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UN Announces Somalia Famine Today: Seattle-based World Concern Responds to Save Lives

This morning the UN will announce a famine has hit a large section of Somalia, with severe drought conditions throughout the Horn of Africa.

At least 500,000 children are at risk of death in the region, according to UNICEF. This has been one of the driest years in decades. Families have no more crops, their animals are dying, and now these desperate families are in search of food and water to simply survive.

Seattle-based World Concern's response includes assistance with water, emergency food and survival supplies in Southern Somalia, an area which was until recently inaccessible due to a high security risk. Our response also extends to Northern Somalia and Kenya, with the primary goal of delivering water to families.

At 10:00 at World Concern Headquarters, reporters will be able to speak with staff on the ground in the famine response. The connection will be over Skype, or phone if that is not possible.

This is the worst drought the region has seen in more than 60 years. An estimated 10 million people are affected in Northeastern Kenya, Somalia and Eastern Ethiopia. This is the first major famine in the region since 1984-85, when one million people died in Ethiopia and Sudan.

Christian humanitarian organization World Concern has worked in the region for many years, developing communities by establishing clean water sources, schools, providing agricultural assistance and more. But several consecutive seasons of failed rains, combined with skyrocketing food prices, conflict, and limited humanitarian access, have added to the crisis.

The forecast is bleak. August is expected to be dry. About 1,300 people cross the border from Somalia into Kenya every day, landing in ill-equipped, over-crowded refugee camps. The largest camp is home to nearly 400,000 people. The UN estimates between 40% and 50% of Somali refugee children are acutely malnourished.

To learn more or donate, visit: www.worldconcern.org/crisis or call 866-530-LIFE (5433).

To arrange interviews, or for more information, please contact **Derek Sciba at (206) 713-5564 or Cathy Herholdt at (206) 546-7374.**

Press conference:

Wednesday July 20 – 10am
World Concern HQ, on the campus of CRISTA Ministries
Mike Martin Administration Building
19303 Fremont Ave. N
Shoreline, WA 98109

World Concern, part of CRISTA Ministries, is a Christian humanitarian organization that helps lift people out of poverty through activities including microfinance, agriculture, disaster response and small business development. World Concern works with the poor in 22 countries, with the goal of transforming the lives of those we touch, leading them on a path to self-sustainability. Worldwide, World Concern offers life, opportunity and hope to nearly six million people.

