



Photo: Peter Caton/Tearfund

Prayer station

Praying for people affected by conflict

Millions of people across the world have been forced to flee their homes due to persecution, conflict, violence and human rights violations. Countless others remain in conflict zones, living with the threat of violence every day.

The mid-year report from the UN refugee agency, UNHCR, released in November 2025 showed there were 117.3 million forcibly displaced people as of June 2025.

Imagine a line of 1.5 million double-decker buses: that is what it would take to provide a single seat for every person currently displaced worldwide. The line would stretch almost 10,000 miles – equivalent to the flight path from London to Sydney.

All conflict is a result of our broken relationships with God and with others. But God's plan – through Jesus, the Prince of Peace – is to restore these relationships and bring true peace. And he asks us, as his followers, to love our neighbours (both near and far), and to 'seek peace and pursue it' (Psalm 34:14).

One of the ways we can do this is to pray.

Meet Kalonda: mother, farmer and champion for peace in the DRC.

Kalonda lives in Nyunzu Territory, Tanganyika Province, in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). She has lived through years of conflict between her own people, the Twa, and their neighbours, the Bantu people.

The conflict between the two groups started some years ago, fuelled by issues such as land ownership disagreements and discrimination, which led to violence and counter-violence.

It has cost lives, destroyed homes and livelihoods, and kept children out of school – pushing people further into poverty and limiting their hopes of finding a way out.

But now things are changing.

The long-standing conflict has been the focus of a series of peacebuilding activities initiated by Tearfund and run with local partners.

📷 Photo: Elijah Muweza/ Tearfund



Peace champions and renewed minds

Kalonda is now part of a village peace committee. She is one of 50 ‘peace champions’ trained by Tearfund as part of a peacebuilding project called Artisanas de Paix (‘Peacemakers’ in English).

The group, made up of 23 Twas and 27 Bantus, includes 25 women. They facilitate conversations within their community on how to live together peacefully and resolve conflicts. Having 25 women in the group is also helping to address some difficult gender issues and giving women a voice where they have struggled to be heard or taken seriously before.

The group has reached more than 8,000 people, helping the Twa and Bantu communities build bridges and start to work together, leading to fewer human rights issues and a more peaceful coexistence.

Kalonda says, ‘We are seeing a change in attitudes and behaviour that differs from what we experienced in the past. We have been living in difficult and unbearable conditions in terms of food security, and many of us have remained living in poverty and stripped of the possessions that we need to survive because of the conflict.’

Within the project, the community established land committees, developed a local land charter and mapped land rights. These steps helped resolve underlying land disputes clearly and practically.

Kalonda says, ‘We are now embracing a new reality of peace in our daily lives and have turned the page on everything that plunged us into the depths of hatred. Through what Tearfund has done, we are now determined to move forward, and this second and new chapter reflects the two communities living together in harmony, expressing lasting peace in our communities, our families and elsewhere.’

Local church, lasting change

To carry out peacebuilding work like this, Tearfund often collaborates with local partners who have a vital, close-up understanding of the context. We also believe that churches and faith leaders play a crucial role in peacebuilding due to their trusted position in communities, so they too are involved in dialogues and spreading messages of peace.

While conflicts still exist, the Artisanas de Paix project has sown seeds of transformation which Kalonda hopes and believes will lead to long-lasting peace.

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 **‘Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.’**

Matthew 5:9

Tearfund’s work focuses on restoring relationships. It identifies and seeks to understand the factors that cause conflict between people and then looks for ways to address them. This means building bridges between diverse groups and helping them to identify shared challenges and work together to solve problems.

Creative prayer idea

**You will need paper and a pen/pencil.*

- Choose a conflict or situation in the world that God has laid on your heart.
- Draw a series of figures on a piece of paper.
- Label each one as a group that is involved in conflict, affected by conflict or working to bring peace eg: decision-makers and leaders, people who have had to flee, vulnerable groups, host communities, Tearfund’s local partners and staff.
- As you look at each figure, ask God to guide your prayers and pray for what you feel they need. Ask God to bring true peace in this situation.