



**UnitingWorld**  
connecting communities for life

**DISCOVER HOW YOU CAN PARTNER WITH  
OUR GLOBAL NEIGHBOURS FOR JUSTICE**

# Dear friends.

## Come, encounter what Christ is doing in the world.

We in the Uniting Church in Australia are connected in partnership with churches across the Pacific, Asia and Africa. They are vibrant, inspiring, and formidable people who are transforming lives and communities for the better.

Many of our overseas church partnerships go back more than 150 years and have impacted countless lives at both ends of the relationship.

For us at UnitingWorld, these church partnerships are the lifeblood of everything we do.

As the international aid and partnerships agency of the UCA, we work together with the global church to address the causes and consequences of poverty, injustice and violence.

We do this work because we believe every person is beloved by God and invited to a life that is whole and hopeful. We do this on behalf of you, and each of us has a role to play.

Through UnitingWorld, you have an opportunity to be part of this movement. We support local church partners to make a difference in their own communities by providing expertise in sustainable community development practices, by building leadership and organisational capacity, and by sourcing and raising funding for the work. We will keep you updated on our projects so you can get to know our partners and support their vital work through prayer and giving.

The back page of this booklet offers a range of ways that you and your church can play your role to help end poverty and injustice.

In our time of rapid change, crises and global instability, your ongoing support and solidarity will go a very long way.


This booklet has some short stories from our programs, to give you a picture of the change you'll be helping create.

I hope you'll join us in this powerful movement that has a great legacy and—with your help—an even greater future.

Yours in Christ,



**Dr Sureka Goringe**  
National Director  
UnitingWorld



Women planting seeds at a food security and peacebuilding project run by our partner, the Protestant Church in Maluku.

# POVERTY ALLEVIATION

The COVID-19 crisis saw the number of people living in poverty increase for the first time in a generation. Now, rising inflation and a global cost of living crisis mean the goal to end poverty by 2030 is even more challenging. But there is always hope amongst God's people.

Our partners in India are leading the way in their communities.

In remote village in West Bengal, India, seasonal drought meant that it was impossible to farm all year round, so most families travelled away for several months every year to try to find work to survive.

UnitingWorld partner, the Church of North India's Diocese of Durgapur, asked how they could help.

The villagers' request was a simple one: find a way to put in place a sustainable source of crop irrigation that doesn't dry up when the rain stops.

Thanks to the generosity of UnitingWorld supporters, our partners were able to purchase and install two submersible pumps that can channel large volumes of water across long distances. The new sources of irrigation mean that the community can continue farming throughout the year.

UnitingWorld Program Manager Shreshtha Kumar visited the village this year and was blown away by the complete turnaround described by the people.

"It's so heart-warming to see how the village has become a self-sufficient community. The people can now rely on far better food security and the whole life of the village is benefiting," she said.

Our partners are also helping the community to access high quality education through their study centre and self-help groups (pictured), teaching skills to people to help them develop extra sources of income and pathways to career opportunities.

This is how our partners are making incredible change in 26 rural villages across two provinces of West Bengal as well as two urban slums in Durgapur.



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These communities are extremely poor and marginalised but are on the way to having more sustainable, healthy and hopeful futures thanks to the love and support of our partners.



# EMERGENCY RESPONSE

When disasters strike, our partners want to assist in the best ways they can. Basics like food, water, shelter and healthcare, and psychosocial support like chaplaincy can get people through the worst of a crisis and allow them to rebuild their lives.

"For months after the disaster, if the wind blew the metal roofs the sound would make children burst into tears. Adults would stop eating and just hold their breath and wait for a few moments. That's how much it affected us ... it's a feeling you never forget."

Semisi Kaufusi, a member of our partner the Free Wesleyan Church of Tonga (FWCT), was feeding his pigs at home in Tongatapu when the *Hunga Tonga-Hunga Ha'apai* Volcano erupted in January 2022.

"Suddenly we heard a large bang, and pressure hit your ears so much that it hurt. Within five minutes the whole sky was black, and ash started to fall," recalls Semisi.

"We were fortunate to get to some high ground. Then we came together, we prayed, thanked God, and then just stayed there and waited for the worst."

Communication with the outside world was completely broken, but the community helped each other right away said Semisi.

"The church leaders called on the whole church to give what they had and work to support each other.

"It was common for people to give half of whatever they had—food, clothes, shelter, anything—to help communities who had lost so much in the disaster," he said.

Eventually, the church was called on to clean the airport runway so that aid could arrive. The whole church came together again, said Semisi.

"Every church sent people to the runway, and we all got to work clearing and sweeping."



