



Free to Rise

**PERSISTENT WOMEN CAN
CHANGE THE WORLD.**

Poverty has a face, and it is often a woman's. Globally, the majority of people living in poverty are women¹. Tearfund's mission to overcome poverty and injustice cannot become reality unless we address gender inequality.

Despite systemic inequality and violence, persistent women are changing our world. They are shaping a future where men and women alike are free to rise above poverty and injustice. Like the persistent widow from Luke 18, women around the world are crying out to God to grant them justice.

IN OUR WORLD TODAY GENDER INEQUALITY IS PERVASIVE:

- *1 in 3 women worldwide will experience violence in their lifetime.²*
- *60% of people experiencing chronic hunger are women and girls.³*
- *Women own less than 20% of the world's land⁴ yet produce the majority of the world's food (and are the most impacted by climate change).*



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Masika's story

Masika* is a mother of four children. Historically, her husband was the main earner for the family living in the DRC. It was a joyless marriage and he had shown her no respect - to the point of verbal abuse. "My husband told me I was useless without him; just like a radio without batteries," she recalls. He would never consult her for any decisions about their household.

In Masika's group, the members began pooling small amounts of money each week, then issuing loans to one another. With her loan, Masika started selling tomatoes and small doughnut-like cakes called mandazi.

Suddenly she was making money and could contribute to household expenses. As that happened, her husband's attitude changed. "Now my opinion counts in the house," she says.

Not only has the abuse stopped for Masika, it's ceasing for other women in her village. She's teaching and counseling other survivors of gender-based violence in her village - a serious problem in the DRC - and helping them to speak out about it.

HOW WE'RE *responding*

Through our partner organizations and local churches, we are standing with women like Masika in the most vulnerable communities around the world. **We do this by:**

1. *expanding access to economic opportunity*
2. *supporting survivors of gender-based violence*
3. *equipping men to confront the attitudes that perpetuate violence against women*



"When you empower a man to escape poverty, it's a wonderful thing. However, empowering a woman is twice as wonderful."

- Hebdavi Muhindo, **Tearfund's Country Director for the Democratic Republic of Congo**





WHAT CAN WE DO?

It's up to all of us - both men and women - to make sure every woman has the freedom to rise to her full potential.

For too long, women have been left out of leadership, denied justice, and silenced in society-- even in some of our churches. Even if we've been part of the problem in the past, Jesus invites us to be a part of the solution moving forward.

As followers of Jesus, we must go above and beyond the world's standards in how we treat women. Unbound by the social standards of his time, Jesus was nothing short of revolutionary in his inclusion of women. This is why we are committed to making sure women are encouraged, affirmed, and equipped as they step into their God-given potential.

YOU CAN STAND WITH WOMEN TODAY

\$15 could provide educational meetings for men in Malawi to identify and unlearn harmful norms that perpetuate gender based violence.

\$50 could sponsor a community-based support group in Zimbabwe for survivors of sexual and gender-based violence to pursue healing together.

\$80 could provide one woman in the DRC with agricultural training, tools and support to grow food in a hotter and drier climate.

\$100 could equip local counselors with the skills they need to support women processing trauma in their communities. Mental health therapy is essential for healing from assault and other human rights abuses.

\$150 could create opportunities for women like Masika to join self-help groups. These groups provide savings and credit opportunities for people who cannot access traditional banks or even microfinance so they can start small businesses.

\$12.5 a month could provide a group of teenage refugees with sanitary products. For girls displaced by conflict or disaster, having an adequate supply of sanitary products opens the door to dignity, education, and employment opportunities.

¹UN WOMEN
²UNDP Fast Facts: Gender Equality
³UNDP Fast Facts: Gender Equality
⁴WeForum.org
*Name changed to protect privacy