

A photograph of a woman with dark hair, wearing a white t-shirt and a patterned skirt, holding a baby in a pink shirt and orange pants. A young girl with dark hair, wearing a blue shirt, is looking up at the camera with a joyful expression. The background shows a simple building with a corrugated metal roof and a blue door.

LEADER'S GUIDE

# FIRST STEPS

MATERNAL  
AND CHILD  
HEALTH



THE LORD MAKES FIRM  
THE STEPS OF THE ONE  
WHO DELIGHTS IN HIM

PSALM 37:23

 **World  
Renew**  
LIVING JUSTICE • LOVING MERCY • SERVING CHRIST

**FREE A  
FAMILY**





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*Note: This Leader's Guide and other resources are also available for download as PDFs on World Renew's website at [worldrenew.net/churchresources](http://worldrenew.net/churchresources).*

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## Introduction: First Steps

Welcome to the 2016-17 Maternal and Child Health Sunday campaign from World Renew!

This year, your church is joining World Renew in supporting families in the world's poorest places as they improve their health and overcome poverty for the long-term. The theme is "First Steps," which highlights to the nutritional importance of a child's early days of development.

**A child's first milestones provide a critical clue to how he will fare for the rest of his life.**

In many communities of our world, poor access to nutritious food, nutrition education, and adequate health care place both pregnant mothers and young children at risk of serious, even fatal health complications. Lack of proper nutrition in a child's first 1,000 days of development can place him or her at risk of death, or else lead to stunted growth, disease or other life-long health problems.

**Maternal and Child Health Sunday is a powerful and interactive way for your church to help break this cycle of poverty and poor health.** Psalm 37:23 reminds us that: The Lord makes firm the steps of the one who delights in him. As your church supports and celebrates families taking steps out of poverty, you do so rooted in the power of a God who guides, strengthens, and gives delight to his children. You are making it possible for families to take action to change their situation for the better — steps that may, at first seem small to them, but that have a huge impact on giving them healthier, more secure lives.

**Through community programs in agriculture, health, nutrition, and literacy, World Renew's Free A Family® program is equipping families to take their first steps out of poverty and improve health for their children.** As you and your church lead a Maternal and Child Health Sunday, you will learn and pray about issues that contribute to the dangers facing pregnant women, babies, and young children. You will also empower families and entire communities by supporting World Renew's Free A Family® program, and by advocating on behalf of mothers and children in need. **These are steps that can truly transform lives for families searching for a new way forward.**

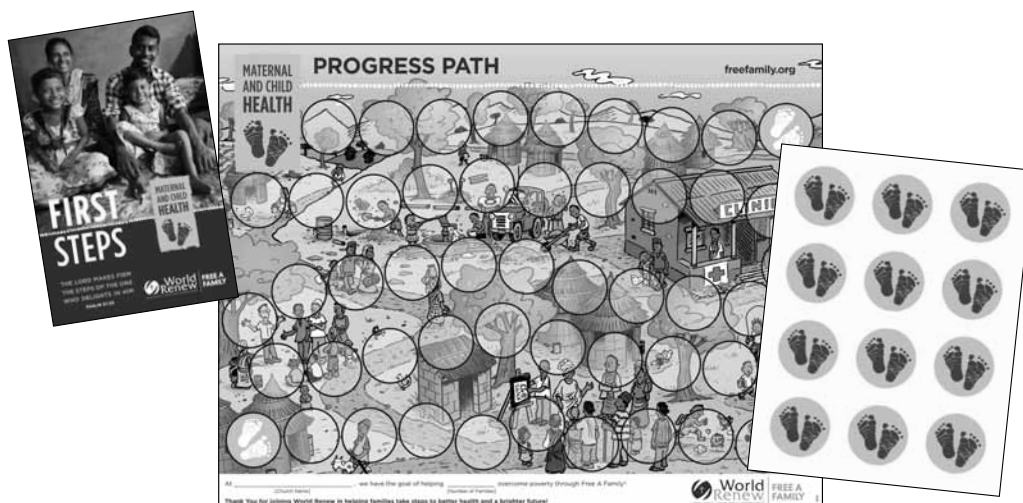
The following Leader's Guide includes all the resources you need to present the Maternal and Child Health Sunday campaign and the **Free A Family® program** to your congregation. Bulletin announcements and leader's instructions are also included to help you promote Maternal and Child Health Sunday in the weeks leading up to your event.

**This year, we have the Maternal and Child Health campaign activities spread over two Sundays (more details on Page 5).**

- **The first Sunday (Week 1)** — your church will learn about World Renew's Free A Family® program and take home a bulletin handout that includes a story and sign up form to join Free A Family® as a monthly supporter. As you, the leader, prepare for this service, please use the litany and scripture notes included in this booklet to help your church prepare to pray for and reflect on the needs of mothers and children in places of poverty.
- **The following Sunday (Week 2)** — your church will hold on offering for World Renew's Free A Family® program and learn about advocacy opportunities to raise support for families in need. Families in your church also have the chance to submit their sign-up forms to pledge a monthly gift to Free A Family®. To help you track your church's involvement, we've included a poster with footprint stickers to demonstrate the number of families who are overcoming poverty thanks to your support!

