



A YEAR OF CHALLENGE – A YEAR OF HOPE

Open Doors Annual Review 2019



A YEAR OF CHALLENGE AND OPPORTUNITY

“Blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord, whose confidence is in him.” Jeremiah 17:7

It's been a year of challenges. Here in the UK and Ireland we face an uncertain economic climate, while around the world persecution continues to increase. But three things give me hope. First, our confidence comes from trusting in God. Second, we are encouraged every day by the faithful, sacrificial giving of our many supporters in the UK and Ireland. (Amazingly, despite the challenging economic outlook, voluntary giving to Open Doors actually increased – what a blessing!)

Finally, if the challenge has grown, so have the opportunities. In church, state and media, we are seeing a surge of concern for persecuted Christians. At the beginning of the year we saw unprecedented media coverage of the World Watch List. As the year progressed, the witness of North Korean believers like Hea Woo had a powerful effect in churches and at festivals. And in December, Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt launched a review into the worldwide persecution of Christians. I believe this is a God-given moment. Through His grace, we are seeing unprecedented opportunities to speak truth to power. Never has the name 'Open Doors' seemed more appropriate.

I am incredibly aware, as the incoming CEO, of what a privilege it is to join this community of supporters, staff and volunteers, all working together to strengthen our persecuted family to grow God's kingdom in some of the toughest places on earth. Thank you so much. Your prayers, voices and gifts are making a difference!



Henrietta

Henrietta Blyth
CEO Open Doors UK and Ireland

A YEAR OF STRENGTH AND HOPE



JAN / FEB

YOU KEPT CHRISTIANS ALIVE IN NORTH KOREA. Every £58 you gave provided emergency food, medicine and clothes to support a North Korean family for a month. Over 60,000 secret North Korean Christians were supported in this way, helping them to survive the harsh winter.



MAR / APR

YOU EMPOWERED VULNERABLE WOMEN IN EGYPT. Every £25 provided vocational training to enable a woman in Egypt to set up a business, become self-sufficient and be a strong role model for girls in her family and community. Nearly 19,000 women and girls were reached through women's groups like these.



MAY / JUN

YOU EDUCATED CHILDREN IN PAKISTAN. Every £35 provided six months of education for a Christian child in Pakistan, equipping them with the knowledge and skills they need for the future. Thousands of children were helped through projects run by Open Doors partners.



JUL / AUG

YOU TRAINED SECRET BELIEVERS IN THE HORN OF AFRICA. Every £34 you gave trained a secret church leader to find and care for new believers facing persecution in the Horn of Africa. In one secret location alone, over 250 pastors were trained in this way.



SEPT / OCT

YOU STRENGTHENED CHURCH LEADERS TO SURVIVE PERSECUTION IN INDIA. Every £23 provided persecution survival training for a church leader, training them in a biblical response to persecution and helping them to understand their legal rights. Because of your support, thousands of Indian pastors were trained last year.



NOV / DEC

YOU HELPED FAMILIES SURVIVE THE WINTER IN SYRIA. Every £26 you gave paid for a monthly emergency relief pack for a family in Syria. Because of your support, 2,810 families have what they need to survive for the whole year.

A YEAR OF GIVING, PRAYING AND SPEAKING OUT

Your support is keeping your persecuted family alive and strong – thank you!

£1,088,397
Raising funds

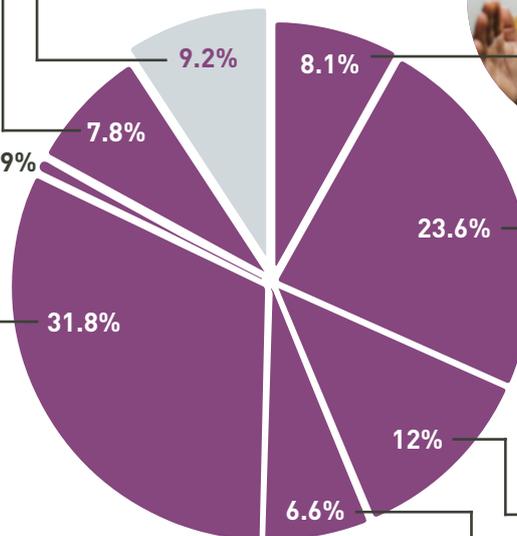
£925,789
Engaging and mobilising the church

£107,837
Preparing the next generation of supporters

£3,764,683
Sustaining lives, supporting livelihoods



Last year, **90.8%** of our expenditure was spent on directly supporting the persecuted church and raising awareness and prayer on their behalf



£953,715
Providing Bibles and Christian literature

£2,799,076
Training for leadership and discipleship

£1,417,001
Raising awareness and encouraging prayer

£778,359
Speaking out in advocacy

£11,704,292 was donated in support of the persecuted church



Over **63,000** people prayed regularly for the persecuted church

YOU KEPT HOPE ALIVE IN SYRIA AND IRAQ

Noeh and his family are home! In 2014 they fled from Karamles, Iraq, as so-called Islamic State overran their town. Now the family has returned and their house is rebuilt.

