

tearfund

Correspondent

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Shining a light on the Pacific's dark underbelly

The Pacific Islands are known to Kiwis as an island paradise, an idyllic holiday destination with snorkelling, fancy resorts, pristine blue water, sunny skies and friendly locals. But on the other side of the picture-perfect postcard lies a very serious problem. Modern-day slavery.

STORIES AND PICTURES GRACE ELLIS AND CHARLOTTE ROWSE

Combined, the Asia and Pacific region has the highest number of people in forced labour and forced commercial sexual exploitation in the world.

The good news is that Tearfund is doing something to help stop it. We have recently embarked on a five-year, multi-million-dollar partnership with The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) to improve rural livelihoods and protect vulnerable communities from human trafficking, abuse and exploitation. The Safe, Aware, Free and Empowered (SAFE) programme is operating in five countries, the Solomon Islands, Fiji, Vanuatu, Sri Lanka and Myanmar (from 2024), weaving together our expertise in Farming and Enterprise and Modern Slavery initiatives. The SAFE programme aims to benefit more than 20,000 people and indirectly impact more than 80,000.

We want to show you this work in action through the stories of two remarkable young women.

Adi* finds healing and hope

Adi suffered from depression and anxiety growing up in Fiji. Her childhood and teenage years were unsettling—constantly torn between

living with her mum or her dad, who divorced when she was just two.

Her dad married again multiple times and his wives were very unkind to her.

“It was challenging. I always felt neglected and there was no one to stand up for me. I used to run away from home a lot, but did well in school—that was the only stable thing in my life,” says Adi.

By 25, Adi was married. “My husband and I would go out partying, smoking and drinking with friends,” she says.

Her life changed when she became pregnant with her baby girl. “I started to live more responsibly, knowing we were bringing a little one into the world. But my husband didn’t.

Adi’s husband’s substance abuse worsened as they struggled to make ends meet, and he began to verbally abuse and hit her. “It felt like raising a child was a burden,” says Adi.

But just when she thought there was no way out, her friend referred her to Tearfund’s partner, Homes of Hope.

“My friend encouraged me to leave my husband. She was just graduating from the programme and recommended I go,” says Adi.

And she did. One night after Adi’s baby girl turned one, she ran to her mother’s house in her nightie with her baby.

She grabbed a bag of things from her mother and took a bus to the shelter run by Tearfund’s partner. When she arrived, she was greeted warmly by a staff member.


“I didn’t really know what to expect. When I arrived, I was so depressed and skinny. I hadn’t been eating properly. But I started to gain weight again,” she says.

“I loved the help they gave me to raise my daughter. During the day I would go to classes, while my baby was in daycare.”

Adi learned to sew, make jewellery, bake and how to grow vegetables. She learned there is help out there and people who care. Adi found a place of refuge and a chance to reconnect with God.

Using her new-found skills, she now grows her own veggies and has started a bakery business, selling baked goods such as scones made with coconut milk.

Adi believes this verse wholeheartedly, Romans 8:28, “For everything works together for good to those that love



“He continued to stay out late, and some nights wouldn’t even come home. I was left to look after a newborn by myself. It was hard.”

Adi
Photo: Grace Ellis, Tearfund

God, for those who have been called according to his purpose.”

Adi received long-term accommodation and counselling support when she needed it most and learned valuable life skills. The programme aims to keep vulnerable women like Adi from resorting to more dangerous work.

Homes of Hope offers trauma rehabilitation for women who have been exploited, and runs awareness and prevention programmes in communities. They educate women and men about forced sex and encourage open conversations about it. They also work with the communities to put safety nets in place.

Gina champions trafficking and exploitation

Meet Gina. Gina was HOPE Trust’s former legal specialist, a big role for a young woman who dreamed of seeing

justice served for survivors of human trafficking in the Solomon Islands.

“When I was 11, I became aware of things that didn’t seem right. I once saw a man hitting his wife, and I knew from the Bible that violence was not okay. I remember watching a movie soon after about a lawyer who stood up for people being abused, and I started to dream about being someone like this in the future,” she says.

After graduating, Gina became a paralegal at the Public Prosecutions Office, where she was exposed to human trafficking cases in the Solomon Islands.

“I didn’t realise human trafficking included domestic exploitation, and this realisation brought into focus things I had seen as a child.”

Growing up on the main island of Guadalcanal, Gina lived close to several logging camps operated by migrant workers.



“I saw my cousin become a victim of abuse at the hands of those workers in exchange for money to support her family,” Gina says.

“Once, my cousin took me and my little sister to meet the loggers because she



Gina
Photo: Tearfund



Prevention workshop, Fiji.
Photo: Tearfund



Prevention workshop, Fiji.
Photo: Tearfund

was too scared to go on her own, but she didn't tell us where we were going. We met two men. One approached me, and I was instantly enraged by what he asked me. I pushed him away in anger but was petrified he would retaliate, so I grabbed my sister and ran home," Gina says.

"From that day on, my aim was to become someone who could stop exploitation and bring justice against abusers." In her role at HOPE Trust, Gina was responsible for working with local law enforcement and court systems to strengthen policies to secure justice for survivors.

"By working with the justice system in the Solomon Islands, we can put offenders behind bars and send a clear message that change is coming," she says.

An equally important part of our partner's work is to empower communities to protect themselves from exploitation by championing women's and children's rights, and providing opportunities for households to earn sustainable incomes through agriculture, breaking the cycle of poverty and exploitation.

“Tearfund’s partner Ola Fou is creating opportunities for youth to earn money through agriculture and be in control of their futures,” Gina says.

Both organisations in the Solomon Islands are working together to bring transformation in the lives of rural communities. HOPE Trust's focus is on preventing and responding to human

trafficking, child sexual exploitation and sexual abuse in the Solomon Islands.

Ola Fou brings expertise in agricultural livelihoods to improve household incomes and quality of life. They do this by linking farmers so they can work together to supply commercial markets. By tackling the grassroots issue of economic poverty in rural communities, they are helping to protect people from modern slavery.

You can help our local partners protect women and children in the Pacific through our regular giving programme—World of Difference. If you would like to support this programme more directly with larger contributions, please email info@tearfund.org.nz or call our team on **0800 800 777**.

Inside Out

STORY IAN MCINNES



📷 Tearfund CEO, Ian McInnes
Photo: Tearfund

Reading this issue of the Correspondent, I would understand if it left you in despair. The timeline on pages 8 and 9 shows no less than five serious disasters to which we, and no doubt you, have responded in the last year. As Tim Manson acknowledges in his reflections on the East Africa hunger crisis, the region has been in trouble before. The Life in Plastic article confronts us with the mountain of waste we have to climb if we are to begin addressing the impact of pollution in poorer countries. Adi in Fiji reflects on the challenges she faced raising her child in an abusive home—a story aid workers repeatedly hear. Amareech, a woman in East Africa, only had her husband for two years before he died, leaving her to give birth to their daughter and raise her.

