The work of Tearfund should spread to all parts of Malawi so that many lives and families can be transformed and sing a story similar to mine.

HASWELL, SELF-HELP GROUP MEMBER
BUILDING RESILIENCE: ADAPTING AND RESPONDING TO ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGES IN MALAWI

Food insecurity is threatening lives and livelihoods on a massive scale in Malawi. Tearfund has been teaching sustainable farming techniques to local farmers, as well as playing a pioneering role in raising awareness of environmental challenges at the local, national and global level, so that rural communities might be released from hunger and supported to adapt to local changes in climate.

REASONS FOR OUR RESPONSE

Progress has been made in Malawi over the last 10 years, shown in the improvements in the Human Development and Fragile States Indexes. But this progress is at risk of being reversed by climate change, which is causing acute food insecurity, malnutrition and prolonged periods of hunger for many.

Malawi is among the countries most affected by climate change in the world today. Over the last decade, extreme weather events such as droughts and floods have increased in frequency and magnitude. This unpredictable weather is causing crops to fail, meaning that rural communities cannot harvest enough to eat.

On average, the country loses 4.6 per cent of its maize production each year due to droughts, and 12 per cent due to flooding. In terms of economic loss, that is £9.8 million (US$12.5 million) each year, but the local cost can be much worse, with whole communities experiencing crop failure in badly affected areas. It was projected that 6.5 million people (40 per cent of the population) would experience food shortage between April 2016 and March 2017.

The negative impact is felt most severely by the poorest whose livelihoods depend on small-scale agriculture. When the harvests fail they lose vital food and income. This can place a strain on personal relationships and force families to turn to negative coping strategies, such as debt, selling valuable items or eating ‘hardship foods’ such as wild tubers and maize husks. Children may have to leave school and instead go to work or enter into forced marriage to bring in extra income for their families.

Rapid population growth, deforestation and poor farming practices have exacerbated food insecurity and caused flooding and water pollution, meaning access to clean water is also scarce in many areas.

As Malawi is a low-income country, the government’s resource and support to help communities adapt and cope with these environmental challenges is limited.

From 2006 to 2015, Tearfund’s work in Malawi has been delivered through a consortium of local partners, known as the Malawi Church Partnership Programme (MCPP). Food security, disaster risk reduction (DRR) and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) have been major priorities in their work. By teaching farmers how to farm sustainably and improving access to clean water, Tearfund has released many families from hunger and enabled people to reach their full potential. This grassroots work has been combined with local, national and global advocacy actions in order to hold those in power accountable for reducing the future effects of climate change and supporting rural communities to adapt to the impacts they are already experiencing. You can read more about the journey of Tearfund’s global climate change advocacy work on pages 54 to 55.

COUNTRY PROFILE

| POPULATION* | 2006 | 13 MILLION | 2016 | 18 MILLION |
| LIFE EXPECTANCY* | 2006 | 50 YEARS | 2016 | 64 YEARS |
| HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INDEX** | 2016 | 0.387 | 2016 | 0.476 |
| FRAGILE STATES INDEX*** | 2016 | 29TH | 2016 | 44TH |

*Data obtained from the World Bank (data.worldbank.org), **1 = most developed, ***1st = most fragile
1. DRR AND FOOD SECURITY
The Malawi Church Partnership Programme (MCPP) was established in 2006 with a significant focus on disaster risk reduction (DRR) and food security. Working in six key regions, farmers were taught sustainable farming techniques to build their resilience to the changing climate and increase food production in a very cost effective way. This included crop diversification, soil and water conservation practices, and communal grain banks.

An external evaluation found that families using these techniques benefited from increased crop yields; improved nutrition; and surplus income to spend on essential items, schooling and medicines. This in turn strengthened relationships and wellbeing by reducing tension between family members and helping people feel more confident about coping in the future.

The programme also focused on raising awareness of climate change and advocating for policy change at the local and national level.

Risk awareness messages were shared in schools and via national radio. Disaster Management Committees were trained to build their communities’ resilience to future shocks.

