

tearfund

# UNDERSTANDING POVERTY

RESTORING BROKEN RELATIONSHIPS

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**‘I HAVE COME THAT THEY  
MAY HAVE LIFE, AND HAVE  
IT TO THE FULL.’**

JOHN 10:10

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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## tearfund

Tearfund is a Christian relief and development agency working with partners and local churches to bring whole-life transformation to the poorest communities.

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Cover image: Women with food vouchers walk to the market to receive their food items from local vendors. South Sudan.

Cover photo: Will Swanson/Tearfund  
Photos from top: Clive Mear, Geoff Crawford, Jenny Barthow/Tearfund

## INTRODUCTION

Jumana delves deep into the parched earth to steal seeds from ants' nests. She has to dig a metre down to find the scant harvest that rattles in the bottom of her bowl. This will be the only food her family has today.



Jumana and her children live in Hillé Bar, a tiny village in Chad, on the edge of the Sahara. The hamlet is ringed by the stumps of failed crops that the drought has claimed. The river where they collect water has dried up and Jumana and the other women have to excavate the sandy banks to find deeper reserves. The land has turned to dust.

Jumana's husband left to find work in a rope factory some distance away and his visits home are rare. The women in the village weave mats and bread baskets to sell at the market, but they earn very little.

The children don't go to school – and never have. Sometimes they're so weak with hunger, they can't play or even stand. Already, one of Jumana's children has starved to death...

When we look at the world, poverty can feel both deeply shocking and profoundly normal. We hear the statistics regularly: ten per cent of the global population live on less than \$1.90 a day,<sup>1</sup> while even in the UK, a so-called 'developed' or 'first-world' country, 8.9 million people (14 per cent of the population) are described as living in

households with 'absolute low income'.<sup>2</sup> Most of us are used to a regular onslaught of images and stories in the media about poverty and disaster, and to frequent requests for help. If Tearfund supporters' response to such stories and appeals is anything to go by, the shock of being confronted with poverty does not seem to fade. As human beings, we instinctively understand that this is not how the world should be: people are not meant to live in poverty.

People's desire to respond to this suffering does not seem to fade either. They can be incredibly generous, ready to give of themselves – their time, skills and money – to help make the world a better place. A key question for an organisation such as Tearfund, for our supporters and for those with whom we work is: How can we best respond? What are the steps and activities that will help end extreme poverty, and how do we, individually and corporately, play our part?

To answer this question, we need to look more closely at poverty. We need to understand what poverty is and how it affects people, to think about its root causes and the different factors and systems that can enable and exacerbate it. We also need to have a vision of what a world without poverty would look like so



that we have an end goal for our relief and development work and we know what we want to see as a result. This means asking deep questions about what it means to be human, how we are supposed to live in the world and what it means to flourish.

This booklet presents Tearfund's thinking about what poverty is and how we can best respond. It draws on years of experience and reflection and on conversations about these very questions with many different people: from those we are working with and serving in some of the world's poorest communities, to development experts, church leaders and theologians, to politicians, academics and business leaders. It describes our understanding of the nature and causes of poverty, and our vision for a future in which the whole of creation thrives. Subsequently, we explain how this vision can be pursued, with a particular focus on the part that we believe Tearfund is called and equipped to play. Finally, we conclude with some suggestions for how you can join Tearfund in this work, as individuals and with your churches, focusing on prayer, giving and action.



☐ Left: Violette in Burundi attends a nutrition project run by the Anglican Diocese of Matana  
Photo: Tom Price/Tearfund

## WHAT IS POVERTY?

How we understand poverty will determine our response to it. Many, especially in the West, understand poverty as economic poverty. For example, the World Bank defines people in poverty as those living on less than \$1.90 a day.

Other measures of poverty such as the Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) and The Happiness Index look beyond economic poverty, recognising that poverty is more complex and also relates to health, education and access to resources. Tearfund's understanding of poverty goes much further than even these definitions or metrics.

