

WATER CRISIS & DROUGHT IN MADAGASCAR

**ASHRAFUL
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According to Amnesty International's Madagascar Programme Advisor, Mr. Tamara Léger, thousands are in danger of famine, and millions cannot get adequate food supplies in Southern Madagascar. We cannot let this situation worsen anymore; otherwise, a great human tragedy will be born.

Water fills 70% of our world, and it seems abundant. But freshwater—the kind we drink, bathe in, and use to irrigate our farms—is uncommon. 3% of the world's water is fresh, and two-thirds of it is frozen glaciers or otherwise inaccessible. According to the UN, 1.1 billion people lack access to clean water, while 2.7 billion endure water shortage for at least one month each year.

Human activity and mismanagement frequently exacerbate the impacts of water scarcity and drought. Human consequences include felling trees for fuel, constructing homes, and inadequate agricultural methods.

In Madagascar, droughts have destroyed crops and limited food supply for three years, and COVID-19 is adding to the misery. The UN World Food Programme (WFP) has warned that southern Madagascar faces a humanitarian crisis, with 1.5 million people needing urgent food aid.

These people are primarily children and women, and the number is three times what the world expected mid-year. Less water is available in Madagascar's South, making it more prone to drought. Access to safe drinking water is a severe issue in the area. Droughts cause yearly emergency pleas to rescue starving youngsters. Notably, over half of the children under five are chronically malnourished or physically stunted, putting their minds and bodies at risk.

Three years of damaged crops have resulted in famine and malnutrition. Families in drought-stricken regions sell livestock, agricultural equipment, and household items to survive. Beginning in October, the World Food Programme started supplying 320,000 individuals in need with lentils, sorghum, enriched oil, and rice, as well as hot meals in Amboasary. But financial shortfalls mean food aid can't keep up with demand.



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