

**LEVERAGING U.S. FUNDS: THE STUNNING GLOBAL
IMPACT OF NUTRITION AND SUPPLEMENTS
DURING THE FIRST 1,000 DAYS**

BRIEFING AND HEARING
BEFORE THE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON AFRICA, GLOBAL HEALTH,
GLOBAL HUMAN RIGHTS, AND
INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS
OF THE
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LEVERAGING U.S. FUNDS: THE STUNNING GLOBAL IMPACT OF NUTRITION AND SUPPLEMENTS DURING THE FIRST 1,000 DAYS

THURSDAY, JUNE 9, 2016

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON AFRICA, GLOBAL HEALTH,
GLOBAL HUMAN RIGHTS, AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
Washington, DC.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 2 o'clock p.m., in room 2255 Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Christopher H. Smith (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

Mr. SMITH. The hearing will come to order and good afternoon to everybody.

We are here today to examine the global impact of nutrition and supplements during the first 1,000 days of life, a period from conception to roughly age two, and how we can leverage U.S. taxpayer funds to achieve maximum results.

As you know, this subcommittee has played a key role in advocating for an enhanced focus on food security. For the past two Congresses, I have been working on authorizing legislation for our flagship nutrition and food security program, Feed the Future, and worked very closely with Dr. Shah before he left USAID, on crafting that legislation.

I authored the Global Food Security Act of 2015, H.R. 1567, which passed the House in April, as did its predecessor bill in the last Congress, thanks in large part to the leadership of Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy, who has a very personal and key interest in ensuring that this legislation becomes law.

Today's program also follows upon a hearing we did in the latter part of 2015 called Food Security and Nutrition Programs in Africa, which highlighted the role implementer play on the ground as well as a hearing we held last Congress that we called "The First One Thousand Days: Development Aid Programs to Bolster Health and Nutrition."

For this afternoon's program, we will step back and take a look at the role played not only by the U.S. Government, which has been pivotal, but also the United Nations.

Thus, we will be hearing from USAID's Assistant to the Administrator Dr. Beth Dunford, who will relay to us remarkable results that USAID-led Feed the Future initiative has achieved in reduc-

ing stunting by emphasizing those first 1,000 days and the implication of those results for developing nations that are seeking to grow not only their human capital but also their economies.

We will also be briefed first by Ajay Markanday of the Innovations Food and Agricultural Organization. Part of our ability to leverage U.S. funds depends on our partners who play key roles in enhancing food security throughout the globe and none is more important in this regard than the FAO.

I want to highlight that in his statement there is an underscored in a key point of this hearing the rationale for supporting proper nutrition is not simply a moral imperative but it is also economic.

It has been long established that malnutrition undermines economic growth and perpetuates poverty. Indeed, there is perhaps no wiser investment that we could make not only in an individual person but also in the economies of the developing world than to concentrate on ensuring that sufficient nutrition and health assistance is given during those first 1,000 days of life.

Children who do not receive adequate nutrition in utero are more likely to experience lifelong cognitive and physical deficiencies, due in particular to stunting. UNICEF estimates that one in four children worldwide are stunted due to a lack of adequate nutrition.

The African Union Commission's Cost of Hunger in Africa study estimated that the economic costs associated with child under nutrition are substantial, from 2 percent to 16 percent of the gross national product in several African nations.

For instance, this cost was estimated at \$4.7 billion in Ethiopia in 2000 alone, which is equivalent to 16 percent of Ethiopia's GNP.

Conversely, by helping women throughout pregnancy receive adequate nutrition and supplemental micro nutrients such as iodine, Vitamin A, and folic acid, and ensuring that they are well nourished by nursing, children and mothers thrive.

To give one example, studies indicate that if we provide women of childbearing years with the recommended dose of folic acid during the 3 months prior to pregnancy and during the first month of pregnancy, the risk of autism spectrum disorder, or ASD, is reduced by a whopping 40 percent.

We do look forward to hearing some of the results that USAID has been able to accomplish with regard to reducing stunting, again, attributable to the Feed the Future program.

It is also my hope that as we look now to the next administration that we will be able to enshrine food security and nutrition as a firmly planted cornerstone of U.S. policy.

Consider how President Bush beginning in 2002 had the initial foresight to elevate the import role of food security in U.S. foreign policy, especially in Africa, via the Initiative to End Hunger in Africa, or the IEHA, which was funded through development assistance and implemented through USAID.

At the same time, the Millennium Challenge Corporation began making substantial investments in agriculture-led economic growth programs, particularly in Africa.

This is a policy course that President Obama has continued and built upon with the Feed the Future initiative instituted at the G8 meeting in Italy in 2009 when the countries of the world came together to ensure that we cultivate resiliency in food insecure coun-

tries so they can withstand the next food crisis such as what we saw in 2007 to 2008, a crisis that Dr. Beth Dunford was on the front lines in battling.

It is my hope and the committee's hope that the next administration, whomever the President may be, will build upon this and continue that focus, for by addressing nutrition during the first 1,000 days of life we can help ensure that the next 25,000 days, or whatever the number our Creator has allotted for that individual, are filled with good health.

I would like to now yield to my good friend and colleague, Ranking Member Bass, for an opening statement.

Ms. BASS. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I also want to thank Mr. Markanday and Dr. Dunford for appearing before the subcommittee this afternoon, and I look forward to hearing their perspective and testimony on what is one of the most important issues facing the developing and developed world.

As I have said in the past, the U.S. has long been a leader in the realm of food aid internationally and over the years has contributed consistently and innovatively regarding the global challenge.

President Obama established the Bureau of Food Security in 2010 and by doing so demonstrated the high priority that we place on addressing the issue of global food insecurity.

This key decision by the Obama administration has led to greater coordination amongst government agencies and leveraged strategically government efforts to combat global hunger and food insecurity by not only working with recipient governments but also with international organizations and other donors.

Feed the Future stands out in this effort to combat some of the most challenging examples of food insecurity worldwide.

I believe one of the reasons that the U.S. has led so effectively in this arena is the focus that the government places on strong partnerships with recipient countries.

Also, the Feed the Future program has worked with not only host governments, but also the private sector and, critically, local civil society, I believe, this inclusive approach is the key to the initiative's effective implementation.

Addressing food security challenges effectively also means addressing the challenges facing newborns in countries plagued with food insecurity.

In this regard, I look forward to hearing the testimony of Dr. Dunford regarding progress and ongoing challenges regarding stunting. Of particular interest to me are identifying what approaches work successfully and whether success in one region of Africa, for example, can be duplicated in another region.

Also, I would like to know what role capacity training has played in these efforts. I would also welcome statistical information regarding successes and challenges faced by countries in both Africa and Asia and how our country in concert with the host countries, the international community, and donors can help address such challenges.

Thank you.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you very much, Ms. Bass.

I would like to now point out that pursuant to committee rules we will suspend the hearing and convene an official briefing in its stead to receive a statement from Dr. Ajay Markanday of the Food and Agricultural Organization.

He is the director of its liaison office for North America and is an expert in sustainable agricultural development with over 35 years of experience in over 20 countries, having served in a number of international development agencies. He is uniquely positioned and has a keen understanding of the importance of leveraging international organizations to further global development goals and initiatives.

He has earned many accolades and commodiations for his efforts in promoting global food and nutrition security and most recently received and was recognized by the Prime Minister of Cambodia for his work on the country's agricultural and food security program.

Mr. Markanday, the floor is yours.

STATEMENT OF MR. AJAY MARKANDAY, DIRECTOR, LIAISON OFFICE FOR NORTH AMERICA, FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS

Mr. MARKANDAY. On behalf of Dr. Graziano da Silva, the Director-General of the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization, I would like to thank Chairman Royce, Chairman Smith, and Ranking Members Bass and Engel for the opportunity and honor to brief you this afternoon on the work the FAO is undertaking to support the efforts of the United States in the fight against global hunger and malnutrition.

I would also like to acknowledge USAID, an extremely valued partner of FAO and, especially, Dr. Beth Dunford and the Feed the Future team who are staunch advocates for the principles of Chairman Smith's Global Food Security Act.

Chairman Smith's contribution, passion, and unyielding drive in advancing the health and nutrition needs of children worldwide is at the core of what brings us here today.

From the beginning, FAO has been inspired and supported by generous contributions from the people of the United States. The United States and FAO have a historic relationship and the U.S. was instrumental in its creation and leadership.

In 1943, President Franklin Roosevelt convened 40 countries in Hot Springs, Virginia to charter an international organization dedicated to global food nutrition and agriculture.

So, Mr. Chairman and honorable members of the subcommittee, FAO owes a tremendous debt of gratitude to your country's vision for a world free from hunger.

To this day, America's vision remains at the heart of FAO's charter. Chairman Smith's Global Food Security Act and its significant bipartisan sponsorship further demonstrates U.S. leadership where no child is left malnourished.

I hope that the U.S. further leverages the longstanding relationship and partnership with FAO in advancing the act's worthy principles.

As background and to further underscore the significant relationship between the U.S. and FAO, it is important to note that the

U.S. is not only FAO's founding member country but also our largest resource partner.

The United States contributes the lion's share of the FAO budget and is second only to the European Commission in voluntary contributions.

In addition to significant financial contributions through USAID, USDA, and other U.S. agencies, FAO receives valuable in-kind contributions from the U.S. through scientific and technical expertise.

U.S. expertise had been instrumental in shaping key FAO policies and programs at the global and country levels. Major areas of cooperation include food and nutrition security, emergency assistance and resilience, food safety, and sustainable agricultural production and natural resource management. There is ample scope for expanding and deepening our collaboration in nutrition.

And now I will turn to the concerted efforts of FAO in the area of global nutrition in the first 1,000 days.

Ending hunger, food insecurity, and malnutrition is our director general's highest priority. In 2014, FAO co-hosted the second international conference in nutrition where 170 countries made the noble commitment of reducing all forms of malnutrition under the Rome Declaration.

