

ONE VOICE

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

PRAYING FOR JUSTICE

As a Christian charity, Tearfund believes that everyone has an amazing God-given potential to create change. We also believe that everyone is made in the image of God.

Racism is unacceptable to God. We stand with people everywhere who experience racism, and speak out against this injustice. Together as the church, we have the power to create change.

We ask you to join us in praying for healing and the restoration of peace where racism has caused the inequality that devalues human life. Racism destroys relationships, and broken relationships cause poverty and suffering. Please join us in actively challenging racism everywhere as we continue to work with churches and partners to restore what has been broken.

Our hearts are with everyone who has been discriminated against because of the colour of their skin. We join with you and the millions of others across the world in our call for everyone to see that Black Lives Matter, today and always.

PLEASE PRAY

Come Holy Spirit,
Our hearts cry out for more of you, Lord,
In a world full of brokenness,
Show us how to use our gifts to repair and restore.

Spirit of peace,
Fall on places of conflict around the world,
Heal divisions and hurts,
Bring together families torn apart by war.

Spirit of justice,
Anoint decision-makers with wisdom,
To bring about systemic change and truth,
Where cycles of poverty and bias have taken root.

Come Holy Spirit,
We let you take control,
Show us how we can build back better,
Unite, bless others and renew.

In Jesus' name we pray, amen.

A NOTE FROM...

'The Bible is clear that as Christians we have a call to pursue justice and speak out for the oppressed. At this time, as the world is standing up against racial injustice, I ask you to stand in prayer with those who are marginalised and oppressed by asking God to bring justice where there is pain, peace where there is loss and asking him to heal our land.'

Liz Muir, Diversity and Inclusion Manager for Tearfund

A MAN OF MANY IDEAS

It can be hard when your life suddenly gets turned upside down. Wogasso knew that feeling too well. His career in the military was abruptly cut short after he injured his right hand. When he reunited with his family, life looked a lot different to how he remembered it.

Wogasso returned to his village in Ethiopia, to his wife, Busha, and their seven children. He felt out of place. Life in the military was very different from life at home. He was unsure if the two could ever be reconciled.

His money was spent on alcohol; his days drinking.

'I couldn't help my family: I was a drunk. I would lose my balance and fall down on my way home,' says Wogasso. 'My wife never complained, she would help instead – even if I was making life hard for her and our children.'

Wogasso knew things needed to change in his life, but he didn't know how.

Finding *Tesfa*

A Tearfund local partner, the Terepeza Development Association (TDA), were running training sessions in his village to bring together members of the community and inspire people to get involved with business ventures. Wogasso decided to go along to the training and he ended up joining a self-help group.

Self-help groups enable small groups of vulnerable people to support each other, both financially and with mutual encouragement. Members begin by saving small amounts of money which are used to start new businesses or to help when times are tough. These groups are a proven method for communities to lift themselves out of poverty.

And the best part is, because people in the groups are working together, the burden isn't placed on one individual. No one has to continue the battle alone – they can share the load. The group Wogasso joined was called *Tesfa*, which translates into English to hope. And that's what it brought to him and his family.

Finding friendship

The group would pray together and help each other out on their farms. Wogasso began farming with others in the group. His injury made most tasks impossible, so the group found ways he could still contribute so he didn't miss out.

His new friends also encouraged him to stop drinking.

'What really touched me, opened my eyes and changed my perspective, was discussing with others common issues, as well as looking for potential business opportunities and supporting each other,' says Wagasso. 'That was a big deal for me.'

New ideas

This was when Wogasso had a brilliant idea. In one of the group meetings, he was discussing how he could use his land more effectively and work more strategically. He pitched the idea that the group could farm his land together. The members could do the farming – work that Wogasso couldn't manage because of his injury – and they would all share in the benefits.

This was a win-win situation for Wagasso. He would profit from his land without doing the heavy toil on it, and the group would earn an income to provide for their families.

'In the first year of the agreement, I could see a positive change in my income,' shares Wogasso. 'I was participating in the meetings of the self-help group every week, and we kept saving and praying together. I loved the solidarity among the group members.'

