

ONE VOICE

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

DEVASTATING FLOODING IN THE CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

Heavy rains have hit the Central African Republic (CAR), bringing devastating flooding to a country already impacted by extreme poverty.

It's estimated that 57,000 people have already been affected by what is rapidly becoming a humanitarian crisis.

The Ubangi River has burst its banks close to the capital city, Bangui, and in other areas of the country. More than 10,000 homes have been destroyed and more than 1,000 wells are flooded across the nation, cutting access to essential safe water supplies.

Over 57,000 people have taken refuge in schools, churches and community centres, losing all their belongings as they ran for their lives.

Taken by surprise

Among those areas affected are some of those featured in Tearfund's 2018 UK Aid Match Appeal. So far 500 of the people we work with and their families have fled their homes, which have been completely destroyed by the floods. The full impact of the floods on Tearfund's projects is still being assessed.

The conflict in CAR that began in 2012 has resulted in 2.6 million people – more than half of the population – relying on humanitarian assistance to survive. The latest floods have only compounded their problems.

Athanase Ndayisaba is Tearfund's Country Director for CAR. He says this latest crisis has taken everyone by surprise:

'Throughout the month of October, we had torrential rains when the country was expecting the start of its dry season. People are devastated and frustrated after losing their possessions, having not yet recovered from the disastrous conflict in the country.'

PLEASE PRAY:

- Ask God to comfort people who have lost everything in the floods and to provide for them.
- Pray that the relief efforts will be effective in bringing urgent supplies and support to the most vulnerable.
- Pray that the work we have been doing in the country will be able to re-commence, and continue to change lives.

A NOTE FROM...

'In the midst of this terrible situation, we are thankful. The people not affected by the floods have welcomed with open arms those who have lost everything to the flooding. They have comforted them, shared what they have, and helped them overcome their anguish. May God's love increase and overflow so we can love and bless others like this too.'

Diane Abroukette-Nguera, Central African Republic Team

HOW TOGETHER WE OVERCAME POVERTY

Liberatta and her husband fell on hard times after building their house in Rwanda. Although they had a roof over their heads, they now struggled to feed their three children and were in a state of constant worry. They couldn't think of how they could begin to provide for themselves again.

Not alone

Rwanda has made significant progress in recovering from the devastation of the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi population. However, over 39 per cent of the population still live below the poverty line.

Tearfund works with a number of partner organisations in Rwanda, especially local churches. They encourage communities to come together to set up self-help groups. These groups meet regularly and put small amounts of money aside to save and invest in projects that will help benefit them and their community. This means people from low-income backgrounds gain the knowledge and skills they need to take advantage of local investment and business opportunities.

This is how Liberatta found a way to help her family out of poverty.

'The good thing about our self-help group is that we are supporting each other - we visit each other. When you are sick, you are not alone... here you know that you have a family,' Liberatta shares.

Every time they meet, they do a Bible study together – which brings comfort to the group. In being honest with each other about where they are at and the struggles they are facing, they are able to build one another up. Seeing other people overcome their struggles gave Liberatta the confidence to believe in herself and in the dreams that she had, and to aim for that too.

Setting up shop

Through the self-help group, Liberatta was able to save and take out a loan, enabling her to set up a shop. It is the only one in her neighbourhood that sells food, so business has been going well for her. At the moment it's located in her home, but she has plans to build a shop in her community. Her dream is that by 2020, she will have that shop.

Liberatta now not only has enough food that her family doesn't go hungry, but she can pay for her children's school fees too. She also has a new love for church. Before joining a self-help group, she rarely went to church, but now she goes regularly and enjoys the time she spends studying her Bible with her self-help group.

One story that sticks with Liberatta is the story of Sarah, the wife of Abraham. She shares how Sarah spent many years waiting for the child God promised, and that this story gave Liberetta hope that God would answer her prayers and provide for her: 'I waited like Sarah, and with patience and prayer, I finally have all I've prayed for,' Liberatta concludes.

PLEASE PRAY

- Praise God for his provision for Liberatta and her family. Pray for her business, that it will keep thriving and that she will have the money needed to open a shop in the community next year.
- Lift up Tearfund's local partners who help to coordinate the self-help groups and encourage people to take part. Pray for wisdom for them about who to invite to join. Thank God for their desire to see people transform their lives.
- Pray for self-help groups across Rwanda, that they will continue to help communities find solutions to overcome poverty.

