

dispatches

from the ends of the earth

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Health & Blessings in Midst of Chaos

The day that the soldiers attacked Rebecca Cho De's village in South Sudan, she lost her brother, her father and her home. The traumatized girl and her mother fled for their lives across the border to the relative safety of the Dadaab refugee camp in Kenya.

"Since that day, I have lived as a displaced person," says Rebecca. "Now as a young mother, I have three of my own children to look after. With the current drought, lack of food is a major challenge," she says. "We can go for three days without eating."

Severe drought conditions in the Horn of Africa have put more than 13 million people in need of life-saving assistance. Even before the drought made headlines in July, 2011, many displaced families like Rebecca's were already living on the edge of survival.

In response, Partners International appealed to supporters to join a global effort to provide emergency food relief for hard-hit families in the Horn of Africa. With your help, Sheepfold — the Partners International local partner in Kenya — was able to distribute life-saving food to more than 2,000 families in Wajir, Garissa and Tana River regions of Kenya. Families in greatest need received a 10-kilogram bag of maize flour, 3 litres of cooking oil and a kilogram of beans, which is enough to sustain a family

of six for an entire month.

A subsequent distribution was launched in September, 2011, to assist 630 vulnerable families living in Dadaab, the world's largest refugee camp and now the third largest city in Kenya. Each displaced family also received a one-month supply of rice, beans, sugar, cooking oil and Unimix — an enriched maize and bean flour that has been specially designed to fight malnutrition in children and young adults.

Rebecca Cho De and her children were among the vulnerable families who received assistance in Dadaab — a gift of food that came just in time for them. "Some organizations were giving relief food supplements to Muslims only," she says, "so when I heard that Sheepfold was going to make food available to Christians as well, I knelt down and thanked God for answering our prayers. It was like a miracle, like the time Jesus fed the hungry. I was filled with so much joy."

Thank you for helping to transform lives like Rebecca and her family in a tangible way. Please consider another gift to help other families who are still in need.

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Kenyan children look anxiously for second helpings of food.

From the Director's Chair

Having the will to make a difference

Every time we read the news or watch television, the deterioration of world affairs and the level of human cruelty towards fellow human beings by some can sometimes be difficult to watch or comprehend. With Christmas just around the corner, we are all so busy with our family responsibilities, work related tasks and daily chores that need to get done. As a result, we often tend to focus inward as a defence mechanism so that we don't inadvertently become overwhelmed.

Despite what we have on our individual plates and in spite of all the negative things we hear in the daily news, there are many things that we can be thankful for this Christmas season. For one, Christians are in the forefront of tangible, positive change in all of the troubled areas of the globe. Hope is not on its way, but rather, it is here and now.

As an example, Partners International has had great success in working with our Kenyan-based partner in the Horn of Africa, even when other organizations were not able to reach the many needy souls. Of great joy is the fact that the community of Chewele Bura in eastern Kenya, which we assisted with drought-resistant crops in the post famine period of 2005-2006, is now helping to feed the victims of drought that have migrated into their region. Our work continues on the ground, and any help is greatly welcomed.

We are grateful for all your kindness and support this year. Our prayer is that as Christians we continue to be mindful and supportive of those less fortunate than us as we celebrate this most joyous time of the year. Thank you for having the spirit and will to make a difference.

Blessings and Merry Christmas from the field,



Milton A. Parisis
Director of Development



(continued from page 1)

Our work in Kenya continues

On October 13, 2011, the situation for many families in Dadaab became even more desperate when two Doctors Without Borders workers were taken at gunpoint from the camp. In response, Kenya declared war on the Somali terrorist group, Al-Shabaab, and closed the Somali border, forcing the UN to suspend all non-life-saving aid operations in Dadaab.

The closing of the border has not hindered the work of Partners International, which is one of the few remaining agencies going ahead with a full scope of relief efforts in the Dadaab refugee camp. Our Kenyan director says, "We opted not to scale back, but continue our relief efforts in the region. We are sending teams to Dadaab that include counselors, to step up the trauma counseling program." With the advantage of working through local partners, Partners International has been able to assist a further 4,200 families to the end of October, 2011.

Partners International has the capacity to continue providing assistance to struggling families in Kenya. In addition to dedicated staff on the ground, the ministry sourced a 9-ton Mitsubishi truck this summer that is used to deliver aid when the cost of renting vehicles was running at 30% of the cost of the relief items themselves. The investment in this dependable vehicle has saved money and puts the organization in a better position to continue serving the needs of local communities in a low-cost and efficient manner.

Your gift provides more than emergency food relief

Our response to the needs of communities in the Horn of Africa has not been limited to emergency food distribution. In addition, we are supporting a school feeding program that provides 1,250 students with a nutritious bowl of porridge each morning — often the only meal of the day for these children. Another 1,212 children under the age of five are receiving therapeutic and nutrient-rich food supplements that prevent malnutrition and protect the lives of these most vulnerable children.

While this work is overwhelming, our local team in Kenya is grateful and inspired by the change that you have made possible for these vulnerable children. Your gifts have helped to save the lives of children like Mallio who was suffering from acute malnutrition. When Mallio first came to the feeding program, she was too weak to stand in line for food. Her eyes were unfocused and her hair had turned orange. After several weeks on the feeding regimen, Mallio regained her strength, her smile returned and she is expected to recover to full health very soon.

Partners International has been able to respond to other critical needs in several communities in Kenya as well. Two dry wells have been deepened to restore access to clean water for thousands of migrant people and their livestock. Wells



A shipment of food arrives at a camp and is distributed by local volunteer relief workers of all ages.

in eleven other communities are currently being restored thanks to your contribution. In addition, Sheepfold has created opportunities to continue working in these communities and help them develop greater resilience so they can better respond to future droughts.

