

Help Dreams Come True



Esther, a widowed grandmother from Malawi, has a story that speaks of her powerful love for her family and deep desire to prove her their future.

Christian Aid Week 2023

Every Christian Aid Week, people across Ireland step out in love for our global neighbours. It's a joyful celebration of our determination to change the world, through our gifts, prayers, and actions. This Christian Aid Week (14-20 May), we stand with women like Esther and their families in Malawi; strong, determined women who want to make their children's dreams come true.

Esther Saizi's story:

Esther Saizi, 54, is small, softly spoken woman full of laughter. When we met Esther and her wonderful family, we found something magic in her warm heart and everyday acts of kindness. Esther grows some truly special pigeon peas on her farm. With these peas, Esther can bake delicious bread, support her daughter's dreams, and send her little grandson, Nespo, to nursery.

For 10 years, Esther grew pigeon peas on her farm, but she could never secure a fair price for her crop. However, when Esther joined a pigeon pea programme run by a Christian Aid partner, Nandolo Farmers Association, and started selling as part of a cooperative, she was able to earn much more: 'I was

able to sell the pigeon peas at a better price with a better market,' she explains. 'It provided financial stability.'

The Power of Pigeon Peas

Esther is doing amazing things for her family with her pigeon peas. She bought tools for her daughter Ziwone to use in her carpentry business, and pays for her daughter Rashida's lodgings near her school, a part-time tutor and school costs. Her dream is to see Rashida graduate from college and become a nurse, and to send her two grandsons to nursery.

With her profits, Esther has been able to buy goats, and now has a herd of 13, who also provide manure for her crops, saving on expensive fertiliser. Now she is able to keep her pigeon peas in a warehouse, safe from floods and storms.

A Better Future

Esther is a doting grandma, and Nespo and baby Emmanuel clearly adore her. Esther's family love the bread she makes from pigeon pea flour. Ziwone says, laughing: 'My son Nespo loves the bread so much that when his grandmother comes without any bread, he gets really mad!'

Esther adds that growing pigeon peas has helped her through losing her husband. Previously, they worked together on their land. When he fell ill, they spent time talking about how she could continue to grow the peas after his death. 'My husband was a teacher in everything thing that he did,' she says quietly. 'Therefore, we can continue his legacy.'

Transforming Communities

Esther loves baking bread and making other pigeon pea recipes, which she shares with her family and community. 'We are a community that helps one another a lot, she says. 'If people face a problem, we do not allow them to suffer alone.'

It's thanks to people like you that this change has been possible for Esther and her community. This gives us hope that, with your help, more women will be able to transform their lives. This Christian Aid Week, you can help more families like Esther's have a brighter future, and help more farmers secure a fair price for their crops, and make their children's dreams come true.

Give, Pray, Act:

- £10 could pay for a 2kg bag of seeds to plant pigeon peas – a hardy, drought resistant crop.
- £50 could provide pigeon pea seeds and farming tools for a family. You'll be helping them grow enough crops to make a healthy profit.
- £70 could buy a bicycle so that an experienced farmer can reach over 100 farmers in remote areas and teach them essential business skills.
- £100 could help provide a business training session, helping farmers to secure higher, fairer prices for their crops.
- £250 could pay for a cooperative oven, supporting more than 800 people to turn their pigeon peas into profit by baking bread.

Contact us

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Nandolo Farmers Association (NFA) organises and trains farmers, helps them market their produce, helps them form cooperatives and supports them to increase their pigeon pea harvests.

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