



CAFOD at Mass Lobby 2025 at Parliament Square  
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In this Jubilee year, when we have all been called upon to be pilgrims of hope, we are pleased to share with you our Summer Update 2025, and to sincerely thank you for your continued prayers, generosity and support.

In the face of so many challenges, conflict, hunger, and the growing impacts of climate change, we are also seeing incredible signs of hope. Thanks to your support, countless families are being reached in times of crisis, and communities are building towards a more just, peaceful and sustainable future.

Whether it's providing clean water, emergency food, healthcare or supporting people to rebuild their livelihoods, you standing in solidarity and hope is making a real lasting difference.

We hope the updates below will inspire you. Everything we do is only possible through God's grace and steadfast compassion, prayers and generosity of our loyal supporters like you.

**Thank you for walking alongside us.**





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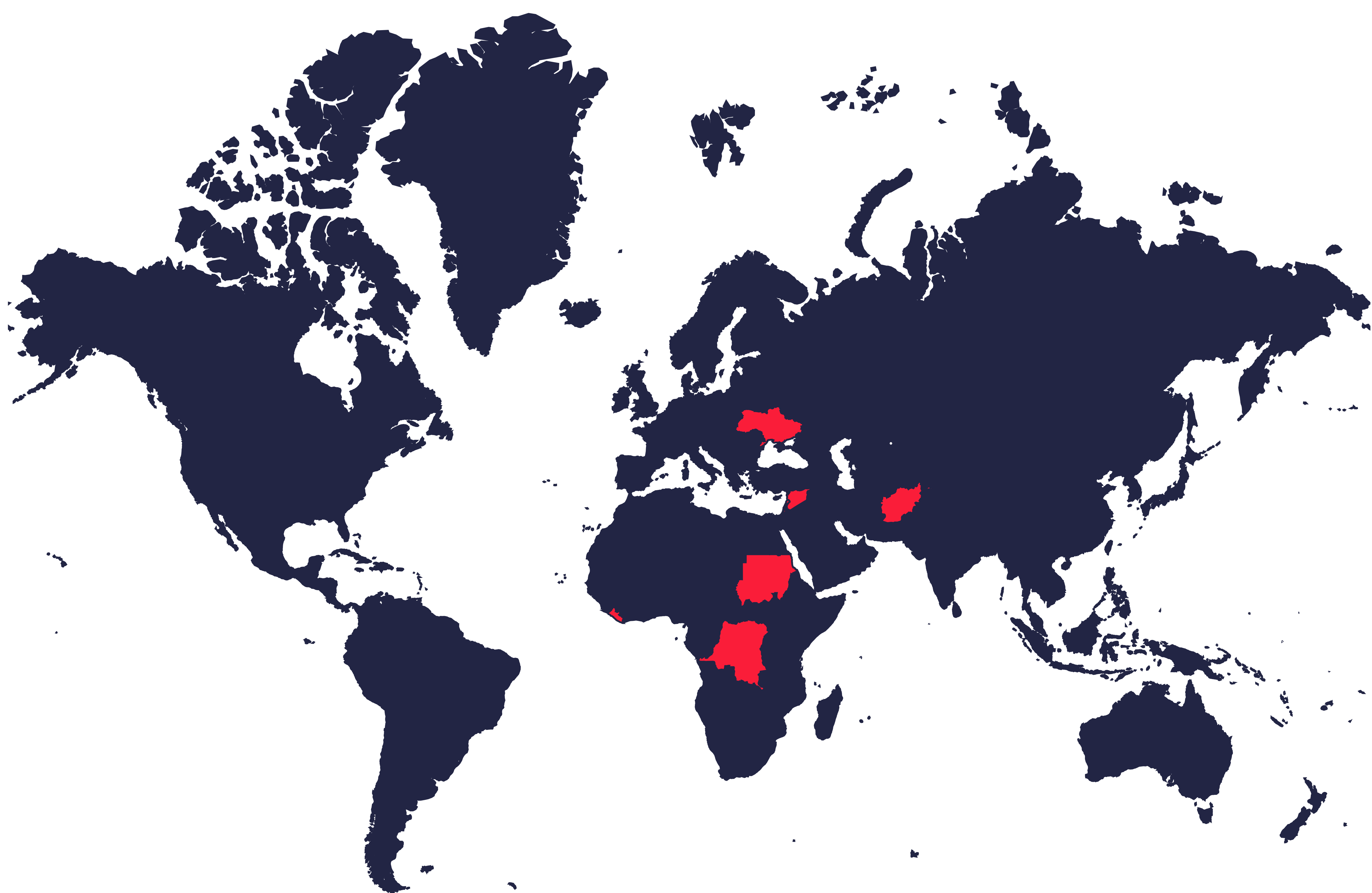
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## Countries featured in this update:





## Middle East - The occupied Palestinian territory and Lebanon

### **This update serves to show the impact of the appeals we ran for the Middle East and as part of the DEC (Disasters Emergency Committee)**

The escalation of the conflict in Gaza, Lebanon and the West Bank and Israel has left millions of lives devastated with widespread displacement, economic destruction and spiralling humanitarian needs. CAFOD is responding to these urgent crisis while continuing to support those affected by longstanding conflicts and divisions. We began supporting our partners in Gaza immediately following the outbreak of hostilities in Oct 2023 and continue to work with them including as part of the DEC appeal for the Middle East. We have appealed for help in Lebanon as the conflict between Lebanon and Hezbollah escalated.

