

# Breaking Bread

Fall 2010 Newsletter



## A Flood of Justice

*The flooding that began in Pakistan late this summer has devastated much of the country. Millions have been affected and have lost their homes and livelihoods. Fields have been washed away. Short term needs abound, and the long-term effects are only starting to be comprehended. Canadian Foodgrains Bank has responded to immediate food needs by distributing food kits to over 12,000 flood-affected families through two partners: Church World Service and Interfaith League Against Poverty.*

*Kelvin Honsinger, director of ERDO (Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada), traveled to Pakistan at the beginning of September to visit flood affected communities and see the food distributions carried out. Below, Kelvin shares some of his impressions and reflections from his journal.*

**Wednesday, September 8** – We start early and speed along a modern highway northwest of Islamabad that belies the more primitive, rural communities that we will visit today. The goal is to participate in food distributions at four sites, each distributing food kits to 250 families. That's a total of 1,000 families (with an average of eight people), so this effort provides food for 8,000 people. First stop is Mardan. At our local partner's base of operations, situated in a rented house, we take a comfort break – a cup of cold water to abate the 34 degree heat followed by a security briefing. We wait for the pre-arranged police escort; this district has been shaken by a suicide bomber attack on the local police station just two days earlier. Tensions are high.

It is good to reach the tent camps and to be with the people. Intent gazes from the men, shrouded women, curious, bashful children surround us. The mood is peaceful, hopes are high. Expressions of gratitude abound as the friends from Canada are introduced. The massive flooding in Pakistan means vast need for basic necessities, just for survival. I'm faced with the fierce urgency of now. There are dark clouds over the future as people attempt to recover, clutching their few possessions, and talking of rebuilding. In the words of the Old Testament prophet Amos (5:24), this calls for a "mighty flood of justice, a torrent of doing good."

We must be here. We have good reasons. Our efforts are significant, together caring for 12,200 families at these and other sites, but somehow it seems like just a drop in this ocean of despair! More must be done. Frankly, there is a noticeable absence of international concern and presence. Will that change today?

**END HUNGER** 



Pakistan photos: Kelvin Honsinger

Canadian Foodgrains Bank is a partnership of 15 Canadian churches and church-based agencies working to end hunger in developing countries by increasing and deepening the involvement of Canadians in efforts to end hunger; supporting partnerships and activities to reduce hunger on an immediate and sustainable basis; and influencing changes in public policies necessary to end hunger.

### Member Agencies

ADRA Canada (Adventist Development and Relief Agency Canada) [www.adra.ca](http://www.adra.ca) • Canadian Baptist Ministries [www.cbmin.org](http://www.cbmin.org) • Canadian Catholic Organization for Development & Peace [www.devp.org](http://www.devp.org) • Canadian Lutheran World Relief [www.clwr.org](http://www.clwr.org) • Christian and Missionary Alliance in Canada [www.cmacan.org](http://www.cmacan.org) • Christian Reformed World Relief Committee [www.crwrc.org](http://www.crwrc.org) • Emergency Relief & Development Overseas (Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada) [www.erdo.ca](http://www.erdo.ca) • Evangelical Missionary Church of Canada [www.emcc.ca](http://www.emcc.ca) • Mennonite Central Committee Canada [www.mcc.org](http://www.mcc.org) • Nazarene Compassionate • Ministries Canada [www.ncmc.ca](http://www.ncmc.ca) • Presbyterian World Service & Development [www.presbyterian.ca](http://www.presbyterian.ca) • Primate's World Relief & Development Fund (Anglican Church of Canada) [www.pwrdf.org](http://www.pwrdf.org) • The Salvation Army [www.salvationarmy.ca](http://www.salvationarmy.ca) • The United Church of Canada [www.united-church.ca](http://www.united-church.ca) • World Relief Canada [www.wrcanada.org](http://www.wrcanada.org)



**Thursday, September 9** - The same early morning road takes us to another food distribution, this time at Akbar Pura. This is a congested, seething urban neighbourhood. We scrape through narrow streets to reach the gates of our local partner's compound; sacks of flour and rice, imprinted with *Canadian Foodgrains Bank* are piled high. Food kits and cooking oil are distributed to 200 families.