While we recommend that you hold your Maternal and Child Health Sunday campaign on May 15 (Week 1) and May 22 (Week 2), the materials are written in such a way that they can be used at any time throughout the year, should your church need to schedule it for an alternate time.

**Bulletin handouts, Posters, and Stickers are all available FREE OF CHARGE.** To place an order call 1-800-333-8300 or visit [worldrenew.net/order](http://worldrenew.net/order). You may also visit [freefamily.org](http://freefamily.org) for additional resources that might be of value to you as you prepare for the Maternal and Child Health campaign. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact World Renew at 1-800-552-7972 (US) or 1-800-730-3490 (Canada).





## Fast Facts about Maternal and Child Nutrition

How does nutrition impact health for mothers and their young children? These fast facts about maternal and child health, provided by Bread for the World (a US-based, Christian, anti-hunger organization), will help you present the urgency of this issue to your congregation. Source: [breadfortheworld.org](http://breadfortheworld.org)

- Ending hunger around the world is not just about providing people with enough food—the calories. It's also about **providing the right nutrients.**
- Globally, **165 million children** are stunted and will not have the chance to achieve their full potential because of poor nutrition early in life.
- Nearly **3 million childhood deaths** each year are the result from malnutrition.
- Addressing **the 1,000 days between a woman's pregnancy and her child's second birthday** is crucial in preventing childhood deaths. The right nutrition during this period can ensure healthy body and brain development, stronger immune systems, more years of education, and a higher lifetime earning potential for millions of children.
- Studies show that children who get proper nutrition **before their second birthday:**
  - are 10 times more likely to **overcome the most life-threatening childhood diseases**
  - complete 4.6 **more grades of school**
  - go on to earn **21 percent more in wages as adults.**
- Children who get proper nutrition before their second birthday are also more likely to have healthier families, **breaking the generational cycle of malnutrition.**
- Recent analysis has also shown that for every \$1 invested in improving nutrition in a country, **\$16 is returned to the economy there.**
- Ending malnutrition stretches beyond improving access to and availability of nutritious foods. It also involves other development areas including **agriculture, education, health, social protection, water, sanitation, hygiene, and women's empowerment.**





# Planning Your Maternal and Child Health Campaign: Week 1 & Week 2

## Learn and Pray: Week 1 of Maternal and Child Health Sunday

*(Recommended Date: Sunday, May 15, 2016)*

On the **first Sunday** of the Maternal and Child Health campaign, your congregation has the opportunity to learn about how World Renew is helping improve the health of mothers and children **through the Free A Family® program**. Your church will:

- Receive a bulletin handout that has the short, powerful story of young Mohona and her family in Bangladesh. This family is experiencing new hope and strength **as a result of World Renew's Free A Family® program!**
- Take home this bulletin handout, which includes **a form that allows church members to sign up as monthly supporters of World Renew's Free A Family® program**. This gives them the week to think and pray about signing up to give monthly to **Free A Family®**. People can then bring it back to church the following Sunday (Week 2 of the campaign) and give it to a deacon/church leader to **sign up or request more information** from World Renew. If they prefer, they can also sign up online at the web address provided in the bulletin handout, or mail their form in directly (but be sure to tell their deacon they did so, to help the church keep track of **Free A Family®** families being helped). **Joining Free A Family® is a practical, powerful way to help families overcome poverty!**
- Learn about **a special poster and sticker activity** that World Renew has designed to help churches track how many families their congregation is helping through Free A Family®.
- Use **worship service materials from this Leader's Guide to pray for and support mothers in children** in places of poverty (such as the litany and scripture notes).

## Give and Advocate: Week 2 of Maternal and Child Health Sunday

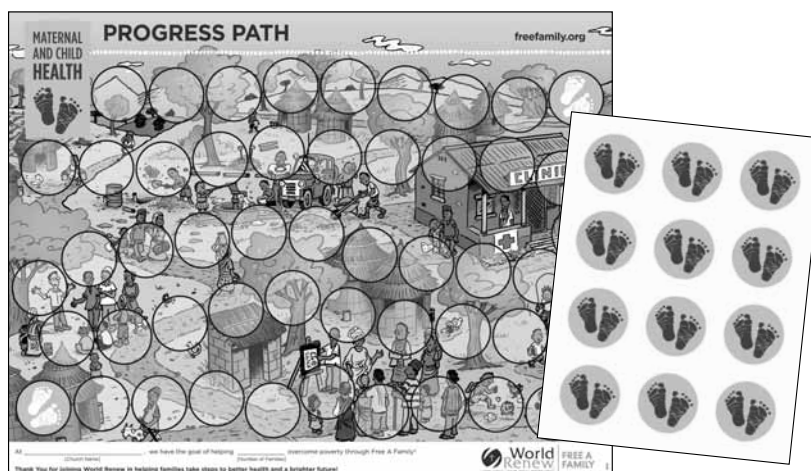
(Recommended Date: Sunday, May 22, 2016)

On the **second Sunday** of the Maternal and Child Health campaign, your congregation has the opportunity to support mothers and children in need and to learn how to advocate in the face of global hunger. Your church will:

