

THE
HUNGER
PROJECT
Bénin

EPICENTRE
DE
ZAKPOTA



GENDER-FOCUSED, COMMUNITY-LED DEVELOPMENT IN RURAL AFRICA

The Hunger Project's Epicenter Strategy

THE
HUNGER
PROJECT



ABOUT THE HUNGER PROJECT

Founded in 1977, The Hunger Project is a global, nonprofit organization committed to the sustainable end of world hunger. We were created as a strategic organization, reinventing ourselves time and again to meet each challenge and opportunity along the path of ending hunger.

Our global movement of individuals and organizations in 22 countries worldwide is a demonstration of authentic partnership. In more than 17,000 communities throughout Africa, South Asia and Latin America (in Bangladesh, Benin, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Ghana, India, Malawi, Mexico, Mozambique, Peru, Senegal, Uganda), people are leading their own change with the support of committed investors in the United States, where our Global Office is based, and in our affiliates known as Partner Countries (in Australia, Canada, Germany, Japan, The Netherlands, New Zealand, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom).

OUR VISION:

A world where every woman, man and child leads a healthy, fulfilling life of self-reliance and dignity.

OUR MISSION:

To end hunger and poverty by pioneering sustainable, grassroots, women-centered strategies and advocating for their widespread adoption in countries throughout the world.



It is a very exciting time in the work of ending hunger. The goal that The Hunger Project has always stood for — the end of hunger — is being recognized and accepted by the entire global community. In developing the next set of global development goals — the Sustainable Development Goals — world leaders are aligning to end hunger and poverty by the year 2030. African leaders, through the African Union, have set an even more ambitious agenda: adopting a declaration to end hunger in Africa by 2025.

Significant progress has been made over the last two decades, yet the most entrenched poverty and hunger still remains. Ending hunger and poverty within this timeframe is only possible if we transform existing policies, ambitiously work to overcome inequality, and use the latest research and technology to innovate and share best practices. The bottom line: this will require a breakthrough.

The Hunger Project's holistic approach empowers women, men and youth living in rural villages to become the agents of their own development and make sustainable progress in overcoming hunger and poverty. While adapted to meet local challenges and opportunities wherever we work, all of our programs have these three essential elements at their foundation:

1. Start with Women: Empowering women as key change agents.
2. Mobilize Everyone: Mobilizing clusters of rural communities for self-reliant action.
3. Engage Government: Forging effective partnerships with local government.

In order to be sustainable, the work of ending hunger requires us to engage with communities using a holistic, multi-sectoral approach with multi-year partnerships that acknowledge that complex human development takes time. In eight countries across Africa (Benin, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Ghana, Malawi, Mozambique, Senegal and Uganda), The Hunger Project's Epicenter Strategy mobilizes clusters of rural villages into "epicenters," which band together 5,000-15,000 people to carry out community-led holistic strategies to meet basic needs. In 2014, women and men in 123 epicenters created and ran their own development programs, reaching nearly 1.6 million people.

We invite you on this path with us as we together meet this final challenge of ending hunger once and for all.



Sincerely,

Idrissa Dicko, Ph.D.
Vice President for Africa Programs

THE EPICENTER STRATEGY

The Hunger Project's **Epicenter Strategy** unites 10,000 to 15,000 people in a cluster of villages to create an "epicenter," or a **dynamic center where communities are mobilized for action to meet their basic needs.**

This holistic strategy takes them on a path to sustainable self-reliance through four distinct phases over a period of about eight years. During this time, individuals build the confidence to become leaders of their own development, and communities come together to unlock a local capacity for change.

In **PHASE ONE**, communities are mobilized to participate in Vision, Commitment and Action (VCA) Workshops to develop their own vision of a different future. Local volunteers, called "animators," work with their communities to make a firm commitment to achieve their shared vision of the future and create action plans for moving forward. Community-level action projects are launched and build cohesion among communities. The Hunger Project supports the community in gaining the support of government officials, and encouraging local traditional leaders and government to contribute sufficient land for epicenter construction.

PHASE TWO begins with the construction of the L-shaped epicenter building. Community members work together to mobilize construction materials and create a food bank, community fields, a meeting hall, a rural bank, a clean water source, public latrines and, where they don't already exist, a health center, food processing units and classrooms. The epicenter quickly becomes a vibrant center of community action and a strong symbol for positive change.

Once the epicenter building is constructed, the community continues working to address its needs (**PHASE THREE**).

HEALTH & NUTRITION: At health centers, children are weighed and immunized; a government-staffed maternity wing provides safe conditions for birthing.

EDUCATION: In classrooms, gender-balanced preschool care and Functional Adult Literacy classes are provided.

FOOD SECURITY: Farmers are trained to improve yields through new technologies, alternative farming techniques and increased access to agricultural tools. Food banks safely store harvests to support communities during lean periods throughout the year.

MICROFINANCE: A training, credit and savings program develops women's and men's capacity to become economic decision-makers, entrepreneurs and small business owners.

WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT PROGRAM: Provides education on women's legal, reproductive and property rights.

ADVOCACY, AWARENESS AND ALLIANCES: The Hunger Project supports the community in establishing effective partnerships with local government and other organizations to ensure that services are available locally.

