

# Food for life in Liberia



Heidur Netocny/PANOS PICTURES

## Introduction

**Everyone has the right to be free from hunger, and to have access to safe and nutritious food.** However this is a right which people in developing countries are routinely denied. As many as 815 million people still go to bed hungry every night, despite the fact that the world now grows enough food to feed its entire population twice over.

Millions of people in developing countries rely on agriculture and farming to provide them with enough food and income for their families. However farmers in poor countries are increasingly unable to grow or buy enough food because they have lost their land or crops, and these farmers are facing a daily struggle to survive. Lack of nutritious food and calorie deficiencies put these farmers and their families at great risk of poor health and malnutrition.

## Liberia's hungry population

Liberia, in West Africa, is one of the poorest countries in the world. Over 75% of the population live on less than 65p a day. The country has suffered from 15 years of civil war, which killed more than 200,000 people and forced nearly a third of the entire population from their homes. The conflict devastated crops and farms, and thousands of farm families in Liberia have returned after the war to find their homes and livelihoods destroyed.

In Grand Cape Mount County, West Liberia, there is a chronic lack of food and 80% of the population still has to depend on food aid. With no crops, seeds or tools, farmers are unable to grow or sell produce and families are forced to wander from place to place in search of food. These families desperately need a chance to resettle and rebuild their lives for a better future.

real lives:

## Satta's story

**Satta is 12 years old and lives with her parents and five siblings in Grand Cape Mount County. Her family relies on farming in order to survive.**

"If you farm then you can eat. Because the farming that we do now is only small, there is not enough food for all of us. When things get hard, we look up to other family members to help us, but sometimes they tell us that they have nothing too. If we had more seeds and tools then there would be more food in the home for me and my brothers and sisters. We could sell food and get money to help us when we are sick. My mother could use the money to buy school books."



L. Taylor/Robert Harding

# how you can help

By supporting this project, you can provide Satta and her family with lasting food security.

## The project – food for life in Liberia

This project will provide a lasting source of food for hundreds of farm families in Liberia who have recently returned home to find everything destroyed. Farmers will be provided with livestock, tools, seeds and planting materials which will enable them to start up their businesses once again. Farmers will be able to grow a variety of crops including rice, sweet potato, cassava and groundnuts. The project will train the farmers in small business management, local food processing, how to preserve crops and nutrition awareness.

This project will target women farmers in particular, as agriculture is their main source of income. By increasing the availability of food, farm families in Liberia will be able to settle back into their homes and send their children back to school. The project will give Liberia's poorest people the chance that they need to provide food for life for themselves and their families.

## What your support means to children like Satta

**£10** could mean that five farm families receive enough seeds and tools to rebuild their livelihoods

**£32** could allow 100 farm families to attend small business management workshops

**£125** could mean that 100 farm families are provided with hand gloves

**£275** could mean that 50 farm families receive hoes and diggers

**£750** could provide enough wheelbarrows and grass cutters for 50 farmers

**£2,050** could construct two drying floors which will preserve future food produce for 2,400 people



## Liberiatoday

- ◆ Life expectancy in Liberia is just 41 years.
- ◆ More than 15 per cent of children die before reaching their first birthday.
- ◆ Nearly 40 per cent of children under five have stunted growth as a result of malnutrition.

## The bigger picture

- ◆ Every day, more than 16,000 children die from hunger – one child every five seconds.
- ◆ Many food agriculture corporations have become so powerful that they are threatening the rights of poor farmers in developing countries.
- ◆ ActionAid puts pressure on leaders of rich countries to ensure that companies don't abuse poor people's rights by exploiting their corporate power.



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