You have helped our local partners keep going, often in the face of immense challenges and great personal risk, tirelessly reaching out with dignity and hope to families who cannot escape the violence.

In Lebanon, our partners have supported the immediate needs of communities and internally displaced people (IDPs). Our partner Association Najdeh distributed emergency food parcels, hygiene kits, mattresses and bedding to over 7000 IDPs in Palestinian refugee camps and host communities across Lebanon. Through Caritas Lebanon's emergency appeal, people have received support, including food kits, meals, clothes, hygiene and dignity kits as well as legal support and protection services. Our other local partner, Basmeh & Zeitooneh has reached 3,687 through the DEC who provided multipurpose cash assistance.

Alongside the provision of essential supplies, our partner CFTA is working tirelessly to support displaced families. They have sheltered over 3,500 people in their centres and provided food for them, as well as for more than 1,500 displaced families living in the surrounding areas. Their teams distribute emergency food parcels and shelter items, and create safe spaces for children affected by trauma to play, draw, learn and participate in cultural activities, offering vital respite from the relentless bombardment all around them. They also work to restore dignity and empower communities by forming committees where displaced people affected by the conflict can take part in decision-making and play an active role in the practical delivery of the aid they receive, ensuring assistance is not only life-saving, but respectful, inclusive, and community-led.

Working conditions are near unimaginable - the mobile clinics are forced to relocate depending on where it's safest to operate – but the incredible women and men of the Caritas team are still doing all they can to bring much-needed aid to those who need it most. Please keep everyone working at or making use of the clinics in your prayers.

Other local partners are providing food and shelter for displaced families. However, they report growing difficulty in sourcing food, with the nutritional value of meals declining sharply.

This crucial work has been made possible with your support - but as the crisis continues to spiral out of control and thousands face starvation, further donations are needed now more than ever. Caritas Jerusalem report that every sector of civilian life in Gaza is collapsing and has issued an urgent appeal for international intervention to prevent further loss of life and human dignity.

Our partner CFTA report that food stocks are increasingly difficult to replenish due to severe restrictions on aid entering Gaza. The nutritional value of meals is declining sharply, and many people are already going without nourishment. Even so, their teams are finding ways to stretch what supplies they have, sourcing from what little is available locally, pooling resources, and ensuring that every possible meal reaches those most in need. Your continued generosity can help them act quickly when food becomes available, keep hot meals going for thousands, and provide lifelines to families who would otherwise have nothing.

With your support our Church partner Caritas Jerusalem is operating medical points across Gaza, treating chronic illnesses, running pharmacies (though dangerously low on supplies), and supporting families mentally and physically through this crisis.

Separately, a medical point was evacuated in response to the announced threat of ground invasion, to safeguard staff and patients. Upon return, staff found the facility damaged and in need of urgent repair. In the West Bank our partners report that Christian communities are also under attack.



Medical centre in Khan Younis in Gaza © Caritas Jerusalem



Caritas Jerusalem report that every sector of civilian life in Gaza is collapsing and has issued an urgent appeal for international intervention to prevent further loss of life and human dignity.

Tragically they were forced suspend medical services at the Holy Family Church shelter due to risk of attack. With nowhere else to go, displaced families chose to remain at the shelter but on the morning of 17th July the church was hit by a shell. The blast landed near the cross on the church roof, sending shrapnel and debris across the courtyard and causing widespread panic. Three people were killed, including the parish janitor, reportedly due to the lack of medical supplies at nearby hospitals. Ten more were injured, including parish priest Fr Romanelli. *We pray for them.*

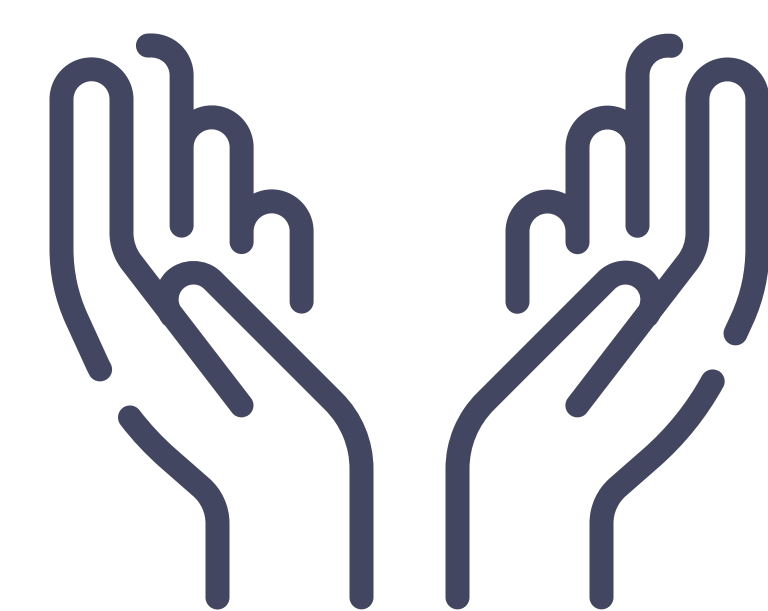
Despite all this, they have managed to secure a small but important delivery of new medicines in Gaza, thanks to a World Health Organisation donation and access to some local vendors.