I can't help but replay yesterday's activity in my mind: two men, two conversations. Their words follow me, punctuated by indelible images of their shared grief for the desperate plight of their Pakistan. The first is young, articulate, educated-in-England, and serving as Minister of Law & Justice for Khyber province. I stood with Arshad Abdullah as he expressed his gratitude to Canada, all those who have reached out to his people. Alongside of his government's best intentions we are needed. He anguished about the terrorist threat, "the elusive enemy" that continues to destabilize everyday life. "This is not who we are," he lamented, "and this does not represent millions of ordinary people who want to live in peace."

The other man, Bahadar Khan, is very elderly. He welcomed me to his tent, home for now, shared with children and grandchildren. Our encounter was brief but poignant. Much was communicated by what he could not say in his sadness as he stared past me. But in a few translated words, he said "I am crying inside. All is lost. What will my family do now?" And then with resignation, "This must be God's will and somehow we will get through this." He is one of those ordinary people – whose extraordinary sorrow invites God's people to show up with practical acts of compassion.

I am proud to be Canadian; privileged to represent our supporters. I'm praying for a rising tide of generosity. I am touched by the presence of Jesus in the touches of people, young and old, who reach out and say 'thank you' for what you have done. Remember, He said, "I was hungry and you fed me." (Matthew 25:35)

— **Kelvin Honsinger**, *Director of ERDO (Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada)*. He is pictured at bottom left.

*Canadian Foodgrains Bank continues to respond to the needs in Pakistan. These projects were led by CRWRC and PWS&D with additional funds from CBM, ERDO, MCCC, PWRDF, and WRC.*

*Plans to distribute food kits to additional families are underway. The Foodgrains Bank is committed to longer-term efforts that will support and re-build food security in Pakistan.*





## Capacity Development at Canadian Foodgrains Bank

The word “capacity” conjures many different images in people’s minds. Farmers talk about the threshing capacity of a combine. Look in the back of your vehicle manual and you will learn about the fuel tank capacity of your car. Capacity is generally linked to an ability to do something, whether that is how many bushels/hour a combine can thresh or the kilometers your vehicle can travel on a tank of gas.

Within the Foodgrains Bank network, we refer to our capacity in relation to our ability to end hunger. At the field level, the capacity to fulfill our mission is closely connected to our ability to design, implement, monitor, and evaluate projects that reduce the number of hungry people in the world.

Our goal is to continually develop more capacity to end hunger by strengthening the skills of individuals within our network, improve the efficiency of the Foodgrains Bank network, and coordinate more effectively with organizations having a similar mission. Since we want to *increase* our capacity to end hunger, our focus becomes “capacity development”.

Workshops are one way the Foodgrains Bank develops capacity. In order to build capacity to monitor and evaluate projects, Akililu Yohanis, Canadian Foodgrains Bank Monitoring and Evaluation Coordinator, facilitated a workshop in Kenya that included an introduction to new tools to help partners track their progress in achieving project objectives. One participant said the workshop clarified her understanding of “immediate, intermediate, and ultimate outcomes...I will use this knowledge in drafting proposals, reporting and conducting baselines.”

This year we are coordinating and facilitating workshops in many different countries to help partners learn how to apply these tools to their programs.

Another way to develop capacity is by organizing information exchanges for implementing partners. Recently partners from Zimbabwe and Malawi visited a variety of food security projects to learn about innovative programming approaches and discuss the merits of each with program staff from other partners.

This year we are conducting evaluations on sand dams and conservation farming projects. The recommendations coming from these evaluations will identify methods to further improve our ability to run effective and efficient programs.

—Alden Braul, *Capacity Development Manager*

Jim Cornelius with organizers from SHARE growing project near Morden, MB.



## From the desk of the Executive Director Responding to and preparing for emergencies

The flooding in Pakistan, the earthquake in Haiti, and droughts in Kenya illustrate how people around the world are vulnerable to natural events—events that can ruin crops, destroy infrastructure, devastate livelihoods, and displace people from their homes and fields. We have experienced some of these same challenges in Canada with flooding in the Red River Valley, rain in the spring that left many fields unplanted in Saskatchewan, and hurricanes battering the east coast.

Foodgrains Bank often finds itself responding to these types of emergencies by providing food to meet people's immediate needs and helping households and communities recover and rebuild. As much as 40 percent of our resources are used in responding to natural disasters of various types. People need assistance to meet their immediate needs and without support they can be driven into deeper and longer term poverty. Emergency assistance is essential for addressing and reducing hunger and poverty.

