

Hunger group hopes for progress in 2011 on global malnutrition

by [Adelle M. Banks](#)

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WASHINGTON (RNS) Significant progress on global malnutrition can be made in 2011, the ecumenical anti-hunger group Bread for the World said Monday (Nov. 22) in its new annual report on hunger.

The U.S. government's "Feed the Future" initiative has the potential to reduce hunger by addressing long-term economic development and focusing on small farmers, said Asma Lateef, director of Bread for the World Institute.

The report calls for emphasizing nutrition, especially for young children and pregnant women, and fostering rapid response to hunger emergencies. It also urges a rewrite of the 1961 Foreign Assistance Act to emphasize poverty reduction as a key aspect of U.S. foreign policy.

The report, " Our Common Interest: Ending Hunger and Malnutrition," was released as interfaith leaders have mobilized U.S. houses of worship to work on fighting domestic poverty. Officials of the National Council of Churches, Catholic Charities USA and the Jewish Council for Public Affairs (JCPA) gathered in Washington on Monday to call on Congress to address poverty through legislative action, including reauthorizing the Child Nutrition Act.

Recent federal statistics show an additional 3.8 million people in poverty and one in seven American households unable to purchase adequate

food.

"Despite more people falling into poverty, federal programs are helping to make a difference to provide people with access to affordable, ... healthy food," said Josh Protas, Washington director of JCPA, in an interview. "Federal intervention can make a critical difference as people are on the cusp of falling into poverty and losing so much of what's important in their lives."