



February  
2023

 **Open Doors**

# IMPACT REPORT

Where most needed

**“I thank my God every time I  
remember you. In all my  
prayers for all of you, I always  
pray with joy because of your  
partnership in the gospel from  
the first day until now.”**

PHILIPPIANS 1:3-5

**UPDATE** Private & Confidential

**PREPARED FOR** St Mildred's Parish Church - Lee

**DATE** February 2023

# Thank you

You have shown that you share a vision with our local teams around the world: to see the global church strengthened, particularly where Christians risk the most for Christ. All Open Doors partners are committed to seeing a church that worships our Lord, serves His world and tells others the good news of Christ Jesus.

Thank you for your commitment to partner with the persecuted church through prayer, advocacy and financial support. We know God is using your giving and prayers. Through the work of Open Doors projects, individuals and communities are supported and equipped to 'let [their] light shine before others' (Matthew 5:14-15).

In this report, you can read about how your financial support helps provide vital practical and spiritual support. We focus on your gift of £3,000.00 to Where Most Needed (received on 11 August 2022).

You'll find prayer points from our teams, specific to where your support has made a difference - you are welcome to share these with your trusted networks.

Thank you



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# TESTIMONY



# Nigeria



*Pictured: Charity, who received trauma care and is now helping others*



# Nigeria

The persecution facing Christians in Nigeria is extreme and often violent, as Islamic militants and armed bandits attack with increasing impunity.

Nigeria's World Watch List rank rose by two places to number seven in 2022. Christians continue to be attacked indiscriminately and brutally, especially in the north – where attacks against Christians continued even during Covid-19 travel restrictions and lockdowns. Attacks have spread south, despite these regions being Christian-majority. Fulani militants, and other violent groups, have settled into southern forests, making it difficult for Christian farmers to access their lands.

Open Doors partners with the local church to strengthen persecuted believers in Nigeria through discipleship and persecution survival training, education and community development projects, emergency relief and trauma care.

## VISION

Our vision is to enhance resilience among Nigerian Christians and ensure that they can live fruitfully and keep courageously sharing the gospel despite persecution.

## Charity Shining A Light

Charity and her three children from Nigeria were getting ready for bed when her brother ran into the home with an urgent warning: “Put out the light! Put out the light!”

Charity grabbed her youngest daughter, Patience, and quickly placed her on her back in a wrap. “We ran away towards the mountains,” Charity says. In the scramble, Charity got separated from her other two children, Theophilus and Elizabeth.

On her way back to the village the following day, Charity heard that some family members were killed in the Boko Haram attack. She was devastated; all she could think about was her missing children.

After a week with no news, Charity was alone in her mother’s house when she heard her son calling out her name. When she looked out her front door, she saw Theophilus and Elizabeth walking toward her. “I was so shocked and excited as I shouted their

names!” Charity recalls. “Seeing my children felt like a new dawn – everything changed because my lost children were back.”

When Open Doors heard about the attack, local partners in the field rushed into action to help provide emergency aid, food relief and support to rebuild, thanks to your prayers and gifts. They were also able to deliver vital trauma counselling to Charity and her family.

Later, Charity received training to help others wrestling with trauma. Because you are standing with her, she is taking the light she has received through healing and sharing it with others in her community – thank you.

“Your coming has brought about new life,” she says. “The trauma healing has really helped us to learn how to forgive, and how to let go of anger. It has given us hope of a life in the future.”



# HOPE FOR THE MIDDLE EAST





# Hope for the Middle East

Your gift is supporting the survival of the church in Iraq and Syria, in the face of the attempts of extremist Muslims to destroy it. The faithful remnant in Syria and Iraq are holding onto hope through the courage, sacrifice and long-term commitment of local Open Doors partners.

The prayers and donations of Open Doors supporters during the *Hope for the Middle East* campaign have helped Syrian and Iraqi Christians open 160 and 126 Centres of Hope respectively – and there are plans for more.

