

WINTER 2022

Walking **TOGETHER**

THE NEWSLETTER OF FOOD
FOR THE HUNGRY UK



Welcome to the winter newsletter

"Let me tell you, my dear family, about the grace which God has given to the Macedonian churches. They have been sorely tested by suffering. But the abundance of grace which was given to them, and the depths of poverty they have endured, have overflowed in a wealth of sincere generosity on their part." **2 Corinthians 8:5**

Our country is facing difficult headwinds. Recession. The cost-of-living crisis. Food

prices rising. Energy bills skyrocketing. Problems with the NHS. War in Europe. Political confusion. Yet every day this week, I have received cheques or bank transfers to support the vulnerable families and communities with which Food for the Hungry works. Thank you so much. You are an inspiration.

It brought to mind Paul's second letter to the Corinthians quoted above. He begins with commendation for the

churches in Macedonia. These believers begged to contribute to a collection for the suffering Jewish Christians in Jerusalem. They were following the example of Jesus' sacrifice for them.

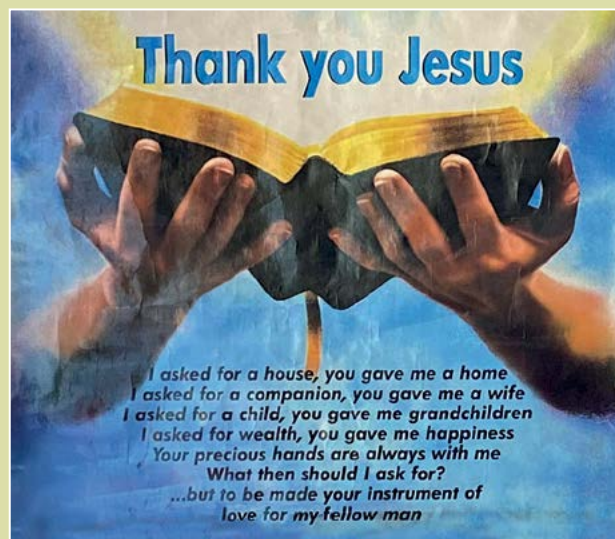
We still see examples of this self-sacrifice today from Christians all over the world. We see it from our Food for the Hungry supporters in their continued giving. We see it in Kenya. Sister Rita and Sister Boniface working in slums outside Buuri town (see page 4) stand in front of this 'Thank you Jesus' poster.

We also see it when Christians are willing to give their time to be agents of change in their community. Anastasie, a mother of eight, exemplifies this. Read her story on page 6.

Let's all follow these examples, so that all may have enough.

God bless you this Christmas.

Ian Johnson



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We are a Christian international development organisation that has been walking with the poor globally since 1971. We tackle the root causes in order to graduate communities out of poverty.

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Saruheshyi Community, Rwanda reconnected with the outside world

The construction of a new bridge has restored normal life to the people of Saruheshyi community, Rwanda.

Heavy rains had washed away the previous wooden bridge, effectively cutting off Saruheshyi community of 3,501 people, from daily life – including economic, social, health, and educational activities.



School children were turning up to class soaked, having waded through the river to get to school, while others just dropped out of school altogether; their parents afraid to let them attend for fear their children would be washed away. Indeed, several people had lost their lives trying to cross the river when it was in flood, making the necessity for a replacement bridge essential.

The new bridge was built between May and September 2022 and has restored

life to Saruheshyi in all its fullness; today, people are moving freely between Saruheshyi community and the town, and educational, economic, social and cultural life has been restored. Agricultural produce can be transported to market, allowing farmers to earn an income once again; people are attending church and have been reconnected with members of their social networks, and are able to access local authority services. Health care services are being accessed again, and pregnant women are accessing ante-natal services. Finally, children are attending school without fear of being swept away, or arriving at school wet and dirty. They have had their dignity restored and are able once again to connect with friends and access their right to education.

While the construction of this bridge was made possible by a UK Charitable Trust, it was also supported by you, the generous supporters of FH UK. Without your support FH UK would not be able to step in and ensure such projects are completed on time and to the highest spec possible. Thank you for your ongoing support to FH UK, and here, to the people of Saruheshyi, Rwanda.