The Malawian government soon recognised Tearfund as a leading player, and model of best practice, for DRR programming in the country. This opened the door for Tearfund’s partners to represent Malawi at the 2009 international Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen, and to contribute to government policy and planning discussions.

2. WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE
The MCPP also focused on increasing access to safe water and sanitation for some of the poorest communities in Malawi by constructing and repairing boreholes, wells and latrines; training local people to maintain water points; and promoting hygiene education. As a result there was a reduction in both the occurrence of waterborne disease and the distances women and girls had to travel to collect clean water.

Malawi Church Partnership Programme (MCPP) founded

2006

23,600 farmers trained in sustainable farming techniques

50,000 school children reached with risk awareness messages

7 MILLION farmers reached with DRR messages through national radio

18,000 people gain access to clean water

6,600 households have improved toilets and handwashing facilities

40 primary schools are trained in safe hygiene practices

Water Management Committees are trained to maintain water points

FOOTSTEPS 79
MANAGING EVERYDAY RISK

This edition focused on managing the risks we face in our daily lives, including insights from Tearfund’s disaster risk reduction work in Malawi

20,000 copies distributed
3,379 downloads
3. FOUNDATIONS FOR FARMING
In 2012, Tearfund started training Malawian farmers in an innovative, alternative farming technique called ‘Foundations for Farming’ (FFF). Setting the proven principles of conservation agriculture (CA) within a biblical framework, the method has been very successful in improving crop yields and taking families from the point of starvation to being food secure (see case study).

In the Salima District, for example, farmers using FFF techniques were able to harvest 15 months’ worth of maize from their 2013 to 2014 season, compared with just four months’ harvested by farmers using conventional methods.32

4. WATER AND CLIMATE JUSTICE
In 2013, Tearfund combined food security and WASH activities in the Water and Climate Justice Project, funded by the Scottish government. The aim was to share the FFF method and enhance access to clean water, while also educating communities about their water-related rights and how to protect the natural environment.

This ongoing project is improving food production and access to clean water, empowering communities to engage in advocacy on climate change, and encouraging people to live in an environmentally friendly way.33

5. INTRODUCING SHGS
Then in 2015 Tearfund began integrating self-help groups (SHGs) into FFF projects so farmers could come together and save small amounts of cash from their surplus crops. They could then access credit on a rotational basis to purchase productive assets, such as new farming tools, or invest in entrepreneurial activities. In the Khwamba Sustainable Livelihoods Project, for example, 96 per cent of SHG members accessed credit to develop their businesses.34 The SHGs also provide an organised structure through which to share valuable knowledge and learning, including business skills and agricultural techniques such as making organic fertilisers:

‘We applied the technology that we learnt for making organic fertilisers and my family now has a very healthy crop of maize.’ – Haswell, SHG member
Malawi’s climate means that rains fall in brief intense periods, which can wash away ploughed lands and prevent moisture from being retained in the soil. Conservation agriculture (CA) is a farming technique that aims to reverse this damage by improving soil fertility and water retention through three key principles:

1. Disturb the soil as little as possible
2. Keep the soil covered
3. Rotate and mix crops

The Foundations for Farming (FFF) method uses the innovative and scientifically-proven principles of CA and sets them in a biblical framework, teaching farmers how to produce high crop yields in a sustainable way that makes a profit. At its heart are four management principles that are supported by biblical teaching:

- Farm on time
- Farm to a high standard
- Farm with joy
- Farm without waste

The method was developed many years ago by Zimbabwean farmer Brian Oldrieve, and is now used in more than 30 countries worldwide. The tools required are simple and the method can save time and energy in the long run. The principles are radically different to the practices used for generations that can take goodness from the soil without always replenishing it.

When the principles are applied well, crop yields can increase by up to 200 per cent. As a result, communities trained in the method are being released from the cycle of poverty and hunger and are better prepared to survive the challenges of climate change. Tearfund has been supporting FFF in Malawi since 2012.