ENVIRONMENT: Each epicenter focuses on maintaining biodiversity, ensuring the sustainable use of resources through soil conservation and water management, and promoting renewable sources of fuel and energy through tree plantings, forest preservation and plastic bag recycling programs.

In **PHASE FOUR**, The Hunger Project ends its financial and staff support for the epicenter's programs, but continues to monitor progress for two additional years. This transition allows time for epicenter leadership to affirm its partnerships, ensure funding streams from revenue-generating activities and begin relying on its leadership structures for future growth.

An epicenter that has reached sustainable self-reliance exhibits:

- Effective, gender-balanced and fully trained epicenter leadership, with democratic processes and transparency;
- A strong Women's Empowerment Program;
- Access to basic services, including healthcare, education, clean water, agricultural tools, and microfinance savings and credit opportunities; and
- Epicenter income, with revenues that cover all expenses and a self-reliant microfinance institution.

The Epicenter Strategy is an integrated approach that was created in Africa, by Africans and, over the last 20+ years, has become an effective, affordable and replicable strategy. To date, The Hunger Project has mobilized 1,975 communities to create 123 epicenters, reaching 1.6 million people across Africa.

	Phase I		Phase II	Phase III			Phase IV	
Year	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
EPICENTER'S JOURNEY TO SELF-RELIANCE	MOBILIZATION		CONSTRUCTION	PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION			TRANSITION TO SELF-RELIANCE	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VCA workshops • Animators • Community-initiated projects • Leadership • Microfinance 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contributed land, materials, labor • L-shaped building • Demonstration farm • SACCO/Bank recognition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food and nutrition security • Health • Education • Sanitation • Adult literacy 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Epicenter income generation • Epicenter committee leadership of continuing development 	

“The Hunger Project puts innovation into practice, and we see this award as both recognition of their outstanding work around the globe and a tremendous opportunity to harness the power of innovation in addressing an important social issue.”

– DARIUSH GHATAN OF GOOGOL, an Innovation Pioneers initiator member company, on The Hunger Project’s receipt of the 2013 One Wish Award, the Innovation Pioneers’ annual prize which recognizes the use of innovation in achieving outstanding results.



Epicenter Strategy in 2014

UNLOCKING LOCAL CAPACITY



Nearly 46,000 people trained
in Nutrition

97,000 participants
in HIV/AIDS and Gender Inequality Workshops

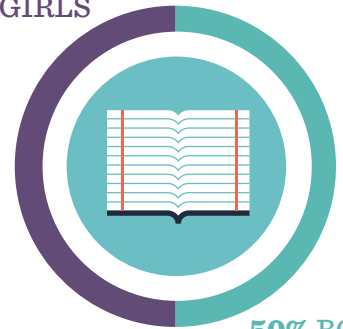
68,600 participants
in Food Security Workshops

14,200 participants enrolled
in Functional Adult Literacy

105,000 women and men trained
in our Women's Empowerment Program



50% GIRLS



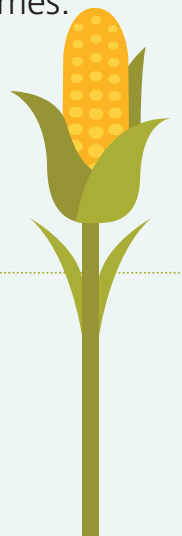
50% BOYS

3,665 CHILDREN
are enrolled in early education
at our epicenters

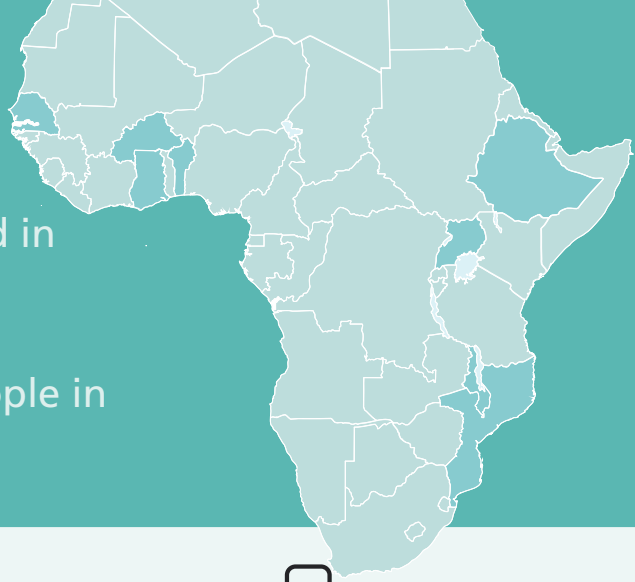
MORE THAN

**850,000
KILOGRAMS**

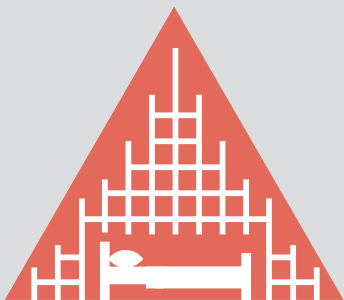
of food was stocked by
community partners in food
banks to help provide food
during lean times.