Following the Declaration, I am pleased that the United Nations General Assembly has unanimously endorsed the Decade of Action for Nutrition earlier this year.

Supporting proper nutrition is not simply a moral imperative but, it makes economic sense. Malnutrition undermines economic growth and perpetuates poverty with productivity losses to the individual estimated at greater than 10 percent of lifetime earnings.

To the economy, losses are high and in Africa and Asia are estimated at over 11 percent per annum of GDP. Yet, targeted investments in promoting nutrition, providing micro nutrients, and supporting community-based programs targeted at children rank among the highest of all investments.

Improving nutrition in the first 1,000 days must be backed by sustainable private-public partnerships. In this regard, FAO values the role of the private sector and recognizes its essential contribution to ensure nutritional quality and food safety, investment to infrastructure and storage, and improvements in supply chains.

The private sector is our key ally under our private sector strategy. The first 1,000 days in a child's life are critical. Malnutrition leads to infection and stunted growth, resulting in poor physical and cognitive development, as Chairman Smith has just pointed out.

However, malnutrition during this period can effectively be addressed through targeted investments, proper proteins and vitamins, and especially through diversified diets.

FAO's unique comparative advantage and strength amongst development partners includes the ability to convene governments and other actors, the sharing of information and best practices, the development of effective policy dialogue, the development and dissemination of norm standards and guidelines, and the delivery of technical assistance at the primary school as well as the university levels.

The key elements of FAO's comprehensive strategy on nutrition include increased knowledge in scientific exchange, diversified food systems, the importance of food intake and food safety, and creating an enabling environment by mainstreaming those policies into national agricultural and investment plans.

FAO has partnered with USAID in many spheres, especially under FANTA to monitor programs, progress in outcomes and has developed indicators.

Additional collaborative efforts with USAID and Feed the Future include field-based trials in countries like Bangladesh and Cambodia, where I served, and Zambia.

A good example is Bangladesh, where FAO leveraged financing from USAID to leverage other financing from the European Union.

These activities are now being scaled up as part of the USAID—FAO Meeting the Under Nutrition Challenge program with mainstreaming this program into national food policy and country investment plans.

FAO also works closely with USAID in support of the African Union's new partnership for African development in building capacities of the 50 member states of the African Development Bank to mainstream nutrition and agriculture investment plans through the CAADP Nutrition Capacity Development Initiative.

Mr. Chairman and honorable members, in conclusion, FAO is an international organization and is at the service of its members. We are both an instrument of the collective policies and the goals of our member governments.

As I have noted, the United States is a leading member and partner of FAO. Our history is longstanding and your contribution is unmatched. The U.S. should expect results from FAO to be a collaborative instrument in furthering the goals of the Global Food Security Act.

We have 197 member countries and organizations, and offices and programs in 130 countries. Therefore, FAO can be strategically leveraged by the United States as a partner to collaborate directly with our members who achieve far-reaching positive goals, results, and progress.

For example, the last world food summit hosted by the FAO brought together 5,000 delegates from 180 countries including 60 heads of state. During this summit, \$20 billion was pledged to end world hunger.

FAO has the political neutrality and mandate to globally raise levels of nutrition and standards of living and FAO can be instrumental in articulating and fostering your global health, nutrition goals, and initiatives.

Chairman Smith, Ranking Member Bass and members of the subcommittee, recognizing that your oversight extends to international organizations, I leave you with one final thought for your consideration and for this I am removing my FAO cap and doffing my international civil servant cap.

In addition to the FAO, I have worked with and within many international organizations globally. I cannot think of a single one that, like FAO, which the United States does not contribute to and invest in generously.

In fact, the United States of America usually invests to the vast majority of other countries. These international organizations to which the U.S. belongs and invests can and should be effective and responsive instruments in promoting sound global policy be it for health, nutrition, trade, economics, or wherever your priorities exist.

For many countries that have limited national resources, they effectively use international organizations as vehicles to leverage their policy agenda and goals.

I submit for your consideration that the U.S. can be even more effective in your strategic engagement with these organizations and enrich new investments substantially.

Demand return on your investments. And on that note, I will now replace my FAO cap and pledge to this subcommittee and the entire U.S. Government and citizens that as the director of FAO for North America you have my highest assurances that I will strive every day to deliver results and return on your investment on behalf of FAO.

Once again, Chairman Smith and members of the subcommittee, I thank you for the honor and privilege of briefing you today.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Markanday follows:]

**Briefing for U.S. Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human
Rights and International Organizations on**

*“Leveraging U.S. Funds: The Stunning Global Impact of Nutrition and
Supplements during the First 1,000 days”*

Ajay Markanday

Director, Liaison Office for North America

Committee on Foreign Affairs

Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and
International Organizations

June 9, 2016



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Introduction

On behalf of Dr Graziano Da Silva, Director General of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, I would like to thank Chairman Royce, Chairman Smith, and Ranking Members Bass and Engel for the opportunity and honor to brief you this afternoon on the work the FAO is undertaking to support the efforts of the U.S. in the fight against global hunger and malnutrition. I would also like to acknowledge USAID, an extremely valued partner to FAO and especially Dr Beth Dunford and the Feed the Future Team who are staunch advocates for the principals of Chairman Smith’s Global Food Security Act. Chairman Smith’s contribution, passion, and unyielding drive in advancing the health and nutrition needs of children worldwide is at the core of what brings us here today.

FAO – United States History and Relationship

From the beginning, FAO has been inspired and supported by generous contributions from the people of the United States of America. The United States and FAO have a historic relationship- the very idea of creating FAO began with the United States. In 1943, President Franklin Roosevelt convened 40 countries in Hot Springs, Virginia to charter an international organization dedicated to global food, nutrition and agriculture – and so, began the roots of FAO right here in the United States. Mr. Chairman and Honorable Members of the Committee, the United States was instrumental in the creation and leadership of FAO and FAO owes a tremendous debt of gratitude to your country’s vision for a world free from hunger. To this day, America’s vision remains at the heart of FAO’s charter and mandate.

Chairman Smith’s Global Food Security Act and its significant bipartisan sponsorship further demonstrates U.S. leadership in securing a world with zero hunger and where no child is left malnourished. I hope that the U.S. further leverages the longstanding relationship and partnership with FAO in advancing the Act’s worthy principles to the benefit of children of the 197 countries and members of our Organization.

FAO – United States Contribution

By way of background, and to further underscore the significant relationship between the U.S. and FAO, it is important for this Subcommittee to note that the you are not only the FAO’s

founding member country, but also our largest resource partner. The United States contributes the lion's share of the FAO core budget and is second only to the European Commission in voluntary contributions. In addition to significant financial contribution, through USDA, USAID, and other U.S. Agencies, FAO receives valuable in-kind contributions vis-a-vis U.S. scientific and technical experts. The U.S. experts have been instrumental in shaping key FAO policies and programs at the global and country levels. Major areas of cooperation include food and nutrition security, emergency assistance and resilience building, food safety, and sustainable agricultural production and natural resource management. There is ample scope for expanding and deepening collaboration in nutrition.

With that, I'll turn to the concerted efforts of FAO in the area of global nutrition in the first 1000 days:

FAO's commitment to mother and child nutrition in the first 1000 days in the context of the SDGs

When nations came together in 1945 to create the FAO, they did so with the aim of "*raising levels of nutrition and standards of living of peoples under their jurisdiction*" (Preamble to FAO's constitution). Ending hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition is one of FAO's three global goals and it is the focus of one of the Director General Dr Da Silva's five strategic Objectives under our reviewed Strategic Framework (2010-2019). In 2014, FAO, together with WHO, hosted the Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2) during which 170 countries committed to reduce "all forms of malnutrition" by adopting the Rome Declaration on Nutrition. Since 2014, FAO has reaffirmed its commitment to nutrition by making it a corporate priority.

The rationale for supporting proper nutrition is not simply a moral imperative but also economic: it has been long established that malnutrition undermines economic growth and perpetuates poverty. The productivity losses to individuals from undernutrition have been estimated as greater than 10 percent of lifetime earnings. Losses to the economy can be just as high – for example, over 11% of GDP lost annually in Africa and Asia is due to malnutrition alone. Yet investing yield high returns. Nutrition interventions, such as investments in micronutrients and community-based programs targeted to children under two years of age, were among the highest of 17 potential development investments. Nutrition must be understood as both an input to and an outcome of sustainable development, and is essential for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Improving nutrition in the first 1000 days is central to breaking the cycle of poverty and malnutrition, and therefore vital to FAO's work. FAO's comprehensive strategy to improve nutrition is focused a food systems approach that requires a sustainable public-private partnership.

Private Sector Engagement

FAO values the role of the private sector and recognizes its essential contributions to assure the nutritional quality and safety of foods, investment to infrastructure and storage, improvement to supply chains. The private sector is a key ally in the fight against hunger and is recognized in FAO's Private Sector Strategy which focuses on: Policy Dialogue; Norms and Standard Setting;

Development and Technical Programs; Advocacy and Communication; Knowledge Management and Dissemination; Mobilization of Resources. FAO recognizes two main categories of contributions from the private sector: financial and in-kind as know-how exchange, and managerial and scientific expertise.

Improving nutrition in the first 1000 days: the rationale behind FAO's approach

Why are the first 1,000 days in a child's life so critical?

The first 1000 days are critical. If not properly provided for can lead to malnutrition, infection, stunted growth and development in children; with consequences for long-term physical and poor cognitive function.

A key challenge in ensuring good nutrition during the first 1000 days is ensuring increased nutrient requirements for both the mother and the child, particularly in protein and vitamins.

Finally, research shows that the challenges of nutrition in the first 1000 days are not only related to access to the right foods: even when family food resources are adequate, caregivers are often unable to make optimal use of them because of insufficient knowledge, skills and practices in infant and young child feeding, and the lack of a supportive environment.

