



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations

SUSTAINABLE  
DEVELOPMENT  
GOALS

working for Zero Hunger

# 10 contributions parliamentarians can make towards achieving "Zero Hunger"

Eliminating hunger by 2030 will require appropriate legislation backed up by the necessary budgets and proper monitoring, allowing a just and long-lasting legal framework to be created.

The following are ten ideas for areas where members of parliament could direct efforts **aimed at achieving Sustainable Development Goal 2 (SDG 2)**: to end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture.



# 1 Legislators should establish the principles that guide policy towards ending hunger and malnutrition

## HOW?

A country's constitution is its supreme law, the foundation on which its citizens' rights and the state's obligations are built. By including the right to adequate food (whether implicitly or explicitly) in their constitution, countries give this goal the greatest guarantee of success.

Formal legal frameworks serve to support policy, and provide continuity and transparency during the electoral process. When programmes are supported by legislation, they become government policy.

## EXAMPLES OF THIS IDEA BEING PUT INTO PRACTICE

- To date, **30 countries have explicitly recognized the human right to adequate food** in their constitutions. These countries include South Africa, the Philippines, Ukraine, Zimbabwe, Egypt, Fiji and Guyana.

The most recent example is **Nepal**, which received support from FAO during the process of adding the right to food to its constitution in 2015. Since then, countries have been sharing their experiences so that targeted laws on food and nutritional security can be drafted.

- **Ecuador's law on food sovereignty** (the *Ley Orgánica del Régimen de Soberanía Alimentaria*, or LORSA) establishes the state's obligation to implement public policy designed to promote food and nutritional sovereignty, in accordance with the requirements set out in the country's constitution. LORSA comprises eight fundamental laws and requires that accountability mechanisms be in place.



# 2

## Legislators should establish the rules of the game when it comes to overseeing laws and organizing their implementation

### HOW?

Legislators should criticize, question, and authorize other branches of government, including the executive branch.

The tools that they have at their disposal for ensuring and demanding accountability include question time sessions, the approval of budgets and select committees. In this way, they can demand that budgets are allocated to policies aimed at ending hunger and malnutrition.

### EXAMPLES OF THIS IDEA BEING PUT INTO PRACTICE

- In **Honduras**, government regulatory bodies, each operating within their own remit, are required to oversee the **Law to extend credit to rural women** (the *Ley para el Programa Nacional de Crédito Solidario para la Mujer Rural*, also known as **Credimujer**) and produce annual accountability reports.





# 4

## Parliaments could take advantage of the knowledge held by national and international academic bodies, such as universities and research institutes

### HOW?

Legislators need to understand the extent of a problem and be able to measure the impact of policies. To allow them to do so, they can capitalize on the expertise of the academic community while drafting, implementing and overseeing legislation or public policy relating to the right to adequate food.

### EXAMPLES OF THIS IDEA BEING PUT INTO PRACTICE

- The **Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM)** in Africa, the **Right to Food Watchdog for Latin America and the Caribbean (ODA-ALC)** and the **Right to Food Watchdog of Spain (ODA-E)** provide decision makers, strategic partners, government and civil society with content and tools in the form of studies, performance indicators and recommendations on food and nutritional security, and encourage reflection and dialogue in their work with them.
- In Spain, the **University of Oviedo's World Food Governance Research Centre** was created to encourage research on topics related to food and nutritional security, evaluate policy, assess consistency between programmes and produce an annual report reviewing strategy and best practice.



# 5

## Parliaments should maintain a dialogue with civil society, businesses, and the executive and legislative branches of government

### HOW?

For the process of creating laws to be successful, it requires not only political will, but also participatory governance.

Members of parliament should open up the debate to groups working in food- and nutrition-related areas to ensure laws are passed on the basis of consensus and receive input from all of society.

### EXAMPLES OF THIS IDEA BEING PUT INTO PRACTICE

- In **Bolivia, Pacto de Unidad**, a national alliance of five of the country's biggest rural indigenous organizations, actively participates in decision-making processes affecting food-related issues.
- **Honduras's Law on Food in Schools** (*Ley de Alimentación Escolar*), which guarantees all children access to healthy food, envisages the involvement of mothers, fathers, teachers, municipal authorities and farmers.
- Chile's **Food Labelling Law** (*Ley de Etiquetado*) – which aims to combat excess weight and obesity – was drafted in consultation with businesses, some of them demonstrating fierce opposition to the law, while others expressed a willingness to reformulate certain food products.



# 6 Parliamentarians could improve the work they do by undergoing specialized training

## HOW?

To ensure that strong legislation and legislative proposals are passed and implemented, members of parliaments and their advisors should have a proper technical grounding in food and nutritional security.

Parliamentarians are not always specialists in the fields of hunger and malnutrition.

By attending workshops (online or face-to-face) and training courses led by experts, they can strengthen and build on their skills.