“The house was so damaged that I didn’t believe it would be possible to reconstruct it,” said Noeh’s father, Haithem. “But I thank God and everyone who helped us to rebuild.” Noeh’s family is one of over 1,000 whose homes were rebuilt in 2018. Hundreds of believers were also helped to start small businesses so they can support their families. As Easter was celebrated in their churches for the first time since the IS occupation, hope began to blossom again in the Middle East.

There is a long journey ahead. In Syria, for example, your support kept 12,000 families alive through the harsh winter. As the year drew to a close, churches throughout the UK and Ireland used our *Sing for Syria* Christmas Pack to raise prayers and gifts. They were inspired by Pastor Abdalla, a local church partner of Open Doors who stayed in Aleppo throughout the conflict.

“We are beginning to rebuild everything,” he says. “It is obvious to everyone that life and reconciliation are coming back to Aleppo. “We saw the church worldwide act like one family, supporting us, praying for us, helping us,” he said. “That made a difference.”



YOU SMUGGLED HOPE INTO NORTH KOREA

It was an unforgettable moment. This tiny woman on the stage, holding thousands of people transfixed with stories of planting a church in a North Korean prison camp. Hea Woo’s visit to the UK and Ireland was a highlight of the year. On the media, and at events like Spring Harvest and New Wine, she opened people’s eyes to the courageous faith of Christians in North Korea. Later in the year, at our annual celebration Standing Strong, her compatriot Hannah spoke powerfully to a crowded auditorium, along with believers from India and Egypt.

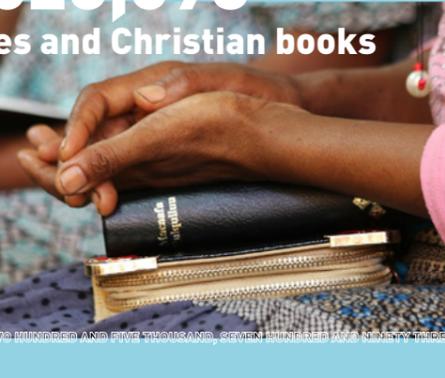
It was North Korea’s 17th consecutive year as number one on the World Watch List. As a result of being contacted by supporters, nearly 100 Parliamentarians gathered for the launch of the list. And concern for the plight of people in North Korea shows no sign of diminishing: this year with your support Open Doors secret workers have smuggled enough food into North Korea to keep 60,000 believers alive.

And it’s not just food – there is also medicine, and illegal Bibles and Christian literature to nourish the soul. Early in the year we launched the Secret Church Devotional to help you engage in daily prayer and action for the persecuted church. An amazing 11,000 of these have been sold, and the money raised was used to send God’s word to Christians in North Korea.

“You take care of our North Korean underground church organisation and church believers,” said one secret believer. “Your continuous and massive support helps our North Korean believers to be strengthened to fight at the frontline of the Christian battles.”

LAST YEAR, THANKS TO YOU...

Open Doors distributed **2,023,093** Bibles and Christian books



- Which included:**
- over 63,400 children's Bibles
 - over 272,000 Bibles and New Testaments
 - over 1.6 million Christian books, children's resources and training materials

Open Doors trained **570,702** persecuted Christians through leadership and discipleship courses, trauma care training and persecution survival seminars



- Which provided:**
- trauma counselling for over 26,000 Christians
 - training for more than 81,000 Christians to help them withstand persecution
 - discipleship training for almost 160,000 Christians

Open Doors provided advocacy and legal assistance for **51,890** people



- Which included:**
- legal assistance for 15,400 people
 - advocacy training for over 35,400 persecuted Christians

Open Doors helped **375,919** persecuted Christians with emergency relief, community development, education and medical care



- Which provided:**
- help for over 15,400 people to rebuild their homes or churches
 - over 198,000 people with emergency relief
 - livelihood training and support to over 46,000 people

MULTIPLICATION
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New cells and networks of believers from Muslim backgrounds are multiplying – especially across the Middle East and North Africa. In the Horn of Africa, Medina* started a small business which gave her the opportunity to share the gospel with four people. Those four people shared what they heard with 26 others. It's all about the multiplication.



