

Companies pledge millions to end hunger in the world by 2030 as part of the Zero Hunger Private Sector Pledge

September 21, 2021

Today, 42 companies have pledged a promising USD 345 million to contribute to ending global hunger as part of a new initiative led by key international organizations.^[1] The *Zero Hunger Private Sector Pledge* is a game-changing solution emerging from the UN Food Systems Summit (UNFSS) Action Tracks. It recognizes that governments cannot eradicate hunger alone and need more private sector involvement, with investments aligned with the highest-impact areas. To date, pledges have been made in 34 priority countries.

Global hunger is rising unabated, with up to 811 million^[2] hungry people in the world in 2020—that's 1 in 10 people suffering because they did not have access to the most basic need and fundamental right^[3] of food. COVID-19 measures have made the issue even worse.

But there is a roadmap to end world hunger. Additional investment in 10 high-impact areas can put hunger in the history books.

"Today, one in ten people go to bed hungry and millions are right on the brink of starvation. This is happening in a world that has enough food to feed everyone, everywhere. It's time to end this suffering. But to succeed, WFP and the entire community need the creative drive, energy, and commitment of the private sector. Through the Zero Hunger Pledge initiative, businesses around the world can join us and truly make a difference—giving food, hope, and a better future to those who need them most."

- *David Beasley, Executive Director of the World Food Programme (WFP)*

Although this financial investment must mostly come from governments, public spending will not be sufficient. That is why the UNFSS came up with a game-changing solution to mobilize more private sector investment as a catalytic contributor to achieving zero hunger.

The Pledge is launched today in advance of the UN Food Systems Summit.

"Increasing private sector investment towards small food producers in geographies with high burdens of hunger is essential to changing the lives of millions of people and making nations food secure. The Pledge enables food companies to provide a strong, united front with governments to make hunger a thing of the past by 2030."

- *Peter Bakker, President and CEO, WBCSD*

The Pledge requires companies to make a financial commitment in at least one of the 10 high-impact intervention areas [\[4\]](#) identified in the [Ceres2030 findings](#) and in at least one of the priority countries or regions.

Pledgers include a range of companies, from large corporations to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), each having committed to upholding internationally accepted principles including, but not limited to: the Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS-RAI), the International Code of Marketing of Breast Milk Substitutes, the Principles of the UN Global Compact, and the UN Guiding Principles for Business and Human Rights.

"The private sector in Africa is absolutely key to Africa's agricultural development agenda. We are committed to mobilising businesses—big and small—deliver concrete outcomes on the ground."

- *Ibrahim Gourouza, Chief Operations Officer, Grow Africa*

Pledging companies will then coordinate with implementing organizations or partners. They agree to being assessed by the WBA and to the assessment being published publicly.

Commitments can come in the form of core business investments, subsidized contributions, cash contributions, and in-kind contributions. They focus on three key areas:

I. Empowering the excluded—giving marginalized populations and small producers the resources to learn and benefit from successful agricultural interventions.

II. Investing in food producers—encouraging more sustainable on-farm practices and interventions to improve environmental conditions.

III. Reducing losses and supporting SMEs—assisting small-scale producers and SMEs to increase their productivity and income.

"What we are seeing with the Pledge is the private sector stepping up to be a bigger part of the solution. This is a game-changing approach to solving one of the most pressing yet oldest challenges humanity faces."

- *Lawrence Haddad, Executive Director, GAIN*

With a level of commitment so far amounting to USD 345 million, the implementing organizations are confident more companies will join in the fight against zero hunger. The Pledge is officially being [launched](#) on Tuesday, September 21, 10 am EDT/4 pm CEST.

###

[Notes for Editors](#)

[About the Pledge](#)

The *Zero Hunger Private Sector Pledge* is a multistakeholder platform of cooperation and action with a single objective of ending hunger for good. It involves businesses supported by civil society, member state governments,

and international organizations. Each of the actors provides a commitment within the remit of its organization. The flexible and voluntary character of the Pledge is its strength as it creates a platform for cooperation for actors who wouldn't have necessarily worked together in the past.

More information about the Pledge can be found in the Q&A document, attached herewith.

Disclaimer

The signing of this pledge does not constitute an endorsement, preference, or approval by the implementing organization selected by the company or its activities, services, or products.

About the implementing organizations

- [FAO](#)
- [WFP](#)
- [GAIN](#)
- NEPAD | [Grow Africa](#)
- [Grow Asia](#)
- [WBA](#)
- [WBCSD](#)
- [IISD](#)

Enquiries/Contacts

To request an interview:

Edwin Shankar, Leidar communications consultancy

Tel: +47 (0)415 23 012 (Norway), email: edwin.shankar@leidar.com

[1] Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), WFP, Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN), New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), Grow Africa, Grow Asia, World Benchmarking Alliance (WBA), World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD), and International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD).

[2] State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World (SOFI 2021) report.

[3] Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 25: right for adequate food and to be free from hunger.

[4] Enabling participation in farmers' organizations (I); creating vocational programs for rural youth (II); scaling up social protection programs (III); investing in extension services in R&D programs (IV); intervening to support sustainable practices (V); supporting the adoption of climate-resilient crops (VI); increasing research on water-scarce regions (VII); improving the quantity and quality of livestock feed (VIII); reducing post-harvest losses by combining interventions (IX); investing in the assistance needed to support SMEs (X).

About IISD

The International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) is an award-winning independent think tank working to accelerate solutions for a stable climate, sustainable resource management, and fair economies. Our work inspires better decisions and sparks meaningful action to help people and the planet thrive. We shine a light on what can be achieved when governments, businesses, non-profits, and communities come together. IISD's staff of more than 120 people, plus over 150 associates and consultants, come from across the globe and from many disciplines. With offices in Winnipeg, Geneva, Ottawa, and Toronto, our work affects lives in nearly 100 countries.