



Introduction to the International Alliance Against Hunger

The 1996 World Food Summit Plan of Action and the 2000 Millennium Development Goals set the stage for establishing and supporting hunger-fighting activities on a global scale. The World Food Summit's Rome Declaration put forward a goal of reducing world hunger by half by the year 2015. The United Nations identified reducing hunger and poverty as its primary Millennium Development Goal.

In 2002, when the World Food Summit: *five years later* convened to look at progress toward reaching the goal, delegates became acutely aware of the need to work together to accelerate the global effort if they were to reach their target. The Summit's final declaration, entitled "The International Alliance Against Hunger", supported bringing together organizations already involved in the fight against hunger and poverty in order to present a stronger voice and add more power to their advocacy efforts.

In accepting the declaration by acclamation, the Member Nations themselves asked FAO to put its efforts bringing all potential partners into an alliance that would work for the fulfillment of the 1996 Summit goals. It called on "***governments, international organizations, civil society organizations and the private sector to reinforce their efforts so as to act as an international alliance against hunger to achieve the World Food Summit targets no later than 2015. With this aim, parties should promote coordinated action.***"

IAAH Statement of Principles

The unique aspect of the International Alliance Against Hunger is that it has no set parameters. Its main focus is bringing existing organizations together into an alliance with a common goal that gives them the opportunity to speak with a unified voice, build political will and advocate for policy support in the fight against hunger and poverty. National Alliances represent new ways of tapping and combining expertise and infrastructure at national and international levels – ranging from highest levels of government to grassroots organizations to the individual beneficiaries themselves – building on what already exists, rather than creating a new entity.

The principles of the International Alliance Against Hunger are designed to support the growth of a dynamic organization. They meet the current focus of the International Alliance but can also be changed or adapted as the needs of the International Alliance and its National Alliance partners evolve.

IAAH Principles

The IAAH is a voluntary association whose members share a common commitment to the rapid eradication of hunger in the world. Membership is open to all who share its basic principles and aims. Its core work is building partnerships between civil society and government in order to set and adapt strategies, policies and programmes that:

- contribute to meeting the Millennium Development Goals and the target of the World Food Summit by strengthening national and global commitment and action to end hunger and poverty;
- facilitate dialogue on the most effective measures to reduce hunger and poverty;
- promote mutually supportive action involving governments and other stakeholders in the fight against hunger; and
- engage and empower grassroots organizations and individual beneficiaries as full partners in National Alliances, to participate in finding and implementing solutions that will make a real difference to their lives and the lives of generations to come.

Defining the Need for establishing National Alliances Against Hunger

The IAAH partnership stresses the value of combining the strengths of local, national and international governmental and non-governmental organizations, grassroots organizations, service and religious organizations, the private sector and concerned individuals with the common mission of working to eradicate hunger and poverty. At the same time, the IAAH also recognizes that the greatest efforts to eradicate hunger and poverty should be at the country level.

By providing the forum for government and civil society to work together, National Alliances can contribute significantly to achieving the goals of the IAAH. However, first the National Alliances must build their capacities in advocacy, accountability, resource mobilization and coordination of programmes.

About this guide

This guide has been developed to support fledgling National Alliances in their start-up activities as well as established National Alliances that are moving their agendas forward. The information offered here can be followed as linear steps or individual sections can be adopted to match local or national needs. This is in no way intended to be prescriptive. It is meant to provide guidance and assistance through a series of suggested activities and actions, and practical examples of best practices.

Getting Started: organizing and developing National Alliances Against Hunger



Who initiates a National Alliance?

The common denominator in determining who will begin the process of forming a National Alliance is deep commitment to meeting the MDG/WFS goals of reducing the number of hungry people to half by 2015. The impetus can come from a local non-governmental organization (NGO), from an international partner of IAAH or from the national government itself – any organization that recognizes the value of working together in a participatory manner and wants to add its voice to the voices of others in order to present a stronger front.

The IAAH can provide administrative support in this initial stage, either through local representation of its member organizations or through its Secretariat. Once formed, there are no set rules or requirements to follow. The national groups organize themselves according to their own situations, set their own targets, establish their own deadlines and reporting systems, and lay out the steps they will need to move forward according to what they feel are the most urgent and solvable needs in their countries.