### A BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE ON POVERTY

God's inherent nature is good. One of the ways this is shown in the Bible is through the central theme of justice and care for the poor in scripture. Consequently, poverty and oppression are symptoms of something fundamentally wrong in the relationship between God and humanity.

The biblical narrative describes an arc of history starting from a life of wholeness in creation (Genesis 1 and 2) that was marred by the Fall (Genesis 3). The consequence was broken relationships – ultimately with God, but also with each other, with ourselves and with the whole of creation. This is shown in the following verses:



#### BROKEN RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD

After sinning, Adam and Eve hid from God. 'Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the LORD God among the trees of the garden.' (Genesis 3:8)<sup>3</sup> The consequence of their disobedience was that their relationship with God changed and they were expelled from the garden.



#### BROKEN RELATIONSHIP WITH SELF

God created men and women in his own image (Genesis 1:26). However, after the Fall, shame entered Adam and Eve. 'Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realised that they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.' (Genesis 3:7) Consequently, they no longer understood or felt comfortable with themselves as God's image-bearers and children. This took away their identity, which takes away their very humanity. Poverty takes away human identity in God and changes the perspective we have of ourselves.



**BROKEN RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHERS**

The relationship between Adam and Eve was broken. ‘ “Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you.” ’ (Genesis 3:16) The genuine, natural harmony they enjoyed with one another was ruined and injustice entered the world.



**BROKEN RELATIONSHIP WITH THE ENVIRONMENT**

The relationship between humans and the environment was broken. ‘ “Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat food from it all the days of your life.” ’ (Genesis 3:17) Consequently, there is no longer an ease in nature’s bounty or fruitfulness. Since the Fall, men and women have had to toil, with no guarantee of an equal return on their effort in working the land.

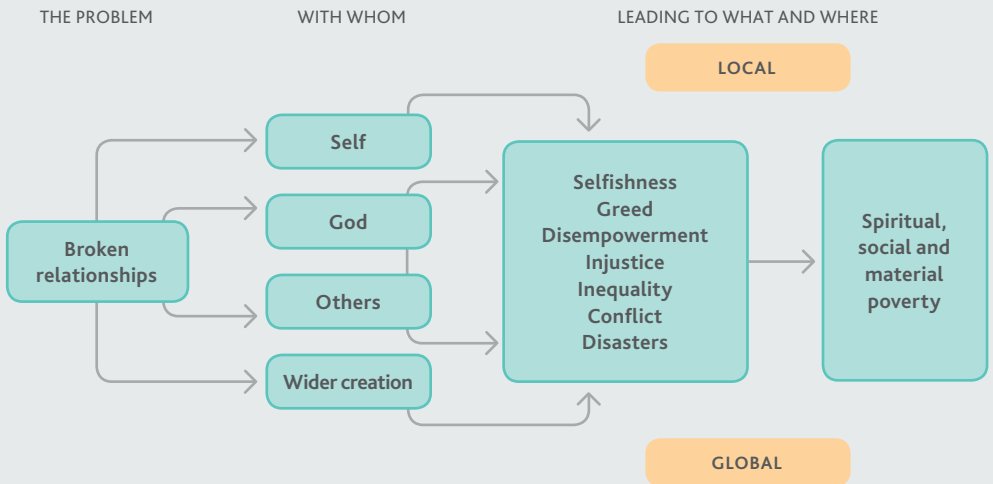
So, the Fall, documented in Genesis 3, has resulted in the imperfect world we now experience. Poverty and injustice are expressions of our separation from God, which impacts the environment as well as humanity.

Poverty is the result of a social and structural legacy of broken relationships with God, a distorted understanding of self, unjust relationships between people, and exploitative relationships with the environment. These broken relationships not only affect individuals’ lives, decisions and actions, but also create broken systems, leading to problems such as power imbalances and corrupt governments. These fractures are made worse by conflicts and natural disasters, many of which also have roots in the broken relationships between God, humanity and wider creation.