- **Hold an offering for World Renew's Free A Family® program** during your church service as an way to use your gifts to bless others. Families in the congregation who have prayerfully decided to support Free a Family® can put their completed forms in the offering plate or have them collected by leaders. **Others can make a one-time donation during the offering.**

**Note:** The completed bulletin forms can also be used to request more information from World Renew, or to let World Renew know **if someone is already supporting Free A Family®.**

- Track how many families are on the path to better health thanks to your church's support. with the poster and footprint stickers. Once church leaders have collected the Free A Family® forms, they can take time after the service to **count up the families and add the footprint stickers to that poster.** It's a great way to visualize the number of lives being changed!
- Learn about **advocacy opportunities** to help mothers, young children, and entire families overcome poverty and hunger for the long-term. **A take-home sheet about advocacy opportunities such as writing letters to government letters and social media advocacy can be distributed** to church members.







## Bulletin Announcements

Here are a few announcements that you can use in your church bulletin to promote your two-week Maternal and Child Health Sunday campaign. Recommended Sunday dates are May 17 (Week 1 of MNCH Sunday) and May 22 (Week 2 of MNCH Sunday).

### **One week before Week 1 of the Maternal and Child Health Sunday campaign**

Next Sunday [Date] we'll begin learning about mothers and children around the world. In some of the world's poorest places, children are at risk of stunted growth, disease, and even death due to poor nutrition in the first 1,000 days of their life. You can help equip pregnant women and their families to improve their health and overcome poverty through Word Renew's Free A Family® program. Find out more at [freefamily.org](http://freefamily.org) and then join us on [Date] for Maternal and Child Health Sunday to pray for and support parents and children in need.

### **On Week 1 of Maternal and Child Health Sunday campaign**

Today, you will receive a Maternal and Child Health Sunday handout to take home. Please read it over and prayerfully consider joining others in our congregation in supporting families through the Free A Family® program. Our church has a goal of helping \_\_\_\_\_ families. In many developing countries, those least likely to receive adequate health care are poor women and children. As a result, pregnant women and their young children are vulnerable to complicated, even fatal health risks. When you support World Renew's Free A Family® program, you are investing in community-based health promotion, education and nutrition programs that improve health for the entire family for the long-term. If you'd like to join Free A Family® or already a supporter, please complete the form on the handout and put it in the offering plate next week. For more information about Free A Family®, visit [freefamily.org](http://freefamily.org).

### **On Week 2 of Maternal and Child Health Sunday campaign**

Today's offering is for World Renew's Free A Family® program. Your participation in the Free A Family® program will help men, women and children around the world improve their lives in lasting ways. Through church-based programs, they will learn about agriculture, health, nutrition, and literacy. Please put your completed forms in the offering plate or make a one-time donation to help families in need. For more information on helping parents take critical first steps out of poverty and improve health for their children, visit [freefamily.org](http://freefamily.org).

### **One week later**

Thank you for generously supporting World Renew programs that help mothers, young children, and entire families take steps to overcome poverty by participating in the Maternal and Child Health Sunday campaign. Our church raised \$\_\_\_\_\_ for World Renew's Free A Family® ministry through our offering. Through monthly gifts to Free A Family®, our congregation is also helping \_\_\_\_\_ families overcome poverty and improve their health. For additional information about World Renew, please visit [worldrenew.net](http://worldrenew.net).



## A Maternal and Child Health Litany

*Note: this litany is also available to download as a PDF or as a Powerpoint presentation at [worldrenew.net/churchresources](http://worldrenew.net/churchresources)*

*Reader 1: Our human lives are full of milestones and occasions to celebrate—from a child's precious first steps, to the entrance into adolescence, to the years of adulthood beyond—*

*Reader 2: From achievements in school to accomplishments at work and in the home. Our God is with us at every stage to guide us as we learn and change.*

**People: For your faithfulness, Father, we praise you!**

*Reader 1: In poor communities in our world, many families do not have the nutritious food, education, and proper health care they need to survive and thrive.*

*Reader 2: These men, women, and children have hopes and dreams and skills, but poverty has unjustly cut them off from what they need to build a healthy, strong future.*

**People: For our neglect of families in need, Father, forgive us.**

*Reader 1: In our world's poorest places, many pregnant mothers do not have nutritious food to eat or access to health care—*

*Reader 2: And many babies suffer from poor nutrition that places them at risk of early death or life-long health problems.*

**People: For our neglect of families in need, Father, forgive us.**


*Reader 1: When we ignore the suffering of pregnant mothers, young children, and parents struggling to survive . . .*

**People: Please forgive us.**

*Reader 2: When we forget to seek out ways to use what you have given us to bless others...*

**People: Please forgive us.**

*Reader 1: We praise you for the stories of parents in the poorest places who are taking steps to break free from poverty . . .*



Reader 2: Through community programs that help them learn health practices and other life-skills so they can provide better for themselves and for their children.

**People: For your faithfulness, Father, we praise you!**

*Reader 1: We praise you for working in us, cultivating generous hearts and a greater understanding of challenges facing our brothers and sisters around the world.*

**People: For your faithfulness, Father, we praise you!**

Reader 2: We praise you because we know that you are at work everywhere, including places of crushing poverty, to inspire hope and awaken potential.