Civil society-led initiatives

In the **USA**, Bread for the World led the effort to establish a National Alliance. With a focus on advocacy and recognizing the potential power of a National Alliance in lobbying the government to increase development aid, it brought together a host of interfaith organizations as well as other groups and individuals involved in the fight against hunger and poverty such as food banks, private foundations and charitable organizations.

Caritas **Burkina Faso**, with support of FAO, used its broad national presence to identify potential grassroots partners and bring existing projects under the National Alliance umbrella. Caritas initially invited its partner organizations, including the Telefood Club of Ouagadougou University, and then expanded to all interested groups including farmers' and women's organizations.

Aligning with existing networks

The mandate of the National Food and Nutritional Security Council (CONSEA) of **Brazil** is quite similar to the mandate of the IAAH. CONSEA, composed of government and civil society organizations, coordinates national efforts in the "right to food". Recognizing the potential for collaboration, Brazil joined the IAAH but determined that its National Alliance would keep the recognized name CONSEA. No new entities were created, IAAH benefits from having a National Alliance in Brazil, and Brazil benefits from CONSEA's association with IAAH.

It is a similar story in **Ireland**. The Freedom from Hunger Council (GORTA), an Irish network of mainly faith-based NGOs working in international development, has now become the National Alliance of Ireland but is still called GORTA. GORTA has continuously supported the IAAH. In becoming the National Alliance of Ireland, it will be able to expand its collaboration even further.

Government-led initiatives

The Government of **Angola** recognized the value of having a National Alliance but had no existing infrastructure. Support came from FAO, IFAD and WFP who coordinated among themselves to identify projects that could be helpful in implementing a National Alliance. The three agencies also provide communication tools to raise awareness of the National Alliance in Angola and facilitate coordination to connect existing organizations and programmes.

In **Indonesia**, the government met with the National Farmers' Network to propose the creation of a National Alliance. With the contribution of the private sector, the new National Alliance is now running post-tsunami reconstruction activities.

UN agency initiatives

In **France**, a national association formed to support FAO initiatives led to the establishment of the National Alliance. FAO facilitated the startup activities, supported the process and, to raise awareness, FAO sponsored the National Alliance's launch at the 2005 *Salon International de l'Agriculture* in Paris. In 2006, WFP also joined *Alliés contre la Faim*.

With the support of FAO, the **Honduras** World Food Day Committee, made up of government representatives, expanded its mandate to include civil society organizations and created a National Alliance. The National Alliance then joined with the National Strategy for Poverty Reduction, implementing training activities, seminars and programmes on education and rural development.

A similar process occurred in **Madagascar** where the World Food Day Committee extended its mandate to become a National Alliance. The Alliance's activities focus on advocacy through national events such as World Food Day.

In **Jordan** the FAO representative suggested that Her Royal Highness Princess Bama Bint Talal lead the effort to create a National Alliance. The Princess has always shown commitment to charitable activities and under her patronage and through consultation with both government and civil society, the National Alliance was formed.

Community-led initiatives

IFAD and FAO held several consultations in villages of Meghalaya, **India**, that are IFAD partners in community-level rural development projects for enhancing the capacity of group members in competences related to hunger and poverty reduction. As a result of consultations in which villagers mapped their needs and constraints in achieving food security, the community decided to establish a Community-led Alliance against Hunger. This community-driven Alliance has received full support of local government and faith-based organizations.

Planning the initial meeting

From the very beginning, it is extremely important to present the establishment of a National Alliance Against Hunger as an opportunity for participating organizations to increase their effectiveness. The first meeting should give participants the idea that they are being invited to join a group of committed, action-oriented professionals who believe that by working together they will become a stronger presence in the national debate.

Thus, the initial meeting – at which a proposal for establishing a National Alliance is introduced – should include a broad cross section of organizations and individuals who not only will benefit from working together but also will have something to give. Choosing the correct venue, choosing who to invite and preparing the meeting agenda all require careful consideration because, as is said, “there is never a second chance to make a first impression”.

Who to invite

It is important to have as complete a list as possible before scheduling the first meeting in order to avoid the possibility of omitting a potentially important contributor. This may require conducting a search to identify and enlist all individuals, organizations, government ministries and programmes already involved in fighting hunger and poverty, as well as those whose work can impact poverty and hunger, such as health care organizations. This can include

- community-based organizations
- local and national branches of international NGOs
- local representation of UN agencies
- representatives of government ministries
- local farmers' organizations
- religious groups
- social service organizations
- university and research institutions
- food producers and agribusinesses.