It would be easy to throw our hands up and give up. But look closer, and you will see God at work in each of these

stories. Amareech became a master of small-scale conservation agriculture—enabling her to escape the worst impacts of the present drought. Those affected by cyclones in Vanuatu have replanted their cash crops and are determined to come through stronger than before. A Romanian church has strengthened its faith by running bilingual church services for Ukrainian refugees. Adi now runs a bakery business and has an unshakable faith in God's goodness.

Psalm 40 reminds us we are to wait patiently for the Lord, and he will turn to us and hear our cry. If the many participants of Tearfund's relief work can do this, so can we.

Lord, hear our cry that we may not despair or grow weary of doing good as we wait patiently for your intervention in troubled times. May we stand with Amareech and Adi and celebrate your goodness. For you are Lord, and you hear our cries.

Looking for a way to make a difference at Christmas?

STORY ANNA BUTTON

Do you love our Gift for Life catalogue? Do you attend church? Are you looking for a way to get involved in Tearfund's mission of relieving poverty among's the world's most vulnerable people? If you answered yes to these questions, then we have an exciting opportunity for you!

This Christmas we're looking for a bunch of **passionate and committed people** who would be willing to

volunteer their time in November or December. Your mission will be to set up a table in your church foyer to promote and sell Gift for Life products.

Our Gift for Life Gift Catalogue is full of meaningful gifts that make a big impact for people living in poverty around the world and we'd love your help to be able to reach even more communities by promoting it widely to your church family.

The more gifts we can sell across Aotearoa, the more lives like Anu's we can help transform. By promoting Gift for Life in your church, you could play a vital role in this!

We believe anyone can run a GFL shop. **We will send you everything you need including cards, envelopes, and promotional materials.** All you need is a table and a spot in your church to display them!

Keen to learn more and make a meaningful difference this Christmas? Email us at info@tearfund.org.nz and we'll be in touch with more information.



📷 Every Gift for Life supports people like Anu in Nepal who stayed in school because people bought Get Educated (\$125).

The Big Quiz is coming!

STORY VICTORIA HANNA

SEPTEMBER 9



Clear your calendars and save the date—it's time to get quizzical. On Saturday, September 9, Tearfund's Big Quiz is back.

Everyone loves a good quiz, but rather than heading to the pub, invite your community to your church. Tearfund is asking churches across Aotearoa to join together on the same night for some family and community fun for a good cause. For only \$10 per person, you can make a real difference for vulnerable people living in extreme poverty.

It's easy to run the event

The Big Quiz is a ready-made event where Kiwi celebs ask the quiz questions via a pre-recorded video making it easy to run the event at your church and reach out to your community. All you need to provide is the venue, the equipment to run the video, and someone to MC the evening.

The cause

We have quizzes available for people at all stages from kids through to adults, so that everyone can join in the fun and raise money to help people overseas impacted by poverty and injustice.

The quiz has eight categories, with ten questions per round, including the popular Bible round.

How can you make a difference?

Every dollar your church contributes through the Big Quiz Night will support global projects that help lift people out of poverty and transform lives around the world.

Be part of something huge!

Talk to your church leaders about hosting this epic evening of poverty-beating, community-building, and fact-finding fun. Don't forget to invite the whole community. To host the event or learn more, visit tearfund.org.nz/quiz.

Past participants have said it was a great way to bring their church together and extend their reach in their local community while also giving back.

"It was a lot of fun and really easy to run because of everything organised for me by Tearfund!"

Wilma Reinders, Reformed Church of Wainuiomata.

"Such an awesome social night with a mix of all ages! Loved the challenge of the questions and chance to have a good laugh together."

Anna McConchie, Bishopdale Reformed Church

"It was such a fun night. The questions were great, even if they were a little challenging. We can all say we learnt something, that's for sure. Loved the guest quizmasters."

Gemma Crawford, Bluff Community Church

Here are some of the ways your donations can make a difference:

- **Raising \$350** could help provide blankets and food for Syrian refugee families.
- **Raising \$600** could help provide life-saving psycho-social counselling and education sessions to child trafficking survivors in Cambodia.
- **Raising \$800** could help 20 Ethiopian women to be food secure and learn sustainable farming techniques through Self Help Groups.
- **Raising \$1,200** could provide after-care to survivors of trafficking in Thailand and assist in the prosecution of human traffickers.

Kiwis show compassion to disaster-affected people

Over the past year, conflicts and disasters seem to have dominated our news headlines. War in Ukraine, an earthquake that killed thousands in Turkey and Syria and a looming famine in East Africa. Even New Zealand has taken a bashing from weather-related events normally seen in the Pacific Islands.

STORY KEITH RAMSAY

📷 Survivors in Syria working through the rubble after the Turkey-Syria Earthquake.
Photo: Tearfund

Disaster Response Timeline

since June 2022

Jul 2022

Ukraine Response

Five partners: 438,000 people
Funding: NZD \$1,605,000

2 Integra / NZD 77,368*

- Emergency food, family supplies and shelter
- 295,596 people supported

4 Medair / NZD 1,279,261

- Warm clothes, food, water, and hygiene kits
- Cash transfers & links to local services
- Shelter repairs and refurbishment
- 31,424 people supported

Aug 2022

Sri Lanka Economic Disaster Response

- 300 families (approx. 1200 people) provided with six months of food support through our partner Yugashakthi and local government services
- 120 families will receive smallholder dairy and crop training

1 Baptist Churches / NZD 130,000

- Emergency shelter in Ukraine and bordering countries
- 49,533 people given a safe bed for the night

3 International Health Partners / NZD 97,994

- Health equipment and meds for displaced people
- 21,356 people treated

5 Operation Mobilisation / NZD 20,000*

- Emergency family supplies and shelter
- 40,000 people sheltered

* The Impact numbers are for the whole programme which Tearfund NZ only partially funded.

The only silver lining in this otherwise very dark and threatening cloud is that our supporters have enabled Tearfund to be there for people affected by this ever-growing list of conflicts and disasters. The team at Tearfund has been amazed at the response we have had from every one of these disaster appeals, which has been even more remarkable given the economy and the challenges many Kiwis are facing. So, we want to let you know how you have helped our partners respond to these ongoing disaster relief situations so far.

Ukraine

The war in Ukraine shows no signs of ending as it continues to bring suffering and trauma to the people affected. Since 2022, Tearfund and its partners have been working tirelessly to come to aid Ukrainian families in crisis. The support of people like you has helped families fleeing war with emergency shelter, essentials such as food, personal care items, clothing, medical treatment and medicines.

