

# Abundance

Magazine



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quest for  
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# Thank You



‘Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see.’

Hebrews 11:1

All that we have witnessed globally over the past year has been cause for major concern. In Gaza the ongoing complex conflict makes the promise of peace difficult to even imagine. But God is moving despite what our eyes tell us, and he allows each of us to play our part.

During the drought in Kenya, it was difficult to believe in the possibility of rain. Stories of hungry children fainting in school were distressing, but it was through the love of AOA supporters that families desperate for a meal were fed. Then the rains came, and crops were able to grow; something that seemed so impossible a year before sparked seeds of renewal.

In this issue of Abundance, you will find stories of partnership, hope and outcomes made possible when we work together. This was evident in our Partner Learning Forum, that you can read about on Page 2. Our partners from Africa and AOA staff from Australia were able to meet in Kenya, where they shared stories of resilience, learning from one another's experiences, especially how each partner is addressing climate challenges.

In Mozambique, ‘The Towards Abundant Life for All’ Program is strengthened by health volunteers who go door to door giving people knowledge on how to prevent illnesses and live healthy lives. You can read about Rodrigues and Aida’s journey to health on page 4.

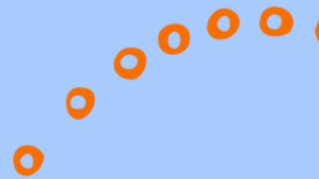
The determination of our partners to seek justice in the face of so many obstacles lie in their passion for supporting the most marginalised. In our story on page 6 you will hear about Milicent’s mission to advocate for the rights of people living in Kenya and the part AOA plays in ensuring this is achieved.

As supporters, you faithfully support AOA’s work, believing it will change the lives of those experiencing poverty and injustice. As you read this issue of Abundance may you be assured that your faith and hope has created long lasting change for our global neighbours.



**You have enriched the educational opportunities of children in regional Cambodia by donating to our Christmas Appeal.**

**From AOA and our partner PNKS,  
Thank you!**



# Partners Unite: Africa Learning Forum

Anglican Overseas Aid's African partners united in November last year for our 'Partner Learning Forum' held in Kenya, hosted by The Anglican Church of Kenya, Mt Kenya West Diocese.

AOA staff who travelled to Kenya to take part included Jo Knight, Kylie Wingjan, Head of International Programs and Tim Hartley, Disaster Response and Resilience Coordinator. They were joined by partners from Uganda, Kenya, South Sudan and Mozambique.

The Forum's theme, Building Resilience in a Changing Climate, was particularly relevant to Millicent and her team from the Anglican Church of Kenya. Millicent shared their experience of dealing with drought and how resilience had been strengthened through strong and equal partnership with AOA.

Vincent Ondieki, an Environmental Governance and Climate Change Specialist at Hivos International, spearheaded a session on climate change adaptation, delving into the repercussions of our changing climate and its impacts on the various facets of existence.


Upon returning from the 'Partner Learning Forum', Tim Hartley offered some reflections on the value of peer-to-peer learning and relationship building that give some insight on the importance of meeting together with our global partners.



Tim Hartley (right) with Aaron from Wise Choices for Life Uganda (left)

**Q: What were the goals you had for the partner learning forum?**

It's a pretty unique opportunity to bring a lot of disparate partners from all these different countries together face-to-face in the one place over a fairly long period of time to enable and facilitate a lot of peer-to-peer learning, relationship and trust building. We shared challenges and discussed potential solutions.



Q: Why was climate a focal point for partners meeting together?

In terms of shared challenges, across all of our partners in Africa, it's an increasingly troubling challenge and the largest challenge that they are dealing with. What we're seeing is that climate change is a threat multiplier on all the existing challenges that they are facing.

So, partners are all facing slightly different challenges in all their different communities, whether they're farmers, pastoralists or living in urban areas. But these challenges are being exacerbated by climate change in ways that they can't predict anymore. And so, it was a very common theme, across our partners. It was the feedback that we've been receiving. And so being able to bring everyone together to discuss the challenges they were facing and explore potential solutions was highly valuable.

Q: What were your key takeaway from the forum?

Climate change is an increasingly urgent problem that we need to work to address.

The types of work that we do relies on trust and relationships that still are greatly facilitated by face-to-face engagement. Being able to draw on those relationships when they've had a disaster is really important.