Building the invitation list

The international development organizations that work with local and national partners will often have lists of, or access to, organizations and individuals who are working on issues of hunger and poverty in the country that can serve as a starting point. Once they are contacted, they will often be able to provide references to other organizations or individuals.

It may be necessary to make a specific point of seeking out local and grassroots organizations, especially those involving women, youth and farmers. Their participation in the National Alliance can be highly beneficial, both to themselves and to the Alliance. Yet often, small local organizations are unaware of the activities of other organizations or of the possibility of joining together. Some are so focused on their special needs and locally focused projects that they do not recognize the impact their presence could have on an Alliance with wider goals and aspirations.

Representatives of the media who cover social issues also can be invited to join, if their organizations permit them to participate. Above all, it is important to invite only those who are truly involved in the hunger-poverty issues of the country, share the basic principles and aims of the IAAH, and will have something to contribute to the Alliance in terms of expertise and resources.

Choosing the venue and sending out invitations

Ideally, the spot chosen for National Alliance meetings should be politically neutral and easily accessible. However pragmatic considerations could lead to accepting free hosting by national or local government entities if no other solution is offered.

The National Alliance of **France** set up a media and communication committee to promote events for raising awareness on topics related to hunger and poverty and also about the activities of the Alliance, especially during selected events such as the French agriculture fair, *Salon International de l'Agriculture*, and World Food Day. At the 2005 fair, they invited high profile guests including French President Jacques Chirac and FAO Director-General Jacques Diouf.

The idea of a National Alliance for **Argentina** was presented at a national food security seminar sponsored by the government. In its support, FAO suggested that the government invite civil society and the media to the seminar, which was crucial to broadening National Alliance participation. At the seminar, participants identified priority action areas for eliminating poverty and hunger and took initial steps to establish their National Alliance.

The Government of **Bolivia**, with FAO support, brought together a wide range of organizations that participated in the initial meetings including farmers' organizations, trade unions, development agencies, national chapters of international NGOs, UN representatives, women's organizations and universities.

Situations vary greatly and so do local customs, in terms of how far in advance invitations should be sent and how the invitations should be delivered. The dependability of the local postal system or the access local people have to email is also a consideration. Usually, a hand delivered invitation followed by a personal phone call would be ideal for the first meeting. The invitation should include the time and location but also background information introducing the IAAH and a summary of the findings about the country's hunger and poverty situation.

It could also include a list of the other individuals, organizations and government representatives who have been invited and the proposed agenda. In the case of the agenda, the participants could also be asked if they have any suggestions of their own to add to the agenda.

Preparing the first meeting agenda

The first meeting should be considered a "roundtable" opportunity for the participants to get to know each other, so it is important that the agenda indicate there will be an opportunity for all those attending to introduce themselves, express why they are interested in joining the National Alliance and indicate how they will be able to contribute to the Alliance's work. The meeting host should be prepared to introduce the work of the International Alliance, present examples of activities and organizational

SAMPLE AGENDA

Adapted from first meeting of Dominican Republic National Alliance

1. Introduction of the International Alliance Against Hunger and the National Alliance against Hunger

It is important to explain the principles and the structure of the International Alliance in terms of how it supports the National Alliances. Introduction of the National Alliance should focus on the concept of how much organizations have to gain from each other if they join forces, becoming one voice in advocacy but also being able to rely on each other to support each others individual activities.

2. Choose participant to serve as meeting secretary

One person should have the responsibility for keeping the list of all participants, recording the minutes of the meeting including all decisions that are made and topics that are discussed for decisions at future meetings.

3. Introduction of each participant

Participants should all have the opportunity to share information about the activities of their organizations and how they envision synergies within an eventual National Alliance. This gives the group the opportunity to determine if any of the existing organizations could serve as the country's National Alliance and avoid the necessity of establishing a new organization.

4. Choosing a name

If the group determines that it is ready to initiate steps to become a National Alliance, then it must decide if it will be known as the National Alliance of that country or use the name of an existing network that already has name recognition. Either way, it will be a member of the International Alliance and receive all associated benefits of having access to the International Alliance Secretariat.