While limited, this has helped bolster depleted stocks. In addition, 1,400 households received multi-purpose cash assistance as part of the DEC-funded project. Follow-ups and post-distribution monitoring are underway to confirm receipt and assess whether the support is meeting priority needs.

In Gaza and the West Bank, Catholic Relief Services have previously provided essential assistance to those impacted by the fighting, delivering vital emergency support to over a million people - providing shelter, cash assistance, and psychological support, with 172,994 households having been provided with food parcels.

Alongside the provision of essential supplies, one of our local partners is providing opportunities for displaced children who have suffered trauma to play, draw and participate in cultural activities in order to receive respite from the relentless bombardment all around them.

The Catholic Church calls for peace.

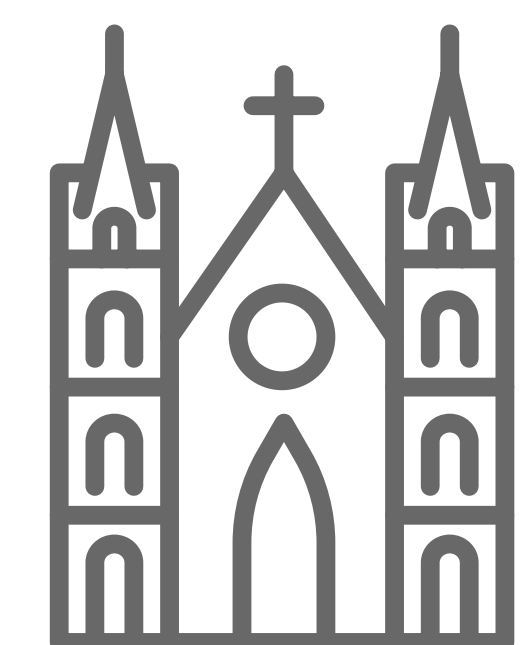


On 22 July, Cardinal Pierbattista Pizzaballa, the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, offered a powerful reflection on the suffering in Gaza:

**“Christ is not absent from Gaza. He is there — crucified in the wounded, buried beneath the rubble, and yet present in every act of mercy, every candle in the darkness, every hand extended to the suffering.”**

Pope Leo also reiterated the call for peace and that international law must be respected.

**“I once again call for an immediate end to the barbarity of this war ... I renew my appeal to the international community to observe humanitarian law.”**



Above and below, CAFOD’s partner, Caritas Jerusalem, continues to run health consultations and provide medicines, despite the challenges in Gaza. © Caritas Jerusalem

One user of the medical centre told us **“I am diabetic and I was displaced from the north to Khan Younis .**

**We came here for the treatment for diabetes, thank God we found this excellent medical team and received very good care. We need a medical point in this area and in this situation”**





**Pray for peace in the Middle East**

Our vision is for a future where all the people who call the Middle East home can live in peace with justice and security for all. We grieve for all the lives that have been lost and are deeply concerned about the lack of progress towards a more sustainable future. The conflict has devastated lives and livelihoods. Access for essential supplies has reached its lowest level and the risk of famine deepens.

Hope for a just and sustainable peace dwindles. Inspired by the courageous work of our partners, please continue praying for peace, for a just solution and for an end to the conflict which has seen the loss of so many innocent lives.

Many supporters have also raised their voices to ask our government to take bolder and more decisive action to call for an end to the crisis. And it's clear that the message is getting through.

In late July, Sir Keir Starmer made a statement of plans for the UK to officially recognise Palestine as a state for the first time in history if a ceasefire is not declared. That the UK is considering recognition of a Palestinian state shows that people pressure is working. But the PM 's words must be backed up by concrete measures. The UK government must take deliberate action to stop the war in Gaza, to uphold international law and to work towards a just peace for all.

*They will hammer their swords into ploughshares and their spears into sickles. Nation will not lift sword against nation, no longer will they learn how to make war.*  
**ISAIAH 2:4**

*God of peace, bearer of hope,  
we seek your help  
for the peoples of the Middle East.*

*Quiet the clamour of war  
and guide us towards peace.*

*Where there is hatred and division sow  
seeds of calm and openness.*

*Where there is destruction  
help us to rebuild.*

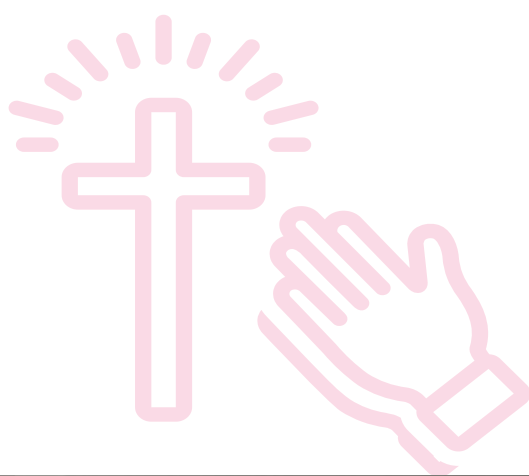
*Where children are crying  
bring an end to tears.*

