

## UN World Food Program Director: If we want to beat world hunger by 2030, we need 'Big Ag' and biotechnology

Ertharin Cousin has spent her entire life providing people with food: as a child of a restaurant owner couple in Chicago, later as head of the World Food Program of the United Nations. And today as head of a foundation with the declared goal of creating a new food system for the world. She says: An agriculture that produces more and is at the same time more sustainable needs genetic engineering and the market power of agricultural corporations.

ZEIT ONLINE : Ms. Cousin, your goal was to create a world without hunger by 2030 – also officially proclaimed by the UN. In 2022 we are further away from that than we were a few years ago. You are failing right now.

Ertharin Cousin : We've lost our way. It would be dishonest to claim otherwise. The number of starving people is increasing and there is not enough investment to fight it.

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ZEIT ONLINE : What is possible is also in the hands of companies. Many of the products of agribusinesses, such as pesticides with their side effects on insects and other plants, contribute to environmental damage and also contribute to the increasing number of people suffering from hunger . A well-known example is Monsanto, which now belongs to Bayer. You were appointed to the Bayer Supervisory Board in 2019. What are your hopes?

Cousin: Corporations like Bayer have to change because they are part of the solution. Without them we will not conquer hunger. We can no longer farm today with the same means as in the past. Today's agriculture, while efficient at producing lots of food, is inflexible and has major disadvantages. Bayer and the other big agribusinesses have the potential to develop new biological and digital tools that will secure our future production capability – and in a more environmentally sustainable way.

[\*\*This is an excerpt. Read the original post here\*\*](#)