



PHP POST

Fall 2019 | Presbyterian Hunger Program | pcusa.org/hunger

Global Hunger

War is a Root Cause of Hunger

By Eileen Schuhmann, Mission Specialist for International Hunger Concerns

“When armies march, there is no harvest.” These words by the Rev. Maxime Rafransoa of the All Africa Conference of Churches were captured in a 1985 edition of the *Handles for Action: Hunger Action Network Newsletter*, published by the Presbyterian Hunger Program.

This powerful statement draws a clear connection between war and food insecurity. Destroying farm fields and all of their potential for providing sustenance to families and communities has unfortunately become a common practice in war-making. Food is often used as a “weapon of war.”

As I’m writing this, it was reported that thousands of acres of food crops have been set on fire in northwest Syria as a part of the ongoing conflict there and it is estimated by the U.N. that at least 300,000 civilians have been forced to flee their homes.

In 2017, famine was declared in four war-torn countries: Nigeria, Yemen, Somalia and South Sudan. In all four of these countries, famine has resulted primarily because of the ongoing conflicts and pervasive violence there that has led to human deaths, population displacements, agricultural collapse, loss of livelihoods, destruction of infrastructure and interruptions in social services. In these countries, famine has been accelerated when warring parties have obstructed humanitarian food and medical assistance.



Kaalmo

Kaalmo Relief and Development provides food and water in famine-stricken Somalia.”

Stephen O’Brien, the U.N. Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, said in a March 2017 statement to the U.N. Security Council that the fighting and military conquest in the four countries needs to cease to prevent the famine crises. O’Brien said, “All four countries have one thing in common: conflict. This means we — you — have the possibility to prevent — and end — further misery and suffering. ... It is all preventable. It is possible to avert this

crisis, to avert these famines, to avert these looming human catastrophes.”

Since World War II, the incidence of mass starvations has been on the decline, but the four famines of 2017 are feared to be a sign of a re-emergence on the horizon.

One of the U.N. Sustainable Development Goals involves ending hunger by 2030. After years of declining rates in incidents of undernourishment and food deprivation, the U.N. says that hunger is on the rise again and has been since 2015.

One reason for the increase could be that violent conflicts have increased dramatically since 2010. And currently, 60% of the world’s hungry are concentrated in just eight countries where there is ongoing violent conflict (according to the World Food Programme).

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Famine, Extreme Hunger and Following Christ in Global Hunger Ministry

Rebecca Barnes, Coordinator for Presbyterian Hunger Program

From the Matthew 25 passage where disciples asked Jesus “when were you hungry” to the John 21 text where Jesus tells Peter to “feed my sheep,” we are instructed clearly and consistently that tending to the hungry is integral to following Jesus. Feeding the hungry and tending God’s people is how we love Jesus.

Similarly, in the Hebrew Scriptures, God stands with and cares for those who are the foreigners, widows, orphans and those who are hungry. In Genesis, Ruth, 2 Samuel, and 1 and 2 Kings, the background of people’s experience is famine. In Exodus, the people experience extreme hunger in the wilderness. It is in these cruel realities that God enters to provide food and to raise up leaders.

Famine and extreme hunger are cruel realities

even in our own time. Unlike what our ancestors of faith experienced in a world in which they were much more vulnerable, we now have the capacity, knowledge and ability to feed the world’s hungry and attack systemic problems. Yet, people are still hungry. How do we see God enter the stories of today?

God is raising up leaders as you will read in this issue — from Joining Hands networks to partners in the modern four countries declared to have famine by the United Nations. God is providing food — and so much more than physical food — as you will see on pages 6-7.

What else does God have in store in caring for all God’s people and creation? However difficult the task, God invites us to examine the world around us, to be courageous in

understanding and tackling the problems, and to be hopeful and assured of the Spirit’s presence.

Join us in prayer for all of God’s creation (page 9), in accepting the Climate Care Challenge (page 11), and in participating in Food Week of Action in October. In all these ways, we are mindful of global hunger and injustice and offer ourselves to God for God’s redeeming work in the world.

We work so that God works through us. We love Jesus and show that love by hunger ministry. We value relationships, long-term solutions, empowerment, and uncovering and dismantling “root causes” of hunger. We hope for a better world and do our part to build God’s beloved community here on earth, as it is in heaven.