[The Partner Learning Forum](#) in Kenya was supported by Australian Aid through the Australian NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP).



African partners together exploring Food Secure Schools in Kenya

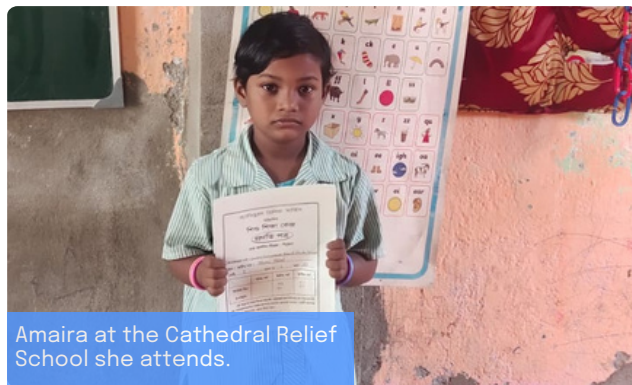
# Girls Belong in the Classroom

In Kolkata, amidst the challenges and struggles of many families, the Cathedral Relief Service lies as a beacon of hope. Within its folds, young minds like Amaira find not just education but a pathway to a brighter future. Amaira's story is a testament to the transformative power of education and community support.

At just four years old, Amaira\* has already faced the harsh reality of losing her father. Raised by her mother and grandmother, Amaira's journey was pivotal when she became a student at one of the Cathedral Relief-supported schools. Here, she found not only education but also an encouraging environment.

Amaira loves coming to the centre where she has the chance to learn, play, and make friends. She rarely misses a day and is always eager to be a helper, both to the teachers and the other children. Amaira's mother knows that the centre provides a safe space where her little girl can begin her school journey.

Cathedral Relief Service believes every girl deserves a chance to go to school and pursue her dreams. They run schools in the informal settlements of Kolkata, where they enrol girls who would otherwise miss out on education.



Amaira at the Cathedral Relief School she attends.

They also work with their families to overcome their reluctance to send their girls to school.

Amaira's story is just one among many, illustrating the profound impact of the Cathedral Relief Service on the lives of vulnerable children across India. Education, empowerment, and community support pave the way for a brighter, more hopeful future, not just for individuals like Amaira but for entire communities.

\*Name has been changed

# Women's Safety in Tiu Village – Lighting up the Dark

Working to address poverty and injustice in communities is often a slow process and requires much patience.

AOA's partners work faithfully over the long term, always looking out for the small sparks of change and working to fan into flame.

With the support of the Anglican Church of Melanesia, AOA's partner in the Solomon Islands, the Mother's Union formed a Gender Justice taskforce. The taskforce members from Malaita province learned how to work together and claim their rights to safety, protection, and wellbeing.

In Tiu village, it is exciting to see that this is already bearing fruit, with women working together to identify a shared problem, and coming up with an achievable, low-cost solution without needing external help.

Few families in this village have a toilet in their home and women and girls use the surrounding bushland or seaside. Accessing these areas at night is unsafe due to high rates of violence against women and girls, exacerbated by public drinking and drug use. Taskforce and community members decided to tackle this issue by fundraising for and installing street lighting to help make Tiu village safer.

Rebecca Moli, the Project Officer shares that the women 'purposely wanted to protect and provide safety for their elderly women, girls, children, and people living with disabilities in their community.

A community policy was also developed to start to address underlying reasons that women and girls are not feeling safe to move around their village after dark. Rebecca has observed changes in the reported behaviour of men and boys around the public consumption of drugs and alcohol. It may be that when they are ready, these women may start to work together to tackle the challenge of how to ensure each family can access a toilet.

Excitingly, nearby villages are starting to observe and follow Tiu's example and are now planning their own street lighting projects.

AOA are grateful for the support of the ACT Alliance and Swedish International Development Agency in supporting the Gender Justice 2.0 Project in 2022-23

Written by Kelly Rae, AOA Program manager of Quality Innovation

# Revitalising Communities: A Family's Journey to Health



Rodriguez and his family know health struggles all too well. They have battled bouts of diarrhoea and sickness routinely.

