In recent months there have been many stories of hungry people and anecdotal evidence in the media of the increasing problem of hunger. While individual stories inform our understanding of the daily lives of hungry people, the recent nationwide hunger study sponsored by Feeding America (FA) (formerly America’s Second Harvest), the nation’s largest organization of emergency food providers, offers the most comprehensive study of hunger across the nation, individual states, and our local communities. The FA Hunger in America 2010 surveys the emergency food programs whose primary purpose is to feed people in a hunger crisis and the clients who receive food from those pantries, kitchens and shelters.

The national study is based on completed in-person interviews with more than 62,000 clients served by the FA national network, as well as on completed questionnaires from more than 37,000 FA agencies. The national report can be found at www.feedingamerica.org/hungerstudy.

The FA Hunger in America study is executed every four years. This is the first one in which all FA member food banks in Indiana have participated and therefore the first time there has been a state-wide Indiana report. Figure A shows the coverage of Indiana counties by FA food bank members. The comprehensive Indiana statewide report can be found at www.feedingindianashungry.org.

This Executive Summary encapsulates the results from clients and agencies served by Terre Haute Catholic Charities Food Bank. The comprehensive report for the Terre Haute service area can be found at www.CatholicCharitiesTerreHaute.org.
How Does the Food Banking System Work?

Figure B shows the channels through which FA provides food to its 205 member food banks and food rescue organizations. In most cases food banks and food rescue organizations do not directly feed people. They collect food from a variety of sources and distribute it to emergency food programs including pantries, kitchens and short term shelters who do the actual feeding.

**FIGURE B: How Food Banking Works**

- **Indiana’s Hungry:** Working Poor, Newly Unemployed, Single Parent Families, Homeless, Victims of Abuse, Children, Elderly
- **Nonprofit Food Bank Member Agencies:** Pantries, Soup Kitchens, Shelters, Youth Programs, Senior Centers, Day Cares

Terre Haute Catholic Charities Food Bank

For three decades, Terre Haute Catholic Charities Food Bank has been soliciting, collecting and redistributing food to charities who are feeding hungry people. Terre Haute Catholic Charities Food Bank is a 501 (c) (3) not-for-profit and member of FA network which not only provides food to charities for people trying to make ends meet, but also food and supplies to those recovering from natural disasters. For more information about the work of Terre Haute Catholic Charities Food Bank and for the full study Hunger in America 2010 Local Report prepared for Terre Haute Catholic Charities Food Bank, please refer to www.CatholicCharitiesTerreHaute.org.

Who Participated in the FA Hunger in America 2010 Survey in the Terre Haute Service Area?

Figure C shows the Indiana counties served by Terre Haute Catholic Charities Food Bank. While Terre Haute Catholic Charities Food Bank is located in Terre Haute in Vigo County, its service area covers urban, suburban, and rural counties. 62 agencies (emergency pantries, kitchens, and shelters) participated in the Agency Survey and 308 clients of those agencies participated in the Client Survey. The conclusions of this report are based on the responses of the participating agencies and clients.

**FIGURE C: Counties Served by Terre Haute Catholic Charities Food Bank**
Who Receives Food Assistance?

The FA Hunger in America 2010 estimates that the emergency programs receiving food from Terre Haute Catholic Charities Food Bank provide food assistance to 7,600 different people each week and 32,200 different people each year. There has been a significant increase in pounds of food distributed in the last four years suggesting growth of clients served. In 2006, Terre Haute Catholic Charities Food Bank distributed 1,276,971 pounds, while from July 2008 to June 2009, Terre Haute Catholic Charities Food Bank distributed 1,773,891 pounds of food.

Demographic Profile of Food Clients

- 72% emergency pantry clients are female
- 47% of emergency kitchen clients are male
- 99% of clients at emergency food programs are US citizens
- 71% of emergency food clients in Terre Haute Catholic Charities Food Bank service area are registered voters
- Less than 1% of emergency food clients are homeless

Multigenerational and Single Parent Families are Common

- 26% of households with children < 18 are headed by single parents
- 13% of households have a member 65 or older
- 3% of households have a grandparent providing basic needs for a grandchild
- 9% of households have a non family member

All numbers of .5 or less found in this summary have been rounded down in order to not exaggerate conclusions.
Many people believe that most of the clients receiving emergency food assistance are on welfare, but welfare clients account for 2% of those receiving emergency food assistance.

- The most frequently mentioned source of income (51%) was non-welfare governmental sources such as social security, unemployment compensation, Disability/Workers compensation, and Supplemental Security Income. These sources of income are generally not available to healthy workers who are still of working age.

- The main source of income in the previous month is a job for 30% of respondents.
- Another 6% report no income at all.
- 4% report their main source of income as from non-governmental, non-job sources such as family, child support, alimony, churches, etc.

Why Does the Hunger Report Refer to Food Insecurity Rather than Hunger?

*The Merriam-Webster Dictionary* defines hunger as a craving or urgent need for food or a specific nutrient, an uneasy sensation occasioned by the lack of food, or a weakened condition brought about by prolonged lack of food. Hunger is a physical feeling which many of us feel when a meal is delayed. Food insecurity refers to the inability of people to obtain sufficient food for their household. Some people may find themselves skipping meals or cutting back on the quality or quantity of food they purchase. This recurring and involuntary lack of access to food can lead to malnutrition over time.

