

WhyHunger's Theory of Social Change

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WhyHunger envisions: resilient, powerful and unified networks and alliances of grassroots leaders and communities working at the intersection of the root causes of hunger and poverty to build and strengthen social movements worldwide. These movements will transform our food system into one that is socially and economically just, nourishes whole communities, and ensures the rights of all people to food, land, water and sustainable livelihoods.

We believe that:

- Grassroots support organizations can act as allies and learning partners when they build towards a shared vision with grassroots partners rooted in trust and solidarity, remain open and flexible to shifting contexts and priorities in the field, are consistently transparent with grassroots partners regarding organizational assets and challenges, demonstrate a commitment to long-term engagement, and invest in their own anti-oppression learning and practices.
- Relationship building is at the heart of movement building and requires times, resources, structure and flexibility. Work grounded in a relationship-based approach is critical to allowing project-based work to evolve and change in order to reflect the realities and priorities of the grassroots.
- Grassroots support organizations, when acting as allies and learning partners, can help strengthen movements.
- Social movements must be led by grassroots leaders and communities anchored in their realities of oppression and injustice in the food system.
- Shared learning builds shared leadership and the capacity required for strong and resilient communities and facilitates authentic participation in movement building.
- Charity will not end chronic food insecurity; addressing the broader social problems and policies perpetuating hunger and poverty will.
- Food justice is the demand for dignity, respect, rights and equity at all points of the food system.
- Food Sovereignty is the right of all peoples everywhere to determine their own food and agriculture policies; it is the democratization of access to the resources needed for food production; it requires dismantling corporate control of the food system.

To realize these values and beliefs, we approach our work in the following ways:

- We support grassroots organizations, leaders and networks through capacity building, resource mobilization and sharing, technical support, information sharing, alliance building, and advocacy in order to strengthen a cadre of grassroots leaders that are investing directly and creatively in their local communities while simultaneously participating in/building a national food justice movement.
- We partner with community-based organizations and social movements domestically and globally through authentic relationship building and accompaniment to reinforce and enhance their capacity to create the change they want to see in their communities and the broader society.

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WhyHunger is a leader in building the movement to end hunger and poverty by connecting people to nutritious, affordable food and by supporting grassroots solutions that inspire self-reliance and community empowerment.

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- We invest in community-based organizations, grassroots leaders, long-term community-based collaborative projects and social movements through community learning projects, linkage agreements, sharing financial resources, and participating in and building national alliances in order to:
 - contribute to the groundswell of emergency food providers that source, prepare and distribute healthy and nutritious food to their clients, thereby improving health outcomes.
 - support food banks, food pantries and soup kitchens to shift from a charitable response to hunger to a systems-change response rooted in social justice.
 - build power that strengthens the impact of the food justice movement for systemic transformation and collective liberation.
 - strengthen the capacity of social movements in the Global South to support communities in developing collective agroecological practices, educating and organizing with each other, and advocating for themselves.
- We create opportunities for international solidarity between grassroots leaders and organizations in the Global South and the United States through learning exchanges in order to promote agroecology as a means to replace industrial agriculture, change social relations and strengthen local organizing and leadership.
- We amplify voices of grassroots organizations and social movements by connecting and mobilizing the resources of artists, funders, and other NGOs in direct support of and in solidarity with our partners to contribute to the groundswell of organizations, communities, and funders invested in community-based food justice and food sovereignty around the nation and in the Global South.
- We engage in financial, administrative, and organizational development practices internally rooted in a critical anti-oppression analysis reflective of our values and practices of allyship, accompaniment and shared learning in the field in order to stay accountable to the grassroots organizations we support and effectively shift power as experienced by staff within the organization.