For Rodriguez's community, a lack of clean water and adequate sanitation was at the heart of the problem. Communities in Mozambique face continued health challenges as lack of sanitation results in disease and infection that travels through families and communities. Once illnesses begin, they spread quickly as open sewerage carries bacteria from household to household.

Rodriguez, his wife Aida and their two children struggled with sicknesses that prevented the family from engaging in work and community life.

The team members of the program 'Towards Abundant Life for All' witnessed the struggles of Rodriguez's family and many others who suffered preventable illnesses. The team undertook to



Rodriguez with two of his children





Rodriguez and Aida with two of their children

support the community by educating families on minimising the spread of disease. Rodriguez has built a latrine in his home that distances the family from sewerage. Cooking practices across the community have been changed, as water is boiled and purified, and dishes are properly washed and dried before use. Rodriguez and Aida can prepare food safely for their children and teach them the importance of washing themselves daily.

Rodriguez is now a volunteer 'Towards Abundant Life' Team Member, and has adopted their mission as his own, explaining that 'our goal is a community free of diseases'. While there are fewer cases of diarrhoea, there is still much to be done for the health and sanitation of Mozambique's communities.

Rodriguez has said that while 'it's not like before,' it's also 'not over for good' as health continues to be a challenge for people in his community. As for Rodriguez and his family, their newfound health knowledge has been invaluable in decreasing sickness, for which they are grateful to The Anglican Diocese of Nampula, Mozambique who run 'Towards Abundant Life for All'.

'Towards Abundant Life for All' receives funding from the Australian Government, through the Australian NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP).



# Our Partners in Action

Here are a few highlights from our partners who are working hard serving their communities.

## Spafford

Spafford Children's Centre in Jerusalem works to support children in need with occupational and speech therapy services so they can actively engage in community life. In December 2023, Spafford announced their 'Trauma Healing Program', which provides a safe and nurturing environment for children to thrive. As Spafford is in a part of our world experiencing ongoing tension and conflict, children in the region need a safe space to heal and be themselves. The program seeks to empower children to build resilience in a warm, supportive environment designed so that they can play, learn and grow.

## Kenya

Through the 'Food Secure Schools Program' supported by the Imarisha Maisha Program in Kenya, students and staff have an abundant yield of food they are now harvesting (pictured). The Program ensures that schools have the resources and knowledge to ensure that food can grow on the school grounds without being threatened by extreme climate and wildlife.



**Australian Aid** 

## Congratulations Wise Choices For Life Uganda

Wise Choices for Life Uganda recently completed an independent Programs Evaluation with outstanding results.

The program evaluation was undertaken by consultant Annette Nabuduwa who found the Wise Choices for Life training 'relevant, adding value to the community in the form of filling information and knowledge gaps on reproductive health and life skills across all age groups and categories of participants.' Another important achievement was the, 'significant reduction in maternal and infant mortality rates reported by the health facilities.'

Congratulations to Joyce Kidulu (Joyce pictured left with AOA's Kylie Wingjan), the Country Director of WCFL Uganda and her team for implementing a program that has had significant impact on filling the reproductive health gaps in Ugandan communities.



# Responding to Emergencies

## al-Ahli Arab Hospital

Anglican Overseas Aid (AOA) has been partnering with al Ahli Arab Hospital for over three decades to ensure the implementation of lifesaving programs for women, including vital breast cancer screening. The Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem runs the hospital and provides healthcare to patients regardless of ethnicity, religion, political affiliation, or economic status.

In just 100 days of the war in Gaza, an estimated 26,000 Palestinians have died, over 65,000 have been injured, and 1.7 million have been internally displaced. The collapse of healthcare, education and welfare systems has left people with little to no support structures.

Al Ahli Arab Hospital is one of the only remaining functioning hospitals in north Gaza. It continues to be inundated with patients that it struggles to assist. Recently, the hospital was left with only a few doctors to treat hundreds of injuries, with new casualties arriving daily.

## Praying for Gaza



Lord, we ask that you bring peace to Israel and Palestine. We ask that your justice, mercy and peace would reign. We pray for all impacted on both sides of the conflict. Comfort them in their suffering.

We pray for those who have fled their homes and are searching for safety, food and medicine. Please provide them with shelter, nutrients, clean drinking water and medicine. We pray for your protection from the psychological and social impacts that war brings. We ask that you heal their trauma. May they experience your hope and peace. We pray for those held hostage, that they would be released and reunited with their families.

