Helping The Hungry

Millions of people in Africa need food now.

Imagine that your whole town has run out of food. Every night, you go to bed hungry. In the morning, your stomach growls. Before long, you become dangerously weak and sick.

That is the way of life for millions of people in Somalia. That is a country in East Africa. Many people there are suffering from a famine. A famine happens when there is so little food that people become very ill. Some even die.

In Somalia, thousands of people have died from the famine. About 12 million others in Africa are extremely hungry. “We are starved,” says Lul Hussein. She lives in Somalia.

The emergency has been caused in part by a huge drought. That is a long period of dry weather. In East Africa, the lack of rain has dried up many people’s crops.

The famine has led many Somalis to become refugees. A refugee is a person who flees his or her home to escape danger.

Thousands of people have moved to nearby nations, such as Kenya.

To help Africa’s hungry, officials need about $2.5 billion. So far, countries have given about half that amount.

Meanwhile, aid groups bring food to Somalia. One organization is called the World Food Programme (WFP). The group cooks meals for Somalis. It also hands out a special food that is similar to peanut butter, says Rene McGuffin. She works for WFP.

“We’re working hard to figure out new ways to get food to those who need it most,” she told WR News.

THINK ABOUT IT: What are some ways you might help hungry people in East Africa?

Spotlight on Somalia

Size: 246,200 square miles (The country is slightly smaller than Texas.)

Languages: Somali, Arabic, Italian, and English (Less than half the population age 15 and older can read and write.)

Population: about 10 million people

Government: There is no permanent, or lasting, national government.