

One Voice

Your weekly
prayer resource

tearfund

The house of hope rescuing girls in Chad

Warning: contains mentions of sexual and gender-based-violence that some readers may find upsetting.

In Chad, female genital mutilation and cutting (FGM/C) is rife, despite it being illegal. But thanks to our local church partner, girls are becoming aware of their rights and have a place to turn to. They have a house of hope.

Beth Elphia means 'House of Hope'. It is run by our local church partner, SERBAD, and is home to more than 120 girls who have escaped FGM/C.

The church running it provides the girls with shelter and food, as well as paying for their education. But as more and more girls come in, it has become challenging to provide for all their needs. When visiting local villages to raise awareness about the issue, the church's leaders also often have to ask for donations.

'Some [girls] walked hundreds of kilometres on foot to take refuge in the centre,' shares one of the church's leaders. 'The challenge is great but with the help of the Lord, we will meet it.'

A desperate escape

Amira* tried fleeing to Beth Elphia but her parents brought her back to be cut. 'They in turn stripped me completely and threw me among other naked girls to wait for our turn,' Amira tells us.

Amira found the courage to escape, slipping away as other girls were cut. She ran for more than six miles to the house of the pastor who runs Beth Elphia. It was 2am when she arrived. 'When he opened the door the pastor was shocked... He called his wife who gave me her clothes,' she shares.

Uncertain futures

While some mothers flee to the centre with their daughters, feeling powerless to stop the cutting, other parents reject their children once they end up at Beth Elphia. 'My daddy disowned me and doesn't want to see me at their house anymore,' shares Amira.

Zahra* fled to Beth Elphia with her sister. She is terrified that her parents will force her to come back. 'Our parents are alcoholics and if we were taken home, they will abuse us a lot and cut us afterwards,' she says.

Please pray for these girls, for the Beth Elphia centre, and for an end to FGM/C.

Pray with us

Zahra shared this prayer request with us: 'pray a lot for us because we are always worried... Do not forget us in your prayers until total victory. Thank you and God bless you.'

**Names changed to protect identities*

*Thursday 25 November begins the 16 Days of Activism – a global campaign to raise awareness of different forms of male violence against women. We have a free resource for you to use individually, in small groups or with your church. It has stories, Bible studies and prayers to help you pray for an end to violence against women. **You can download it by visiting www.tearfund.org/OV16days***

A note from...

'No girl should be subjected to violence including FGM/C. Please continue to pray with us and our partners as we tirelessly work to create a world in which women and girls no longer have to fear violence.'

Sabine Nkusi, Head of Tearfund's sexual and gender-based violence team

Pray for the world



Praise God: in Zambia, our local partner Jesus Christ Ministries has secured extra funding from the European Union. This will support their work taking children out of manual labour and getting them back into education. Thank God for this wonderful breakthrough, and pray that this funding will bear fruit for years to come.



Conflict continues in the Central African Republic; the humanitarian crisis is affecting more people. It is estimated that in 2022, more than 3 million people will need support for essentials such as clean water, food and hygiene. Pray for an end to the violence; and pray for the work Tearfund is doing to reach people in need.



Pray for the people of Yemen, who continue to bear the brunt of the ongoing conflict. More and more people are being forced from their homes. Along with outbreaks of diseases such as cholera and coronavirus, the conflict continues to keep millions of people trapped in extreme poverty. Pray that aid will be able to reach the most vulnerable in Yemen.

A new dawn after COP26?

The climate crisis can feel like an overwhelming issue. One where it can be difficult to imagine that we can make a difference. Yet as we look back at COP26, we can see that – while it fell short of delivering all that we need – a difference *has* been made. The prayers and actions of ordinary people around the world have borne fruit.

No matter the challenge ahead of us – we take heart from our belief in the God of justice. Alok Sharma, who led the talks, called them our ‘last, best hope’. Yet, as Christians, we know that this is not true. Hope is alive in Christ.

Reasons for praise

A key priority going into COP26 was for governments to take action that would limit global heating to 1.5°C. If the promises made during the conference are kept, then heating could be kept to below 2°C. While this is not enough, it is progress – previously, we were on track for a disastrous rise of closer to 3°C.

