

# LENT 2020 TRÓCAIRE NEWSLETTER

**Did you know?** Trócaire works with local partner organisations in over twenty developing countries with a focus on food and resource rights, women's empowerment and humanitarian response.

Trócaire was established in 1973 as the overseas development agency of the Catholic Church in Ireland. The organisation was created as a response to the widening gap between rich and poor and our collective duty to reduce it. Trócaire's work is rooted in Catholic social teaching, based on the belief that God has a plan for creation, a plan to build his kingdom of peace, love and justice. Around the world, families are living under constant threat of conflict, drought and land grabs. In the face of these threats, many women hold their families together, battling enormous odds to provide for their children. Lent 2020 highlights the different ways in which women keep their families safe and protect their futures.

During Lent 2020 we tell the stories of Madris in Kenya and Angela in Honduras as a way to celebrate the strength of women all over the world who are overcoming the odds to protect and provide for their families.

## Meet Angela

Angela lives in Honduras with her husband and five children. Angela's home is on ancestral tribal land, which is held in collective title. In 2008, Angela became involved with Trócaire's partner MADJ, a broad movement for dignity and justice that fights against corruption.

Angela tells us, 'The problem we have here is the destruction of the forest. I saw that they were selling the wood (trees) and minerals and decided to intervene. Mining and logging companies have come onto our land to exploit it.'

In 2010, a logging company entered their land. Angela explains, 'We have a small stream that we use for water. We knew it was polluted when we started getting rashes, including the children. We used the water to wash clothes and dishes – it was not drinking water, thankfully. That is when I really got involved. The training I received taught me about our rights. We were asleep and did not understand what was happening. Now we have woken up. Now we are fighting against the logging company.'

In October 2017, Angela and her community set up a dignified encampment to protect the forest. They

