

The Church of Ireland Bishops' Appeal and Diocese of Cork, Cloyne and Ross have partnered with Christian Aid to help farmers in Burundi make the most of their maize.

Christian Aid is working with partner organisation, the Anglican Church of Burundi (Matana & Makamba Diocese) to increase the resilience of small scale maize farmers.

The support of the Diocese of Cork, Cloyne and Ross will provide farmers with the financial capital they require to invest in modern farming technologies.



Burundi

Christian Aid's first field offices in Burundi, Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo opened in 1995 to respond to the humanitarian situation that followed after the Rwandan genocide.

Agricultural livelihoods are still recovering from the consequences of the war, and have been affected in recent years by an increasingly variable climate, making food security a real challenge. Many Burundians live in rural areas and are dependent on subsistence farming for their survival and financial security.

Competition for farmland is high and rainfall is erratic, particularly in the north and east of the country. It is often impossible for farmers who have achieved food security to move beyond this and achieve financial security. They tend to be held back by a lack of access to entrepreneurship training and a conducive business environment.

Farmers need our support if they are to adapt to a changing climate and extract the greatest value from their harvest.

Challenges

- Rainfall is erratic and farmers are unsure of the best times to sow their seeds.
- Families have limited access to the financial capital they require to invest in adapting their farming methods.
- Farmers cannot currently meet market demands for maize.
- Brokers & middlemen continue to control and distort the market.

Building resilience

- Conducting entrepreneurship training for 600 farmers.
- Helping farmers to develop business plans.
Assist farmers in their acquisition of more land.
- Ensuring farmers have a sustainable and secure level of income.
- Improving the performance of maize grain milling plants.

The work of Christian Aid and the Anglican Church of Burundi's Dioceses of Makamba and Matana will develop the capacities of small holder farmers to increase their ability to respond to both market demands and unfair competition from larger producers in neighbouring countries such as Tanzania.

By joining cooperatives and increasing the capabilities of 22 producer groups, farmers will be part of business plans and able to work collectively to increase their ability to consistently supply large quantities of high quality grains. It is anticipated that farmers will be rewarded by their clients by obtaining fairer and improved prices for their produce.

By increasing the amount of income households have access to, families will be able to purchase food and educate their children.

For further information on this appeal please contact Andrew Coleman acoleman@christian-aid.org or Sarah Leeman sleeman@christian-aid.org