We pray for all staff at al Ahli Arab Hospital, for the doctors, nurses and administrators, to give them strength, hope and comfort as they continue to save lives. Protect them, Lord. We pray that they will receive the medical supplies, clean water, food and fuel they desperately need.

Obtaining regular supplies is incredibly challenging in these circumstances. The Diocese of Jerusalem has been successful in getting funds through to the hospital, which has helped to purchase some supplies. However, the needs and shortages are ongoing.

The situation in Gaza is dire, with 2 million Palestinians facing starvation, imminent famine, and disease outbreaks. Anglican Overseas Aid is working closely with other Australian Aid Organisations and peak body, the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID), in advocating for an immediate cessation of hostilities, sufficient emergency funds to meet this humanitarian crisis and the unconditional release of all hostages.

We are working with the Anglican Alliance, The Diocese of Jerusalem, and hospital director Suhaila Tarazi to ensure we can continue to support our partner and hospital staff who remain courageously caring for those who are suffering.

# Praying for our Partners



## Health

Compassionate Lord, we lift up our partners to you, asking for your healing and peace in their time of sickness. We especially remember the 'Towards Abundant Life for All' program in Mozambique and pray that you would bless their work to combat the spread of diseases. Lord, we ask for your healing hand over those who are ill in Mozambique, we also thank you for the work of Wise Choices for Life in Uganda; we praise you for the lives they have saved through their training.

## Gender Justice

Lord, we intercede for our partners who tirelessly advocate for the rights and dignity of women and girls worldwide. Surround them with your comforting presence as they confront gender-based injustices and fight against practices like gender-based violence and child marriage. We especially pray for our partners in Vanuatu and Kenya who are fighting for gender justice and protection, bless their work, Lord.

## Climate Resilience

Merciful God, we appeal to you for our wounded world in its time of need. We acknowledge how we have spoiled the beauty of your creation; we advocate for our global neighbours who endure the worst impacts of our changing climate. We particularly pray for the Solomon Islands, where they have strived hard to brace themselves for the cyclone season. Grant them resilience and refuge in the midst of storms, provide for their needs plentifully.

### Disaster Response

O God, our refuge and strength, we lift up to you the people affected by disaster. In places of war, famine, drought, flood and other calamities, we ask you to grant your peace and provision. We thank you for the relief from drought in Kenya and praise you for your goodness. We pray for your strength to be with those who serve in disaster response in communities worldwide. We pray for your comfort and love to be with those who have suffered loss and are mourning.

### Education

Almighty God, we thank you for the gift of education we have enjoyed. We ask you to bless our brothers and sisters in other parts of the world who lack access to education. We commend the work of the Cathedral Relief Service, which has established schools and training programs for people in poverty in India. May your grace and mercy uphold their efforts and transform the lives of those they serve.

### Livelihoods

Heavenly Father, we bring before you the plight of those around the world who struggle to secure basic necessities such as food, medicine and education. We pray especially for LEADS Sri Lanka, who support the growth and development of livelihood security in local communities. Lord, we ask that you bless the work that they do and those whom they work hard to support. We also think of our partner in Kenya, bless those who are re-establishing their livelihoods. We pray that you would make their paths straight and lighten their burdens on their journey towards financial freedom.

We Pray this through  
Jesus Christ our Lord

Amen

# Faith in Action: A Bible Reflection



This Bible reflection is brought to you by Reverend Nelson Bako, the Mission Secretary of the Anglican Church of Melanesia.

## John 14: 8-17

Phillip asked Jesus, “Show us the Father, that’s all we need? Jesus replied, I am in the Father, and the Father is in me.”

Christ’s response tells us that Jesus and the Father are one. Jesus said there will be a helper; “The Spirit who reveals the truth.”

Today, we live in a divided society defined by nations, cultures, races, education, political status, and languages. This diversity creates barriers that cause divisions. It has been a challenge to our witness of Christ’s oneness. Jesus said to Philip when he asked to show him the Father, “Whoever has seen me has seen the Father.”

Jesus and the Father are one. They are a living testimony of oneness. During the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit descended upon the believers, and they began to speak in different languages as they were filled with the Holy Spirit.

