

ONE VOICE

TOGETHER IN PRAYER FOR AN **END TO POVERTY**

PRAISING GOD AND FINDING HOPE IN NIGERIA

With gunshots ringing in their ears, Sarah and her family ran for their lives.

Sarah was three months pregnant when armed men attacked her village in rural Nigeria. Hundreds of thousands of people like her had been forced from their homes by violence. Sarah's home was burnt down. She went through a frightening time, but is thankful that she, her husband and three children made it out alive.

'We left the community unharmed, just our house was burnt down. God deserves the praise,' says Sarah.

Sarah and her family fled to a temporary camp in the town of Jos, where they stayed with hundreds of other displaced families. It was here that the team from Tearfund's partner, RURCON, was able to help.

'I got a mattress. I got soap. I got a mat. I got a water tablet for purification of drinking water and cash assistance,' says Sarah. 'I'm planning with my husband to save more money to go and rent a room so that we can move out from the camp.'

'We came to the camp with no hope of receiving anything from anybody. But God raised you to bless us. We are so grateful. God bless you.'

It's only thanks to the prayers, donations and actions of people like you that we can support people like Sarah when they need it most. Thank you, and please continue to pray.

- Lift up Sarah and her family today, and others in Nigeria who have lost their homes due to conflict and violence. Pray they will feel God's comfort and peace, and know his love through the work of local churches and organisations such as RURCON.
- As we prepare to celebrate the birth of Jesus, Prince of Peace, please cry out to God for a breakthrough of his peace in Nigeria and wherever conflict and division are causing people like Sarah to suffer.
- Pray for Tearfund's staff and partners in Nigeria as they do all they can to help people like Sarah survive, recover and rebuild.

A NOTE FROM...

'It was humbling to meet Sarah and find such a resilient woman, determined to protect her unborn baby. The team at RURCON had such a good relationship with the people in the camp, including Sarah, providing prayer and spiritual encouragement as well as practical help. Please keep the people of Nigeria in your prayers.' **Peter Shaw, Tear Times editor**

Sarah features in our Christmas Appeal this year. If you feel led, please donate to help people like her by visiting www.tearfund.org/miracle

THE GENERAL ELECTION AND A TRUSTWORTHY LEADER

'All things are wearisome, more than one can say...' A Biblical view on UK politics, perhaps?

Well, it could be. As could the bit that comes after it in Ecclesiastes: 'What has been will be again, what has been done will be done again; there is nothing new under the sun.' (Ecclesiastes 1:8;10)

Amidst the seemingly endless cycles of disagreement and discontent, the Brexit-ing and the debate, there is something strangely soothing in the lament. We're not the first people to face any of this. We probably won't be the last.

This election result won't be an overnight resolution of the situation and the upheaval can be distressing. The change – or lack of change – can cause us to be anxious. In light of that, let's reclaim two recently-overused, anxiety-inducing words – leave and remain:

Leave

'Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.' (John 14:27)

Be at peace. His voice is above the context of our political views or fears. He is constant.

'Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the Lord your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you.' (Deuteronomy 31:6)

He goes with us. He never leaves us. His trustworthiness is unchanging.

Remain

'And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.'
(1 Corinthians 13:13)

No matter what else happens, his love for us remains. Our hope is steadfast. In faith.

'Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.' (John 15:4)

In this we can be clear. If we hold on to him, he holds on to us. And we bear fruit.

Our constant aim

Whatever political storms may rage, there is one leader who is completely trustworthy. His ways are perfect and his truth is steadfast. We remain unwavering in our call to follow Jesus where the need is greatest. The crucial things are still the crucial things: empowering people to step out of poverty; responding in times of disaster and conflict; campaigning for justice in our world.

PLEASE PRAY

- Pray for each of our partners and programmes around the world – that people will continue to be empowered to build futures free from poverty. Pray that our new government will continue to prioritise aid funding.

- Lift up every person facing the aftermath of disaster or conflict – pray that we will be able to reach people in their time of need. Pray that our new government will continue to care about those around the world who face times of struggle.
- Pray for the awareness of individuals and organisations everywhere – that we will all play our part in protecting creation. Pray that our new government will take responsibility and be a powerful voice for positive change.
- Lift up all of those who now hold political power in our country – pray that they will love justice and speak truth.

POLITICAL CRISIS HALTS TEARFUND'S WORK IN BOLIVIA

Political turmoil in Bolivia has put a halt on much of Tearfund's work, as our team there ask for prayers for peace and security.

National elections were held on 20 October, but the results were disputed by many. Throughout November, tens of thousands of people took to the streets in major cities to demand a new vote.

For 19 days clashes between President Evo Morales' supporters and government opponents led to several deaths and many roads being blocked. Morales then resigned and sought asylum in Mexico. On 12 November Jeanine Áñez declared herself interim president, pledging new elections in early 2020.

Deep crisis

Tearfund's partner organisations have been forced to suspend their activities. This includes their Church and Community Transformation (CCT) work, where churches help families and young people learn about healthy relationships.

This is incredibly important, as in some of the areas where we work in Bolivia there are dangerously high levels of violence, sexual abuse and gang culture.

'What is happening is incomprehensible,' says Efrain Piuca, Tearfund's Project Manager for Bolivia. 'It is a difficult and complicated time for Bolivia with great economic losses. The political crisis is very deep.'

'At such a time of uncertainty I fear for the future for my daughter and all children here. We pray life would return to normal soon and that we have peace.'

PLEASE PRAY

- Thank God that the protests in Bolivia have eased off in recent days.
- Pray for peace during the ongoing political change process, and the proposed elections next year.
- Ask God to guide and protect Tearfund's staff, partners and all the people in churches we are working with.

PRAYER POINTS FROM AROUND THE WORLD



Today (13 December) marks the end of this year's UN climate change conference in Madrid. Pray that these talks between world leaders will bear positive fruit, particularly for people living in poverty who are vulnerable to climate change. Pray that governments around the world will take the strong action necessary to protect and restore creation.



Please continue to pray for the Rohingya people, many of whom still live in terrible conditions. It has been over two years since nearly 800,000 people fled from Myanmar into Bangladesh. Pray for safety, provision and hope for the refugees; and pray for our partners as they serve the most vulnerable.



Aid and health workers responding to Ebola in the Democratic Republic of Congo are still facing violent attacks. Please pray for God's hand of protection over them. Pray that the attacks will stop, and that those looking to help – including Tearfund staff and partners – will be able to reach people in need.