*Shelter your peoples and protect them*

*Guide them and keep them from harm.*

*Show us how to break down the barriers  
of history and fear  
and breathe whispers of hope.  
Amen.*

*Linda Jones / CAFOD*



Children in the health centre in Khan Younis, Gaza © Caritas Jerusalem



“It's an important statement, but the key thing behind it is that we are beyond the point of needing statements. We need concrete action. There has to be a ceasefire. There has to be the space to be able to start real negotiations towards that. And we also have to be in a position where we are tackling the situation of famine. It is intolerable that there is an entirely preventable famine about to unfold in front of us, and that demands immediate action. We can't wait.”

Janet Symes, Head of our work in the Middle East

”

This shows the government is listening and have heard our calls for peace – but we must not let up until a ceasefire is reached.

### What action on Gaza is CAFOD calling for?



More than 100 organisations (including CAFOD) are urging governments to take decisive action to:

- open all land crossings
- restore the full flow of food, clean water, medical supplies, shelter items and fuel through a principled, UN-led mechanism
- end the siege
- agree to a ceasefire now.

**Tell your MP we need action on Gaza**

## Sudan: A catastrophic emergency unfolding



Mary\*, 45yrs, with her son Hussein talks with Ibrahim Njuguna, CAFOD's Head of Humanitarian (right). \*Mary and Hussein are pseudonyms. © Africa Development Aid (ADA Development)

After more than two years of relentless conflict, Sudan is facing one of the most severe humanitarian and displacement crises in modern history. The scale of suffering is staggering and tragically, it continues to grow.

The war has forced over **11.4 million people** from their homes, with more than **3 million refugees** fleeing into neighbouring countries. Over **10 million** are displaced within Sudan itself. Camps in South Sudan, particularly along the White Nile, are stretched to four times their intended capacity and are now seeing returnees who are coming back mainly from Khartoum, where infrastructure has been destroyed and there is no electricity or water, empty handed and with no homes therefore they often end up in camps in White Nile.

Fighting between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) has engulfed nearly the entire country. Millions of families are now battling famine, disease, and violence. The need for food, shelter and healthcare is at a record high.

Climate change is compounding the crisis. Last year's rainy season brought devastating floods that destroyed homes and farmland and triggered deadly outbreaks of cholera. The disease has spread rapidly, especially in newly contested areas where water systems have been destroyed. In May 2025 alone, over **7,000 cases** of cholera were reported. a **400% increase** from April. With the next rainy season imminent, the situation is expected to deteriorate further. At the same time, **hunger is spiralling**. In 2024, **750,000 people faced extreme hunger** and food insecurity continues to grow at an alarming rate.



## The Catholic community has not looked away

Thanks to your generous support to our appeal last year, CAFOD continues to provide critical humanitarian assistance in Sudan, even as many aid agencies have been forced to withdraw. Our work is possible only through deep-rooted partnerships with local organisations who understand the needs of their communities and can access areas others cannot. Together with these partners, we're reaching people with life-saving aid: food, clean water, essential hygiene, shelter, and mental health support.

**Telley Sadia, CAFOD's Country Representative for Sudan, shares: "As this conflict rages into its third year, the humanitarian situation here in Sudan is devastating. 30 million people are in desperate need of assistance, and yet they are being largely ignored by the international community.**

**"Our local partners are providing essentials such as food, shelter, clean water and toilets to prevent the spread of disease, as well as treating acute malnutrition and offering psychosocial support. Working through local partners enables us to reach communities that larger organisations struggle to access."**

### Real Stories: Nadia's Struggle for Survival

**Nadia\* is a Sudanese mother displaced by the conflict who now lives in a refugee camp. Her husband has been missing for over a year.** She told CAFOD about her efforts to earn a living, but says the funds she raises are barely sufficient to purchase even the most basic foodstuffs.

**"We hope God will stop the war so we can return to our homes and normal lives. We came here as refugees from the war."  
"We are trying to make a living. We go to collect firewood to sell it. We also go to the village next to the camp to harvest okra. One basket is worth £400(Sd) Sudanese pounds (equivalent to 50p in the UK), sometimes I get £800(SDG) Sudanese pounds (equivalent to £1.02 in the UK), but it's not enough to buy ¼ of a kilogram of flour."**

Thanks to your support, Nadia and her family now receive safe water regularly.

**"We were suffering from lack of water. But after CAFOD's intervention, a water tank now arrives every two days."**

\* a pseudonym



Click or visit [cafod.org.uk/news/emergencies-news/conflict-in-sudan-standing-together](https://cafod.org.uk/news/emergencies-news/conflict-in-sudan-standing-together) to watch and find out more.



