

Zero Hunger Private Sector Pledge – Q&A

Why was the pledge created?

The pledge was created to strengthen the private sector's contributions to ending hunger. Global hunger is rising unabated with up to 811 million hungry people in the world, according to a new UN report (The State of Food Insecurity and Nutrition in the World - SOFI 2021). That is one in ten of the global population.

Recent multi-institution studies like the groundbreaking [Ceres2030](#) report¹ identified that an additional **USD 33 billion** is needed in annual spending per year to reduce the number of people affected by hunger to under **170 million by 2030**.

The pledge is a game-changing solution that emerged from the UN Food Systems Summit Action Tracks in July 2021, which recognized that governments cannot eradicate hunger without the involvement of the private sector. It is supported by Agnes Kalibata, Special Envoy for the UNFSS; Professor Joachim Von Braun, Chair of the Science Group; and Peter Bakker, CEO of the World Business Council for Sustainable Development. It commits companies to better aligning their operations and investments with new evidence and the commitments made by donors, governments, and global institutions to end hunger by 2030.

Who are the implementing organizations?

The pledge is currently being coordinated out of Action Track 1 of the UNFSS (Ensuring Access to Safe and Nutritious Food for All). The implementing organizations are a coalition of international organizations, namely:

- [Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations](#)
- [World Food Programme](#)
- [Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition](#)
- New Partnership for Africa's Development | [Grow Africa](#)
- [Grow Asia](#)
- [World Benchmarking Alliance](#)
- [World Business Council for Sustainable Development](#)
- [International Institute for Sustainable Development](#)

¹ A research project of Cornwell University, the International Food Policy Research Institute, and the International Institute for Sustainable Development, supported by the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development of Germany and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

How does it actually work?

Companies have to do four things:

1. Make a financial commitment in at least one of the 10 high-impact intervention areas² identified by the new evidence, and in at least one of the priority countries or regions³.
2. Name the implementing organizations they wish to work with to achieve the action. This could include one of the pledge-implementing organizations (or other international or regional organisation, local, regional, or national government) or civil society organisation (CSO) that the company is working with.
3. Comply with host state laws and regulations, and commit to 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.
4. Agree to have the progress against their commitments tracked by the World Benchmarking Alliance and published publicly.

Any contribution to or cooperation with an implementing organization proposed by a company requires a written agreement which is conditional upon the formalization of all relevant conditions and the successful completion by the company of any due diligence requirements.

² Enabling participation in farmers' organisations; creating vocational programmes for rural youth; scaling up social protection programmes; investing in extension services in R&D programmes; intervening to support sustainable practices; supporting the adoption of climate-resilient crops; increasing research on water-scarce regions; improving the quantity and quality of livestock feed; reducing post-harvest losses by combining interventions; investing in the assistance needed to support SMEs

³ High-priority countries include: Chad, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Madagascar, Mozambique, South Sudan, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe. *See map in next question for further info.*

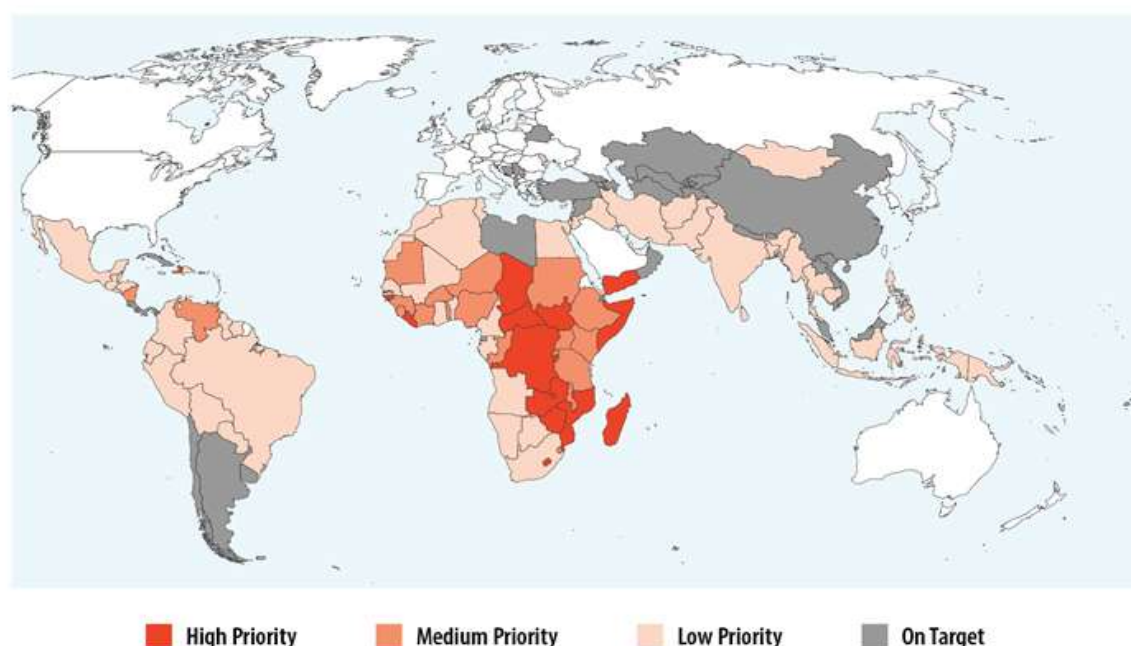
Where will the money be spent?

