

REIMAGINING HUMANITARIAN NUTRITION SECURITY (RHNS)

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A severe challenge

Food and nutrition security is under unprecedented threat worldwide. Despite decades of international commitments, over 300 million people are living with extreme hunger. Projections show that we've stopped making progress on the problem – that we'll have the same proportion of food insecure people in 2030 as we did in 2015.

Yet, official development assistance from the seventeen largest OECD donor countries is projected to drop from \$198.7 billion (2024) to \$145.3 billion (2026). The World Food Program estimates that the 2025 funding cuts will take food away from 17 million people across the world who desperately need it and that funding for food security has dropped by 45% compared to 2024. Less than 1% of crisis funding is deployed in advance of crises.

As resources and financing for emergency assistance are declining, the basic foundations of global collaboration are also deteriorating and there remains limited flexibility in how the remaining donor funds may be allocated across short-term crisis response and longer-term resilience building. Funding for critical information systems is also being eliminated with very limited visibility into financing data systems for both short and long-term planning.

Information systems themselves are fragmented across the food, nutrition, climate, peacebuilding, humanitarian, and development sectors. Within and between these sectors there is often limited confidence in new analytical tools and datasets due to regulatory constraints, conflicting analyses, and uncertainty about new technologies. When trusted data is available, it is not easily translated into actionable indicators that can support decision making for resource allocation, operational planning, and anticipatory action.

Yet, from the perspective of local food system actors in increasingly volatile situations, what they want is coordinated support to build greater resilience before

crises hit, as they look to advance agricultural productivity, incomes and local food and nutrition security.

A reimagined approach

This crisis presents a profound opportunity to reimagine how to build food and nutrition security by integrating crisis response with longer-term, locally based resilience programming. By better aligning institutions and applying existing tools, organizations across the ecosystem can utilize limited funding more efficiently and effectively.

By leveraging The Rockefeller Foundation's convening power and cross-sector partnerships, we are bringing together diverse actors and proven models to unite behind a shared vision of locally led anticipatory food action. Anticipatory actions will be closely coordinated with long-term food, nutrition, and climate adaptation programming for the development of more resilient, nutritious, locally anchored food systems. We are developing three components for a revamped approach.

First, data is a key entry point for anticipatory action and resilience building. By leveraging new technologies across sectors, fragmented data can be turned into local information assets that provide actionable insights. They can enable anticipatory, cost-effective, and resilient solutions in crisis-affected communities. Satellite technology, new media sources, and real-time sensor data flows can enable earlier and more geographically precise data on where weather, soil, water and conflict related crises will hit. We believe that technology can also enable democratized access to information in a way that will make data a true global, public good.

To address the fragmentation of information systems across the nexus, we are mapping the ecosystem of which organizations hold what data, how they use it, and in what formats. On the demand side, surveys are underway to better understand the needs for

improved data to guide decisions by local actors including policy makers, businesses, farmers and humanitarian organizations. In parallel, we are connecting with other emerging initiatives around the use of improved data and AI for food and nutrition security. We are looking to catalyze a new 'big tent' inclusive data alliance. Putting this all together will enable much greater precision in anticipatory action.

Second, we are piloting programs for evidence based, anticipatory action in three fragile geographies. With stronger data, governments and stakeholders can plan and respond to crises more effectively – whether it is by improving social safety nets, school feeding programs, post-harvest strategies, reducing food waste, building adaptation infrastructure, or working with business and farmers to invest in more resilient food systems. These pilots – in Haiti, Philippines and Somalia - will strengthen local, social safety nets and nutritious food value chains, under a locally driven, multi-stakeholder governance framework. The pilots are being designed for scale from the outset. We are looking for committed partners to build momentum and use the pilots as proofs of concept to attract additional funders – even those with limited resources.

Ultimately, for pilots to scale, we believe they will need to follow two tracks:

1. Local governments will need to take ownership – committing budget and possibly repurposing subsidies or social benefits. This might include, for example, cash grant or voucher schemes that can deploy additional funds to communities where crises will hit, or co-funding strengthened storage, logistics and communications infrastructure in crisis-prone regions.
2. Private sector investment will be key – whether in farms, storage and services, such as insurance and logistics. We'll look to tap not just local capital, but also tapping into remittances, development and climate finance and impact investors more broadly.

Third, we want to help shape the bigger picture – globally and regionally – around how international collaboration and financing can better support long-term, resilient food systems. This work will build on what we learn from the data and pilot programs and will also dive into the political and institutional economics of scaling impactful solutions. We will commission policy research that looks across international frameworks – covering the current lack of transparency, fragmentation and fragility of funding for early warning and other needed data platforms, as well as needed changes in food

and nutrition security, and climate adaptation for food system resilience. We will track how effective we are at embedding scaling in the data and pilot workstreams. This evidence will feed into broader efforts to influence global conversations and commitments, with the goal of helping to shift the international emergency response, cooperation and development architecture toward approaches that are more forward-looking, locally grounded, and resilient.

Successful outcomes

If the RHNS agenda is a success by the end of 2027, we will have catalyzed:

- Improved and aligned predictive and anticipatory data systems and information access that are responsive to local actors' needs in fragile food systems, supported by an active, dynamic and coordinated group of actors
- Evidence of how the improved data can be deployed into strengthened and coordinated anticipatory crisis action and resilient and nutritious food systems in Haiti, Philippines and Somalia.
- Champions and leaders advocating for a new vision of how nutrition security in fragile contexts can be developed, supported and scaled into the future.