5. Membership

Participants in this initial meeting can decide if they are ready to join the National Alliance. Some may have to return to their organizations in order to have the support of their membership. Once there is a core group of motivated people and organizations, it will be important to begin an outreach effort to others such as small community organizations, private sector groups and foundations, media, research centres.

6. Set date, location and agenda for next meeting

Choose someone, perhaps the meeting secretary, to ensure that the minutes are distributed before the next meeting. Note: the secretary can be a permanent job or it can rotate from meeting to meeting, depending on the will of the Alliance members.

structure in other National Alliances, and discuss the types of decisions that will be made at future meetings such as choosing organizational structure and leadership, and setting goals and objectives.

Agendas for initial meetings should be distributed to participants in advance. Agenda structures vary but they should give an idea of both short- and long-term goals of the National Alliance and the types of decisions that will need to be made at the meeting. The following example comes from initial meetings.

Roundtable concept

With a “roundtable”, all participants come to the table as equals to decide on their Alliance’s future direction. There is no innate top-down structure or pre-determined leadership.

In addition to participants introducing themselves and declaring how they envision their participation and contributions to the Alliance, they can also present the type of work they are doing and, in the cases where they need support, they can reach out to other members or to the Alliance for guidance or discuss opportunities to develop cooperative activities. This will help early on with the establishment of common fields of cooperation that can build synergy among members, and between the members and the Alliance.

It is also important for participants in the first meeting to decide immediately about follow-up meetings, how often they will be held, if the venue will be rotated and to appoint someone to take responsibility for tasks such as booking the meeting location and sending out reminders of the next meeting.

Start-up phase activities

Before a National Alliance can begin charting its course, members first must have an understanding of the hunger and poverty situation in their country. It is important to gather sound statistical information as well as anecdotal information that will raise awareness of need and give a realistic basis for setting goals. There are both local sources and international sources for finding this information.

Local sources: Existing national food security policies and national poverty reduction strategies contain well researched background information on the hunger and poverty situation in the country. Public information or policy officers of appropriate government ministries can provide access to documents that contain helpful information. Researchers or faculty of local academic institutions can provide background information and statistics or at least guidance on where such information can be found. The figures are usually available on the government and national research centre Web sites.

International sources: International UN or non-governmental organizations are a great source of statistical information. In fact, governments often base their strategies on statistics compiled by UN organizations, such as the FAO, WFP, IFAD, Unicef or World Bank country profiles and hunger maps.

When accessible, Internet is a great source of information, but a random Internet search by country name and with the words “hunger statistics” has the potential of locating tens of thousands of sites. Thus, for those who use Internet, it is important to be able to judge which sites have the kind of sound, irrefutable information that will support the establishment of a National Alliance. Sites of UN organizations are reliable and should provide the kind of statistics that will help present a realistic story of a country’s hunger and poverty situation.

Sources of national hunger statistics and country profiles

FAO

<http://www.fao.org/countryprofiles/inventory.asp?lang=en> (country profile)

<http://www.fao.org/es/ess/faostat/foodsecurity/FsMap/map14.htm>

(figures on specific issues with disaggregated data)

<http://www.fivims.org/index.jsp?lang=en>

(information and mapping systems on food insecurity and vulnerability)

<http://faolex.fao.org/faolex/index.htm>

(legislative database collection of national laws and regulations on food, agriculture and renewable natural resources)

WFP

http://www.wfp.org/country_brief/hunger_map/map/hungermap_popup/map_popup.html (country profile)

IFAD

<http://www.ifad.org/operations/projects/regions/country.htm> (field operations)

UNDP

<http://hdr.undp.org/statistics/> (country profile and statistics)

Determining organizational structure

Although the initial meeting/s will be hosted by an organizer or organizing committee, once participants commit to the task of building and supporting a National Alliance, it is necessary to decide upon the appropriate organizational structure. This, again, will vary from country to country, according to specific situations.

The National Alliance of **France** formed ten committees, each representing a different type of stakeholder, e.g. one committee is all NGOs working on sustainable development, another is local institutions, another is media. The committee selects one representative to serve on an executive board that is headed by one representative from government and one from civil society.