The Spirit enables the believers to speak in tongues and communicate in different languages. The Spirit has broken the barriers of language amongst the believers. Jesus told Phillip, “I am in the Father, and the Father is in me.” Jesus and the Father are one, and through their oneness, the Father will send the Spirit as a helper who will stay with the believers forever.

What is this Spirit?

The Spirit overcomes our separateness and gives us the courage to break out of our locked rooms. The Spirit helps us to recognise the needs of our neighbours. We, as Christians, are called to be witnesses of oneness by reaching out to those in need. Our duties are to demonstrate Christ’s love and be filled with the Spirit to address the issues people face. Let us see the Father through Christ, who dwells within all humanity and the rest of the creation. By seeing the Father, we can recognise each other’s needs and the rest of the creation. So let us allow the Spirit, who is the helper for us, to recognise Christ’s connection with the Father so that we may recognise the needs of all people and the creation.

### Let us pray

Almighty God, you are the source of life and giver of all things on Earth. May your blessing be upon us; continue to strengthen and empower our ministry amongst your people. Help us to recognise your will and purpose. Help us to see the need within our society. Give us your grace O Lord so that we may be a good ambassador for your creation. May all the needs of your people on Earth be submitted within your loving Grace. This we ask through your Son Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour. Amen.

# A Prison Officer's Quest for Transformation

Twenty. This is the number of children fathered by prison officer Tom (pictured). But it isn't without multiple challenges.

After fathering 18 daughters, Tom's goal to finally father a son was achieved. However, the number of children posed a considerable problem to the family's quality of life, with the birth of another son following. Social, economic and educational struggles ensued.

Having joined the Wise Choices for Life program in 2021, becoming an accredited trainer, Tom was able to reflect on his situation.

'We cannot change the past but when they empower us, we can change the generation to come,' he asserted. Acknowledging his own parenting faults, he seeks to inform and educate others on how to live financially viable, healthy and fulfilled lives.

He aims to transfer the empowerment gained from Wise Choices For Life to his community - focusing on the inmates in the prison.



With the overarching belief that the individual has power to change and redefine norms, the Wise Choices For Life program destigmatises issues such as reproductive health.

With greater education and knowledge, the individual is encouraged to make decisions surrounding their own health.

'I am seeing a change in my life and even the people I train', Tom explains. He encourages supporters to fund the program as it creates opportunities for truly meaningful change within Ugandan communities.

# Advocating for the Rights and Resilience of Communities in Kenya

Millicent is determined that the rights of the most vulnerable in the communities she serves will be understood, respected and their opportunities expanded.

Through her work as the program coordinator of the 'Imarisha Maisha' program in Kenya, Millicent has seen the resilience of people in communities develop through the strengths-based approach that she facilitates with her team. A strengths-based approach recognises that every person has abilities, gifts and ideas that will assist them in achieving their dreams and goals. It is an approach that has proven effective, as Millicent attests; 'When you see a mother who was living in an abusive relationship empowered to make decisions ...both economically and socially, it is very fulfilling.'

Millicent is tireless in her efforts which is demonstrated in her team's achievements, 'we recently have been supporting people living with disabilities and we felt whatever we were doing was not really enough.' However, after the county decided to include a bill for the inclusion of people living with a disability, her team got to work mobilising people's experiences, providing them a platform to share their views. They then

prepared the bill, which passed through the county assembly. Millicent reflects on the success of that achievement, 'Now people living with a disability will be recognised at the county level. They will be able to access opportunities meant for them.'



Kylie Head of International Programs at AOA (3rd from left) with Millicent (4th from left), they stand with AOA CEO Jo Knight and other AOA partners.





Millicent (left) with Lucy\*, whose family has been supported by Imarisha Maisha.

## ‘I see a society where every person will know their rights.’

Millicent works closely with Kylie, the Head of International Programs at AOA. It’s a partnership they have shared for many years and one Millicent speaks highly of. ‘The kind of partnership that I have seen between us and AOA; I would want it emulated elsewhere because it’s a partnership where they want us to be part of the design, the planning and everything, so there is no donor/

recipient relationship, it’s a partnership.’

Millicent is strengthened by the impact that she has seen in the lives of families, schools and even at a government level but is eager for more: ‘I see a society where every person will know their rights and every community member will know their responsibility to take care of his or her neighbour’s rights.’ With her passion for a just society, an effective approach and strong team her community is in safe hands.