### Emergency food packages and soup kitchens:

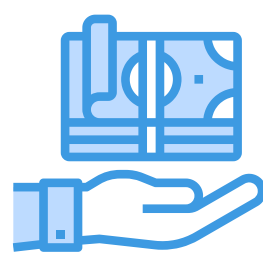
CAFOD partners have been providing emergency food packages and access to hot-soup kitchens to families who have been forced to flee their homes, as well as the communities hosting them.



### Improving access to clean water:

The ongoing conflict has led to water pipelines being damaged, resulting in communities not having access to clean water and having to resort to fetching water from unsafe locations.

CAFOD's local partners have been working to repair damaged water pipelines and construct new water facilities to.



### Providing cash assistance:

CAFOD's cash voucher programmes are helping vulnerable families to buy essentials like food and hygiene kits to stay healthy and prevent the spread of dangerous diseases like cholera.





## From Relief to Resilience: A Long-Term Vision

Through our **Every Second Counts** funding, we provided over **£350,000** in Sudan and South Sudan last year. This helped us reach:

- **165,150 people** with emergency food, clean water, cash assistance, and refugee support
  - **300,000 people** with critical healthcare to help curb the spread of disease
- But we know emergency aid alone is not enough. The people of Sudan need sustainable, community-led solutions that enable them to rebuild their lives with dignity and resilience.

CAFOD has worked in Sudan for more than 50 years, through the **Caritas Internationalis** network and with the **Sudan Council of Churches**. In the face of one of the world's most urgent and overlooked humanitarian crises, we remain steadfast, and we are deeply grateful for your continued support.

**Thank you for standing with the people of Sudan**



CAFOD has helped to provide emergency water and toilets in the camp. - *Sudan crisis: refugee camp - March 2025*

© Photo courtesy of CAFOD's partner





## Update on Afghanistan

Sadly, since the Taliban's return to power in 2021, Afghanistan has faced deepening political, economic and social crises. An estimated 22.9 million people are currently in need of assistance in Afghanistan, with a population of around 40 million.

Afghanistan is a culturally conservative society. For women, work is forbidden, girls over 12 are banned from school, public spaces are closed off, access to healthcare and other basic services is reduced. The country's economy relies heavily on foreign aid. It doesn't export many goods and collects little in taxes. This, along with record high unemployment, has led to millions of people not having enough food.

Rural communities often rely on farming to support their families but, unfortunately, the climate crisis has made them vulnerable to extreme weather that can affect the growth of their crops.

### How we're responding.

Together we can build a better world. Donations from people like you mean we are able to work closely with local experts within Afghanistan, who are supporting families through the complex challenges they face.

Our partners in Afghanistan are currently working on projects that are building resilience to climate disasters, supporting small business, and promoting rights and uplifting voices.

### How your support is making a difference:



#### Building resilience to climate disasters

We are forming local committees that work closely with community members to develop new skills for adapting to climate change.

This includes working with experts to build flood defences, which protect homes and farms from extreme flooding.

This means that families can continue to support themselves and grow food before, during and after a disaster.



#### Promoting rights and uplifting voices

We listen and learn from local experts who identify key priorities for their community. We support community groups and committees in raising issues for local power holders to implement change.

This includes improving the access of marginalised Afghans to vital local services, such as health, education and justice.

We also strengthen the capacity of Afghan civil society to lead and advocate for change and to influence decisions that impact the work and wellbeing of the communities that they support.



#### Supporting small businesses

With your help, we provide better access for vulnerable Afghan women and men to a range of livelihoods, for example by supporting small business development and entrepreneurship through practical training

One key project has been providing humanitarian and livelihood support across three provinces in Afghanistan. This has involved distributing food assistance and hygiene kits; providing skills training; and raising awareness about women's rights. Key recent impacts have included:

- The percentage of people reporting acceptable food consumption scores increased from 12% to 96%, thanks to the delivery of food packages, along with hygiene kits.
- 200 women in Kunduz and Bamyan provinces (100 women) and in Kabul (100 women) were supported with skill training and institutional support, aiming to empower them economically by building their capacity to generate sustainable livelihoods.
- 76% of supported women reported easier access to basic services such as healthcare, education and legal support, following the advocacy and awareness raising sessions organised in the target communities.





One of the male participants of the project awareness raising sessions in Bamyan said:

***I always believed that a woman's role was limited to household jobs. However, after attending a series of awareness sessions, my perspectives began to shift. These sessions highlighted the importance of women's rights, education, and economic participation for the improvement of families and communities.***

A woman supported by the project said:

***Previously, I often asked my husband to allow our daughter to attend school, but he always refused. After attending the sessions, his mindset changed. I'm excited and surprised that he has now agreed.***

Awareness raising session – Bamyan  
Awareness raising session – Bamyan.

© CAFOD's partner organisation

## Update on Ukraine

Three years of conflict has left Ukrainians displaced, traumatised and facing an uncertain future. CAFOD's partners continue to support their local communities, while being directly affected by the conflict themselves.