Foodgrains Bank also supports initiatives to reduce the risks households and communities face from natural events. It is important to improve early warning systems and strengthen the ability of communities to cope with and manage natural events so that these events don't turn into disasters. Such interventions include planting more drought-resistant crops, improving conservation of moisture and water in drought-prone areas, constructing and raising dykes in areas subject to flooding, and introducing more earthquake-resistant construction techniques and regulations. These types of initiatives are often called disaster risk reduction.

Foodgrains Bank, along with other international agencies and governments, is giving more attention to disaster risk reduction as an important part of our programming. Reducing the negative impacts of natural disturbances is critical to the task of ending hunger.

—Jim Cornelius, Executive Director

## Renewing a Promise to the World's Hungry

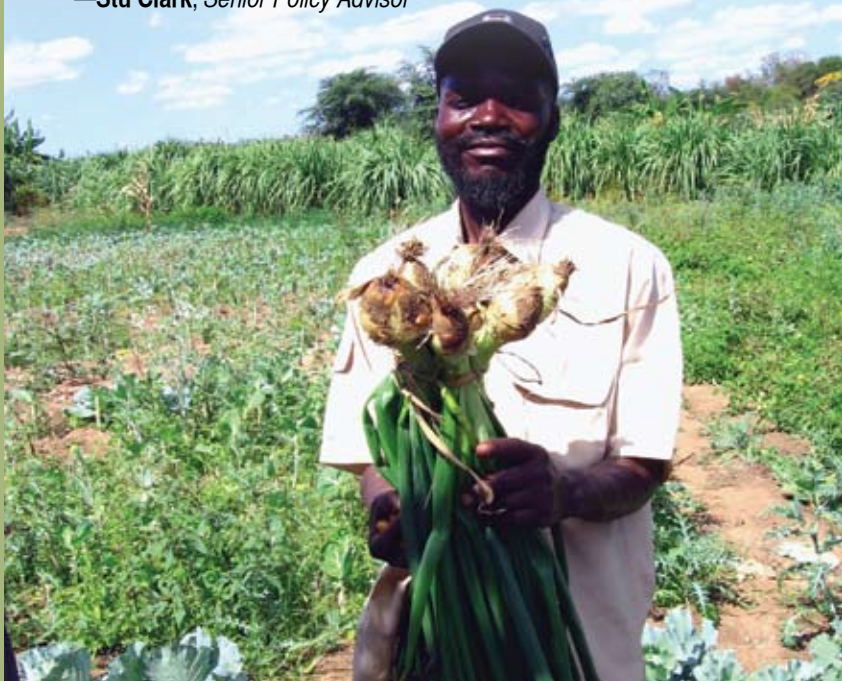
Forty-three years ago, Canada joined 16 other countries in making a promise to provide at least 4.5 million tonnes of food for hungry people in developing countries. Each year since then Canada has met its promise. At the last negotiation eleven years ago, Canada promised to provide over 400,000 tonnes of food, the most generous commitment on a per capita basis of all of the Convention members.

Today the 1999 Food Aid Convention, which should have been renegotiated in 2004 but was blocked by a food aid fight at the World Trade Organization, is again under negotiation. This time Canada is leading the negotiations and consults regularly with the Foodgrains Bank. But the timing is not good. Many European food aid donors are under intense budgetary pressure and may be tempted to reduce their promises despite the growing numbers of hungry people.

There are important questions about what should be included in a new Convention. In addition to food for consumption, should food vouchers and cash given directly to people also count towards meeting commitments? What about seeds and fertilizers to grow food immediately following a food crisis? Out of the one billion people who are food insecure, how many will need food assistance and how many should the Convention provide for?

The first informal negotiations took place in Ottawa for three days in late September. These meetings are crucial in determining whether or not the member countries of the Convention will be able to come to a speedy conclusion. The indications so far are positive. If they end up in serious dispute this 43-year-old promise to the hungry could simply disappear. Please remember the negotiators in your prayers.

—Stu Clark, Senior Policy Advisor



## From Whom Much is Given

While Sandra Fisher's first child grew round and plump in front of her eyes, she was haunted by the images of emaciated children that were beamed into her living room through her television set. Her healthy son, whose life held so much promise, was growing strong in Canada during the height of the 1967 Biafra crisis that left so many children malnourished on the other side of the world. The injustice of it all stayed with Sandra. How could it be that the happenstance of geography could create such a gulf between her son and the children she saw on television?

