

Ten Facts About Hunger and Poverty



June H. Kim/UMCOR

Three million children under five years old die because they are undernourished, according to Bread for the World.

UMCOR's World Hunger/Poverty Program, Advance # 982920, supports life and hope-giving enterprises that emphasize action and compassion. Our role model is Jesus, who ministered to the most vulnerable in his time and expects us to do the same today.

Here are 10 types of UMCOR programs that address issues of hunger and poverty in the world, and a fact about each one that we hope will get you thinking about how you can become involved.

1. Eradication of the Root Causes of Hunger and Poverty

- An estimated 1.2 billion people in the world go hungry. Each year, 3 million under-five children die because they are undernourished. Far more children live with under nutrition than die from it. For infants and young children, the effects of chronic malnutrition in the early years of life are largely irreversible.
- In the United States, 11.7 million children live in households where people have to skip meals or eat less to make ends meet. That means one in ten households in the US are living with hunger or are at risk of hunger. (*Bread for the World*; www.bread.org)

2. Agriculture, Rural Development, and Food Security

- AIDS has killed around seven million agricultural workers since 1985 in the 25 hardest-hit countries in Africa. It could kill 16 million more before 2020. (FAO; www.fao.org)

3. Stewardship of Natural Resources and the Environment

- Globally, 20% of the world's people in the highest-income countries account for 86% of total private consumption expenditures — the poorest 20% a minuscule 1.3%. (UNDP; www.undp.org)

4. Education, Training and Literacy

- 6.2 million youth in the US between the ages of 16 and 24 are high school dropouts. (US Census; www.census.gov)

5. MicroCredit and Enterprise Development

- In the developing world, 850 million people are illiterate; nearly two-thirds of these are women. More than 100 million school-age children in the developing world are not enrolled in primary school. (UNDP; www.undp.org)
- In the US two-thirds of all children growing up in poverty have one or more working parents, and one-third have a parent working full-time, year-round. (*Bread for the World*; www.bread.org)

6. Health Education

- 1.2 billion people lack access to water and over 2.6 billion lack access to basic sanitation. Almost 2 million children die each year for want of a glass of clean water and adequate sanitation. (UNDP; www.undp.org)

7. Leadership Development

- Although there are no exact figures, hundreds of thousands of children under age 18 (some as young as 8 years old) serve in government forces or armed rebel groups. Both girls and boys are used as child soldiers. In some countries, a third or more of the child soldiers are girls. (*Human Rights Watch*; www.hrw.org)

8. Supplemental Food Programs

- Poor nutrition contributes to 1 out of 2 deaths (53%) associated with infectious diseases among children aged under five in developing countries. In addition, inappropriate feeding of infants and young children are responsible for one-third of the cases of malnutrition. (*World Health Organization*; <http://www.who.int/en/>)

9. Advocacy to Alleviate Hunger and Poverty

- 36.2 million people live in households considered to be food insecure. Of these 36.2 million, 23.8 million are adults (10.6 percent of all adults) and 12.4 million are children (16.9 percent of all children). (*Food Research and Action Center*; <http://www.frac.org/>)

10. The Mobilization of Resources through United Methodist Connections

- With just six cents per American per day, we can cut hunger in half within five years in our own country, and within 15 years worldwide. (*Bread for the World*; www.bread.org)