Through the generosity of Tearfund supporters like you, one church in Romania has opened their doors to more than 300 Ukrainian refugees

since the start of the war. The church provides practical support such as safe accommodation with host families, warm meals and food packages, help

Ukraine Quick stats:

- 8.1 million Ukrainian refugees are spread across Europe
- 17.6 million Ukrainians need humanitarian assistance
- Tearfund has five partners responding to this crisis

with transportation, legal advice, and a Christian therapist on-call for emotional and spiritual support.

The way the church has rallied around their Ukrainian neighbours is truly inspiring. "We have become a community of faith," the church shares. Church services are now bilingual in Romanian and Ukrainian as they collaborate and learn from one another spiritually through their unique gifts. No one knows how long these families will be away from home,

but until they can safely return, they are in the loving arms of their new church family.

Turkey-Syria

In February, we watched in horror at the devastating loss of lives in the earthquakes that rocked Turkey and Syria. The tragedy of this event was that it was unsafe buildings that saw the death toll surpass an estimated 59,000. In Turkey, buildings were not up to standard, and in Syria, many buildings where people were sheltering were already partially destroyed or unstable due to bombs and shelling. The outpouring of support from our supporters again blew us away. The toll was not only in terms of lost lives, injuries and livelihoods. Freezing temperatures for those displaced from their homes meant many went cold and hungry and mental trauma and fear has been a huge consequence

Turkey Quick stats:

- 9.1 million people are affected
- 3 million people remain displaced

Nov 2022

East Africa Hunger Crisis

- 13,000 people receiving nine months' worth of food in partnership with TF Canada through Terepeza Development Association
- Ten villages getting support to develop a community disaster risk reduction plan

Jan 2023

Rohingya Refugee Continued Response

- 65,571 people will receive Sexual and Reproductive Health services (SRH)
- 16,535 children will have access to life-saving vaccinations
- In the Rohingya Refugee camps

Feb 2023

Turkey-Syria Earthquakes Medair (In Turkey)

- Deliver mental health and psychosocial support services (MHPSS) to 3,000 earthquake affected
- Provide 20,000 people with MHPSS awareness-raising activities
- Provide 1,600 people with access to cash-for-work activities

Mar 2023

Vanuatu Cyclones Judy and Kevin

- Working with Nasituan on the island of Tanna
- Seed distribution: 1,486 Households (total direct participants 6,389)
- Provide traditional planting materials and food security trainings: 480 Households (total direct 2,064)
- Establishing new nurseries for food security in communities: 240 Households (total direct 1,032)
- Coffee, peanut, and vanilla farmers receive new plants to rehabilitate cash crops: 90 Households (total direct 387)

Turkey-Syria Earthquakes MERATH (In Syria)

- 7500 blankets
- 8500 food packs
- 8,500 hygiene kits

of this disaster. Tearfund has been working with a partner in Turkey and another in Syria. In Turkey, our partner is delivering mental health services to 3,000 people traumatised by the quakes and implementing cash-for-work schemes which allow people to work to earn money to help their families. In Syria, the focus of the work revolves around essentials such as emergency food, hygiene and keeping people warm.

Syria Quick stats:

- 4.1 million people are in need of humanitarian assistance
- US \$15 billion needed for earthquake recovery

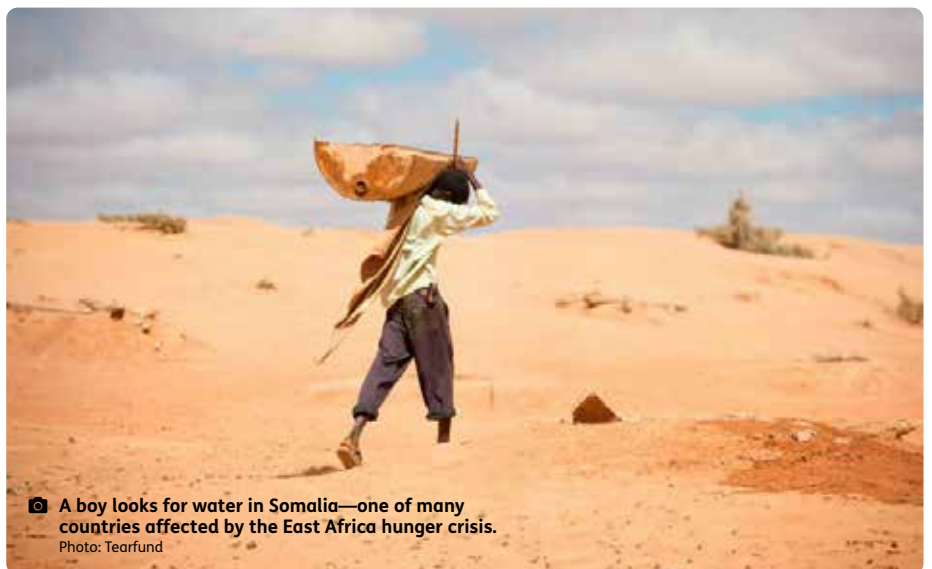
East Africa

For three years, people in East Africa have gone hungry, living under the threat of famine. In Ethiopia, where we are working with our partners, there has recently been reason for cautious optimism as the rains have started to return. The people in this region have endured three years

of drought and had exhausted all options to feed themselves. However, thanks to our supporters, along with supporters of Tearfund Canada and the New Zealand Government, our local partner has distributed life-saving food to 13,000 people for the past nine months. Tearfund's longer-term work implementing climate-adaptable farming in a neighbouring region saw farmers had more resilience through this crisis. One farmer in particular did not need any emergency food assistance. Ten villages are being supported to develop a community disaster risk reduction plan.

East Africa Quick stats:

- 345 million people facing high levels of food insecurity in 2023
- About 20% (278 million) of people in Africa are facing chronic hunger, compared with only 10% globally
- About 11.8 million people across Ethiopia are facing severe hunger due to drought



© A boy looks for water in Somalia—one of many countries affected by the East Africa hunger crisis. Photo: Tearfund

Are we making progress in East Africa?

STORY TIM MANSON

After my recent visit to Ethiopia to see the response being made by our partner to the East Africa Hunger Crisis, I was reminded of a question I've been asked many times: "Haven't we seen this before?" Tearfund's Facebook posts on the East Africa Hunger Crisis have some comments that are more direct. Someone wrote: "This same story has been recurring all my life", and another reads—"Why should we spend money on a crisis that keeps recurring?"



📷 This Ethiopian woman is one of millions affected by the East African hunger crisis. Photo: Tearfund UK

I've been tempted to dismiss these questions or feel angry. I was moved to tears at several points on my visit as I heard first-hand about the level of suffering. One woman shared that each day her kids come home from school and ask for food, but she has nothing to give them. Death is at their doorstep. And in New Zealand, some people are bored with the story.

But I think at Tearfund we have a responsibility to engage with these questions, not dismiss them, and open the dialogue rather than shut it down.

