



May 1, 2018

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

The World Council of Churches, World Evangelical Alliance and All Africa Conference of Churches, along with church-related humanitarian organizations and a coalition of church-related networks and organizations and partners, are promoting 10 June 2018 as the second annual **Global Day of Prayer to End Famine** to be observed in faith congregations worldwide. The Day of Prayer to End Famine will unite faith communities all over the world as a prayerful and spiritual movement to:

- Promote prayer, reflection and action with information and suggestions.
- Bring awareness regarding famine's impact on the most vulnerable children and families, and help address its root causes.
- Connect with church-related and other humanitarian organizations that are currently working to bring immediate relief and positive long-term change so children and families can live out God's aspiration for a dignified, peaceful and violence-free future.
- Help communities and congregations uphold each other in prayer and support, by sharing experiences, challenge and solutions.

As in 2017 120 organizations promoted the Global Day of Prayer to End Famine, it is our hope that many will continue to join and respond to the call on the same lines this year. There is a form at <https://goo.gl/forms/sYOPzxlWjLIJKazu1> open for all organizations, faith communities, partners and friends to express their continued and shared commitment to the day of prayer.

*Some wandered in desert wastes,
finding no way to an inhabited town;
Hungry and thirsty,
their soul fainted within them.
Then they cried to the Lord in their trouble,
and he delivered them from their distress;
He led them by a straight way,
until they reached an inhabited town. Psalm 107: 4- 7*

As a contribution by the faith community to a global effort to prevent famine, the 2017 Global Day of Prayer to End Famine played a critical role in raising awareness in faith communities and among global leaders of this under-reported and unfolding tragedy. This united effort was a strong contribution to mobilizing greater action across the world which led to famine being averted and/or rolled back in the short-term.

However, the risk continues into 2018. After years of a steady and remarkable progress on reducing world hunger, the numbers of hungry people globally have started to climb—a startling reversal less than three years after global leaders collectively agreed that achieving the ambitions of the Sustainable Development Goals demanded that no-one be left behind. Famine, drought and armed conflict, are making millions of our sisters and brothers hungry, homeless and vulnerable to conflicts, violence, and abuse.

In a world where there is more than enough resources and food for all, less than 50% of needed resources to address these challenges are being collected. While in most parts of the world, we have peace, we are not only unable to stop festering localized conflicts, and many across the world are guilty of encouraging the fratricidal slaughters. Children, young men, and women have been among the most affected. Millions of women and girls are exposed to gender-based violence in these crisis-affected areas. Apart from strengthening the ongoing peace initiatives at the national and community level and increasing support for humanitarian responses, including greater access to the most vulnerable communities, we also must stand in solidarity with our sisters and brothers to support them to realize a future free of extreme poverty, hunger, and violence.

Let us observe 10 June 2018 as a **Global Day of Prayer to End Famine**. May our prayers join the millions of our sisters and brothers as they cry to the Lord to be delivered from their distress. May we, together, make a straight way, to sustained peace, wellbeing and abundance!



Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit
General Secretary
World Council of
Churches



Rev. Dr André Karamaga
General Secretary
All Africa Conference of
Churches



Bishop Efraim M. Tendero
Secretary General/CEO
World Evangelical Alliance

Fact sheet, 2018

- The world continues to face an unprecedented catastrophe where 20 million people in Yemen, Somalia, South Sudan and Nigeria are living on the brink of famine. With concerted effort last year famine was averted and/or rolled back- however, in 2018, the risk of famine remains and/or has increased and has the potential to spread to other areas.
- 1.4 million children are at the risk of dying of severe malnutrition die in the coming months unless they receive treatment and care.
- The majority of hungry and malnourished people live in countries affected by conflict – 489 million out of the 815 million people. Almost 75% of the world's 155 million stunted children under the age of five live in countries affected by conflict.
- The world is currently witnessing the highest levels of displacement on record with an unprecedented 65.6 million people around the world having been forced from their homes. Among them are nearly 22.5 million refugees, over half of whom are under the age of 18. There are also 10 million stateless people who have been denied a nationality and access to basic rights such as education, healthcare, employment and freedom of movement.
- In northeast Nigeria, violence and insecurity are causing mass movements of people, with 1.62 million living in camps or host communities within Nigeria and tens of thousands seeking refuge in neighboring countries, including Cameroon, Chad and Niger, with 7 million people needing food assistance in these countries.
- As South Sudan enters its fifth year of current conflict, of the population of 7.5-10 million people, 2 million people have fled the young nation as refugees, and about 1.9 million people are internally displaced. Two-thirds of the remaining population (5.1 million people), continue to face severe food insecurity from January to March 2018.
- In Somalia, more than 3 million people cannot meet their daily food requirements today and require urgent humanitarian assistance, with 800,000 on the brink of famine.
- In Yemen, in the midst of continuing conflicts and blockade, almost 18 million people do not have enough food to eat – 8 million of these are severely food insecure and rely entirely on external assistance. The rate of child malnutrition is one of the highest in the world. More than 3 million pregnant and nursing women and children under 5 need support to prevent or cure malnutrition.
- Due to the ongoing effects of the 2015-2016 El Niño-induced drought and multiple consecutive droughts, an estimated 8.5 million people in Ethiopia continue to require emergency food assistance. Severe drought has decimated livestock herds, sharply reduced crop production and led to widespread disease outbreaks. The drought in Somalia and conflicts in Sudan, Somalia, South Sudan and Eritrea have resulted in an influx of refugees into Ethiopia, which currently hosts approximately 894,000 refugees in total.
- In Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) in the last year, 1.7 million people have been internally displaced, most of them from the Kasai region, due to protracted conflicts with militia attacks and army reprisals, causing considerable misery and starvation. In a separate development, more than 22,000 people have fled clashes between herders and farmers from different ethnic groups in Ituri province, north-eastern DRC, bordering Uganda, in the past weeks.
- In Bangladesh, a further 655,000 Rohingya refugees fleeing the violence in Rakhine region of Myanmar, are estimated to have arrived since August 2017, joining around 307,500 refugees already living in camps, makeshift settlements and with host communities.
- Furthermore, in Syria and Iraq, protracted conflicts continue to negatively impact the food security of millions of affected people, compounded by large-scale displacement internally and into neighbouring countries.