## EXAMPLES OF THIS IDEA BEING PUT INTO PRACTICE

- With support from the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID), **in May 2018 more than 30 advisors to the Parliamentary Fronts against Hunger (PFHs) in Latin America and the Caribbean have received training** from FAO on the subject of responsible investment in sustainable agriculture and food systems.
- In 2016, FAO and the Togolese government organized a **workshop for members of the Togolese parliament**. The workshop allowed them to strengthen the skills needed to draft a framework law on the right to food, learn about the relevant specialist tools they might be able to use, and listen to examples from other countries.



# 7 Parliamentarians should build and strengthen opportunities to share knowledge and experience

## HOW?

Members of parliament don't always have the specialist food and nutrition-related skills needed to draft laws that comply with international standards. Building knowledge-sharing networks allows lawmakers to make progress in the implementation of legislation and legislate in accordance with their country's individual characteristics.

Parliamentarians should share their experiences of how and to what extent public policy in this area is progressing. They should reflect on how to improve the legislative process and create effective public policy.

## EXAMPLES OF THIS IDEA BEING PUT INTO PRACTICE

- The **Global Parliamentary Summit against Hunger and Malnutrition** (Madrid, 29–30 October 2018) and the **forums and planning meetings of the Parliamentary Fronts Against Hunger in Latin America and the Caribbean** (FPH-ALCs) seek not only to reach agreement in the aim of promoting laws, but also to ensure that these laws become reality by creating spaces for dialogue with stakeholders.
- With technical assistance from FAO, a delegation of the **Nepalese Law Commission** undertook an **international mission to Bangladesh** in 2016 aimed at fostering the regional exchange of experiences related to the right to adequate food.

The **Parliamentary Front Against Hunger in Haiti** also travelled to Rwanda to meet with East African lawmakers, experts and representatives of civil society, with whom they shared the FPH-ALCs' experiences.





# 8

## Raising awareness and informing the public should be part and parcel of parliamentary work

### HOW?

Sharing information promotes transparency and accountability, and ensures that organizations and the public are aware of the issues surrounding hunger, and able to assert their rights.

Journalists play a key role in this regard, as they can inform citizens of their rights, the country's food status and government programmes. In order for them to do so, legislators need to communicate and raise awareness, explaining clearly to the public why a given law has been passed and the consequences it will have. This increases the probability that citizens will support the work of lawmakers.

### EXAMPLES OF THIS IDEA BEING PUT INTO PRACTICE

- In **El Salvador**, the right to food has been promoted **on the radio and in the press**. The PFH in the **Dominican Republic** has conducted an intensive **publicity campaign** aimed at finally getting a law on food and nutritional security passed.
- The **FAO Partnerships Division** has a webpage where it publishes key documents and information on the work of the Parliamentary Alliances. The legislators that make up these Parliamentary Alliances also appear regularly in the **media**, giving interviews on television or signing opinion pieces.
- In 2016, the **Togolese Network of Journalists for the Right to Food**, made up of journalists from both public and private organizations, was created. The network promotes the right to food, raises citizens' awareness of their rights, shares information and informs the public of the work carried out by government bodies.



# 9

# Legislators should form inclusive alliances

## HOW?

According to SDG 17 of the 2030 Agenda, a successful sustainable development programme requires alliances to be established between governments, the private sector and civil society. These alliances should have shared targets based on the public's wellbeing.

Malnutrition in all its forms has to be tackled as a matter of priority through the exchange of knowledge and experience, regular meetings, and dialogue. This means overcoming ideological differences to achieve one goal: eliminating hunger.

## SUCCESSFUL EXAMPLES OF THIS IDEA BEING PUT INTO PRACTICE

- There are currently **more than 30 Parliamentary Alliances and Fronts across the world**, representing both national and regional (Europe, Africa) alliances. Japan, Spain, the Philippines and Madagascar are among the countries that have brought together different political groups interested in promoting the right to food and combating hunger.
- In Latin America, **19 national, two subregional and four departmental Fronts** have been formed. To date, 400 members of parliament have demonstrated their great motivation in working to secure legislation on food and nutritional security.



# 10

# Towards a shared objective: building a global alliance

## HOW?

For SDG 2 to become a priority on regional and global political agendas at the highest levels, it is essential that stakeholders of varying significance and with varying degrees of decision-making power come together to work towards a shared vision for the future. This is to be achieved by participating actively at international forums, maintaining an open dialogue with regional parliaments and agencies tasked with matters of integration, and supporting the monitoring of regional political commitments, such as the SAN-CELAC Plan. It is also important to work with specialist bodies, such as the agencies of the United Nations, as well as with the support of foreign donors.

## SUCCESSFUL EXAMPLES OF THIS IDEA BEING PUT INTO PRACTICE

- Members of the PFHs in Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean attended a meeting of the **OECD's Food Crisis Prevention Network**, where they described the lessons that they had learned and their work to promote the right to adequate food.
- Lawmakers from Asia, Africa, and Latin America and the Caribbean will be attending the first **Global Parliamentary Summit against Hunger and Malnutrition**, where the fight to make Zero Hunger a reality will take on a global perspective, and regional efforts and alliances will be able to support one another and make headway in the same direction.



# 10 contributions

parliamentarians  
can make towards achieving  
☺ "Zero Hunger"

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