So, as I embark on the marathon trip home, I've decided to put down some of my thoughts—partly in response to these questions, but also to help me process what I've just seen.

Haven't we seen famines in East Africa many times before?

In short, yes, we have. As I travelled through the capital Addis Ababa, I saw the grain silos from the 1985 famine. At that time, a terrible famine resulted in the deaths of nearly one million people— mostly in Ethiopia. Many of us remember the very high-profile Live Aid campaign associated with that famine. Since then, there have been three official famines in the same region, and right now, we're on the verge of another. Currently, 50 million people are categorised as being severely food insecure by the World Food Programme. According to the Global Food Insecurity Index, some southern regions of Ethiopia and much of Somalia and Kenya are at a Level 4 (Emergency) setting—one level away from an official famine declaration.

Many people in the Horn of Africa have already died due to a lack of food, including some members of a village I visited recently.

But, despite these previous examples, it's important to also point out that this current global hunger crisis (with an epicentre in East Africa) has some new drivers. The war in Ukraine has interrupted the global grain supply, pushing the price of some food staples up, and global inflation levels have jumped dramatically in the past couple of years. The global pandemic has also contributed to rising costs and food supply issues. Local conflict (Somalia, South Sudan and Northern Ethiopia) has also interrupted access to some regions and diverted aid.

On top of this, East Africa is facing the worst drought in 40 years.

One 60-year-old man told me that he hasn't experienced a drought of this length or severity in his lifetime. There have been three years of barely any rain. Livestock have died in big numbers and there have been multiple consecutive failed crop harvests. We cannot say for certain with a one-off event like this, but it is likely this extreme drought is driven by climate change. Subsistence farmers in East Africa are at the coalface of this very real crisis. It's fair to say that people in extreme poverty have less margin to cope with shocks like these and the situation right now is critical.

Is any progress being made?

It can be easy, particularly for aid organisations trying to raise money, to present an overly negative narrative. But at Tearfund, we want to balance our expression of the dire situation being faced by many, with the progress that is being made on some of the world's most complex development issues, including hunger.

Hans Rosling in his famous book, *Factfulness*, cites data showing that the proportion of people in the world who are undernourished has dropped from around 30% in the 1960s to around 10% in the 2010s.

Dialling back to the current hunger crisis, the last two famines in East Africa (2002-03 and 2011-12) have seen more effective responses from the Ethiopian Government and international aid organisations. More recently in 2015, a severe drought pushed many to the edge of starvation, but a famine declaration was avoided through a large-scale, joint government and NGO response with emergency food aid reaching about 8 million people.

At Tearfund, we support local partners involved in both humanitarian and long-term development work. In times of emergency, it is vital to provide short-term relief. However, most of our

partners are working on multi-year community development programmes. They endeavour to support communities to achieve sustainability so that when shocks come along, they do not need external aid and can recover quickly.

While I was in Ethiopia, I saw a powerful example of this in action.

I met a woman named Amareech who lives in Wolaita District. She married in 2008 and lost her husband in 2010, then gave birth to her only daughter a few months after his death. She was pressured by her in-laws to leave her land and child and move away.

But she decided to keep her daughter, stay on her land and work hard to take care of it herself. She faced severe poverty because she was alone, but she didn't want to become a beggar. Some neighbours and the church helped, but her life was extremely challenging.

Once, while she was on her way to the market, she saw a plot of mulch-

covered land. She stopped and asked the farmer about it and learned that he was part of a farmer savings group and had received training in something called Conservation Agriculture (CA). She learned that it didn't need much investment and it would produce better results. She started mulching and getting advice from this nearby farmer. He told her that he had been trained by Tearfund's local church partner. When our partner came back to that community, Amareech signed



Amareech holds a portion of her harvest.
Photo: Tearfund



A Food Distribution Centre in Ethiopia.
Photo: Tearfund Canada

up and received training in CA and was linked up with a savings group.

Over the past decade that she's been in the programme, the results have been outstanding. Before joining, she described herself as scared, afraid, stressed and poor. Ostracised by others, her life was based on daily subsistence, enough for one day at a time, and some days, she had no food for herself and her daughter.

Now she consumes what she needs and sells extra, and she is respected by her neighbours. Other farmers in her village have seen the results and copied the conservation agriculture techniques adopted by Amareech. I spoke to a neighbouring farmer who said he had been sceptical until he saw that her harvest outperformed his significantly. He has since started

mulching, has reduced tillage and has changed to more drought-resistant crop-varieties.

Recently, there was a government assessment to identify the poorest of the poor during this current drought, and she told me with great pride that she is not eligible for this support!

Amareech is one of 9,000 farmers in the project in this region. This is the work of the local church in action and the support of Kiwis like you that give to make it possible. What a privilege to support work like this and hear that her family is self-sufficient in the middle of a severe drought.

Why should we bother getting involved when it keeps happening?

I believe that as followers of Christ, we are called to engage in messy, difficult situations that sometimes don't have clear resolutions. Issues such as modern slavery, generational conflict and famines are complicated and have multiple drivers. Yet, our mandate is to retain a measure of determination that can withstand some disappointment.

Having just visited a country on the verge of famine, I'm convinced that "donor fatigue" or frustration at the lack of progress, is nothing when compared to the depth of suffering experienced by a malnourished child. Have we seen this before? Yes. Will we see it again? Probably. But we should respond anyway.



Tim talking to a Self Help Group in Ethiopia.
Photo: Tearfund



Cycle event breaking chains for slaves finishes well

The steady cycle of poverty, disasters, conflicts and oppression is constant in our media both here and overseas where Tearfund's partners operate.

STORY LUISA GIACON

📷 The team from Arrowsmith: Logan Basham, Ryan Pratt and Bob Cameron at the top of the Crown Range. Photo: Sportzhub.com

The biennial Tour of New Zealand cycle race has been a powerful force in combating modern-day slavery, raising over half a million dollars since its launch in 2012. Started by Peter Yarrell, a dedicated Tearfund supporter, the event brings together cyclists with a shared passion for fundraising. The recent Tour of NZ marked Peter's final ride, and we extend our heartfelt gratitude to his loyal crew, who have raised over two million dollars for various charities.

Covering 517 kilometres, the April 2023 event started from Arthur's Pass, showcasing the stunning landscapes of the West Coast. Despite battling



📷 Conditions were not always pleasant.

wind and rain, approximately 130 riders triumphed over challenging terrains. The sight of the sun breaking through on the final days brought relief, as participants concluded their adventure atop Wanaka's Crown Range and celebrated with a prize-giving dinner at the renowned Skyline Gondola restaurant.

Over the years, well-known figures like Julian Dean, an Olympic cyclist and Tour de France competitor, have joined Tearfund's cycling team. Dean believes the event goes beyond cycling, emphasising unity, charitable causes, and fundraising. Wearing a number on his back only twice since retiring, he raised funds for Tearfund and raised awareness about their work against human trafficking.

