



Hunger

Is it possible to eliminate world hunger?

FOCUS ON ETHIOPIA



CONCERN
worldwide
(U.S.) INC

WHY ARE SO MANY PEOPLE HUNGRY

**“A person who has food has many problems.
A person who has no food has only one problem.”** — Chinese proverb

Have you ever said, “I’m starving”?

All of us have felt hungry at times but there are many degrees of hunger. Read the definitions below to learn more.

HUNGER: A condition in which people do not get enough food to provide the nutrients for fully productive, active and healthy lives. People living in households where there is hunger are often forced to go without food because they cannot afford to buy it or cannot provide enough for everyone in the household.

MALNUTRITION: An extreme form of hunger resulting from inadequate consumption or excessive consumption of one or more nutrients that can impair mental and physical health.

UNDERNUTRITION: A condition resulting from an inadequate consumption of calories, protein and nutrients to meet the basic physical requirements for an active and healthy life.

FOOD INSECURITY: The limited or uncertain availability or ability to acquire safe, nutritious food. People living in households that are food insecure do not always know how to provide for their next meal and are often forced to cut back on meals to stretch resources.

DID YOU KNOW?

- Hunger kills over 10 million people every year, which is more than HIV and AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria combined.
- 1 out of every 4 children in developing countries is underweight.
- 25,000 people die from hunger or hunger-related illnesses each day.

There is enough food produced in the world to feed everyone. Yet there are almost one billion people in the world who suffer from hunger every day.

WHAT ARE THE CAUSES OF HUNGER?

The causes of hunger are diverse and complex. Which one of the causes listed below do you think has the greatest impact on hunger? Why?

WAR AND CONFLICT significantly reduce access to food by damaging infrastructure, disrupting economic activity, and/or forcing people to flee from their homes. As a result, conflict-affected communities often have no access to farmland and/or income. Most of the world’s “hunger hot spots” are also “conflict hot spots.”

WEATHER AND CLIMATE CHANGE severely impact world hunger. Natural disasters such as drought, flooding and tropical storms have made agriculture more difficult for poor families who rely solely on small plots of land for food. Drought is now the single most common cause of food shortages in the world. The world’s farmland is also under threat from erosion and desertification.

LACK OF AGRICULTURAL INFRASTRUCTURE including roads, storage facilities and irrigation severely limits production and availability of food. Improving infrastructure is one of the key solutions to ending hunger.

POOR FARMING PRACTICES, such as overgrazing, overcropping and deforestation, lead to reduced crop yields and soil erosion.

POVERTY is both a cause and an effect of hunger. If farmers are unable to buy seeds, tools, fertilizers or equipment, they drastically reduce their ability to feed their families. Year after year, this has a cumulative effect, locking families and communities into a cycle of poverty.

POPULATION GROWTH is increasing demand for food in some of the world’s poorest countries. At current rates, the world’s population is expected to reach 9 billion people by 2050. The United Nations estimates that food production must rise by 50 percent by 2030 to meet growing demand.

HUNGER AROUND THE WORLD

Is there hunger in your community?

“Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care...”

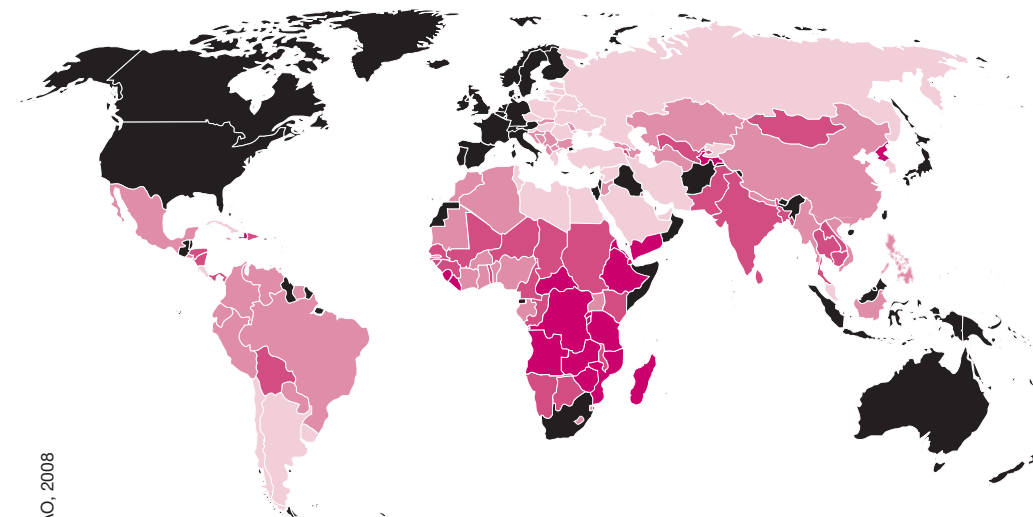
— Article 25, The Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Access to food is a basic human right. Yet every day, 923 million people are hungry. Increasing access to food is a global priority. World leaders committed to halving hunger at numerous summits including:

1. The World Food Summits in 1996 and 2002
2. The Millennium Summit of 2000
3. The 2002 Summit on Sustainable Development

Despite these commitments, much work remains to ensure that everyone has access to their rights. How do you think a country with limited resources can increase access to food?

HUNGER AROUND THE WORLD



Source: FAO, 2008

PERCENTAGE OF POPULATION UNDERNOURISHED

■ 35% or more ■ 20–34% ■ 5–19% ■ 0–4% ■ No Data

GLOBAL FOOD CRISIS

In the last few years, the price of food around the world skyrocketed. For the world’s 2 billion people living on less than \$2 a day, increased food prices can be a matter of life or death. In 36 countries, high food prices triggered a crisis, forcing families to spend up to 80 percent of their income on food. This increase has been caused by many factors, including lower agricultural production, climate change and the shift to planting bio-fuel crops. Protests around the world, from Senegal to India and Haiti, demonstrated the significance and scope of this global crisis. Yet it also revealed the complexity of the potential solutions. How do increased food prices affect you?

HUNGER IN THE U.S.

Although the U.S. is one of the richest countries in the world, each year over 26 million Americans experience hunger. The U.S. government has established numerous programs to increase food security, such as food stamps, school breakfast and lunch, and supplemental food for women, infants, and children. Every year, these programs reach over 75 million people — that is one in five Americans. What would happen if the government did not provide this assistance?

Source: USDA, 2008 & World Food Program, 2008

WOMEN AND HUNGER

Women represent more than 60 percent of the world’s hungry. Pregnant women and new mothers and their children are most at risk of undernourishment. Ensuring that women have access to adequate food is important because women most often take responsibility for the nutrition of their families. Ensuring that women also have access to education is critical, because educated women tend to marry later, have fewer children, and become more aware of nutritional issues.

CHECK IT OUT:

Take a health quiz: www.youthink.worldbank.org/issues/health/nutrition/quiz.php
Read a report on global hunger: www.ifpri.org/pubs/cp/ghi08.pdf

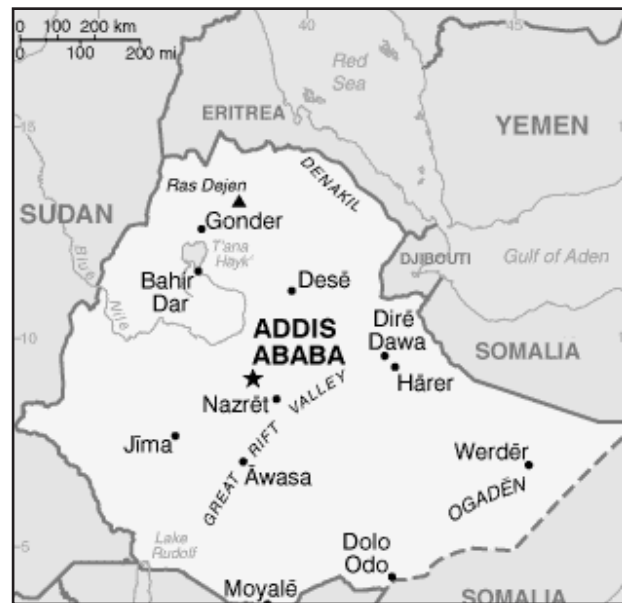
CHECK IT OUT:

Read more about the global food crisis: www.un.org/issues/food/taskforce
Learn more about world hunger: www.wfp.org/country_brief/hunger_map/map/hungermap_popup/map_popup.html

WHY IS THERE HUNGER IN ETHIOPIA?

