

Facts about Hunger around the World

by Katie Minchew

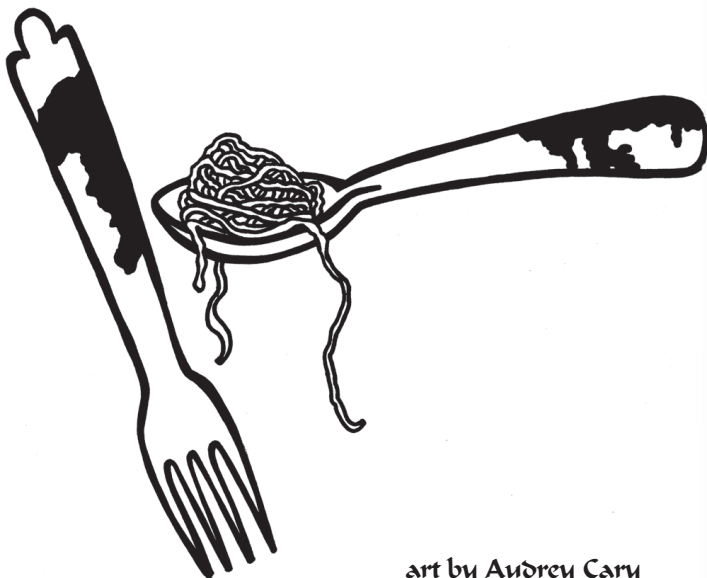
Facts about Hunger in the US

- 49 million people—including almost 17 million children—live in households that experience hunger or the risk of hunger. This represents one in seven households in the United States. (*Bread for the World: Household Food Security in the United States*) *Whyhunger.org*)
- Research shows that preschool and school-aged children who experience severe hunger have higher levels of chronic illness, anxiety and depression, and behavior problems than children with no hunger. (*Whyhunger.org*)
- Nearly 20 percent of the US workforce lacked adequate employment in January 2010 and struggled to make ends meet with reduced resources and bleak job prospects. (*Reuters*)
- 8.9 percent of U.S. households in the US are at risk of hunger. Members of these households have lower quality diets or must resort to seeking emergency food because they cannot always afford the food they need. 31.8 million people, including 15.6 million children,

live in these homes. (*Bread for the World: Household Food Security in the United States*)

Facts about Hunger around the World

- One in six people in the world do not get enough food to be healthy. (*United Nations World Food Programme*)
- Worldwide, hunger and malnutrition are still the number one risks to health. (*United Nations World Food Programme*)
- 1.02 billion people in the world do not have enough to eat—more than the populations of USA, Canada and the European Union (*United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), Bread for the World, World Bank Group*)
- About 25,000 people die every day of hunger or hunger-related causes, according to the United Nations. This is one person every three and a half seconds. (*poverty.com*)
- Almost a billion and a half people live below the international poverty line, earning less than \$1.25 per day. (*Whyhunger.org*)
- Among this group of poor people, many have problems obtaining adequate, nutritious food for themselves and their families. As a result, 820 million people in the developing world are undernourished, which means they consume less than the minimum amount of calories essential for sound health and growth. (*Whyhunger.org*)
- The number of undernourished people in the world increased by 75 million in 2007 and 40 million in 2008, largely due to higher fuel prices, which sparked the worst food crisis the world has seen in several decades. (*United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation*)
- 907 million people in developing countries alone are hungry. (*The State of Food Insecurity in the World, FAO*)



art by Audrey Cary

- Asia and the Pacific region are home to over half the world's population and nearly two thirds of the world's hungry people. (*The State of Food Insecurity in the World, FAO*)
- More than 60 percent of chronically hungry people are women. (*The State of Food Insecurity in the World, FAO*)
- 65 percent of the world's hungry people live in seven countries: India, China, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Pakistan and Ethiopia. (*The State of Food Insecurity in the World, FAO*)
- Latest figures from the United Nations Refugee Agency show that the number of Afghan children under 18 who applied for asylum in Europe last year rose by 64 percent, from 3,800 to more than 6,000. (*British Broadcasting Company*)