Why are diets an important of addressing nutrition in the first 1000 days of life?

Interventions targeted to pregnant and lactating women, infants and young children often emphasise micronutrient supplementation, food supplements, therapeutic feeding and care for the most vulnerable. While these have a key role to play, a comprehensive food-based approach that promotes the availability and consumption of a variety of nutrient-rich local foods is essential.

Research has confirmed the importance of dietary diversity for meeting micronutrient requirements. Women of reproductive age and young children can increase the likelihood of improving the adequacy of their micronutrient intakes by consuming diversified food groups.

Promoting healthy diets is key to empower local populations to make optimal use of their resources and limit dependency on external resources. In addition, healthy diets are also essential to prevent obesity and diet-related non-communicable diseases.

What is FAO doing to improve nutrition during the first 1000 days?

FAO's work in nutrition focuses on promoting healthy diets and ensuring that investments made in food systems and agriculture result in improved nutrition, in particular for women and children. FAO's "food-based approach" to nutrition complements the work done on nutrient supplementation supported by other partners and is essential to ensure sustainable and lasting improvements in nutrition.

FAO's assistance focuses on developing capacities of national institutions to improve nutrition through food-based approaches, together with the creation of a policy environment that enables households—in particular the most vulnerable—to access and consume healthy and nutritious diets.

By providing scientific advice, fostering inter-country exchange and knowledge sharing, creating forums for multi-stakeholder policy dialogue, facilitating the development and dissemination of norms and guidelines, and delivering technical assistance on the ground, FAO seeks to inform and enable effective action by a variety of stakeholders, including governments, development partners (including the U.S. government), food producers, the private sector, philanthropies, and civil society organizations.

Improving nutrition in the first 1000 days through action at community and household levels

FAO promotes the following interventions by providing policy and technical assistance to governments and service providers who are engaged in direct implementation:

➤ **Promoting the diversification of women's diets and their consumption of nutrient-rich foods:**

FAO promotes improvements in women's diet through a combination of interventions such as household food security activities and nutrition education. Furthermore, investments in agriculture and food systems should be designed so as to benefit women and help them improve their diets. (see related sections, below)

In order to monitor whether this is the case, FAO, USAID FANTA and other partners have developed a simple indicator: Minimum Dietary Diversity for women of reproductive age (MDD-W) defined as the proportion of women 15-49 years of age who consume food items from at least 5 out of 10 defined food groups. This indicator is key as it links all the components of SDG 2 (improved nutrition and sustainable agriculture) by highlighting the quality of women's diet. FAO is promoting this simple indicator for use by countries to monitor the intakes of women especially. USAID's 'Feed the Future' program has adopted the use of MDD-W as a dietary quality indicator in its programs.

➤ **Promoting improved complementary feeding with locally available foods for children 6-24 months**

FAO promotes the improvement of complementary feeding for children 6-24 months using locally available foods, by targeting agriculture and dietary diversification and practical hands-on learning to enable families to practice good nutrition behaviors in complementary feeding.

FAO's work in this area includes the Trials of Improved Practices (TIPs) carried out as part of FAO food security projects in countries like Afghanistan, Cambodia, Lao PDR and Zambia. TIPs demonstrated that young children's diets were improved by using locally available and affordable foods that were well accepted by families. These projects combined agricultural production diversification (such as provision of seeds for maize, tubers, vegetables, legumes, nuts or fruits, small livestock, fertiliser, water and irrigation) with nutrition education and advocacy.

Evaluation of the programs showed that agriculture diversification combined with Infant and Young Child Feeding (IYCF) participatory nutrition education, and building on community support, can be effective in improving IYCF practices and quality of children's diets. Lessons learned from this project have been collated into a guidance note for

programme planners,
http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/nutrition/docs/education/infant_feeding/Programme_Lessons.pdf).

➤ **Improving household food security by diversifying food production and livelihoods**

Efforts to improve children's diets can only be successful if the households in which they live have access to diverse and nutritious foods. FAO promotes a variety of interventions designed to diversify household food production and livelihoods and increase incomes. These include home vegetable gardens, small-scale poultry and livestock rearing, and aquaculture, as well as strategies to sustainably intensify local food production. Production activities are complemented with food processing and support to smallholders to better access markets. These interventions can improve nutrition in several ways: 1) direct access to a diversity of nutritionally-rich foods, 2) increased purchasing power from marketing of production 3) fallback food provision during seasonal lean periods.

FAO specifically promotes gender-sensitive approaches; ensuring women benefit and have increased access to both more diverse foods and income. Indeed, research shows that income controlled by women is much more likely to be invested in food for the family, health care and children's education.

In Bangladesh, for example, FAO – with support from USAID and the European Union – has been promoting nutrition-sensitive agriculture through the implementation of small-scale horticulture, livestock and aquaculture with the aim of promoting dietary diversity. These activities were combined with practical nutrition education and cooking demonstrations with a focus on improved recipes for pregnant and lactating women and young children. Horticulture and aquaculture interventions showed strong positive effects on household consumption of vegetable and fish, and poultry interventions had a significant impact on egg consumption. The women's dietary diversity score increased from 3.7 at the beginning of the project (baseline) to 5 during the project implementation. These activities are now being scaled up as part of the USAID-FAO MUCH (Meeting the Under-nutrition Challenge) program. These activities are aligned with the National Food Policy and Country Investment Plan.

➤ **Biofortification and fortification**

Efforts to diversify food production can be complemented by the promotion of biofortified crops, i.e., crops whose micronutrient content has been enhanced through conventional breeding. Biofortified crops released include Vitamin A-rich orange flesh sweet potato, high-zinc and iron millet, vitamin A rich cassava and maize. Efficacy trials carried out by Harvest Plus show that the biofortified crops are effective in improving micronutrient status. FAO works with partners and governments at global and country levels (for example, in Zimbabwe) to promote – where appropriate – the uptake of biofortified crops as part of a comprehensive strategy to improve nutrition.

FAO also promotes the adoption of food fortification strategies (post-production stage) adapted to national nutrition priorities and as a complement to diverse diets.

➤ **Promoting quality nutrition education and behavior-change**

Review of agricultural development projects consistently underline that impact on dietary adequacy and child growth depends on whether nutrition education is included in the intervention. FAO therefore promotes the inclusion of nutrition education in agricultural programmes (for example through Farmer Field Schools), and social protection programmes such as cash transfer and school food programmes.

Moving beyond handing out nutrition information to promoting healthy diets and good dietary practices is not a simple job, yet professional training with a practical focus is rarely available in many institutions and countries, as indicated by a seven-country study conducted by FAO in 2011. FAO has therefore developed the ENACT (Education for Effective Nutrition in Action) training course in nutrition education to start building this essential capacity. The course has been piloted in Africa by universities in 12 countries

FAO also supports governments in integrating nutrition education in school curricula and the adoption of a comprehensive approach to school food and nutrition, where the school curriculum, local procurement as well as school meal standards and school policy and programmes are combined to improve children's diets and promote life-long skills. The link from school to infants comes from the improved diets of female girls adolescents who may be future mothers.

FAO's core focus: creating an enabling policy environment for improved nutrition

In order for the kind of interventions described above to be implemented on the ground, it is essential that an enabling policy and institutional environment be established and national capacities developed for implementation. This is the core focus of FAO's work on nutrition.

➤ Nutrition-sensitive agriculture and food system investments and policies

FAO provides guidance to countries on how to mainstream nutrition concerns – including a focus on the first 1000 days – in national agricultural investments plans, to ensure these investments support the kind of interventions described above.

In 2011, FAO facilitated a consultation process amongst a broad range of stakeholders which culminated in the formulation of *Key Recommendations for Improving Nutrition through Agriculture and Food Systems*. U.S. partners, including USAID and its SPRING project were key contributors to the process and these recommendations helped inform the mainstreaming of nutrition (with special attention to the 1000 days) in the Feed the Future program.

FAO has been using these Key Recommendations to support the mainstreaming of nutrition in national agriculture investment plans. For example in Africa, FAO worked closely with the USAID in support of the African Union's New Partnership for African Development in building capacities of its 50 Member States to mainstream nutrition in National Agriculture Investment Plans through the CAADP Nutrition Capacity Development Initiative. As a follow-up, FAO is providing technical assistance on nutrition-sensitive agricultural planning to over 20 countries, including Nigeria, Namibia, DRC, Madagascar, Burkina Faso, Seychelles, Comoros, Sierra Leone, Uganda, Ethiopia, Angola, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Rwanda, Mali, Niger, Senegal, Kenya, Chad, South Africa, Lesotho and Zimbabwe.

Similar work is also conducted in several countries in Asia (including Bangladesh, Pakistan, Nepal, Cambodia, and Afghanistan) the Near East, Latin America, and Eastern Europe.

FAO also supports countries in improving the information systems to assess and monitor nutrition-sensitive agricultural strategies, by developing capacities to collect and analyse food consumption and food security data, and information on the nutrient composition of foods.

Nutrition-sensitive social protection and resilience policies

FAO is increasing support to its member states on the linkages between agriculture, social protection and nutrition. Indeed, when social protection programs are leveraged to increase households' access to productive assets (such as Ethiopia's Productive Safety Net Program and Household Asset Building Program) or to facilitate smallholders' access to markets (such as through Home Grown School Feeding), they can be a key instrument to lift the poor out of poverty. Food transfer programs, if they include measures to promote healthy diets (e.g. through healthy school meals) can be a way to directly improve diets, but also shape consumption patterns and generate incentives for producers and retailers to supply healthier foods.

Similarly, in crisis-affected contexts, FAO promotes nutrition-sensitive resilience programs, to ensure that investments in emergency response are leveraged to foster longer-term food security and good nutrition.