The ‘Imarisha Maisha’ Program receives funding from the Australian Government, through the Australian NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP).



\*Name has been changed

# Celebrating 30 Years of Partnership

This year marks the 30th anniversary of generous and dedicated support from St John's Anglican Church Diamond Creek. We thank St John's for their heart for our global neighbours experiencing poverty, disasters and injustice and the way they have faithfully and obediently contributed to the work of AOA. Tim Johnson (pictured), Senior Minister of St John's and AOA board member, speaks with AOA about their longstanding partnership.



Why do you think your church community has remained committed to supporting the work of AOA?

We love the idea of being partners in God's global mission, partners with God and partners with Christians throughout the world who are doing God's work. AOA connects us with wonderful Christian people and projects in different parts of the world in a way that we wouldn't be able to achieve on our own. AOA helps us to have a sense that we are part of something much bigger than our own church and local community.

Why is supporting our global neighbours experiencing poverty, disasters and injustice important?

As well as being committed to the whole world, we know that God is committed to the whole person and the whole community. Therefore, our Christian faith calls us to share the same commitments and so support work to alleviate poverty, assist in disaster relief and work for justice. We also recognise that our ways of achieving this across different cultures may not be the best because of our own cultural biases

and blind spots. We need to be attentive to the voices of our global neighbours about what they need and the best solutions for achieving it. That's why we love the idea of partnership through AOA with Anglican churches, dioceses and agencies who are local and can do this work best.

### How has your church community benefited from the partnership with AOA?

We benefit from seeing the amazing work that God is doing around the world and the incredible resilience and faith of our Christian sisters and brothers in different places. We often can take for granted the resources, wealth, and safety that we enjoy in Australia, and so we have learned how hard it is for others in very different circumstances and yet how they find joy and exercise deep faith amid these circumstances. That is inspiring and calls us to persevere in our own circumstances, too.

### Sometimes, it can be hard to remain hopeful when working towards a world free of poverty, what helps you to remain hopeful and continue to pursue a more just world for all?

Ultimately the resurrection of Jesus gives us hope, that the full weight of injustice, death and evil could not defeat him but that he rose victorious. We live in that resurrection hope knowing that although the world is still full of injustice, death and evil it will not remain so forever. As we fix our eyes on the risen Jesus and look to his coming again to restore and

renew the whole of creation we can work now in the present to bring this amazing future forward. The work that AOA and its partners are doing, and we do with them all, is part of this great future work that we can be involved in right now.

### Are there any partners, initiatives or stories from AOA that have significantly impacted you?

There are so many over the past 30 years that have impacted our church community. We think with sadness about the devastation of the Boxing Day Tsunami in 2004 and how powerless we felt in the face of such a massive tragedy. And yet, our support through AOA was a means to channel our grief into positive action to help those in need. The same has been true in other disasters and conflicts since, including most recently, the devastation at the al-Ahli Hospital in Northern Gaza. We are impacted because partnership brings both grief and hope: grief because we are tangibly connected with the people who are suffering and so are pained by their loss, and hope because we have the means to contribute and help, even if it is in small ways. It's a privilege to have this partnership with AOA, and we look forward to the next 30 years.

Tim is also Archdeacon of the Yarra. He has served on the board of Ridley Theological College and is an Adjunct Lecturer in Practical Ministry there. Tim regularly visits Papua New Guinea to work with pastors and church leaders in his role as international facilitator for Langham Preaching.

# Towards a Renewed Creation

As floods, droughts, and natural disasters increase worldwide, those most vulnerable experience their devastation first-hand. Our partners are at the forefront of the battle with our changing climate, supporting those who are most impacted. Our partners know that our changing climate can worsen poverty, as communities face environmental damage that cripples the livelihoods of those who depend on the land for their incomes. These are their stories of change:

Pictured: Reverend Ruth teaches her community how to care for their kitchen gardens during drought.



# Cultivating Change: Resilient Farming in South Sudan

**As weather patterns change and the frequency of natural disasters increase, low-income communities face the disruption of their agriculture, livelihoods and extended disaster recovery periods.**

For those already poor, climate change worsens poverty and hunger. This crisis has devastated communities in South Sudan, where severe droughts (2011, 2015) have been followed by catastrophic flooding in recent years. The changing weather patterns have resulted in the loss of life, internal displacement and migration and the destruction of farmland and livestock. This has exacerbated the existing humanitarian crisis in the country following years of civil war.