THE EPICENTER STRATEGY is an integrated approach that was created in Africa, by Africans and, over the past 20 years, has mobilized **123** epicenter communities, reaching **1.6 million** people in eight countries across the continent.



16,000
BED NETS WERE
DISTRIBUTED
TO PREVENT
MALARIA



Nearly 160,000 children
were weighed and monitored at
epicenter health clinics.

94,250 children
were vaccinated to prevent
childhood diseases.



22,600 pregnant women
accessed prenatal care.



OVER **75,000** PARTICIPANTS ACCESSED

\$3 MILLION
IN MICROFINANCE LOANS



VISION, COMMITMENT & ACTION

Mobilizing the creativity of community-led development

At the country level, a multi-stakeholder National Advisory Council comprised of individuals from academia, government, business and civil society provides guidance to a Hunger Project country office, staffed by a Country Director and a programmatic, administrative and financial team — all of whom are from within the country. That team supports and coordinates all the work at the community level. In selecting initial areas to demonstrate the Epicenter Strategy as an approach, criteria include: peace (we do not work in active conflict zones), serious need, community and local government readiness to take self-reliant action, and reasonable distance from the capital to serve as a demonstration to policy makers and ease staff accessibility. Consideration may also be given to religious, ethnic and geographic diversity; as well as ensuring that communities meet certain thresholds for our strategy to take root.

The first step that The Hunger Project takes to mobilize the population for the Epicenter Strategy is to embark on a process that emphasizes the critical importance of leadership, creates a clear vision of the future, and generates commitment and action at the individual and community level to achieve the eradication of hunger and poverty on a sustainable basis.

This process is implemented through an intensive workshop called the Vision, Commitment and Action (VCA) Workshop. This workshop combines leadership training, which enables a community to create its own vision for the future, with a public commitment to achieve it and the identification of a set of actions necessary to achieve the vision. Participants are asked to develop specific action plans for a community project that they will achieve independently in the next three months using their own initiative, skills and resources.

The first Vision, Commitment and Action Workshops are attended by all members of the community as well as traditional leaders and local government officials. At this general assembly, members of an Epicenter Committee—usually six men and six women (though this number may vary with the size of the epicenter)—are elected by the community to oversee the regular operations of the building after it is constructed. These committees have two-year terms and hold quarterly accountability meetings. Sub-committees are:

- Finance Committee (to collect income and monitor the finances of the epicenter);
- Water and Sanitation Committee;
- Education Committee (for the nursery school and functional adult literacy classes);
- Food Security Committee (managing the Food Bank);
- Food Processing Committee; and
- Health Committee.

In addition to electing committee members, The Hunger Project recruits the most committed and motivated people — women and men — to become volunteer leaders, called “animators.”

“When you see men voluntarily breaking rocks in the hot sun to build their village’s community center, you think they must really want it. I saw this on a visit to a project by The Hunger Project in the Eastern Region of Ghana. The Hunger Project believes in people helping themselves...[A salute] to the men at work in the hot sun to build their own community center – a better image for aid than the stereotypical helpless child.”

– BILL EASTERLY, Professor of Economics at New York University and Co-Director of NYU Development Research Institute

Using advanced workshops, The Hunger Project intensively trains animators in community-based strategic planning. These animators identify and prioritize activities according to the community-held vision created at the first mass Vision, Commitment and Action Workshop. They empower their fellow community members to recognize their own capacities, determine possible solutions, and then plan and implement the solutions independently. Examples of community-initiated projects are rebuilding schools and establishing income-generating activities, all based on people’s own resources. Many animators also take additional, in-depth trainings, becoming specialized in certain areas, for example HIV/AIDS or women’s empowerment.

Vision, Commitment and Action Workshops are repeated in a succession of trainings throughout the course of the epicenter’s timeline. With each workshop, new members of the community are engaged, the vision for the community is further developed and new openings for action are identified. This process builds solidarity beyond traditional community borders and inspires confidence in local leaders.

To physically construct the epicenter building, The Hunger Project hires an experienced local contractor to train community members in construction. The Epicenter Committee mobilizes voluntary labor to pull together the materials (stones, sand), clear the land, construct the bricks and begin laying the foundation. People begin to work together across village lines, constructing the facility, brick-by-brick. The building becomes a symbol of partnership, self-reliance and unity.

The Hunger Project program brought great unity and solidarity among the partner communities, resulting in shared responsibilities for development.

– FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT, Odumase-Wawase Epicenter, Ghana



THE HUNGER PROJECT UGANDA
**WAKISO WOMEN
FOOD FARMER
INITIATIVE CO-OPERATIVE
SAVINGS & CREDIT SOCIETY**
P O BOX 26393 K/la(U) Reg:7060

“[VCA Workshops] differentiate The Hunger Project from NGOs who believe in investment of cash or goods and services first and change as the consequence . . . The VCA workshops, mobilization process, and local leadership approach accelerate change and help people to remain motivated...”