Food security and food insecurity are conceptually defined as follows:

- **Food security:** “Access by all people at all times to enough food for an active, healthy life. Food security includes at a minimum: (1) the ready availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods, and (2) an assured ability to acquire acceptable foods in socially acceptable ways (e.g., without resorting to emergency food supplies, scavenging, stealing, or other coping strategies).”

- **Food insecurity:** “Limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods or limited or uncertain ability to acquire acceptable foods in socially acceptable ways.”

The hunger study refers to “very low food security” and “low food security,” respectively, in order to distinguish the physiological state of hunger from indicators of food availability. The main distinction between a household being classified as having very low food security and low food security is that households with very low food security have had one or more members experience reductions in food intake or disruptions in eating patterns due to a lack of adequate resources for food. Households with low food security, while faced with food access problems, typically do not experience incidents of reduced food intake.

Many clients report health issues. 30% of clients reported that at least one member of their household was in poor health. As you would expect, the study found that purchases of food compete significantly with other life necessities such as housing, medical expenses, and transportation.
Why is Emergency Food Assistance Needed?

Many people in Indiana are not able to purchase sufficient food because they are unemployed or underemployed. Their food needs are partially met by the federal safety net programs (e.g. Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), School Breakfast Program (SBP) and National School Lunch Program (NSLP), but additional assistance is needed.

CHART 5: 2008 Income of Clients Under the Federal Poverty Level

Education level is highly correlated with household income.

- 36% of emergency food clients did not complete high school compared to 14% nationally and across Indiana.
- 73% of emergency food clients had a high school education or less.

Who Provides Food Assistance?

Emergency Food Assistance Providers

Emergency food assistance is provided by food pantries, soup kitchens and homeless shelters, and by the federal government through the state.

There are many experienced service providers in the Terre Haute Catholic Charities Food Bank service area. The average length of operation is 18 years.

- 11% of programs have been serving clients 4 years or less
- 31% of programs have been serving clients 5-10 years
- 50% of programs have been serving clients for 11-30 years
- 8% of programs have been serving clients for more than 30 years

There is a very high level of satisfaction among clients of food pantries, soup kitchens and homeless shelters.

- 88% of clients report that they are treated with respect by the staff all the time.
- Over 97% of clients are very satisfied or somewhat satisfied with the quantity, variety and quality of the food they receive.
84% of emergency food pantries in the Terre Haute Catholic Charities Food Bank service area are faith-based organizations.

62 of Terre Haute Catholic Charities Food Bank’s 69 agencies participated in the FA Hunger Study: 39 food pantries, 9 soup kitchens, and 6 homeless shelters.

Most emergency food providers do not meet other physical needs of their clients.

85% of pantry programs do not provide Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), counseling, employment training, or eligibility counseling for other federal programs.

78% of emergency food pantries, 72% of kitchens, and 40% of shelters reported an increase in clients since 2006.
Who Provides Food Assistance?
The Federal Government Feeding Programs

While the Feeding America emergency food system provides immediate critical assistance, the US government provides the majority of food assistance to its citizens in need. Given the high need experienced by many clients, it was important to assess whether the clients are receiving all of the government assistance for which they are eligible.

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is used by many clients of emergency food assistance. SNAP is not intended to supply all the food needed by a household. On average monthly SNAP benefits last for 3 weeks. The program was called “Food Stamps” prior to 2008.

- 80% of clients or household members have ever applied for SNAP benefits.
- 48% of households are currently receiving SNAP benefits.
- 46% of clients who are receiving SNAP benefits have been receiving them for more than 2 years.

Client households with children and seniors rely on SNAP benefits.

- 65% of clients living with seniors have ever applied for SNAP.
- 92% of households with children younger than 18 have ever applied for SNAP.
- 74% of households with children younger than 5 are currently receiving SNAP.

Although many client households receive SNAP it is likely that many more are eligible.

- 36% of clients who had not applied for SNAP benefits did not do so because they believe that they are not eligible or eligible for only a low benefit amount.
- 23% of all households believed that they were not eligible, but had incomes below 130% of the federal poverty level, the maximum income eligibility.
- 35% of households with children under 18 thought they were ineligible due to income, but in fact were not.

Other common reasons for not applying for SNAP include:

- It is inconvenient (e.g. it is hard to get to the office).
- Clients do not need SNAP benefits.

19% of clients had received welfare in the form of General Assistance or Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) in the previous 2 years.

The SBP and NSLP are used by many children who receive assistance through the Terre Haute Catholic Charities Food Bank network. Of households with children younger than 18, 73% participated in NSLP and 72% participated in SBP. Only 13% participated in the Summer Food Service Program providing free meals to children. The most common reasons for not participating were that they were not aware of the program or that there were no programs near them.

What is Needed?