In **Rwanda**, the National Alliance comprises the General Assembly and the Executive Committee. The General Assembly, the main body of the Alliance, has three levels of membership including associate, honorary and founding members. The Executive Committee has five members, elected by the General Assembly for two years and renewable only once.

The International Alliance does not prescribe an organizational structure for the National Alliances. However, it does ask National Alliances to set up organizational structures that will ensure representation of all members in the decision-making process. In some cases, there may be existing organizations or networks that can be expanded and adapted to form the National Alliance. In other cases it may be necessary to forge something new. The decision has to be based on local practicalities.

However, all Alliances require some form of secretariat or executive committee to handle administrative duties, support members and have authority for procedures such as fundraising and communication.

Action Aid International (AAI) facilitated the creation of a food security network in **The Gambia** led by the National Youth Association for Food Security, a farmers' organization which grew out of the 1996 World Food Summit. The network joined the National Alliance and AAI financed the first year's activities. In its first year, the Alliance set up a seed bank project for preserving biodiversity in the region and a project for improving agriculture production with, in part, use of the community seed bank. An assembly establishes priorities, the secretary coordinates membership and activities and monitors both projects and the Secretariat implements the Alliance decisions.

In addition, considering that one of the basic aims of the International Alliance Against Hunger is to foster dialogue and joint action between government and civil society, the structure of the National Alliances should always provide for the participation by both the public and private sector. With this in mind, there are three organizational options that would be consistent with the IAAH aims: government initiative with public sector leadership and private sector participation, joint government-civil society initiative with shared leadership and civil society-led initiative with government participation.

Government initiative with public sector leadership and private sector participation

The National Alliance in **Guatemala**, led by the private sector and international cooperation agencies, played an important role in lobbying for legislation on the “Right to Food” and nutritional security. Now, the government is supporting National Alliance activities through a National Food Security Secretariat located in the Office of the President.

Joint government-civil society initiative with shared leadership

The governing committee of the National Alliance in **France** is co-chaired by civil society and government representatives. The Alliance has ten committees whose members have similar mandates, such as NGOs working in development, the media and local institutions. Each committee has one representative on the executive board which is co-chaired by one representative from civil society and one from the government.

Civil society-led initiative with government participation

The National Alliance of the **USA** is chaired by one of the member organizations, Bread for the World, which also hosts the secretariat. During 2004 election season, the National Alliance lobbied the candidates to raise the fact that Americans are interested in hunger issues. A bi-partisan representation from Congress serves as an observer.

Also, because there will be so many different types of organizations represented in the Alliance, the Alliance should ensure that each type of organization is represented in the leadership structure.

Registering the National Alliance

In the start-up phase, a National Alliance may operate informally but once the organizational structure has been determined, it is necessary to take whatever steps are required by the national government to be legally recognized. Official status might allow the National Alliance to receive and disburse funds, organize events, obtain official recognition for public statements and to represent its membership.

However, when taking the steps for legal recognition, it is important to avoid the risk of seemingly creating a new structure that could be perceived as a competitor of similar initiatives. In fact, this is an indication of why it is often preferable to turn an existing organization into a National Alliance by enlarging or adapting its mandate to match the IAAH mandate. If that is not possible, the new entity created to be the National Alliance can be legally recognized by law or in a formal procedure of registration as an official association.

In order to register in the official list of national organizations, the National Alliance of **Burkina Faso** was requested to describe the nature of its activities and provide membership, logistical and administrative information. This allowed the Alliance to undertake fundraising activities such as applying for support from the FAO Telefood Trust Fund. The Alliance is currently running six microprojects financed by Telefood and other development funds.

Alliances in **Rwanda** and **Guatemala** were officially legalized by parliamentary laws. In Guatemala, the government included the Alliance within the National Law for Food Security. In Rwanda, the law establishing the Alliance assigned it a mandate for food security.

Taking action



The key advantage of the National Alliances is the strength of a common voice to advocate for change. This strength can be applied in many ways, such as raising awareness of national hunger and poverty situations through the media, lobbying the government for increased funding of hunger and poverty reduction programmes, or setting up fora for debate and exchange of information. But in order for that to happen, the National Alliances need to prepare. The Pledges to End Hunger, in which Alliances and their members set goals for future work, serve as a concrete tool to help Alliances quantify their collective strength.

