

JOINT NGO STATEMENT for the High-Level Event: “Action in Support of Preventing and Ending Famine Now” October 4th, 2021

As NGOs that work directly with vulnerable people at the last mile, we are deeply concerned at the sharp spike in global hunger and malnutrition – driven by a deadly mix of conflict, climate change, and the economic impacts of COVID-19.

Most pressing are the 41 million people in a hunger emergency, including the 584,000 girls, boys, women, and men experiencing catastrophic levels of hunger--a 300% increase in six months.

Inaction has real-life consequences for millions of people. A child too hungry to learn, a woman who forgoes meals so her children can eat, a refugee whose rations are cut in half, a girl forced into marriage to reduce the number of family members to feed.

Failure to act means widespread protection risks and unbearable human suffering.

We cannot let this happen again. The 2011 Somalia famine taught us we cannot wait for an official famine declaration to act. Half of the 260,000 deaths in Somalia occurred before famine was declared; and half of the dead were children under five.

Colleagues, the NGOs endorsing this statement are clear: words alone nourish nobody.

We urgently need \$6.6 billion in frontloaded, flexible, and unearmarked funding and it must reach vulnerable people now. We also urgently need your support for the ERC’s calls to improve humanitarian access.

While lifesaving needs must take priority, we must work together to end hunger crises forever. We call on Member States and the UN to work with us to speed up response to early warnings. This means driving system-wide changes that prioritise anticipatory action and disaster risk reduction to prevent crisis from slipping into famine.

The vast majority of people facing famine were already living in fragile contexts where humanitarian access is constrained, and violations of International Humanitarian and Human Rights law are rife. We must redouble our collective diplomatic, political, and legal efforts to guarantee unimpeded humanitarian access, stop the use of hunger as a weapon of war in line with Resolution 2417 and secure peace.

Thank you.

Action against Hunger

CAFOD

CARE International

Christian Aid

Concern Worldwide

International Rescue Committee

Islamic Relief Worldwide

Mercy Corps

Plan International

Save the Children

The Lutheran World Federation (LWF)

Titi Foundation

World Vision International