While clients are grateful for the help they receive from emergency food providers, most providers are concerned about their ability to meet the needs of their clients. A major cause of their concern is the significant growth in the number of clients in recent years. There have been many anecdotal reports of the increase of people needing food assistance in the media, and the quantitative results of Hunger in America validate them. 78% of Terre Haute Catholic Charities Food Bank food pantries have experienced an increase in the number of clients since 2006.
Many emergency food providers are rationing or reducing food portions in order to provide some food to all clients. In 2008 32% of pantries and 13% of kitchens sometimes or always experienced the need to reduce food portions.

Many emergency food providers turn people away because they do not have enough food. 45% of pantries and 60% of shelters reported turning away clients during the previous year.

- The most frequent reason for pantries to turn away clients was clients abused program or came too often. The second most common reason for pantries to turn people away was lack of food or clients lived outside of service area.
- The most frequent reason for shelters to turn people away was clients exhibiting drug, alcohol or behavioral problems.
- On the average kitchens needed 75 additional meals and shelters needed 35 additional meals per week.

**CHART 13: Problems That Threaten Operations**

**CHART 14: Percent of Emergency Food Providers Accessing Food from Sources in Addition to the Food Bank**

Much of the food distributed by emergency food providers comes from Terre Haute Catholic Charities Food Bank. On the average pantries receive 51% of their food from Terre Haute Catholic Charities Food Bank, kitchens receive 36% of their food from Terre Haute Catholic Charities Food Bank and shelters receive 38% of their food from Terre Haute Catholic Charities Food Bank.

Of significant concern is that a large majority of emergency food providers feel that their organization’s very existence is threatened by lack of sufficient resources. 76% of pantries and 100% of kitchens believe that they are facing one or more problems that threaten their continued operations.

The problems reported were predominately related to funding and food supplies.
Food Donors

It is clear that food donations to local food banks are critical! Food banks are the single largest source of food to most emergency food programs. If you do not currently donate food please consider helping. All emergency food providers need more sources of protein: meat, poultry, fish, beans, eggs, and nuts.

CHART 15: Needed Items for Pantries, Kitchen, and Homeless Shelters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Pantry</th>
<th>Kitchen</th>
<th>Shelter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bread, Cereal, Rice and Pasta</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fresh Fruits and Vegetables</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canned or Frozen Fruits or Vegetables</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meat, Poultry, Fish, Beans, Eggs, and Nuts</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milk, Yogurt, Cheese</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fats, Oils, Condiments and Sweets</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milk, Yogurt, and Cheese</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fats, Oils, and Sweet</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Hygiene and Cleaning Products</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Financial Donors

Financial donations are critical. Food banks are able to leverage every dollar into multiple meals. Financial contributions help food banks purchase critical items such as sources of protein and hygiene products which are not donated in sufficient quantities. Large financial donations also help the food bank repair and purchase trucks, forklifts, refrigerators and other items needed to operate their warehouses.

Food Bank Employees

Dedicated food bank employees often work long hours at wages lower than they could earn elsewhere. Emergency food providers wish that they could get more food from Terre Haute Catholic Charities Food Bank, but they are clear that Terre Haute Catholic Charities Food Bank is critical to their continued existence. Over 85% of pantries and 72% of kitchens predict significant or devastating impact of the elimination of their food bank.
Volunteers

Volunteers are critical to the operations of pantries and kitchens.

- On the average a pantry has 0 paid staff and a kitchen has 1.
- 91% of pantry programs and 17% of kitchen programs are entirely run by volunteers.
- The average number of volunteers at a pantry or kitchen is 8.
- The average total volunteer hours in the previous week at a pantry was 37 and at a kitchen was 28.

Elected Officials

Federal food programs such as SNAP, WIC, SBP and NSLP provide the overwhelming majority of food to those in poverty. These programs must be sufficiently funded and efficiently administered to meet the needs of the growing number of people who need them.

- SNAP is used by many clients receiving charitable emergency food assistance. Almost half of households with children who use charitable emergency food programs in Terre Haute Catholic Charities Food Bank service area are already using SNAP. Many others don’t know that they are eligible for benefits.
- Children in nearly 75% of the households using food pantries in Terre Haute Catholic Charities Food Bank service area participate in the SBP and NSLP.

The Many Ways You Can Help End Hunger

If you are not currently engaged in the work of helping your neighbors have enough to eat, then we encourage you to do so.

You can...

- Read the full local report which can be found at www.CatholicCharitiesTerreHaute.org, the state report which can be found at www.feedingindianashungry.org, or the national report findings at www.feedingamerica.org/hungerstudy.
- Donate financially to help Terre Haute Catholic Charities Food Bank provide more of the less commonly donated items like sources of protein.
- Donate food to Terre Haute Catholic Charities Food Bank or to a pantry, kitchen, shelter or other food provider.
- Volunteer at Terre Haute Catholic Charities Food Bank or a local pantry, kitchen or shelter.
- Let your federal representative and senators know that you want them to fully fund programs like SNAP, WIC, SBP and NSLP.
- Contact your state representative and senator to request improvement to the administration of and outreach for the federal programs so that all eligible households can access existing programs.
www.feedingamerica.org/hungerstudy
www.feedingindianashungry.org
www.CatholicCharitiesTerreHaute.org

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