Food Week October 2019

We envision a world where everyone has enough affordable, healthy and culturally appropriate food, where no one is hungry, and where all who work in the food chain are fairly compensated, respected and celebrated.

2019 action areas are climate justice, famine, and food sovereignty.

The Food Week of Action surrounds World Food Day (Oct. 16) and is the time to highlight hunger issues and celebrate efforts to bring more justice and democracy to the food-farm system! Email php@pcusa.org to join dozens of churches and organizations in co-sponsoring Food Week (no cost). pcusa.org/foodweek



Valery Nodem

Around the world, seeds are crucial for food sovereignty.

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Thinking and Acting Both Globally and Locally

Jed Koball, Mission Co-Worker, *Joining Hands network, Peru*

A simple Google search on “wealth inequality in the United States” will reveal that most Americans are discontented with wealth distribution in the U.S. While solutions may differ across the political spectrum, what is clear is that the gap between the rich and the poor is of great concern. One could conclude that addressing this gap should be a priority.

As I reflect on this matter, I am reminded that this particular conversation about poverty and wealth distribution pertains to the United States. I live in Peru. As a former pastor in New York and now a mission co-worker based in Lima, this conversation about poverty invites a question I have wrestled with for years: Why go around the world to address poverty when poverty exists at sobering levels across the U.S.? At a time of increasing isolationism in the world, I know I am not alone in asking this question.

For us to more fully comprehend and effectively address root causes of poverty, we must do so together with our global partners.

Nonetheless, I contend that for the very reason that poverty does exist in startling numbers in the U.S., we must engage more deeply, carefully and prayerfully in global mission. If we are serious about addressing poverty, then we must do so not only at the local level and in hands-on ways (which are very legitimate and necessary responses!), but also at the global level and in strategic ways. For us to more fully comprehend and effectively address root causes of poverty, we must do so together with our global partners.



Peru 2017 National Gathering of Populations Affected by Toxic Metals

Our global partner in Peru, Red Uniendo Manos Peru, together with Presbyterian churches in the U.S., have been doing this for nearly two decades. Their story begins in the Andean town of La Oroya, Peru. Named one of the five most contaminated cities in the world, 99% of the children of La Oroya have been shown to have severe and chronic lead poisoning. The source of contamination is a metals smelter owned by the New York-based corporation The Renco Group.

Knowing that a U.S. entity was responsible for the impoverished health of children in La Oroya was more than enough to engage Presbyterians in a campaign to hold it accountable. But, when we learned that the same corporation owned a lead smelter in Missouri that also contaminated their surroundings, our understanding of global partnership was transformed. We were now in this together.

From 1998–2008, Presbyterians in the U.S., together with our global partner in Peru, worked prayerfully to expose this billionaire-owned corporation for its wrongdoing and to demand that local and national

governments, both in Peru and the U.S., hold it accountable. They were successful in not only gaining international media exposure but also in achieving the enforcement of regulations in both places.

But, in 2009, an unexpected twist revealed that the cause of injustice in La Oroya and Missouri was not just one irresponsible corporation — it was an economic and political structure that allowed the corporation to get away with running roughshod over the right of people to breathe clean air.

In 2009, a free trade agreement between Peru and the U.S. was enacted. At that same time, The Renco Group claimed that its investment in La Oroya was going bankrupt and that it would not be able to fulfill its environmental responsibilities. It asked for a bailout from the Peruvian government but was denied. In response, The Renco Group filed an \$800 million lawsuit in an international tribunal against the State of Peru, claiming that enforced environmental

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Joining Hands: Celebrating Two Decades of Global Solidarity and Social Change

By Valery Nodem | Associate for International Hunger Concerns and former Director of RELUFA, Joining Hands network in Cameroon

In early 2000, a consortium of three international oil companies (Exxon, Chevron and Petronas) were granted a contract to exploit oil from Chad. Since Chad is a landlocked country, it was decided to build a pipeline from Doba in Chad to Kribi in the Atlantic Coast in Cameroon, where oil would be taken by tankers to international markets. The construction of this 1,100 mile-long pipeline was at the time the largest investment project in South Saharan Africa, with a cost of \$3.5 billion.