Child Hunger in the World

- Every day, almost 16,000 children die from hunger-related causes. This comes to 3 million children in a year, and one child every five or six seconds. Most of these deaths occurred in developing countries, especially sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, the two regions that also suffer from the highest rates of hunger and malnutrition. (*Bread for the World: State of the World's Children, Whyhunger.org, FAO: The State of Food Insecurity in the World*)
- Far more children live with undernutrition than die from it. For infants and young children, the effects of chronic malnutrition in the early years of life are largely irreversible. (*Bread for the World, The World Bank Group*)
- More than 70 percent of the world's 146 million underweight children, under age five, live in just 10 countries, with more than 50 per cent located in South Asia. (*UNICEF, Progress for Children: A Report Card on Nutrition*)
- 10.9 million children under five die in developing countries each year. Malnutrition and hunger-related diseases cause 60 percent of the deaths. (*UNICEF: The State of the World's Children*)
- The cost of undernutrition to national economic development is estimated at US\$20-30 billion per annum. (*UNICEF: Progress for Children, A Report Card on Nutrition*)
- One out of four children—roughly 146 million—in developing countries are underweight. (*UNICEF: Progress for Children, A Report Card on Nutrition*)
- Every year, the UN World Food Programme (WFP) feeds more than 20 million children in school feeding programs in some 70 countries. In 2008, WFP fed a record 23 million children. (*United Nations World Food Programme*)

Malnutrition around the World

- Global nutrition officials estimate that 684,000 child deaths worldwide could be prevented by increasing access to vitamin A and zinc. (*World Food Programme: Annual Report*)
- Undernutrition contributes to 53 percent of the 9.7 million deaths of children under five each year in developing countries. This means that one child dies every six seconds from malnutrition and related causes. (*UNICEF*)
- The lack of Vitamin A kills a million infants a year. (*UNICEF: Vitamin and Mineral Deficiency, A Global Progress Report*)
- Iron deficiency is the most prevalent form of malnutrition worldwide, affecting an estimated 2 billion people. Eradicating iron deficiency can improve national productivity levels by as much as 20 percent. (*World Health Organisation*)
- Iron deficiency is impairing the mental development of 40-60 percent of the children in developing countries (*UNICEF: Vitamin and Mineral Deficiency, A Global Progress Report*)
- Vitamin A deficiency affects approximately 25 percent of the developing world's preschoolers. It is associated with blindness, susceptibility to disease and higher mortality rates. It leads to the death of approximately 1 to 3 million children each year. (*United Nations Standing Committee on Nutrition*)
- Iodine deficiency is the greatest single cause of mental retardation and brain damage. Worldwide, 1.9 billion people are at risk of iodine deficiency, which can easily be prevented by adding iodine to salt. (*United Nations Standing Committee on Nutrition*)
- The UN World Food Programme sponsored a deworming effort in 2007 that reached 10 million children in 2007. (*World Food Programme Annual Performance Report*)

Food and HIV/AIDS

- In the countries most heavily affected, HIV has reduced life expectancy by more than 20 years, slowed
- continued on page 18*

Facts about Hunger, *continued from page 17*

economic growth and deepened household poverty. (*UNAIDS Global Report on the AIDS Epidemic*)

- In sub-Saharan Africa alone, the AIDS epidemic has orphaned nearly 12 million children aged under 18 years. (*UNAIDS Global Report on the AIDS Epidemic*)
- The UN World Food Programme and UNAIDS estimate that it costs on average US \$0.70 cents per day to nutritionally support an AIDS patient and his/

her family. (*WFP: Cost of Nutritional Support for HIV/AIDS Projects*)

- The UN World Food Programme's assistance for orphans and vulnerable children is estimated at US\$0.31 per day. (*WFP: Cost of Nutritional Support for HIV/AIDS Projects*)

—Katie Minchew, at this writing, was a professional writing student at Baylor University in Waco, TX.

A Prayer of Contrition and Supplication

by Deborah E. Harris

O God of Grace and Mercy,

We are a nation of all-you-can-eat
buffets and fast foods.

We have forgotten what it is to eat
what we need to be healthy,
and to know when we have had enough.

Remind us of the morning manna in the desert,
of simply gathering what is needed each day,
and gratefully trusting in your provision for the next.

Disturb us at the thought of "haves" and "have-nots."

Help us to realize that a true feast is not defined by the quantity of food,
but by the certainty that everyone—even our enemy—has a welcome place at the table.

Amen.

—Deborah Harris is a freelance writer in Waco, TX. She volunteers as the regular copy editor for *Seeds of Hope* and serves as a member of the *Seeds Council of Stewards*.

art by Rebecca S. Ward