Develop consensus on goals and objectives

Once the National Alliances are set up and proceeding with activities, it is time to think long-term and begin the process of developing an action plan. Although each country's strategy will be different, developed in relation to local needs and capacities, there are several goals and objectives that should be adapted to each National Alliance strategy.

The overriding goal of the IAAH and, in turn, the National Alliances, is to reach the target set by the World Food Summit and the Millennium Task Force of reducing the number of hungry people by half by the year 2015. There are several avenues that can be considered and many possible activities.

Educational and capacity building

The First Lady of **Paraguay**, an FAO Goodwill Ambassador, was instrumental in forming a National Alliance in Paraguay. Her office already supports the FAO educational initiative Feeding Minds, Fighting Hunger. The IAAH Secretariat provided technical support to identify potential partners from civil society and UN agencies.

In **Honduras**, the Alliance implemented a national educational project to improve knowledge of nutrition. The project, based on the Feeding Minds Fighting Hunger programme, is part of the national strategy for poverty reduction.

Strengthening and empowering national organizations

A farmer youth organization had an important role in the effort to form a National Alliance in **The Gambia**, a fact that was given great credence when a government representative actually joined the National Alliance. This respect shown by the government empowered the youth in The Gambia and gave them a key role in rural development.

Workshops and training

The National Alliance in **Guatemala** helped organize a high-level meeting with government representatives from 16 Latin American countries aimed at exchanging experiences related to the regional hunger and food security situation.

In **Honduras**, the National Alliance organized a national seminar on food security for prioritizing its national strategy and field activities for food security and poverty reduction.

The Pledge to End Hunger

The Pledge to End Hunger is truly the heart of the International Alliance and the National Alliances. It is a voluntary step but one that can serve to bring the membership together under one umbrella. In making a Pledge to End Hunger, a National Alliance is

- stating its commitment,
- defining its goals with a deadline,
- and setting up its own reporting mechanism.

Discussions on the parameters and final goals or set of goals of its Pledge to End Hunger forces a National Alliances to focus on the reality of its situation as it identifies the practical steps needed and quantifies the time and resources required to reach the goal of reducing poverty and hunger.

In addition to presenting the National Alliance's Pledge to End Hunger, the member organizations also should be encouraged to make their own individual pledges. This serves to spread the debate from the Alliance meetings into the meetings of all the member organizations and further raise awareness of the need to work together to fight hunger and poverty. This will help build solidarity among the member organizations and heighten their commitment to the Alliance.

In order to bring more recognition to the Alliance and its members, it is suggested that the pledges be made on a locally symbolic date and that the progress reports be issued on that date. Several National Alliances – including Burkina Faso, Madagascar, Sierra Leone, Ireland, Italy, Switzerland, Honduras, USA, Benin, Guinea, Angola, Dominican Republic – choose World Food Day to meet, organize common activities and report to the IAAH secretariat.

The debates for determining exactly how the pledges will be worded and setting goals will give members a parallel focus on long-term as well as immediate goals. Setting measurable, practical goals as well as setting deadlines for achievement provide a built-in monitoring system for the Alliance.

The International Alliance provides documents to guide the National Alliances in the process of establishing Pledges to End Hunger and as a way of harmonizing reporting. All pledges are featured on the IAAH Web site where space is provided for the National Alliances to report their progress in achieving their goals.

Build partnerships and Twinning

Once National Alliances are established, it is important that they continue their outreach activities, looking for ways to develop partnerships outside the Alliance and bring more organizations under the Alliance umbrella. At the same time, as Alliance members get to know more about each other's activities, they can find ways to combine their efforts to achieve some of their individual goals. In addition, there is the possibility of coordinating activities with other international organizations, such as NGOs, the FAO Special Programme for Food Security (SPFS), UN agencies or the UN System Network on Rural Development and Food Security.

Non-governmental organizations

The **West African** Organization of Farmers and Agriculture Producers (ROPPA) supports the participation of its member organizations in National Alliances. This support strengthens the voices of National Alliances at national, subregional and regional levels, and facilitates contacts and partnerships with other networks and institutional organizations.

FAO Special Programme for Food Security (SPFS)

The National Food Security Council (CNSA) of **Haiti** also serves as the Haitian National Alliance. With this double role, CNSA can bring National Alliance participants into the consultation it oversees, namely coordinating and implementing revisions to the SPFS.

