



Questions and answers for speakers

Q. How are we talking about Tearfund's 50th year? Is it our birthday, our anniversary?

A. Among church and supporter audiences, we're mainly referring to the name of the campaign (*We won't stop until poverty stops*). However, celebrating 50 years of Tearfund's work is an important element and we are inviting churches and individuals to join us in marking it. It is a valuable opportunity to reinforce the rich heritage of Tearfund and the huge experience we've gained over 50 years. It's OK to talk about our 50th year to the people you speak to in churches, but we wouldn't refer to 'our Jubilee campaign' or 'our birthday campaign' and so on.

Q. Your strapline for this year's campaign is 'We won't stop until poverty stops.' What do you mean by this?

A. Tearfund believes that broken relationships – our relationships with God, with self, with others and with creation – are the root cause of poverty. Jesus, in his relentless love, came to restore those relationships. It's an expression of how we recognise the root causes of poverty. We've been addressing them for many years but there is an end in sight for extreme poverty, and we're pushing on to reach that goal. So we are motivated by the love of Jesus, and we won't stop until poverty stops.

Although Jesus said that 'the poor you will always have with you' (Matthew 26:11), we believe that poverty is detestable to God, and that Christians are called to serve those living in poverty until Christ comes again. The victory of the kingdom of God is not yet fully realised in the world, and won't be until Christ's return. Sin is still with us, both individual sin and systemic sin, and this continues and will continue to contribute to poverty all around the world.

In the current time we are called to serve those living in poverty and to challenge the worldly structures that enable poverty, all while expressing God's love and justice. However, we recognise that we cannot do this in our own strength; we need to be transformed by God to become more like Christ as we serve, and to wait for the final revelation of the kingdom. However, Tearfund believes that we can see an end to extreme poverty, even though there will always be inequality, relative poverty and injustice. (Recommended reading: Justin Thacker's *Global Poverty: A Theological Guide*, especially chapters five and six).

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When you speak about this, you will be affirming that an end to extreme poverty is possible, and that we are motivated by the relentless love of Jesus, knowing the restoration of relationships is available to all. The aspect of togetherness – the ‘we’ – reflects the fact that it takes all of us: each one of us has a part to play in the fight to end extreme poverty.

Q. What is extreme poverty?

A. The World Bank defines extreme poverty as living on less than \$1.90 (£1.45) per day. USAID expands this, defining extreme poverty as ‘the inability to meet basic consumption needs on a sustainable basis’. People who live in extreme poverty lack both income and assets and typically suffer from interrelated, chronic deprivations including hunger and malnutrition, poor health, limited education, and marginalisation or exclusion. Poverty also affects self-esteem – people living in poverty often feel worthless and overlooked. We want to uncover people’s God-given potential, and restore people to a full understanding of their infinite value in Christ.

Q. We say that an end to extreme poverty is possible in our lifetime. How do we know this? What is this based on?

A. As part of their Sustainable Development Goals, the UN has set a target of ending extreme poverty by 2030. We recognise that defining and measuring poverty is inherently fraught with challenges, but we feel called to step up to the challenge.

The most recent statistics available from the World Bank from 2013 indicate that 10.37 per cent of the global population live in extreme poverty. In 1990, 1.9 billion people lived on less than \$1.90 a day, compared to a projected 702 million in 2015. That’s a 74.1 per cent decline in 25 years. When global poverty was forecast to drop below 10 per cent in 2015, World Bank Group President, Jim Yong Kim said, ‘We are the first generation in human history that can end extreme poverty.’

Q. What are the main challenges to reaching this goal?

A. Looking ahead, projections suggest that people living in extreme poverty will be highly concentrated in Sub-Saharan Africa, especially in fragile and conflict-affected states. Additionally, the effects of climate change – hurricanes, flooding, drought – will increase the vulnerability of millions of households who live just above the poverty line. We have chosen to target three key areas where we feel Tearfund can play a leading role: partnering with local churches to transform communities, working with communities affected by disaster in the long term and pursuing environmentally and economically sustainable development.

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Q. How does Jubilee (Tearfund's 50 years) fit with 'We Won't Stop'?

We believe that the essence of Jubilee is its provision of a way of life for God's redeemed, liberated people. It enables them to flourish and thrive through the restoration of their relationships: with God; with the understanding of themselves as God's children; with each other; and with creation.