In our broken world, unjust systems and power structures make it easy for us to become complicit in sin and in exacerbating poverty, even unwittingly. Our decisions and choices can so easily condone, even shore up these systems. Theologian Justin Thacker describes this systemic aspect of poverty using a vivid metaphor: ‘As the strings in one part of a net are strengthened or broken, so the tension in other parts of the net is changed... Collective purchasing decisions in London can impact whether a child in Bangladesh gets to go to school.’<sup>14</sup>

The consequence of the Fall is illustrated in Figure 1 (below).

**FIGURE 1 – Broken relationships; as a result of the Fall**



## WHAT CHANGE DO WE WANT TO SEE?

### THE CHANGE WE WANT TO SEE AT THE LOCAL LEVEL

The Bible tells us that God is working to redeem and restore his whole creation. In John 10:10 Jesus says: 'I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.' This life of 'wholeness' encompasses all aspects of life: 'being', 'having', 'doing' and 'interacting'. It is inherently relational. Whereas discussions of well-being are often linked to maximising one's own potential, the biblical notion of shalom ('peace') is about the well-being of the whole community, and the individual within it. Shalom cannot exist where there is no justice and righteousness.

We acknowledge Jesus' words in Mark 14:7 that 'the poor you will always have with you'. Jesus is quoting here from Deuteronomy 15:11; yet, in Deuteronomy 15:4–5, Moses says that if the people fully obey the Lord and his commands, then there need be no poor among us. In other words, poverty itself is an indication of sin, of not following God and obeying his commands. While our salvation is assured in Christ, we live in an imperfect world and we are still imperfect. Therefore, poverty will not be fully eradicated until Christ returns, as Das (2016) writes:

*'While change is possible... complete, lasting and sustainable social transformation on this side of eternity will never be a reality, because we live in the in-between times where evil and the kingdom of God coexist in this world.'*<sup>15</sup>

Therefore, we believe that Christians are called to be part of restoring broken relationships while we wait for that work to be completed when Christ returns.

Tearfund's approach to overcoming poverty is holistic: we aim to restore all four different types of broken relationship. This approach goes beyond meeting basic needs to enabling and empowering people to flourish.

📍 Right: Celebrating the success of women's groups in South Sudan

Photo: Tom Price/Tearfund







### **RESTORED RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD**

Human flourishing depends on a living relationship with God the Father through Jesus in the power of the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 2, John 15). Shalom is about being right with God through repentance and the forgiveness of our sins. It is a gift, and not a human achievement, and it is dependent on God's grace. God's desire is that individuals respond to Christ's invitation of a restored relationship with him, and love God with all their hearts, all their souls, all their minds and all their strength (Luke 10:27). This response enables personal transformation, through the Spirit, which is reflected in a person's character, values and behaviour.



### **RESTORED RELATIONSHIP WITH SELF**

This requires us to be aware of our identity in the eyes of God (Genesis 1:27, 1 Thessalonians 1:4) and to bring our body, mind, soul, feelings and will back into line with that identity. It also involves having the opportunity and security to use our gifts to the glory of God (1 Corinthians 12:12–30). God's desire is that individuals would understand they bear his image and show him to the world in all areas of their life.



### **RESTORED RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHERS**

Restored relationships are characterised by love and respect, and by being able to work out differences with others, especially those people with whom we do not have an immediate affinity. These differences may include gender, race, culture, status or religion. Before restoration, these relationships may be characterised by misunderstanding or ignorance, leading to conflict, abuse or violence. Being willing to listen and understand differences and resolve tensions through repentance, forgiveness and reconciliation is vital for restoring these relationships. This also applies to our relationships with local government, national and international authorities and institutions, and with businesses. God's desire is for individuals and communities to seek unity in a diverse world, and love others despite our differences.



