

Hunger: Children Facing Malnutrition



One in four of the world's children are stunted. In developing countries the proportion can rise to one in three.¹



99 MILLION
CHILDREN UNDER 5
were underweight in 2012.²



90%
OF THE HUNGER
burden falls on Africa, Asia,
and the Middle East.³

SITUATION

Millions of children around the world are undernourished. These children and their families struggle with rising food prices and severe challenges in growing their own food. Rural families in particular suffer as a result of drought, annual lean seasons, and food emergencies. While progress has been made with the help of organizations like World Vision that provide immediate resources along with long-term solutions for hunger, great need still exists.

PLEASE PRAY ...

... for the millions of people struggling to recover from food crises.

Famine is the most lethal level of hunger. A severe drought in the Horn of Africa in 2011-2012 killed tens of thousands of children in Somalia

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and pushed millions of families to the brink of starvation. World Vision provided food, clean water, and medical care to more than 620,000 people during this crisis. Ask God to continue healing this region and others affected by drought and food shortages.

Lord, Psalm 65:9 tells us that “the streams of God are filled with water to provide the people with grain.” We pray that You will send blessings of grain to our hungry brothers and sisters in the Horn of Africa and elsewhere.

... that world food prices will be stable.

In 2008, food prices soared by 57 percent, sparking a global food crisis. Staples such as maize, wheat, and rice were priced out of reach for millions of hungry children and families. After a significant drop, food prices spiked again in 2010 and have stayed at higher levels. Pray for God’s intervention in the conditions that lead to food shortages, including high fuel prices, political turmoil, natural disasters such as droughts and floods, protectionist trade policies, and panic hoarding.

Lord, nothing is beyond Your power or out of Your control. Ease the suffering of the hungry by making food affordable for them.

... for children impacted by acute and chronic malnutrition.

Malnutrition leaves children vulnerable to devastating effects such as stunted physical growth, delayed or permanently damaged intellectual development, and a lowered immune system. Without proper nutrition, the heart literally shrinks, and in cases of acute hunger, the liver, kidneys, and intestines begin breaking down. Ask God to intervene and protect hungry children.

Lord, we lack words to express how the effects of hunger on children break our hearts. In Your great mercy, protect their lives and bodies.

... for the safety of those working to get food to the hungry.

Two groups at high risk of hunger are the rural poor and disaster survivors. It can be extremely difficult to reach these children and families, as well as those who suffer as a result of sectarian violence and political instability. Ask God to protect the aid workers who put their own lives at risk to help others.

Lord, You are our refuge. Be a fortress of safety for those who work in Your name to feed the hungry.

*For he satisfies
the thirsty*

*and fills the hungry
with good things.*

—Psalm 107:9 (NIV)

Praise God for the success stories.

Despite the tragedies, progress is being made. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization, the number of hungry people has been declining in a host of countries, including Armenia, Vietnam, and Nigeria. World Vision, the largest distributor of World Food Program food aid, continues to be on the forefront of feeding millions of hungry families. Thank God for the precious lives that have been saved.

Thank You, Lord, for the decline in the number of hungry people in certain countries. Isaiah 58:10 assures us that if we give ourselves on behalf of the hungry, then our light will shine in the darkness. Thank You for those who are shining lights into the darkness, and call others to join in saving lives.

And if you spend yourselves in behalf of the hungry and satisfy the needs of the oppressed, then your light will rise in the darkness, and your night will become like the noonday.

—Isaiah 58:10 (NIV)

¹World Food Program, www.wfp.org/hunger/stats, accessed 8/7/13

²Joint UNICEF/WHO/World Bank Child Malnutrition Database for 2012 (published 9/13), www.who.int/nutgrowthdb/jme_2012_summary_note_v2.pdf?ua=1

³The Lancet, online publication, 6/6/13, [www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(13\)61100-9/fulltext](http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(13)61100-9/fulltext)