Jubilee is about justice: redemption and restoration; liberation and renewal. It is radical and countercultural – both in the ancient world and today – and it is prophetic. It provides a model for a community living well according to God's will for his creation, so that they can flourish and thrive as individuals and a community, and so that they can be an example of light to the rest of the world.

Poverty results when these things are lacking. We won't stop until poverty stops – until Jubilee comes to all.

Q. Why have we chosen the Bible passages that we have for this campaign?

A. We're focusing on two specific areas of theology: restoration and relentless love. There are four central Bible passages for this campaign. The ideas around Jubilee are relevant to much of Tearfund's frontline work. So, while these passages are specific to this campaign they are also part of ongoing thinking around the theology of our work.

Leviticus 25 is the primary account of Jubilee, where it is laid out in the establishment of the law that would define Israel's new post-Exodus relationship with God.

Luke 4 and **Isaiah 61** help us reflect on the impact of Christ's life, death and resurrection on our understanding of Jubilee. This is essential to thinking about its place in our lives as disciples today. In Luke 4, Jesus is reading from Isaiah 61, which in turn refers to Leviticus 25 and the Jubilee laws. In this moment, Jesus is announcing that his mission was God's mission: the redemption of God's creation and the restoration of its relationship with God. He is making a clear statement that he himself is the fulfilment of the Jubilee – he makes possible the kind of world that the law alone could not create.

In **Romans 8**, Paul explores what it means for humans to be saved and set free by Christ. We are liberated by Jesus' death and resurrection: the fulfilment of Jubilee and the foundation of our

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hope for the future – the new creation that we are promised. Although this will not be fully realised until he returns, we all have a part to play in this era of ‘now but not yet’.

For more, please read the [Foundational Theology Paper](#). Note: we ask that all Bible verses quoted should be from the NIV.

Q. Tearfund believes that poverty is rooted in broken relationships, with God, ourselves, others and our world. Do you have any material to help me understand this theology better?

A. Tearfund have produced this short introductory film which outlines our theory of poverty: www.tearfund.org - [The theory of poverty](#)

Q. How many countries does Tearfund work in now?

A. Tearfund currently works in 48 countries around the world.

Q. Why are you focusing on the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) for Tearfund’s 50th year campaign?

The theme of the campaign ‘We won’t stop’ is designed to cover the breadth of Tearfund’s work. As such we are not focusing exclusively on the DRC, but the case study chosen for the church film, which you will be using throughout the year, is from the DRC. In our recent strategy refresh, certain areas have been identified as places we are committed to working in more, and to working in more effectively as part of our call to follow Jesus where the need is greatest. One of these is our work in fragile states (low-income countries characterised by weak state capacity and/or weak state legitimacy leaving citizens vulnerable to a range of shocks). The DRC is one such state, with years of conflict and weak state institutions. These are countries where the need really is the greatest.

Q. What are the corporate priorities identified in the strategy refresh?

1. Church and Community Transformation (CCT) – we partner with churches as they empower communities to lift themselves out of poverty, and we seek whole-life transformation everywhere we work.
2. Fragile States – we go to places of greatest need and respond to crisis situations and find long-term solutions for communities and individuals.

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3. Environmental and Economic Sustainability (EES) – we work towards a world where every person's basic needs are met, and all have the chance to flourish within environmental limits.

Q. How long has Tearfund been working in DRC? And where in DRC are we working?

Tearfund has been working in DRC through partners since 1986, while the operational team has been working in DRC since 2001. The relief programme is largely based in the east, in North and South Kivu and Maniema, with longer-term work being carried out by partners across all other provinces in DRC. Tearfund has been implementing life-changing programmes in areas of water and sanitation, livelihoods, prevention of sexual- and gender-based violence (SGBV) and support to survivors of SGBV, maternal health and – as you see through Birungi's story – church and community transformation.

Tearfund's current projects include livelihoods (such as the skills centre you see in the film), agricultural extension work, disaster risk reduction activities, water and sanitation provision to schools, health centres and communities, public health promotion and SGBV.

Q. Who is Tearfund's partner in DRC?

A. Tearfund has many partners in the DRC, and we partner with Action Entraide in Bunia and the surrounding areas. Founded in 2009, it is a community-based organisation working in the east of Ituri Province in north-eastern DRC. They have provided church and community transformation training to many pastors in the area as well as starting a number of initiatives, in particular the skills training centre in Bogoro that Birungi attended. This reflects their commitment to support local young people to gain employment and improve their living conditions through vocational training courses. Action Entraide also engages in peace and reconciliation activities for young people through sports and cultural activities.

