



CHURCH WORLD SERVICE



UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST



# GLOBAL FOOD CRISIS

A Palestinian boy eats bread in front of his house in the southern Gaza Strip. Gaza is one of the areas seeing sharp increases in the prices of food. The area's crisis is compounded by restrictions on humanitarian aid.

*Reuters and  
Ibraheem Abu Mustafa,  
courtesy alertnet.org.*



**A**cross the globe, millions face malnutrition because of skyrocketing food prices. In some countries, hunger and starvation are looming threats. The Reuters news agency estimates basic food prices have gone up anywhere from 45 to 80 percent. Hunger kills an estimated 10 million people every year, and as food becomes more expensive even those who were once marginally secure in their ability to find food are in danger of slipping into hunger and malnutrition.

The global food marketplace is a complex web of supply, demand and subsidies. Several factors that determine food prices are driving the increase:

- **The rising cost of oil makes food more expensive to transport;**
- **In many countries, government subsidies change the food marketplace, making staples more expensive;**
- **Increased production in biofuels diverts agricultural efforts away from food production.**

Many of the world's hungry are not short of food because of a disaster or crop failure but because of chronic, long-term poverty that means they cannot afford the food that is available in their local markets. The crisis means the legions of the world's hungry will

## Hunger: By the numbers

U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki-moon estimates the food price problem could become the worst crisis in 30 years. It is already prompting riots from Haiti (pictured, right) to Egypt. World Bank President Robert Zoellick has warned that rising food prices could push an additional 100 million people in low-income countries into poverty. Even before the food crisis, hunger plagued the lives of millions:

**A child dies of hunger every five seconds**

(Food and Agriculture Organization)

**The number of chronically hungry people is growing by 4 million per year** (Food and Agriculture Organization)

**One in four children in developing countries is underweight** (UNICEF)



*Photo: Reuters/Eduardo Munoz, courtesy alertnet.org; other photos, Reuters, courtesy alertnet.org unless noted*

*...share your bread with the hungry...IS. 58:7*

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# 'HUMAN RIGHTS BEGIN WITH BREAKFAST'

-Leopold Senghor, first president of Senegal

Displaced persons in Sudan's Darfur region line up for food assistance supplied in part by the UCC through CWS and others.

Photo: Chris Herlinger/CWS



## In Cambodia ...

"Cambodia's poor are left increasingly exposed to rising food and fuel prices. The price increases affected not only Cambodia but also Thailand, Laos and others. Rice... sold for \$546 per ton in March, up 68 percent from a year earlier."

*Hong Reaksmeay, CWS Cambodia*

## In Kenya...

"In this new era of global warming, farmers must begin to understand what this means and collectively begin to adjust the types of crops to use as well as farming techniques." - Dan Tyler, CWS East Africa & the Indian Ocean

## In Zimbabwe...

"If there is a time when the presence of humanitarian assistance is required in Zimbabwe, it is now... The 2007 agricultural season has seen so much of both flood and drought that rural farmers harvested virtually nothing. Inflation is around 200,000 percent."

*The Rev. Forbes Matonga, Christian Care, Zimbabwe*

## In Haiti...

"I believe the food crisis we are seeing shows the importance to our food security programs we have in Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Dominican Republic and Haiti. Families are able to provide and this gives them hope for a better future."

*Don Tatlock, CWS Latin America Liaison*

## How to Help

**GIVE:** CWS and its member communions, including the United Church of Christ work with local partners in more than 80 countries to provide assistance. People all around the world are feeling this crisis. Your gift will provide essential help where it is needed most. Mail your gift to the United Church of Christ, note Global Food Crisis, 700 Prospect Ave., Cleveland, OH 44115.

**SPEAK:** Contact your Senators and ask them to co-sponsor the Global Poverty Act (S.2433) and support an increase of \$5 billion each year in poverty-focused development assistance.

**PUT YOUR CONCERN INTO ACTION — GIVE TODAY!**

**WWW.UCC.ORG/OGHS**

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