Over the years, Sandra and her husband of 41 years were blessed with two more children and now have eight grandchildren. "We have been so blessed—we want to give out of that blessing," explains Sandra, citing Luke 12:48, "When someone has been given much, much will be required in return." For the Fishers the Foodgrains Bank is "a concrete way of contributing."

Sandra became a monthly donor after a Fast for Change kit arrived at All Saints Anglican Church in Melville Saskatchewan a few years ago. She and Pastor Kim Sherwin decided to take part in the program and both fasted and prayed for 24 hours. At the end of the fast, Sandra resolved to contribute to the work of ending hunger.

For Mark Friesen, it was a Steve Bell concert in Winnipeg that started him on the path of becoming a

monthly donor. When Mark saw the concert, the news was covering food riots from around the world. "I felt it was important to do a little bit to address the imbalance," says Mark.

Signing on to be a monthly donor is a commitment, Sandra explains, "It is not compulsive. We were able to pray about it. It is easy to write a cheque and not think about it again – to feel that you have done your part," Sandra says, "but giving monthly is a pledge."

The Friesens were drawn to the Foodgrains Bank because of the simple, non-flashy, approach of the Foodgrains Bank and the collaboration between different church denominations. Mark likens the approach to the body of Christ, where each part of the body is working for the greater good.

With so many organizations to give to, Sandra feels that the work of the Foodgrains Bank is validated by other organizations that she respects, such as Primate's World Relief and Development Fund and Mennonite Central Committee. Sandra is also drawn to the 4:1 match from the Canadian International Development Agency that many Foodgrains Bank projects are eligible for. While Sandra sees practical reasons for choosing to support the Foodgrains Bank she also adds, "Maybe I heard from God."

If you would like to commit to the work of ending hunger on a regular basis, consider becoming a monthly donor. See the attached envelope for details. Fast for Change materials are available at [www.fastforchange.ca](http://www.fastforchange.ca).

—Emily Cain, *Communications Officer*



*Mark Friesen and family*

# Voices from the South



## Update from Zimbabwe

Zimbabweans continue to hold on to hope as signs of recovery from the decade-long development crisis begin to appear. According to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, humanitarian conditions have significantly improved in the last year. In 2009 a cholera outbreak peaked and over half the country's population required emergency food assistance. Although the humanitarian situation continues to be precarious, hope is found in improvements as a result of co-ordinated efforts by the government and the donor community.

Christian Care is proud to have contributed through the efforts of the United Church of Canada (UCC) and Canadian Foodgrains Bank partnerships. Together we have played a significant part in alleviating hunger and implementing life-changing food security interventions with rural communities in Zimbabwe.

These efforts were complemented by conservation farming, a program that improves yields by promoting conservation agriculture principles such as minimum tillage and covering soil with mulch to retain moisture. Farmers who previously harvested less than 200 kg per year quadrupled their harvests, much to their amazement. Results indicate a national cereal harvest in April 2010 of approximately 1.5 million metric tons, which is a 3% increase from the previous year.

Christian Care is delighted that our efforts in the southern districts of Zimbabwe were successful and that a combination of timely rains and conservation farming programs improved food security in the area. We continue to work towards food security in Zimbabwe and are grateful to Canadians and the Foodgrains Bank for making us part of the vision to END HUNGER.

—**Addmore Makunura**, Deputy Director Programmes & Planning, Christian Care Zimbabwe and Member of Canadian Foodgrains Bank Board of Directors



## Farewell from Heather Plett, Director, Resources & Public Engagement

As I write this, I am in my last week of employment at Canadian Foodgrains Bank. It is with mixed emotions that I make my departure. The six years I've spent here have been truly incredible. I've learned so much and met so many fascinating people across Canada and around the world. Though I feel a calling into something new, I leave with some sadness that I will no longer be a part of such an incredible organization.