**WHAT CHANGES HAVE WE SEEN?**

In 2015, Tearfund partner Ministry of Hope (MoH) began a three-year sustainable livelihoods project, funded by the Scottish government, in Dowa district, central Malawi, where 45 per cent of the population survive on less than £0.80 (US$1) per day.

The project reached over 7,000 people with FFF training and also established 328 self-help groups (SHGs) to enable farmers to save small amounts of surplus cash and share their knowledge and learning.

An evaluation conducted in February 2017 found the project was impacting communities in a holistic way, improving food production and household income, and enhancing people’s capabilities and social relationships. Some of the key impacts include:

### More food to eat:

On average, agricultural yield increased by over 50 per cent for families using the FFF method. As a result, there was a decrease from 88 per cent to 74 per cent in the number of families experiencing food shortages during the most food-insecure months. Beneficiary households were able to diversify the range of crops they grew, in order to improve nutrition. Now 85 per cent of FFF farmers grow two or more crops, compared with 39 per cent at baseline.

### Increased purchasing power:

SHG members earned significantly more income from their crops than non-members and benefited from the opportunity to save as a group and access credit. This gave them surplus cash to invest in livestock, home improvements, education and new assets, such as mobile phones. It was found that 78 per cent of SHG members owned livestock, compared with 23 per cent of non-members.

### Improved knowledge and capabilities:

SHGs provided an organised group structure through which to pass on new skills and learning to the farmers. Each SHG leader received training from the project facilitators and passed on their knowledge to the rest of the group to create a ‘multiplier effect’. As a result, farmers in the project had increased knowledge about business skills, environmentally friendly practices such as making organic fertiliser, and how to prepare nutritious meals.

### Enhanced social connections:

SHGs encouraged people to work together in groups, sharing ideas and assisting vulnerable community members. This improved social interactions and strengthened social cohesion, which will help to make the community more resilient to future shocks.

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**MALAWI CASE STUDY**

*Foundations for Farming: Securing food and resources for sustainable futures*

> Thanks to the Foundations for Farming techniques we have learnt, we now have enough food to eat from our harvest, and the money we make from our business can be spent on other things, such as improving our home and helping others in the community. We feel very happy.

KATERINA, CHAGUNDA VILLAGE

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> ‘Thanks to the Foundations for Farming techniques we have learnt, we now have enough food to eat from our harvest, and the money we make from our business can be spent on other things, such as improving our home and helping others in the community. We feel very happy.’

KATERINA, CHAGUNDA VILLAGE

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KATERINA’S STORY

Katerina and her husband, Stanley, have experienced many positive changes in their life since Tearfund began teaching FfF in their area. Where once they could barely harvest enough to feed their family day to day, they now have plenty to eat and are even able to share their surplus with older, more vulnerable members of the community.

‘I used to be so worried about feeding my family,’ Katerina says, ‘but now we have food, there is no more pressure, the family is secure and our worries are reduced; there is happiness unlike some years back.’

For 30 years Katerina’s husband worked as a fishmonger and spent all his income buying food for the family. Now the family are able to produce enough food for themselves, and the profits they make from their business can be invested in other assets to improve their quality of life.

They have built up a small flock of goats, and have also been able to build themselves an iron-roofed home, furnished with new chairs and a radio.

These changes have improved the couple’s emotional wellbeing and positivity for the future: ‘We can listen to agricultural programmes and sermons on our radio. When you listen, you can laugh, you can ease yourself from any pressures.’

Less worry about where the next meal will come from has brought a positive change in their marriage, too. ‘I used to go out and leave my wife worried as to how she will take care of the children,’ explains Stanley, ‘but now my wife is always happy, so I am happy; we are closer than ever before.’

Katerina’s story demonstrates how the FfF method can take families from living on the edge, to being able to produce enough food to thrive and be generous to others. Having food security not only brings good health, it transforms people’s whole life by giving them freedom, time and choice to develop in other areas, such as their businesses, their assets and their social relationships.