### **RESTORED RELATIONSHIP WITH THE ENVIRONMENT**

Living sustainably means caring for the whole of creation (Genesis 1:26, 2:15), including the physical environment and living creatures, and maintaining environmental resources such as ecosystems and biodiversity. Furthermore, it includes how we manage resources such as water, land, seeds and the air (including limiting emissions of harmful gases that lead to climate change), which in turn impacts the poorest and most vulnerable people. We recognise that as human beings we have failed to do this well and God's desire is for individuals to go back to his instruction to work the land and take care of it (Genesis 2:15) and honour the fact that all creation is God's (Psalm 24:1).



## HOLISTIC TRANSFORMATION

We want to see whole-life transformation for individuals, communities and society at large.<sup>6</sup> This is how we envisage this change:

- People demonstrate a commitment to building and sustaining loving, equitable and affirming relationships and can manage conflict constructively.
- Cross-community dialogue and community action for the common good are the norm. Differences are valued and respected and everyone is included in community activities.
- Christians from different denominations work together as salt and light to achieve positive change in their own communities and beyond. They work with other Christians and faith groups to influence and impact society at the local and national levels.
- People are supportive of one another and are at peace with the past, with hope for the future. They are able to share concerns and have the emotional resilience to withstand and adapt to shocks, stresses and uncertainty.
- Indicators for physical health are continually improving for all groups, particularly the most vulnerable, and everyone has equal access to resources to keep them healthy.
- People can access and use the material resources they need to sustain their livelihoods in an environmentally responsible way. They collaborate with others, both to understand how natural systems operate and to ensure sustainable use of resources, for the common good.
- Ultimately, everyone can thrive within a flourishing natural environment, both as individuals and as a community.
- Individuals and groups recognise and realise their own potential, and also help realise the potential of others, sharing their expertise. People plan creatively, learn, and adapt in response to changing needs and contexts to bring change collaboratively and achieve a shared vision.
- The views of all groups are represented and considered so that their views influence decision-making about their future.

## THE CHANGE WE WANT TO SEE AT A GLOBAL LEVEL

Every individual and each community lives and operates within systems: economic, political, legal and social. As we have seen, these systems are also affected by broken relationships. We believe that for global systems to be restored, they need to work according to these three key principles:



First, **we live within environmental limits**. This means ensuring that our economy works with, rather than against, the creation that God has given us. In keeping with Psalm 24, we believe that the abundance of the earth belongs to all of us, and ultimately to God. That comes with responsibilities, both to exercise care in how we use it, and also to share the proceeds of that natural wealth fairly. In Leviticus 25, we see how the jubilee reset land ownership to prevent wealth inequality from building up over generations.<sup>7</sup>



Second, **everyone is able to meet their basic needs**. This means providing an enabling environment and basic level of economic security and protection for every person on the planet. This is the foundation for human flourishing and all people being able to realise their potential.



Third, **inequality is kept within reasonable limits**. This encompasses both income inequality and wealth inequality, at national and international levels.<sup>8</sup>


 A pastor tends to his potato crop in El Tambo, Peru

Photo: Geoff Crawford/Tearfund



## HOW WILL CHANGE COME?

### WHO WILL HELP US CONTRIBUTE TO THE CHANGE?

We believe that individuals, the church, businesses, governments and wider civil society all have important roles to play in bringing about change.

#### INDIVIDUALS

All communities and systems are made up of individuals and are shaped by them (just as individuals are shaped by systems and their communities). We have already discussed the way individuals can be changed by a restored relationship with God. This transformation, expressed through values, behaviours and actions, has a knock-on effect for communities and systems.

#### THE CHURCH

We believe that there is a special role for the church within civil society at both local and global levels.

