



Tackling Short- and Long-term Food and Nutrition Security Needs in East and Southern Africa

Findings from the CARE Learning Tour to Djibouti and Mozambique

August 17-23, 2015

From August 17-23, 2015, a delegation of U.S. Senate Agriculture Committee staffers, the Administrator from the U.S. Department of Agriculture and a technical expert from Global Child Nutrition Foundation, traveled to Djibouti and Mozambique to see how U.S. investments in food and nutrition security are providing short-term food assistance to those in need, while also building the capacity of smallholder farmers to sustainably produce enough nutritious food to feed their families and lift their communities out of poverty.

This two-country Learning Tour provided a stark contrast between the food insecure nation of Djibouti with arid land and rocky terrain, home to large refugee populations as well as poor pastoralist natives, compared to the agricultural potential of a lush Mozambique, brimming with opportunity to feed their population and much of the region while struggling to combat poverty and invest in long-term food secure communities. The visit to both countries highlighted some of the interventions needed at the regional, national and community level to build the resilience of smallholder farmers, particularly women, who are vulnerable to a range of risks and shocks deriving from factors over which they have little or no control, including volatile food prices, natural disasters, human conflict and high dependence on dwindling natural resources. Effective interventions that build farmers' capacity and enable them to participate as key partners in the solution to end hunger and improve agriculture systems are crucial to creating sustainable change.

► Day 1: Setting the Stage: Distributing Emergency Food Aid in the Region

After arriving in the capital city of Djibouti, the delegation was briefed by local technical experts on the development landscape in the country. Before touring the program sites, the delegates had the opportunity to learn about the political and historical context in which food aid is being delivered to Djibouti and East Africa. During this presentation, the delegation heard from Jacques Higgins, representative of the United Nations World Food Program (WFP); Dan Suther, regional food advisor for the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID); and Meritxell Relano, representative for the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

Later that afternoon, the delegation visited the Port of Djibouti, where they met with Magda Jukowiecka, logistics officer for WFP, who talked about the important role that the country plays as a regional hub for food aid delivery

Participants:

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and storage. The delegates also had the opportunity to meet port workers who discussed the types of emergency food aid and food commodities received and processed at the port. The group visited a food warehouse at the port and learned more about the arrival process of food aid into Djibouti. This warehouse, supported by USAID, provides dry, air-conditioned, chilled and frozen storage areas for emergency food aid commodities. Finally, the delegation heard from David Hanse, country director for Bahrain Maritime & Mercantile International (BMMI) Djibouti, a Food for Peace contractor, about the successes and challenges logistics organizations face in transporting food aid and ensuring it is efficiently delivered to those most in need of food assistance.



The delegation visits a USAID-supported warehouse at the Port of Djibouti, which provides dry, air-conditioned, chilled and frozen storage areas for emergency food aid commodities.

► Day 2: Exploring Food Aid Delivery in East Africa

On the second day of the trip, the delegation continued these conversations around food aid delivery with a visit to a food distribution center in southern Djibouti. The delegates heard from recipients of food aid commodities, many of whom were pastoralists, and learned how this emergency assistance provides benefits to families facing severe food insecurity and high malnutrition rates. Many Djiboutian citizens are severely food insecure due to the country's history of prolonged droughts and its limited natural resources, and distribution of food aid is challenging, as many rural pastoralists migrate frequently. The delegation had the opportunity to learn how food aid commodities from Djibouti are helping to alleviate chronic malnutrition, particularly for women and their families.



The delegates visit a food aid distribution center in Djibouti and meet with recipients of emergency food aid.

► Day 3: Exploring Local Solutions to Malnutrition

Next, the delegates boarded a flight to Nampula in northern Mozambique, where they gained a more nuanced understanding of the impact of food and nutrition security on smallholder farmers.

The delegates first stopped at an agronomy research center, the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA), to learn about the work being done at the national level to investigate and develop more sustainable agricultural practices. IITA works to create more sustainable agricultural inputs and to improve crop production and yields for smallholder farmers in Mozambique. The delegation toured the research fields and discussed some of the various farming techniques that have been developed for small-scale farmers in Mozambique, such as seed germination and increasing seed varieties. The group also heard from Dr. Steve Boahen, IITA's systems agronomist and country representative, who discussed some of the barriers smallholder farmers face, particularly women farmers, in accessing seed varieties, and what is being done to overcome them.