‘I used to be so worried about feeding my family, but now we have food, there is no more pressure, the family is secure and our worries are reduced; there is happiness unlike some years back.’

KATERINA, CHAGUNDA VILLAGE

Thanks to Foundations for Farming Katerina and Stanley are now harvesting enough food for their family to flourish. Photo: Tom Price/Tearfund
ANNEX A

EVIDENCE LIST

The following is a list of significant evaluations and research used as evidence for this report. We have scored our evaluations against the Bond Evidence Principles to ensure quality in the evidence used. Only evidence that scored 40 or above was chosen to be included. The scores have been assessed and cross-checked by Tearfund’s Impact and Effectiveness Team.

This list does not represent all the evidence used in the report – only the significant evaluations and research documents. The Impact Narratives were constructed by triangulating different sources of evidence, including project reports, annual reports, interviews and qualitative and observational knowledge from our teams and partners.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Report title</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Bond Evidence Principles score</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Uganda</td>
<td>Participatory evaluation process implemented by PAG</td>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Church and community mobilisation process by PAG, Soroti</td>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>61</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Capacity enhancement project</td>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td>2015</td>
<td>74</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bridging the gap</td>
<td>Research Report</td>
<td>2016</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Myanmar</td>
<td>Evaluation of the capacity building programme for Myanmar Baptist Convention</td>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>48</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Cyclone Nargis evaluation report</td>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>41</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Telling the story of Eden</td>
<td>Review Report</td>
<td>2014</td>
<td>68</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Social Capital, Resilience and the Local Church</td>
<td>Research Report</td>
<td>2014</td>
<td>82</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Our Daughters’ Voices</td>
<td>Research Report</td>
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<td>Cambodia</td>
<td>Integrated rural community development programme</td>
<td>Evaluation</td>
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<td>Integrated rural community development programme</td>
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<td>Malawi</td>
<td>Investing in communities: the benefits and costs of building food security in Malawi</td>
<td>Research Report</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Improving food security and livelihoods of rural households in Salima district, Malawi</td>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td>2015</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Malawi: water and climate justice project</td>
<td>Evaluation</td>
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<td>Enhancing water management project, Malawi</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Khwamba sustainable livelihoods improvement project</td>
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<td>2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>FCS Aid4Life programme</td>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td>2012-2015</td>
<td>52</td>
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<tr>
<td>DRC</td>
<td>Faith-based coalition on holistic responses to HIV and gender in eastern DRC</td>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td>2014</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Engaging faith groups in preventing sexual violence in conflict affected communities in DRC</td>
<td>Evaluation</td>
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<td>Haiti</td>
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<td>Disaster Management Team programme evaluation</td>
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<td>Evaluation of the Umoja approach</td>
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<td>Middle East</td>
<td>Syria appeal real time review</td>
<td>Real Time Review</td>
<td>2013</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Emergency cash assistance for displaced households in northern Iraq</td>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td>2016</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Evaluation of European refugee response 2015</td>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td>2017</td>
<td>64</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
'If another big drought hit, it wouldn’t be like before, ample food would still be available within the community since some farmers have greatly increased their production and we have savings from previous years...we are much more secure now.'

PARTICIPANT FROM TEARFUND’S DISASTER RISK REDUCTION TRAINING, MALAWI
64. Office of the Secretary General’s Special Advisor on Community Based Medicine and Lessons from Haiti (2012) Key Statistics [www.lessonsfromhaiti.org/lessons-from-haiti/key-statistics/]
67. Ibid
68. Tearfund (2013) Syria Appeal Real-Time Review
69. ACAPS (2016) Iraq Key Figures [www.acaps.org/country/iraq]
74. UNHCR (2017) Humanitarian Response Plan Iraq
75. Markus G (2016) Operation Safe Passage – Refugee and Migrant Relief in Greece
80. Eco Church is an A Rocha UK initiative that Tearfund supports. To find out more see ecochurch.arocha.org.uk
Following Jesus where the need is greatest