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World Vision

PRESS RELEASE

Women and girls going hungry as global food prices spike

On the eve of 100th anniversary of International Women's Day aid agency calls for empowerment of women as the backbone of families

When it comes to not having access to nutritious food, women and girls in developing countries are the most vulnerable. Global food prices are now soaring to unprecedented highs every day, making this problem exponentially worse.

Tomorrow on the 100th anniversary of International Women's Day, World Vision is highlighting the importance of women in the food cycle. Women are the backbone of many families. They care for and raise the children, prepare the meals, ensure the well being of the family, and make up the vast majority of small farmers in developing countries. And a malnourished woman is more likely to die in childbirth or give birth to a malnourished baby, continuing the cycle of malnutrition from generation to generation.

Women must be empowered and heard as key voices as Canada and the international community responds to food insecurity and food price volatility.

World Vision's work

World Vision is working in nearly 100 countries and empowers women through:

- Community projects that get the women with the healthiest families to teach cooking methods and recipes to other women in their communities
- Family gardens to grow the healthiest crops that their climate can sustain
- Microenterprise loans to start up their own small farms to grow crops for their family and for sale at market
- Work with poor female farmers to develop new agricultural techniques
- Support groups that allow women, grandmothers and fathers to learn about good nutrition and childcare

Facts

- Global food prices hit an all time high after eight months of rising prices
- One fifth of maternal deaths are related to poor nutrition
- When a mother dies her child is up to ten times more likely to die prematurely
- Healthy women are important for healthy families, economies and societies. A healthy mom increases a family's income and decreases welfare dependency
- Approximately 20 million children under age five suffer from severe malnutrition—five million of these children die every year

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"This is a critical time for the world's poor—especially the woman and girls. In Canada we are feeling the pinch in our own pocketbooks as we see an increase in food prices in our own supermarkets. For the world's poor, these price increases can mean life and death. Women and girls are already the most marginalized group when it comes to food insecurity, despite the critical role that they play in cultivating and preparing food for their families. They need access to more nutritious food and they must be empowered as part of the response to this crisis."

—Caroline Riseboro,
Vice President of Public
Affairs, World Vision
Canada

World Vision is a leading Christian relief, development and advocacy organization dedicated to working with children, families and communities to overcome poverty and injustice. Inspired by our Christian values, we are dedicated to working with the world's most vulnerable people. We serve all people regardless of religion, race, ethnicity or gender.