

One Voice

Your weekly
prayer resource

tearfund

We won't give up on Afghanistan

This week, the withdrawal of international military forces from Afghanistan came to an end. It is uncertain what the future holds for the country. Our local partners have been providing life-saving support to people in need. These are the stories of some of the families they were able to support before the recent political change in Afghanistan.

Living in a cave

Khan* was a farmer. He led a good life with his family, eating fresh vegetables from his field and drinking milk from his livestock.

But then his village was attacked, and they were forced to leave. His family couldn't find a proper place to live, and so had to build a simple shelter using curtains. Eventually they found a cave-like building and lived there. With the worst drought in decades gripping the county, food is scarce, and so his children had to beg in the market.

The relief package he received from our partners changed that. 'This is beyond my expectations,' he said. 'Thank you for your concern, and for the help you've provided.'

The resilience of children

'Many times we have been displaced by the violence,' shared Zarina*. '[This time] the conflict was very intense and so we had to leave our village. I have five children and my husband has a disability.'

Unable to afford to rent a house, Zarina's family lived in a tent. 'We never have enough food and our health is also affected.'

Yet Zarina's children have shown remarkable resilience. They made a small amount of money selling ice cream out of a water cooler. It's not enough to provide for the family's needs, but our local partner was able to help.

'When I got a call to receive the relief kits, I was very happy,' Zarina told us. 'I am thankful to your organisation for providing us such a good package of food and hygiene kits. Your help is timely.'

Please join us in praying for Afghanistan.

Pray with us

- Lift up the people of Afghanistan – including those who have fled – and pray for their safety and wellbeing. Ask God to provide for all their practical needs, including shelter, clean water, food and opportunities to earn an income.
- Pray for an end to the drought that is leading to chronic food shortages in Afghanistan.
- Cry out to God for peace in Afghanistan and that it will be safe for people to one day return home.

*Names changed to protect identities

Learn more about how our partners in Afghanistan are responding at www.tearfund.org/OVAfghanistan

A note from...

‘Thank you so much for your faithful prayers for the people of Afghanistan and for our local partners in these challenging times. It’s uncertain what the future holds, but we will continue to serve people wherever the need is greatest. We will not give up on the people of Afghanistan.’

Corine Verdoold, Country Director for Afghanistan

Pray for the world



In southern Haiti, Tearfund continues to help communities who have been affected by the recent deadly earthquake. Our teams are distributing food and cash grants, so people can buy what they need. We are working with churches to help reach even more people with shelter and to plan for people’s long term needs. Pray for protection and provision for Haitians as they recover from this disaster.



This weekend (5 September) marks Climate Sunday in the UK, where churches will be hosting services about God’s call to care for creation. Thank God for churches who will be taking part. Pray that even more churches will take up the call to care for creation through prayer and action to help protect people living in poverty, which the climate crisis is affecting most.



Keep praying for peace in the Sahel region of West Africa; especially in Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger and Chad. Violence is rising due to shortages of resources, including food, caused in part by the climate crisis. Attacks from armed groups continue to put people we serve at risk, as well as our local partners and staff. Pray for their safety, and for peace to reign.

A life's work destroyed: crisis in Mozambique

Trigger warning: this article contains mentions of violence that some readers may find upsetting.

Cabo Delgado, Mozambique's most northern region, is a dangerous place to be. Armed groups have led a campaign of violence that includes torching villages, beheading people – including children – and kidnapping. More than 3,000 people have been killed and 800,000 people have been forced to flee their homes – many escaping with nothing but the clothes on their backs. Here is an update on the crisis and how you can pray.

Since 2017, al-Shabaab, an armed group that has ties to the Islamic State, has been carrying out attacks in Cabo Delgado. At the end of last year, however, the violence escalated dramatically, leading to hundreds of thousands of people fleeing.

Al-Shabaab captured the strategic port town of Palma. This led to a siege in which many were killed or injured. Some fled across the border to Tanzania, but many are now living in temporary camps in Mozambique, where the facilities are basic and resources are stretched.

A life's work destroyed

'I was okay as I had spent the greater part of my life sowing fields so that I would have something in my old age, and now, this,' shares 65-year-old Misheck*, who fled the violence with his family. As well as losing his home, Misheck lost his plantation of 300 palm trees when his village was attacked.

'First they harvested whatever they could carry and then, when they were satisfied with their loot, they then burnt the field. I have not been able to go back to assess the damage and I don't even know if I will be able to go back,' he says.

Coconut palm trees produce their first fruit in six to ten years, taking 15 to 20 years to reach peak production. Years of hard work by Misheck had been destroyed.

'Tell me, at this age how am I supposed to start again in this camp? Years and years of sacrifice gone – just like that.'

Sewing hope

Joachim* is a self-taught tailor. But when his village was torched he thought he would have to leave all of that behind.

'I had bought a fairly new [sewing] machine using my years of savings, but when they attacked our village it got burnt along with other things I owned,' shares Joachim.

Joachim couldn't carry his new sewing machine away with him – but his father gave him an old machine, which now helps distract him from the difficulties of living in the camp.