During Advent we told you about Maria and her family. Maria, her husband and four children fled from their home in the Berdyansk Region, in the south-east of Ukraine, which is now under Russian occupation. They were displaced to a village on the other side of the country. They found a new house to live in and made vital repairs to make it liveable but when the temperature dropped as low as minus 20C, Maria, like any mother, became scared for her four children.

Caritas Ukraine helped provide firewood to keep out the winter cold. Maria described their help as a lifeline for her family: "***When the firewood arrived, it was like a playground for the little ones. Our emotions were off the scale because we knew it was our lifeline in winter.***"

Maria's new neighbours welcomed her family and helped them settle in, and during planting season older community members worked with them to help plant potatoes to feed the family.



Another partner DePaul Ukraine told us

**“Depaul Ukraine has supported homeless people in Ukraine since 2007, so we know that winter is a dangerous time. Every year, homeless people die in Ukraine due to hyperthermia and frostbite. This year, there will be significantly more homeless people, as well as people whose homes have been damaged during the war. During the winter months, we will continue delivering food, hygiene and medical supplies. Depaul’s large-scale humanitarian response has transported more than 1000 tonnes of food aid, hygiene items and medical equipment into the country.”**  
**– Fr Vitaliy Novak, CEO of DePaul Ukraine as of December 2024**

**We are delighted to say we can hear more from Maria herself:**



***Last winter, we had the opportunity to interact with social workers through the Opika project from Caritas Khmelnytskyi. I’m very grateful to Caritas and the local community for these meetings with psychologists, and for the children’s celebrations. These gatherings were important not only for the children but also for us adults. They gave us a sense of connection, a space to feel free, to draw the world we carry inside.***

***For this, I am sincerely thankful. I’m grateful to Caritas, to the community, to everyone who takes part and sacrifices something to help families like mine.***

***My attitude toward the war hasn’t changed. I want this horror to end even more than before. I want to return home.***

***I am deeply thankful to all the donors, project organizers, and everyone who makes this support possible. Help is not only material—it can be spiritual, too. And for that, I am especially grateful.”***

***“My name is Maria. I would like to share a small part of my story since last winter. My family and I have been living in Bulgaria for about six months now. The children attended a Bulgarian school and have completed the academic year, and our youngest daughter goes to kindergarten.***

***Right now, we are facing challenges with integration: new people, a new language, a new culture. It’s always hard to adjust. I especially want to thank Caritas Khmelnytskyi (one of Caritas Ukraine’s Diocesan offices) for the support we received last winter.***

***That help was extremely important to us because we couldn’t afford to buy firewood for the entire heating season. Thanks to that support, we were able not only to stay warm but also to cook our food. It was a comfort to hear the fire crackling in the stove — and to feel the warmth of the people who made it possible for us to feel physical warmth again.***

***But even more than that, we felt emotional warmth, and we are deeply grateful for that.***

***These are not easy times for us. We are trying to get used to new surroundings and new people. But there are also kind people whose smiles and support help keep us going.***

Maria and her family in Bulgaria in 2025 above and right © CAFOD's partner organisation.





Tetiana Stawnychy, president of Caritas Ukraine, attributed the strength of the response to the international Catholic community:

***“There is something about the way the Caritas family works. It’s a community – a community of people who are supporting one another – and there is a strength in that solidarity that is acting in opposition to the war, destruction and chaos.”***

For further information visit:  
<https://cafod.org.uk/about-us/where-we-work/ukraine>

**During 2024:**

- **We reached 83,281 people in Ukraine.**
- **Our Ukrainian partners on the ground – all affected by the conflict themselves – still provided 17,038 people with emergency food packages and hot meals, and provided cash to another 3,840 people to purchase emergency supplies themselves.**
- **We supported 14,496 Ukrainians with fuel, winter clothing and bedding during the harsh winter, and housed 2,194 people who had lost their homes in emergency accommodation. We repaired 79 families’ houses which had been damaged by shelling.**
- **Our trained psychologists worked with 4,776 children and adults in group and individual mental health and psychosocial support counselling sessions.**

# Supporting communities and their livelihoods

## Liberia fishing communities

Last year we shared the story of James and his fellow fisherfolk who were really benefitting from working with our local partner, Caritas and Development Office Monrovia (CDOM). They have helped to improve knowledge of fishers through training in safety, navigation, fishing handling and hygiene. They have also provided crucial equipment, including a fish finder which uses GPS.

The project is a great example of how your support can help people develop their livelihoods.



The GPS Fish finder © Caritas and Development Office Monrovia (CDOM)

**A total of 200 fishermen have gone through training.** This training illustrates different safety measures; how to use the navigational equipment; improved fish handling and hygiene practices. It also covers sustainable fishing practices such as the protection of marine species (i.e. protected species such as dolphin, turtles, etc.); mitigation of overfishing; seasonal breaks in fishing to allow fish to reproduce; the use of acceptable fishing equipment and materials to protect marine environment and juvenile fish species.