Q. How is the local church involved in this work?

A. Tearfund works through local churches and Christian organisations across Africa. Working through local churches is effective because of the power of prayer, the quality of relationships and the local understanding that this brings. For Tearfund, the local church is well placed to reach the most vulnerable and those in need – whether that be through a church network reaching remote villages, or whether that is in urban settings in hard-to-access slums and tower blocks.

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When Tearfund mobilises the church, we ensure that they recognise the threats and the risks that their community face, and we work with them to develop ways of coping and responding. Right at the heart of that is our passionate desire not to see the precious gains we've made in our development work lost to flood, war or drought. Tearfund supports Action Entraide in DRC, resourcing them to offer lasting transformation to communities.

The pastor from Birungi's village approached Action Entraide asking them to visit his village and speak to them about community mobilisation. He was then taken through the CCT process and the church is moving forward with a number of projects in the community. It was through this connection that Birungi's uncle heard about the skills training centre.

Q. Can you tell us a bit more about the training we see in the film?

A. Trainees are selected from young people who have not had the opportunity to finish primary school or may not have attended school at all. This is a particular issue for girls and women, who are often overlooked in favour of male siblings when it comes to education. The training focuses on practical skills but also addresses some literacy and numeracy needs, especially relating to equipping the young people to be able to run businesses. For women, this can be life-changing as, without practical skills, literacy and numeracy, they cannot earn income and are more likely to marry young, be abused by their husband and live a life of servitude.

The two main areas of training are tailoring and carpentry. These have been chosen because there is a ready market in all villages for such skills, and businesses can be started with fairly limited layout. The school also teaches some welding but this requires a source of power and expensive equipment, which means it is not an easy business to establish.

Q. Did Birungi get to 'school'? Or did she only attend the vocational training?

A. Birungi never got the opportunity to go to school. All she has learnt she has received from the skills training centre.

Q. Does Tearfund collect items like sewing machines to send out to countries like DRC to help this type of work?

A. We are all incredibly excited by Birungi's story of restoration, and understand that people might want to provide help in kind. However, the costs involved in sending out bulky equipment from

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the UK are far greater than what can be achieved through in-country resources. So, we actively discourage people from sending materials overseas, as it is much cheaper to use local resources, and it is much better in the long term – encouraging people to use the resources they have access to. There are also huge benefits to the local economy of sourcing items locally wherever possible. We're working with our partner to ensure that young people like Birungi get the opportunities and training they need to build sustainable livelihoods. We want to make sure there is hope and a future for many more and we can't do this without your help.

Q. Why is there so much gender inequality in DRC?

A. Traditional gender norms mean that men are seen as the authority in the home with control over all aspects, including their wives. Daughters are viewed as having less worth than boys, and are often seen only as a means of bringing a dowry to their parents. When resources are limited, boys will be prioritised. This leads to the common practice of only sending boys to school. The history of conflict has exacerbated this, with women often marginalised and abused through sexual violence. A key aspect of Tearfund's work involves changing attitudes to gender with both men and women.

Q. Tearfund's vision for this campaign is to see five million people freed from material and spiritual poverty – how/why did we come up with this number?

A. From looking at the number of people who benefited from our work last year and the year before, and taking into account the plans we have to scale up our work in certain areas over the next year, we felt that the target of seeing five million people freed from material and spiritual poverty achieved a good balance in terms of being both realistic and ambitious.

Q. What is the money we raise through the speaker programme going towards? How are we making that clear?

A: The money will support people in challenging situations with little hope or opportunity, like we've seen in DRC. It will help us to respond wherever the need is greatest, all over the world. We make this clear in all our correspondence.

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Q. How will I know what my donation achieves?

A. We want people to be inspired about what they are making possible and so will provide updates as and when we receive them. In addition, we regularly include more information about the progress of our work in places like DRC and other countries on our website and in *Tear Times*.

Q. We hear so much about corruption. How can supporters be sure their money will be used as intended?

A. Our money is not routed via government but is administered by local Christian NGOs. We use rigorous financial management assessment and monitoring systems to minimise the risk of corruption.

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