

## **ACTION AGAINST HUNGER IS ASKING CANADIANS TO HELP GROW A VIRTUAL GARDEN IN HONOUR OF THEIR LOVED ONES TO SUPPORT LIFE-SAVING NUTRITION PROGRAMS.**

**Toronto, ON – May 8, 2017:**

This Mother's Day, Action Against Hunger is offering a unique way for Canadians to honour loved ones by planting a seed in their virtual garden to support nutrition programs in over 50 countries.

"In lieu of the usual charity e-card, we've made a public virtual garden on our website where supporters can make a donation to plant a seed in honour or in memory of a loved one," explains Zoe Fregoli, Action Against Hunger's Fundraising Manager, "so often, charities offer 'symbolic gifts' of goats or wells for Mother's Day, and we wanted to do something a little different."

Donors can choose from six fruit and vegetables to plant in the public garden, and they can include a message with their virtual seedling honouring a loved one.

Why a virtual garden? Because gardens feature extensively in Action Against Hunger's programs:

- As a part of its nutrition and health programs, Action Against Hunger facilitates the creation of community gardens outside of malnutrition treatment centres so parents of children suffering from malnutrition can access fruits and vegetables directly for a varied and nutritious diet.
- Through Action Against Hunger's food security and livelihood programs, families are shown how to grow "kitchen gardens" – these allow families to grow fruits and vegetables in their own homes, to supplement their diets, but also to generate income through the sale of surplus produce.
- In Action Against Hunger's emergency response programs, community and kitchen gardens both supplement the food rations displaced persons typically receive – sufficient to keep a person alive in the short-term, but not a complete diet long-term.
- The organization also carries out water and sanitation programming, e.g. the building of wells and irrigation canals, to help protect families from climate shocks like drought and flooding.
- In Canada, Action Against Hunger runs food literacy programs to help instill healthy habits in Canada's youth.

Saynuwara, from Myanmar, shared her garden story: "I was just looking for a way to survive and feed my family. Before I participated in Action Against Hunger's garden program, I did not have any knowledge of homestead gardening. They gave me training on sustainable gardening practices. I learned about pest and disease management, water management, natural pesticide making, compost making, and seed saving in a bottle mixed with ash. Because of Action Against Hunger, I can access fresh vegetables and year-round availability of food is now guaranteed for my family. Now I grow a variety of vegetables such as okra, chili, corn, beans and sweet potato. Life is better now and I can save money for my children's education."

Meanwhile, in Canada, Action Against Hunger runs a mobile school garden program. "As a mother myself, I know that we need to do what we can to give our children the best possible start at life. This is why I'm so excited that our school food gardens and food literacy projects are taking off across Canada," explains Mira Lyonblum, National Programs Manager.

She adds, "more and more teachers and parents are asking me for this much-needed program, and with your help, we can have the resources to reach more schools. Your donation to our garden will ensure more kids get a healthy foundation that will shape the rest of their lives."

For more information and to see our virtual garden, visit:

<https://actionagainsthunger.ca/garden>

###

### **About Action Against Hunger**

Action Against Hunger saves the lives of severely malnourished children while helping communities become self-sufficient. Recognized as a world leader in the fight against malnutrition, Action Against Hunger has pursued its vision of a world without hunger for more than three decades, combating hunger in emergency situations of conflict, natural disaster, and chronic food insecurity. With more than 8,000 staff in more than 50 countries, our innovative programs in nutrition, food security, livelihoods, water, sanitation, and hygiene, reach more than 14.7 million people each year, restoring self-sufficiency to vulnerable populations throughout the world.

For more information, visit us online, on Facebook, or on Twitter:

[www.actionagainsthunger.ca](http://www.actionagainsthunger.ca) | Facebook: [actioncontrelafaimcanada](https://www.facebook.com/actioncontrelafaimcanada) | Twitter: [@ACFCanada](https://twitter.com/ACFCanada)

### **Media Inquiries**

To schedule an interview or to speak with one of our experts, please contact:

Naomi Garneau

416-644-1016 x 206

[ngarneau@actionagainsthunger.ca](mailto:ngarneau@actionagainsthunger.ca)