“For peace, for justice, for the freedom of peoples. In equality and in love we stand united.”

— National Anthem of Ethiopia



HISTORY

Ethiopia is one of the oldest countries in the world. It was the place where scientists found “Lucy,” the oldest known complete fossilized human skeleton. Fossils found in Ethiopia have been dated over 4 million years old. A series of monarchies ruled Ethiopia until 1995, when the first democratic elections took place. One of Africa’s most famous leaders was Emperor Haile Selassie, who ruled Ethiopia from 1930–1974.

Ethiopia was the only country in Africa that Europe did not colonize, except for a brief Italian occupation from 1936 to 1941. Despite its celebrated past, decades of political instability, dictatorship and environmental degradation have left Ethiopia one of the poorest countries in the world.

In 1998, a border dispute with Eritrea led to a serious conflict. Although a peace agreement ended the conflict in 2000, an on going border dispute with Somalia threatens to further destabilize the region. Additionally, cycles of droughts and floods continue to hinder Ethiopia’s development and growth.

DID YOU KNOW?

- Ethiopia is the birthplace of coffee.
- It is the second most populous country in Africa.
- It is home to more than 80 languages with over 200 dialects.
- The Ethiopian calendar has 13 months.
- Since 1960, Ethiopian runners have set many world records and have received 38 Olympic medals, including 18 gold medals.



ETHIOPIA COUNTRY INFORMATION

LOCATION: East Africa

CAPITAL: Addis Ababa

POPULATION: 81 million

SIZE: Nearly twice the size of Texas

LANGUAGE: Amharic

ETHNIC GROUPS: Oromo, Amara, Tigraway, Somali, Guragie, Sidama & Welaita

CHILD MORTALITY RATE:
123 deaths/1,000 live births

LIFE EXPECTANCY: 50 years

RELIGIONS: Christian 61%, Muslim 33%,
Other 6%

LITERACY RATE: 36%

PRIMARY SCHOOL ENROLLMENT: 45%

ACCESS TO CLEAN WATER: 22%

**POPULATION LIVING ON LESS THAN
\$1 A DAY:** 23%

POPULATION UNDERNOURISHED: 46%

KEY EXPORTS: Coffee, beeswax, sugarcane

Sources: UNICEF, 2008 & CIA World Factbook, 2008

CHECK IT OUT:

Research information about Ethiopia: www.ethiopianembassy.org

Read more about Emperor Haile Selassie: www.imperialethiopia.org/selassie.htm

HOW WOULD YOU SOLVE HUNGER IN ETHIOPIA?

“When spider webs unite, they can tie up a lion.”

— Ethiopian Proverb

You may have seen pictures of starvation in Ethiopia. Hunger has plagued the country for many years and for many reasons. Agriculture has suffered due to prolonged droughts and a lack of irrigation systems. A growing population also requires an increasing supply of food. Since 90 percent of the population earn their income from agriculture, droughts can have a devastating impact. Each year, between 6 and 13 million people are at risk of starvation. Furthermore, the worsening economic situation has left Ethiopians with little money for food and development.

CAN ETHIOPIA BREAK THE CYCLE OF FAMINE?

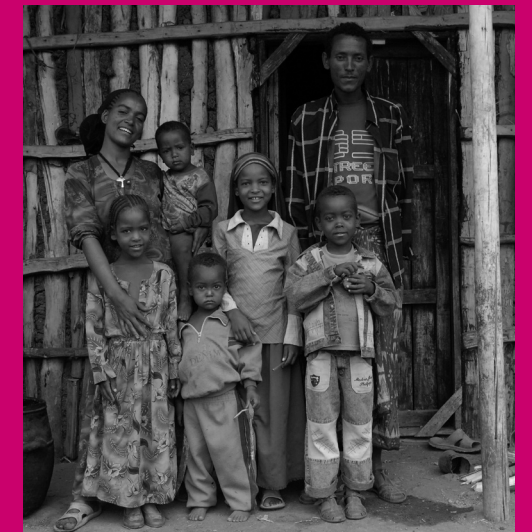
Since 1965, Ethiopia has faced drought over 15 times. From 1984–1985, two of the worst famines in human history took the lives of over 1 million people and brought worldwide attention to the plight of the drought-affected communities. Over 20 years later, the threat of famine and drought continues to affect people’s lives. Successive crop failures over the past years have depleted many families’ savings, forcing them to sell their belongings to buy food or other basic necessities.