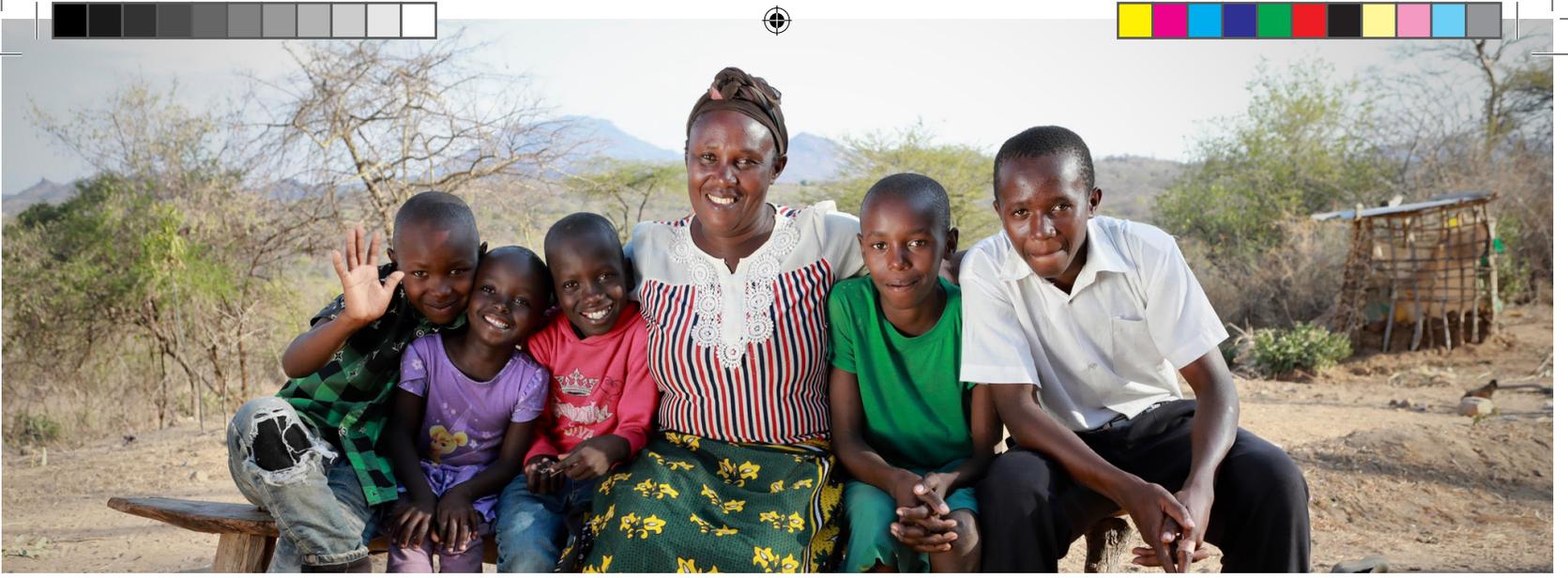


*Angela, Jocsan and baby  
Helen at their home in  
Honduras. Photo credit:  
Simon Burch*

stopped a number of trucks by placing rocks in the road, and the police came to intervene. The community were being peaceful. The police removed the rocks that were blocking the road but Angela and the protestors refused to move. The police shot twenty-five canisters of tear gas at them. There were children, elderly people and pregnant women in the crowd. Angela said, 'As a woman, a mother of five children, I have learned a lot, to fight for the defence of our territory, of our goods, because our life lies in this forest, it lies in the rivers, it is in all nature.'

## Meet Madris

Madris is a farmer and mother of six living in Kenya. When we met her, she was living on the edge, struggling to survive after two seasons of failed rains. As climate change exacerbates the situation for farmers in Kenya, Madris manages to support her children and persevere in the face of mounting daily challenges. Madris finds strength from her Anglican Christian faith. Madris and her children sit and eat dinner together every evening. They talk about their day and any problems they are having. Then, as a family, they pray about it.



| Erick, Joy Faith, Alex, Madris, Julius and Eugene. Photo credit: Gary Moore

Madris walks around the dusty brown patch of land beside her small home, where she lives with her six children. There are no crops visible, just a few scraggy bushes.

'I feel very bad when the rains don't come because all my plants depend on rainfall,' she tells us.

Madris receives support from Trócaire's local partner, Ishiara Parish. She has received chickens, and has been taught new methods of eco-friendly farming, how to harvest rainwater and how to prevent livestock diseases. She has been supported to join a savings and loans group, which enables her to receive additional income during the dry months, and to get support and help from other women. When climate change has made life so precarious, this support makes all the difference to her being able to feed her family, to pay school fees and to plan for the future.

To learn more about Madris and her family, please download our parish resource at: [trocaire.org/resources/parishes](https://trocaire.org/resources/parishes)

## Prayer for Rain

### Madris asks us to pray for rain.

Father Patrick Barasa OSA, Project Manager, Parish of Ishiara, wrote this prayer. We invite you to pray this prayer in your home, parish or community. This can be used as a communion reflection or while you are telling the stories of the two Lent families.

Let us pray.

God our Father, we thank you this time for the gift of life,

The gift of the world you gave to us.

We also thank you for the gift of faith

That keeps us going.

Lord, I pray for rain, especially in this Ishiara Parish and in all parts of Kenya that are dry.

You, Lord, are the provider of everything.

You are the one who brought us where we are and you have a good plan for us.

Lord, I pray you may look at the suffering of your people, especially those who lack rain,

Those who have nothing to eat because of the effects of drought and hunger that is caused by climate change.

I pray, Lord, that you may give us your graces and you may send rain to this area,

Therefore, your people will be able to live a good life.

I pray, Lord, you will give us courage to preserve our environment so that the environment may provide for us as we continue to preserve it.

May we also have the investment for future generations.

We make our prayer though Christ our Lord.

Amen.



Father Patrick Barasa.  
Photo credit: Gary Moore

## Called to action?

On reading these stories, we ask you to take action in your parish. We have many resources, such as homily notes and Stations of the Cross, available on our website: [trocaire.org/resources/parishes](https://trocaire.org/resources/parishes)



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# Trócaire

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