This vast project happened at a time when Chad and Cameroon were among the poorest countries in the world, and Cameroon for a couple of years was listed as the most corrupt country in the world in the Transparency International index. Discussion about oil revenues in Cameroon was taboo and oil revenues were not kept in the national budget, but in a separate and secret account for which there was no transparency at all. Raising questions about that landed many journalists and activists in jail.

In Joining Hands, there is a focus on building relationships, capacity, discerning the will of the collective, and knowing that a “win” might be seven (or more!) years down the road.

Our partner in Cameroon – the Network for the Fight Against Hunger in Cameroon (RELUFA) – decided to use a different tactic: since it was difficult



Chethana

A member of the Chethana Joining Hands network (India) raises awareness on the importance of protecting and preserving the environment.

to raise questions about the revenues that Cameroon was going to make from this project, RELUFA decided to work with other organizations in the country and abroad to raise awareness about the impacts of the pipeline on the lives of communities in the 242 villages that were going to be traversed by the project. Talking about social, economic and environmental issues and compensations was less risky at the time than asking how the funds from oil were going to be managed. It was also a good and first experience for civil society organizations and churches to be involved in the management of resource extraction in Cameroon.

That experience was critical, as it taught communities and our partners from RELUFA how to interact with oil companies and with the government and bring them together to defend community rights. It also taught RELUFA how to build a campaign and put a strategy in place to reach its goal. From the beginning of their campaign in 2000, they grew in strength and reputation into being able to address

the “elephant in the room”—transparency for oil revenues in the country. This included aligning with an international campaign Publish What You Pay, which hosted a workshop in Cameroon in 2005.

In 2007 and for the first time in the history of the country, the government presented a report on the sale of its oil, documenting how many companies are present in the country, how much money they have paid to the government, and where the funds went. This was a tremendous success after the seven years of RELUFA’s organizing and strategizing. This crucial information for decades had not been accessible to the public, had facilitated corruption and had kept poor communities from challenging the government and demanding more investment be made in social services.

This long-awaited victory came because RELUFA had worked with hundreds of local communities for years; it had built strong connections at the national level where decisions are made; it worked hand in hand with Presbyterians and

other connections in the U.S., where the corporations in charge of the project were located.

RELUFAs are one out of seven networks in the world that currently are part of the Joining Hands initiative of the Presbyterian Hunger Program. Joining Hands is a model of uncovering and addressing root causes of hunger internationally through building a network of churches and NGOs in-country that together decide on and engage strategies that the network identifies.

The Joining Hands initiative was created in 2000 and connected presbyteries in the United States with partners overseas so they could examine and address issues affecting people in both contexts. Mission co-workers were sent to countries to act as Companionship Facilitators to help bring countries together. For PHP to address the challenges of complex issues -- such as global trade, corruption, and climate change -- solidarity between these two contexts was key. Part of the solidarity between Presbyterians in the United States and each of these country networks was the understanding and agreement that there were no feel-good quick fixes but instead that we would be in the work together, for as long as it takes to move the needle.

This is a different kind of "hunger ministry" than those that can be described as building so many water wells in one calendar-year or providing so much livestock in a hungry community. The victories are long-term and often relate to public policy or corporate policy changes and sustainable development, which all take time. So, for the advocacy work of RELUFAs and the other Joining Hands networks, we take the long-view. In Joining Hands there is a focus on building relationships, capacity, discerning the will of the collective, and knowing that a "win" might be seven (or more!) years down the road.

Joining Hands networks today operate in Cameroon, Democratic Republic of



Villagers watch a documentary on the impacts of mining on their community produced by POM (Joining Hands Congo) in the DR Congo.

Congo, El Salvador, Haiti, India, Peru, and Sri Lanka. They primarily focus on 3 areas:

Food & Land: Support efforts that promote the right of people to produce and consume food in accordance with their cultural traditions and through ecologically sustainable methods, as well as the right of people to access land to produce food and provide housing, particularly with indigenous communities whose traditional rights are threatened.