UN agencies and UN System Network on Rural Development and Food Security

When the Government of **Angola** expressed interest in forming a National Alliance, the IAAH secretariat facilitated contacts among government, UN agencies, project managers and other interested groups. Through FAO's efforts, UN agencies shared information on field projects and selected those consistent with the National Alliances.

FAO and WFP jointly support the operational activities of the National Food Security Council (CNSA) in **Haiti**, which serves as its National Alliance. Activities included a school feeding programme and working with the SPFS in designing a national policy on food security. FAO and WFP are in continuous contact to provide coordinated support.

Connecting national initiatives

In **Sierra Leone**, *Caritas Makeni* led the establishment of a Community-led Alliance Against Hunger. FAO brought together governmental initiatives on food security and the national Right to Food Committee which serves as the National Alliance Against Hunger. The National Alliance is supporting and working with the Community-level Alliance.

In **Dominican Republic** and **Madagascar**, FAO facilitated contact between the National Alliances and the UN Public-Private Alliance for Rural Development in order to improve the Alliances' capacities in resource mobilization.

Twinning with other partners

The International Alliance twinning programme is set up for matching two National Alliances that have the potential to support each other. In this way, more developed countries can give advice and financial support to less developed countries and, at the same time, they learn about each other's needs and goals and can expand into other areas for building partnerships.

USA and Ghana

The twinning of the **USA** and **Ghana** began as an effort for resource mobilization for the start-up of the Ghana National Alliance. The USA financed a Ghanaian delegation to travel to the USA and Rome. In the USA, they met with the USA National Alliance, members of the Millennium Project Hunger Task Force and others. In Rome, they met with representatives of IFAD, FAO and WFP. These contacts were crucial for positioning the National Alliance within Ghana's development community and for strengthening the Alliance operational capacity. As follow-up, there will continue to be periodic visits between the two countries.

Brazil and Haiti

Under an exchange protocol signed by the Ministries of Agriculture of **Brazil** and **Haiti**, Haitian ministers visited Brazil and attended a seminar on small-scale farming and Brazilian ministers visited Haiti and agreed to support a rural development project proposed by civil society and supported by the Haitian Ministry of Agriculture. Later, a Brazilian government and civil society delegation visited Haiti to explore logistical arrangements for a pilot project in which Brazilian agronomists will work with Haitian colleagues to increase agricultural output. The increased production will be purchased by the local school feeding programme.



Empowering National Alliances to be effective advocates against hunger and poverty

Set up communication strategy

In order to raise awareness of the activities and goals of the National Alliances, it is necessary to make sure the information is disseminated. There are many communication requirements that need to be considered.

- National Alliances must stay in contact with the IAAH secretariat.
- National Alliances need to communicate with other National Alliances.
- National Alliance members need to communicate with each other and with potential members.
- Media should be kept informed of activities because it provides the broadest avenue for getting news to the grassroots population and to the politicians. All of this takes a well thought out communication strategy.

For Alliances to communicate with the IAAH, other Alliances or members, it is important to look at what is possible with the local infrastructure. If access is available, information can be disseminated with email distribution or Web sites notices. Discuss with membership if email is appropriate for communicating with each other or if a newsletter would be better. The local or national media also provide opportunities for passing on information.

Before developing the communication strategy, it is important to meet media representatives, explain the goals of the National Alliance and find the right avenues for releasing stories or making announcements through the media.

Depending on the local situation, it may be necessary to send out news releases or to schedule press conferences when there is an important announcement. If a good relationship is developed with the media, it will be of great help in advocacy campaigns. This is also an opportunity to develop and share messages about the work of the Alliance with a broader audience, but it is necessary to adapt those messages to the particular audience of the media outlet you are dealing with.

The **USA** National Alliance sponsored the production of “Silent Killer”, a public television documentary that raises awareness of the fight against hunger. This is part of ONE, an advocacy campaign on MDG-1, launched in the USA in 2004 by several NGOs including CARE International and Oxfam.

Develop effective advocacy/accountability campaign

- Raise awareness of MDG/WFS targets and the current status of the country.
- Promote accountability and cooperation between government and civil society to fight hunger and poverty.
- Consider association with WFD celebrations and other established events and fora.
- Open possibilities for policy dialogue with government.

