

# One Voice

Your weekly  
prayer resource

tearfund

## When disaster hits home

**People in poverty are often living in areas prone to flooding, landslides and cyclones, and in houses that cannot withstand these shocks. And all through no fault of their own – they cannot afford to live anywhere safer.**

When Hurricane Iota struck Colombia, one of the hardest hit places was Cartagena – home to thousands of Venezuelan refugees. They're stuck in settlements where the soil is sandy and unstable and their houses are generally made of wood and plastic.

When the rains and winds hit, their homes didn't stand a chance.

### Catastrophe

As the water got into people's homes, walls were cracking, making many homes unsafe to live in. The strong winds upturned trees, causing even more damage.

'The hurricane came and the water began sipping into the house through all the walls,' shares Hernan, who lives with his wife and three children in a house with three other families.

'In the street where we lived, the sewage ran freely, so it was very difficult to walk through all the waste and this water entered the houses.

'It was very difficult during that time.'

### A helping hand

Families lost so much due to the floods and were sleeping on cardboard. As a result, the number of children suffering from respiratory illnesses and diarrhoea increased. Through our local partner, Tearfund was able to provide immediate relief, including mattresses – reducing the number of children at risk from these sometimes fatal illnesses.

We also continue to work with local churches to help refugees recover from the trauma of the floods and to help them to rebuild. We are training church leaders to advocate on behalf of refugees to improve their living conditions.

'The best thing they [Tearfund partner] gave us today was attention. It was a hug and it made us feel that there is someone who is willing to give us a helping hand in the midst of starting from scratch,' concludes Hernan.

## Pray with us

Draw or paint a house and write your prayers for people living in poverty – like Hernan – inside of it. This can be anything from joy and laughter to safety from flooding and disease.

Afterwards, stick it somewhere where you will see it often – in your Bible or on your fridge – as a reminder to pray for people who do not have a safe place to call home.

## A note from...

‘Home. So many of us have rediscovered the importance of it over the last 18 months – how having a safe place to live affects our mental and physical wellbeing. For people around the world, including in the UK, a safe home is a luxury many cannot afford. As I reflect upon how much of a blessing my own home is, I’m going to keep reminding myself to pray for those for whom it is a burden.’

**Gideon Heugh, Brand and Communications Team**

## Pray for the world



In Myanmar, the military forces who seized power in February’s coup continue to seek out and eliminate resistance along the country’s borders. Many families are fleeing into India and other neighbouring countries to avoid violence. Pray for people’s safety in these challenging times. Pray for democracy to prevail and for peace.



Kerala, a state on the Indian coast, has been severely affected by flooding – even though the main monsoon season has ended. The government is responding and Tearfund is monitoring the situation. Kerala still has a high number of coronavirus cases, making the flood response difficult. Pray for the rains to stop, for help to reach those in need, and that the virus will not spread further.



The increase in violence in Tillabéri, a region in the west of Niger that borders Burkina Faso, has caused widespread hunger. Thousands of people have abandoned their crops or fled their homes. Pray for provision for those who are facing hunger. And join us in continuing to pray for peace in Niger.

# Nowhere to run: the devastating effects of the climate crisis on Africa

**People living in poverty have done the least to cause the climate crisis, yet they are the ones paying the highest price. They can't wait any longer for action to be taken. Here, we share how the climate crisis is affecting many people across Africa, and how you can pray for them and the upcoming UN Climate Conference, COP26, which will be hosted in Glasgow.**

Climate change has affected weather patterns, leading to long periods of drought in some places and extreme floods in others. Both can ruin harvests. In Zimbabwe, Burkina Faso, and Niger, where the majority of people rely on growing crops for both food and income, this is having a devastating impact.

More people are going hungry, and cases of malnutrition are rising. Many parents can no longer afford to send their children to school.

'If they can't go to school we will have a generation of children who can't read or write,' says Idzai Murimba, who leads Tearfund's work in Zimbabwe. 'We need global efforts to address climate change.'

## Women and girls at risk

The impact of the climate crisis is also putting women and girls at increased risk of abuse.

'The number of child marriages increases in years of drought,' says Idzai. 'When families are desperate, they can get some money for the daughter, and it's one less person to feed.'

'We also see an increase in violence against women, especially domestic abuse, as the stress of the situation puts pressure on relationships.'

