

Working with the church to address food security issues in Kenya

Background



Photo: Marcus Perkins/Tearfund

Marsabit district in North Kenya is an area prone to frequent droughts and high food insecurity. In 2005/2006, most people in the district lost about 80% of their livestock which is their main source of livelihood.

Kamboe village, about 45km from Marsabit town, was particularly badly affected. Apart from the loss of livestock, the only source of water was 15km away. Many of the children suffered from malnutrition and ill health.

Mobilisation of the local church and community

Christian Community Services of Mt. Kenya East (CCSMKE) Marsabit field office staff visited the community and held several discussions with the villagers. They identified themselves as a Christian organisation, affiliated to the Anglican church of Kenya. They held prayers about the situation and asked God to open a way for the community.

At the same time, Tearfund, in partnership with CCSMKE, was able to respond to the drought and provide food, water and medicine for the sick people in Kamboe. The activities of CCSMKE made the villagers want to know more about the church and even request that a church be established in the village.

During one of the community meetings, an elderly man volunteered to donate a piece of land where a church could be constructed. A church was built and one of the community members trained to be the church pastor. Since then, the congregation has grown and has become active in articulating the needs of Kamboe community. CCSMKE is continuing to work with the church, helping them to serve the needs of the people around them through the development of their own projects and activities.