



Give Thanks

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Photos: Ralph Hodgson/Toilet Tinning.



Giving thanks for a loo

'The Lord is my strength and shield. I trust him with all my heart. He helps me, and my heart is filled with joy. I burst out in songs of thanksgiving.'

Psalm 28:7 (New Living Translation)

For all too many women, the lack of a proper loo means they are forced to relieve themselves in the open and risk being attacked. Many have to wait till dark to venture out.

Today, 526 million women will have no choice but to go to the toilet out in the open.

By the end of the year, women and girls will have spent 97 billion hours finding a place to go.

Toilets mean everything. They bring safety and dignity. They mean women are no longer living in fear and shame.

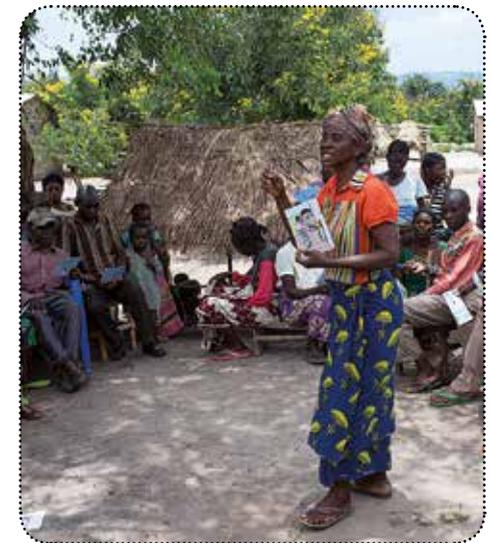
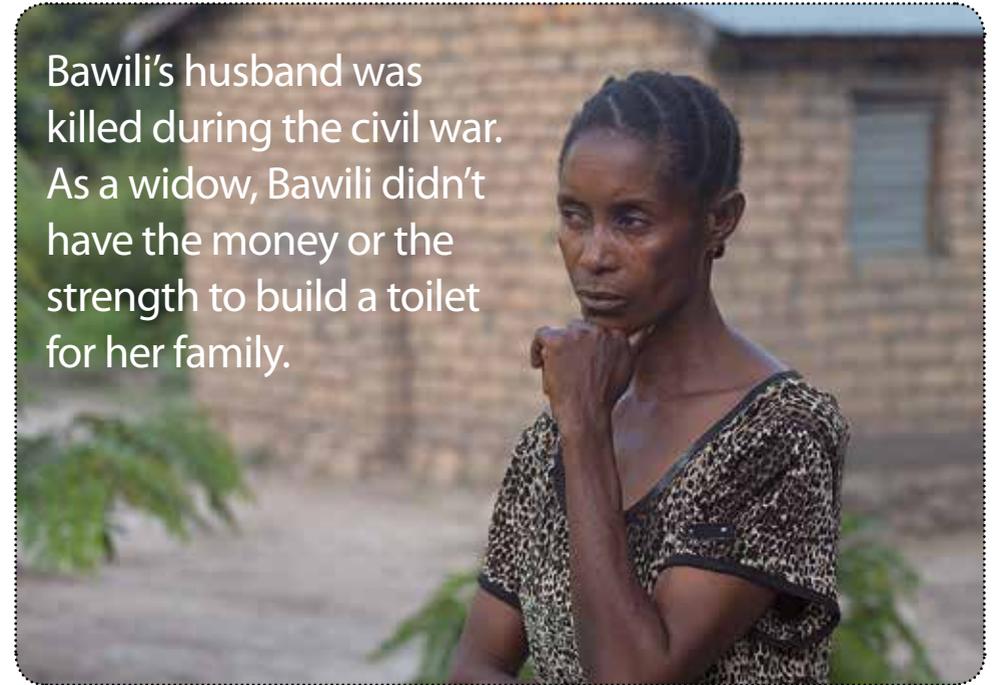
Give Thanks invites your church to share in a story of courage, gratitude and toilets – and celebrate how God provides for our every need and encourages us to share our blessings with others.

