

YWAM Organizes Famine Relief in Africa's Horn

While aid groups and political movements argue about the severity of the food crisis in the eastern Horn of Africa, it is clear to everyone that an overwhelming number of people are desperate for help in this region that has experienced two consecutive poor rainy seasons. The drought in Somalia, Ethiopia and Kenya has resulted in a humanitarian crisis worse than any seen for more than 60 years.

YWAM associates in east Africa have reported from the area that the crisis is worse in some areas than others. In parts of Kenya alone, drought victims number over 4 million—many of them are unreached tribal people, and 80 percent of the victims are women and children. In Somalia, the victims number around 3.7 million.

YWAM staff member, Amir Ibrahim*, explains how the nomad community who depend on cattle for a living are desperate for relief food, as the drought has diminished their food options.

“The locals depend on livestock for livelihood and for business. Most of the animals have died and the few that are left are so weak they cannot fetch a price at the local market,” Ibrahim says. “All this is because there was no rainfall for the last expected rainy season. In two trips to Dadaab, Liboi and Madogashe I saw carrions of dead animals all over the roadside and malnourished children begging for water.”

Ibrahim is trying to organize truckloads of relief food, in cooperation with local leaders and other aid agency experts to assist the starving residents of the worst-affected districts. The trucks will deliver up to 17 days worth of maize, rice and cooking oil to 100,000 people.

“What can we do as Christians who love our neighbors? I am reminded of the story of the Good Samaritan—that the person who shows act of mercy is the real and true neighbour,” Ibrahim says. “Our acts of practical assistance will open doors in this region.”

**name changed for security*