As a fundraising manager at Tearfund, I was inspired by the riders' determination and the impact on victims of modern-day slavery. With 6.3 million people trapped in modern slavery, the riders' efforts are significant. Tearfund's work in the

Pacific and Southeast Asia is making a difference.

Arrowsmith Builders from Tauranga sponsored three cyclists, supported by owners Blair and Sue Arrowsmith. "We are so proud of our team because not only did they help raise funds for such an impacting and courageous charity, but the guys experienced the health benefits and were able to push beyond their expectations. The training leading up to the event kick-started healthy lifestyle changes for our guys," says Blair.

"The team members found extra motivation when Luisa gave each rider a photo of a trafficking survivor to carry during the race," he says.

If you share a concern for those trapped in modern slavery, consider joining our cause by hosting a gathering or exploring other fundraising avenues. Email info@tearfund.org.nz or visit tearfund.org.nz/Modern-Slavery for more information. Together, we can make a difference.

A Celebration of Humanity

Tearfund photographer shares some of her favourite images.

STORY AND PICTURES HELEN MANSON



📷 Silhouettes at Sunset.

Tearfund's Helen Manson has travelled the world documenting the lives of people in difficult circumstances in some of the toughest places on earth. She has been touring the North Island sharing the stories of the people behind her lens in our A Celebration of Humanity tour. Here are a few of her all-time favourite images she has taken over the past 15 years.

Helen says: "I hope these images capture and reflect a moment, emotion, celebration, or intimacy that, be it mundane or extraordinary, is instantly recognisable across cultures and language barriers. The world has enough photographs that show us what something looks like. As a

humanitarian photographer, I want to show you how it feels."

Silhouettes at Sunset

Lake Volta, Ghana. Ghana hosts the largest man-made lake in the world, but there's a dark underbelly to its beauty—the slavery of thousands of children coerced to work on it. They are recruited as young as five because their little fingers can untie nets, they can hold their breath for long periods and are unable to fight back. Tearfund's partner, Compassion, is working hard to ensure that through child sponsorship, children are placed in school, given nutritious food and a safe place to play—away from the allure of evil traffickers preying around

their villages. The boys in this image are safe and secure.

The sun was about to set, and I spotted two sponsored children hanging around the boats on the lake. I asked them if they'd take me out on their boat so I could photograph them doing what they normally did on the fishing boats on weekends with their fathers and uncles. They were happy to oblige, so we rowed into the sunset on the lake. We didn't speak the same language, so I just sat at the back of the boat and quietly took it all in. The stark contrast of their figures against the sky was captivating. I deeply appreciated my time with these boys.



📷 Better late than never.



📷 Wet hair—don't care.



📷 Here's to looking at you.

Wet hair—don't care

Bocachica Island, Colombia, South America. It's almost lunchtime at a Compassion child sponsorship project on Bocachica Island in Colombia and so what better to do than go for a swim with all your clothes on? Because when the temperature feels like it's in the mid-40s, you'll be dry before lunch. Tearfund's partner, Compassion, provides sponsored children with an education, nutritional and medical support and a safe place to be known, loved and protected.

To take this shot, I was also in the water with my camera, watching the kids frolic, splash and laugh with their friends. True to form, we were all bone dry before lunch.

Here's to looking at you

Karamoja, North Eastern Uganda
A Karmajong mother holds her baby in a fabric sling at the opening of the first Compassion project in the area. Hundreds of children are behind her to receive breakfast and learn what they can expect from the project (schooling, medical and food support etc). One of her children has been lucky enough to be registered in the programme.

It was the opening of a new sponsorship project in Karamoja—one of the most hostile and remote places in Uganda. Hundreds of children were there, and the event was hectic, loud and full. Amongst the chaos, I spotted a beautiful mother holding her baby

in a fabric sling. The beads hanging around her neck and the baby's eyes peeking out instantly captured my attention.

Better late than never

Kampala, Uganda. A little girl takes a moment to pray before starting her day in downtown Kampala, Uganda. Tearfund's partner, Compassion, provides child sponsorship for over two million children globally—125,921 are from Uganda. These children are known, loved and protected. Children in the programme are given the potential to become leaders in their communities and their nation.

I was in a church inside a slum in inner city Kampala on a Saturday



📷 Pretty in pink.

morning. The service had begun, and the children were singing and dancing. After about ten minutes, it was prayer time, and this little girl arrived late. She walked in the door, saw everybody praying and immediately dropped to her knees in the entranceway and began praying too. She was so sincere and fervent in her prayers, so I dropped to my knees and captured this precious moment.

Pretty in Pink

Cartagena, Colombia, South America.

In the scorching heat, two young girls walk along a street in Cartagena, Colombia, using an umbrella for sun protection. The brightly coloured homes behind them are common in these neighbourhoods. Tearfund's partner, Compassion International, works in this area. At the programme,

many children like these girls receive an education, nutritional and medical support and a safe place to be known, loved, and protected.