Money is pledged to at least one of the priority countries, as identified in the Ceres2030 report

Figure 1. Priority countries for donor investment

Africa will need the greatest level of support, followed by South Asia

Priority countries for donor investment based on their dependency on external resources until 2030



The pledge is a non-binding statement of the companies' proposed investment plans. It is not intended to create any legally enforceable rights or obligations on the company or its affiliates. After the pledge is signed, the company will work with implementing organizations to convert the pledge into specified terms for the proposed project and investment plans, and ultimately into a binding agreement, subject to the company undergoing applicable due diligence process and any other organizational requirements. Companies will make their financial commitment in at least one of the following 10 high-impact intervention areas based on the new evidence.

Table 1. Ceres2020 high-impact intervention areas for investment

Ceres2030 area for investment	Types of investment needed (evidence drawn from scientific reviews published in <i>Nature</i> & Computable general equilibrium (CGE) modelling)
Empower the Excluded	Enable participation in farmers organizations
	Investment in education, training, and vocational programs for rural youth
	Scale up social protection programs
On the Farm	Investment in extension services and research and development, especially for women
	Agricultural interventions and innovation to support sustainable practices
	Support adoption of climate-resilient crops
	Scale up farm-level interventions in water-scarce regions
	Improve quality and quantity of livestock feed for small and medium-scale commercial farms
Food on the Move	Reduce post-harvest loss by focusing beyond cereals on fruits and vegetables and other parts of the value chain
	Invest in infrastructure, regulations, technical assistance, and services to support SMEs in the value chain

Who will monitor that companies are honest in their pledges?

The **reporting and accountability requirements** for the pledge are rigorous. The company or investment fund commits to providing annual progress reports to the Pledging & Reporting Conference. Reporting includes information about implementation underway, challenges, investments made, and impact achieved. The reports will be based on existing best practice and reporting standards, such as the [CDP](#) Protocol and the Global Reporting Initiative's forthcoming Agriculture and Aquaculture Standard.

The World Benchmarking Alliance will monitor progress against the company's investment area as part of the broader benchmarking assessment of the Food and Agriculture Benchmark.

What is the long-term plan for the pledge?

A bi-annual Pledging & Reporting Conference will provide a regular opportunity for companies to pledge new commitments and showcase the results of the past pledges. The initiative will sunset in 2030.

Which financial commitments qualify for the pledge? Do they have to be new ones?

Financial commitments can come in the form of:

- Core business investments
- Subsidized contributions
- Cash contributions
- In-kind contributions

They need to focus on the three key areas identified in the Ceres2030 report:

- Empowering the excluded – giving marginalized populations and small producers the resources to learn and benefit from successful agricultural interventions
- Investing in food producers – encouraging more sustainable on-farm practices and interventions to improve environmental conditions
- Reducing losses and supporting SMEs – assisting small-scale producers and SMEs in increasing their productivity and income

See Table 1 for further information.

