

Conference: Mitigating the Nutritional Impacts of the Global Food Price Crisis
Day Three: Session 7- Panel : Reorientation of U.S. Policy in Food and Nutrition
Kaiser Family Foundation, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and the Institute of Medicine (IOM) of the National Academies
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Barbara Jordan Conference Center
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ROADMAP TO END GLOBAL HUNGER

Thank you, Jackie, for your kind introduction and for moderating this panel. I also want to thank the **Kaiser Family Foundation**, the **Institute of Medicine of the National Academies** and the **Global Health Program of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation** for putting together this very important 3-day conference on the central role of nutrition in addressing hunger and promoting food security. I am glad to be here.

We’re living in interesting and challenging times, to say the least. There’s a lot going on. But the issue of ending hunger must take on a renewed sense of importance and urgency.

Sadly, we’re told by the United Nations that the number of hungry people in the world is over one billion. It’s hard for a lot of us to comprehend what that actually means. It’s a statistic so big and so huge that I fear some may lose the human ability to feel it – or some may be overwhelmed and choose to ignore the crisis.

The fact is this: there are some issues that cannot be solved in my lifetime – but ending hunger isn’t one of them. This is doable – if we muster the political will.

I have seen the face of hunger all over the world. I have met children with rusty-colored hair and cloudy eyes because they didn’t have the basic nutrients for a healthy life. It is tragic; it is sad; it is frustrating; it breaks your heart. It doesn’t have to be.

So – with that preface – let me again thank all of you for coming and for being part of this effort. This is about changing the world for the better – and I have a new sense of hope as we move ahead.

I’ve been asked this morning to talk about the “*Roadmap to End Global Hunger*.” So, I want to walk through how an idea was born; how it turned into the report entitled, “*The Roadmap to End Global Hunger*,” and how the recommendations of that report have been translated into legislation that was introduced by Congresswoman Jo Ann Emerson and me.

Last May, the GAO came out with a report describing why donor nations, including the United States, were failing in their efforts to help Sub-Saharan African nations’ meet the first Millennium Development Goal of cutting hunger in half by 2015. Jo Ann Emerson and I asked

the authors of the report, Tom Melito and Phil Thomas, to come brief the co-chairs of the House Hunger Caucus about the report and its findings. One of the central issues that caught our attention was the seeming lack of coordination and the lack of any clear strategy on how the U.S. was really going to make a difference, make an effective contribution, to reducing the incidence of hunger and malnutrition in Sub-Saharan Africa, let alone working with those nations on how to create longer-term food security.

For those of us in the House Hunger Caucus, this was the conversation where the light bulb turns on above your head. Jo Ann and I started talking about the need for a specially-appointed coordinator or office – the short-hand was a “Hunger Czar” – to oversee a comprehensive, government-wide strategy to address global hunger and food security. I have seen personally, both here in Washington and in the field when I travel to Africa and Latin America, how un-coordinated our food security programs often are on the ground.

I note this without trying to point fingers or lay blame at anyone’s doorstep. I think one thing that the global food crisis of 2008 put into sharp relief is how many programs we have on food aid, nutrition and food security and how they are spread over a variety of federal departments, agencies and jurisdictions. The same problem exists on Capitol Hill, with global food security programs under the jurisdiction of the Agriculture Committee, Foreign Affairs, Ways and Means and Financial Services, to name just the principal committees.

Congresswoman Emerson and I decided to make a crusade about the need for a comprehensive government-wide strategy and a Coordinator on global hunger and food security. On November 7th, the day after he was elected to be our next president, we sent a bipartisan letter to Barack Obama from 116 Members of Congress, calling for a comprehensive government-wide strategy and the appointment of a White House Coordinator of such a strategy.

I also had the privilege of meeting with Secretary of State Clinton in December, and with members of the Obama Transition Teams for State, USAID and USDA, to talk about the importance of a comprehensive, government-wide strategy that would maximize our efforts to reduce global hunger, and promote nutrition and long-term food security. And, I have to admit, I have been hounding White House and other U.S. officials on this priority ever since.

Around the same time, beginning in the spring of 2008, a diverse group of NGOs had begun talking about trying to draft a blueprint for the next Administration on how U.S. programs and policies could more effectively and successfully address global hunger, nutrition and food security. The NGOs had their own “jurisdictional” problems, with some focusing mainly on emergency and humanitarian relief operations, others engaged on agricultural development, others involved with helping women and children, others emphasizing health and hygiene interventions, or research and development, or market development, and the list of their various issue, field and regional expertise goes on and on.