– PRO BONO EXTERNAL CONSULTING FIRM, 2009

ACHIEVING THE YEAR OF WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT AND DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA

When women are empowered, agricultural production increases; birth rates, childhood malnutrition and child mortality are reduced; more children go to school, including girls; and all of society benefits. In setting the Africa Union Summit 2015 theme to be the Year of Women's Empowerment and Development toward Africa's Agenda 2063, Madame Chairperson emphasized this should include mobilizing women within all sectors and ensuring women's access to modern agricultural technologies, land and capital to improve their productivity.

The Hunger Project firmly believes that empowering women to be key change agents is an essential element to achieving the end of hunger and poverty. Wherever we work, our programs aim to support women and build their capacity.

EQUALITY IN LEADERSHIP: Every Epicenter Committee – the council that is elected to be responsible for all epicenter activities – must include an equal number of women and men.

WOMEN ANIMATORS: Women do the bulk of work to meet their families' basic needs – they are on the front lines of food security every day. Women Animators are the perfect messengers in that they are better able, socially, to reach other women and offer information, hands-on demonstration and encouragement for the adoption of new practices.

WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT PROGRAM: This specialized program provides an intensive series of trainings to both women and men about women's legal and reproductive rights, as well as workshops for women and men to raise community-wide awareness of women's vital and often overlooked contributions to her family and to her community.

HIV/AIDS AND GENDER INEQUALITY CAMPAIGN: Launched in 2003, this workshop confronts the gender issues fueling the spread of the disease.

MICROFINANCE PROGRAM: trains and empowers villagers, with a special focus on women food farmers, who grow 80 percent of the household food in sub-Saharan Africa. Partners learn how to increase their incomes and use their savings to improve the health, education and nutrition of their families. Eighty percent of our Microfinance Program participants are women.

SELF-HELP GROUPS OR COOPERATIVES: Women band together to form small cooperatives that are more visible, efficient partners to larger entities such as government agencies and NGOs. Through cooperatives, farmers are better able to make use of resources and training, benefit from cross-pollination of ideas with other farmers, and take up new techniques more quickly – all while reducing risks to crops and livelihoods by bearing that effort together.

“If women are emancipated and uplifted, the human race will get better. The ownership of this idea across the continent is substantial to make the aspirations of Agenda 2063 happen.”

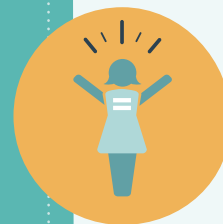
– H.E. DR. NKOSAZANA DLAMINI ZUMA,
African Union Commission Chairperson



Making a Difference

A CASE STUDY

Since joining The Hunger Project's Women's Empowerment Program and becoming a trained animator in Ghana, Dina has expanded her farm, started a new business and has positively affected the lives of women in her community.



My name is Dina Amartey; I am 34 years old and live in Koni village, Matsekope Epicenter in Ghana. I am married with three children and work as a farmer and business woman.

I came into contact with The Hunger Project in 2006 when a community Vision, Commitment and Action Workshop was organized in my community, educating people about self-reliance, women's empowerment, HIV and so on. I decided to train as a Women's Empowerment Program animator when The Hunger Project invited my community to send a representative for the training. I completed Junior Secondary School and was only subsisting by farming on a small piece of land before I met The Hunger Project.

Since my training as an animator, and my participation in The Hunger Project meetings and activities, my eyes have opened. **It led to my full understanding of life.** I began to plan for my family and my future. The fact that I have three children currently was due to my experience with The Hunger Project; I would have had more.

The Hunger Project taught me how to be independent, work hard and develop a vision. With the knowledge acquired through my association with the organization, I made up my mind to educate my children to the highest possible level. That is the reason why I am working hard to be able to save money. I pay my children's school fees on my own. I am on family planning now, meaning that I am using contraceptives that have been approved by health personnel at the epicenter. I earn respect from my community members and have become part of the leadership of the community.



I have now expanded my farm; for the last three years, I have been cultivating four to six acres of pepper and okra farms, and I am also into petty trading now. This expansion and the new business I started were aided by the loan and the training I received from The Hunger Project.

As a Women's Empowerment Program animator, my activities have positively affected the lives of many women in my community; many people call on me to assist them in resolving problems. **The Hunger Project is changing the lives of people who are willing to have a change—and I am one.**

LEVERAGING THE RESOURCES OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The Hunger Project's experience in more than 17,000 communities around the world has taught us that people living in poverty are not the problem, they are the solution. When people have the opportunity to take charge of their own lives and destiny and exert control over a fair share of public resources, they can rapidly and dramatically improve their lives. We partner with local government and build the capacity of epicenter communities to negotiate effectively to ensure government programs are effective and people are able to access resources that are rightfully theirs. In order to strengthen local government, The Hunger Project facilitates discussions with local government officials to generate support for the epicenter prior to beginning

work with a cluster of rural communities. Local government is involved at every phase of the Epicenter Strategy process.

The Epicenter Committee negotiates all the key commitments from local government to provide teachers, nurses, books, pharmaceuticals and farm extension agents. Community members begin to have confidence to negotiate directly with their government, and the government in turn feels a true stake in the success of the epicenter. Once the epicenter building is constructed, senior government officials are often present at the ceremony – a public celebration of accomplishment and partnership.



