

# East Africa Food Crisis Appeal Update Summer 2017



*Aluel Ring outside her tea kiosk in Nyamlel, Aweil West. See over for her story. Photo: Christian Aid/Andreea Campeanu.*

## Humanitarian Response in South Sudan

In response to the crisis in South Sudan, Anglican Overseas Aid decided to partner with Christian Aid, a fellow member of the ACT Alliance. The funds raised have enabled Christian Aid to scale up its humanitarian response in two of the worst-affected, hard-to-reach areas – Unity State and Northern Bahr el Ghazal – helping people to cope with desperately needed reliable access to food.

In Unity State, where famine was declared and then averted earlier in 2017, food supplies have been distributed to 1,000 households (approximately 6,000 people). These food parcels contained lentils, pulses, oils and grain (either rice or sorghum).

Fishing and survival kits have also been provided. They have given families the means to catch nutritious fish in the region's swamp waters, while the survival kits include items like kitchen materials, plastic sheeting and mosquito nets.

In Northern Bahr el Ghazal, the program has given cash vouchers to 468 households who are either displaced themselves or are hosting displaced people. Given three times over a three-month period, these vouchers – worth US\$50 (AU\$66\*) – have enabled vulnerable families to buy food at local markets. In most cases, the food items, such as sorghum, cooking oil, dried fish and peanuts, were bought using these vouchers.

Commenting on this work, local Program Officer Malaci Owino said: "We negotiated with a selected group of suppliers in the market to ensure that the beneficiaries would access certain food commodities with the cash vouchers given to them. One of the assurances we received from the market suppliers was that they would not be affected by price inflation for the food commodities."

## How you have made a difference

In May 2017, Archbishop Philip Freier helped Anglican Overseas Aid launch its East Africa Food Crisis Appeal. The region has been facing famine this year, potentially affecting up to 20 million people. That is close to the entire population of Australia.

As of the start of December 2017, generous responses from Anglicans around Australia had raised over AU\$216,000 for the Appeal.

Our East Africa Food Crisis Appeal builds on our earlier AU\$35,000 rapid response to three partners in Africa: the Episcopal Church of South Sudan (to support the Sudanese Development and Relief Agency in South Sudan (SUDRA)), Anglican Church of Kenya Diocese of Mt Kenya West in Kenya (ACKMCW), and the Afar Pastoralist Development Association (APDA) in Ethiopia.

## Aluel Ring's Story

Aluel Ring is a single mother raising four children on her own. Since her husband left, she has been struggling to provide for her children alone. She runs a small business selling tea and bread at a market in Northern Bahr el Ghazal, where food scarcity is at severe levels.

On a good day, Aluel can make 70 SSP (South Sudanese Pound/AU\$0.71\*). But with the inflation rate exceptionally high, the money she earns is barely enough to meet her family's most basic needs. On a bad day, Aluel earns nothing: this, she says, happens more often than not. At times like this, her family would have to eat just one meal, which would at times consist of wild leaves.

"Before Christian Aid intervened, life had become very difficult. As a family, we urgently needed help," said Aluel.

Aluel was provided with three cash vouchers of US\$50, giving her the much-needed resources to buy food at the local market.

Each voucher saw her through the month. This also meant she was able to spend more time with her children: she had previously been forced to work very long hours at her shop, to try to make enough to feed her family

With this help, Aluel saw a difference. "I saw the health of my children improve drastically as they then started eating three meals a day," she said.

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Anglican Overseas Aid and Christian Aid are members of the global ACT Alliance, a coalition of more than 140 churches and affiliated organisations working in 140 countries on long term development and emergency response. Anglican Overseas Aid often responds to disasters and emergencies through the ACT Alliance. Our membership allows us to respond quickly and effectively and to know that the activities are being carried out to the highest global standards.



Atoch Maureen and two of her children. Photo: Christian Aid/Andreea Campeanu.

## Atoch Maureen's Story

At only 24, Maureen is already a widow and mother of four: her husband died suddenly last year. The responsibility of raising her children single-handedly has not been easy, but thankfully, she has been receiving some support from her younger sister. When Maureen goes out to look for work, her sister cares for her four children.

Maureen's work comprises of cleaning clothes, as well as the competitive job of collecting dried grass for making thatch, which is used for the roofs of traditional houses in her village. "Many other women in the village do this, so it makes it difficult to make some money through this," she says.

Her daily wage is about 50 SSP, equivalent to AU\$0.51\*: barely enough to cater for her family's needs. Her situation is exacerbated by the soaring inflation rate within the country.

Aluet, Maureen's youngest child, who is nearly two, was so severely

affected by the food shortage that it affected his growth. "There were days we would only eat one meal, and there were days that one meal was not available," Maureen recalled.

The situation got so bad that Maureen even contemplated moving north to Sudan, across the border. However, the thought of travelling that far with her children was daunting.

The village leadership committee in her community in Aweil North, Northern Bahr el Ghazal, selected Maureen as a beneficiary for the Christian Aid project.

Receiving three cash vouchers across three months meant Maureen could get hold of food such as sorghum, cooking oil and, occasionally, dried peanuts, at the local market.

Maureen is grateful for the support. "Each cash voucher took my family through for one month. This consistent help for three months changed our food situation," she said.

\*All currency conversions are approximate as at December 2017.

# Your support is appreciated!

*With your support, thousands of people in East Africa have already received urgent help. But the needs are still great. If you would like to make a further donation, you can do so by the following methods:*

Donating online at: [www.anglicanoverseasaid.org.au](http://www.anglicanoverseasaid.org.au)

Calling us for free on: 1800 249 880

Mailing your donation to:

East Africa Food Crisis Appeal, Anglican Overseas Aid,  
PO Box 389, Abbotsford, VIC 3067.