## Desperation

In Burkina Faso, more than 1 million people have left their communities because the land has become unfarmable. They are desperate to find somewhere to resettle, but it's getting even harder to find a suitable place to live.

'People don't know where to run to,' says Gaston Slanwa, who oversees Tearfund's work in Burkina Faso and Niger. In both of these countries, lack of access to food has become a major problem.

Meanwhile, in Mozambique, the climate crisis has led to an increase in deadly cyclones and storms, along with droughts and flooding.

'Climate change is creating a lot of poverty in Mozambique,' says Edgar Jone, who oversees Tearfund's work there 'Sometimes people lose everything. The cyclones destroy everything and we have to start from zero.'

## What can we do?

But Edgar still believes that there is hope, and that Christians and churches have a key role to play in taking action to tackle the climate crisis.

‘If we take action to care for creation, we can save a lot of lives’ he says. ‘Please pray for our people, for God’s protection over their lives.’

At COP26, governments from around the world will come together to make plans for tackling the climate crisis. We pray this will include bold new commitments and action to protect the environment and support people most affected by this crisis.

The decisions made will have consequences for everyone, especially the world’s most vulnerable communities. Please join us in praying at this crucial time.

## Pray with us

Across Africa, the climate crisis has disrupted people’s everyday lives. Over the next few days, take some time to pray for the COP26 conference while doing everyday household tasks. Allow the Holy Spirit to disrupt your routines as we pray for people whose whole lives are being turned upside down.

When cooking or preparing a meal...

Pray for those who can no longer grow crops or feed their families. Ask that world leaders will choose people and the planet over profits.

When cleaning your home or gardening...

Lift up those who have had to leave their homes due to the effects of the climate crisis. Pray that world leaders will choose to support the poorest people and protect them and God’s creation from further harm.

## South Sudan underwater amid relentless rains

**The rains in South Sudan have been relentless. Hundreds of thousands of people have now been affected by the flooding – a crisis that began last year, but hasn’t stopped. Tearfund has been adapting its support to reach those in need. Find out more about what’s happening and how you can pray.**

Maketh, a father-of-five, relied on farming to provide for his family. They had cows, goats, chickens, as well as crops sown into the ground, ready to harvest. But then, the rains came.

As the floods got worse, chances for cultivation became narrower each day. Now, the area has become totally submerged in water. ‘I lost everything. My home, my farm and harvests, even my livestock,’ says Maketh.

Maketh was forced to evacuate his family from the area and sought refuge on higher ground. But he had nothing now to provide for his family. Like many others in the area, he was facing hunger.

‘I moved my family to Bor, I remained here at Pakeny Island to be able to do something to support them. My family is starving,’ he shares.

### Farmer to fisherman

Tearfund, in partnership with the UN Food and Agriculture Organization, has been helping families like Maketh get back on their feet. We have been supporting them with fishing kits as an alternative way they can provide for their family.

‘With the fishing materials I received from Tearfund, I am now able to catch enough fish for food for my family and even for selling,’ explains Maketh. ‘With the money I get, I then buy other basic things my family needs like salt, soap, medicine, and many other types of food.’

### Getting around

It is still a challenge for people to get around – many of the roads in Jonglei state, where Maketh lives, are still underwater or impossible to use. Where cars and bikes used to go, boats are now essential.

For Maketh to reach the market to sell his fish, he borrows a canoe from his friends.

Our Tearfund staff team has also made significant changes to the way it reaches people in need by investing in boats.

### God’s provision

‘We thank God for the provision of these boats that has enabled us to reach places that have been cut off by the floods,’ shares Anthony Rama, who leads Tearfund’s work in South Sudan. ‘It is often in these places where people have been the hardest hit.

‘Many people just want the flood waters to recede so they can go back home and rebuild what they’ve lost, but we don’t know when this will be. Or if the land will be suitable again for building or farming on. There’s a lot of uncertainty. Please keep the people of South Sudan in your prayers.’

### Pray with us

When our team asked Maketh how we could pray for him and the people of South Sudan, he shared this with us:

‘May the Almighty God increase Tearfund and it’s partner’s strength to alleviate poverty amongst the vulnerable communities around the world. Join us in prayers for the flooding to recede for normal living.’

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