For both social protection and resilience, FAO advocates for particular attention to the needs of pregnant and lactating women, infants and young children as core components of a "nutrition-sensitive" approach.

Conclusion: opportunities for strengthening collaboration between the U.S. and FAO in support of the first 1000 days

FAO's efforts to improve nutrition, and in particular in the window of the 1000 days are very much aligned with the U.S. Government's goals, as implemented through the Feed the Future program and enshrined in the Global Food Security Act. And as noted, Mr Chairman, the United States is a key strategic, historic, and financial partner. So, we believe there is ample opportunity to strengthen and leverage FAO in reaching the goals of the Global Food Security Act and ending malnutrition globally.

Some potential collaboration to leverage our resources forward include:

- The Decade of Action for Nutrition, 2016-2025, was unanimously declared by the UN General Assembly this year – the SDGs provide a favorable environment for the U.S.
- Government and FAO to explore innovative ways to partner better nutrition in the first 1000 days and beyond.
- Collaborating more strongly with USAID's Strengthening Partnerships, Results, and Innovations in Nutrition Globally (SPRING) project and expanding its reach in FAO member countries
- Exploring how FAO can work in partnership with the United States towards mutual goals on the United States' Global Nutrition Coordination plan

Mr. SMITH. Mr. Markanday, thank you for your excellent statement, even more so your extraordinary leadership. And without objection, your full statement will be made a part of the record.

I just want to say, I know that the rules preclude us asking a number of questions. But I would want to thank you for underscoring the importance of the Decade of Action on Nutrition, and it does coincide, I believe, in a very good way, a synergistic way with the post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals so that—but it is a matter of prioritization with the SDGs.

There is so much in the SDG mandate that nutrition could easily get lost. So having that decade of action, having your leadership, of course, having Dr. Dunford's leadership and the leadership of the U.S. Feed the Future initiative hopefully will keep this front and center because this is a winnable initiative.

And every time we win we collectively—the international community, women, children, and families' lives are enhanced. It can't be said enough, and Dr. Dunford says in her statement that in 2011, 45 percent of child deaths, 3.1 million children, were attributable to undernutrition.

That is, in a way, a scandal that we haven't even done more to eviscerate that causation of death, which we could do, I believe. Thanks also for recognizing the generosity of the American public. We often get criticized that on a per capita basis we don't provide enough. Very often not on the ledger or airlift, what our military does, working side by side with USAID and NGOs.

I myself and certainly Piero, we have been to the typhoon that took place in the Philippines and the military was there working side by side and if they were not there many more lives would have been lost.

And there was the *USS Abraham Lincoln* and a few years before that when the tsunami hit Banda Aceh and other areas they were there saving lives and none of that ever gets calculated in terms of costs.

So I do believe the American people are very generous, as are other countries, and we do, as you pointed out, we need to demand accountability. We do do oversight. We need to do more of it and I thank you for ensuring that your money that you are allotted from multiple sources is well spent on behalf of people.

I would like to yield to my friend. Thank you. Do you have any other comments you would like to make? Because your statement was excellent.

Mr. MARKANDAY. Thank you very much, Chairman Smith, and I am so happy that you have underscored a lot of the things that I did include into my briefing in terms of the Decade of Action on Nutrition and how we should leverage more out of our international organizations. I think that is terribly important for results.

I think the only point that I would like to make that the FAO was, as I said, under U.S. leadership established in 1945. The world has changed, and we, as an organization, recognize that we have to be fit for purpose for the future and the challenges that are coming.

So I think with your leadership we are looking to being that type of an organization.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you. And Mr. Markanday, also—and you'll never have this problem but compassion fatigue is a problem we have to be careful about.

I will never forget after the first drought—man-made drought by Mengistu in Ethiopia everybody was on board. We are the world. When it hit the second time it was like been there, done that, got the T-shirt. People were not interested. It was horrible because people were dying.

So, again, you're part of the leadership that ensures that these individuals are never forgotten. The emphasis on not just saving lives, but enhancing your ability to get a better education and to go on to raising more dollars by way of their capabilities for their families, it's a win-win-win all over the place. So thank you again for your leadership.

Thank you. We would like to now resume our congressional hearing and again thank Mr. Markanday for his appearance here today and his insights.

We would like to welcome to the witness table Dr. Beth Dunford, who is the Assistant to the Administrator in USAID's Bureau for Food Security as well as Deputy Coordinator for Development for Feed the Future, the U.S. Government's global hunger and food security initiative.

In this dual role, Dr. Dunford coordinates implementation of Feed the Future across the U.S. Government, a whole of government approach, oversees its execution, reports on results, and leads engagement with the external community to ensure that food security remains high on the development agenda.

Dr. Dunford also oversees USAID's technical and regional expertise focused on improving food security to sustainably reduce hunger, poverty, and undernutrition.

A career Foreign Service Officer, she most recently served as Director of USAID's Mission in Nepal and has also served in Ethiopia, Afghanistan, and a number of roles in Washington. Please proceed as you would like.

STATEMENT OF BETH DUNFORD, PH.D., ASSISTANT TO THE ADMINISTRATOR, BUREAU FOR FOOD SECURITY, U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Ms. DUNFORD. Thank you. Good afternoon, Chairman Smith, Ranking Member Bass, members of the subcommittee. Thank you for inviting me to speak today and thanks to all of you for your continued support and leadership on nutrition and food security.

I also want to thank Mr. Markanday for that presentation. We are grateful for the FAO's close collaboration with Feed the Future and it is wonderful to hear Mr. Markanday reaffirm just how seriously the FAO takes nutrition.

In particular, I would like to express my gratitude to you, Chairman Smith, for introducing the Global Food Security Act, which shows the U.S. Government's strong bipartisan commitment to reducing global hunger, poverty, and malnutrition.

The Global Food Security Act has passed both the House and the Senate and we are looking forward to working with the subcommittee members and Congress to pass it into law.

And as Feed the Future's Deputy Coordinator for Development, I am honored to be able to talk to you today about the important role the U.S. Government is playing in the fight against global hunger, poverty, and malnutrition, particularly during the critical 1,000-day window between pregnancy and a child's second birthday when good nutrition matters the most.

Nutrition bridges many areas. It affects human health, development, economic growth, agriculture, education and resilience, and because of this Feed the Future has taken a comprehensive approach to undernutrition.

And this approach has contributed to substantial progress on food security and nutrition globally. Farm productivity is on the rise among much of the global south. Poverty rates and hunger have fallen dramatically in many of the countries where we work.

Growth rates in agriculture are among the highest in recent history, and preliminary data demonstrate that we are on track to see poverty and stunting reduced by an average of 20 percent across the areas where Feed the Future works by 2017.

Just one example of this is Cambodia, where from 2010 to 2015 the prevalence of stunting fell by 23.3 percent across the areas where Feed the Future focuses its efforts.

And while we have seen impressive gains over the past 5 years, particularly on stunting and nutrition, there is still much more to be done.

We know that 795 million people are still undernourished globally, and that is 795 million too many.

Undernutrition, particularly early in life, impairs cognitive, socio-emotional, and also motor development. It leads to lower levels of educational attainment, productivity and lifetime earnings, and ultimately it slows economic growth.

For example, we know that by reducing stunting by just 20 percent can lead to an 11 percent increase in incomes. We also know that relatively simple interventions such as increased consumption of vitamin-rich orange-fleshed sweet potatoes can have a transformative impact on people's lives, especially children's.

Our interventions in nutrition are a smart investment in building human capital and shared prosperity. Every dollar spent on improved nutrition yields up to \$18 in returns.

But to accelerate progress on poverty and hunger, and to ensure robust inclusive economic growth for years to come, we must do more to end malnutrition.

Significant reductions in stunting take time. But given the solid collective results over the past decade, and the global community's commitment to solving these issues, I am optimistic that we can work together across sectors, across disciplines, and we will see the elimination of malnutrition.

And while it's clear that Feed the Future can and has done a lot, we know that we will never be able to eradicate global hunger, poverty, and undernutrition on our own.

To succeed, we have to have additional partners committed to transforming agro-food systems so we can deliver benefits like good nutrition for years to come.

But impact like this does take funding, and to pay for it all we must develop a new international framework for financing agri-

culture, food security, and nutrition, one that goes beyond donor assistance to better leverage resources from all sectors.

So going forward, Feed the Future will intensify our partnerships—and we have been intensifying our partnerships—with: developing country governments to expand ownership and create environments that allow our investments to take root, multiply, and thrive; the private sector to bring market access, cutting-edge business practices, and innovative insights to the development table; and financial institutions to spur greater investment in small and medium enterprises and small-holder farms, ensuring inclusive sustainable economic growth on a macro level.

And civil society is also important. They help to amplify our message, increase transparency, and make sure that vulnerable groups are protected and our investments reach our targeted population.

By bringing partners together, to focus efforts on agriculture and nutrition, Feed the Future and the U.S. Government have achieved a great deal. Our approach is working and we can and will leverage it to do much more.

And that is why Feed the Future will continue to forge new partnerships and strategically steward our resources to multiply our impact and build a more food- and nutrition-secure future.

One of the most important partners we have in this is the United States Congress, and I want to thank you again for your leadership on this issue.

I am grateful for the opportunity to speak with you today and I welcome any questions, comments, and suggestions you might have.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Dunford follows:]

**Testimony of Dr. Beth Dunford
Assistant to the Administrator, Bureau for Food Security,
U.S. Agency for International Development
and Feed the Future Deputy Coordinator for Development
House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on
Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations
“Using and Leveraging U.S. Funds: The Stunning Impact of Nutrition and Supplements
During the First 1,000 Days”**

Thursday, June 9, 2016

Introduction

Chairman Smith, Ranking Member Bass, and Members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today.