In the opening chapters of the book of Acts, Luke tells the story of the disciples after they have received the Great Commission. At this time the group of disciples take on a new corporate identity; 'the fellowship of believers' (Acts 2) becomes the church, the body of Christ on earth, continuing his mission until he comes again. As Moltmann (1977) puts it, 'It is not the church that "has" a mission, but the reverse; Christ's mission creates itself a church.<sup>19</sup> Therefore the church is commissioned to join in with God's mission.



Our key foundation is 'integral mission', which understands that God is working to restore broken relationships by responding holistically to people's needs, including economic, emotional, spiritual and physical ones. The church, as the body of Christ, therefore has a vital and distinctive role to play in fulfilling this mission.

## Local churches can make three distinctive contributions to international development.

### THE CHURCH IS INTEGRAL

The physical location of the church at the heart of local communities provides:

#### Access

- When international organisations have limited or no access to an area, local faith leaders hold the privileged position of being able to reach where others cannot go.
- Churches and church leaders can engage local people in discussions about their own needs and ensure that the most vulnerable are included.

#### Immediacy

- When a disaster strikes, response times can make all the difference in saving people's lives, and churches are often some of the first responders in a crisis.

#### Sustainability

- The long-term presence and lower turnover rate for church workers compared with NGO staff means churches hold relationships and credibility among the communities they are embedded in, because their staff are part of the community.

### THE CHURCH IS INSPIRATIONAL

The Christian identity of the church acts as an asset in providing:

#### A whole-person approach

- This means addressing the emotional and spiritual needs of those living in poverty or caught up in disasters, alongside their immediate physical problems – an approach we call 'integral mission' (see p12). The worldview of Christians means that they understand their lives and problems in terms of their faith, and can more easily engage with poverty holistically.

- The church has a biblical mandate to help those in need.

- Christians see looking after the vulnerable as an outworking of their faith, so are often inspired to offer help, frequently without payment or recognition. This means that the church supplies services and social infrastructure in much of the developing world.

#### Influence

- Harnessing the influence of church leaders and the church more generally can be a huge advantage in humanitarian and development responses. Because the church is deeply embedded in society, with roots into community history, it holds the trust and respect of the people. This allows church leaders to challenge traditions, beliefs and values that may perpetuate poverty.

### THE CHURCH IS INFLUENTIAL

The church is one of the largest civil-society networks in the world, and one of the few movements that is both local and global in its reach and influence. This offers enormous potential to shape attitudes and speak up on behalf of the poor and the oppressed, and huge scope for successful initiatives to be replicated across its network.

All this makes the church a highly distinctive and effective partner in tackling poverty, and brings huge added value to humanitarian, development and advocacy responses.<sup>10</sup>

We acknowledge that the church can sometimes have a negative impact on efforts to end poverty. However, we believe that when the church is living out its biblical mandate, it has a vital role to play in ending poverty.

## GOVERNMENTS, BUSINESS AND CIVIL SOCIETY

Governments, business and wider civil society all play important roles in bringing positive change at both local and global levels, when they are focused on the common good. The church must work in partnership with them.

### Governments

Governments help bring about transformation by, for example, ensuring order and stability, delivering and protecting public goods, and providing education and access to basic services. Governments also play a vital role through policies to incentivise positive practices.

### Business

Business helps bring about transformation by, for example, providing the economic engine that generates the resources to lift whole countries out of poverty; creating (through research and technical innovation), producing (through manufacturing) and distributing (through sales and marketing) the products and services people need to live full lives. Business provides opportunities for employment through which people develop and exercise their creativity and gifts, thus contributing to their communities. People gain fulfilment and empowerment through work, as well as wages which are essential for lifting them out of material poverty. And, significant tax revenues are provided for governments and foreign exchange through trade.