Commitments need to begin at the time the pledge is made.

When will we see the results, and how will they be communicated?

The pledge is being launched ahead of the UNFSS on September 21, 2021. A special media event will be held on that occasion on the sidelines of the summit. Companies will be able to continue pledging after the summit.

A bi-annual Pledging & Reporting Conference will then provide a regular opportunity for companies to pledge new commitments and showcase the results from past pledges. The initiative will sunset in 2030.

What is the level of commitment right now?

As of 20 September 2021, 42 companies have pledged a total of more than USD 345 million in 34 countries.

Which companies will not be accepted? How do you ensure compliance?

The pledge requires companies to comply with host state laws and regulations and commit to 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
- The International Code of Marketing of Breast Milk Substitutes
- The Principles of the UN Global Compact
- The UN Guiding Principles for Business and Human Rights

The pledge does not constitute a binding commitment nor a guaranteed partnership with any organization. Implementing organizations reserve the right to decide not to partner with a company at any point, including if the company does not comply with the governing principles of the pledge.

Any companies failing to comply with the above criteria and the pledge's overarching principles will be revoked or suspended from the process.

Can you provide an example of a corporate pledge and what it concretely entails?

The Zero Hunger Private Sector Pledge

Sample Pledge

Purpose of this private sector pledge

This pledge expresses our company's commitment to contribute to efforts to end hunger by 2030. Hunger was already increasing prior to the COVID crisis and is spiraling out of control. We recognize the role the private sector has to support other stakeholders in addressing this threat which affects all of us. We make this pledge in the context of the UN Food Systems Summit of 2021 and as a part of the Summit's Coalition of Action for Zero Hunger.

We will fulfil our pledge by converting it to a commitment to align our investments and business operations more clearly and strongly with new evidence on effective ways to achieve these goals (See [Ceres2030](#), [PARI 2020](#), [SOFI 2021](#)). We will support and build on public sector commitments in these areas, and partner with governments, donors, and global institutions to make evidence-based investments that contribute to food systems transformation.

Overarching principles

We will comply with applicable national laws and regulations and we will be guided by country priorities for hunger reduction as recorded in their official documents, including their food system pathways and national development priorities and strategies.

Through our business operations, we commit to uphold 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.

Coalitions and partnerships

We warmly welcome the Zero Hunger Coalition, presented as one of the emerging coalitions from the UN FSS process during the Pre-Summit, and will support the Coalition's efforts to achieve zero hunger. In addition, we urge development partners to provide appropriate technical and financial support to accelerate implementation of the Zero Hunger Coalition, with the goal of facilitating private investment.

We look forward to building long and mutually beneficial relationships with producers, governments, private sector actors, donors, and other players in the countries where we operate and invest. Accordingly, we are pleased to make this pledge and commit to working with partner organizations to convert this pledge into a commitment.

Lesson-learning and mutual accountability

We commit to reporting on our progress in implementing this pledge, including the resources allocated, and challenges encountered. The reports will be based on existing best practice and reporting standards, such as the CDP Protocol and the Global Reporting Initiative's forthcoming Agriculture and Aquaculture Standard. We support the Food and Agriculture Benchmark of the World Benchmarking Alliance (WBA) and will collaborate with the WBA to verify that our commitments have been fulfilled.

We commit to sharing the necessary information allowing WBA to monitor progress of our pledge against the company's investment area, as part of the broader assessment of the Food and Agriculture Benchmark. We also commit to ensuring that our investments include action on one or more relevant indicators to raise our overall score each year.

Nature of this pledge

This pledge is a non-binding statement of the company's proposed investments plans and is not intended to create any legally enforceable rights or obligations of the company or its affiliates.

Through this pledge, Sample Pledge commits USD 10000000 in the form of core business investment on the following portfolio of aligned investments:

Aligned Investments: Empower the Excluded

	Type of Investment	Country	Partner	Project Name	Financial Contribution
1	Enabling participation in farmer organizations	Global R&D	Not yet identified	NA	10,000,000

Implementing Partner(s)

Not yet identified

Sincerely yours,

For Sample Pledge:

Sample Pledge
NA
email@email.com

Signature



City, Tuesday, September 14, 2021