SUSTAINABLE FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY

The Hunger Project works to empower rural communities in strengthening their self-reliance so they can develop sustainable, self-reliant, hunger-free communities.

FARMER TO FARMER TRAINING: Animators are given intensive training in well-tested farming techniques and technologies such as composting, micro-dosing, water management, row-planting and inputs such as improved hand-held tools, seed varieties and compost starters. The Animators, in turn, bring trainings to the farmers in their communities.

DEMONSTRATION FARMS: The farm is used as a showcase for new sustainable farming techniques, inputs and technology. Farmers can see the fruits of new methods develop right in their community. Government-provided extension workers provide training in composting and introduce improved seeds and efficient agricultural methods at the demonstration farm.

FOOD STORAGE: The epicenter provides a food bank on-site and stores incoming harvests; this allows farmers to hold crops when there is a glut in the market and sell at a higher price later in the season. This also means community-wide resilience as there are backup stores in case of flood or drought. In addition to this epicenter-level storage, farmers are trained in improving storage within their communities – for example, building elevated granaries so that harvests are kept dry and away from pests or triple bagging harvests such as cowpeas in order to suffocate insects. At the household level, farmers are trained in such simple strategies as canning and adding shelving to their homes. Reducing crop loss and selling harvests at higher prices removes pressure on smallholder farmers so that they need not put more land into cultivation. With greater yields from fertile, productive plots farmers can begin storing food surpluses.

AGRICULTURAL INPUTS: Epicenters set aside a room or part of the food bank to operate as local agricultural shops. In a move to make inputs more affordable, these epicenter shops often subdivide large quantities (50 kilos) of fertilizer, seed, or other inputs into smaller sacks (5 kilos) – scales that are more appropriate to the needs of smallholder farmers.

WARRANTAGE PROGRAM: Many epicenters offer warrantage programs to farmers as a means of leveraging their higher crop yields. With this system, a farmer stores some of her harvest as collateral with a credit union, which issues a loan based on the value of the crop. The loan makes it possible for the farmer to invest in agricultural inputs or to carry out income-generating activities between seasons. The farmer then repays the credit union, with interest. The credit union then releases the crop collateral, which has gained value as it was kept out of the market during the glut at the height of the season.

MICROFINANCE PROGRAM: Farmers can access affordable credit so that they may take small loans with which to purchase inputs. Their ability to purchase and use improved seeds and fertilizer translates into an expanding restoration to soil fertility, structure and water retention.

BRINGING MARKETS TO FARMERS: Equipped with new thinking about markets, farmers collectively organize themselves to reduce crops that cause a glut in the market (such as cassava, potato and corn) and begin to diversify their produce. Rather than farming solely for household consumption, newly confident farmers plant part of their plots with items such as tomatoes, ginger and peanuts that they know will sell at the epicenter market, which is no longer an expensive ride away, but now within walking distance.

FOOD PROCESSING UNITS: Some epicenters offer farmers a way to add value to their crops, for example: turning peanuts into peanut butter yields a ten-fold increase in profit. Many farming communities acting together can offer produce at a scale that attracts the attention of much larger, institutional customers. Epicenters in Burkina Faso and Senegal are now proud to sell their produce to the World Food Program and UNICEF.

NUTRITION TRAININGS: At Hunger Project epicenter trainings, tens of thousands of women attend workshops in which health care professionals explain the basics of nutrition for both children and mothers and the importance of pre- and postnatal care. In 2014, nearly 46,000 people were trained in nutrition workshops throughout Africa.

EDUCATION AND ADULT LITERACY

Education programs for children and adults alike can improve all aspects of life in epicenter communities.

SCHOOLROOM AND LIBRARY: The epicenter community operates a pre-school, including provision of one nutritious meal per day. The one-meal-per-day program works partially to ensure a nutritious meal for the children and promote healthy growth and partially to encourage parents to bring their children to the preschool. And while children are educated, mothers have more time for their own education and income-generating activities.

PROMOTING EQUAL EDUCATION FOR GIRLS. Animators run educational campaigns to promote childhood primary school enrollment, especially for girl children. In 2014, half of the over 3,600 children enrolled in the nursery school program were girls. Moreover, our Microfinance Program in Africa includes a policy that requires participants to enroll their daughters in school.

FUNCTIONAL ADULT LITERACY AND NUMERACY CLASSES: The schoolroom also hosts adult literacy and numeracy classes, which allow partners to become more independent and confidently make business deals on their own. In 2014, over 14,000 people were enrolled in Functional Adult Literacy classes throughout Africa.

“The coming of The Hunger Project has helped in that the nursery schools are helping our children to do well in their primary education because they have been taught the basics in nursery school...Illiteracy has also been reduced because of adult literacy classes.”

– FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT,
Champiti Epicenter, Malawi



HEALTH AND DISEASE PREVENTION

Teams of specialized volunteer Health Animators are empowered with information, training and materials to go out and educate their communities. This workforce leverages, and is guided by, resident nurses – provided by government – as well as partnerships with other civil society organizations to improve access to health care services, immunizations, antiretroviral treatments and more.

