

Faith Leaders Statement on the Right to Food and Nutrition for Marginalised Communities including Children

Affirming Our Commitment to Food as a Sacred Human Right

As faith-based organizations representing diverse traditions, we unite in the conviction that access to adequate and nutritious food is a fundamental human right rooted in the inherent dignity of every person.

Today, about 673 million people suffer from chronic hunger even as global food systems produce enough to feed everyone. About 150.2 million children worldwide experienced stunting due to malnutrition in 2024, impairing physical growth and cognitive development. Hunger amid abundance signals a moral failure and a need for urgent action. Feeding the hungry and caring for the vulnerable remains humanity's highest obligation, one which faith leaders and their communities consistently play a key role in addressing.

“The hungry are fed by the Lord.” (Psalm 146:7)

The Moral Imperative of Food Security

The earth's bounty is intended for all humanity. When children go to bed hungry, mothers cannot nourish their babies, and families must choose between food and medicine, we witness a violation of divine intention and human dignity. The right to food is inseparable from the right to life.

“If you knew what I know about the power of giving, you would not let a single meal pass without sharing it.” (Dhammapada 49)



Food insecurity disproportionately affects women, children, Indigenous communities, and marginalized communities. This inequality reflects systemic injustices that must be challenged. True food security requires addressing root causes of poverty, discrimination, and exclusion, including policies that respect the self-determination of affected communities.

Confronting Misplaced Priorities

The Cost of Conflict We are gravely concerned by resource allocation that prioritizes military spending over humanitarian aid and social protections. In 2024, about 1 in 8 people faced conflict, global military spending exceeded \$2.7 trillion—up 9.4% from 2023—while funding for humanitarian food assistance remains chronically inadequate. This is a moral failure: governments, not just markets, determine who goes hungry. Conflict destroys food systems, displaces farmers, and creates refugee crises that exacerbate hunger.

Examples: Sudan has over 3.2 million children under five facing acute food insecurity; more than half a million people in Palestine experience starvation. We urge governments to redirect resources toward ending hunger, supporting peacebuilding, and preventing hunger as a weapon of war in line with International Humanitarian Law and UN Security Council Resolution 2417.

Climate Change: A Threat to God's Creation and Human Survival

Climate crisis threatens food systems worldwide. We, as stewards of creation, urge urgent climate and anticipatory action prioritizes smallholder adaptation, climate-resilient farming systems that include agroecology, sustainable water management, and the support for Indigenous knowledge that sustains communities. **Overcoming the Cycle of Indebtedness and Proclaiming Jubilee¹**

Many countries face a twin crisis of food insecurity and sovereign debt distress. Debt burdens hinder climate-resilient investments, while inequitable global food systems fuel debt. Jubilee calls for liberation from debt and restoration of land. Governments must break the cycle of unsustainable food systems, hunger, and indebtedness. **A Clarion Call for Justice and Action to Ensure Right to Food and Nutrition for All**

To Governments and International Bodies:



Recommit to the Right to Food: Enshrine the right to adequate food in constitutions and legal frameworks accompanied by enforceable accountability targets.



Reallocate Resources: Shift from profit- and security-focused policies towards programs that promote food security, agroecology, sustainable agriculture and nutrition.



Invest in Smallholder Farmers: Provide inclusive funding and support for small-scale farmers, particularly women, who produce about 70% of the world's food but receive minimal support.



Address Climate Change: Implement ambitious climate policies protecting agricultural systems and supporting community-based adaptation.



Cancel Unsustainable and Illegitimate Debt: Provide fair restructuring of unsustainable debts, cancellation where necessary, and financing models that free up resources for climate-resilient and equitable food systems.



Ensure Participation: Guarantee meaningful involvement of affected communities, including children, in decision-making guided by solidarity, the common good, and integral human development.



Strengthen Social Protection: Establish comprehensive social protection, including cash transfers and school meals, ensuring no one goes hungry.

Hunger in a world of plenty is not inevitable—it is a choice. As people of faith, how we treat the hungry reflects our relationship with the divine and our commitment to justice. Our moral traditions demand nothing less than the full realization of the right to food for every person on earth. As faith leaders and communities, we commit ourselves to advocating for these changes and working for them in all our spheres of our influence.

“Annam Brahma” (Food is divine): this belief impels respect, careful handling, and sharing food with those in need. (Hinduism)

¹ [The biblical Jubilee vision offers a critical mandate for periodically overcoming structural injustice and poverty and for restoring right relationships. During the Jubilee year, there is to be release from debts and slavery and the restoration of all lands \(Lev. 25\)."](#)

Signatories