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Inter-Sectoral Response to Drought in Southern and Eastern Africa

ADRA INTERNATIONAL

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The Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) is the global humanitarian organization of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Through an international network, ADRA delivers relief and development assistance to individuals in more than 130 countries—regardless of their ethnicity, political affiliation, or religious association.



Current Situation

In 2015 Africa experienced its worst drought in 60 years. The unusually strong El Niño weather pattern in 2015-2016, coupled with record-high temperatures, had a catastrophic effect on crops, vegetation, livestock, and water resources. Unfortunately, the drought has continued into 2017 due to lack of significant rainfall.

In addition to the drought, armed conflict, and economic decline has further exacerbated the problem for some countries.

After two consecutive years of drought, more than 38.8 million people across Southern and Eastern Africa are food-insecure and in urgent need of assistance. A lack of critical funding, coupled with ongoing conflicts in certain locations, is hindering the much needed humanitarian response to the most vulnerable.

What is ADRA Doing?

In response to the drought, ADRA and partners have implemented a number of interventions in the following sectors:

Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene: Water trucking, rehabilitating and drilling new bore holes, distributing water storage containers and water treatment tools, and providing trainings are just some of the ways ADRA is responding in Ethiopia, Somalia, South Africa, and Zimbabwe.

Livelihoods: In Madagascar, Malawi, and Zimbabwe, ADRA is providing training to target

communities and distributing agricultural inputs, such as seeds and fertilizer.

Food Security: ADRA is distributing food, food vouchers, and/or running school feeding programs in Burundi, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan, Swaziland, and Zimbabwe.

Nutrition: ADRA Zimbabwe is screening for and distributing supplementary food to severe and moderately acutely malnourished (MAM) individuals, as well as providing training in nutrition, food preparation, meal balancing, and garden planning. In Malawi, ADRA has been providing nutrition/culinary demonstrations to those at risk of MAM as well as distributing Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) materials.

Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Risk Reduction: ADRA is working with communities in Zimbabwe and Ethiopia to design community emergency contingency plans, as well as ensuring residents are better equipped to respond to trends that threaten their lives and livelihoods. Furthermore, ADRA is teaching climate change adaptation techniques to small-scale farmers.

Where is ADRA Responding?

Burundi, Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan, Swaziland, and Zimbabwe





School Feeding

The Effect of Drought on Education

61 million of the world’s hungriest primary school-aged children (6-11 years) are not afforded even basic education.

These children have to work, or beg, just to survive. Infrequent meals and a lack of consistent nutrition can lead to developmental delays. For those that are lucky enough to make it to school, hunger affects their ability to concentrate, to learn, and even to play.

The UN World Food Program estimates that 66 million primary school-aged children worldwide go to school hungry and are unable to learn (Global School Feeding Sourcebook, World Bank 2016). Therefore, school feeding programs are a key element of combating school absenteeism, increasing school enrollment, and contributing to learning through avoiding hunger and enhancing cognitive abilities. If they eat nothing else during the day, they are at least guaranteed a meal at school. The World Bank recognizes that school feeding programs help to increase school enrollment rates, decrease absenteeism, and improve food security at a household level.

ADRA’s Program

ADRA, supported by its partners, is currently running a school feeding program in Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, Swaziland, and Zimbabwe where hungry school children receive nutritious meals every day.

A total of 220 schools have been included in the project, providing meals to 46,925 beneficiaries each year.

Project goal

ADRA’s goal is to increase the resilience of school-aged children and improve access to education in drought-affected communities across Africa.

“263 million children and youth are out of school from primary to upper secondary levels”
— UNESCO, 2016

It is anticipated that measurable change will be seen in the weight and height of children. Furthermore, it is expected that enrollment, attendance, and retention rates will increase for both boys and girls.

The project will require the involvement of the school and its wider community to ensure the short- and long-term sustainability of the project. The project will work with schools to revitalize or establish nutrition gardens and orchards as a source of nourishing food. Training will also be extended to the students, which will help in cascading positive health and nutrition habits down to the household level. Community members will be encouraged to purchase their produce from the school’s garden as well as collect firewood for the school to cook the students’ meals and gather cow or goat dung to be used as manure in the gardens.

The partnership

ADRA International, together with Rise Against Hunger and Islamic Relief, are spearheading this 3-year school-feeding initiative. Rise Against Hunger specializes in supporting feeding programs with nutritious pre-packaged meals, Islamic Relief contributes expertise in shipping of gifts-in-kind, and ADRA, with its network of offices and extensive operational capacity will manage the in-country logistics and project implementation.



Serah's Story:

Getting access to safe water was an ongoing challenge for Serah and her family. Accessing water during the dry season took an hour to get to the water point and back as well as additional time to dig into the sand to access the water. During the rainy season the river however became flooded which meant Serah and her children would have to use another water point 30 minutes away which was stagnate and dangerous. Serah's children were constantly sick and life was difficult. In August of 2016 ADRA Kenya installed a bore hole in Serah's village. Thanks to the bore hole Serah's family are now healthy and happy.

“

ADRA has changed our lives.
Thank you so much! There are no words that can express my joy! Water is life! And you brought it to us!”

— Serah Mzembi Zakayo, *Mother of six*

Charity's Story:

Hunger is a constant challenge for Charity and her grandchildren. It is not possible for Charity to get work and it is not possible to get food. After learning of ADRA's school feeding program in Juba, South Sudan, Charity started to bring her three grandchildren along each day so they could get a cup of porridge.

“

I can see a real change in them after they started coming here. They play and interact and are happy. When they come home they play like they do at the child-friendly space. Not aggressive, like before.”

— Charity, *Grandmother of three*