HEALTH COMMITTEES AND CLINICS: The Health Committee assists in operating the health clinic (including a delivery room, consultation rooms, pharmacy and toilets). The clinic typically tracks child and maternal health, provides malaria and tuberculosis prevention and treatment, offers nutrition education, administers medications and supplies, and coordinates with government and local agencies to host medical staff. Nurses' quarters are built adjacent to the epicenter building to ensure ready access to health care.

HIV/AIDS AND GENDER INEQUALITY WORKSHOPS. In response to the HIV/AIDS pandemic in Africa, in 2003 The Hunger Project launched HIV/AIDS and Gender Inequality Workshops to empower grassroots people to transform the conditions that have perpetuated HIV/AIDS. In 2014, nearly 100,000 participants attended these workshops across Africa.

ACCESS TO HIV/AIDS TESTING AND TREATMENTS. In addition to generating awareness about the root causes of HIV/AIDS infections, mobile voluntary counseling and testing (VCT) services are offered in partner villages. Some of our epicenters in Malawi also partner with government to provide communities with access to antiretroviral treatments.

ANTI-MALARIAL BEDNETS. Insecticide-treated bednets are distributed throughout communities, often in partnership with like-minded organizations. For example, The Hunger Project-Malawi partners with UNICEF on the sale and distribution of low-cost, anti-malarial bednets within our community epicenters. In 2014, nearly 16,000 malaria preventing bed nets were distributed to our African partners.

MATERNAL AND CHILDHOOD HEALTH PROMOTION. The Hunger Project supports maternal and child health by empowering women to have a voice in decision-making and gain awareness about the importance of pre- and postnatal care. In 2014, over 22,600 women accessed antenatal care services at our epicenters in Africa, and nearly 95,000 children were vaccinated.

FEMALE CONDOM DISTRIBUTION. Women in Malawi are empowered to take control of their sexual and reproductive health with the distribution of female condoms at epicenter health centers.



WASH: WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE

Having increased access to clean water is crucial not only to decreasing disease, but also to empowering women. By reducing the distance women must go to fetch water they are thus allowed more time for their own financial or personal pursuits, improving the quality of life for entire families and communities. The Hunger Project works to empower rural communities to ensure increased access to clean water and improved sanitation, the development of new water resources, and the implementation of water conservation techniques.

BUILDING CAPACITY: Establishing water project boards made up of community leaders who are trained by experts on how to monitor, maintain and repair water systems; training people in the use and repair of water pumps and generators; and training a core of local leaders in water safety and purification so they can lead workshops throughout the community and expand grassroots knowledge.

DEVELOPING NEW SUSTAINABLE WATER SOURCES:

Empowering local communities to drill new wells and boreholes and repair existing ones; build and repair water towers; and construct water troughs for livestock.

ENSURING A RELIABLE SUPPLY OF CLEAN WATER:

Providing equipment and training for testing and pumping water; and lobbying local governments to devote public resources to water infrastructure projects.

PROMOTING IMPROVED SANITATION AND HYGIENE:

Empowering communities to build and repair latrines in homes, schools and public spaces; and leading awareness campaigns to promote proper hygiene practices.

IMPLEMENTING WATER CONSERVATION TECHNIQUES:

Mobilizing communities to initiate drip irrigation projects, which minimize the use of water and fertilizer by allowing water to drip slowly to the roots of plants, and to develop water catchment systems, which collect rainwater from a roof or other surface before it reaches the ground and store it for future use.

ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT AND YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

The Hunger Project takes a holistic approach to hunger, which means addressing its root causes – including poverty. We build the capacity of women, men and youth to move beyond poverty, training them in the skills, methods, knowledge and leadership needed to take self-reliant actions so they can meet their own basic needs, improve their communities and build better futures for themselves and their children.

MICROFINANCE PROGRAM: Nearly 75,000 people participate in this program of training, credit and savings – gaining access to affordable credit while working to strengthen their clout in the marketplace.

As part of the Microfinance Program, local volunteer loan committees gain government recognition and operate as a licensed saving and credit cooperative (SACCO) or Rural Bank. Owned entirely by community members, the Rural Bank then provides the entire epicenter community with sustainable access to savings and loan facilities. There are now 45 Rural Banks that have gained government recognition at our epicenters in Africa.

In the first half of 2014, participants deposited nearly \$3 million in savings in epicenter Rural Banks and revolving loan funds.

INCOME-GENERATION ACTIVITIES: Trained partners implement income-generating activities, often joining together in self-help groups. In 2014, 2,500 of our African partners participated in income-generating workshops to learn new and innovative methods of increasing household income.

ACCESS TO INPUTS, TRAININGS AND WARRANTAGE

PROGRAM: Through agricultural trainings and increased access to farming inputs, small farmers in communities are able to increase their crop yields, enabling them to grow enough food to feed their families, diversify their crops and even sell surpluses at market. The warrantage program allows farmers to not only contribute their share, but also to store their excess harvest in the epicenter food bank until market conditions shift. As a result, farmers can sell their produce for higher prices.