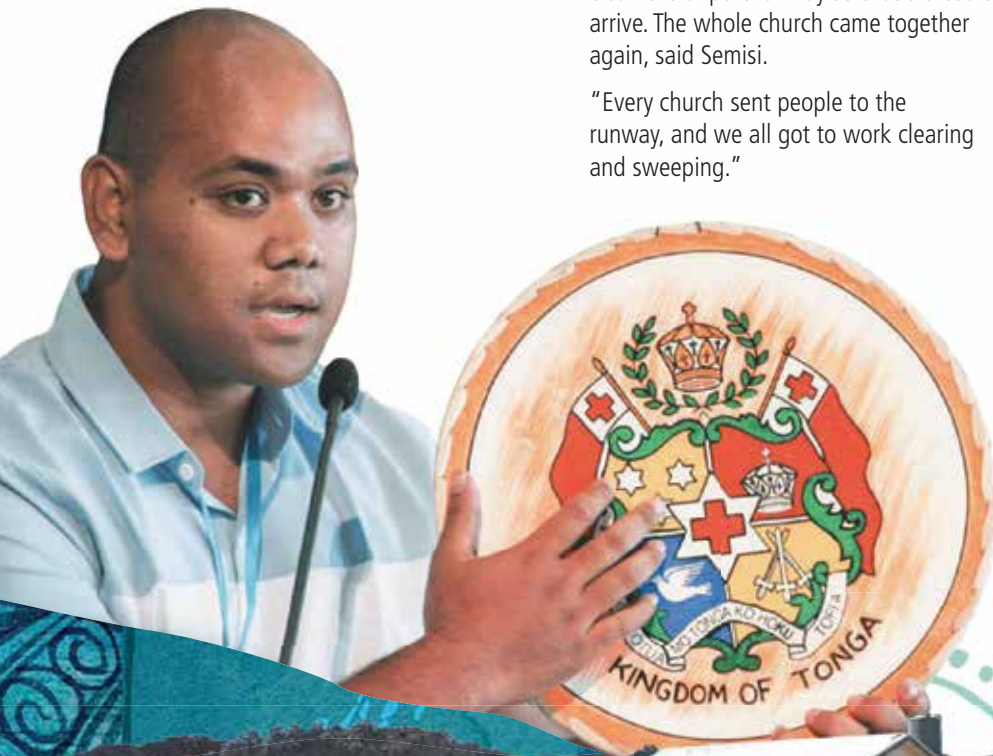
"Once it was clean, the first flag I saw on a plane was an Australian one."

UnitingWorld supporters stepped up for the people of Tonga, helping to provide immediate emergency relief and disaster chaplaincy delivered by our partner, the Free Wesleyan Church of Tonga.

The generous support is also helping long-term to restore and improve the livelihoods of those affected. Our partners have been able to provide cooking stoves and sewing machines, along with training to help people start businesses; seeds and gardening tools for people to start their gardens again; and building tools and materials to help people rebuild their homes.

We have also supported our partner to hire a local boatbuilder to help rebuild boats (their primary source of income) for community members who lost them in the crisis.

**"UnitingWorld supporters stepped up to support the people of Tonga, helping to provide immediate emergency relief and disaster chaplaincy delivered by our partner, the Free Wesleyan Church of Tonga."**





# STRONG LEADERSHIP

**Skilled leaders and effective organisations are key to combating poverty, inequality and injustice.**

For several years, UnitingWorld has been supporting the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe (MCZ) to become a safer and more inclusive church through the development of gender, safeguarding, prevention of anti-human trafficking and disability inclusion policies, as well as the preaching manuals and training needed to put those policies into practice.

Liniah, a local preacher, is one of the participants supported by this project:

"I was invited by the church for a preachers' workshop where we received knowledge on different issues including disability inclusion and human trafficking. It was during this workshop that I realised that I had not been imparting my word fully to the people of God as I was ignorant of the differences that define people.

"The training was a turning point. I prayed to God to give me wisdom and guide me in my sermons. I was now aware that disability inclusion was an important issue that should be talked about in the church. Christianity teaches that all human beings are created in the image of God are equal.

"Now, whenever I preach, I share a message of disability inclusion, I encourage congregants to ensure that people with a disability should not be discriminated against and should also enjoy all human rights such as education, employment and worship. I also encourage the church leaders to help in making our church buildings disability friendly.

"I now enjoy my sermons as I feel that I am imparting the word of God to everyone without leaving anyone behind."



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A team from the Methodist Development and Relief Agency visit a project in rural Zimbabwe.



# CLIMATE RESILIENCE

The climate is changing, and climate resilience has never been more crucial. Around the world, we are hearing an urgent and heartfelt message from our partners: climate change is destroying their lives. And they are stepping up to act.



**"I am more fortunate to plant this flower than coffee because it only takes eight months to be ready to harvest and can be harvested once a week. Coffee plants can take up to seven years"**

For years, people living in Wanagiri Village in Bali have depended on coffee farming to support themselves. That changed in 2019 when erratic weather and torrential rain due to the changing climate made farming far more difficult. Within just four years, crop production fell by 90 per cent.

Ni Luh and her husband are engaged in a project supported by our partner in Bali, *Maha Bhoga Marga*, to help Wanagiri locals make a better living. They got the support they needed to start growing the more sustainable hydrangea flower (known in Indonesia as *pecah seribu* - thousand broken flower plant) which can withstand the uncertain and harsh new weather conditions. Ni Luh and her husband can now confidently support their three children with hope for a more stable future.

"I am more fortunate to plant this flower than coffee because it only takes eight months to be ready to harvest and can be harvested once a week. Coffee plants can take up to seven years," said Ni Luh.

"I don't struggle to sell it because traders come to my house to buy it right after the harvest. I am happy to be able to grow this plant because with this additional money I can meet my family's needs, both for food and school for my children."



# Partner with our global neighbours!



This family in rural Bali was helped to lift themselves out of poverty and earn enough to buy the land they live on, thanks to the generosity of UnitingWorld supporters.

## Everyone has a role to play to help end poverty and injustice

### CHURCHES

- Host a UnitingWorld Sunday ([www.unitingworld.org.au/sunday](http://www.unitingworld.org.au/sunday))
- Sponsor a project as a church
- Invite a guest speaker from UnitingWorld
- Host an Everything in Common stall or participate in Lent Event as a congregation
- Pray for UnitingWorld and our partners
- Use UnitingWorld resources to learn more
- Sign up for our e-news and share stories to your congregation

### INDIVIDUALS

- Become a Global Neighbour and give regularly to UnitingWorld
- Sign up for UnitingWorld e-news
- Volunteer to be a UnitingWorld Ambassador to your congregation
- Donate to UnitingWorld:



### GET IN TOUCH

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