### Civil society

Civil society helps bring transformation through:

- providing a voice for communities
- helping to resolve conflict at a local level
- providing relief and services to the vulnerable, particularly in fragile states
- delivering humanitarian relief during and after a disaster or war
- people making lifestyle changes to live more sustainably and use fewer resources
- innovating new approaches to aid and development practice which can be scaled up
- advocating for changes in policy to enable transformation
- holding governments to account
- blowing the whistle on bad business practice

📷 Right: A civil-society march for climate justice

Photo: Clive Mear/Tearfund



## GLOBAL INFLUENCES

At a global level, we believe that the three main influences on change are:<sup>11</sup>

### WHAT THE ECONOMY INCENTIVISES

PRICES, TAXES, SPENDING, INVESTMENT

The economic system determines what we can buy, what we can earn and what we can produce. New products emerging from the economic system (such as mobile phones) can transform the way we live. Similarly, differences in price often determine what we buy: if renewable energy was cheaper than coal, we would probably all be using it already. Likewise, differences in (risk-adjusted) returns often determine which ideas attract financial investment and which don't.

### WHAT THE LAW ALLOWS

LEGISLATION AND ITS ENFORCEMENT

The legal system sets out the formal rules of the game, through legislation, regulation and judicial precedent – covering everything from how contracts are drawn up and enforced, to what we can be arrested for and what the punishment will be. This too is a hugely important lever for affecting the behaviour of people and companies.

### WHAT SOCIETY EXPECTS

THE SOCIAL NORMS THAT GOVERN MUCH OF OUR BEHAVIOUR

The socio-cultural system frames what society expects of us, what's considered 'normal' and – conversely – what's considered unacceptable or shameful.

## TEARFUND'S ROLE

### OUR SPECIFIC CONTRIBUTION

Tearfund's calling is to follow Jesus where the need is greatest, and our expertise is in international development, humanitarian aid and advocacy. We also see part of our role as enabling the church to live out its calling to help release people from poverty, regardless of their faith or background. So we put the church at the centre of all we do, working through local churches wherever possible.

📷 Corrugated metal sheets for emergency accommodation, Nepal  
Photo: Anna Chilvers/Tearfund





## WE HAVE A BIG VISION

**'To see people freed from poverty, living transformed lives and reaching their God-given potential'**

In order to achieve this vision we want to see:

**Churches mobilised:** The church is envisioned, empowered and equipped to play its part in transforming the poorest communities and changing society.

**Communities transformed:** The poorest communities are resilient to shocks and stresses, working for peace and unity, and contributing to better futures for themselves and others.

**Emergency needs met:** Immediate needs are met when crises and natural disasters hit and community structures and mechanisms are affected.

**Society changed:** Social, political, economic and environmental systems and policies work for the poorest communities, ensuring access to basic needs, reduced inequality and sustainable growth.

## OUR VALUES

Christ-centred  
Compassionate  
Servant-hearted  
Truthful  
Courageous

## THE WAY WE WORK

Wherever possible, we work with the local church. This is our major distinctive. Where we cannot, we aim to work through other Christian partners and individuals.

In pursuit of our desired outcomes, our three main approaches are:

- **Community development**
- **Humanitarian response**
- **Influencing and advocacy**

In **community development**, we support communities to lift themselves out of poverty. We aim to build local capacity, so that communities become resilient and can continue to combat poverty and injustice with their own resources and relationships. We are committed to supporting communities in understanding and addressing risks of all types.

