

Securing a Brighter Future for the Burkina Faso People

At just six months old Alexis was malnourished. He lives with his mother and two siblings, who live in a small millet farming village in northern Burkina Faso. The millet that Alexis and his family live on only gives them enough food for 4 months of the year. In that other 8 months when Alexis and his family don't have food, they are vulnerable to malnutrition. We need to help kids like Alexis and keep them from falling into the category of the 3.5-5 million kids each year who die because of malnutrition. With my grant, I will start achieving our global goal of zero hunger by starting in Burkina Faso and securing land rights, which will increase agricultural production by 60%.

815 million or 1 in 9 people worldwide are hungry, and 2 billion people expected by 2050. This is very much a problem. Those 815 million people are far less productive and much more prone to diseases than me or you. For young children being hungry means long term poor health, disability and poor educational development. And those are the children of the future. The children that will create new technology, cure cancer and even help stop hunger. In other words, they will help the world. Our world. By solving hunger, it creates a better future for everyone.

Burkina Faso, a country in western Africa is one of the poorest countries in the world. 80% of the population live on rural small family farms, that make a living through agriculture, livestock and forestry. Nearly half of the population lives on 1.25 US dollars per day, making it an important place to start the quest of zero hunger. Burkina Faso is prone to natural disasters such as, severe cycles of drought and flooding and man-made disasters such as rapid deforestation. Those disasters lower farm productivity which leads to food scarcity and rising prices of food. Another issue in Burkina Faso that effects food availability is the conflict between farmers and the pastoralists. What causes these conflicts is the difficulty in sharing resources. When there is drought or flooding the pastoralists are forced to move to different land that has

grass for their cows, which usually is the farmers lush crop. This results in conflict and even violence between the two communities. By lifting the heavy burden of hunger off the Burkina Faso people's shoulders so they can try to fix and solve the puzzle of the natural disasters and the conflict between the farmers and the pastoralists.

My solution for achieving our zero-hunger goal is to secure land rights for Burkina Faso family's and farmers so that they can invest in property improvements. To not have land rights means that the government or a tribe can come along and take it. In 2015, over half of the rural households in Burkina Faso indicated that land rights were a concern, and over one third of the house-holds indicated that they are worried about their land being taken away. So working with the government to create laws that you can't take land and creating documents that show land ownership will reduce the conflicts between the farmers and the pastoralist.

While most people in America don't have to worry about secure property rights, it is estimated that more than 1billion people across the globe don't have secure land rights, most of whom are poor. By securing land rights those 1billion people can invest in their property without the worry of it being taken away. The investments may include buying tools, fencing their property or growing space and improving soil. These investments could increase agricultural production by up to 60%. This results in the farmers family having more food to eat and additional food to sell at the market. This could increase the family's income by up to 150%. With this additional money the family can send their children to school, and school opens endless job opportunities, not only does sending their child to school open job opportunities it also, it is shown when girls go to school and graduate, teen pregnancy is cut by half. Imagine if all of Burkina Faso had secure land rights. The possibilities are endless.

Alexis was saved from falling into a severe form malnutrition, by getting the nutrients he needed in a paste, from a clinic. If he had secure land rights this wouldn't be a problem. When I go to Burkina Faso with my grant, I will secure land rights so that the Burkina Faso people can

invest in their property and produce more and better crops which will significantly decrease malnutrition like Alexis's. But my goal is stopping hunger in young children before it even starts, so those young children in school or anything they do. To help those children you can donate money to organizations that work to secure land rights.

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