Before I begin, I want to thank both of you as well as the members of this Subcommittee for your continued support and leadership on nutrition and food security. In particular, I want to thank you, Mr. Chairman, for sponsoring the Global Food Security Act, which demonstrates the U.S. Government's commitment to reducing global poverty and hunger through increased food security and improved nutrition. The Global Food Security Act will solidify our standing as a global leader on these issues and send an important signal to rally others to this work. The passage of the Global Food Security Act in the House of Representatives would not have been possible without your strong support and the leadership of this Committee, including Chairman Ed Royce and Ranking Member Eliot Engel. We look forward to working with you and colleagues in the House and Senate to get this important legislation to the President's desk.

I am pleased and honored to address the important role that the U.S. Government is playing to help reduce global hunger, poverty and malnutrition through the President's Feed the Future initiative, including during the critical 1,000 day window between pregnancy and a child's second birthday.

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations estimates that 795 million people are undernourished globally, 98 percent of whom live in developing countries.¹ While this number has fallen by 167 million over the last decade, it is still 795 million people too many. Compounding this problem, research indicates that by the year 2050 the world's population is projected to increase by over 30 percent to nearly ten billion, which, combined with changing diets, will require up to a 60 percent increase in food production.²

¹ <http://www.fao.org/hunger/key-messages/en/>

² <http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/news/population/2015-report.html>

During the Bush Administration, the United States allocated resources for a near- and longer-term response to the 2007-2008 food price crisis that focused on boosting agricultural productivity, strengthening supply chains, and promoting sound market-based principles for agriculture sector development and regional trade. This approach was consistent with ongoing efforts by African leaders to invest in and revitalize agriculture as a proven means to reduce poverty. Early success provided near-term gains in agricultural productivity in West Africa and increased food availability.

In 2009, following record high food prices and a dramatic increase in the number of poor and hungry in the world, the Obama Administration built upon the Bush Administration's efforts to address this problem. The President pledged to provide at least \$3.5 billion over three years to attack the root causes of global hunger and poverty, implemented through Feed the Future. This commitment rallied the global community behind these efforts and led to additional donor pledges of more than \$18.5 billion.

Feed the Future has brought together the knowledge and expertise of 11 different federal agencies for a whole-of-government initiative. The initiative is led by the U.S. Agency for International Development, the lead U.S. agency that works to end extreme poverty and enable resilient, democratic societies to realize their potential, and draws on the wider diplomacy, agriculture, trade, investment, science, development, and policy resources and expertise of the U.S. Departments of Agriculture, Commerce, State and Treasury; the Millennium Challenge Corporation; the United States African Development Foundation; the Peace Corps; the Overseas Private Investment Corporation; the Office of the United States Trade Representative; and the U.S. Geological Survey.

Feed the Future has positioned the United States as a global leader in the political, economic and moral fight against hunger and poverty. With a focus on smallholder farmers, particularly women, Feed the Future supports countries to develop their agriculture sectors as a catalyst for broad-based economic growth and trade, to raise incomes and help reduce hunger. It represents the first time that nutrition and agriculture became closely tied together in development efforts. Productivity gains by farmers make food more available and affordable for low-income consumers, drive demand, and generate local employment, further helping the poor. Feed the Future also seeks to address the root causes of recurrent food crises and to help vulnerable populations become more resilient when crises occur. Feed the Future is also based on the principle that to succeed we need to work hand-in-hand with host governments, civil society, the private sector, and the international community.

Feed the Future's Progress on Nutrition

Because of Feed the Future's efforts and those of our many partners, we have seen significant progress. Farm productivity has risen, poverty and hunger have fallen dramatically in many countries where we work, and growth rates in agriculture are among the highest in recent history.

Preliminary data indicate we are on track to meet the target of helping to reduce poverty and stunting by an average of 20 percent across targeted areas in Feed the Future focus countries by 2017.

On nutrition, the world has seen a drop in stunting from 39.6 percent to 23.8 percent as a result of better nutrition since 1990, although many countries are lagging far behind, including countries where Feed the Future is working.³ Since the initiative began, the average annual rate of reduction in stunting for all children doubled across the Feed the Future focus countries for which we have data. Preliminary data from recent surveys also show encouraging reductions in stunting for children in the targeted areas in many focus countries where Feed the Future collaborates with host governments and other development partners to improve nutrition. From 2011 to 2014, stunting in Bangladesh dropped by 14.4 percent in the two districts that make up most of Feed the Future's Zone of Influence, accelerating the annual rate of reduction to 5.1% from only 0.6% annually over the previous four years. In neighboring Cambodia, the prevalence of stunting significantly decreased by 23.3 percent between 2010 and 2015 across the Zone of Influence where Feed the Future concentrates its programs, an increase in the annual rate of reduction to 6.4% compared to 4.7% over the previous five years. Between 2012 and 2014, Feed the Future-supported beneficiaries in Honduras saw their incomes rise by an average of 55 percent. This and other interventions helped contribute to a 56 percent reduction in the prevalence of underweight among children under two directly benefiting from the Feed the Future activities.

While we have seen impressive progress over the last five years, particularly on stunting and nutrition, there is still much to be done. According to the latest data, approximately 159 million children under the age of five, still suffer from chronic malnutrition.⁴ In 2011, undernutrition contributed to over 3.1 million child deaths—45 percent of child deaths worldwide.⁵ It also reduces the economic growth potential of low- and middle-income countries by up to eight percent.⁶ The World Food Program estimates that child mortality associated with undernutrition has reduced national workforces by one percent to 13.7 percent globally, and roughly one half of the world's working age population suffered from stunting as children.⁷

Efforts to address early childhood malnutrition are essential to breaking the cycle of poverty and facilitating development. Malnutrition contributes significantly to maternal and child mortality, decreases resistance to infectious diseases and prolongs episodes of illness, impedes growth and cognitive development, threatens resilience, and negatively impacts countries' human capital and economic growth. The damage caused by undernutrition may be irreversible, especially during the critical 1,000 day window of opportunity between a woman's pregnancy and the child's

³ <http://data.unicef.org/nutrition/malnutrition.html>

⁴ http://www.unicef.org/media/media_85603.html

⁵ [http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(13\)61100-9/fulltext](http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(13)61100-9/fulltext)

⁶ <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/mcn.12080/epdf>

⁷ <http://documents.wfp.org/stellent/groups/public/documents/communications/wfp264183.pdf>

second birthday. Undernutrition impairs cognitive, socio-emotional, and motor development, which leads to lower levels of educational attainment, reduced productivity later in life, lower lifetime earnings, and slowed economic growth of nations. In the face of this, we know that relatively simple interventions to increase dietary diversity such as the increased consumption of fruits, vegetables, such as orange-fleshed sweet potatoes, a bio-fortified food, can have a transformative impact on people's lives. Orange-fleshed sweet potatoes contribute to decreasing vitamin A deficiencies and thus night blindness in young children.

Recent studies show that investments in nutrition build human capital and boost shared prosperity.⁸ Early nutrition programs can increase school completion by one year, plus raise adult wages by five percent to 50 percent later in life. Children who escape stunting are 33 percent more likely to escape poverty as adults. Reductions in stunting can increase GDP in the world's least developed regions by four percent to 11 percent. According to recent estimates, every dollar spent on improved nutrition yields up to \$18 dollars in return.

To make progress on poverty and hunger, and to ensure robust, inclusive economic growth, we must do more to end malnutrition globally. The U.S. Government has long been a leader in the effort to reduce undernutrition around the world. In 2014, USAID launched our Multi-sectoral Nutrition Strategy, and on June 14 of this year, the U.S. Government will release its Global Nutrition Coordination plan, outlining high-impact nutrition actions that will help achieve this goal. The U.S. Government Global Nutrition Coordination Plan is designed to harness the power of the many diverse investments across the U.S. Government through better communications, collaboration, and linking research to program implementation. By embracing cross-U.S. Government partnerships and coordination, we leverage our advantages so that U.S. resources have a greater impact on nutrition worldwide.

As we meet today, we can for the first time perceive the end of hunger and undernutrition. While significant reductions in stunting take time, given the solid results achieved over the last ten years, I am optimistic that we will see the elimination of global malnutrition. The adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals and commitments from governments, donors, and the private sector toward meeting them has added to already substantial momentum. The world has committed to eliminating extreme poverty and the hunger that accompanies it, while ensuring everyone on Earth has the opportunity to have an adequate diet necessary to health and well-being. Setting down that marker is a monumental step forward, and Feed the Future is committed to leading the way, hand-in-hand with our many partners, to ensure we take all necessary steps to achieve our goal.

⁸ <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/2016/04/26231191/investing-nutrition-foundation-development-investment-framework-reach-global-nutrition-targets>

A Framework for Sustainable Financing for Agriculture, Food Security and Nutrition

Given the complexity of the problems we face, it is clear that Feed the Future can do a lot, the U.S. Government can do a lot, and our partner donors can do a lot, but we will never be able to eliminate hunger, poverty, and undernutrition on our own. To succeed, we have to have partners, including the private sector, committed to this work, and we must develop a new framework and innovative mechanisms to finance agriculture, food security, and nutrition.

To be clear, donor financing is as important as ever. When used strategically it can catalyze new investment from the private sector or accelerate the impact of investment by the governments of countries where we work. Donor financing allows us to work with U.S. universities and international partners to develop and introduce new technologies and innovations that can have a major impact. And donor financing allows us to ensure that interventions reach women and other marginalized, vulnerable groups who might otherwise be overlooked. Funding for Feed the Future is critical to these efforts. But our efforts have to strategically complement and foster private sector and national investments to create an environment that sustainably contributes to eliminating extreme hunger and undernutrition.

Going forward, Feed the Future will intensify our partnerships with governments to expand country leadership; the private sector to catalyze sustainable investment in the global food system; financial institutions to accelerate growth among small and medium enterprises and smallholder farmers; and civil society to ensure that growth is inclusive and transparent.