Resource Extraction & Environment: Uphold transparency and oppose corruption in countries where mineral and resource extraction creates wealth for a few and rampant poverty for the vulnerable majority, a consequence of the "resource curse." Address the impact of the extractive industries on communities and the environment, advancing the right of people to access clean water, protected from pollution.

Trade Justice: Work for fairness in the global economy so that trade agreements protect the rights of workers, consumers, the environment, and public health, as well as human rights.

Since it was created in 2000, Joining Hands

has had a strong presence and impact both in-country and in the United States. This model has provided connections and support to global partners to address issues that are causing hunger and maintaining people in poverty. It has also helped Presbyterians in the U.S. and others to do and understand mission differently.

The Joining Hands model has had a strong impact in the following areas:

Exposure: People from the global south and from the U.S. were able to get out of their comfort zone, travel or receive travelers, share stories and learn about how global issues affect us all and a global response can better help deal with them.

Mutuality: Rather than assistance programs with a donor and a receiver, the church was invited to the table as an equal partner. In fact, in this new model, the tone was to be set by global partners.

Advocacy campaigns: Joining Hands came as a new way for the church to understand and approach its changing role in a changing world. Rather than the traditional approach of short-term mission through

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International Development and Advocacy



Self-development



Women's empowerment



Technical skills



Mobilizing and organizing



Capacity building



Addressing Global Hunger

Root causes of global hunger include: colonialism, inequality, corporate abuse, climate change

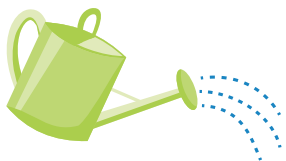
WHAT YOU CAN DO

Learn more about issues and/or give financial support at pcusa.org/hunger

Sign up for the Together for Justice blog at presbyterianmission.org/together-justice

Consider a reflection/action trip to a PHP partner: pcusa.org/trips

Respond to requests for action from our global partners — letter writing, engaging members of Congress, prayer vigils and more: capwiz.com/pcusa



Food production and gardening



Microcredit



Emergency food relief



Clean water and sanitation



Reforestation

Addressing Global Hunger

Colonial exploitation, ethnic conflict, civil war, climate change, unequal trade, waste and corruption.

Supporting



Animal rearing

Defending Resource Rights

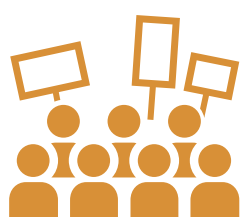
JOINING HANDS

The Joining Hands initiative of the Presbyterian Hunger Program (PHP) is celebrating 20 years of connecting and mobilizing organizations and faith-based groups in the global South with each other and with Presbyterian congregations, presbyteries and other concerned people in the United States to study together how unjust global systems affect all of us and to work together to improve policies and corporate practices.

Much of PHP's work defending resource rights is done through Joining Hands. Some focus areas for our campaign work are: food sovereignty, land rights, transparency in resource extraction, preserving and protecting native seeds, defending public health, and advocating for socially and environmentally just trade policy.



Protecting and preserving native seeds



Upholding human rights



Transparency in resource extraction



Resource governance



Defending public health and the environment



Equitable trade agreements



Land rights



Food sovereignty

The Four Famines

By Eileen Schuhmann, Mission Specialist for International Hunger Concerns

In 2017, famine was declared in Northeast Nigeria, South Sudan, Yemen and Somalia. This is the first time that famine has been declared in four countries at the same time.

In 2018, the Presbyterian Hunger Program (PHP) reached out to partner with grassroots organizations in all four countries to make whatever small positive impact we could on the lives of people there.

Northeast Nigeria

In Northeast Nigeria, the protracted armed conflict that has been ravaging this region is now in its 10th year, and this has left the region in great distress. Three states within the region — Borno, Adamawa and Yobe (BAY states) — are the main areas most affected by the insurgency. The insurgency triggered a wave of forced migration; people were displaced to neighboring states and even across the border to Cameroon, Chad and Niger.

According to Peter Egwudah, the program coordinator for PHP's partner in Nigeria, the Civil Society Coalition for Poverty Eradication (CISCOPE), "It is worthy to note that the majority of inhabitants in these areas are small-scale farmers; as a result of this displacement, many lost access to their farms, and those that took refuge in IDP (Internally Displaced Persons) camps had to survive on aid for their daily survival. In areas where security forces were able to restore normalcy, the people returned to nothing, all forms of business activities were halted; shops and banks and other business premises were looted and destroyed."

