

# This Christmas, help families break the cycle of poverty

Together, we can invest in communities and see lives transformed



Photo: Tom Price/Tearfund

The powerful story of Elijah and the widow at Zarephath, in 1 Kings 17, displays God's miraculous provision. Despite having only a handful of flour and a little oil, the widow trusted God's promise, shared what she had, and she and Elijah were provided for. The widow and her son were also sustained throughout the drought. God wants to provide out of his abundance, even when our gifts are scarce.

This Christmas, our Tearfund church resource highlights the hope that God brings when we share what we have, even if it feels small. When we give him the small things we hold in our hands, he takes them, multiplies them, and uses them for his glory. Families like Malich's and Agnes's, who faced the worst drought in Kenya in over 40 years, know this first hand.

## Communities cannot continue to be trapped by the extremes of climate change and by poverty.

When the severe drought began in 2019 and local water sources dried up, Malich's life changed drastically. She lost everything. All her family's livestock died. They had already been battling poverty, but with no livestock left and hunger a constant threat, they ended up relying on wild fruit just to survive.

Agnes, a mother in the same region, faced similar hardships in caring for her family as her community grappled with the same desperate challenges. Her family of seven had to survive on just one meal of tea and maize a day.

**The drought took away more than just livestock; it stole hope and stability.** But, we believe in a world where families can rebuild, thrive, and break free from the grip of poverty.



Photo: Tom Price/Tearfund



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## Unleashing hope through church-led poverty solutions

**When your church gives to Tearfund, it funds innovative, community-focused programmes that empower families to overcome poverty.** Through our local church partners, we provide people with sustainable solutions like training in poultry farming and climate-resistant crops. This approach helps communities tap into their skills and resources, fostering hope and resilience.

Tearfund's programmes not only bring immediate relief but also equip families to build brighter futures.

When we give back to God, he is able to multiply our efforts in ways we cannot imagine. As we invest in these communities, we can witness whole lives transformed.

### Malich's and Agnes's stories:

A community member from Funan, where Malich lives, explains: 'During the drought we lost our sources of livelihoods. We lost all our livestock.'

Malich's family used to rely on livestock for survival, but continuous cycles of droughts and floods mean that is no longer possible for them. Animals have died, wells have run dry, and temperatures are soaring.

'When the rains came, water and pasture returned. We tried planting crops, but the rains stopped when the crops were at the flowering stage, and they failed.'

With no livestock left, Malich's family relies on wild fruits to survive, often walking 60 kilometres to gather them.

'We are surviving on these wild fruits, but it's still not enough. We are still facing hunger challenges. **Please come back and support us again.**'

Mother-of-seven, Agnes, also faced similar struggles of food insecurity in her community. 'The drought has really affected us,' she shares. 'We used to receive food aid, and it was very helpful. Now, we can only afford to feed our children a little maize.'

**'I hope for continued aid to keep us going as we pray for rain which would bring back livestock and a chance to survive.'**

Just as the widow at Zarephath trusted in God's provision, both of these women also place their faith in his promise to sustain their families through these tough times.

## Partner with purpose and tackle poverty together

The struggles Malich and Agnes face continue, but by supporting families like theirs, we can provide the help they need to rebuild their lives and find hope in the face of adversity.

Tearfund is committed to working alongside local churches to bring sustainable solutions to communities like those in Kenya affected by the drought.

Your church's prayer and support can continue to empower even more families to break free from poverty and thrive.

## How your church can help our global neighbours thrive

Thank you for choosing this Christmas appeal resource for your church. This next section outlines everything you need to plan and run your Christmas services and activities. We recognise that each church has its own unique style, so feel free to follow the outline closely or adapt it to better suit your needs.

We ask that when you choose to use it, you would prayerfully consider donating a gift to Tearfund's work in whatever way works best for your church.

Our hope is that this resource will inspire your congregation to embrace the message of generosity, reminding us that when we share what we have, God can multiply it for his glory.



### Video

A family-friendly spoken word piece highlighting Agnes's journey can be shared at any point during the service to engage and inspire the congregation.



### Give

A gift from your church will help stop poverty from devastating lives. Just as for the widow at Zarephath who trusted in God's provision, whatever we give, God can multiply for his glory.

**£38**

could provide a cash grant for a family to buy what they need most urgently, such as enough food to last two weeks.

**£90**

could train two people like Malich in climate-smart farming techniques to help them break the cycle of poverty.

**£130**

could give five families seeds and kitchen garden materials to grow fast-maturing vegetables at home.

**£224**

could train ten households to restore natural vegetation and biodiversity on their land, helping the region adapt to the climate crisis and reduce disaster risks.





Photo: Tom Price/Tearfund

## Prayers

Prayer is central to all that we do at Tearfund. Our vision extends beyond what we can accomplish on our own. We believe in a loving God who listens and answers our prayers.



In this Christmas appeal resource, we have included a collection of prayers designed to guide your church as you pray for Malich, Agnes and the vital work of Tearfund in empowering communities across the globe through the local church.

## Thank you

Thank you for taking the time to share Malich's and Agnes's stories with your congregation. As always, we're right here if we can help with any further information. You can reach us by email at [churches@tearfund.org](mailto:churches@tearfund.org).

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