The Critical Role of Country Leadership

Leadership and support of national governments are among the most important factors to successful and sustainable progress in a particular country. Going forward, we must build on our work with governments to help them create the enabling environments that allow our investments to take root and thrive. By enacting policy changes, improving infrastructure, and supporting research, which is a public good, governments can build the space and opportunity for civil society and the private sector to flourish. We will continue to encourage governments to build the infrastructure necessary for agricultural systems to grow and to forge partnerships with the private sector to create a viable and sustainable local economy. Governments set the tone for their country's development and have the ability to make issues such as nutrition a national priority.

For example, in Nepal, where I served as the USAID Mission Director, the Nepalese Government committed \$193.4 million to nutrition efforts over five years. They made clear that increasing investments in nutrition was a national priority and that improving the nutritional status of children and women was necessary for future economic growth and development.

On September 17, 2012, the Government of Nepal, donors, members of the private sector, and civil society signed a major policy declaration committing to the acceleration of improvements in maternal and child nutrition and rallying partners behind the Government's Multi-sectoral Nutrition Plan.

Feed the Future was there to support and build on their efforts. USAID's five-year, \$57 million nutrition project complemented their work by providing key health and nutrition information to "1,000-day households." Through local radio programming, community interactions, and household visits, families learned about nutrition, safe childbirth, childcare, hand washing, how to build latrines and safely dispose of solid waste, planting household gardens, and breeding chickens as a source of protein.

Under the Nutrition Plan, Feed the Future supported the training of more than 48,000 current government health and agricultural extension workers. Our complementary nutrition project trained these workers on nutrition, water, sanitation and hygiene, child health, and homestead food production. With these skills, the workers continue to serve their communities in 41 districts, further ensuring that these nutrition activities continue long after Feed the Future's project ends.

This partnership has paid off. In 2015, when a 7.8 magnitude earthquake hit Nepal, devastating communities across the country, we expected that a high number of children under five in the earthquake-affected districts would need to be treated for severe acute malnutrition (SAM). Given the high, historical prevalence of wasting in Nepal and the rates of SAM following other disasters, we were not hopeful. At the time, the Mission's nutrition group estimated that we would find about one percent of children suffering from SAM. In the five earthquake-affected districts where USAID has a presence, we anticipated 836 SAM cases. We began screening efforts and, when all was said and done, we only identified 244 children affected by SAM (or 0.3 percent). These low levels of SAM were probably largely due to the Nepalese Government's leadership on nutrition, and Feed the Future is encouraged by this example of country ownership. It is something that we hope to see replicated in other countries.

The Importance of Private Sector Partnerships

A sustainable global food system requires a vibrant private sector, which brings market access, cutting-edge business practices, and innovative insights to the development table. Inclusive economic growth is the most sustainable way to accelerate development and eradicate extreme poverty. The evidence shows that public-private partnerships advance the impact of sustainable development and foster private sector-led growth in emerging markets. They are fundamental to reducing poverty, fighting hunger, and improving nutrition across the globe. For our nutrition efforts to succeed over the long haul, we have to work hand-in-hand with the business community.

I would like to highlight one example of how we are partnering to catalyze access to a more diverse diet. Protein is an important part of a healthy diet. Access to affordable meat is one way to provide women and children with B12, which is only available in animal source foods and is necessary for healthy nerve development, red blood cell production, and iron absorption. When Eric Muraguri, a Kenyan entrepreneur, noticed women and children collecting chicken byproducts outside the poultry processing plant where he worked, he saw an opportunity. Eric quit his job and launched Chicken Choice, a company that prepares safe and affordable chicken products for those most vulnerable to malnutrition. Today he has nine shops across Kenya, but early in the growth of his business Eric ran into a problem. Because of unreliable refrigeration while transporting products from the processing plant to his outlets, Chicken Choice struggled to keep up with demand. Feed the Future's work on cold chain storage was able to help Eric purchase a refrigerated truck, which allowed Chicken Choice to keep up with the growing demand.

By working with private sector partners like Eric, through a relatively small investment, Feed the Future is able to create sustainable and scalable pathways to access nutritious foods at an affordable cost.

Expanding Access to Financing

Without access to financing, however, it is difficult for businesses like Eric's to grow. To ensure inclusive, sustainable economic growth on a macro level, which will lead to better nutrition outcomes for all, we need to create new tools to give rural small and medium enterprises and smallholder-farmers access to credit. We are investing in scaling up mobile technologies and easy access to real-time market information, and developing new tools that demonstrate the creditworthiness of rural agribusinesses. For example, low-tech solutions such as developing farm profiles using data to predict future yields give banks confidence in farmers' ability to repay their loans, which lowers the level of risk associated with granting loans to agribusinesses.

In East Africa, Feed the Future works with Partners in Food Solutions, a consortium comprised of General Mills, Cargill, Hershey's, Royal DSM, and Bühler, to introduce new technologies and knowledge to local food processors with the aim of expanding the availability of affordable and nutritious processed foods. Since its inception in 2012, this project has supported dozens of food processors in five countries and has also conducted market surveys on food fortification, identifying opportunities and challenges of implementation of food fortification.

But without access to financing, these processors would struggle to grow their businesses and implement what they have learned. Feed the Future also supports Root Capital, a nonprofit social investment fund, to make loans to small and growing agricultural businesses that are improving food security and nutrition throughout Africa. Our support is allowing Root Capital to disburse more than \$50 million in loans over five years. Small agribusiness such as these food

processors are the recipients of these loans, allowing people across East Africa increased access to affordable and nutritious foods.

Partnering with Civil Society

As important as engaging governments and the private sector is, we also have to continue partnering with community and faith-based organizations, farmer cooperatives and associations, and women's groups to amplify our message about the importance of good nutrition, ensure transparency, and make certain that vulnerable groups are protected and our investments get to those we target. Civil society provides important checks and balances and lends on-the-ground credibility to our programs and partners. We cannot succeed without their support. Feed the Future is partnering with civil society and community leaders to spread our message about the importance of good nutrition and hygiene practices and share promising interventions. By tailoring messages to the local context and gaining buy-in from community leaders, Feed the Future aims to sustainably advance the health status of women and children.

The Path Ahead

Feed the Future and the U.S. Government have achieved a great deal, and we can do much more, but we cannot do it alone. We need partner country governments, the private sector, research institutions, and civil society to succeed. We need partners throughout the world committed for the long haul, committed to seeing this through. That is why Feed the Future will continue to forge new partnerships and strategically steward our resources to multiply our impact.

One of our most important partners in this work is the United States Congress, and I would like to thank you again for your leadership on this issue. Feed the Future looks forward to continuing our work together to end child and maternal malnutrition, building a safer and more prosperous future for all.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you very much for your excellent testimony. Without objection, your full, very extensive commentary will be made a part of the record.

And just a few opening questions and I yield and to my good friend, Mr. Clawson, and then maybe have some follow-up questions at the end.

You have pointed to some excellent results in Cambodia, Honduras, Bangladesh, for example. I know when we spoke privately you talked about what was going on in Nepal.

Ms. DUNFORD. Right.

Mr. SMITH. Which you might want to elaborate even further on, particularly that way of—I know it's not a food security issue but that great birthing technique that you were meaning to elaborate on when we last met, particularly with regards to the umbilical cord, which saves lives.

But Nigeria is one of the worst of the worst when it comes to the loss of child's lives both neonates—newborns and unborn children—and I am wondering if the new government has been responsive to initiatives.

Of course, they are challenged with Boko Haram. We all know that. I know that children in the three northern states particularly are probably even more malaffected than anyone else. But if you could speak to some of the other African nations but particularly Nigeria.

Ms. DUNFORD. Great. So I wanted to highlight, as you mentioned, chlorohexidine which is an important intervention where it was based on years of research that USAID funded in Nepal and in partnership with a local private sector company that we also help to support.

The government really took on this initiative. It's a gel that you put on the umbilical cord after birth to keep the umbilical cord sanitary to prevent against tetanus.

And as we know, as child mortality rates are decreasing, neonatal mortality rates are often the most difficult to really start seeing great movement on. And this really can reduce the infant mortality rate by 23 percent just by use of this one gel. It costs pennies to distribute and in Nepal we are working to have it disseminated across the country.

A network of 48,000 community health volunteers have taken up this effort under government leadership and are working to get it out to the farthest reaches of way up in the mountains, way out into the plains.

It is very easy to apply. It is something that these community health volunteers, when they work with pregnant women to inform them of best practices going forward to have a healthy pregnancy, it's something they can give to the women.

There is one person who is always present at a delivery, and it's the mother. So the mother carries the packet around with her and it's just one application that anyone can do. So that is a very, very important intervention, and I do know the Government of Nigeria has gone to Nepal to receive training and to better understand how chlorohexidine works and how they might integrate it into the health system.

How far it has actually gone I am not sure. But it is one of several governments that have learned from Nepal in this effort.

And we are looking at working with the African Union, which has shown tremendous leadership on the issue of food security and nutrition and we are really working to highlight what we are calling champions of change, to work with partner country governments that are demonstrating the type of leadership by putting their own funds into agriculture and food security, by putting in place the right policies that can really allow space for private sector investment to further fuel the agricultural transformation and to fuel investments in nutrition. And by elevating those leaders that are doing a good job, they are really incentivizing others to follow suit and we are hopeful that Nigeria will go along that path as well.

Mr. SMITH. You mentioned the importance of faith-based organization and private sector. Are you finding a lot of buy-in from the faith-based community when it comes to these initiatives? Are they included in a robust way by the governments? I know our own seeks and reaches out. But are the other governments doing it as well, particularly in the 19 countries where we are—we're involved.

And secondly, if I could just ask you with regards to the post-2015 SDGs and, of course, the Decade of Action on Nutrition. I am always concerned when there are so many aspirational goals, targets, indicators and the three-pronged approach with the post-2015 that there is so much people then don't prioritize and do as much as they could, particularly on such a life-changing, life-enhancing initiative like Feed the Future.