PHP is supporting CISCOPE in its work to assist farmer households in the Michika Local Government Area (LGA) of Adamawa State with seeds and improved water access.

South Sudan

In South Sudan, PHP's partner Hope Restoration South Sudan (HRSS) describes how "scorched earth policies," military practices of destroying anything that could be useful to the enemy, including homes and

food, have been employed in the villages of Mayendit County. Angelina Nyajima, the director of HRSS, said that "when locals return to their villages, there is literally nothing to return to."

Mayendit County is located in the southern part of Unity State, where there has been ongoing violent conflict since 2013. The violent situation has led to multiple instances of displacement of locals from their homes, disrupting their livelihoods. Currently, the tensions have calmed a bit and locals are returning to their homes and trying to rebuild their lives once again.

PHP is helping HRSS to respond in Mayendit County through food security and livelihood support by providing women with agricultural seeds and tools, and training on best farming practices, seed storage, crop

and product marketing, and establishing savings groups.

Yemen

In Yemen, conflict and violence have relentlessly exacerbated pre-existing challenges, including food insecurity and malnutrition. With two-thirds of the population now food-insecure, Yemen is the world's largest food security crisis. This is not a result of food scarcity or natural disasters. Assessments confirm that violent conflict is the primary driver, with the worst hunger concentrated in areas that saw the fiercest violence in the past year. As a result of conflict, as many as 4.3 million people have been displaced in the past three years, including approximately 3.3 million people who remain displaced and 1 million returnees.

» FAMINE AND EXTREME HUNGER

PHP is working to restore livelihoods in zones that have been impacted by violent conflict and famine or extreme hunger, including:

SOMALIA — Providing emergency food assistance through food vouchers to provide immediate access to food from local vendors.

YEMEN — Assisting conflict-affected communities to ensure that they have continued and regular access to food through the distribution of fishing kits and security and production capacity trainings.

SOUTH SUDAN — Working to empower rural women and girls through farming, promoting positive coping mechanisms and improving their resilience.

NIGERIA — Supporting farmer households with seeds and improved water access.

Learn more at pcusa.org/phpfamine.

PHP is partnering with Generations without Qat (GWQ) in Yemen to distribute fishing inputs and provide training in good fishing practices to conflict-affected communities. GWQ’s vision is “to alleviate the suffering of society and achieve sustainable development ... a decent life and social justice.”

Somalia

Two years after the prolonged 2016–17 drought destroyed livelihoods and displaced almost 1 million Somalis — but also triggered a massive and successful scale-up in humanitarian response to avert famine — severe climatic conditions, combined with other persistent drivers of humanitarian crisis such as armed conflict, protracted and continued displacement and a spike in evictions of internally displaced persons, are again pushing Somalia toward a major humanitarian emergency.

According to the director of Kaalmo Relief and Development, PHP’s partner in Somalia, “Armed fighting is prevalent in large parts of the country and continues to cause significant physical and psychological harm to civilians, as well as displacement and deprivation of basic services.”

PHP is partnering with Kaalmo to provide emergency food vouchers so that people are



Families in Somalia displaced by violent conflict receive shelter and food from Kaalmo Relief and Development.

able to purchase local food to feed themselves and their families while supporting the local economy.

If you would like to learn more about this work, download a poster and bulletin insert to share with your church, and/or contribute

to grow its impact through your financial generosity, please visit pcusa.org/phpfamine.

Excerpts of this article were written by Hope Restoration South Sudan, CISCOPE, Generations without Qat, and Kaalmo Relief and Development.

World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation

In 2015, Pope Francis joined an earlier invitation for Christians to consider Sept. 1 as the “World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation,” so that “every year on this date prayers and supplications to the Maker of all, both as thanksgiving for the great gift of creation and as petitions for its protection and salvation” could be offered.