Centres of Hope are places (often church buildings) where the local church can support their community practically and spiritually. The church is trained and resourced to run projects in their community. No two centres are quite the same, but they share the vision to be light in the darkness, to reach out with Christ's love. Centres of Hope provide Christians and communities with what they need: hope and new perspective through Christ.

The activities and provision differ depending on the context, but often include vital food and medical aid, Bible study and discipleship, training, income-generating projects and trauma care. It's hard to overstate the impact they're having.

## VISION

We want to see the church in the Middle East restored as a beacon of hope by rebuilding people and homes, transforming the church to be a centre of hope, and campaigning to enable a hopeful future for Christians.

## Centres of Hope provide food

“We wanted to stand by the elderly people who are left alone with no one caring for them.” According to Nariman Khoury, that summarises the reason why, four years ago, the charity kitchen started functioning from the Mar Elias Greek Orthodox church in al-Hwash. The church is one of the Centres of Hope run by Open Doors partners in Syria.



*Woman cooking in charity kitchen*

The smell of food fills the church hall. About a dozen women are preparing lunch for 150 elderly people who, again, will receive a delicious meal today. In front of the building, on fires, the kibe are baked. Inside the building, a sweet rice porridge is prepared. Soon, the first couriers will depart from here to take the meals to the beneficiaries.

Nariman explains “We help those people who can’t help themselves. Their children often left the country, or they don’t have children at all. The forgotten individuals. Two days a week they receive a healthy meal for free.”

The church doesn’t want people to depend on the food they prepare in the kitchen. The families who are still young enough to work can apply for microloans to start their own business. The church successfully invested in several new businesses like a sawmill and a blacksmith shop. “They have to start paying back after three months. Only 20% of the total amount they got needs to be paid back. We hope this helps the young generation to stay in Syria.”



## Making hope last in Syria

Pastor Edward's Centre of Hope is making hope last for his Syrian community in various ways, through projects established during *Hope for the Middle East*.

“It’s a prolonged crisis, without seeing an end,” says Pastor Edward. “On the other hand, we experience divine light amid darkness.”

Pastor Edward and his wife, Rana, started a medical clinic in 2006 called ‘Jesus, Light of the World’. The clinic serves 1,500 people a month – both Christian and Muslim. It shines Christ’s light to the community, most of whom couldn’t otherwise afford healthcare.

“Most of the patients are non-Christians,” says Pastor Edward. “They can tell that there is something different in this clinic. Most of our doctors and staff are committed Christians who really try to serve medically and, at the same time, bring the cure of Christ.”

It’s clear that the clinic is having a significant impact – thanks to people like Pastor Edward, and to your prayers and gifts. “People feel the respect and love of our staff,” says Pastor Edward. “Many of them ask questions about Christ and about the Word of God. Patients in the clinic come from all backgrounds, and especially people from non-Christian backgrounds love the clinic.”