**People: For your faithfulness, Father, we praise you!**

*Reader 1: Psalm 37:23 tells us that "The Lord makes firm the steps of the one who delights in him." We thank you Father, for your guidance.*

Reader 2: We also thank you for gift of delight, which we can see in the smile of a parent and the laughter of a child!

*Reader 1: We pray that you will continue to work in us and through us as we build your kingdom.*

**People: Glory be to God! Amen.**



## Scripture Notes

Planning a message for your Maternal and Child Health campaign? Scripture has a lot to say about people stepping out in faith and experiencing God's faithfulness along the way. Here are some bible verses and a story from scripture to consider for pastors or other leaders preparing a sermon or brief message that ties to the theme of helping families overcome poverty.

### A Story of Trusting in God's Provision

*Elijah and the Widow at Zarephath — 1 Kings 17:7-16*

When the prophet Elijah meets a widow in Zarephath, the land is dried up due to a lack of rain. Like so many families in the world today, this widow and her family are thrown into a food crisis by disaster.

Elijah does not come to this woman's town by accident; he has been called there by God who told him: "Go at once to Zarephath in the region of Sidon and stay there. I have directed a widow there to supply you with food."

Elijah finds the widow at the town gate gathering sticks, and asks her to bring him water to drink and bread to eat. In a time of food shortage, this is, of course, a request that she cannot fulfill. But Elijah follows God's orders and asks her anyway.

The widow's response is important to pay attention to. Does she grow angry with Elijah for his request or treat him unkindly? No. She tells him of the terrible situation that she is in, and does so in a way that acknowledges him as a servant of a living God.


"As surely as the Lord your God lives," she says, "I don't have any bread—only a handful of flour in a jar and a little olive oil in a jug. I am gathering a few sticks to take home and make a meal for myself and my son, that we may eat it—and die."

This widow's words also reveal that she is a single mother faced with the heartbreaking reality of not having food for her young child. It is a burden that every parent dreads. She is left collecting *sticks* to bring home. Her situation brings to mind the many parents of today suffering from economic hardship. These parents may not know where their next meal will come from, either—or if it will come at all.

The widow has so little that surely so no one would judge her for refusing to share what she has with Elijah. Some might even tell her she would be better off keeping what she has for herself.

Yet she does not withhold. Instead, she gives of what she has.

This widow at Zarephath follows Elijah's instructions to go home and bake a loaf of bread for herself, her son, and also a loaf to bring to him. She has but a handful of flour and a measly



portion of oil, but Elijah promises her that she will not run out of the resources she needs until the rain again returns. She faithfully follows the directions she has been given.

The Lord's promise of abundance in a time of scarcity comes true. There is food enough every day for the widow, her son, and even for Elijah. One moment, she is sure that both she and her son are going to die of hunger. The next moment, her cupboard is full of nourishing food. Her remarkable step of faith takes her on a path of new fruitfulness.

This story demonstrates God's great provision. Even when we are dealing with economic hardship, poor health, or crushing poverty, He is there to lead us and calling us to continue to trust him. Even when the world is telling us to keep what we have to ourselves—to focus only on the bills we have to pay or the contents of our own wallets—he is there calling on us to live in the way of generosity.

For some families in poverty, it may be a huge step of faith to sign up for a literacy training class or attend training in health and nutrition. Their time and energy is very valuable, and they are trying to use every second they can to provide for their family. They may not know the exact outcome of the new skills and practices they are learning, but they are trusting that this is a step in the right direction. They are taking action to help put more nutritious food on the table, to ensure that women have safer pregnancies, and to help give their children the best chance at a good start to life.

Like these families, and like the widow in Zarephath, we are all called to trust in the provision of God. He will multiply our gifts so that they not only meet our needs, but also help others have healthier and more joyful lives.

## **Additional Bible Stories about Steps of Faith**

- God tells Moses to walk — *Exodus 3*
- Esther reveals Haman's plot to destroy her and her people to the King. — *book of Esther*
- Nathan the prophet speaking truth to David, taking the first step of being brave to tell David what he's done is wrong — *2 Samuel*
- James and John immediately come to Jesus when he calls — *Matthew 4:21-22*
- Woman with the alabaster jar of perfume, pouring it on Jesus — *Luke 7:36-50*
- Jesus bringing the paralyzed man through the roof for healing (talk about a serious first step!) — *Mark 2:1-12*
- Nehemiah going to the city of Judah to restore the city; he was afraid of the King and what he might say but took the first step of trusting God — *Nehemiah 2:1-6 (and other passages in the book of Nehemiah)*



## Take the Step: Join the Free A Family® Program

Looking for tips as you share the opportunity to support Free A Family® with your church? Here are the basics about this great way to help more of God's children overcome poverty.