Joachim spends his time mending people's clothes in the camps, as well as making face masks, to help slow the spread of coronavirus.

‘Sewing is a hobby that distracts me from my problems... I am glad I was able to help many families with masks, but the challenge is to get cloth to make enough masks for everyone,’ explains Joachim.

Responding to the need

Due to facilities in the camps being very basic, there is a lack of clean water and safe sanitation. This has led to people being forced to drink, wash and cook with water from dirty rivers. And with no toilet facilities, people have no choice but to defecate in the open.

This has led to an increase in cholera – an illness caused by bacteria in dirty water. It is a fatal illness for children.

‘Tearfund is doing all we can to help improve access to clean water and safe sanitation in the camps,’ shares Edgar Jone, who leads Tearfund’s work in Mozambique.

‘As well as providing families with water and sanitation kits, Tearfund, through our partners, is planning on training community activists to raise awareness of hygiene and sanitation and how to slow the spread of coronavirus in the camps.’

Our partners are also providing families like Misheck and Joachim’s with essential supplies such as tents, mosquito nets, torches, sanitary pads, food and seeds.

What is happening now in Cabo Delgado?

A few weeks ago, a coalition of African forces, led by South African Development Community countries and the Rwandan military, reclaimed Palma from Al-Shabaab.

Though it is still early days, the situation in Cabo Delgado is reported to be much calmer. However, reports of abuses by armed groups and military forces are raising concern. And the threat of Al-Shabaab has not been eliminated.

Al-Shabaab’s reign of violence has led to chronic food shortages in the country. With crops burned, livestock killed and farmers forced to flee, food is in short supply. There are reports of some families now returning to Palma, but unable to earn an income or feed their families.

‘The situation is desperate,’ explains Edgar. ‘Tearfund is doing all we can to support people in need, but this ongoing crisis has stretched our resources.’

‘Thank you so much for continuing to hold the people of Mozambique in your prayers – prayer does change things and we trust and have faith in God for the future of this country.’

Pray with us

Dear God,

We pray for an end to the violence in Mozambique. Bring your mercy and your peace, Lord, we pray.

We pray for people like Misheck and Joachim who have been forced to leave everything behind. Bring your provision, comfort and hope for the future, Lord, we pray.

We pray for people who are traumatised or who are ill in the camps. Bring your healing, rest and clean water and safe sanitation, Lord, we pray.

We pray for organisations who are helping people in the camps. Bring your wisdom and multiply their resources so they can reach anyone in need, Lord, we pray.

Lord, make Cabo Delgado a place of safety and refuge – where its people can flourish again. In Jesus' name we pray, amen.

**Names changed to protect identities*

How love is transforming lives in Zimbabwe

Cecilia's life is a shining example of the difference a church can make. A partially blind Gogo (grandmother) in her seventies, Cecilia's only carer used to be her ten-year-old grandson, Ralph. Her two sons suffer from mental illnesses, and are unable to look after themselves. Cecilia was exhausted and destitute. But then the church reached out.

Cecilia's family live in a small rural community in Zimbabwe. Life has been hard for them. Hard to make ends meet. Hard to face the challenges of living with failing sight or mental health issues. Hard for a ten-year-old who should be playing and being a child, but is responsible for cooking and cleaning, for looking for firewood and for fetching water from five miles away. Ralph tells us: 'I can cook. I cook *sadza* [a staple food in Zimbabwe – a kind of maize porridge] and relish.'

Being his grandmother's eyes

Ralph takes good care of his grandmother – he's her eyes and he's the one who made sure Cecilia and her sons were wearing masks to protect them from coronavirus when our staff went to hear their story of how, through Tearfund's local church partner, Cecilia and her family have been able to find some relief.

'I have appreciated the church in a big way,' says Cecilia. 'They have shown me so much love. They have visited us, and remembered us in an amazing way.'

Our local partner helped provide funds for a house for Cecilia, and members of the church helped do the building and bring meals to the family.

On top of this, the family now has the help of Pretty.

Pretty amazing

Trained by our local partner, Pretty is now a family volunteer in the community. She works with five vulnerable families – including Cecilia's – visiting them each month and helping them to improve their lives.

When Pretty discovered that Cecilia's sons' mental conditions could be managed through medication, she began to coordinate efforts within the community to pay for their medication. Every evening, Pretty goes to Cecilia's home to assist the sons with taking their medication, and since she started administering injections to them, their lives have improved greatly. One of the sons is now able to bathe himself and carry out other household chores.

During Pretty's visits, she helps clean the family's house and washes clothes for them. She has also encouraged the community members to donate clothes for the families she is visiting.

'I am grateful for all your help,' shares Cecilia.

Please join us in thanksgiving for how the local church has been an answer to prayer for families like Cecilia's.

Pray with us

- Pray for Cecilia and families like hers who are struggling. Ask God for his provision and for practical help from community members.
- Pray that Ralph will have time to play and find joy in being a child.
- Lift up Pretty and volunteers like her. Thank God for them and for their willingness to serve their communities. Pray that they will be blessed and encouraged.

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