Following the visit to the agriculture research center, the delegation traveled to Angoche, a small fishing province off the coast of northern Mozambique, where they met up with a delegation of influential American chefs, also supported by CARE, who were learning more about global hunger to increase their own advocacy capacity around the issue. Together, they visited a farmer field school program supported by CARE and the World Wildlife Fund (WWF). This CARE-WWF Alliance program, *Primeiras e Segundas*, aims to improve food and nutrition security

for vulnerable populations, while also conserving and improving the fragile ecosystem of the Primeiras and Segundas Environmental Protection Area (PSEPA), where many communities depend on the area's marine and terrestrial resources. The program's intervention in agriculture on the coast is meant to increase food security by giving families more diverse food options, while also alleviating the overuse of marine resources by offering an alternative to relying solely on fishing.



The delegates hear from Dan Mullins, Director of Research, Learning and Advocacy for the Food and Nutrition Security Unit at CARE, who discussed some of the challenges smallholder farmers in Mozambique face in accessing seed varieties.

The delegates sat down with local farmers to learn about the various farming techniques they have learned from the school and how this has translated into increased agricultural production and nutritional yields on their own personal family farms.

One farmer, Faída Delfim, also known as “Mama Fala Fala”, is a 62-year-old mother of 12 children, who is widowed and currently lives with her granddaughter in Angoche. Faída uses the techniques she has learned at the farmer field school to improve productivity on her own two farms, where she grows cassava and beans. Faída shared with the group that utilizing these improved farming techniques on her own land have resulted in better food security for her and her granddaughter.

Later that evening, the congressional delegation and the chefs joined together for a dinner discussion, reflecting on their experiences in Djibouti and Mozambique and discussing ways to improve messaging to the American public on issues of food security to make them effective advocates and agents of social and

political change. They also talked about ways in which they could work together to gain additional influencers to improve food systems around the world.

► **Day 4: Linking Smallholder Farmers to Big Markets**

On the morning of the fourth day, the group visited a cashew processing factory that is supported by TechnoServe, a private U.S. company, to learn more about the work being done in Mozambique to help small-scale farmers access larger markets and link small businesses to international markets. The delegates met with the factory manager and technicians from the plant to learn how cashew production has created opportunities for rural Mozambican farmers to bring their products to larger markets and enhance their income potential.



The group meet with Faída Delfim, “Mama Fala Fala,” a program participant in the CARE-WWF Alliance farmer field school, who talked about the ways improved farming techniques have benefited her crop production.

The group then joined representatives from the U.S. mission at a lunch meeting to discuss the U.S. government's approach to food and nutrition security in Mozambique. John Irons, director of the Agriculture, Environment and Business Office at USAID Mozambique, described the ways in which the Feed the Future Initiative aligned with the Government of Mozambique's priorities, and complemented the efforts of other donors in-country. James Browder, a health, food security and linkages advisor for USAID Mozambique's Integrated Health Office, explained the challenges in treating chronic malnutrition in Mozambique, along with the U.S. government's multisectoral approach to addressing malnutrition. Almeida Zacarias, agricultural specialist at the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), briefed the

delegation on the Food for Progress program, which aims to help developing countries and emerging democracies modernize and strengthen their agricultural sectors. He also highlighted the involvement of the private sector in making progress on food and nutrition security in the country, and the U.S. government's efforts to revitalize poultry and dairy farming in Mozambique. Jake Walter, the country director for TechnoServe Mozambique, also joined the luncheon and discussed TechnoServe's work with the U.S. government and its work with the cashew and poultry industries.



Arlene Mitchell talks with a worker from a cashew processing plant in Mozambique, where she and the delegation learn about the ways smallholder producers are being linked to larger markets through private sector investment.

Later that afternoon, the delegation visited New Horizons, a chicken processing factory where representatives provided an overview of the benefits of empowering smallholder farmers to enter new markets, become independent and expand access to wider markets. After touring the factory, the delegation then visited a chicken farm owned by Vasco Meza, one of the participants in the New Horizons program. Vasco shared his experience as a participant in the program and the impact it has had on his income and his family's livelihood.

► Day 5: Taking Action Back Home

On the last day of the Learning Tour, the delegation participated in a roundtable briefing with donors and partners from WFP, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the European Union. During this meeting, the delegates learned how international donors are approaching the issues of nutrition, food production and access to finances for smallholder farmers. The group also learned

how investments are empowering the government of Mozambique's capacity to respond to food security challenges by strengthening extension services for small-scale farmers, and how donors are working to build the government's capacity to respond to recurrent drought emergencies and increasing food prices through targeted relief and recovery interventions. The donors also discussed how these investments have resulted in more effective management of natural resources through the development and implementation of national agriculture policy.

