



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 17, 2014

Contact: Ben Grossman-Cohen, bgrossman-cohen@oxfamamerica.org, 202-777-2907

Key International Food Aid Reform Passes in Final Spending Bill, say Leading Aid Groups

Washington, DC, - 17 international development, relief and advocacy organizations released a joint statement today applauding the funding levels for international food assistance and reforms that would allow these programs to reach even more people, passed in the FY 2014 Consolidated Appropriations Act.

With passage of the Act, Congress took an urgently needed step toward making food aid programs more efficient and expanding their reach to more of the world's most vulnerable children and families. The Act makes a key reform to international food aid by providing \$35 million to reduce the need to monetize food aid, or sell U.S. food commodities overseas to pay for life-saving food and nutrition security programs. This simple change will improve the efficiency of the Food for Peace program and help expand its reach to hundreds of thousands more people - allowing them to better feed themselves, lift their communities out of poverty, and reduce the need for future emergency assistance.

We also welcome the strong funding provided in the Act for vital international programs that signify Congress's continued commitment to addressing global hunger and malnutrition, including funding not just Food for Peace Title II at \$1.466 billion, but also International Disaster Assistance at \$1.8 billion, Development Assistance at \$2.5 billion, Nutrition within the Global Health Account at \$115 million and McGovern-Dole Food for Education at \$185 million. We thank the Chairs Mikulski, Rogers, Pryor, Leahy, Granger and Aderholt and Ranking Members Shelby, Lowey, Blunt, Farr, and Graham for their dedicated leadership and commitment.

U. S. food aid helps feed 55 million people in need around the world every year, supporting both emergency responses and programs that tackle chronic hunger and malnutrition. When 870 million people go hungry every day, making each dollar count is both a responsible use of taxpayer money and a moral imperative. Increasing efficiency of these anti-hunger programs and expanding proven methods, such as local and regional purchase (LRP) as part of the food aid toolbox, is essential. A recent independent evaluation [report of the USDA LRP Pilot Program](#) confirms that LRP is a triple win: providing considerable cost savings, faster humanitarian response, and support for local farmers and food markets that are key to ensuring long-term global food security. The U.S. should be applauded for the efforts it has already made to increase funding for LRP through USAID's Emergency Food Security Program (EFSP). This program will continue thanks to Congress's support for EFSP funding in the Act.

U.S. food aid reform is long overdue and Congress's inclusion of the \$35 million to reduce monetization is a solid step in the right direction. We hope the Farm Bill, expected to be released in the near future, will further advance the modernization of food aid. Food aid reforms give the U.S. government greater

flexibility in the use of its resources to quickly and appropriately respond to crises, such as those on-going in Syria, Somalia, Democratic Republic of Congo and the Philippines.

Our organizations stand ready to work with the Administration and Congress to further reform assistance to ensure U.S. food aid reaches the hungry faster and is a more efficient use of taxpayer dollars.

Action Against Hunger USA

American Jewish World Service

The Borgen Project

Bread for the World

CARE USA

Church World Service

Convoy of Hope

Friends Committee on National Legislation

InterAction

Lutheran World Relief

Mennonite Central Committee U.S. Washington Office

Mercy Corps

Modernizing Foreign Assistance Network

ONE

Oxfam America

Save the Children

World Food Program USA