

Christian Children's Fund

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Impact of Rising Gas, Food Prices Felt Globally

Richmond Va - June 5, 2008 - Soaring gas prices are a contributing factor to soaring food prices and the impact is greatest on the poorest and most vulnerable within the global community – the countries that Christian Children's Fund serves.

The situation is particularly devastating in Ethiopia, one of the least developed countries in the world. A lack of rain in 2007 and again in 2008 compounded the Ethiopian situation, Christian Children's Fund reports, and notes that about 2.8 million people in the Oromiya region will require immediate emergency relief assistance.

Because the rains failed, farmers lost their standing crops, said Hubert Charles, CCF's director in Ethiopia. They also lack pasture and water for their livestock, all of which has lead to soaring food prices and food shortages.

CCF Ethiopia assessed its program area in Siraro Woreda, Ethiopia, in April and used some of its funds to immediately start a supplementary feeding program for 3,500 severely malnourished children from six of the worst affected kebeles, or areas.

Unfortunately, the problem has not lessened and CCF Ethiopia is preparing a larger response to include six additional kebeles for six more months. It would serve an additional 3,500 severely and moderately malnourished children and about 8,600 of the most affected people, including pregnant and lactating mothers and female heads of households.

“The higher food prices directly impact on the early development of children,” Charles said. “It’s not just about children being hungry. It’s about their physical and social development as well.”

“When children go to school hungry, they are unable to focus on learning in the classroom. At its extreme, malnourishment leads to stunting and poor cognitive development. Some children drop out of school so they can work to put food on their families’ tables or because they have to travel up to 30 kilometers in search of water to drink,” Charles said.

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In addition to its direct support in Ethiopia, CCF created the Global Food Task Force, which is monitoring the food situations in the 31 countries that it serves. CCF is focused on promoting effective responses across countries.

CCF has worked in Ethiopia since 1972 and currently works with more than 1 million children and family members.

CCF is accepting donations through its ChildAlert emergency fund at <http://www.christianchildrensfund.org>. Under Emergency Update, click on “donate to CCF’s ChildAlert Fund.”

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Christian Children's Fund (CCF) is a global force for children, helping the world's poorest and most vulnerable survive and thrive in order to reach their full potential. One of the world's oldest and most respected international child development organizations, CCF works in 31 countries and assists more than 13.2 million children and family members worldwide, regardless of race, creed or gender.