Conclusion

In both Djibouti and Mozambique, and across much of sub-Saharan Africa, integrated solutions to food and nutrition security will be critical for addressing the various underlying problems effecting undernourished and food insecure populations. Programs such as the farmer field school visited in Angoche, Mozambique have not only helped local farmers increase their agricultural output, but have also equipped these producers with the skills necessary to achieve greater incomes and access to nutritious foods that can reduce malnutrition and result in healthier families for generations to come. This progress can be sustained and strengthened with a renewed U.S. commitment to global food and nutrition security.

Policy Recommendations

Support Smart Foreign Assistance

U.S. foreign assistance is critical to building a stable and secure world. U.S.-funded programs produce real change in the lives of children and families living in extreme poverty and it saves lives during crises. By emphasizing self-reliance and sustainability, U.S. foreign assistance helps people help themselves. One of the most important things the U.S. can do to fight global poverty is devote sufficient resources to these programs and ensure the U.S. is coordinated and effective in its response. The International Affairs budget is just 1 percent of the total federal budget, and yet it helps to feed millions, reduce mortality for women and children, and enables the U.S. to respond to humanitarian crises like the conflict in Syria or the Ebola epidemic in West Africa. While we recognize the significance of this difficult budget climate, CARE advocates for the U.S. to leverage its resources, coordinate its response, and strengthen its support for the International Affairs budget and programming.

Support Long-Term Food Security

CARE advocates for U.S. food and nutrition security programs to adopt a comprehensive and coordinated approach that addresses all aspects of hunger and malnutrition. Food-insecure households often struggle to grow or buy enough nutritious food because of poor soil quality, small plots of land, water scarcity, and/or low incomes. Often, they have no access to a variety of nutritious food and face increasingly unpredictable weather patterns. Women are particularly constrained, given their unequal access to financial, information and economic resources. Food and nutrition security programs must enable vulnerable families to increase their agricultural productivity and incomes, protect natural resources, increase their resilience, and diversify their livelihoods. Programs also must integrate nutrition. CARE advocates for support of bipartisan legislation, such as the Global Food Security Act (H.R. 1567/S. 1525) that calls for a comprehensive food and nutrition security strategy, increased program effectiveness and coordination among existing programs, and sustainability that ensures continuity of these programs.

Modernizing U.S. International Food Aid

CARE advocates for U.S. International Food Aid programs, which address urgent hunger and crises, to be more flexible, effective and efficient in order to ensure taxpayer dollars reach more people and communities can better recover, adapt and thrive. Traditionally, the U.S. has shipped food from the U.S. to developing countries, but this legally mandated

process can be expensive and slow. Crises are complicated and we need flexibility to respond with the right tools. Sometimes, shipping food from the U.S. is the best option, and sometimes it is not. When the U.S. can purchase food closer to a crisis more people can be reached an average of two months faster than aid sent from the U.S. Local purchase—whether by an organization for distribution or by vulnerable households with cash or vouchers in a local market—also supports local economies and small-scale food producers. Simply put, it's faster, cheaper, and sets communities up for long-term recovery and food security.

CARE also advocates reducing the burden of *cargo preference* and end *monetization* requirements. *Cargo preference* requires that at least 50 percent of all food aid be shipped on U.S. flagships, which cost approximately 2.7 times more than the average global shipping rate. This high-cost requirement diverts as much as 30 cents of every food aid dollar to pay for transportation, not food. *Monetization* is a practice where U.S.-grown food commodities are purchased from American farmers, shipped abroad, and then sold at a loss in a developing country in order to provide cash for poverty-fighting programs. Research shows that monetization can result in losing up to 30 cents of every dollar. Monetization not only costs taxpayer money, but also it undermines smallholder farmers by forcing them to compete with imported U.S. grain being sold at below-market value. Modernizing the U.S. food aid system is a solution for today and critical for the success of tomorrow.

We are deeply grateful to the many people who generously gave of their time to make this visit to Djibouti and Mozambique a success. CARE specifically thanks the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation for its generous financial support of the Learning Tours.

If you are interested in learning more about CARE's Learning Tours program, please contact:

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