*Pastor Edward and his wife Rana*



# India



*Pictured: Pastor praying with a believer on a persecution survival course*



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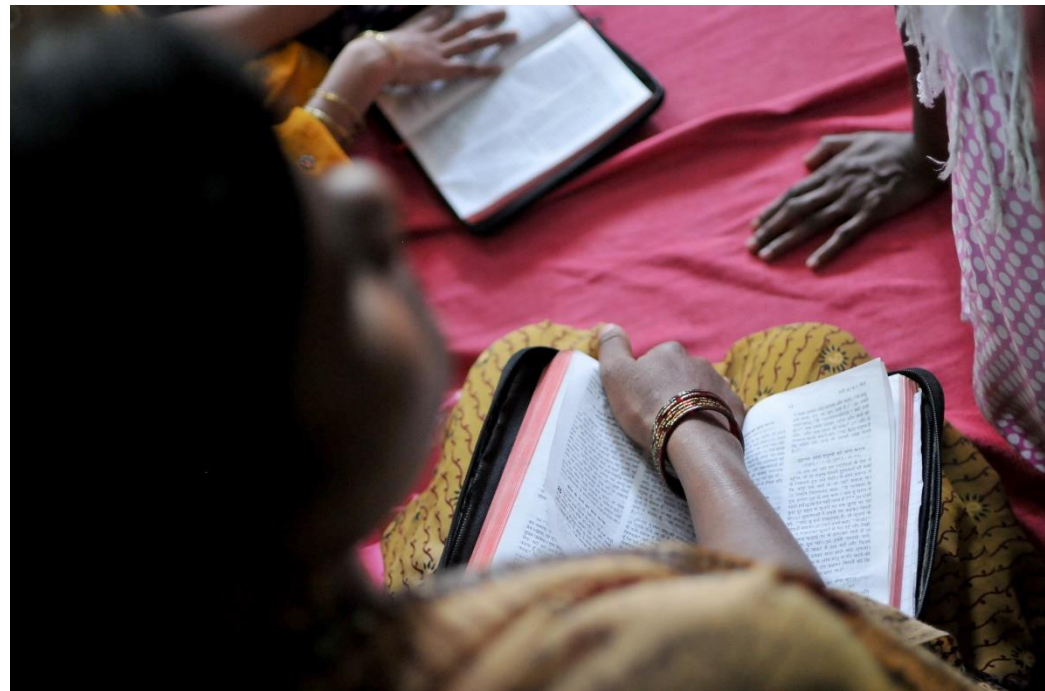
# India

The persecution of Christians in India is intensifying as Hindu extremists aim to 'cleanse' the country of their presence and influence.

The driving force behind this is Hindutva, which seeks to 'purify' India of non-Hindu influences. The ideology disregards Indian Christians and other religious minorities as true Indians because they have are believed to have allegiances that lie outside India.

Hindutva is leading to carefully orchestrated, often violent targeting of Christians and other religious minorities, including use of social media to spread disinformation and stir up hatred.

Thanks to your support, Open Doors partners are strengthening the church in India by providing Bibles, emergency aid, persecution survival training, livelihood training and community development projects.



*Women's Bible study in India*

## Kusum

Widow Kusum\* has endured so much because of her faith in Jesus. In 2016 she was blamed for her husband's death and was prevented from burying her own son, all because of her faith in Christ. As Kusum grew deeper in faith, she faced constant verbal abuse from other villagers. Her father-in-law called her faith toxic and once approached her with an axe, threatening her life.

Kusum and her fellow believers bring all this pressure before the throne of grace. "In my village, there is a prayer meeting three days a week. When we gather for prayer, we pray for all Christians who are facing persecution. At the same time, I explain to all those believers that no matter how much persecution comes, we have to remain in the Word of God. We must be ready to face persecution."

For six years, Open Doors local partners have been walking with Kusum thanks to your support and prayers. Though she is still shunned by many for her faith, she keeps on sharing the Jesus she loves.

*\*Name changed to protect identity*

"I am surviving thanks to you.  
To all of those who pray, I give  
thanks."



*Young widow Kusum praying*



## A future for Shivani

Shivani\* is only in her mid-30s and she has already suffered so much, especially since becoming a Christian – including violence at the hands of her husband. But thanks to your prayers and gifts, local Open Doors partners in India have helped her to establish a business of her own and ensure that her faith remains unshaken.



*Shivani in the beauty parlour*

Shivani was raised a Hindu, and her troubles began after she was married. “Mine was an arranged marriage fixed up by my family,” she says. “My in-laws seemed well-to-do, and my parents thought I would have a comfortable life. Much to my horror, a few months into the marriage, I found out that my husband was an extreme alcoholic and very abusive.”

After Shivani came to know Christ things became even harder for her. Open Doors partners stepped in to help when they heard about Shivani. Thanks to the provision of your gifts and prayers, Shivani was offered counselling and, with the blessing of her family, was helped to set up a small beauty parlour business.

Shivani is very happy about what the future may hold for her, though she still faces a lot of harassment. “Despite all my afflictions, I am very hopeful,” she says. “God remembered me and I know, deep down, He preserves me as the apple of His eye.