To ensure that we don't get lost in other good things but they get crowded out by trying to do it all. Your thoughts on how we can keep this prioritized going forward between now and 2025 with the decade and also 2030 with the post-2015.

Ms. DUNFORD. Thank you. Thank you, Chairman, for those important questions.

I wanted to touch, first, upon faith-based organizations, which are incredibly important to Feed the Future and its implementation.

As we work with civil society, faith-based organizations are a critical part of that throughout all of the 19 focus countries where we work on many, many different levels.

Just to provide one example, in Zambia, Catholic Relief Services is out there working specifically to deliver nutrition messages to first 1,000 day mothers and also to first 1,000 day mothers in their communities, helping them to understand what types of nutrition they need to ensure that they take advantage of this really critical window and also making sure they have access to those nutritious foods as well.

I wanted to talk also about the SDGs, and I think you're right. The SDGs are—it is a very important global moment where world leaders came together to agree on how important development is and codify that.

As we know, SDG 2 is most focused on hunger. We think it's a really important way to elevate the work that we all think is so important.

There are a lot of competing priorities out there. I like to say that hunger and food security weaves itself through all of the SDGs and is central to everything that we can and will do.

I think in order to help us raise the profile of this effort are the results that we are starting to see come in. With the right types of investment we can see change and I think that is as motivating a factor as anything to keep this at the top of the policy agenda.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you.

Ms. Bass.

Ms. BASS. Thank you very much for your presentation.

You know, in many ways we are talking about a difficult subject but in many ways you are filled with a lot of good news too in terms of practices that are really making a difference.

And I wanted you to expand on that. So a few things in terms of Feed the Future, I have traveled to a couple of countries and have seen Feed the Future in action, specifically though as it relates to farming.

In your written testimony, you have a couple of examples that I wanted you to elaborate on. One was Chicken Choice in Kenya. And so I wanted to know if you could give a couple of examples of a Feed the Futures best practices that weren't very specifically agricultural.

Ms. DUNFORD. Thank you, Ranking Member Bass, for that question and also for your support of the Global Security Act.

Chicken Choice is one of my favorite examples which I think is why it made it into the testimony. It's really a nice example of someone who worked in a chicken factory who saw that chicken parts were being sort of discarded and these poor women who had no other choice, no other avenues, were coming to dig through the trash to find these parts in order to have something to feed their children that was nutritious. And so he started a product made from these by-products and started expanding to different locations throughout Kenya. He ended up with nine locations but had difficulty reliably transporting this very nutritious but low-cost product to these nine locations. We helped him buy a refrigerated truck, as simple as that. Given that transport can be dicey, this really helped him expand his business and get this low-cost nutritious food out to many more people.

So I am glad you like that example. That's the type of ingenuity and innovation that we need to see from the private sector that we are trying to support.

Other examples, just to put out there, I was just in Rwanda last month and I went with a group of women to their field of beans, and they have been growing iron-fortified beans.

This bean has doubled the amount yielded by a traditional bean. It cooks in half the time, which is very significant for people who are time-bound and needing to get fuel to cook all their food with, and has a very important source of iron.

And so I think these seeds we are starting to disseminate throughout Rwanda will be very much game changing when one of these staple foods becomes something that is iron-fortified from the very beginning.

So there are a couple of examples. I am happy to provide more as well.

Ms. BASS. Great, and I appreciate that.

I wanted to know some other input around Africa. You talked about how the African Union was really taking a leadership role and maybe you could be specific about what you mean.

And then in that regard, also I wanted to know if you feel that there are examples of roles being played by the African regional economic communities regarding a more regional approach, especially with some of the smaller countries.

Ms. DUNFORD. Yes. So the Malabo Commitments that came out of the 2014 African Union summit are very, very good if you read them and I think the African Union is looking to see how can we use CAADP to fuel the implementation or the attainment of these goals, which include things like reducing stunting and poverty, and tripling trade and the rest.

And they're launching this campaign called Seize the Moment, talking of champions of change—like I said, really elevating country leaders who are doing the right thing on agriculture and malnutrition. And so we're looking forward to seeing how that campaign goes on to really elevate this issue, as Chairman Smith said.

On the regional issue, I think the regional economic communities play a very, very important role. I'll take the example of Senegal and then I've also got an example of Togo I can give.

ECOWAS, the regional economic body in west Africa, passed standard certifications of seed, but these were not adopted by Senegal for many, many years.

So what you found were that private sector actors involved in seed production and multiplication were not able to operate freely in Senegal, and that the government was left with an inadequate system—really, trying to get seeds out to farmers and didn't have access to the latest seeds.

So the Government of Senegal, as part of its New Alliance commitments, in 2013 passed a law that put Senegal in line with these regulations that had been passed and encouraged by the regional economic community, and therefore, allowed for private sector engagement in the seed sector.

We helped to amplify this effort once the policy was right to get private sector actors out there producing and multiplying seeds that were able to reach many, many more farmers.

As a result, NERICA rice now is readily available on the market. It's a rice that's drought resistant, drought tolerant, and also increases yield by up to 3 times.

And so as part of our interventions working with private sector and this important policy change, now 180,000 farmers have access to this new technology that's really game changing.

Also, the regional economic community put in place some regulations on how many border check points you could have—a maximum of 30 border check points—which is critically important.

And we supported some businessmen in Togo who really went to the ministers and said, wait a minute, you aren't abiding by this regional economic rule and had an advocacy campaign to get people out to see all of the check points. And upon understanding what it took to get food from the north of Togo down to southern Togo—which was taking up to 4 days, they were aghast and put in place these changes and now it only takes 1 day to go from the north.

Ms. BASS. Wow. That's great. That's wonderful, because a problem throughout the continent——

Ms. DUNFORD. Absolutely.

Ms. BASS [continuing]. Is how to support intra-African trade.

So one question that always comes up in my district whenever I talk about Feed the Future, and I brag about Feed the Future all the time, but I'm always questioned as to whether or not GMOs are a real big factor.

Like when you were describing the beans and then also the rice, and so I wanted to know if you could comment on that.

Ms. DUNFORD. So I think that genetically-engineered technology is one of many, many tools that we use along with conventional breeding, along with other techniques, to help farmers increase their productivity, that have to do with things like drip irrigation and the rest.

We definitely follow countries' own laws, regulations, and wishes around genetically modified crops.

Ms. BASS. Thank you. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Mr. CLAWSON. Thank you for coming. Thank you for your important work.

Ms. DUNFORD. Thank you.

Mr. CLAWSON. My firsthand experience tells me that for subsistence farmers to make meaningful progress, A, they have to have diversification, which you have spoken to, and B, they have to have credit.

And we have been talking about microcredit since I was in college and I have got a lot of gray hair right now. And so I hear and read and see with my own eyes lots of really good programs, small programs in Southeast Asia, Africa, or wherever.

But given the level of corruption for a lot or most of these governments, depending on how charitable we want to be, I don't know of any examples of countries that are struggling with hunger that also have widespread microcredit available for a market of struggling subsistence farmers. And without that, all of this is just anecdotal talk to me. I'm glad you're doing what you're doing.

But if there's no microcredit in Africa or Southeast Asia at a broad level because there is so much corruption and there is not a developed private market for it, we are just blowing in the wind as far as I can tell.

Am I wrong about what I'm saying or—I'd like you to tell me I'm wrong and there is a country that is struggling to make the jump and that has a large noncorrupt microcredit market for people that need it. Does that exist in the world?

Ms. DUNFORD. So Mr. Clawson, thank you so much for your question and also before I go on I also want to thank you for your support of the Global Food Security Act.

I think you hit on one of the key issues. As I said, all of this takes money, and money at different levels, to invest in public sector infrastructure and research but really to invest so that the small and medium enterprises can really move the agricultural system to have the kind of outcomes that we're looking for. So I think you are right. Credit is one of the critical components to enable us to reach our goals.

I just wanted to provide another example from Senegal, where one of the problems with getting agricultural credit out there is that often you need a little bit bigger loans. The payback time needs to be a little longer sometimes because you have to wait for crop cycles and, frankly, it's a very risky investment for commercial lenders and so how do we get money out to these people?

And I think that there have been some very creative ways over the years. One thing that we found in Senegal was to really look at how can we work with banks to have more creative means of collateral.

One thing that we did with working with farmers in Senegal is that we basically took out iPads and found one or two people in the communities who actually were computer literate who could start recording production data from all of these farmers and after they built out a couple years of production data to be able to take that information to banks to say look, here's a record, it is not so risky to lend money to this farmer so he can purchase the inputs he needs to have a good harvest because here's his production record and that will give some guarantee.

We also found in Uganda, where five youth who met at a Feed the Future innovation conference came together and started a mobile app company that provides information to farmers on best practices, but what it also does is these agents are then able to go out to farmers, collect information and create a credit profile for these farmers, who are often illiterate, to take to banks to get them to be able to loan money to farmers.

So I think finding creative ways to get these funds out to farmers is critical.

Mr. CLAWSON. And what country actually has a functioning microcredit market for these kind of folks? Does that exist?

I love what you're telling me. But does that exist?

Ms. DUNFORD. So I think you're right, there's—

Mr. CLAWSON. I'm not saying that it doesn't exist. I'm asking you. You know, is there anywhere in Southeast Asia or Africa of a developing country that has a microcredit market that actually gives poor people an opportunity to expand their crops, without paying 20 percent a month?

Ms. DUNFORD. I think that if you saw a system that worked very, very well you would see great reductions in poverty and hunger.

In the countries where we work, there are instances of credit being available but we have not yet succeeded in making this something that's universal across the country.

So I think you've hit on one of the key obstacles that we're tackling, moving forward.