MEET SAID

Said Mohammed is 32 years old. He supports his family with income he earns from farming. Like many Ethiopians, Said relied on rainfall to water his crops and risked losing everything in times of floods or drought. Four years ago, he harvested only corn from his land, which was not enough to meet his family’s needs. As a result, he had to sell all of his animals.

Fortunately, Said’s land fell within an area selected for irrigation in a joint venture by the Government of Ethiopia and Concern Worldwide. In this program, irrigation canals were built to channel rainwater into fields. Irrigation enabled Said to plant earlier and harvest more crops, including tomatoes, onions and peppers. With the money he earned, he bought two camels and built a new house for his family. Said stated, “We eat more vegetables now from our land.”

Said is one of 12,000 farmers who have participated in Concern’s irrigation programs. Projects such as this one provide a true-life example of how governments, communities, and organizations can work together to break the cycle of poverty and hunger.



COMMUNITY-BASED MANAGEMENT OF ACUTE MALNUTRITION (CMAM)

In 2001, Concern and partner Valid International pioneered a new approach to treat severely malnourished children. Up until this time, nurses and doctors treated children in hospitals or “Therapeutic Feeding Centers.” The centers were expensive to run because children were given 24-hour care for up to 30 days. Although they were built in centrally located places, families who lived far away were forced to travel for days to reach help. Everything changed with the CMAM approach, which enabled Concern to train and supply community health workers with a new product known as Ready-to-Use Therapeutic Food (such as “plumpy’nut”), for severely malnourished children. Now, community health workers are able to provide a weekly supply to the mothers, who can then treat their children from home. CMAM has been so successful that it has been adopted by the UN and World Health Organization.

CHECK IT OUT:

Learn more about food insecurity: www.fao.org/SOF/sofi

Play an interactive game: www.food-force.com

HOW CAN WE ELIMINATE HUNGER?

We have enough food to feed everyone on the planet. Yet, in every corner of the world there are people who are unable to lead healthy, active lives because they do not have adequate food. There are many complex political, economic and social factors that contribute to global hunger and, as a result, there are no easy solutions. How do you think hunger can be eliminated? **Here are some ideas...**

FOOD AID

The international community can help eradicate hunger through food donation programs. Food aid is an immediate solution in the fight against hunger. This form of aid has been criticized for creating a dependence on external aid and reducing the market prices of locally produced food. Yet many claim that food aid has proven successful in saving lives and reducing the suffering of the most vulnerable communities.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Many people believe that in order to eliminate hunger and poverty, it is necessary to concentrate on long-term, sustainable development. To achieve long-lasting growth, aid programs must focus on combating the spread of HIV and AIDS, providing education for all children and increasing agricultural productivity of poor farmers (particularly women) by building infrastructure and roads to improve access to markets to sell their goods.

GENETICALLY MODIFIED FOOD

By using genetically modified (GM) food — food in which the DNA has been altered — we can increase yields of crops and grow crops that are resistant to certain diseases or pesticides. Some scientists think that this new technology has the potential to end world hunger. However, there is a debate on whether or not these foods may have adverse effects on one's health, or may create new allergies and other unintended consequences. Is donating or encouraging poor countries to grow GM food the answer to world hunger?