Buuri, Kenya - Battling drought, but making steady progress

Ian Johnson reports on his visit to Buuri

East Africa is facing some of the worst droughts in 40 years.

FH have been diligently training community members on conservation agriculture in Buuri, Kenya. However, gains in harvests made in recent years have been reversed. 90% of the farmers supported reported crop failure. The programme continued to work with farmers to promote gunny bag kitchen gardens as a technique that could cope with the drought. Families who had embarked in this farming method reported that they could get at least one meal per day through selling the surplus vegetables harvested. Please pray for rain.

The school farms that have been supported fared better, because water

and irrigation systems had been set up for the schools. This helped dedicated teachers provide food for children at lunch time to help hard-pressed and hungry families. The high value crops planted (onions, water melons, kale, spinach and tomatoes) were harvested. Some of the harvest was sold to finance school activity and part used to supplement the school feeding programme.

It was encouraging to visit St Bernadette's School. This was started by a group of Catholic nuns, who were very concerned about the plight of children living in a slum in Buuri. They set up a primary school and a pre-school. The drought has meant that children are malnourished.

FH supported the school in establishing a feeding programme through training in conservation agriculture, completing a water project to improve hygiene and an irrigation project. A farm was created and, through hard work, seemingly unproductive soil has been transformed. The farm has gradually increased its scope and harvests and proved a lifeline for vulnerable children.

Despite the challenges, I was impressed by the resolve of local community members to make progress and to trust in God.

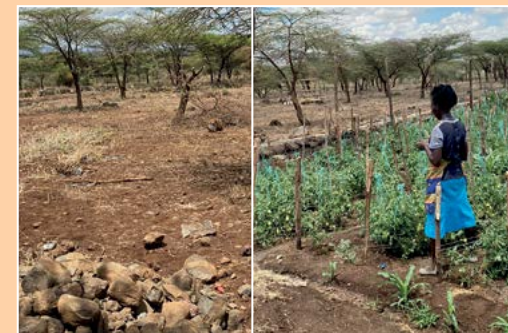
Another major FH initiative is promoting early child education. Too often in Kenya, children from the most vulnerable families were not ready for primary school when they started. Research has shown that investment in pre-schools, as well as training mothers in how to stimulate their young children, makes a massive difference to educational outcomes. FH staff have been encouraging schools to support pre-school teachers, working with parents to promote the value of education and establishing feeding programmes. Pre-school teachers have been trained and encouraged to make appropriate learning materials with home-made materials. This has helped the teachers deliver lessons in a more professional and focused way.

Assess, test and progress

At the same time, FH staff have been working with government education officers to monitor the impact using the IDELA tool. The International Development and Early Learning Assessment is a free, easy-to-use, rigorous global tool that measures children's early learning and development. Pre-school teachers were particularly encouraged by a notable improvement in the IDELA assessment scores of children's progress. In 2018, the score for five-year olds was 26% and in 2022, this had risen to 44%.



SISTERS RITA AND BONIFACE GIVING GLORY TO GOD FOR WHAT HAS BEEN ACHIEVED



DRY ROCKY GROUND TURNED INTO FERTILE SOIL.



Change, education and hope in Mwumba

Attending school is a child's best path out of extreme poverty. Yet circumstances in Mwumba in Burundi can make getting an education extremely difficult.

This creates an inescapable cycle for families like Anastasie Ntakurumtimana, her husband and eight children. The family worked hard on their small farm, but ancient cultivation techniques, which had been passed down for generations, were inefficient. Meagre harvests meant supporting the children's education was almost impossible. Listen to Anastasie's testimony now, ten years after she first joined an FH savings group.

What was life like?

"Before joining FH Burundi's activities, I lived in extreme poverty because I didn't have the technical knowledge to increase income and I did not know the importance of grouping together with other community members to develop ourselves. I thought saving and lending was only for business people and for the rich. Emotionally, I was very discouraged because I could not see a way out.

