Sisters Stronger Together: Ideas for celebrating Harvest with communities around the world

Janet remembers the love, friendship and sense of community she felt when she joined the Makande Women's group, a local co-operative of female entrepreneurs:

‘I gave birth to my third child just after joining the group.’ says Janet, ‘Guess what? The group showered me and my baby with gifts, which was the first time I had experienced that since I got married. This was the turning around of my story.’

As well as a sense of solidarity between the members, the women in the group are transforming their lives through an innovative, sustainable baobab juice-making business. Supported by Christian Aid's partner, Eagles Relief and Development, the women received training, equipment and a low-cost loan to set up and grow their business. Now the women make up to 6000 bottles of baobab juice a month, and have increased their income tenfold. In the wider community 188 jobs have been created through the women's enterprises. As more women join the group, they learn valuable skills from other members, improving the lives of more women.

Find out more:

- Download fundraising resources, our special outdoor service, videos for prayer and reflection, and more: caid.org.uk/harvest
- Set up a JustGiving page for your church: justgiving.com/campaign/SistersStrongerTogether
- Plan your own unique fundraiser: caid.org.uk/diy
Baobab: Tree of hope

In the massive baobab trees near her home, Janet points out the fruit, which look like fuzzy green rugby balls, high up in the branches. It's this fruit that's made all the difference to Janet and her friends in the Makande Women's Group.

The baobab (Adansonia digitata) is remarkable – truly a tree of life. It's a source of water, food, vitamins, medicine, fibre, shelter and much more.

Individual trees can live for more than a thousand years. This gives them a special place at the heart of African mythology and culture; for example, there is a myth that the baobab was one of the first plants that God created.

The baobab fruits are a common sight in African markets. It has a light, citrusy taste which makes an excellent juice. The Makande Women's group work as a team to harvest the baobab, make the juice and sell it at market. By harnessing the incredible power of the baobab trees these resourceful women have transformed their lives and others for generations to come.

In September celebrate Remember a Charity Week with your church and find out how you can make a lasting difference too, visit caid.org.uk/remember-a-charity.
Try making baobab juice

Eddina, chair of the Makande Women’s group, shared their special recipe for making baobab juice, which starts with raw fruit and finishes with market-ready bottled juice.
In the UK, you can buy baobab powder (from health food shops) rather than fruit, so have a go at making this adapted recipe at your church for a unique fundraiser.

To make one litre of juice:
Mix two tablespoons of baobab powder with 10ml of water to form a paste. Top up the water to one litre, and add a pinch of salt. Stir to mix. Add sugar to taste and serve over ice.

It starts with a prayer and a boat

This Harvest we are joining with the Young Christian Climate Network (YCCN) who are on a pilgrimage across the UK to raise the message of climate justice.
Walkers are carrying a model boat to the UN climate talks – COP26. The boat represents our hope that decision makers will help us set sail towards a more just future. Your church can support the relay, wherever you are, by creating a prayer boat to add to our online fleet and send to COP26.
Together, we can make sure decision makers hear our prayers and take action on climate justice.
Get involved at caid.org.uk/rise
Prayer ideas

Use our special Harvest prayer

Creator God,
From the tree of the garden of Eden,
to the tree in the city in Revelation,
we thank you for our vision of creation
healed.
Help us to be your agents of
restoration.
tending to the beauty of the Earth,
and enabling your healing of the
nations.
Amen.

(adapted from the ACT Alliance)

Ideas for preaching

Stronger together
‘Two people are better than one,
because they have a good reward for
their toil. For if they fall, one will lift up
the other’
Ecclesiastes 4:9-10

The enduring strength of the baobab
tree
‘They are like trees planted by streams
of water, which yield their fruit in its
season, and their leaves do not wither.
In all that they do, they prosper’
Psalm 1:3

Explore our other prayer resources

Find ideas for an outdoor service, more
prayers, and video for reflection and
worship at caid.org.uk/harvest

As you pray for communities around
the world this Harvest, take a church
collection to help more of our sisters
and brother build fruitful new lives.
Order envelopes or organise a
JustGiving virtual collection at
caid.org.uk/harvest