This story is part of our World of Difference series, which offers an exclusive window into how your support transforms lives across the world in Jesus' name. Sign up to give regularly, to hear more stories like this and help end extreme poverty at https://www.tearfund.org/world_of_difference/

STORIES OF HOPE IN THE WORLD'S BIGGEST HUMANITARIAN CRISIS

Yemen is currently home to the biggest humanitarian crisis in the world. A brutal civil war has left nearly 10 million people at risk of starvation.

Behind the big numbers, there are millions of smaller stories. Tales of ordinary families, trying their best to cope in a far-from-ordinary situation.

Here are three personal stories of how families are finding ways to cope with the crisis.

Thanks to our partners providing food supplies to families in most need, these are stories with slightly happier endings...

Samed's story

Samed and his family are Muhamasheen – Yemenis of African descent. Muhamasheen are considered second class citizens by many other Yemenis.

Samed hasn't been able to work because he suffers from severe scoliosis – a sideways spinal curvature. His wife works as a domestic servant and earns only \$50 US a month.

The couple live with their four sons in one room. They struggle to make ends meet. Samed and his wife were forced to send their children out begging. They were so ashamed by this but they felt they had no other option. They desperately needed money to survive.

Then our local partners registered Samed and his family on their food security project. This means that they can be assured of a regular supply of basics like flour, beans, sugar and salt.

It may not sound like much, but now the family can survive and even save a little. 'We have our dignity back,' says Samed. 'And I thank God that our children no longer have to beg'

Hamud's story

Hamud was living with his wife and two children. However things were tough for them. He didn't have a job and there was little chance of work.

Hamud couldn't save money for basic household needs. Relations with his wife, Munira, became strained. Finally, Munira left the family home and returned to her parents. This is commonplace in Yemen when a marriage is in trouble, but Hamud was heartbroken.

However, help was at hand: Tearfund's partner group in Yemen could see that the family were in serious need. They gave Hamud the first food basket for his family. Although these were basic supplies like flour and beans, they made a big difference.

Hamud decided to take courage in both hands and save his marriage. He went to his wife and asked her to move back into their house. Munira agreed to return and now the family is reunited. Whatever obstacles they face, they can face as a family – confident that the family will now have enough to survive. It's a big deal and it's enough to keep the family together, fighting for the future.

Sami's story

Sami's daughter, Hibdah, has a serious bone disease. The family has struggled to pay for her treatment and it has left them in serious debt.

The debt burden has meant that they couldn't afford similar treatment for Sami's wife, Nisma. She has herniated discs in her back, causing her unbearable pain.

Without treatment, she just took sedatives to dampen the worst of it, but she was still unable to do any housework or even get out of the house most of the time.

However, things have changed. After receiving regular food supplies from Tearfund's partners, Sami and Nisma were able to start saving again.

This has meant that Nisma has just travelled to the capital to receive treatment for her back. There's enough struggle to contend with when you live in Yemen, at least it will be good to be free of pain.

PLEASE PRAY

Thank you God, that even in the darkest of circumstances, you find ways to reach in and offer hope.

I pray for the families who are currently being reached by Tearfund's partners in Yemen. May you continue to keep our partners and their families, safe from harm.

And thank you, most of all, for hope. May we always remain hopeful and be, ourselves, bringers of hope.

Amen

PRAYER POINTS FROM AROUND THE WORLD



This Tuesday (November 19) was World Toilet Day. There are 2 billion people who do not have basic sanitation facilities such as toilets or latrines. Pray for Tearfund's work around the world to improve people's access to clean water and safe sanitation, that will help prevent diseases and lift people out of poverty.



Please continue to pray for Burkina Faso as a third of the country is now affected by conflict. This has led to almost half a million people displaced, schools closing and farmers forced to abandon their fields. There are 1.2 million people in need of food. Pray for peace and provision for those in need.



Unusually heavy rainfall in Ethiopia has led to an increase in locusts. This has seriously impacted farmers – some have lost all of their crops. Please pray for those who are experiencing severe food shortages as a result, and that swift solutions to this problem will be found.