

World Vision Insider

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Helping the World's Forgotten in Angola

In recent weeks, nearly 950,000 Angolans have been driven from their homes by renewed fighting between rebel and government troops. Though far from the news spotlight, the prolonged crisis in Angola rivals the situation in Kosovo in terms of the total number of people driven from their homes by war.

The return to all-out war in late June has come after four years of intermittent fighting in Angola. A previously signed peace agreement between the Angolan government and the UNITA rebels (Union for Total Independence of Angola) has collapsed. Now the war has returned with a vengeance and UN peacekeeping troops are leaving in haste, saying there is no peace left to keep.

The situation is extremely critical. Food

supplies are limited. More children are malnourished now than at any time during the last 20 years of civil war in Angola. Medicines for treating TB and other serious illnesses are unavailable. Meanwhile, the threat of further attacks is persistent. In this long-standing civil war, there is no safe refuge. Civilians are targeted. UN and relief planes are shot down. Aid workers are killed.

Because the needs are so great, World Vision is determined to continue working in Angola. We are currently providing emergency food aid to some 40,000 displaced persons in four secure locations.

Donors from around the world in recent weeks have enabled World Vision to start preparing an expanded emergency response. This will include a September/

October distribution of seeds and tools to 50,000 homeless and vulnerable families.

Funds will also be used to stockpile survival kits and blankets, cover food distribution costs, and open additional feeding centers. According to Steve Goudswaard, World Vision's program director in Angola, "This injection of new funds has helped alleviate the program's financial crisis, but more funds are urgently required to respond adequately to the rapidly growing and critical needs of war-affected populations."

World Vision is committed to helping the people of Angola, but we work in this area of conflict at great peril. Please keep our ministry to Angolans in your prayers.

Drought Assistance in Ethiopia

Minimal rainfall for two consecutive seasons has led to a famine situation in Ethiopia affecting 5 million people.

Despite traditional coping mechanisms employed by farmers, food commodity prices are skyrocketing, livestock prices are plummeting, animals are dying, and large groups of people are migrating to urban areas.

Moved by the plight of families affected by the drought and food shortages, World Vision staff in Ethiopia recently contributed 40 percent of their salaries for one month (totaling US\$41,000) to buy food locally and transport it straight to hard-hit areas.

Affecting eight regions of Ethiopia, the food shortage has been so severe that most farmers have eaten the grain that they typically set aside for seed. Without seed to plant, the food outlook is grim as there will be little to harvest later this year.

To help prevent a prolonged food shortage, World Vision is purchasing seeds to be distributed to farmers in time for the current planting season. World Vision is also helping families protect their livestock and ensuring that immediate food needs of vulnerable groups are met.

Please pray for good conditions for the current planting season and an abundant harvest this fall for Ethiopian farmers.

Update on Kosovo Rehabilitation

Thousands of Kosovar Albanians returning to their burned-out homes will be at risk of extreme exposure this winter unless aid agencies like World Vision move quickly to provide shelter.

The winterization of homes is a top priority for World Vision. With the help of local contractors, World Vision plans to construct 3,200 temporary shelters before the rains, wind, and snow return in October.

While some work could continue during winter, many villages accessed only by mud tracks will be beyond reach.