Out of what might have seemed too impossibly large a group to ever produce a unified report, over months and months of discussion, this broad-based coalition found consensus. They educated one another about the importance of their own programs and approaches, and they listened and learned from one another about the accomplishments and contributions of other

programs. They hammered out exactly what it would take for U.S. programs to become more credible, more integrated, more comprehensive, more strategic – and projected how much that might cost over five years. And in February of this year they released their findings and recommendations, *The Roadmap to End Global Hunger*. I know Hillary is fond of saying that “it takes a village” – but I like to say, “It takes a plan, one plan.”

The *Roadmap* is noteworthy for being simple, straightforward and brief. It recommends that U.S. government actions to alleviate global hunger and promote food security be:

- **Comprehensive** – meaning government-wide and integrating all programs;
- **Balanced and Flexible** – meaning they must carefully balance and meet: emergency needs, longer-term investments in agriculture, and safety nets for the most vulnerable, especially during this global food and financial crisis;
- **Sustainable** – meaning they need to increase the *capacity* of people and governments to ultimately feed and care for themselves, reduce the impact of hunger-related shocks (whether those are natural or man-made) – and that they be *environmentally* sustainable and responsive to the new challenges of *climate change*.
- **Accountable** – meaning the comprehensive strategy and individual programs need clear targets, benchmarks and indicators of success and that monitoring and evaluation systems to measure and improve programs need to be developed and implemented; and
- **Multilateral** – meaning not only do we contribute our fair share to the multilateral efforts to address global hunger, nutrition and food security but that we make sure our own strategy strengthens the multilateral effort and that we provide international leadership.

How to accomplish this was laid out in four basic recommendations:

1) Create a White House Office on Global Hunger and Appoint a Global Hunger Coordinator to Lead the Efforts of This Office –

- Concretely, the purpose of the Office and the Coordinator is to create a permanent entity to pull all the agencies together and design and carry out a comprehensive government-wide strategy – and equally important, have someone with the backing of the President who can hold everyone’s feet to the fire, be accountable that assignments are carried out, and determine what is and isn’t working, what can be improved and what needs to be eliminated – without regard to turf, territory, budget or other parochial agency interests.

2) Resurrect the Congressional Select Committee on Hunger –

- This would allow one central Committee – and the Roadmap proposes it be bicameral – where the issues of hunger, nutrition and food security are its sole focus 100% of the time.

3) Ensure that the Development and Implementation of a Comprehensive Strategy to Alleviate World Hunger Include –

- Emergency response and management;
- Safety nets, social protection and disaster risk reduction;
- Nutrition, especially programs for mothers and children, emphasizing comprehensive nutrition before the age of 2, but also incorporating nutrition across the board in all our food security programs; and
- Market-based agriculture and infrastructure development.

In all of these areas, the *Roadmap* proposes a special emphasis on and sensitivity to the centrality of women in securing sustainable food security, increased agricultural development and productivity, and the reduction of malnutrition, under-nutrition and hunger.

- 4) **And finally, the *Roadmap* provides specific recommendations and funding targets across a number of accounts so that we can measure whether the Administration and its agencies are “on track” to meet these critical global requirements.**

Turning the *Roadmap*'s recommendations into legislation proved to be much harder than initially thought. In fact, there were days when I was sure House Legislative Counsel and my Legislative Director were either going to jump out of a window or throw each other out of a window. Finally, however, Congresswoman Emerson and I introduced *H.R. 2817, the Roadmap to End Global Hunger and Promote Food Security Act of 2009*, on June 11th. The only real difference between the report and the legislation is that the bill can only reference but not put into statutory language the specific funding levels recommended in the *Roadmap* report. The reason for this is simple: if we did so, it could limit the Administration from exceeding these recommended levels. So the legislation references the total increased investment of \$50.36 billion called for over five years, FY 2010 through FY 2014, for agricultural development, nutrition (including maternal and child programs and for other vulnerable populations), school feeding programs, productive safety net programs, emergency response, research and development, and technical assistance programs.

And quite frankly, in one area, the President has already exceeded our expectations. Under the *Roadmap*, the first increase in Agricultural Development funding for FY 2010 was targeted at \$750 million – President Obama asked for \$1 billion. That is such an excellent and welcome step, and I commend the President for taking it.

