



# Preparing Students for Careers in Effective International Agricultural Development

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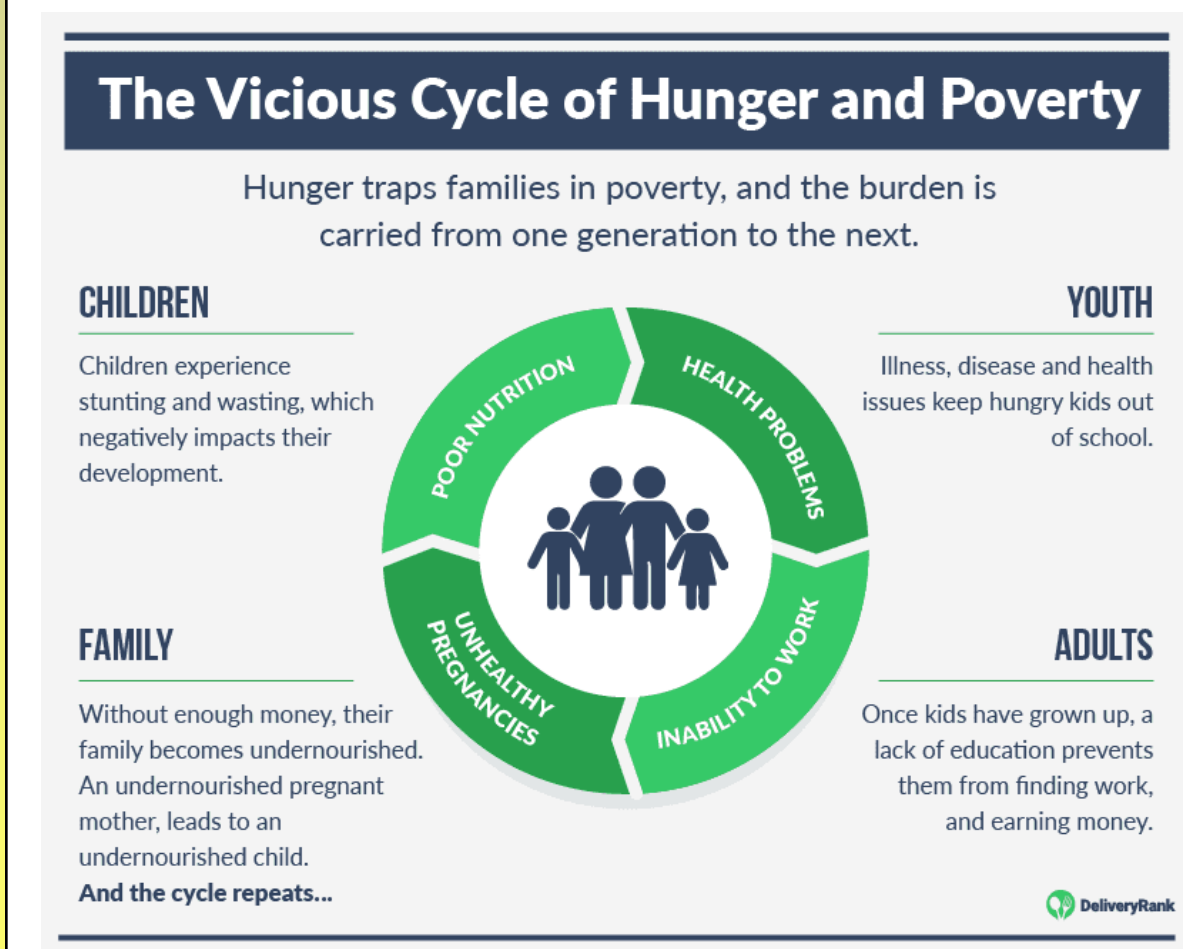


## ABSTRACT

There is an ever-increasing need to find sustainable food supplies for the growing world population. The Department Sustainable Agriculture at Andrews University whose students and staff have a strong ethic of service to others, is attempting to address this need by developing a Bachelors of Science degree program in International Agriculture Development in collaboration with ADRA (Adventist Development and Relief Agency). While housed in Sustainable Agriculture, this degree has required components from Business and the Social Sciences. The Capstone experience of the program consists of two Internships, one domestically to allow the student to gain experience under supervision, and the other internationally to permit the student to develop their own management skills and get a better understanding of what is expected by international aid organizations.

## THE NEED

According to the Food and Agricultural Organization of the U.N. (FAO) 11% of the people on Earth are chronically undernourished.<sup>1</sup> Although 55% of all deaths of children are attributable in some way to malnutrition, it affects on all aspects of the human life cycle.<sup>2</sup>



Chronic malnutrition and its effects on the humans in a society leads to a host of other problems that can keep a society in the grip of poverty and disease for generations.<sup>3</sup>

## ANDREWS' RESPONSE TO THE NEED

The Department of Sustainable Agriculture at Andrews University is the only one of its kind in Adventist higher education in North America. The facilities it maintains for student learning include greenhouses, garden spaces, and the unique Agriculture Education Center.



This Center uses the repurposed barns and pastures of the former part dairy that was part of Andrews for 111 years. It houses livestock species such as sheep, goats, and cattle as well as small species such as chickens and rabbits. The students in the Department care for a different species every semester thereby gaining unparalleled experience and knowledge by putting into practice what is learned in the classroom. There is no other learning program like this at any college, private or public, in the United States.<sup>4</sup>



Students in the Department of Sustainable Agriculture put into practice what they learn in the classroom including preparing raised beds and managing lactating cows.



The faculty expertise in the Department and the facilities it operates put it in an ideal position to address the worldwide need for food sustainability by developing an educational program in International Agriculture Development. The Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) consulted with the Department in designing this pro-

gram with the goal of preparing students to work with non-profit aid organizations that improve food security.



International Agriculture Development students worked with orphans in Zimbabwe to prepare a vegetable garden, and learned date production in Israel.



## PROGRAM BENCHMARKING AND CONTENT

The coursework required for the Andrews University degree is comparable to that required by Cornell University for its International Agriculture and Rural Development degree with a concentration in Agriculture Food Security.<sup>5</sup> The Andrews degree program has components from three different departments/schools: Sustainable Agriculture, Business, and Social Sciences.<sup>6</sup>

The Agriculture portion is built around courses in animal and plant science relevant to production and post-harvest food storage to attain and preserve food safety and high nutrient content. Courses included Plant Science, Soil Science, Fundamentals of Irrigation, Animal Nutrition, Animal Reproduction, Production and Management of Poultry, Sheep & Goats, Small Livestock, Livestock Health & Disease, and Management of Agriculture Enterprises.

The Business portion contains courses in Accounting and Macroeconomics. The Social Science content includes courses in Development Theory & Practice, Needs Assessment, Capacity Mapping & Program Planning, Social Policy, and Emergency Preparedness.

The Capstone experience of the program consists of two Internships: one domestically to allow the student to gain experience under supervision, and the other internationally to permit the student to develop his/her own management skills and get a better understanding of what will be expected by international aid organizations. ADRA is collaborating with the Department on some of these internships.

## ASSESSMENT

Assessment of the students is based on their performance in classes, the quality of their portfolios, and the evaluations of their supervisors and faculty members during their Internships. The students must be able to define, develop, and implement useful recommendations and sustainable projects during the Internships.



## REFERENCES

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