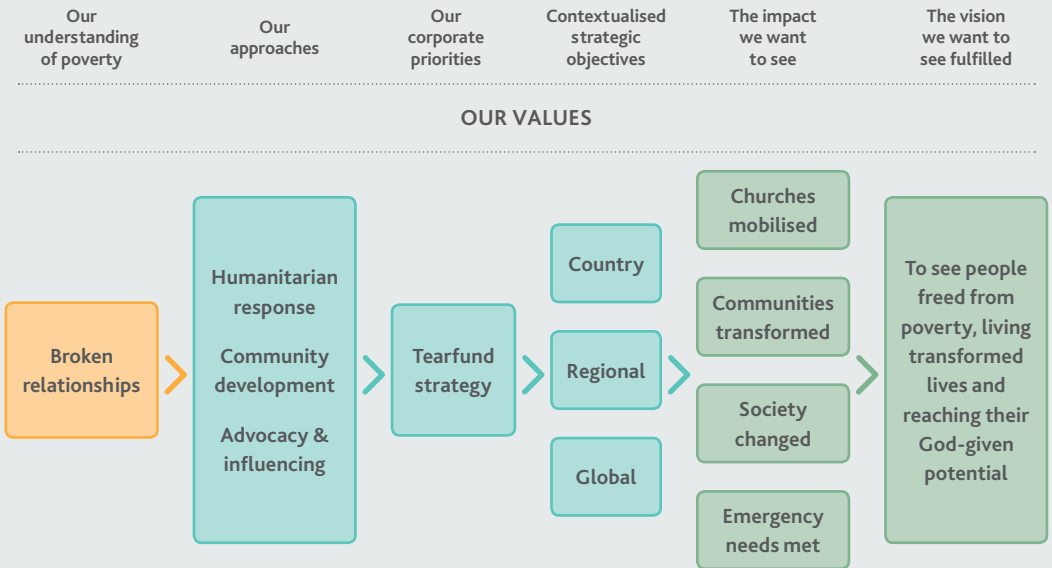
In **humanitarian response**, we respond immediately targeting those in greatest need. We are committed to impartiality, providing assistance to the most vulnerable without regard for: age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief. We respond to rapid-onset disasters and protracted crises, to man-made and natural disasters. We promote partner and community planning to help them respond to and recover from future shocks and stresses, ensuring that even the most marginalised can participate.

In **influencing and advocacy**, we influence the global church and governments with and on behalf of the poorest people, to bring about large-scale change. We believe that change must happen at multiple levels for there to be meaningful transformation. We therefore work to shift public perception on key issues, influence strategic leaders and decision-makers, and mobilise the church and civil society to be agents of change at local, national and global levels.

Figure 2, below, illustrates how our approaches help fulfil our vision and achieve the change we want to see.

While our approaches and outcomes remain largely the same, the priorities and geographical areas we work in may change and develop over time. This allows us to respond and leverage our expertise, skills and resources in the most effective ways.

**FIGURE 2 – Our theory of change: a simplified pathway map**



**Assumptions**

Underlying our understanding of how change happens is a set of assumptions. These are the factors that will influence positively and negatively our ability to bring about the change we desire. We continue to test these assumptions by building our evidence base and by adapting and learning.

- Change is influenced by our belief in the truth of Christianity and the existence of God.
- Broken relationships can be restored and therefore lead to individuals and communities becoming more resilient.
- Building relationships is a long-term process. This has significant implications for the change we desire to see and how we measure it. It also has implications for what we should focus on, how we work and how we fund our work.
- Faith is an important aspect of daily life and an important driver of transformation, giving people shared perspective on how change can happen. Modelling positive values and relationships and addressing unhealthy power dynamics are critical if we want to see transformation through restored relationships.
- It is possible to address poverty effectively by creating the right environment and applying the right tools.
- For there to be deep, whole-life transformation in individuals, groups and communities, change has to be physical, social and spiritual.
- We as Tearfund can only achieve impact in collaboration with others. We recognise the power of faith, prayer and the Holy Spirit to bring change through the work of Tearfund and our partners.

## HOW YOU CAN PARTNER WITH US TO TACKLE POVERTY

Poverty is intricately linked to the social and systemic consequences of broken relationships between God, people and wider creation. We see that poverty comes from a distorted understanding of self, which affects how we interact with other people, with wider creation and with God. God is working to redeem and restore the whole of creation, and we believe that as God's people, we are called to be part of this, responding to poverty holistically by seeking to restore relationships.

