

Hunger Facts: Domestic

Hunger persists in the U.S.

- 38.2 million people—including 13.9 million children—live in households that experience hunger or the risk of hunger. This represents more than one in ten households in the United States (11.9 percent). This is an increase of 1.9 million, from 36.3 million in 2003.
- 3.9 percent of U.S. households experience hunger. Some people in these households frequently skip meals or eat too little, sometimes going without food for a whole day. 10.7 million people, including 545 thousand children, live in these homes.'
- 8.0 percent of U.S. households are at risk of hunger. Members of these households have lower quality diets or must resort to seeking emergency food because they cannot always afford the food they need. 27.5 million people, including 10.6 million children, live in these homes.
- Research shows that preschool and school-aged children who experience severe hunger have higher levels of chronic illness, anxiety and depression, and behavior problems than children with no hunger.

Churches and charities are straining to serve rising requests for food from their pantries and soup kitchens, especially from working people.

- **The U.S. Conference of Mayors** reports that in 2005 **requests for emergency food** assistance increased an **average of 12 percent**. The study also found that 54 percent of those requesting emergency food assistance were members of families with children and that 40 percent of adults requesting such assistance were employed. High housing costs, low-paying jobs, unemployment, and the economic downturn led the list of reasons contributing to the rise.

Hunger Facts: International

World Hunger and Poverty: How They Fit Together

- 852 million people across the world are hungry, up from 842 million a year ago.
- Every day, more than 16,000 children die from hunger-related causes--one child every five seconds.
- In essence, hunger is the most extreme form of poverty, where individuals or families cannot afford to meet their most basic need for food.
- Hunger manifests itself in many ways other than starvation and famine. Most poor people who battle hunger deal with chronic undernourishment and vitamin or

mineral deficiencies, which result in stunted growth, weakness and heightened susceptibility to illness.

- Countries in which a large portion of the population battles hunger daily are usually poor and often lack the social safety nets we enjoy, such as soup kitchens, food stamps, and job training programs. When a family that lives in a poor country cannot grow enough food or earn enough money to buy food, there is nowhere to turn for help.

Facts and Figures on Population

- Today our world houses 6.55 billion people.
- The United States is a part of the developed or industrialized world, which consists of about 57 countries with a combined population of only 0.9 billion, less than one sixth of the world's population.
- In contrast, approximately 5 billion people live in the developing world. This world is made up of about 125 low and middle-income countries in which people generally have a lower standard of living with access to fewer goods and services than people in high-income countries.
- The remaining 0.4 billion live in countries in transition, which include the Baltic states, eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States.

Facts and Figures on Hunger and Poverty

- Worldwide, more than 1 billion people currently live below the international poverty line, earning less than \$1 per day.
- Among this group of poor people, many have problems obtaining adequate, nutritious food for themselves and their families. As a result, 815 million people in the developing world are undernourished. They consume less than the minimum amount of calories essential for sound health and growth.
- Undernourishment negatively affects people's health, productivity, sense of hope and overall well-being. A lack of food can stunt growth, slow thinking, sap energy, hinder fetal development and contribute to mental retardation.
- Economically, the constant securing of food consumes valuable time and energy of poor people, allowing less time for work and earning income.
- Socially, the lack of food erodes relationships and feeds shame so that those most in need of support are often the least able to call on it.

Go to the [World Food Programme](#) website and click on either “Counting the Hungry” or “Interactive Hunger Map” for presentations on hunger and poverty around the world.