I will carry with me many incredible memories of the times I have spent with you, the faithful supporters and friends of Canadian Foodgrains Bank. I remember bidding for homemade cottage cheese at the annual auction at Osler, Saskatchewan; gathering pumpkins in the Annapolis Valley in Nova Scotia; participating in a cattle auction in Abbotsford, B.C.; working at the booth at the annual farm show in Red Deer, Alberta; sitting at the world's largest picnic table at the annual plowing match in Ontario; attending a growing project harvest in Landmark, Manitoba; speaking to a church group in Charlottetown, PEI where they sell Christmas cards as a fundraiser every year; attending an art show in Saint John, New Brunswick; and speaking to educators in Montréal, Québec. How blessed I have been to be part of all of these incredible experiences!

On my first trip to Africa, I slept in a tent on a farm in Kenya near a herd of goats. The farm was owned by the local church, and so it puzzled us where the goats came from. We were told by the pastor that the goats were the tithes of the parishioners. Many of them couldn't afford to give money, so they gave of their herds. That story has stuck with me ever since as it reflects what I have seen many of you do as well. You might not be able to write large cheques in support of the work of ending hunger, but you give of your time, your energy, your fields, your grain, your handiwork, your food, your commitment, and your passion.

*May you be blessed for the way that you have blessed so many others! Farewell and God be with you.*



## Bert Loewen Honoured with Order of Manitoba

Bert Loewen, who played a vital role establishing the Canadian Foodgrains Bank and served as the first Executive Director, was honoured with the Order of Manitoba in July 2010. Loewen built on the vision of the Mennonite Central Committee Food Bank and was instrumental in its expansion to include other churches and church-based agencies in the early 1980s.

Loewen's personal mission statement, "to serve God and man in word and deed," is evident in the legacy of his life work and lives on as the Foodgrains Bank continues to work to end hunger around the world. When congratulated on receiving the Order of Manitoba, Loewen is quick to cite the network of people that made Canadian Foodgrains Bank a success: "it was amazing to have so many people who wanted to get involved – it was positively contagious," say Loewen.

While Loewen is a gracious recipient of this honour, he is also remembered as a fierce negotiator and staunch visionary, whose determination resulted in an effective way for Canadians to get food to people in need.

Loewen sees this honour as a stamp of approval for the Foodgrains Bank and hopes to see the Foodgrains Bank continue to thrive, saying, "Far too many people are still going hungry."

—Emily Cain, Communications Officer

# International Programs

Country	# of Programs	# of Beneficiaries	Total Budget	Food Tonnage	Commodity Type
Afghanistan	1	2,784	\$286,956		
Bangladesh	1	105,000	\$874,424	194	Rice, oil, pulses, salt, sugar, seeds
Burundi	1	20,000	\$288,116	617	Maize, pulses
DR Congo	1	27,500	\$378,124		
El Salvador	1	1,050	\$84,545		
Ethiopia	7	72,405	\$1,812,882	2,013	Wheat, maize, oil, pulses, sorghum, famix, seeds
Haiti	2	9,600	\$673,434	230	Rice, oil, pulses
India	5	44,320	\$722,290	763	Rice, seeds
Iraq	1	11,732	\$451,922		
Kenya	2	120,000	\$1,121,491	1,512	Maize, oil, pulses
Laos	1	603	\$130,135	157	Rice
Liberia	2	31,200	\$746,915	0	
Malawi	1	2,500	\$109,140		
Mozambique	2	8,200	\$167,724	0	
Nepal	2	46,272	\$197,754	1	Seeds
Niger	2	8,866	\$81,684	121	Rice, oil, pulses, millet, salt, sugar, other
Pakistan	2	61,000	\$2,237,464	3,360	Wheat flour, rice, oil, pulses, salt, sugar, chili power, tea
Rwanda	1	3,592	\$96,025		
Sierra Leone	1	450	\$93,988		
Sri Lanka	1	9,850	\$21,596	22	Rice, pulses, salt, sugar, other
Sudan	4	168,002	\$2,202,175	601	Oil, pulses, sorghum, salt, sugar
Tanzania	1	10,000	\$423,303		
Uganda	1	17,000	\$103,126	173	Seeds
Zimbabwe	7	92,950	\$4,600,128	5,418	Maize, oil, pulses, corn soya blend
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>874,876</b>	<b>\$17,905,341</b>	<b>15,181</b>	

\*Total budget includes all food aid, food security, and nutrition activities from April 1 - September 15, 2010.



We welcome your donations in the enclosed envelope, online at [www.foodgrainsbank.ca](http://www.foodgrainsbank.ca), or by calling 1-800-665-0377.

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