- **A Free A Family gift of just \$22 a month** can be multiplied to create a lifetime of change for a family in need through nutrition and sanitation training, growth monitoring for young children, adult literacy training, agricultural training, and small business loans. The end result for all participants is **nutritious food, clean water, improved health, and increased income.**
- Not only does supporting Free A Family® help families break free from poverty and live a life of renewed hope in Christ, it does so in **an amazingly efficient way.**
- Through the use of **representative families**, the Free A Family® program keeps administrative costs low. This means that **more of your money can be used to help people in need.** What's more, since the Free A Family is carried out in partnership with the local church, **the witness of Christ's love is also strengthened.**
- When a family in your church signs up for Free A Family®, **the family will receive four updates each year about a family that World Renew is working with in the region** they selected. This means families can celebrate the life-changing impact their gift brings each month.

### A Free A Family® Story

Marta Mejia Avila in Honduras is a great example of how Free A Family®, works. Marta and her husband, Roberto Antonio have seven young children in the community of El Burillo in Honduras. In 2015, they welcomed their youngest member of the family — a healthy baby boy! They share a small house constructed from a mixture of mud, sticks, and clay-like tile. Their village is without electricity, running water, or a health centre, which can make life difficult at times.

Like everyone else in their community, the Mejia Avila family's income and livelihood revolves around agriculture. The main crops are corn and sorghum. During the summer, the whole the family also works together to make hammocks which Roberto Antonio sells in the nearest town.

Through Free A Family®, Marta and her family have received training in agriculture, nutrition, health, and sanitation. Marta then took extra training to become a community health promoter. Each month, Marta weighs and measures the young children in her community and



teaches mothers to make simple medicines. In a country where preventable diseases and illnesses, and malnutrition place pregnant mothers and babies at risk, activities like Marta's go a long way in improving maternal and child health.

Not only has the Meija Avila family improved their way of life, they are also using their skills to benefit the community. Despite being busy with a new baby and volunteering during the food distribution, Marta continues to also volunteer with the group of women in the community. Recently, the women came up with a plan to build a clay oven for baking bread and other Honduran treats. Through Free A Family®, this skilled, loving, and hard-working mother is truly changing lives.

**Still interested in learning more? Go to [freefamily.org](http://freefamily.org)**





# Advocating for Mothers and Children

## What is Transformational Advocacy?

Transformational advocacy is a way to challenge ourselves and our leaders to change attitudes, behaviors, and policies that perpetuate injustice and deny God's will for all creation to flourish.<sup>1</sup> Throughout the Scriptures, God calls people into community and sets the expectation that leaders should care for their people (Psalm 72:2). We reflect God's love when we call on leaders to protect the most vulnerable. As Christians we work toward a just world in which structures and institutions give every person the opportunity to thrive.

God teaches us, through the prophets, that we are not to withhold nourishment from anyone (Nehemiah 5:1-13; Isaiah 58:6-10; Zechariah 7:8-10), not to harden our hearts, but to give to those who are poor with an open hand and an open heart (Deuteronomy 15:10). Scripture also teaches us to defend the cause of the poor (Isaiah 1). Providing direct assistance to the hungry and poor is vital and it is also important to guard against policies that oppress, to partner with poor communities for long term change, and to speak up for policies that empower.

## Advocacy in the Fight against Global Hunger

Nearly three-quarters of the 795 million people in our world experience hunger regularly, live in rural areas, and work in small-scale family farming. At the same time, 500 million small-scale farmers feed a third of humanity in our world. It's ironic that the people who experience hunger are the ones who produce our food, but the fact that the people who feed us are unable to feed themselves is an unacceptable injustice.

As 43% of small-scale farmers are women (many of whom are also mothers and the main providers of food for their families) female farmers and their children are particularly vulnerable to hunger and often experience the miseries of malnutrition, the effects of which last long into adulthood.

For so long we have been witnessing families go hungry despite living in a world where sufficient quantities of food is produced to feed everyone. This has led to a movement to work for an end to hunger not by producing more food but by producing socially just and equitable societies through advocating to governments and corporations for fairer policies and practices. Advocacy is an important component of justice.

**In the following sections, World Renew has compiled information and opportunities to equip your church to advocate for families in poverty, so more mothers and children in our world can improve their health and enjoy a brighter future.**

<sup>1</sup> Micah Challenge USA Definition of Advocacy

*Note: Since there are different advocacy opportunities and initiatives in Canada and in the U.S., we have divided up this section by country. Each section contains some general advocacy information and then two pages of “action steps” that can be photocopied and given as a handout to your congregation (or downloaded as a PDF under “Offerings” at [worldrenew.net/churchresources](http://worldrenew.net/churchresources)). Please turn to the page numbers listed below for the advocacy information specific to your country.*



*For advocacy steps for Canadians, go to Page 16-18*



*For advocacy steps for Americans, go to Page 19-22*





## ***Maternal and Child Health Advocacy in Canada***

Improving the health of mothers, newborns and children has been Canada's top development priority for a number of years. Between 2008 and 2010 Canada played a leadership role in ending global hunger which was well interwoven with the Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (MNCH) focus. Female farmers in particular benefited, as Canadian investments were successfully used to integrate nutrition into broader food security work. Unfortunately, since 2010 the level of support has fallen. In 2011, only a year later, Canada's aid for agriculture and support to small-scale farmers declined by 24%.