Our partner, South Sudanese Development and Relief Agency (SSUDRA), is working to adapt to the changes in land and water and help establish sustainable practices that combat the challenges brought about by climate change. SSUDRA has worked with the local community to develop agroforestry environmental programs; vegetation is planted, bushland is managed, and crops are cultivated, which works to replenish the land and protect the remaining farmland.

The program is established with an in-depth understanding of the region's ecology, which is used to recover the land essential to the livelihoods of community members.

Abraham\* knows all too well how our changing climate is challenging our global neighbours in new ways. He joined the SSUDRA team working in South Sudan to introduce the new agroforestry practices. The project has been successful for farmers in the Diocese of Mundri, with Abraham stating, 'growth and innovation in agroforestry offers potential to improve farmland productivity, resilience and diversity, whilst restoring soil health, creating wildlife habitats and sequestering carbon'.

Your generosity helps us to work together to realise this goal, supporting the communities who need it most to recover from disasters and adapt to climate change.

\*Name has been changed

# Building a Sanctuary in the Storm

The Solomon Islands community of Surubta has depended on each other as they face continued challenges from increasing flooding. James\*, a member of the Surubta community, has been involved in responding to flooding and tidal inundation in recent years.

'We always have to rely on ourselves to respond to disasters; we don't get help from outside'. The community have implemented and managed strategies to keep people safe, including raising and widening paths to plan for evacuation when needed, particularly prioritising accessibility for disabled and elderly people using the paths. But recognising that floods and water inundation will continue into the near future, the community have seen a significant need to prepare their local church as an evacuation centre, and at last are receiving assistance.

With support from AOA, they identified that there were no accessible toilets or showers in the church building, and the trees surrounding the facility presented a danger in cyclones. A further challenge is that most warning systems, for example the church bell and sounding conch

shells, rely on a person's hearing to alert them to danger, excluding those with hearing difficulties. As a result, they have recently implemented a colour-coded flag system.

The Surubta community demonstrate a true commitment to including people with a disability and elderly community members in safety efforts, and with AOA's support through the 'Disaster READY' program, they can continue to increase their preparations for disaster in ways that strive to keep all community members safe.

Our Church Agencies Network Disaster Operations (CANDO) partners are working with communities in the Solomon Islands to ensure people with disabilities are not left behind. 'Disaster READY' is supported by the Australian Government through the Australian Humanitarian Partnership.



\*Name has been changed

# Introducing our New Partner in Ethiopia



## Anglican Overseas Aid is excited to introduce our new partnership with the Ethiopian Anglican Church Social and Development Organisation.

Ethiopia, one of Africa's most populous nations, boasts a strong and diverse cultural heritage. However, recent humanitarian crises have wreaked havoc on its local communities. To help them recover from the lasting effects of civil conflict and hardship, the Ethiopian Anglican Church Social and Development Organisation (EACSDO) is providing sustainable support to communities in Northern Ethiopia.

The Tigray region, in Northern Ethiopia is the centre of EACSDO's response efforts. The most recent conflict began in November 2020 after an extended period of complex escalating tensions and resulted in 2.2 million people becoming internally displaced and in need of critical assistance. Due to the conflict, a total of 5.2 million people in the country required food and non-food items.

Tigray's infrastructure was devastated by the conflict, with 75% of all medical facilities destroyed or looted. All schools and banks in the area closed. The conflict compounded pre-existing food insecurity from ongoing droughts and the movement of humanitarian supplies became challenging.

The conflict ended in 2022, but displaced peoples and a devastated regional community still feel the effects.

As EACSDO continue to support displaced peoples, an emerging area of need is to rebuild and restore agricultural lands so that the community can return to self-sufficiency. This is particularly the case given the environmental pressure in the area, with a lack of rain causing ongoing drought. EACSDO is working with communities to develop soil and water conservation activities to restore the land to support local families. This will also involve creating springs and protecting water sources to increase accessibility. EACSDO is also supporting Tigray regional communities by offering sustainable energy options as infrastructure is rebuilt.

We look forward to partnering with EACSDO as they undertake invaluable work that responds to communities in need.



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