Mr. SMITH. In your testimony, Dr. Dunford, you talk about the 11 different Federal agencies for the whole of government initiative. Of course, that language is reflected in our bill—both the Senate and the House bill.

And the list includes, of course, the Office of the United States Trade Representative and I am wondering—you know, there are—there are agencies that are all in and doing more—just because of what their past has been, especially your leadership, how helpful has that Office of the United States Trade Representative been?

I've been in arguments with them over TPP and other issues. I think you have, too. But it seems to me that this is a golden opportunity. Just like the World Bank has done such extraordinary humanitarian work in a number of areas and most people, when they think of the World Bank, don't automatically think of that.

So if you could maybe—

Ms. DUNFORD. Thank you very much for this question. I think that working with USTR, they have been an incredibly important partner for us. Really expanding trade is one of the most important things—trade, not aid, is really going to lead to the future that we seek of a food-secure world.

And so we've been partnering with USTR to build a capacity for Africans to increase their trade. We've also been working in other areas as well. So I think they are an incredibly important partner, mostly in the capacity building of key trade systems, and will continue to be moving forward.

Mr. SMITH. Can I ask you how well-coordinated is the effort to ensure that folic acid is included? As I think I know and I might have commented this to you when we met, I wrote three laws on combating autism including the Combating Autism Act.

The Autism CARES Act just became law, and the most recent compilation of NIH research suggests three studies that say the—children on the spectrum can be reduced by 39 percent with 400 micrograms of folic acid per day as long as it's 3 months before actual conception and no later than 1 or 2 months after conception.

After that, it's helpful but not determinative and it also reduces spina bifida and other neurological problems.

I'm wondering how well can you coordinate that to ensure that that's part of the package. In the year 2007, I was with my staff director for this subcommittee, in Lagos and I gave a speech on human trafficking.

And a man came up and said well, what are you doing about autism in Nigeria. I said, nothing. We had dinner that night and it was a learning experience for me to find out how much unmet need there is in Nigeria and the rest of Africa.

The WHO has said there are tens of millions of autistic children in Africa, largely underreported and not getting anything like early intervention. But folic acid could be not a panacea but part of the solution and I'm wondering how well that's integrated.

Ms. DUNFORD. So I think our efforts are really focusing on helping people to grow and access the right types of food in order to have a balanced diet that would include all of the types of micronutrients that you're talking about, including folic acid.

And I know our colleagues in the Bureau for Global Health work also in micronutrients and I will check with them and get back to you in a written answer on how we include folic acid specifically.

Mr. SMITH. That would be great, if you would.

[The information referred to follows:]

WRITTEN RESPONSE RECEIVED FROM BETH DUNFORD, PH.D., TO QUESTION ASKED DURING THE HEARING BY THE HONORABLE CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

Folic acid deficiency is one of several micronutrient deficiencies that USAID nutrition programs address. Global Health programs support folic acid supplementation as part of maternal health interventions, plus any multi-micronutrient supplementation provided to children. Feed the Future works jointly with Global Health on

improving food fortification capacity in East and West Africa, plus other countries, such as Afghanistan, where folic acid may be included as a fortificant. Folic acid may be supported as a fortificant, along with iron, vitamin A or iodine, depending on the food vehicle fortified and the specific country needs that address their population's nutritional deficiencies.

Mr. SMITH. And for the record, how much are we spending on Feed the Future in fiscal year 2016?

Ms. DUNFORD. \$895 million.

Mr. SMITH. Okay. Are there any other questions? Unfortunately, we are being called over for a vote.

Ms. DUNFORD. Yes, of course. Of course.

Mr. SMITH. And I apologize for that.

Ms. DUNFORD. That's okay.

Mr. SMITH. We are planning a meeting and I would hope you and Mr. Markanday, if you would consider this as well—we are going to invite the Ambassadors from Africa and other countries, particularly developing countries, to a forum on Feed the Future.

We are hoping that Roger Thurow—we have asked him already and he seemed very interested to come and speak about the all-important first 1,000 days.

But, of course, what follows is important as well.

Ms. DUNFORD. Right.

Mr. SMITH. But it would be a great opportunity for all of us to encourage the Ambassadors to be in contact with the home front and home office and health minister to say okay, we've all signed up, scaling up, but what are we really doing—are we really making this a priority?

Because the intentions are great in many capitals but competing challenges sometimes crowd out this highly efficacious effort to help women and children.

So if you would at least consider being part of that panel it would be very, very helpful.

Ms. DUNFORD. Absolutely. I would be honored.

Mr. SMITH. As soon as we get a date we will get to you. We are trying to find out when the African Ambassadors especially would be most available. But we're also—we want the other Ambassadors to be there as well.

I was actually in Guatemala the day they signed up with us to work on the first 1,000 days, and I met with the Speaker that day and was—you know, he was all in and very excited about what it would do for stunting in Guatemala.

So is there anything else you would like to add? And I have more questions but we are almost out of time because of the vote.

Ms. DUNFORD. Well, I just want to thank you so much. It's been an honor to be able to testify before you and your committee today. I really appreciate your interest and support in this effort.

I wanted to just give one more example of really talking about the importance of women in Feed the Future and the groundbreaking work of the Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index that has really helped us to—for the first time—measure women's empowerment and understand where and why empowerment goes up and down.

This is an area where Bangladesh, when we did the first round of WEAI Surveys scored the lowest of all our focus countries on this index. And it led our mission and also the country of Bangladesh

to take this seriously and say, "What can we do to increase women's empowerment?" The WEAI found that public speaking was one of the key issues and Bangladesh really worked to ensure that women had opportunities to be trainers in agricultural extension and also looked at how they had problems with control over their production and really understanding that actually fishing was one of the biggest smallholder activities and the big nets being used were so big that men had to actually harvest the fish, which led women to be dependent on men to harvest the fish for their own consumption and also for sale.

And so we've worked to develop a smaller net that more women can use so they can then control the efforts of their production.

So you've seen a big improvement of women's empowerment in Bangladesh and just showing how measurement combined with government leadership and our efforts can quickly move the dial on an issue that has been so pervasive for decades.

Mr. SMITH. My colleague, Mr. Clawson, raised some, I think, interesting points about microcredit lending. I have actually authored two laws on microcredit lending and the biggest takeaway I had about all of that was how well women were able to take modest amounts of money and almost like the loaves and fishes multiply the effect.

Fed not only their families but hired people, paid back the loan so that the revolving funds were back into the kitty to help other people.

But I'm wondering, maybe as a question, do you find that there is a good interface between Feed the Future initiatives, private sector, NGOs, FAO, of course, and yourselves and the micro lending initiatives as well?

Ms. DUNFORD. Absolutely. That is one of things we are really trying to do. I think Mr. Clawson hit on a key issue that is a hard nut to crack and we are really working toward getting there.

So yes, that is well coordinated. If I could say one more point, I started out my career in international development at USAID as a young officer in Ethiopia back in 2002, 2003 where there was a famine—14 million people on the verge of starvation. It was my first experience with anything like this—very, very formative.

That year, I was working on providing food assistance to those people. The USAID Mission in Ethiopia that year spent \$5 million on agricultural development and nutrition, the type of work we are talking about today, and spent \$500 million on handing out food to people.

And while that's a very, very important effort, I just really applaud your support for us to actually reverse that, to spend more money actually on building the long-term capacity that's going to help people pull themselves out of poverty and pull themselves out of hunger.

I really appreciate your efforts.

Mr. SMITH. Okay. But again, we appreciate your efforts because you guys are walking point and doing a tremendous job. Thank you for your personal leadership, expertise, and determination.

The hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 3:04 p.m., the committee was adjourned.]

A P P E N D I X

MATERIAL SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

SUBCOMMITTEE BRIEFING & HEARING NOTICE
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6128

Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations
Christopher H. Smith (R-NJ), Chairman

June 9, 2016

TO: MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

You are respectfully requested to attend an OPEN briefing and hearing of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, to be held by the Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations in Room 2255 of the Rayburn House Office Building (and available live on the Committee website at <http://www.ForeignAffairs.house.gov>):

DATE: Thursday, June 9, 2016

TIME: 2:00 p.m.


SUBJECT: Leveraging U.S. Funds: The Stunning Global Impact of Nutrition and Supplements During the First 1,000 Days

BRIEFER: Mr. Ajay Markanday
Director
Liaison Office for North America
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

WITNESS: Beth Dunford, Ph.D.
Assistant to the Administrator
Bureau for Food Security
U.S. Agency for International Development

By Direction of the Chairman

The Committee on Foreign Affairs seeks to make its facilities accessible to persons with disabilities. If you are in need of special accommodations, please call 202/225-5021 at least four business days in advance of the event, whenever practicable. Questions with regard to special accommodations in general (including availability of Committee materials in alternative formats and assistive listening devices) may be directed to the Committee.



COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

MINUTES OF SUBCOMMITTEE ON Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations HEARING

Day Thursday Date June 9, 2016 Room 2255 Rayburn HOB

Starting Time 2:04 p.m. Ending Time 3:04 p.m.

Recesses 0 (to) (to) (to) (to) (to) (to)

Presiding Member(s)

Rep. Chris Smith

Check all of the following that apply:

Open Session ☒

Executive (closed) Session ☐

Televised ☒

Electronically Recorded (taped) ☒

Stenographic Record ☒

TITLE OF HEARING:

Leveraging U.S. Funds: The Stunning Global Impact of Nutrition and Supplements During the First 1,000 Days

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Rep. Karen Bass, Rep. Curt Clawson

NON-SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: (Mark with an * if they are not members of full committee.)

HEARING WITNESSES: Same as meeting notice attached? Yes ☒ No ☐


(If "no", please list below and include title, agency, department, or organization.)

STATEMENTS FOR THE RECORD: (List any statements submitted for the record.)

TIME SCHEDULED TO RECONVENE _____

or

TIME ADJOURNED 3:04 p.m.


Subcommittee Staff Associate