“The Hunger Banquet”, an advocacy toolkit prepared by Oxfam International, gives practical suggestions on how to build an advocacy campaign including who invite, how to approach media to have the event covered and so on. The toolkit is available upon request at the IAAH secretariat or downloadable in its English version at <http://www.hungerbanquet.org/>.

EXAMINE RESOURCE MOBILIZATION AVENUES

■ fundraising campaigns

FAO Telefood is one example of a funding opportunity. By applying to the FAO representative in a country, there is the possibility of receiving a small (maximum US\$10,000) grant for specific projects. The Burkina Faso National Alliance currently oversees six microprojects financed by Telefood.

■ organization of special events and conferences

When Honduras organized a national seminar on food security, the National Alliance was at the forefront of all activities. This raised awareness and respect for the Alliance, especially in the national debate about hunger and poverty issues. As a result, the Alliance’s enhanced public image strengthened its ability to raise funds.

■ community-based projects

The Community-led Alliance in Meghalaya, India grew out of a “self-help groups” project financed by IFAD. IFAD, in turn, added extra funds to support the Alliance.

■ UN agencies and their donors’ activities implemented under World Bank poverty reduction strategies

By maintaining a high, professional, pro-active profile with representatives of UN organizations in their countries, National Alliances put themselves in a position to become partners in future donor-funded projects. In some cases, the UN agencies will be members of the National Alliance but in others, it is important to establish contact and keep the UN agencies in the loop about Alliance goals, activities and capacities.

■ activities financed by private sector or cooperation agencies

■ twinning/bilateral/multilateral support

Countries participating in the twinning programme of the IAAH as well as those that establish partnerships with neighbouring country or intra-regional National Alliances bring more to the table when discussing funding potential with development banks or donors.

Reporting progress



In order for the National Alliances to gauge their own progress and for the International Alliance to quantify its impact in the global fight to end hunger and poverty, it is important to have a reporting system. The fact that Pledges to End Hunger have pre-determined goals and deadlines means that the National Alliances have a built-in measurement tool for reporting progress to their partners, members and to the IAAH Secretariat.

Reports on the progress toward achieving goals should include:

- a review of major activities and events, including objectives and expected outcomes,
- challenges,
- request of support, if needed.

Each National Alliance makes its own decision as to how often it will report to the IAAH and what information it will share with other IAAH partners such as international NGOs and CSOs, UN agencies and other National Alliances. The first assessment of progress toward reaching the goal of a Pledge to End Hunger will give a National Alliance an idea of how realistic its goals are and how effective the strategies are for reaching their goals. After the first report, it may be necessary for National Alliances to reassess their strategies.

Linking with others



Once established, National Alliances will have an ongoing need for outreach to attract new members. Outreach is also important to increase awareness of the National Alliance's work, thus bringing more attention to the issues surrounding poverty and hunger and giving more importance to the National Alliances' national and international lobbying efforts. This can mean establishing relationships with existing regional networks or creating links with global partners or other global advocacy campaigns.

Looking toward the 2005 G8 meeting in Scotland, IAAH partner ActionAid and the Make Poverty History campaign organized several activities designed to reinforce the message of the Live 8 initiative – advocating debt reduction for low-income countries and mainstreaming hunger issues. ActionAid crossed Africa with a bus, recording voices and messages of African people. The delegation also stopped in Rome to meet with the Rome-based UN agencies, the IAAH working group and representatives of G-77, a group of 77 developing countries. All voices and contributions were presented to the G8 in Scotland.

On World Food Day 2005, several National Alliances sent out news releases they had written in consultation with the IAAH Secretariat. World Food Day activities always receive media attention, so the information in the news releases was given high visibility by the media and the National Alliance messages were strengthened by the global visibility of the event.

IAAH works in partnership with More and Better, an advocacy campaign for increasing the quality and quantity of assistance for agriculture and rural development. IAAH and More and Better promote each other's messages in regional and international venues. The West African Organization of Farmers and Agriculture Producers (ROPPA) is working with National Alliances to strengthen their capacity in policy-making and resource mobilization. ROPPA, crucial in supporting the Alliances in **Mali, Benin and Senegal**, has been highly involved in connecting Alliances with funding organizations such as the African Development Bank.