**400 fishmongers have had 2-days hygiene and fish processing training** to learn how to reduce post-harvest losses and to keep the fish fresh and clean to maintain its actual monetary value for market.

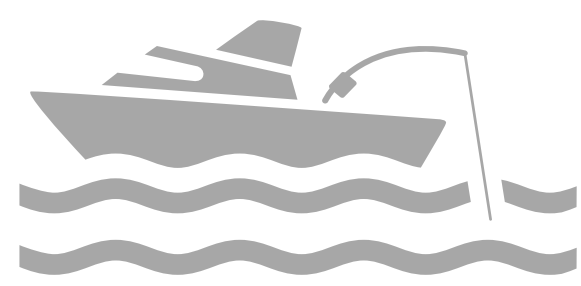
The fishmongers have **access to a solar grid** to preserve their fresh fish and avoid using wood and unsafe ovens to smoke the fish.  
**Our local expert can also** link the fisherfolks with the vendor that imports fish finders/GPS and procure fish products at fair market prices and also improve access to other potential markets.



As for James, he is currently doing his fishing business in Buchanan, Grand Bassa County due to poor catch in Monrovia. Fishers frequently travel to nearby locations where they can catch more fish during a particular fishing season and return home when the season is over. Grand Bassa County is 2-hours away from Monrovia.

The poor catch in Monrovia is also attributed to climate change and high competition from industrial boats and bigger canoes. His family is in Monrovia while he does his fishing business in Bassa.

Our partner, Caritas Monrovia is also currently implementing the extension of the fishery project in Grand Bassa.



***"I'm James Pyne; we travel from Monrovia, Popo Beach to be precise and came to Grand Bassa to hustle. Things are not easy in Monrovia where we fish so we travel to Bassa to make life easy by catching more fish for some time. We will be traveling back home at the end of June or the first week in July 2025.***

***While in Bassa, things are not easy, but we are making efforts to catch fish.***

***We left the landing site, and we are on the sea now to fish. We will be here for 2 days and here is our icebox with ice blocks inside for preserving the fish.***

***Here is the system we're using, the Fish Finder/GPS which was given to us by CAFOD. Also as a participant I want for the project to continue so more fishermen can benefit. We want to appreciate CAFOD Liberia and the UK.***

James on his boat © Caritas and Development Office Monrovia (CDOM)

## Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)

Last Autumn we told you the story of Daniel who was working in a carpentry project run by our partner in DRC. Unfortunately due to the precarious situation in DRC and in order to safeguard Daniel's safety we have not been able to get an update from him, however we also worked with a wonderful lady, Bernadette, whom we are able to update you on.

We can tell you that during the course of 2024, we reached more than 100,000 people in DRC:

- CAFOD assisted 168,775 people with the distribution of food, as well as items like jerry cans for storing water and hygiene kits for women and girls.
- Alongside other Catholic agencies, CAFOD built water systems to provide clean, safe water to around 50,000 people.
- CAFOD reached 47,968 people affected by flooding with emergency cash support so families could choose how to meet their immediate needs.



## Bernadette’s story: rebuilding with courage and creativity

Bernadette was forced to flee unimaginable violence in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo when armed rebels attacked her village, burning homes and killing many. Pregnant and accompanied by her four sons, she made a harrowing journey on foot across the country. Along the way, she tragically lost her baby before eventually finding safety in Goma.

Life in displacement was incredibly difficult. With her husband serving in the army and often unable to provide support, Bernadette struggled to feed her children and keep them in school. But things began to change when she joined the mushroom cultivation programme run by CAFOD’s local partner, CAJED. After four determined attempts to enrol, she was finally accepted and everything shifted.

With training and support, Bernadette began growing mushrooms at home, using them to feed her family and generate a small income. The project helped her pay for school fees for her two youngest daughters and regain a sense of dignity, purpose, and stability. She also joined a women’s savings group and began dreaming of growing her business further.

Thanks to your support, women like Bernadette are not only rebuilding their lives after crisis but investing in the future of their families and communities.

The vocational training project in Goma, is a lifeline for women like Bernadette. Although the situation in the region remains volatile, we’re pleased to share that since last September, the project has now reopened, and we recently caught up with Bernadette at her home.

Since February 2025, Bernadette has had to pause mushroom production due to challenges in sourcing seeds locally. However, with resilience and initiative, she has shifted focus to making and selling charcoal braziers, a business she was able to start with proceeds from her earlier mushroom harvests.

CAFOD’s vocational centre continues to adapt to the evolving context in Goma, helping women sustain their livelihoods, support their families, and keep hope alive even in the most difficult times.



*I am very excited about our mushroom project. These mushrooms have helped me, at the age I am, to be able to change my diet. It has also helped me to take care of my children and with helping them at school."*

Bernadette with her mushroom farm in 2025 © CAJED

Bernadette Muhombo Buunda (second from right, pink top), and her family outside their home in 2023 © CAJED



**I am happy that my children are going to school. Keeping my two younger children in school is crucial to me. I regret that some of my older children were not educated, and I want a better future for the younger ones. Education will empower them and give them a chance to grow differently from their elders."**



# A legacy of love

In June CAFOD’s Legacy team celebrated the work made possible through gifts in Wills at a special Legacy event at St. Mary’s College Oscott.