Thank you for your continuing support of our relief efforts in the Horn of Africa. You have helped to provide food aid to thousands of families in the region and are helping to provide communities with long-term access to life's essentials. You can continue to contribute toward our ongoing efforts to feed displaced hungry families in the Horn of Africa at www.partnersinternational.ca/famirerelief. •

Children in Kenya are most vulnerable when families are displaced by violence.



Women and children hide in rocky hillside while airstrikes hit their homes.

Christians Care for Turkey's Earthquake Victims

On October 23, 2011, eastern Turkey was struck by a magnitude 7.2 earthquake, devastating the area around the historic city of Van, nearly 600 miles east of Ankara, close to the border with Iran. The town of Erzurum has been especially badly hit, leaving thousands of people hurt and displaced.

Almost 300 people are known to be dead, but many hundreds are still unaccounted for, so the death toll is bound to rise. Over 1,000 people are known to be injured. Tens of thousands of people have lost their homes and possessions and are having to sleep outdoors in the bitterly cold winter weather. Many of these people are at severe risk, and the first priority is to care for them immediately.

The few existing Turkish churches are working together to send relief supplies – blankets, winter clothes, hygiene articles and food to help those in need. This remote area of Turkey has very few churches and many scattered Christians – some of them converts from the evangelical Kanal Hayat Christian TV programs funded by Partners International. We want to give special care and support to the Christian families, and all those in greatest need by working with multiple local Christian organizations.

This is an opportunity to help Turkish churches to maximize their Christian compassion to all members of Turkish society, as well as to be a witness to many of the Muslim population who do not fully recognize the positive impact of local Christians.

Please help us to stand with our Turkish brothers and sisters as they help their countrymen in need. Your donations will buy very much needed help for traumatized families who have lost everything. Give online at www.partnersinternational.ca/turkeyquake. •

Protection For Children in Sudan

In June, 2011, a brutal ethnic conflict erupted in the Nuba Mountains of Sudan's South Kordofan state. According to aid workers in the region, minority black Africans are being attacked and killed by radical elements of the majority population. The UN Refugee Agency reports that, since September 3, 2011, over 25,000 persons have fled the fighting. Many of these families are now taking refuge in mountain caves.

"The children are sleeping on the solid earth in the caves of the mountains," wrote Ibrahim, a church leader of a congregation of about 30. "The rainy weather has brought mosquitoes carrying malaria, but the people couldn't light fires because the government aircraft bombard the area where they see the fires."

Partners International responded by providing 120 mosquito nets to protect the children from deadly mosquito bites. "Before we had about two children dying per month," says Ibrahim, "but we thank the Lord for helping us to buy the mosquito nets."

Thank you for helping to provide these simple, life-saving bed nets that are protecting children from mosquitoes. •



A man sits in the debris of his collapsed house after the earthquake.

Connecting with Partners

Meet Ministry Leaders Visiting Canada

Smita Singh (India)
March, 2012

Marcio Garcia (Brazil)
May, 2012

Rev. Ashok Andrews (India)
October, 2012

Call 1 (800) 883-7697 or (905) 458-1202
about specific arrangements

Ambassador Trips

Trip to Bolivia and Peru
Spring 2012

**Trip to the Seven Churches of Asia, Turkey,
Lebanon and Jordan with Phil Dempster**
Spring 2012

Please call our office at 1 (800) 883-7697
or (905) 458-1202 for more information

Ministry Teams

Liberia December 1-15, 2011

Liberia March 14-28, 2012

Online Community

- Follow us on Twitter @PartnersIntlCan
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A Bumper Crop in the Horn of Africa

The people living in the Horn of Africa are no strangers to drought and famine. It's among the most food insecure regions in the world. Even at the best of times, most rural families in this part of Africa earn barely enough to survive. The annual per capita income in Somalia is estimated to be less than US\$226. In Eritrea, before the drought struck, 44% of children under age five showed signs of malnutrition. In this poor and arid region of Africa, families live harvest by harvest. Most simply do not have the resources to put away for the hard times when they come.

The good news, though, is that some communities in the Horn of Africa are learning how to maximize the few resources they have to respond to the challenge of recurring drought. One of these communities is Chewele Bura in the Tana River District of eastern Kenya.

Chewele Bura's success story really begins with the major famine of 2005-2006. At that time, Partners International provided emergency food relief to vulnerable families in this community. Following this emergency assistance, Partners worked with a local agency to follow up in the community of Chewele Bura to develop a long-term agricultural strategy to mitigate against future droughts. This strategy included planting drought-resistant crops and adopting modern agricultural techniques that preserved the precious nutrients in the soil.

As a result, while the Tana River District experiences the worst drought in sixty years, the community of Chewele Bura is producing a bumper harvest. Additionally, the community of Chewele Bura produced more than enough to fill a 9-ton truck with vegetables to feed families living in the Dadaab Refugee camps who were in desperate need.

Partners International is committed to supporting long-term development that builds a community's resilience to meet the challenges of drought and famine. We work with local partners that share our long-term vision, have a presence in vulnerable communities and are able to build strong working relationships with community leaders to further the Kingdom of God and spread the Good News.

Thank you for supporting our work in the Horn of Africa. Your gift not only helps to provide emergency life-saving assistance, but also helps to build the capacity of communities to respond to future challenges. Visit www.partnersinternational.ca/famineralief to send a gift of support for our ongoing work in the Horn of Africa. •