As World Renew and other Christian organizations often have opportunities to advocate and advise the Canadian government on aid initiatives that improve health for pregnant women, young children, and their families we are working with the Canadian Foodgrains Bank, through the Good Soil campaign, to urge the Canadian government to strengthen support to family farmers, especially women.

The newly elected government in Canada is keen to continue and expand our MNCH focus. In his mandate letter to the Minister of International Development, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, outlined the expectation to ensure that MNCH programming is driven by evidence and development assistance is invested effectively so that it reaches the poorest and most vulnerable.

The Good Soil Campaign provides a Christian response to ending hunger by engaging Christians and advocating to our Members of Parliament in order to encourage the Canadian government to increase support to small-scale family farmers. Just as the parable of the sower illustrates, good soil is foundational to bountiful harvests. Likewise, national and global support for small-scale farmers is foundational for their success.

Increasing support for small-scale family farmers will enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of MNCH interventions as it has the potential to maximize the benefits to rural women and their families. When female farmers have access to credits, land, seeds and education, they develop the capacity to grow and harvest good nutritious food to feed their children, their families and their communities. They are able to generate a steady income with which they can build a stable home, send their children to school and access health services.

Investing in family farmers is a sustainable long-term solution to improving maternal, newborn and child health. Find out more online at [worldrenew.net/goodsoil](http://worldrenew.net/goodsoil).

**The next two pages in this booklet can be used as a two-sided handout to photocopy or download (find the PDF at [worldrenew.net/churchresources](http://worldrenew.net/churchresources) under “Maternal and Child Health Sunday”). You can distribute to members of your Canadian church to equip them to advocate for families in need.**



# Advocacy Steps for Canadian Christians



There are a number of advocacy actions your congregation can take to strengthen support to small-scale family farmers and improve Canada's contribution to supporting maternal, newborn and child health outcomes around the world. Here are three steps you can take through the Good Soil Campaign:

## Harvest of Letters

As Christians we are called to love our neighbors, and speak out on their behalf. As Canadians, we have the tools to influence our government to make a difference in the lives of the most vulnerable. Send a letter to your Member of Parliament to tell her/him:

- You care about poverty and hunger in the world.
- Canada can reduce hunger by investing in agriculture in developing countries.
- Canada's support should focus on small-scale family farmers, especially women.

Ask your Member of Parliament to support investing the aid budget to support small-scale family farmers and request them to convey your message to the Minister of International Development. You can customize our sample letter and send it to you MP.

*TIP: Organize a "Harvest of Letters" event with your congregation as a way of taking collective action to support family farmers. After you have posted your letters members can also follow-up with MPs and speak about the matter in person. For more guidance and a print-friendly guide, visit [foodgrainsbank.ca/letters](http://foodgrainsbank.ca/letters).*

## Social Media

Use social media to raise awareness amongst your community, networks, peers, family and friends. Use #AidforAg and #GoodSoil as campaign identifiers. You can also follow World Renew on Facebook and Twitter and share our Good Soil campaign posts.

Here are some sample Twitter posts:

**Small-scale farmers produce 80% of the developing world's food, but ironically their families often go hungry #AidforAg**

**Encourage the Canadian government to support small-scale farmers through increased #AidforAg #Good Soil**

*TIP: Members of Parliament are active on social media. Use social media to reach out to them. Contact the Good Soil Advocacy Manager to get tips and for help finding MPs on social media.*

### **Sign a postcard:**

Show your support by signing a postcard to the Prime Minister. Contact the Good Soil campaign Advocacy Manager at World Renew to order your postcards (contact information below). The postcards come with a pre-written message encouraging the Prime Minister to invest a proportion of the aid budget in small-scale family farming. There is also a little space to personalize the message if you wish.





*TIP: As a congregation you can demonstrate your solidarity with female farmers by collecting the signed post cards during a Sunday offering on Maternal and Child Health Sunday or on a following Sunday of your choosing.*

If you take part in any of these advocacy actions let us know! We keep track of all mobilization efforts as well as share the stories with other World Renew supporters.

**For more tools and resources, information or to learn about other ways you can get involved visit our webpage at [worldrenew.net/goodsoil](http://worldrenew.net/goodsoil) or contact the Advocacy Manager for the Good Soil Campaign at [mmendonca@worldrenew.net](mailto:mmendonca@worldrenew.net)**

## ***Sample Letter using the Engage-Problem-Inform-Call to Action (EPIC) format:***

**First, find your Member of Parliament by visiting the Parliament of Canada website at [parl.gc.ca/senatorsmembers.aspx](http://parl.gc.ca/senatorsmembers.aspx). You simply enter your postal code in the “House of Commons” section of the homepage.**

You can use the following sample letter guide to help you with the wording of your letter. Remember to always keep a polite, positive and respectable tone. Make sure that you also include your return address on the letter so that your Member of Parliament can reply back.