Wogasso's innovative business idea has changed his family's life for the better. Using the profits, he has been able to support Busha in getting a spot at the market, where she now sells different items. The couple have also built another house, which they rent out.

It's a far cry from the life Wogasso used to lead when he first returned to his village. Through this group, his relationships with his wife and children have been restored. He's lifted his family out of poverty and made some incredible friends along the way.

'I have a bright future with God,' he declares.

PLEASE PRAY

- Praise God for how Wogasso has been able to turn his life around. Thank God for the support his wife and his self-help group provided to make this possible.
- Lift up self-help groups like Wogasso's who cannot meet at the moment because of lockdown restrictions. Pray for wisdom for Tearfund and our partners in how we can continue to safely encourage and strengthen them during this time.
- Pray for people who are struggling with life at the moment and who have turned to drink and other methods of escapism. Pray for God to comfort them in their pain, heal their brokenness and bring people around them who can support them in their recovery.

This article references events that took place before the coronavirus crisis.

FOR THEIRS IS THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

The kingdom of heaven is the inheritance of the youth. They matter that much to God. 'Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these."' (Matt 19:14)

Kimsan Richard* is a pastor in a small town in Cambodia.

He cares deeply about the young people in his community. Every week, he spends time teaching his students about the Bible and important things like good hygiene... and how to play football.

Ball skills

Football may not seem the most vital skill (to some) but when vulnerable teenagers in Kimsan's community have too much time on their hands. This is combined with too much worry to escape from, and not enough positive things to occupy them outside of school; drugs, alcohol abuse and gambling become dangerously attractive.

Each one looking like a way out, but all too quickly becoming a way down. To protect the young people by giving them something else to do instead, he formed a football team for them.

Their futures – each planned and purposed by God, with great love – matter to Kimsan.

When Kimsan received training about children's rights through a Tearfund partner, the things he learned gave him new tools. In his community, people had never heard about children having rights before. It just wasn't the way things were. This new information and way of thinking fit right in with his understanding of how valued each young person is.

'I learnt that every child has the right to survive,' says Kimsan, 'the right to protection, the right to development and the right to participation.'

This message was too important to hold on to and Kimsan began to share it with the people around him.

'I know children are important in the sight of God, but I did not know clearly about child rights before. Now, I understand,' says Kimsan.

Winning ways

'I began to teach parents and elders in my community and church,' he says. 'Before, they used to hit, blame and use bad words to their children, but they have now changed their actions toward children.'

One of the major challenges to child welfare in Kimsan's community is that many parents leave to find work in big cities, or even across the border in Thailand. Their children are left behind with other carers. To help ensure these children are kept safe, Kimsan teaches the young people about their rights too.

'Every week, I remind them about child rights and encourage them to bravely tell their friends at school too,' he says.

'I believe all pastors should learn about this,' says Kimsan, 'because many children come to

church and pastors have to teach children the way God loves them. I know children are important in the sight of God, but I did not know clearly about child rights before. Now, I understand.'

PLEASE PRAY

- Pray for Kimsan and the young people he works with – that they will be blessed, encouraged and protected.
- Praise God for each young person around the world. Thank God that he has created every one with a unique plan and purpose. Pray that each child will have the opportunity to fulfil their potential.
- Thank God that, around the world, societies are recognising that children have rights. Pray that young people would be treated in accordance with those rights.

**Name has been changed to protect identity*

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PRAYER POINTS FROM AROUND THE WORLD

-  A new Ebola outbreak has been declared in the west of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Pray for an end to Ebola. Pray for wisdom and resources to tackle Ebola in the whole of the DRC. And pray for peace so help can reach those in need.
-  Keep praying for the millions of people in India and Bangladesh whose lives have been devastated by Cyclone Amphan, which hit two weeks ago. They've lost their homes, jobs and crops. Heavy rainfall has damaged toilets in cyclone shelters and relief camps and safe drinking water is hard to find. Pray for protection from disease and provision for those in need.
-  The lean season – the period between harvests – is now underway in West Africa. In recent months, rainfall has been erratic and scarce, significantly decreasing the amount of crops produced by farmers. Entire communities are now without sufficient food reserves. Pray that families will be able to overcome hunger and that this will not push people further into poverty.