FAIR TRADE

Quotas, tariffs and farm subsidies greatly inhibit farmers in the developing world from trading on the world market. Using these methods, developed countries are able to control the amount of imports into their country, which makes it easier and cheaper to buy domestic goods. While this may help the local economy, it substantially reduces the ability of poorer countries to develop their economies through fair trade. But some argue that if we don't help U.S. farmers, they'll suffer as well.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION

Worsening environmental conditions have had a drastic effect on people in developing countries. Depletion of natural resources, deforestation and degradation of ecosystems make the land unsuitable for productive farming. What are other ways to promote environmental conservation? We can help solve these problems by involving local residents in environmental conservation programs.

PEACE NEGOTIATIONS

One of the major causes of hunger is war, which often displaces people from their land. Violent conflict also prevents food aid from reaching the people who need it the most. How can diplomatic efforts such as peace negotiations ensure that people have enough to eat?



THE COST OF HUNGER

It is estimated that it would cost \$30 billion to solve the world hunger crisis. Although this may seem like a lot, in 2006, the world spent US\$1,200 billion on arms. Do you think that the world can afford to end hunger?

DEBATE IT!

With so many challenges to overcome, do you think we can eliminate hunger?

CAN WE ELIMINATE HUNGER?

YES Hunger can be eliminated

- The industrialized countries have huge economies and tremendous resources. If they would all chip in, hunger could be cut in half at an affordable cost.
- Given the high level of wealth in the developed world, we have a responsibility to share some of this wealth to reduce hunger.
- For the amount of money that Americans spend on dieting and weight loss (over \$50 billion per year), we could invest in sustainable solutions to hunger.
- Because the world is so interconnected today, reducing hunger in the world ultimately serves everyone's interests. It creates more political stability, and by promoting economic growth helps create more markets.

NO Hunger cannot be eliminated

- War and conflict throughout Africa prevent development and perpetuate problems like hunger. All of the aid in the world will not help so long as this violence continues.
- It is not the responsibility of countries like the U.S. to take care of the hungry in other parts of the world; that is the responsibility of their own governments.
- It is unrealistic to try to cut world hunger in half. It would cost more money than people in the industrialized countries would be willing to pay.
- The causes of hunger in other countries are complex and poorly understood. It is naive to think that outsiders can really make a serious difference by throwing money at the problem.

“Hunger is man-made. What misguided policies have caused, better focused policies can undo.”

— Olivier De Schutter, UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food

“What's important today is to realize that the time for talking is long past....now is the time for action.”

— Jacques Diouf, Director of FAO, 2008

“Gender equality is not simply socially desirable; it is a central pillar in the fight against hunger.”

— UN Hunger Task Force

“The freedom of man, I contend, is the freedom to eat.”

— Eleanor Roosevelt, First Lady, diplomat and activist





REFERENCES AND RESOURCES

HUNGER

Famine Early Warning
Systems Network
www.fews.net

International Food Policy
Research Institute
www.ifpri.org

Free Rice Game
www.freerice.com

Friends of the World Food Program
www.friendsofwfp.org

Reuters Alertnet
www.alertnet.org/db/topics/HUNGER.htm

ORGANIZATIONS

Food and Agriculture Organization
of the United Nations
www.fao.org

United States Department of
Agriculture
www.usda.gov

World Food Program
www.wfp.org

World Health Organization
www.who.int/features/factfiles/nutrition/en/index.html

ETHIOPIA

BBC News
news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/country_profiles/1072164.stm

Human Rights Watch
www.hrw.org/doc?t=africa&c=ethiop

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia
www.mfa.gov.et

Mountain Voices
www.mountainvoices.org/ethiopia.asp

UNICEF
www.unicef.org/infobycountry/ethiopia.html

CAMPAIGNS

One Campaign
www.one.org

Results
www.results.org

World Food Day
www.worldfooddayusa.org

DOCUMENTS

International Food Policy Research
Institute Global Hunger Index
www.ifpri.org/pubs/cp/ghi08.pdf

State of the World's Food Insecurity
www.fao.org/docrep/011/i0291e/i0291e00.htm

Universal Declaration of
Human Rights
www.unhchr.ch/udhr/lang/eng.htm

Roadmap to End Global Hunger
www.friendsofwfp.org

Joint Statement on
Community-Based Management of
Severe Acute Malnutrition
www.who.int/nutrition/topics/statement_commbased_malnutrition

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