### **Subject: Support Maternal Health and Child Nutrition by Supporting Smallholder Farms**

<b>ENGAGE</b> (start your letter with something positive and to hook the reader)	Dear <u>(name of your Member of Parliament)</u> ,  I am pleased that Canada has taken a leadership role in ending global hunger, and that Canada is prioritizing aid for sustainable agriculture, nutrition and food assistance. These are all important aspects of ending global hunger.
<b>PROBLEM</b> (Your MP might not be aware of the issue. Explain it and provide some context)	However, Canada’s aid spending on sustainable agricultural development is in decline. As a supporter of World Renew, I would like to see Canada’s aid restore a focus on agricultural development, especially for small-scale family farmers and women.
<b>INFORM OF SOLUTION</b> (Personalize the letter; say why the issue matters to you. Link it back to MNCH — a top development priority for Canada)	Evidence in addition to in-country program evaluations conducted by international organizations like World Renew have shown that past government investments supporting small-scale family farmers is an important and effective way to reduce world hunger and promote the health and well-being of all, especially mothers and children. Such investments are important to supporting the health of mothers, children and newborns. It is also vital for building strong economies and a safer, healthier world.
<b>CALL TO ACTION</b> (Clearly state what you are asking for or what actions you want your MP to take)	I urge the Canadian Government to increase financial support for the world’s most vulnerable farmers. I request that you convey this important message to the Prime Minister’s Office and to the Minister of International Development.  Sincerely,  (Your Name) _____



## ***Maternal and Child Health Advocacy in the U.S.\****

*\*Includes information adapted and quoted with permission from Bread for the World.*

[www.bread.org](http://www.bread.org)

The U.S. Congress plays a critical role in setting the policies and funding levels that allow government to do its part to improve nutrition and health systems among mothers and children. Through this advocacy opportunity, you can help Congress summon the political will to do this.

You are invited to lead your church in advocating for the Global Food Security Act of 2015.

### **Support the Global Food Security Act**

Significant progress has been made in addressing chronic malnutrition through programs such as Feed the Future, which has helped more than seven million small farmers increase crop production and provided nutritious foods to more than 12.5 million children in 2013 alone. The program emphasizes country leadership and supports 19 focus countries around the world. Early results in five of those countries demonstrate that rapid progress is possible.



While Government programs like Feed the Future cannot stand alone as the answer to ending poverty they do play an important role. These programs build on the success and learnings of World Renew and other non-profit programs, they provide research to make future programs more effective, and they get national government extension agencies involved so that solutions can be multiplied in other neighboring communities. World Renew gives thanks to God for the progress we see where we work and values the role that governments can play in our work and similar projects. Change can last and grow when neighboring communities and entire regions transform together.

The Global Food Security Act will make Feed the Future permanent, which will continue to help hungry and malnourished nations around the world develop smart, long-term, country specific agriculture policies and ensure these nations independently empower their people to meet their own nutrition needs.

The Global Food Security Act of 2015, H.R. 1567, will also provide humanitarian assistance in a timely and more effective way through:

- Prioritizing country ownership
- Sustainable agriculture development
- Addressing chronic hunger and malnutrition

This will benefit women and children, especially during the critical 1,000-day window from a woman's pregnancy until her child's second birthday. These nutrition interventions help reduce stunting, life-long poor health, impaired cognitive and physical development, and diminished productivity.

Take a stand for mothers and children and support food security. Write to your members of Congress and urge them to support the Global Food Security Act of 2015 and to support nutrition for children during the critical first 1,000 days of life. Find out more online at [crcjustice.org](http://crcjustice.org).

**The next two pages in this booklet can be used as a two-sided handout to photocopy or download (find the PDF at [worldrenew.net/churchresources](http://worldrenew.net/churchresources) under "Maternal and Child Health Sunday"). You can distribute to members of your Canadian church to equip them to advocate for families in need.**





## Advocacy Steps for American Christians

Significant progress has been made in addressing chronic malnutrition through programs like Feed the Future, which helped more than seven million small farmers increase crop production and resulted in nutritious food for more than 12.5 million children in 2013. USAID programs like Feed the Future cannot answer the challenge of poverty on their own but they do play a vital role. Feed the Future builds on feedback, success and learnings from World Renew and other agencies. It provides research to make future programs more effective. It also helps national government extension agencies to get involved so that solutions can be multiplied in neighboring communities. World Renew gives thanks to God for progress wherever we partner and we value the role that government extension agencies can play when they join in the work with local churches and nonprofits. Change can last and grow when more parties are involved and when entire regions transform together. (Plus it is a cost effective strategy for government to partner in sustainable development projects).

The Global Food Security Act is a bill in Congress that will make Feed the Future permanent. It will continue to help hungry and malnourished nations around the world to develop long-term agriculture strategies. It will also ensure that nations empower their people, especially women and children in the first 1,000 days of life, to meet their own nutrition needs.

