

## WHAT IS AN ANTHROPOLOGIST?

Anthropology is the social science that studies the origins and social relationships of human beings. Therefore, an anthropologist studies people! Often, anthropologists do their work by living with the people that they are studying. This is called "fieldwork," and it often leads to surprising discoveries about why people do what they do. Famous anthropologists include Margaret Mead, who studies teenage girls in New Guinea and Louis Leakey, who studied early man by examining bones.

## HOW DO ANTHROPOLOGISTS CONTRIBUTE TO RELIEF OF FAMINE?

- They can explain the cultural, social, and historical characteristics of a people who live under famine conditions.
- They can expose what meaning people make of famine and how those meaning structures may limit relief efforts.
- They can work with local people to promote peace and restore agriculture and other productive activities.
- They can conduct studies that help us understand the causes and effects of famine.

## REFERENCES

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Effects of Famine: Short Stature Evident in North Korean Generation  
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Report Says Resolving Violent Conflicts Key to Ending Hunger; Cites Sudan Famine  
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## UNITED NATIONS FAMINE TEAM

### AM I MY BROTHER'S KEEPER?

YES! ANTHROPOLOGISTS CARE ABOUT THE WORLD. WE HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY TO HELP SOLVE THE PROBLEMS THAT THREATEN THE COMFORT AND QUALITY OF LIFE OF THE PEOPLE OF ALL NATIONS ON EARTH!

### CAN FAMINE BE PREVENTED?

YES! THERE IS ENOUGH FOOD TO FEED THE WORLD, BUT WE NEED TO WORK TOGETHER WITH LOCAL PEOPLE TO PROMOTE PEACE, RESTORE AGRICULTURE, AND ENCOURAGE OTHER PRODUCTIVE ACTIVITIES. ANTHROPOLOGISTS CAN CONTRIBUTE TO THESE GOALS THROUGH RESEARCH, PLANNING, AND IMPLEMENTATION.

## UNITED NATIONS FAMINE TEAM

What Social and Cultural Anthropologists Contribute to Understanding and Solving the Problems of Famine



Anthropologists for  
 Social Action

## ANTHROPOLOGISTS HELP FIND SOLUTIONS TO FAMINE

### Report Says Resolving Violent Conflicts Key to Ending Hunger

Throughout the 15-year civil war in Sudan, government and opposition forces have used food and hunger as weapons to control territory and people. Presently, 2.6 million people are in need of emergency food aid, and one-third of the country's children are malnourished. The warring parties continue their protracted struggle over southern Sudan's land, water, and petroleum, as well as its religious culture.

According to a new report from the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), creating a hunger-free world in the 21st century will require prevention and resolution of violent conflicts, such as the one in Sudan, as well as concerted efforts to rebuild war-torn societies.

"In Sudan, hunger itself has been a weapon of war," said Ellen Messer, an anthropologist at Brown University's Watson Institute for International Studies and the principal author of the report. "The international community really has to re-think ways to deliver aid so that it leads to peace and does not further fuel conflict," she added.

Anthropologists have also documented that emergency aid has to be more than just handouts. Wherever possible, efforts to stave off famine with food assistance should include working with local people to promote peace and restore agriculture and other productive activities.

### Effects of Famine: Short Stature Evident in North Korean Generation

At 16, Myung Bok is old enough to join the North Korean army. But you wouldn't believe it from his appearance. The teenager stands 4-feet-7, the height of an American fifth- or sixth-grader. The short stature of North Koreans has become an international humanitarian crisis — and one fraught with diplomatic and political overtones. Conservatives — in South Korea and the United States, among others — who may prefer a change in leadership in North Korea point to residents' shrinking stature as evidence of leader Kim Jong Il's failure.

South Korean anthropologists who measured North Korean refugees here in Yanji, a city 15 miles from the North Korean border, found that most of the teenage boys stood less than 5 feet tall and weighed less than 100 pounds. In contrast, the average 17-year-old South Korean boy is 5-feet-8, slightly shorter than an American boy of the same age.

The height disparities are stunning because Koreans were more or less the same size — if anything, people in the North were slightly taller — until the abrupt partitioning of the country after World War II.

South Koreans, feasting on an increasingly Western-influenced diet, have been growing taller as their estranged countrymen have been shrinking through successive famines.

## ANTHROPOLOGY COMES TO THE RESCUE!

**UC Davis lends its expertise to Asian countries**

Extending their reach from the basic struggle for survival in North Korea to the intricacies of international trade, seven UC Davis professors, including a professor of anthropology, are changing the way East Asia does business. They have advised government officials of several countries in the region and the leaders of an alphabet soup of international economic organizations. They've created exhaustive data sets that have reshaped the way the United States and Chinese governments do business. And the research of one professor promises to influence domestic policy on private research organizations. Among the most compelling challenges the professors have tackled is the recurring famine and malnutrition in North Korea.

With Chinese researchers, UC Davis professors are now tackling the food shortage of the isolationist country through a back door. They are surveying farmers in three abutting Chinese provinces about the effects of agricultural reforms.