Governments have been asked to make stronger plans to limit global heating further ahead of next year’s climate talks. Every fraction of a degree can make the difference between life and death for people living in poverty.

Furthermore, almost 40 nations and institutions have committed to end overseas public finance for coal, oil and gas by the end of 2022. This could shift at least \$24 billion a year out of fossil fuels and into clean energy. This is a welcome signal that polluting, creation-harming fossil fuels are being consigned to the history books.

Again, there is far more to be done. But we believe – and we will keep believing – that if we continue to put pressure on governments to take action then it can, and will, be done.

A growing movement

One of the most heartening things about COP26 and the lead up to it was to see the growing movement of Christians who are now praying, speaking up and taking action on the climate crisis. If we continue to raise our voices together, then the door of possibility will always be open.

‘Climate justice won’t be achieved by a single person, decision or conference,’ says Dr Ruth Valerio, Tearfund’s Director of Global Advocacy and Influencing. ‘But millions of us will continue to play our part and demand that world leaders play theirs.

‘We will continue to pray, to act, to hold leaders to account and to call for justice. And we will continue to walk by faith and keep our eyes fixed on God who can do immeasurably more than we ask or imagine.’

We won’t give up. Hope is not a feeling, it is a decision – a decision we can continue to make each day. We will continue to be God’s hands and feet as we strive to protect the world’s most vulnerable communities from the climate crisis. Please join us in prayer.

Pray with us

God of justice,

We pray that the progress made at COP26 will be a stepping stone to genuine change: that following these talks governments will put words into action, and the policies will be put in place that will avert disaster.

Help us continue to hold on to hope – to never give up but keep praying, speaking out and taking action.

And we lift up people around the world whose lives today are being turned upside down by the climate crisis. May the world hear their cries, and do something about it.

In Jesus' name, amen.

Persisting in prayer for Myanmar

The crisis in Myanmar continues to grow. Violent internal conflict in the country has been escalating, forcing tens of thousands of people from their homes. This is in addition to the hundreds of thousands of people who have already been displaced in the last few years.

The turmoil is creating a desperate humanitarian situation. More than 3 million people are in need of life-saving aid. The prayers of God's people are urgently needed. Our call is to 'be persistent in prayer' (Colossians 4:2, Good News Translation) – here, we will be using scripture to guide us as we lift up the people of Myanmar.

If you can, read the Bible verses out loud and let God's word guide you as you pray.

Praying for peace

'He will judge between the nations and will settle disputes for many peoples. They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore.' (Isaiah 2:4)

'No longer will violence be heard in your land, nor ruin or destruction within your borders, but you will call your walls Salvation and your gates Praise.' (Isaiah 60:18)

Pray that the violence will immediately end; and pray for a sustainable political solution that will lead to lasting peace.

Praying for people in poverty

'He raises the poor from the dust and lifts the needy from the ash heap; he seats them with princes and makes them inherit a throne of honour. For the foundations of the earth are the Lord's; on them he has set the world.' (1 Samuel 2:8)

'My whole being will exclaim, "Who is like you, Lord? You rescue the poor from those too strong for them, the poor and needy from those who rob them."' (Psalm 35:10)

Pray that essential aid will reach people in need; pray that resources will flow to humanitarian organisations; and pray for the current crisis to end, so that people will have the opportunity to lift themselves out of poverty.

Praying for refugees

'The foreigner residing among you must be treated as your native-born. Love them as yourself, for you were foreigners in Egypt. I am the Lord your God.' (Leviticus 19:34)

'He defends the cause of the fatherless and the widow, and loves the foreigner residing among you, giving them food and clothing.' (Deuteronomy 10:18)

'Then the King will say to those on his right, "Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was ill and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.'" (Matthew 25:34-36)

Hundreds of thousands of Rohingya people remain stuck in refugee camps in Bangladesh. Pray for provision – for food, clean water, shelter and clothing; pray for protection from flooding and landslides, which are huge risks in the camps; and pray for political solutions that will allow the Rohingya people to return home.

Thank you for persisting with us in prayer.