We heard from the Rector of the college, Father Michael Dolman, and Jo Kitterick, Director of Fundraising at CAFOD about how CAFOD and Oscott are working to be the signs of hope we are called to be in this Holy Year of Jubilee, supported by legacy donations.

We were treated to a tour of the historic building and gathered alongside the seminarians for Mass in the historic Pugin chapel. It was inspiring to come together in celebration of the hope we share for the future of the Church and our commitment to building a better world for all our neighbours.



Legacy event at St. Mary's college.  
© Oscott College

# Advent Service 2025



We are delighted to be able to let you know the details of our upcoming Advent service:

**Wednesday 10th December 2025**

at

**St. George's Cathedral,  
Southwark,  
Lambeth Road,  
London, England,  
SE1 7HY.**

There will be a special guest reception from 5.30pm with the Advent service at 7pm, followed by mince pies and drinks.

We look forward to welcoming you.

**If you would like information about remembering CAFOD in your Will - or attending CAFOD events in your local area - then please contact the Major Gifts team:**

**[majorgifts@caford.org.uk](mailto:majorgifts@caford.org.uk)**

# Jubilee 2025: The new global debt crisis

**As part of Jubilee year, CAFOD and other organisations are urging MPs to lead bold global reforms to tackle unjust debt and unlock funds to fight the climate crisis in vulnerable countries.**

Today, 93% of climate-vulnerable countries are trapped in a debt crisis, undermining their ability to respond to climate related disasters and protect their communities.

Catholics of all ages from across the UK united in a powerful show of concern, gathering in Westminster on 9th July for the Act Now, Change Forever mass lobby, calling on MPs to take urgent action.

A highlight of the day was hearing from Father Charlie Chilufya SJ. Based in Kenya he is a leading voice on debt justice spoke about the urgent need for action on the climate and debt crises, and how critical hope is for all of us who work towards a better world.

Adrian Cannell, a retired teacher from Southport, said:

***"I came to speak to my MP about the link between debt and climate crisis. In my parish alone, so far, 125 people have signed the Jubilee petition. I also brought letters from children at the school where I am a governor calling for a fairer world and debt to be cancelled."***





Father Charlie Chilufya, a priest based in Kenya and Director of JENA (Jesuit Justice and Ecology Network, Africa) with CAFOD at Mass Lobby 2025 at Parliament Square  
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Father Charles spoke so eloquently, telling us:

***“What a blessing it is to stand with you today - citizens from across this land of the UK and around the world - people of faith, conscience, courage and hope.***

***The world is on fire. From the floods in Kenya to heatwaves here in Britain, from failed crops in Zambia to storms in Cornwall, creation is groaning. This is not tomorrow’s crisis. It is today’s emergency.***

***And it is a deeply unjust emergency. Those who contributed least to this crisis are suffering the most.***

***Twenty years ago, in 2005, the UK helped lead the G7 to historic action at the time of the Make Poverty History campaign.***

***As a result, millions of African children returned to school. Life-saving medicines reached hospitals again. Families received food. Futures were rebuilt.***

***That was not just economic policy. That was moral leadership. That was the UK at its best – a force for good in the world.***

***And I’ve come to say this to the people and leaders of this country: you can do it again.***

***The UK has a privileged platform in global finance, diplomacy and climate negotiations. Africa looks to you. The Global South looks to you. Indeed, humanity looks to you.***

***And let us be clear: the climate crisis cannot be solved if developing countries are drowning in debt. How can nations invest in adaptation, in clean energy, in resilience, if every dollar goes to servicing old loans? Climate justice and debt justice are two sides of the same coin.***

***As a Jesuit priest, I speak from the wellspring of faith. And every faith tradition present today tells us the same truth: we were not made for greed or indifference. We were made for love, for justice, for stewardship.***

***The command to love our neighbour is not abstract.  
Today, our neighbour is the mother walking five miles for water in Malawi.  
The nurse suffering from heatstroke in a London hospital.  
The farmer in Ghana watching his crops die in the sun.  
The child who wonders if she will inherit a world worth living in***





*We are not here because we have lost hope.  
We are here because we dare to hope.*

*To every person gathered here - young and old, of every creed and conviction - know this:  
you are not simply protesting, you are prophesying.*

*You are the moral wind behind the political will. You are the light in a time of confusion.  
And together, you are igniting a movement rooted in love, guided by justice and sustained by solidarity.*

*So let us rise, with one voice and one resolve:*

*The time is now.  
The responsibility is ours.  
And the future is listening."*



*Christ the Liberator, a painting commissioned for the Jubilee Year 2025 from Académie Kivu Arts "AKA" in Goma, Democratic Republic of Congo.*

**None of our programmes would be possible without our supporters – from individuals at their parish, to families, companies or institutions, all of you keep this work in motion.  
Thank you!**

*If you would like to know about the best ways to support CAFOD with a major donation or grant, you can contact us at:*

***majorgifts@caford.org.uk***