526,000,000 women go to the toilet in the open

Bawili's husband was killed during the civil war. As a widow, Bawili didn't have the money or the strength to build a toilet for her family.

Everything changed when a Tearfund-led project, supported by Toilet Twinning, encouraged the community to come together to form a Community Health Club. Bawili and her neighbours learnt about sanitation – but, more importantly, they learnt how to work together. When the club helped Bawili build a toilet, they demonstrated that love overcomes.

Harvest is a good time to Give Thanks – or what about a date near **World Toilet Day** (Saturday November 19)? Could your church hold a Give Thanks harvest service or a fundraising 'do for a loo'?



Bawili's community health club learning about sanitation

Reasons to be grateful

Encourage your congregation to think about their attitude to gratitude using these sermon notes.

'The best thing about having our own toilet is the privacy. We know now that we can't be seen by boys or men as we go to the toilet.' Zaina



What lens do we look at life through? Greed or gratitude, fear or God's favour? God calls us to be grateful – in all circumstances – because it throws our focus away from ourselves and our circumstances and fixes our vision on him.

- When we approach God with gratitude, we draw close to him (Psalm 100:4).
- Gratitude opens our eyes to see that he loves us and gave his life for us (John 3:16; 1 Chronicles 16:34).
- When we look at the world through eyes of gratitude, we take our eyes off our problems and fix them onto God: the author and finisher of our faith (1 Thessalonians 5:18).
- He blesses us to be a blessing to others: all we do for others is out of gratitude for what he has done for us (Colossians 3:17).

How about playing the community's song about toilets on YouTube (search for Toilet Twinning community song). It's a joyous song written by people who have suffered hugely. How would we live if we were grateful for everything we had, starting with our loos? How would we look at other people if we knew just how much God loves us?

- We've created a simple PowerPoint on this theme: download it from the Give Thanks page on our website:

toilettwinning.org/resources



Pulling in the same direction

Bawili says that love builds a village. She's experienced this for herself. In her film (*Toilets: Safety for Women*), you'll see how her friends pulled together to build her a loo.

Could you and your church pull together this harvest and help provide toilets for more women like Bawili?

How about a barn dance, disco or ceilidh this harvest, inspired by Bawili's community toilet song? Or a harvest supper with a toilet twist?

On our website – you'll find:

- Give Thanks table mats for a harvest supper
- Ideas for toilet-themed crafts and games

You can call us to order:

- Toilet Twinning balloons
- Toilet Twinning bunting
- more promotional leaflets
- poo stickers (kids love them, honest!)

Email: info@toilettwinning.org

Call: 0300 321 3217

CALLING ALL YOUTH GROUPS!

Could you take on our **Wot no loo** challenge? Encourage your youth group to give up their stuff and help children who lack basic things like loos. The idea is for your young people to go without their bed, their creature comforts – even their screens – and get sponsorship to twin a school block in Pakistan. toilettwinning.org/fun-stuff/wot-no-loo



Why toilets matter

"My daughter was attacked because we didn't have a toilet. Having a loo is a big relief for the whole family." Bawili, DRC

The civil war in the Democratic Republic of Congo (1997–2003) claimed up to 6 million lives, including Bawili's husband. Bawili was pregnant at the time. Conflict still flares in the east of the country where Bawili lives.

The DRC remains one of the poorest countries on earth. Only 46% of the population has access to clean water; less than 20% have a proper toilet.

One in five children in the DRC do not reach their first birthday. Outbreaks of measles, cholera and malaria are common and about 2 million children are acutely malnourished.

In South Kivu province, eastern DRC, many of the people are returnees, including Bawili: people who fled

to Tanzania during the conflict and who later returned to DRC villages without clean water or sanitation.

Toilet Twinning is part of Tearfund, which is giving communities tools and training so they can build toilets with materials available locally. Tearfund have also installed boreholes.

With support from Toilet Twinning, villages like Bawili's have set up health clubs: they meet every week to encourage one another to build latrines, use clean drinking water, wash hands and keep cooking utensils clean. Their ultimate goal is for everyone in the village to have a latrine. Bawili's club is called Na Sohakelwa, which means 'I'm happy'.