We recognise that every individual and each community lives and operates within systems, and that these systems can be transformed through our engagement with church, businesses, governments and wider civil society. When we hear about people like Jumana in Chad, we know we want to respond. So how can we get involved ourselves?

There are many ways individuals and churches can engage with these institutions and systems to help bring change. At Tearfund, we believe that tackling poverty calls us to a whole-life response, incorporating prayer, giving, action, advocacy and lifestyle.



📷 Right: Jumana from Dabkere, Chad  
Photo: Peter Caton/Tearfund

## JOIN US!

Here are some questions for you, your family and your church to consider, to help you decide how to respond:<sup>12</sup>

- Are you praying for people living in poverty?
- What are the particular issues surrounding poverty that you feel called to respond to?
- Can you describe the ways that your faith shapes your response to poverty? Can you describe how you would like it to shape your response?
- If you are a church leader, are you providing your church with a biblical basis for responding to others and caring for our world?
- Is your church seeking to respond to poverty practically?
- Do you reflect on how you spend your money, including your giving?
- Are you thoughtfully considering and embracing lifestyle changes? You might find it helpful to think about the issues that matter most to you, and start there.
- Are you advocating for just government policies and business practices? This might involve writing to a government representative or business leader, participating in a campaign, or voting in a particular way.
- Are you actively encouraging and helping your church and community to respond to poverty?
- Do you think about how you influence the people and systems around you (for example, at work or in community groups)? How could you encourage people to use their personal influence in responding to poverty?

## PRAY



Through prayer we connect with God's heart, entering into a space where we are shaped by God and can talk to him. Prayer reveals God's heart for those living in poverty and enables us to intercede for them. We know that prayer is powerful as God responds to the cry of our heart.

## ACT



When we respond to Christ's offer of salvation and accept the invitation to enter a restored relationship with God, we begin to be transformed through the power of the Spirit. This impacts the way we live, the ways we behave, the choices we make and the actions we take. Our faith inspires us to address the underlying causes of poverty, work for justice and support good development. We can do this through advocacy and lifestyle choices which can influence the systems and institutions around us.

So, for example, we may be able to vote in elections or write to our representatives to encourage them to act on the things that matter to us. We may be able to volunteer with local or international organisations who are seeking to reduce poverty, supporting their work with our skills and time. And we can make choices about our own lifestyle, including the things we buy, the food that we eat and the ways that we travel. **Even small acts, taken together, help create a groundswell of support for change.** You can join with Tearfund Action in advocating and campaigning for change, and learn more about lifestyle changes you can make to have a positive impact on poverty.

## GIVE



We give because God has been so generous to us. Giving allows us to express our gratitude and it gives us the chance to partner with God in his redemptive plans for the world. By giving to Tearfund, you are able to support and participate in our work to see people lifted out of poverty, and be a part of restoring broken relationships with others by reducing inequality and tackling injustice.

Turn over for more information about our latest campaigns and how you can join in!

## ENDNOTES

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- 1 <https://data.worldbank.org/topic/poverty>
- 2 'Absolute low income' households are those with income below 60 per cent of (inflation-adjusted) median income in 2010/11. McGuinness F, Poverty in the UK: statistics (Briefing Paper 7096, August 2018), <https://researchbriefings.parliament.uk/ResearchBriefing/Summary/SN07096>
- 3 All scripture quotations are taken from the NIV (UK) 2011
- 4 Thacker J (2017) *Global poverty. A theological guide*, p58
- 5 Das R (2016) *Compassion and the mission of God*, Carlisle: Langham Global Partnership, p162
- 6 Tearfund (2016) *An introductory guide to the LIGHT Wheel toolkit*
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- 9 Moltmann J (1977) *The church in the power of the Spirit*, Fortress Press, p26
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- 11 Tearfund (2015) *The restorative economy – completing our unfinished millennium jubilee*
- 12 These are adapted from: Barna (2018) *Christians who make a difference*, p69



# tearfund

*Following Jesus where the need is greatest*

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