YOUTH: Specialized programs focus on community members aged 18-30 years old. Non-formal education includes topics such as financial autonomy, leadership, health and sexually transmitted diseases, and how to know and live one's values. Volunteer programs encourage youth to provide service to fellow community members and the elderly, such as re-roofing someone's home or supporting the physical care of a homebound person. Sports and leisure activities create a public space for youth outside of urban centers. Income-generation activities are promoted to support entrepreneurship and build capacity for money management.

GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP

The Hunger Project is a global movement of people working in authentic partnership for the sustainable end of hunger. Our partners in 17,000 communities worldwide — who put their own time, skills and available resources towards our programs — know that the broader funding of The Hunger Project does not come from a faceless institution, but through the partnership of committed Hunger Project investors. These investors are individuals, families, foundations, businesses and networks in the U.S. and our affiliates, known as Partner Countries, in Australia, Canada, Germany, Japan, The Netherlands, New Zealand, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom. In 2013, more than 10,600 individuals and 225+ institutions invested in The Hunger Project's work to empower people to end chronic hunger.

A primary principle of The Hunger Project's work is to leverage existing resources. We work with government and international agencies and other non-governmental organizations to support their programs in being effective; and we partner with local organizations to extend the reach of our programs. For example,

- In Ghana, we signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the **Ministry of Health** to improve and sustain the delivery of quality health services in epicenter communities by strengthening collaboration with the **Ghana Health Service** and integrating epicenter clinics into the community-based health planning and services operational system.
- In Ethiopia, The Hunger Project developed a partnership with the **Wurib District Education Office** to launch 12 literacy centers within the villages of Wurib Epicenter, with the District Office managing recruitment and training and providing the necessary materials. Wurib Epicenter's adult literacy program will support 600 adults in attending Functional Adult Literacy classes.
- In Malawi, in collaboration with the **National AIDS Commission**, The Hunger Project implemented a program to train HIV/AIDS animators on alcohol and drug abuse, as well as intergenerational sex as key factors related to the spread of HIV. They also launched an advocacy program to secure the commitment of partner organizations to improve the national supply of female condoms.
- In Uganda, The Hunger Project implemented a Global Climate Change Alliance Project in collaboration with the **United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)**. Twenty farmer field schools have been established in the villages of Kiboga Epicenter. The schools train farmers in crop and livestock production and management, soil and water conservation, and record keeping and marketing skills.



The Hunger Project orients its work around reinforcing local knowledge and skills such that communities and local governments own and have taken charge of their own development processes, and can therefore perpetuate, sustain and enhance the work begun in partnership with The Hunger Project. By stimulating community-led development, The Hunger Project fosters a unique culture of self-determination and economic viability in which the community itself is the driver of continued change.

A self-reliant epicenter does not necessarily have every single need fulfilled. Yet, these communities do have an increased ability and willingness to tackle development challenges and identify ways to have outstanding needs met thanks to the capacities built in partnership with The Hunger Project.

It is important to note the difference between the concepts of self-reliance and self-sufficiency. Self-sufficiency implies needing no outside help in satisfying one's basic needs. Epicenters are not self-sufficient. Whereas before these communities were largely isolated from public services, now they are managing effective links with district resources to build skills, develop additional infrastructure and increase access to services. The epicenter communities are active members of civil society and remain committed to the fulfillment of ongoing and future needs. They both give and take from their wider circles of contact.

Reflecting the integrated nature of epicenter-level interventions, the measure of community self-reliance depends on a variety of indicators that evaluate progress in all program areas. Therefore, The Hunger Project has identified a diverse set of indicators to measure both program outputs (the immediate results of each activity) and program outcomes (the changes in communities as a result of the interventions). In order to reach the stage of the Epicenter Strategy termed "self-reliance," a community must demonstrate sufficient (defined as meeting or exceeding the locally set target for each indicator) local capacity – skills, behaviors and knowledge – in each program area.

By gathering and analyzing data from epicenter communities, The Hunger Project with trained volunteers from within the community, can determine whether an epicenter is building and reinforcing the skills and behaviors that empower the community to lead their continued development. Additionally, as a learning organization, this information allows The Hunger Project to corroborate – or adjust – its Theory of Change as needed, ensuring that its understanding of how change is wrought adheres to the real experience of the epicenter communities.

When a community has reached self-reliance, The Hunger Project activates its exit strategy by scaling down its program activities as the community solidifies its own leadership and management. In general, following five years of frequent visits and trainings by Hunger Project staff, we estimate one year of intensive work to solidify the program implementation and two years of transition for an epicenter to reach a point of self-reliance.

"If The Hunger Project were to leave tomorrow, we would be OK."

– FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT,
Champiti Epicenter, Malawi

Data for the People by the People



As an organization grounded in grassroots advocacy and international development from the bottom up, The Hunger Project takes a different approach to monitoring and evaluation (M&E) that empowers participants in our programs as both collectors and consumers of data, through participatory monitoring and evaluation methods. The goal of our participatory M&E system is to recognize what works, what does not work, and why, and create a feedback loop that directly connects our project performance with community expectations and goals. The Hunger Project's Participatory M&E system is designed to:

- Support community partners with the information and tools required to identify needs, set priorities and track progress of community development projects;
- Promote organizational learning by enabling Hunger Project staff and partner organizations to continuously monitor and improve our programs;
- Promote accountability and transparency within the organization and among partners and investors; and
- Provide evidence needed to influence policymakers and other thought leaders to adopt The Hunger Project's proven approaches to our bottom-up, gender-focused development.

