

Dire Hunger Crisis

Famine in Africa Takes Lives of Two Apostolic Pastors' Wives

CSI COMPASSION SERVICES
INTERNATIONAL

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A missed meal. Sometimes just a delayed meal. That is how many of us experience "hunger." But for millions across the globe, hunger has a very different reality. The definition of world hunger encompasses malnutrition and undernutrition. There are approximately 7.6 billion people in the world today. One out of every nine individuals is undernourished, which adds up to over 800 million people. Beyond the suffering of empty stomachs,

malnutrition and undernutrition lead to increased susceptibility to disease, difficulty fighting off illness, stunting of

growth, and cognitive delay.

However, the risk of quoting statistics such as these is two-fold. First is that we will forget that the numbers represent actual human lives. Second is that we will be overwhelmed with the daunting enormity of the need and give up before we begin.

Instead, we must ask ourselves: What should I do, and what can I do? The question of responsibility is easily answered. "But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" (1 John 3:17). We are all part of a family --- the family of humanity and an Apostolic church family.

The question of opportunity and ability requires we look for a place to start where real needs can be met. With the Feeding Our Family campaign, Compassion Services International is currently focusing on two areas: Uganda and the Western Sahel region of Africa. Our humanitarian representatives in both of these countries have reached out to make CSI and its donors aware of the tenuous situations in their respective locations. They are looking at real hunger in the faces of their friends, neighbors, and church constituents---our family.

Northern Uganda is currently in the

third year of a drought and famine. Per UPCI Missionary Phil Tolstad, the food shortage is complicated by the presence of approximately one million South Sudanese refugees in that part of Uganda --- one humanitarian crisis compounding another humanitarian crisis. The United Nations has been unable to deliver supplies to refugees directly, so instead they provide money for the purchase of food. This in turn drives the cost of food supplies higher.

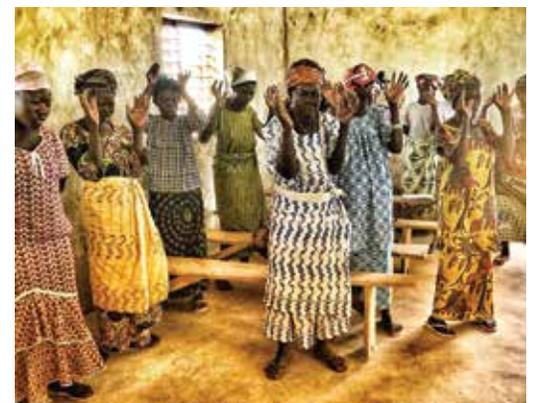
CSI has already sent funding, but more is needed. With this support, Missionary Tolstad was able to purchase food in another region of Uganda and transport it to the North. However, two pastors' wives in Uganda have recently passed away from secondary causes related to their lack of nutrition. All of these church members in Uganda are our family.

There are many parallels between the situation in Uganda and the Western Sahel region of Africa---civil unrest, religious opposition, unfortunate weather, large numbers of refugees. In such places, when the crop yield is low (as it has been for several consecutive years), there is little to no reserve or buffer. According to local news sources, after an irregular rainy season almost one million people in the Western Sahel alone are facing food shortages. Acute malnutrition affects at least one person in ten. At the same time, terrorism has also increased, adding safety insecurity to the food insecurity.

CSI is supporting

funding in the Western Sahel region for food supplies, specifically grain, during this difficult time. Our humanitarian representative there has a system of distribution to reach the largest needs within a village. With careful planning, approximately \$25 can feed a family for an entire month. However, this amount of grain provides only sustenance. They are surviving, but our work is not done. These villagers are our family.

"The worst sin toward our fellow creatures is not to hate them, but to be indifferent to them. That is the essence of inhumanity" (George Bernard Shaw). Compassion Services International's Feeding Our Family Campaign is an opportunity to answer that question "What can I do?" Uganda, the Western Sahel region and other famine-affected areas of the world are in need. Join us in Feeding Our Family.



Grain distribution in the Western Sahel region of Africa