Please help Congress to make an informed vote on the Global Food Security Act. You can send an electronic letter to your congressperson voicing your support and learn more at [crcna.org/hungeradvocacy](http://crcna.org/hungeradvocacy)

### Support the GFA through Social Media

You can also support the Global Food Security Act through social media. Use social media to raise awareness amongst your community, networks, peers, family, and friends. Use the #EndHunger2030 and #ChildHunger hashtags to add your voice to the conversation. You can also follow World Renew on Facebook and Twitter and share our Global Food Security Act and Maternal and Child Health posts. Below are some sample Twitter and Facebook posts:

**Encourage the U.S. government to support robust funding for maternal and child health programs through the Global Food Security Act. #EndHunger2030 #ChildHunger**

**Join in putting your faith into action. Ask our nation's leaders to work to end hunger both at home and abroad by supporting the Global Food Security Act. #EndHunger2030 #ChildHunger**

**The Global Food Security Act will build on the success and learnings from World Renew and other agencies like it in working to end hunger around the world. Urge our nation's leaders to support it. #EndHunger2030 #ChildHunger**

*TIP: Congresspeople are active on social media. Use social media to reach out to them by tweeting at them and writing on their Facebook walls.*



## ***Get Informed: Myths and Facts about Development Assistance***

**Myth: Development assistance is a big part of the U.S. budget and is fueling our record budget deficit.**

**Fact:** Development assistance is less than 1 percent of the U.S. budget, so cutting it would not help fix the deficit. It does, however, save millions of human lives every year.

**Myth: Not much progress can be made against a problem as big as hunger.**

**Fact:** In less than two generations, global hunger has been cut in half. Instead of one person out of every three suffering from hunger and malnutrition, it's now one person out of every six—still far too many, but a big improvement. The global situation is now one where there's a heightened sense of momentum, more commitment and leadership, and better knowledge of “what works.” The United States is leading the way with new initiatives such as Feed the Future, which focuses on agriculture and nutrition.

**Myth: It's a waste of time and money to give development assistance, because it never gets to the people who need it.**

**Fact:** In recent years, there has been much more emphasis on transparency and adherence to strict accounting standards. It has become increasingly difficult for anyone to make aid money “disappear,” lost to corruption. There are many examples of children, families, and communities who have benefited from development programs. And, of course, there are the longer-term results just mentioned: the rate of global hunger has been cut in half.

**Myth: The United States provides more than its fair share of development assistance.**

**Fact:** The United States saves millions of lives every year with programs like child immunizations, PEPFAR, and food aid. There is no doubt that our efforts make a big difference. But the amount the United States gives per person is less than average for donors and far less than Scandinavian countries. Preliminary data for 2011 indicate that Sweden and Denmark devoted more than 1 percent of their national incomes to development assistance. The U.K. gave 0.56 percent, the average for 23 donor countries was 0.46 percent, and the United States was near the bottom of the list at 0.2 percent.



## Additional World Renew Resources

World Renew has several resources available to help you during the year as you learn about, pray for, and support families as they overcome poverty. Here are a few resources to use:



**Live Justly Small Group Curriculum** — Biblical justice isn't an action once a year—it is a lifestyle. World Renew, in partnership with Micah Challenge US, has developed an in-depth scriptural and practical study on advocacy, prayer, consumption, generosity, creation care, and relationships. The nine sessions can each stand on their own or be used together, culminating in the development of a justice action plan for your group. To find out more and order this resource, go to [worldrenew.net/livejustly](http://worldrenew.net/livejustly)



**Healthy Babies, Healthy Moms Baby Shower** — World Renew has resources designed for women's groups to hold an interactive "baby shower" event that is centered on raising awareness about child and maternal health issues in developing countries. World Renew has all the materials you'll need for the event, including devotional materials, PowerPoint presentations, a video, activity suggestions, and discussion questions for your group. You'll also be supplied with promotional posters and invitations, and support you as you plan your event. You can find out more about these materials at [worldrenew.net/babyshower](http://worldrenew.net/babyshower)



**A Town Called Hope** — *A Town Called Hope* is designed to help young teens understand how World Renew helps communities by giving them a hand-up instead of a hand-out? Materials include a DVD, stories, discussion questions, and cartoon graphics that allow you to follow as one village becomes a "town called hope." You can order this resource at from our website at [worldrenew.net/order](http://worldrenew.net/order)



**Gift Catalog** — Improving and protecting health for mothers and children is a key part of World Renew's work around the world. World Renew's gift catalog has opportunities for you to match your interests with an item that will truly change a life for the better. Buy a baby weighing scale or mosquito net, for example, or give the gift of midwife training. Your church can find out more about World Renew's Gift Catalog at [worldrenew.net/gifts](http://worldrenew.net/gifts)



**Videos** — World Renew has a wide variety of video resources available to you, including helpful educational material on Free A Family®, maternal and child health, climate stewardship, gender equity, income inequality, and many other topics. To view these videos online, visit World Renew's YouTube. You can also find and order DVD copies from our website at [worldrenew.net/order](http://worldrenew.net/order)











**World  
Renew**<sup>™</sup>

LIVING JUSTICE • LOVING MERCY • SERVING CHRIST

**FREE A  
FAMILY**

[freefamily.org](http://freefamily.org)

**WORLD RENEW-CANADA** 3475 Mainway • PO Box 5070 STN LCD 1 • Burlington, ON L7R 3Y8 • 1-800-730-3490

**WORLD RENEW-US** 1700 28th Street SE • Grand Rapids, MI 49508-1407 • 1-800-552-7972

[worldrenew.net](http://worldrenew.net) •    

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