Women

Christian women and girls are doubly vulnerable to persecution – because of their faith and their gender. In Egypt, where Christian women and girls face intimidation, extortion and sexual harassment, groups support at-risk Christian girls to recognise the risks.

"This is the first time we feel like humans. The first time we feel that there are people who come to give us something instead of taking something from us. We feel alive when we attend the group meetings. We feel that we are appreciated and valued."
Justine and Dina*, who attend a support group for vulnerable girls run by Open Doors partners*



Influence

Your voice is heard, speaking truth to power, calling for justice, a voice for the voiceless. In Westminster, both senior Conservative and Labour figures put their weight behind this issue in 2018.

Theresa May announced the appointment of Foreign Office Minister Lord Ahmad to a new role of Prime Minister's Special Envoy on Freedom of Religion or Belief. Lord Ahmad shared that the PM's concern for Christians in the Middle East was a key motivation behind the creation of this new position and even cited the presentation of a burnt Bible to the PM by Open Doors partner Father Daniel at a previous meeting.

And in December, Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt announced the launch of a review into the worldwide persecution of Christians. Speaking at the launch of the Open Doors World Watch List he said: "Thank you Open Doors supporters for the fantastic work you are doing to highlight the fact that nearly a quarter of a billion Christians around the world are facing persecution for their beliefs," adding, "I want to thank everyone at Open Doors for the work they've been doing in shining a spotlight on this issue."

ROOTS

Christians have been returning to their traditional communities in Syria and Iraq. In one part of southern Syria, Open Doors partners are supporting around 100 Christian families to return to their village, not only fixing their homes and providing furniture, but also planting 1,000 olive trees.

"The impossible has become possible with the return of Christians to the Nineveh Plain. They have returned to the place they historically identify with."
Father Thabet, Karamles

In Syria, 16 churches become Centres of Hope, supporting believers in Syria to stay and serve their communities.



"Please continue to pray for me so that I can recover quickly and be handsome again!" *Alvaro*

HEALING

Thanks to you, Open Doors is able to stand with victims of violence, and bring restoration and healing. In Indonesia, Alvaro Sinaga (5) entered the next stage of his extensive treatment for burn injuries. Alvaro was one of three child victims of the Samarinda church bombing in Indonesia in 2016. The treatment started early in 2018 and took ten months. He needs more treatment but for the first time since the bombing he can grip a pencil and draw a picture.

Skills

When Christians are expelled from their communities, they need new jobs and new skills.

"With the help of your ministry we have rented a place where persecuted Somali believers can be safely disciplined without fearing for their lives. We plan, with your help, to train them in business principles so that they can generate their own finances."
Muktar, secret church leader in the Horn of Africa*

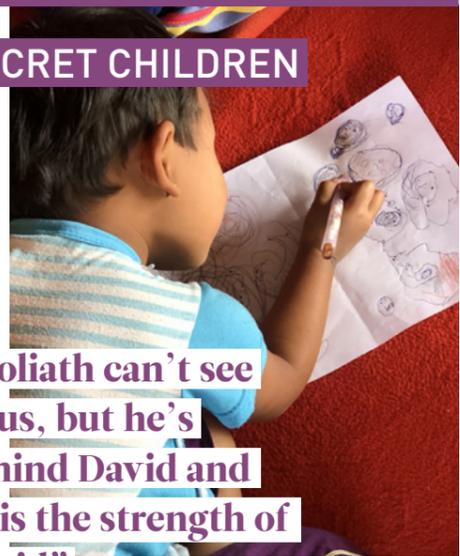
BRIDGE-BUILDING

Many Christians are ostracised and threatened, hated because they are seen as 'infidels'. In Ethiopia, an Open Doors-supported school provides high-quality teaching for both Christians and Muslims. It has grown from seven pupils to 800, breaking down barriers and building trust and friendship.

"What was done is overwhelming. No one else has served us like Open Doors. About six other churches in the area learnt about the impact of this school, and opened their own schools too."
Pastor Feyissa, the founder of the school.*



SECRET CHILDREN



"Goliath can't see Jesus, but he's behind David and he is the strength of David"

Thanks to supporters who give and pray regularly for children, Open Doors partners were able to organise several camps for more than 400 children in Myanmar. These camps have a big impact. A child makes a picture of David and Goliath, with Jesus behind David. "Goliath can't see Jesus, but he's behind David and he is the strength of David," the child says.

In Nigeria, 453 Nigerian widows received financial support towards their children's school fees.

In Bangladesh Open Doors distributed 15,000 children's Bibles. "I don't have a Bible at home or when I go to church. It was only at children's camp that I learned about Jesus, and I love to hear about Him! They gave me a Bible and I'll read this to know more about Jesus."
Uzzal (10)