



PROMOTING GLOBAL FOOD AND WATER SECURITY

When food and water grow scarce, widescale human suffering can result. Food and water scarcity in developing countries fundamentally undermines economies and communities, exacerbating existing instabilities, driving forced migrations, making communities vulnerable to conflict, social unrest, and radicalization, and leading to the outbreak of regional conflicts.

FOOD AND WATER SCARCITY THREATENS U.S. SECURITY

- Scarcities of food and water are often leveraged by extremist groups and transnational criminal organizations to recruit and advance their goals.
 - The rise of Abu Sayyaf, ISIS, and the Taliban is linked to long-standing grievances over water access and the viability of rural livelihoods; the same is true of the expanding narcotics trade in Central America.
 - Al-Shabaab, the Taliban, ISIS, the Shining Path, Boko Haram, and other terrorist groups increasingly leverage scarce water resources as a means of coercion.
- A large proportion of those affected by food and water insecurity can become refugees.
 - By 2050, as many as 143 million people could be displaced due to water scarcity, crop failures, and rising sea levels.
 - The failure of coffee plantations and subsistence crops in Central America resulted in rising rural poverty and was a key factor in recent surges in northern migration.
- Many experts believe water will soon supplant oil as the resource of greatest concern.
 - In the next decade, some 2.9 billion people in 48 countries will face water shortages, which could pose a major threat to global security.
 - If the decline of key river basins in the Middle East, Africa, Asia, and Latin America continues, it will affect the economic, environmental, and social stability of these regions with increasingly negative impacts for U.S. security interests.

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THE U.S. IS A GLOBAL LEADER IN ADVANCING FOOD AND WATER SECURITY

The U.S. government is a leader in promoting global food and water security, working with other countries, international and non-governmental organizations, and private-sector partners.

- Through modest investments, the U.S. is helping to protect freshwater resources, conserve globally significant water basins, and promote more productive and resilient agriculture.
- In 2014, Congress passed the Water for the World Act, which led the U.S. government to create a Global Water Strategy, released in 2017.
- The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) has created a Sustainable Water Partnership program to work with key countries on enhancing water security.
- U.S. contributions to the Global Environment Facility (GEF) support transboundary cooperation between countries on managing shared river basins and groundwater resources, helping to avert conflict between countries over finite freshwater resources.

SMALL U.S. INVESTMENTS HAVE HUGE IMPACT

Dedicated U.S. government support helps protect fresh water, forests, fertile soil, and fisheries to promote economic stability and ensure global food and water security. To date, U.S. government support has:

- Advanced food security and agriculture in more than 100 countries.
- Provided access to clean drinking water to more than 12 million people between FY 2008 to FY 2016.
- Created strategies to promote water security in countries where engagement can best protect U.S. security interests.
- Promoted practices to intensify the productivity of farming systems in developing countries sustainably, allowing more to be produced on less land while improving soil quality.
- Supported protection and improved management of marine fisheries in coastal areas of Africa and Asia where seafood is an essential source of protein.
- Helped the GEF secure an international agreement between Algeria, Tunisia, and Libya, supporting sustainable management of shared groundwater resources to reduce the potential for future conflict.
- Supported work to identify growing threats to the headwaters of Asia's great rivers and impacts on downstream water security in twelve Central and South Asian countries, including India, Pakistan, and Afghanistan.
- Helped protect upstream forests in Asia, Africa, and Latin America that provide critical clean water supplies for millions of people in priority regions downstream.

By advancing food and water security, we protect America's national security and economic interests, avoiding scarcity-driven disruptions and helping achieve stability, peace, and prosperity in the developing world.