During this period, we were in a deplorable situation because our income was too low to sufficiently cover basic needs (food, clothing). I did not expect to develop my family since I did not see where the financial means could come



EDUCATION, PREVIOUSLY UNOBTAINABLE, NOW BRINGS OPPORTUNITIES TO THE COMMUNITY

from. My children always complained about not having adequate school materials like others from wealthier families. Often they went to borrow clothes and shoes if theirs were too dirty. They were not attending school regularly due to lack of food at home."

What have you learned and what changes have you seen?

"I am now a member of a savings group called 'Let's Lift One Another Up'. I am a volunteer in a cascade group that promotes behaviour change in the community. I have also benefited from agricultural training.

I have used the savings group to improve my circumstances. For instance, I applied for a loan of BIF 180,000 (£80). With this, I bought a goat and a pig, and the rest was used for family needs. Now I have 5 goats and 5 pigs. These goats are beneficial for me because they give us sufficient manure to fertilize our farm, which has improved production. In general, our life

has changed positively because we can apply for a loan for small development projects in my family.

My self-esteem has grown, because I am seen as a role model in my community. I am a change agent and my community is talking steps forward in development. I have learned that change is possible and I am proud of the changes I have seen.

As a result of the improvements, there has been enough food, clothes and school materials for all my eight children to be educated. Two are even at university in the capital. Now they have an opportunity and hope."

This is the kind of dramatic transformation your support has enabled, through child sponsorship and by other giving. Thank you so much.



A SEWING COOPERATIVE OF YOUNG PEOPLE AND THEIR TRAINER DISPLAY THE SCHOOL UNIFORMS THEY SELL



A FARMING COOPERATIVE WELCOME VISITORS



Responding to climate change in Bangladesh

The coastal zones of Bangladesh are incredibly vulnerable to the effects of climate change. Sea level rise, storms, cyclones, drought, erosion, landslides, flooding and salinisation all affect the ability of local communities to farm and bring in an income.

Food for the Hungry Bangladesh was recently funded by Guernsey Overseas Aid Commission to implement a project working with 840 farmers to support them in adapting their agricultural techniques to respond to the changing climate and increase the amount of food they could provide to their families.

Food for the Hungry staff distributed a new variety of rice seed that is saline resistant, as well working with farmers to set up new irrigation systems. Our team spent time with the farmers, training them on new rice cultivation techniques and pest management approaches and worked to establish connections between them and the Department of Agriculture.

At the end of the one year project, not only did the beneficiary farmers report an increase in income by up to 30%, but neighbouring farmers also report seeing the success of the new techniques and have begun to use them on their own farms. The saline resistant seeds have been adopted across the zone and farmers groups have been trained to maintain the pumps - funded by contributions from local farmers who also benefit from their use. Going forward, the farmers will be able to maintain these new techniques, in turn making them more resilient to changes in the climate and ensuring they can continue to feed and support their families. Praise God!



How would you like to pay today?

Are the days of paying by cash for a latte or a newspaper nearly over? Now goods can be paid for via mobile phone, a credit card with a pin, contactless cards, and more. We have many options in the UK.

Can you imagine life without easy ways to pay for goods and services? That is the situation faced by many. Close to 1.7 billion adults worldwide (31%) do not have a bank account or access to basic financial services such as quick and easy payments, loans, credit, savings accounts and insurance. Access to financial services alone does not overcome poverty, but it does provide the necessary foundation for people to start and grow a business, save for the future and have access to funds in an emergency.

For many years, Food for the Hungry has encouraged the most vulnerable to put money aside in savings groups. Well-applied technology, developed with the users in mind, can take these saving practices to the next level. In Sub-Saharan

Africa the use of mobile money has taken off. Individuals can pay each other directly through their phones, without the need for a bank account. Initiatives like M-Pesa have boosted financial inclusion, both as a driver of account ownership and of account usage through mobile payments, saving, and borrowing. This is particularly important for women. A research paper from MIT, a respected US college, concluded that "for women, the route out of poverty might not be more capital, but rather financial inclusion at a more basic level, which enhances their ability to manage those financial resources that are already accessible. Thus, although mobile phone use correlates well with economic development, mobile money causes it."

As an organisation, we will be piloting a number of technological solutions using mobiles over the next couple of years, particularly in Ethiopia.

Watch this space for future updates!