Prayer of Confession

Gracious and merciful God, in your presence we confess our sins. Although Christ is risen from the grave and has

shattered the power of death, we are still held captive by fear and doubt. We have neglected the poor and the hungry and ignored the cries of the oppressed. We pursue profits and pleasures that harm the land and pollute the waters, leaving this world depleted and damaged for future generations. Have mercy on us, O Lord. Help us to trust your power to change our lives and make us new, that we and all your creatures may know the joy of life abundant, given through Christ Jesus, the risen Lord. Amen.

Statement of Assurance and Benediction

Loving God, through the death and resurrection of Christ you have made a way to heal the brokenness of this world. ... Renew in us a vision for creation that reflects your sacredness and glory. In all things, we pray in the precious name of our Lord, the Creator of all, Jesus Christ. Amen.

For the full worship resource, go to creationjustice.org/world-day-of-prayer-for-the-care-of-creation.html.

War is Root Cause, continued from page 1

The connection between violent conflict and hunger is clear. What is also clear is that if we are to work toward alleviating hunger and eliminating its causes, we must work toward peace.

In the minutes of the 199th General Assembly (1987), it is stated that “Increasingly the Presbyterian Hunger Program is having to deal with war as a root cause of hunger.” This statement was made in the context of a growing hunger crisis in Latin America caused by war and armed conflict.

More than 30 years later, as famine looms in Yemen, the 223rd General Assembly (2018) approved a “Resolution to Advocate for the Human Rights of All Citizens of Yemen.”

The connection between violent conflict and hunger is clear. What is also clear is that if we are to work towards alleviating hunger and eliminating its causes. . . it is time again for us to speak. . . and for us to take action.

The resolution states, “To remain silent is to be complicit. We as Presbyterians must speak out.”

It is time again for us to speak about war and violent conflict as root causes of hunger and poverty and for us to take action. We can hold our government accountable when its policies and arms sales are feeding conflicts while starving families. We can write letters to our elected leaders and educate ourselves and our congregations on these issues. We can contribute toward efforts of immediate aid in places of famine (see pcusa.org/phpfamine) while also working toward long-term solutions for true food security and peaceful resolutions to conflict around the world.

Thinking and Acting, continued from page 3

regulations had cost the company money and was therefore a violation to its investor rights as stipulated in the 2009 trade agreement.

This lawsuit is one of hundreds of such lawsuits filed around the world by foreign investors taking advantage of investors’ rights clauses found in most trade agreements. Across the globe, foreign investors are suing governments, claiming that democratically constructed public policies do not apply to them when their profits are hurt. These lawsuits not only cost governments, but they undermine the sovereignty of the State and

make a mockery of democracy.

First, let me be clear: Trade itself is not wrong. Healthy trade helps facilitate the development of societies through the sharing of goods, services and knowledge.

However, poorly structured trade is a defining factor in wealth inequality around the globe and in the U.S., too. The 215th General Assembly (2003) calls upon the church to “oppose multinational actions and trade agreements that elevate rights of corporations over the right of governments

and indigenous peoples to pass and enforce laws that preserve the public good and protect their citizens, economies, and environments.”

Present-day trade agreements continue to provide extraordinary rights to multinational corporations, affecting communities from Peru to the U.S. Working together with our global partners, we can effectively address this injustice — thinking and acting both globally and locally.

Joining Hands, continued from page 5

projects, it was about dismantling systems and structures that are keeping people poor and hungry.

Time: systemic change takes time, and Joining Hands was based on the idea that campaigns will take longer to provide tangible results. Working in solidarity and celebrating even the smallest victories is essential.

Companionship: Relationships that were built almost 20 years ago between

Presbyterians and partners in many countries are still strong and ongoing. The power of Joining Hands resides in it bringing the north and the south together.

In 2020, Joining Hands will reach 20 years of existence. Stay tuned as we will be celebrating accomplishments, as well as reflecting on its next steps as 2020 approaches. Many of the issues that existed when the program was created are still there, but networks have managed in their contexts to become critical voices

and agents of change. We will share these stories and updates as we celebrate the 20th anniversary of this important model of global solidarity and social change.

We are still looking for companions in the U.S. to continue this journey together. Will you join us? If you are interested in learning more about Joining Hands, you can read more at the Together for Justice blog as well as contact us at php@pcusa.org.

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