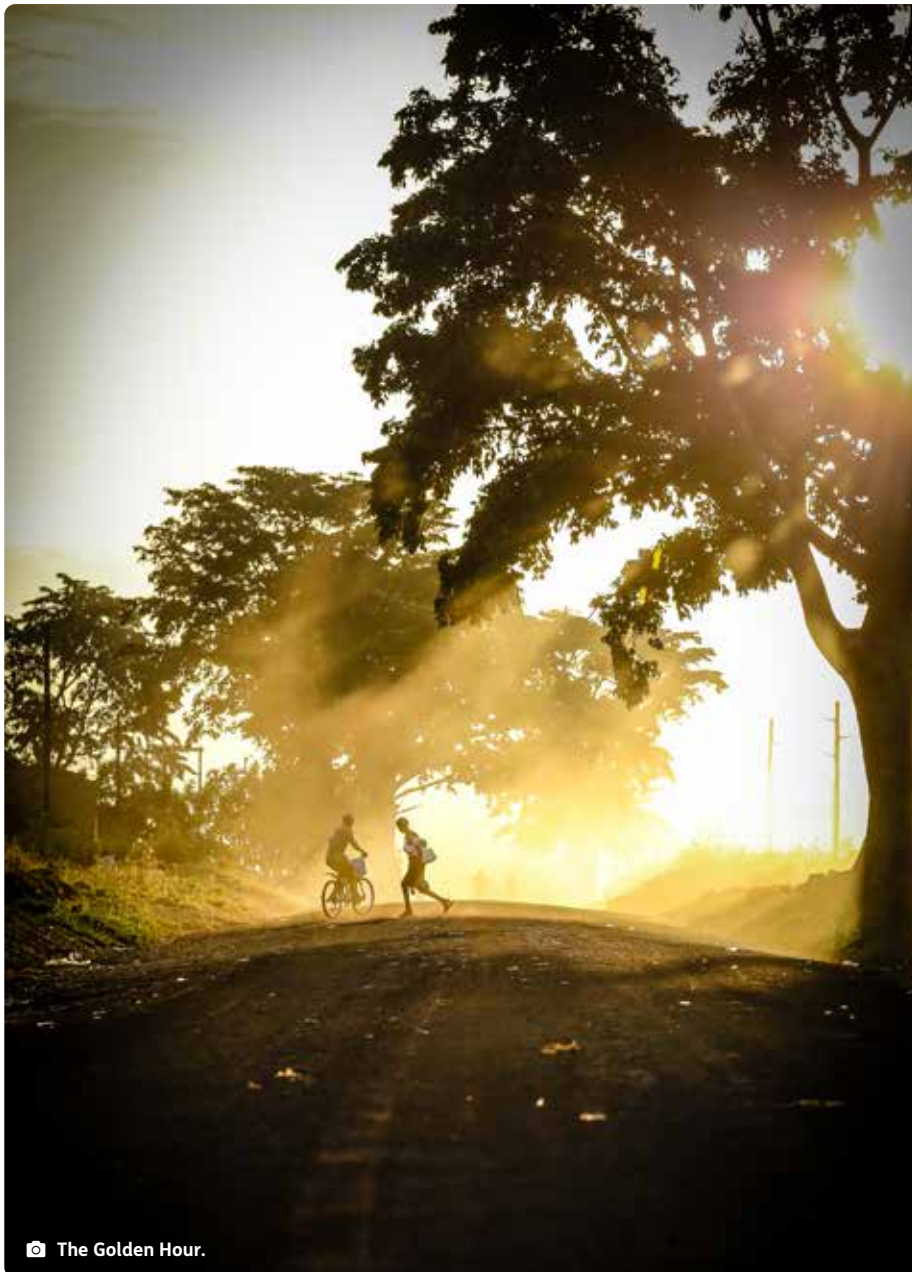
This shot came out of the blue. I was on the street taking a moment's break from the stifling heat where we were conducting an interview inside a Compassion-sponsored child's home. Suddenly, out of the corner of my eye, I spotted these two young girls coming out of the local "dairy". The colours of their clothes, their cheerful umbrellas, the washing hanging on the fence poles and the beautifully vibrant houses, all came together in a brief moment. I only got about three or four frames, but I love the colours in this photo so much it hangs in my daughter's bedroom.

Wide-eyed wonder

BidiBidi Refugee Settlement, Uganda.

Three children living in the second-largest refugee camp in the world take a moment to survey their surroundings under the shade of a tree. Stretched out in front of them are enough tents to house 270,000 South Sudanese refugees fleeing war and violence in their home country.

I've shot in BidiBidi countless times, including the first week it opened. Over the years I've returned, it continues to shape and shift. On my last visit I asked if there was a high vantage point from which we could show the true scale of the camp—now the world's second-largest. With no nearby mountains around, we found the highest point on a small hill and drove up as high as we could. Near the



📷 The Golden Hour.

have flooded over the border fleeing war in South Sudan. More than 1.5 million refugees live in Uganda. Tearfund's partner, Tutapona, works in Adjumani and beyond providing trauma counselling and rehabilitation services to survivors of war and refugees.

The sun was settling quickly over the Adjumani refugee settlement in Northern Uganda. We'd seen trucks and trucks of people loaded as high as you could imagine with personal belongings and many cattle as people fled over the border from South Sudan to escape the war. Our old, dirty, white Toyota Land Cruiser was kicking up the dust as we made our way back to our accommodation when I saw this image taking place. I yelled out to the driver, "Please stop the car!" He abruptly obliged. I jumped out with my zoom lens on, spun around and caught just a mere few frames before the dust from our tires subsided and the sun dipped below the break in the tree. It was a moment of peace and beauty amidst the chaos around us.

Helen Manson recently completed a NZ tour showcasing her photography and the stories behind them. If you want to stay in the loop for future events at Tearfund, visit tearfund.org.nz.

top, I found these little ones playing a game as we were driving by. I stopped and asked if I could take their photo as they played. Their wide-eyed wonder at the size of the camp was a poignant moment. Raising children of a similar age, I can't help but marvel at their resilience to create fun and games no matter where children live on this planet.

The Golden Hour

Adjumani Refugee Settlement, Uganda. The sun sets in Adjumani Refugee Settlement, home to approximately 52,000 refugees who




📷 Wide-eyed wonder.

Life in plastic it's NOT Fantastic

We believe in a world where everyone can live in safe, healthy neighbourhoods and pursue their potential. But our world has a rubbish problem that is severely affecting the health and well-being of people living in poverty.

STORY MAYA DUCKWORTH

The production of plastic has grown enormously. Between 2000 and 2019, the amount of plastic waste being produced globally doubled. Yet two billion people in low and middle-income countries don't have access to waste collection and management services. This means there is little option but for individuals to burn their rubbish or discard it in open dumpsites, roads, waterways, or even their backyards. In high-income countries, like New Zealand, only 2% of waste is burnt or discarded in this way, but in low-income countries, 93% of waste ends up like this.

A large, sprawling pile of garbage, including plastic bottles, bags, and other debris, dominates the foreground and middle ground. Two workers are visible on the pile, one wearing a red cap and the other a wide-brimmed hat, both appearing to be sorting through the waste. The background shows a clear blue sky. A thin yellow line curves across the right side of the image.

Workers pick through the waste of the Suwung tip in Bali.

The plastic paradox: Blessing and burden in Suwung, Bali

In the slum community of Suwung, Bali, where Tearfund's partner Compassion International works—plastic waste is a complicated problem. The community is built beside Bali's biggest landfill, which spans a massive 30 hectares and towers 15 metres high.

On one hand, plastic provides solutions to numerous social and economic problems, but on the other, rubbish also provides an income for waste-pickers. But living amongst this rubbish has consequences. "Sometimes I feel disturbed by the smells here, like the trash", says 16-year-old Debbie* who is part of Compassion's sponsorship programme. And when plastic waste clogs waterways, or is burnt in backyards and the nearby dump, this rubbish can impact people's health and livelihoods, making challenging situations harder.

Thanks to global advocacy, far more people are aware of the impacts of plastic pollution on the environment than they were a generation ago. Images of seabirds with stomachs full of plastic waste have become all too familiar and have demonstrated why reducing the production of plastic is vital. But plastic is causing a social emergency—not just an environmental one.

Plastic pollution is a risk to people's health

Plastic pollution poses huge risks to people's health. When plastic waste is openly burnt on street corners, backyards and rubbish dumps—the toxic fumes released can lead to serious respiratory issues and even damage reproductive and nervous systems. When left lying in water, plastic rubbish creates a breeding ground for disease-carrying flies, mosquitos and rodents.

