

# Making Links ...More Than Just an Advent Calendar

A great way to connect your church to the work of Traidcraft is to encourage them to use this Making Links alternative advent calendar. Make celebrating advent about more than just treats and use our thought provoking calendar to support our work with poor producers and their communities across the world. Celebrate advent by using our daily reflections on poverty and Traidcraft's work from the 1st December to Christmas Eve, and raise funds to help us continue our life transforming work.

We would love for everyone in your church to use the Making Links Advent calendar to pray and reflect on poverty and Traidcraft's work. You can download more copies from [www.traidcraft.co.uk/paper](http://www.traidcraft.co.uk/paper).

When you have worked through the advent calendar please collect in all the donations and write a cheque for the amount received to 'Traidcraft Exchange' and send to: **Traidcraft, Kingsway, Gateshead, Tyne & Wear, NE11 0NE**

**1** 1st December

Traidcraft has been working in **Bangladesh** for over 30 years. Bangladesh is one of the world's poorest nations, 50% of the population live below the poverty line. The country is very susceptible to the effects of climate change, one of the many factors keeping people poor.



**2** 2nd December

Bangladesh is a low lying country and suffers from severe flooding every year. 46% of the population live in low lying areas and are at risk of displacement. *Give 20p if you have never had to leave your home because of flooding.*



**3** 3rd December

Just four people in every 100 in Bangladesh have access to the internet. In the UK this figure is 85 in 100. *Give 10p for every computer in your house.*



**4** 4th December

Between 2006 and 2010 only 27% of women in Bangladesh gave birth under the care of a skilled birth attendant. *Give 50p if a medical professional was present when you were born.*



**5** 5th December

Begum Madina Akkter was living hand to mouth and unable to send her children to school. With the help of Traidcraft, she now has 400 ducks, savings and is an elected member of the local government. And her children now go to school. *Give 5p for every year for free schooling that you completed.*



**6** 6th December

Traidcraft trains vegetable farmers in activities like cultivation, packaging and how to get the best price for their produce. This training means an increase in yield and more money for poor farmers. *Give 10p for every one of your five a day you manage to eat today.*



**7** 7th December

Traidcraft helps poor farmers to set up savings accounts for themselves and their communities. As well as helping families to save for the future, loans can also be given to members of the community to pay for school fees or to set up a small business. *Give £1 if you have, or have ever had, a bank account.*

**8** 8th December

Traidcraft runs Meet the People tours - an opportunity for people in the UK to visit some of the organisations and people we work with. Our Bangladesh tour visits Jute Works who provide employment to people affected by conflict. *Give 5p for every overseas holiday you have been on in the past 5 years.*



**9** 9th December

**Kenya** is East Africa's most developed country, but has the greatest concentration of poor in the region. Kenya is suffering the effects of climate change, including erratic rainfall patterns. This makes life for small scale farmers very difficult, as they can no longer rely on the rains to water their crop.



**10** 10th December

Only 31% of the population of Kenya have access to improved sanitation facilities. This figure is worse in urban slums and rural areas. *Give 10p every time you use a flushing toilet today.*



**11** 11th December

An estimated 1.5 million Kenyans are living with HIV/AIDS. In the UK this figure is 85,000. Approximately half of all Kenyan adults who need treatment for HIV are receiving it. *Give 30p if you have used the services of the NHS in the past year.*

**12** 12th December

The average distance that a Kenyan walks to fetch water is 6km. This water is usually of poor quality and unsafe to drink. Globally, 1.1 billion people do not have access to safe drinking water. *Give 10p for every glass of clean water, tea or coffee that you drink today.*



**13** 13<sup>th</sup> December

Many tea farmers in Kenya struggle to earn a decent living, as their plots are small and cultivation difficult. Traidcraft is helping farmers to supplement their incomes by diversifying into bee keeping and growing passion fruit.

*Give 10p for every different kind of fruit in your home*



**14** 14<sup>th</sup> December

We drink 160 billion tonnes of tea in the UK every year. Kenya is the world's third largest producer of tea. Over 349 thousand tonnes of the world's tea comes from Kenya.

*Give 20p for every cup of tea you drink today*

*If you don't already, why not switch to drinking Traidcraft tea and coffee?*



**15** 15<sup>th</sup> December

The Miwani Milk Collection Centre acts as a fair buyer for hundreds of small scale Kenyan dairy farmers. Keeping milk fresh is a problem as the centre has no electricity. Electricity could mean expansion and could give farmers a better deal for their milk.

*Give 20p if you have a fridge in your home.*



**16** 16<sup>th</sup> December

India is one of the world's fastest growing economies, however many millions of the country's inhabitants still live in extreme poverty. Traidcraft works with producers, supporting them to diversify, expand and pay their workers a fairer wage.



**17** 17<sup>th</sup> December

In India 12% - 13% of children aged 5 - 14 are involved in child labour. This figure runs to millions of children - the total number of children under 14 in India exceeds the entire population of the United States.

*Give 10p for every child in your family who is at school.*

**18** 18<sup>th</sup> December

In India 69 out of every 1000 children don't live to see their fifth birthday.

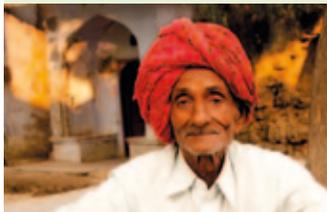
*Give 10p for every child in your church aged five and under.*



**19** 19<sup>th</sup> December

The average life expectancy in India is just 67 years. In the UK the average life expectancy is over 80 years.

*Give 20p for everyone over the age of 67 in your family*



**20** 20<sup>th</sup> December

For many farmers in Kutch, Western India, cotton is their only source of income, but does not guarantee an income throughout the year. Traidcraft has helped cotton farmers in this region to diversify into producing crops like sesame, gram and castor which will guarantee a year-round income to farmers.

*Give 20p for every fairly traded fabric item in your home, including clothing.*

**21** 21<sup>st</sup> December

Concern for the environment in India is becoming more prevalent, particularly because of the effects of the material dyeing industry on water supply. Traidcraft is helping introduce new techniques and equipment, like processing plants in factories to help keep water clean for people to drink.

*Give 20p if you have a river running through your city, town or village.*

**22** 22<sup>nd</sup> December

Traidcraft supports producers all over the world to provide them with a fairer wage and better working conditions.

*Give £1 if your place of work provides you with a decent wage, good working conditions and sick pay.*



**23** 23<sup>rd</sup> December

Bring your money raised to church and make your paper chain to symbolise the links you have with Traidcraft producers all over the world.



**24** CHRISTMAS EVE

Find a quiet space today, perhaps whilst brushing your teeth or wrapping last minute presents, to think of what this special night means for the world.



Activity for last Sunday of Advent (in church): Which Making Links fact has struck you most? What is your prayer for Traidcraft and the people they work with? Write your thoughts and prayers on the back of your paper link before adding it to the paper chain. Incorporate some of these prayers and thoughts into the intercessions part of your service.

\*The amounts provided here are just suggestions, please give what you can.

Photos: GMB Akash, Feroz Ahmed, Richard Else, Charles Kamau, Rajendra Shaw.