



General Introduction: These photos and stories of people in different countries illustrate Mennonite Central Committee's work to alleviate hunger. The world produces enough food for everyone, yet millions go hungry every day. MCC projects like Penny Power help hungry people have food for today, grow food for tomorrow and share food for all. Additional information is available at pennypower.org or mcc.org. Thank you for listening to the stories of those affected by hunger and learning what you can do to help.

(Storytellers are encouraged to adapt vocabulary and include/exclude details appropriate for the age group with which they are working.)

Food helps Tanzanians care for sick neighbors

Introduction of story to children: What happens when you are sick – does someone take care of you and make you special food? What do you do when someone else is sick? Do you take a gift and visit them? This story is about a church in Tanzania, a country in East Africa. Many people in this town have a sickness that makes them too sick to work. The sick people need help and friends to show them how much Jesus loves them.

Story: Many people in Tanzania have a disease called AIDS. People with AIDS often become too sick to work or grow food. Members of Arusha Mennonite Church in Tanzania want to show sick people that they care about them and love them. They have a home care committee that visits people who have AIDS and their families.

In Tanzanian culture, it is important to bring a gift when visiting. Many of the families the church group visits don't have enough to eat, so a gift of food is especially appreciated. In the past, church members often had no means to offer a gift when they visited.

"You go to visit a patient and you can cry yourself, seeing this sick person in pain. And if you go to the home empty-handed, you can feel so guilty that night that you might not sleep," says one committee member.

But now MCC is providing the home care committee with money to buy food such as rice, cooking oil, cornmeal and beans to take to families affected by AIDS.

One of those families includes a woman named Hamila Shabani. Her husband died of AIDS, and she now must support her six children and four grandchildren. She is thankful for both the food and the friendship that the church group offers.

"I'm very happy," Shabani says of the committee's visits. "I feel like my relatives have come to greet me."

Visiting people in such sad situations can be difficult work for the church members, and the support from MCC inspires them to continue. Food gifts help to build trust with patients who aren't part of the church. Church members can then tell the people they visit about their faith and pray with them. This is important, says a committee member, because in the midst of all the sadness and suffering caused by AIDS, "Only the church knows how to give people the message of hope."

Closing: Do you feel loved when someone does something kind for you or takes care of you when you're sick? You are doing something helpful for others when you give pennies to the Penny Power collection. The money you donate will help people who are sick and hungry in Tanzania, as well as many other places.



Tanzania