Let me conclude with a few remarks about the impact of this effort and where we go from here.

As most of you already know, and as some of our other panelists will make clear, President Obama has designated Secretary of State Clinton to coordinate a government-wide approach to create, design and implement a comprehensive U.S. strategy on global hunger, nutrition, agriculture development and food security. It's well underway, and already beginning to be reflected in the President's FY 2010 budget, and the President's announcements both at the G-20 meeting in London and the recent G-8 Summit in Italy. The *Roadmap* recommendations

and the NGOs that make up the Roadmap Coalition have played a critical role in supporting the U.S. coordinated effort, and providing the research and insights they had put together over the past year that led to the recommendations they advocate.

There are a number of organizations and voices all pushing in the same direction for similar priorities, some of whom, like my friends Catherine Bertini and Dan Glickman, are on today's panel, and others, like the Partnership to End Hunger and Poverty in Africa, are important contributors to the *Roadmap*. Dan and Catherine – please know that I haven't talked about your report because you're going to do so – but the Chicago Council has provided several key recommendations on how to frame agriculture and rural infrastructure initiatives.

I recognize that the majority of our resources will be invested in the areas of greatest need, Africa and South Asia. But I also believe we should not neglect those regions where nations are on the verge of breakthroughs. For example, both Guatemala and Brazil are in the midst of carrying out Zero Hunger campaigns, with special emphasis on ending child hunger. With their leadership, there is a hemisphere-wide initiative to end hunger in the Americas. The U.S. should be part of this effort – should find ways to support it and contribute to its success. Since President Obama has pledged to end child hunger in America by 2015, this should be a natural fit – but not if we limit our food security and nutrition efforts in Latin America just to Guatemala and Haiti.

The reason why I was so glad to be invited to be here today is the important emphasis on nutrition. Over the past two days the essential nature of nutrition for children under two years has been a central and repeated theme of this conference. I promise to work with all of you to fight for those funds and for it to be a key pillar of any U.S. food security and global health strategies.

I am concerned that the seven principles for a food security strategy highlighted by Secretary Clinton on June 11th at the event awarding the World Food Prize did NOT include nutrition. This is different from the comprehensive message presented by Secretary Clinton in the briefing I and several of my colleagues received at the State Department in April.

My concern increased when nutrition once again failed to have a central role in the announcement just made at the G-8 on agricultural development and global food security. I realize we don't want to “muddle our message” when dealing with a G-8 communiqué, but either nutrition is a centerpiece of all our food security programs or it's not.

I strongly and firmly believe that we must place the emphasis on zero-to-two and make sure the staffing, resources, funds and coordination are provided for this priority. At the same time, however, we must also ensure that nutrition is more fully incorporated and emphasized in all of our anti-hunger and food security programs. This is the very reason for having a comprehensive government-wide strategy – so that the right hand doesn't undercut what the left hand is doing.

As the father of two children, I know for a fact that children over the age of two need nutritious food. So, we need to ensure that our programs for vulnerable children fully integrate nutrition into their policies, programs and projects.

We need to ensure that our international school feeding programs, including McGovern-Dole, are providing *nutritious* meals to school-age children and *teaching* nutrition to the children, teachers, parents and communities served by those schools.

We need to promote nutrition education not just for pregnant women, but to all families and communities that are beneficiaries or touched by our programs.

As part of a comprehensive vision, we need to ensure that our nutrition and food security programs are integrating the necessary global *health* interventions into their projects – from deworming, immunizations, Vitamin A and micro-nutrient fortification to clean water, hygiene, waste management and even watershed management.

We need to make sure that our *emergency* operations are emphasizing nutrition, especially for children of all ages, and using foods that meet the special nutritional and development needs of children. But we also can't neglect the nutritional needs of adults and vulnerable populations.

We need to recognize that our nutrition programs are NOT just for the *severely* malnourished, but for the malnourished and the under-nourished and the food insecure. We need to recognize and act upon the fact that food security and nutrition walk hand-in-hand.

And we need to ensure that when we press forward with agriculture and rural development that nutrition is as central a piece of how we develop and promote increased productivity as markets and trade are.

That's a comprehensive approach.

That's a government-wide approach.

That's the Roadmap.

Thank you.