Respiratory problems and dangerous diseases impact people's abilities to earn a living and pose a serious threat to their lives. Tearfund's research suggests that between 400,000 and 1 million people die yearly from diseases caused by mismanaged waste, including plastic.

Plastic pollution also threatens livelihoods

When it comes to agriculture and fishing, plastic rubbish can cause a choking hazard for livestock and fish, with dire consequences for farmers and fisher people, and animals. Mistaking it for food, up to a third of cattle and half of the goat population has consumed significant amounts of plastic in some low and middle-income countries. When animals swallow plastic, it often leads to bloating and even death by starvation. For those that rely on fishing and livestock for their income, this is particularly devastating.

From pollution to partial solution: The global plastics treaty

We have a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to tackle this rubbish problem. During 2023 and 2024, nearly 200 governments are meeting to develop the first 'global plastics

treaty'—an international agreement to end plastic pollution. It's a chance to tell global leaders single-use plastics isn't working for billions of people and the environment.

We want to ensure this agreement has targets to reduce the amount of plastic produced, increase access to waste management services worldwide, and ensure communities in poverty can access the goods they need and want without harming their health and livelihoods. We've launched a petition asking the New Zealand Government to prioritise these demands as they negotiate the terms of the global plastics treaty. Will you add your voice to ours?

Sign the petition

Visit www.tearfund.org.nz/rubbish-petition or scan this QR code and add your name to the list of Kiwis asking our treaty negotiators not to waste this opportunity!

Take the rubbish campaign to your church and community. Visit tearfund.org.nz/rubbish-resources and use our pack to learn about this rubbish problem together and then **take action by signing our petition.**

This rubbish situation can change if we act together.



© Widi walks through his neighbourhood with his kite.

*name changed to protect identity.



📷 Ross Wallis visiting a dairy farm in Sri Lanka.
Photo: Tearfund

Tearfund’s work inspires dairy farmers to leave a legacy of faith

STORY KEITH RAMSAY

Leaving a gift to Tearfund in your Will is a wonderful way to continue supporting causes that matter to you. Waikato dairy farmers, Ross and Shayney Wallis, found inspiration in Tearfund’s dairy development programme in Sri Lanka.

Ross Wallis is a sixth-generation dairy farmer from Raglan and has been working his family’s land for the past 20 years. The couple was moved by Tearfund’s work and wanted to give back to Sri Lanka, which has supported them by buying milk they supply to their local dairy company. For them, the post-war dairy recovery programme seemed the perfect partnership.

During a visit to Sri Lanka in 2018 with Tearfund, Ross and Shayney witnessed the “remarkable efforts being made to rebuild communities” that had been severely impacted by the 26-year civil war. Ross was impressed by the programme’s far-reaching effects in restoring life and dignity to those who had lost everything, and he and Shayney immediately signed up to support it. Ross appreciates the model Tearfund has adopted—collaborating with local partners and ensuring that funds are used effectively. Having a heart for missions and having served through various mission organisations, Ross and Shayney see this as the best way for them at this stage of life to be involved in life-changing work. He says this shift in focus to their involvement in missions has “renewed their excitement and energy”.

“We see our purpose is to work alongside people to create good things for future generations by supporting effective and long-lasting work. That is why we included Tearfund in our Will. By leaving a gift that will outlive us, we can ensure our support continues to make a significant impact.”

Ross says his visit to Sri Lanka was memorable.

“I felt extremely privileged to visit farms there, and it gave me a great deal to reflect on when I went home.” He says working together is critical to the success of dairy farming both here and in Sri Lanka.

“Dairy cooperatives have empowered New Zealand farmers to gain the best returns for their milk, giving them ownership and control from the farm gate to the market. It’s great to see this same empowerment happening for farmers in this programme. While our market is worldwide, Sri Lankan farmers have the exciting advantage of having their market just beyond their farm gates.”

If Ross and Shayney have inspired you to include a gift to Tearfund in your Will, or you just want to find out more, please contact us at giftsinwills@tearfund.org.nz or call 0800 800 777.

Sponsorship helped Ariane overcome life's challenges

STORY GRACE ELLIS

A former sponsored child, Ariane Sagusara-Mapula grew up in a family that faced many challenges. Her parents separated, and her mother had health-related disabilities. But thanks to sponsorship and determination, she has graduated with a university degree and lives in New Zealand.

Life was difficult for Ariane growing up with five family members crammed in a one-bedroom house in a squatter community in the Philippines. Ariane's father was the breadwinner, but he left when Ariane was young, leaving her mother to provide for her sister and grandparents. The family struggled to meet their basic needs because Ariane's mother had lost her leg, making it hard to find a permanent job.

Her mother made hotcakes and Ariane and her sister would sell them. "But it wasn't enough, so my mother borrowed money from people to buy food for us. She had diabetes too, so money was spent on medicine," she says.

Ariane says growing up without a father was difficult. "It upset me seeing complete families—all I wanted was for him to return. At first, I felt betrayed, but I learnt to forgive."

When Ariane was five, she joined the Compassion sponsorship programme. This was a relief for her mother. "Sponsorship sent me to school, gave me school supplies, a uniform, dental and medical care and provided our family with food." Ariane says she was introduced to Jesus at the centre.

"They would teach us that God was a father to the fatherless. I never forgot that."



Ariane's first sponsor, Burley, supported her from the age of six until 16. She says he became a father figure to her. Ariane's sponsor also gave her extra support during her birthday.

“I remember getting new clothes and shoes. That was a big deal for me.”

Ariane had the opportunity to study psychology at Davao University in the Philippines because of her second sponsor, Bomina, a doctor from Korea. Having the opportunity to attend university was a miracle. Without sponsorship, it would not have been possible, as Ariane's mother had a serious accident and couldn't work. Her mum slipped on a wet floor and fractured her leg. She spent two months in hospital and came home in a wheelchair—unable to walk for a year, says Ariane.

Her father returned shortly before the accident, but his income couldn't support the family.

"We worried about paying the medical bill, and I didn't think attending university was going to be an option." However, Compassion helped pay her mother's medical bills and gave her and her sister a food allowance.

"If it wasn't for the support of Compassion and my sponsor, I would not have been able to complete my degree. God has blessed me in so many ways. You're not wasting your money if you decide to sponsor a child because you are changing the trajectory of someone's life, and one of those lives was mine. I am so thankful."


Most of the children in her class at the centre are now successful. "They are all professionals. If you were to look at our lives before, that would have never been possible," she says.

Ariane now lives in Auckland with her husband and has just been granted a working visa. Sadly, her mother died of a heart attack. "She will always be the strongest woman and biggest inspiration in my life," she says.