Participatory M&E is designed to recognize and include communities as important stakeholders in data collection and evaluation. It expands the notion of accountability to answer not only whether organizations are fulfilling the terms of the funding they receive, but also whether they are fulfilling the needs and goals of the communities they serve. Participatory M&E requires including community voices in monitoring and evaluation, and building the capacity of community members to become active partners in this process.

A woman with her arms crossed stands in front of a textured, brown wall. She is wearing a blue and red patterned headwrap and a matching short-sleeved top. A large, light green diamond-shaped mural is painted on the wall behind her to the right. The text of the staff profiles is overlaid on a semi-transparent brown box at the bottom of the image.

STAFF

IDRISSA DICKO, PHD, Vice President for Africa joined The Hunger Project in 1996 as Country Director for Burkina Faso and has been Vice President for Africa since 2010. He holds a BS in Agronomy coupled with an MS in Agricultural Plant Pathology, and a PhD in Agricultural Entomology, all from the University of Georgia in the United States. His research focused on identifying and solving issues involving food plant production and protection, relating to rural development. Prior to joining The Hunger Project, Dr. Dicko was a professor at the University of Ouagadougou in Burkina Faso, where he lectured for 15 years and held the position of administrative director of the Institute of Rural Development. In 2000, Dr. Dicko was awarded the Medal of the National Order, his country's highest honor.

TORY WATTS, MPA, Senior Program Officer, Africa Department joined the The Hunger Project in 2010 after obtaining her Master's of Public Administration at New York University's Wagner School of Public Service. After she started her career as a corporate paralegal in France, Tory's volunteering relationships soon led to her working with a variety of international NGOs in Europe, Africa and New York, including CARE International, Action Against Hunger, Doctors Without Borders and Malaria No More. Tory holds a BA in International Relations from Middlebury College.

ANATU BEN-LAWAL, Partnership Building and Resource Mobilization Officer, Africa Regional Office is a development practitioner and fundraiser with over 10 years' experience in development-related work for and with international development institutions, local government and NGOs at community, district and national levels as well as various major corporate entities. Anatu holds an MA in English and International Management from London Guildhall University, LLB law from the University of Nottingham and a BA in English and Modern History from Kings College London.

KRISTINA PARKINS, Program Associate, Africa Department joined The Hunger Project in 2014 after completing her Master of Public Health at the French School of Public Health (EHESP). Kristina has worked with foundations and academic institutions on maternal and child health issues. Kristina earned a BA in French Studies and Sociology at Emory University, during which she had the opportunity to study abroad for a semester in Dakar, Senegal.

JUDITH BONKOUNGOU, Program Assistant, Africa Regional Office joined The Hunger Project in 2015. Prior to joining The Hunger Project, she worked with USAID in their Burkina Faso office providing administrative and financial management, and with Kent State University's Human Resources Division and Fidexco on accounting support and translation. Judith earned a BA in Business Administration with a concentration in Business Management at Kent State University, Ohio.

GLOBAL BOARD OF DIRECTORS

STEVEN J. SHERWOOD

Chair
Chair, CWS Capital Partners LLC

ÅSA SKOGSTRÖM FELDT

(ex-officio)
President and CEO,
The Hunger Project

JOAQUIM ALBERTO CHISSANO

Former President,
Republic of Mozambique
1997 Africa Prize Laureate

CHARLES DEULL

Corporate Secretary
Executive Vice President,
Clark Transfer, Inc.

V. MOHINI GIRI

Former Chair, National
Commission for Women, India

SYEDA SAIYIDAIN HAMEED

Former Member, Planning Commis-
sion, Government of India

CARL-DIEDRIC HAMILTON

Chair, Audit Committee
Senior Advisor, Sweden

JOAN HOLMES

Founding President,
The Hunger Project

SHEREE S. STOMBERG

Chair, Governance,
Nominating and Human
Resources Committee
Global Head, Citi Shared Services

SPECIOSA WANDIRA

Former Vice President,
Republic of Uganda

QUEEN NOOR OF JORDAN[†]

JAVIER PEREZ DE CUELLAR[†]

Former Secretary-General,
United Nations

AMARTYA SEN[†]

Lamont University Professor,
Harvard University 1998
Nobel Laureate in Economics

M.S. SWAMINATHAN[†]

Chair Emeritus
Chair, M. S. Swaminathan
Research Foundation, India

[†]Honorary members

THE
HUNGER
PROJECT

The Hunger Project Global Office

5 Union Square West, 7th Floor
New York, NY 10003 USA
Phone: + 1 212 251 9100
Email: info@thp.org
Web: www.thp.org

The Hunger Project Africa Regional Office

01 BP 5653 Ouagadougou 01
2 ème étage, Parcelle 33 lot 02 Section
114 Secteur ZAD
BURKINA FASO
Phone: + 1 226 25 40 99 23