



PRESIDENTS UNITED TO SOLVE HUNGER

The Power of Collective Action

More than 30 university leaders gathered in February 2014 to consider how the teaching, research, outreach, and student engagement activities of their respective institutions could make a united contribution to the global effort towards eliminating hunger in the world. Hosted by Auburn's Hunger Solutions Institute, in partnership with the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU) and the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the meeting led to a consensus statement called the Presidents' Commitment to Food and Nutrition Security.

Building Momentum

After a launch in the historic ECOSOC Chamber at the United Nations in December 2014, and an operational meeting in Washington DC in June 2015, this commitment has now been signed by more than 80 university presidents from 5 continents. The Commitment Statement includes an Action Plan, outlining activities where universities can work collectively to share knowledge, information and best practices in the areas of:

Teaching – curriculum courses related to addressing hunger and malnutrition

Research – discovery and innovation in these critical areas

Outreach – extension of university activities off-campus to improve lives locally and globally

Student engagement – launching and supporting groups that increase student awareness, support advocacy, and mobilize action

Future Goals and Plans

The primary goal is to increase the impact of universities in the multi-sector community by identifying and promoting collective opportunities. Activities already underway include:

1. Creating critical mass – Recruitment of signatories of the Presidents' Commitment to Food and Nutrition Security has gained momentum since the document was created in late 2014. Nearly 90 universities in 5 continents have signed the Commitment. This includes public large land grants, small private liberal arts colleges, traditionally black universities, faith-based institutions and community colleges.

2. PUSH Points – To expedite communications and initiate activities on each campus, each president has been asked to assign a senior leader to be the PUSH Point at their campus.

3. Sharing best practices – University presidents and representatives gathered in February 2016 to discuss ideas and opportunities to accelerate the fight against hunger on their campuses. We plan to launch an inventory and mapping to better identify opportunities for collaboration and collective action.