Church protects Cristhian from criminal gangs

STORY NICO BENALCAZAR,
COMPASSION ECUADOR PHOTOJOURNALIST

 Cristhian enjoying life free from the influence of local gangs.
Photo: Compassion.

In one of the most dangerous areas of Ecuador, Cristhian and many other young people live in the shadow of criminal gangs. Their friends are recruited or forced to distribute drugs. Compassion child sponsorship programmes, like this one in Ecuador run by the local church, are providing a place of safety. Despite the constant threat, the church works closely with young people like Cristhian to protect them from gangs and give them a different future.

Shooting guns, self-defence and riding a motorcycle—these are the types of skills that children in Cristhian’s community in Ecuador are learning from criminal gangs. The

gangs recruit children and teach them these things, and put them to work, selling and distributing drugs, and even carrying out robberies.

“Children ten years old or even younger are sent out with a gun by the gangs. They tell them to keep quiet, and if they are detained, they can’t say anything. And the children do it—if the police ask them something, they don’t speak because they are threatened and scared,” explains Juliana, a youth tutor.

They recruit children because it is easier to intimidate and control them and since they are minors, their privacy and rights are protected by law, and they can’t be charged with adult crimes.

But in Guayaquil, many children are recruited at school and forced to sell drugs. In exchange for the “work”, gangs offer the children video games or high-end phones. Those who refuse to sell drugs are threatened or even beaten.

The community of Valerio Estacio, located in the suburbs of Guayaquil City is considered one of the most dangerous areas in Ecuador. Rates of crime, extortion, and drugs are very high, and its inhabitants live in a constant shadow. This community’s children and young people live every day in constant risk and are surrounded by danger.

Most shops and commercial businesses are abandoned because the gangs solicit money from the merchants and intimidate them, causing many people to close their stores or leave them.

Cristhian stands strong against drugs

Here in Valerio Estacio, Cristhian, a 13-year-old boy who belongs to the sponsorship programme. He is quiet and shy. Several months ago, at his school, older youths began offering him drugs. Cristhian immediately refused, explaining that he had no interest in trying illegal substances. But Cristhian's refusal only caused these young people to start bothering him and putting more pressure on him.

“Shortly after I told them I didn't want to try drugs, those guys told me that if I didn't want to try drugs, I would at least have to sell them on the street or from my house. And if I do, I will earn a lot of money,” says Cristhian.

Scared and fearful, Cristhian considered not going to school because of the constant threats. Several of his friends and cousins were recruited to sell drugs, but he chose not to join the gang.

Terrified, he hid at his home fearing he would be harmed. Desperate and not knowing who to turn to, Cristhian sought refuge at the church.

“I was scared, but I knew that the church was a safe place for me,” he says.

This was not the first time Juliana, tutor of the sponsorship programme in the community, received this type of help. Several young people at the centre were already being intimidated by the gangs.

“As a church, we cannot abandon our children and young people. That is why together with Pastor Daniel, the centre decided to help Cristhian and the other youths to prevent them joining the gangs,” says Juliana.



A beacon of hope in the community

Juliana and Pastor Daniel opened the church doors so youths could go after school, protecting them from being intimidated or persecuted on the way to their homes. Juliana constantly visits Cristhian and many others to ensure they are well and to prevent strangers from threatening them. In this way, the church is helping youths in its care from joining gangs and selling drugs.

Cristhian is out of danger. Backed by the church, the threats and persecutions stopped, and he was able to return to his school to study without fear, even though gangs are spreading in the area.

Juliana continues to work every day to prevent the youth in the Compassion programme from being recruited or intimidated.

“I feel safe in the church. I am very grateful to Jesus, because I know He takes care of me, and now I am part

of the evangelism programme of the church,” says Cristhian.

Every month, the church's youth group, including Cristhian, takes to the streets to speak about God to other young people who are not part of the sponsorship programme but are in danger from the gangs.

Although this area is one of the most dangerous in the country, criminals respect the church very much and have not come close to causing any problems. In the middle of the community, surrounded by drugs and crime, this church is a beacon of hope for all the youth in the area.

“It is not easy. The situation in the community is getting worse. But we will continue here fighting for young people like Cristhian since each of them is worth it,” says Pastor Daniel.

The church and the sponsorship programme clearly exemplify that in the darkest places, the light of Jesus Christ shines brightest.

Yes! I would like to make a donation to where it's needed most.

Amount:

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Tick to receive our monthly e-news

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- I have already included Tearfund in my Will
- I would like more information on including a gift in my Will

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Card Details: Visa Mastercard

Expiry: /

Cardholder:

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Sponsor an older child today!

If you want to sponsor a child but can't commit long-term, we have an alternative that might work for them and you! Children 11 or older find it more difficult than younger ones to get a sponsor, but you could be an answer to their prayers and find sponsoring more rewarding. By sponsoring an older child, your commitment is much shorter, the letters they write are often more engaging, and you can encourage

them at an age where life can be more complicated to navigate.

For just \$56 per month, you can sponsor one of these young people and help them realise their God-given potential.

Here are a few young people that have been waiting for sponsorship.

Visit tearfund.org.nz for more info and other children awaiting sponsorship, or call 0800 800 777.



Isaac

Colombia
DOB 7/11/07

Isaac lives in Colombia with his parents and two brothers. He is 15 and in the schooling equivalent of Year 9, where his favourite subject is social studies.



Dilakshini

Sri Lanka
DOB 11/19/06

Dilakshini lives in Sri Lanka with her parents and two sisters. She is 16 and in the schooling equivalent or Year 10 where her favourite subject is art.



Adrian

Colombia
DOB 2/25/11

Adrian lives in Colombia with his guardian and a sister. He is 12 and in the school equivalent of Year 7. His favourite subject is art, and he also enjoys playing soccer.



Guerlin

Haiti
DOB 13/3/08

Guerlin lives in Haiti with his mother. He is 15 and at the equivalent school level of Year 4. His favourite subjects are art and math.



Mariam

Burkina Faso
DOB 3/7/11

Mariam lives in Burkina Faso with her parents and four sisters. She is 12 and in the school equivalent of Year 6. Her favourite subjects are history and math.



Akou

Togo
DOB 3/25/11

Akou lives in Togo with her guardian. She is 12 and in the equivalent of Year 7. Her favourite subject is reading and she also enjoys art and dancing.



Esther

Rwanda
DOB 3/17/11

Esther lives in Rwanda with her family. She is 12 and in the equivalent of Year 3. Her favourite subject is physical education and she enjoys art and playing a musical instrument.



Jose

Mexico
DOB 10/28/10

Jose lives in Mexico with his parents and a brother. He is 12 and in the schooling equivalent of Year 6, where his favourite subject is physical education.

Our purpose

Motivated by Jesus, we encourage Kiwis to act for justice and relieve poverty among the world's most vulnerable people.

0800 800 777 info@tearfund.org.nz tearfund.org.nz

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