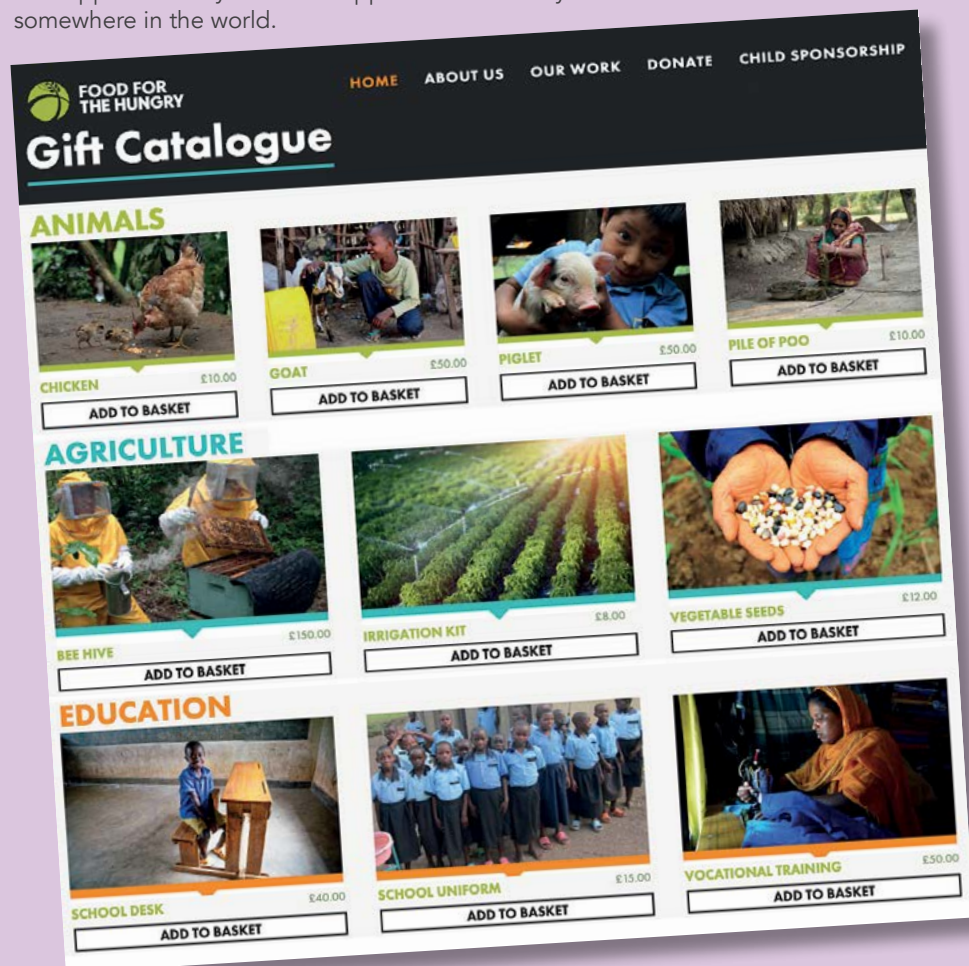


Last minute panic about Christmas presents?

Why not consider giving one of our alternative gifts which can be found at

<https://uk-fh.org/gift-catalogue>

A chicken, a cow, a school desk, a Bible or a community well – you can find a gift that will support a family in an FH-supported community somewhere in the world.



If you are a UK taxpayer, Food for the Hungry UK can reclaim 25% tax for every £1 you give.

☐ I want to Gift Aid my donation today and any donations I may make in the future or have made in the past four years to Food for the Hungry UK. I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that year it is my responsibility to pay any difference.

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☐ I would like to make a donation of £ _____ for Food for the Hungry to use where needed most.

Cheques should be made payable to Food for the Hungry UK and sent to us at 10 Chiltern Hills Road, Beaconsfield, HP9 1PJ

If you would like to make a direct transfer, our bank details are:
Barclays Bank - Account name: FHUK
Sort Code: 20-62-53 Account No: 40359173

Please also email us at uk@fh.org to let us know your donation is on its way.

- ☐ Please do not acknowledge this gift.
- ☐ I would like to know more about volunteering with FH in the UK.
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