Your ongoing support means that local Open Doors partners in India are continuing to reach out to Christian women facing violence – including domestic abuse – because of their faith.

*\*Name changed to protect identity*

# THE IMPACT OF YOUR GIFT

## The impact of your gift

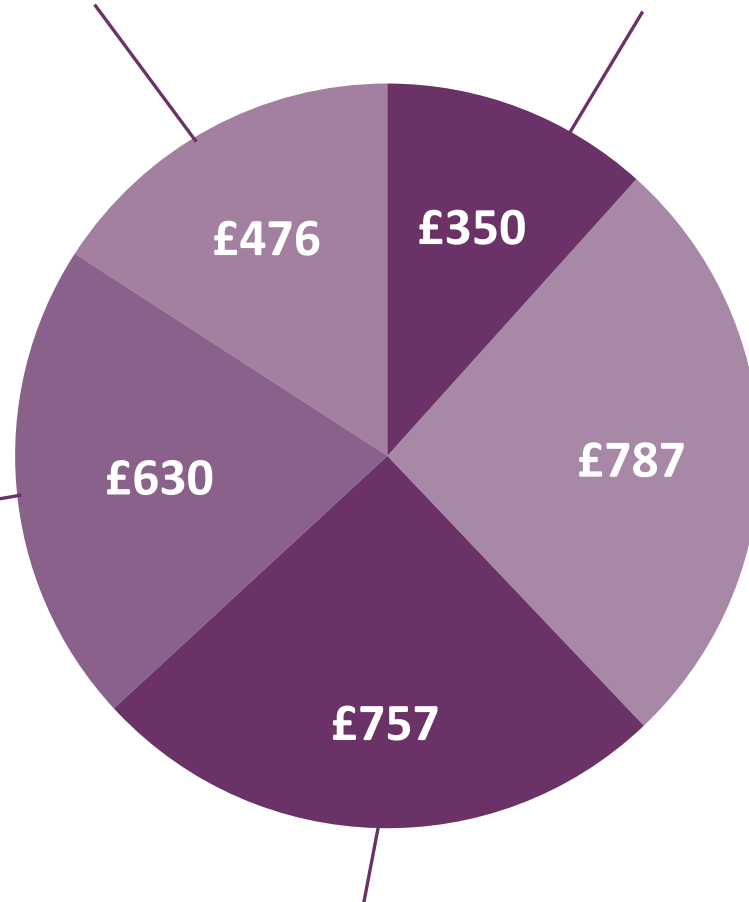
The following summary provides an illustration of the work your generosity may have supported. Your gift of **£3,000.00** has been a great blessing to our persecuted family where it is most difficult to be a Christian:

*All illustrations using recent project costs.*

**£630** helps give 18 persecuted Christians **training and support for their small business**, so they can provide for their family and community

**£476** helps provide a safe space for 8 women to meet and receive **extensive spiritual support and training**

**£350** enables 14 vulnerable believers to access **essential health services**



**£787** provides **emergency food, medicine and shelter** for 37 believers affected by violent persecution

**£757** provides **Bibles** for 61 believers to help them grow in faith





*Pictured: Teacher, Ferial, with her students at a Centre of Hope*



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**PLEASE PRAY**





## Prayer requests

- That God will continue to heal Charity and her children and that He will bless Charity's ministry
- For Open Doors local partners in Nigeria, that God will protect them as they deliver vital aid and support
- That the Lord will pour out His peace over Nigeria and bring an end to the spread of violence
- For God to equip and strengthen Pastor Edward and all other Open Doors partners in the Middle East
- For Centres of Hope to flourish, helping the church in the Middle East to survive, thrive and share the love of Christ
- That Shivani's business, and her faith, will continue to grow and bless those around her
- For Open Doors partners in India as they continue to reach out to vulnerable Christian women.

"I am so grateful. Your prayers have really kept me going,  
I am so happy, thank you so much." - **Ijanada**



# THANK YOU

Your support and prayers make work like this possible.

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