quality of government expenditures.

Part of this should be concrete steps to improve the Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP), which is an African-led and African-owned initiative to support countries in the development and implementation of their own country investment plans. AU leaders can improve the CAADP process by ensuring that:

• Regional compacts are agreed, fostering regional integration and tackling cross-border barriers to agriculture-led development;

• The essential role and needs of women are fully represented and addressed in the policy-making process;

• Mutual accountability is prioritised in CAADP plans and processes to ensure the voices of citizens are heard and taken into account; and

• Non-state actors, such as civil society, NGOs and the private sector, are able to fully and meaningfully participate in the full CAADP process—from design through to monitoring and evaluation—so that the plans meet the needs of all stakeholders.

A concerted push towards using more domestic resources for smart, effective investment in agriculture has the potential to transform the lives of millions of African citizens as well as helping to boost economic growth.

3. GALVANISING SUSTAINABLE PRIVATE SECTOR INVESTMENT

The private sector is fundamental to efforts to drive growth, create markets, and improve food security. Investments are needed across the African agriculture sector in particular to improve seeds and fertilizers, farming practices, storage, processing, distribution and marketing. It is therefore essential that efforts are made to unlock all potential sources of private sector financing.

African governments have an important role to play in attracting the private investment that can unleash the enormous potential for African agriculture. African leaders can do this by creating policies and regulations that improve the business climate, while safeguarding the land rights of small-scale farmers and expanding and improving infrastructure for transportation, telecommunications, energy and water.

Regional integration and rural infrastructure should be a particular priority for African governments and their development partners. Better feeder roads and cross-border transport links, together with more efficient border controls, will help ensure that trade can take place, boosting export earnings and increasing incomes. It will also help to ensure food supplies are distributed more evenly between countries, lessening the chances of families on one side of a border suffering food shortages while their neighbours across the border have more than enough to go around.

In addition, more must be done to mobilise new privately managed investment funds that specialize in, and span across, the entire African agriculture sector. Loan guarantees and so-called pull mechanisms should also be used as a way to jumpstart new agricultural innovations. The private sector window of the Global Agriculture and Food Security Program (GAFSP) is another crucial mechanism. This aims to provide long- and short-term loans, credit guarantees and equity to increase the commercial potential of small and medium-sized agri-businesses and farmers by connecting them with local, national and global value chains.

4. ADDRESSING STRUCTURAL PROBLEMS AND PRICE VOLATILITY

Underpinning any effort to improve food security and reduce hunger must be a concerted drive to address the volatility in food prices that we have seen in recent years. Since the global food crisis of 2007/8, which saw the price of staple foods rocket, food prices have remained high and unpredictable. This has a disproportionate effect on the poorest people in the world, who spend more of their income on food. According to the World Bank, 44 million people were pushed into poverty between June 2010 and April 2011 by rising food prices. The World Bank also estimates that a 10 percent increase in the food price index could lead to 10 million more people falling into poverty, while a 30 percent increase could lead to an increase of 34 million people.

World leaders must urgently address the causes of volatile food prices. Again, there is a real opportunity to do this in 2012. President Calderon of Mexico has made food security one of the five key pillars during his presidency of the G20 this year. Mexico can be a leader in easing price volatility by ensuring all G20 members adhere to the Agriculture Action Plan set out at the Cannes G20 in 2011, and undertake all financial market reforms agreed and recommended by the Financial Stability Board. In particular, they must allow regulators to impose position limits on food commodities before a crisis erupts.

The European Union should also commit to creating a regulatory body of equal or greater stature and power to the US Commodities Futures Trading Commission (CFTC), so that market trends can be analysed and precautions taken to prevent any major market disruptions such as global food prices spikes.

CONCLUSION

In 2012, we have the opportunity to open a new front in the fight against extreme poverty and hunger, a fight that we know can be won. Huge strides have already been made in many places; now is the time to focus our effort on those countries that are on the verge of making similar progress. As ONE’s analysis shows, dramatic results can be achieved in the 30 countries with endorsed investment plans that are ready to go. We know what needs to be done to make this a reality. What we need now is political leadership.

Failure to act would have implications that would be felt for decades to come. Without action, too many countries will stay locked in a vicious cycle of poverty and hunger. Without action, millions more children will become stunted, and suffer irreversible damage. Without action, millions of families will be trapped in extreme poverty, depending on help from outside rather than earning a living and becoming self-sufficient. We can do better than this.

18 World Bank, Food Price Watch, April 2011
Millions of people are locked in a vicious cycle of hunger and poverty. Poverty means parents can’t feed their families enough nutritious food, leaving children hungry and malnourished. Malnutrition leads to irreversibly stunted development and shorter, less productive lives. Less productive lives mean no escape from poverty. We have to break this cycle.

In response to this challenge, ONE has launched THRIVE: FOOD. FARMING. FUTURE. It’s our most ambitious campaign yet, and it will run until 2015.

THRIVE calls on each of us to play our part to break the cycle of hunger and poverty, tackling their root causes. If we achieve our goals by 2015, we could see 15 million fewer children chronically malnourished and 50 million people lifted out of extreme poverty.

To achieve our goal, ONE is calling on African leaders, donor governments and the private sector to focus on thirty of the poorest countries that have smart agriculture and nutrition plans. Those plans are tested, costed and affordable. They need to be put into practice. For that they need two things: political leadership and financial backing. ONE’s campaign will insist on both.

But we know leaders won’t act unless people urge them to do so. ONE’s strength is in our collective action. That’s why we’re asking our three million members to raise their voices—and join with partners and friends around the world to build an unstoppable movement.

Most people would do anything they could to help one hungry child. Together, we can stop malnutrition, not just for one child but for 15 million. We can end poverty, not just for one person but for 50 million. Together we can break the cycle.

ONE.ORG/THRIVE