

The Yawo people of Malawi and Mozambique

The People Group

There are approximately 3 million Yawo living in Malawi, Mozambique and Tanzania. They are predominantly agricultural people living in rural villages under traditional headmen. Daily challenges include accessing safe water to drink, food to eat, healthcare and education.

Due to their involvement with the slave and ivory trades with Arab merchants the Yawo are primarily Muslim. Their rituals and practices are heavily influenced by their traditional African and animistic beliefs.

Global Interaction team among the Yawo

The cross-cultural teams live among the Yawo villages; shopping at the local market, sitting and chatting in Ciyawo, praying for the sick, attending funerals and initiation celebrations, tending the maize fields and sharing their lives with the people they meet. Individual relationship nurturing is the teams' highest priority. They are dedicated to learning the local culture and Ciyawo language as well as Portuguese (in Mozambique) in order to build relationships with the people they meet.

The teams work with the local Yawo to improve their quality of life through health and adult education. Working with a group of Yawo men and women, the teams also help facilitate translation of the Bible into Ciyawo so that the Yawo have the opportunity to read God's story in their own language. They encourage the growing groups of believers through prayer, teaching and leadership training. Our cross-cultural workers continue to see these groups grow into relevant and active communities within their culture.

Prayer Needs

- As the team are invited to share in community life, opportunities would arise to build connections and deepen friendships
- God's wisdom for new Yawo believers as they discern how to live as a follower of Jesus within their Muslim culture
- Yawo people would be open to sharing stories with our team that will give them the opportunity to hear the message of Jesus
- Australian Baptists would respond to God's call and commit to serving among the Yawo

Pray for the Team Members

MALAWI

Andy and Rachel (candidates)

Ian (based in Australia)

Jean-Claude and Joyce (candidates)

Jonno (team leader) and Heather

Tim and Mel

MOZAMBIQUE

Ben and Sam

Cam and Kath

Sally

Scott and Rebekah

Tobias and Heather

Stories of Hope from Malawi and Mozambique

Whole Communities

Mr G is a Yawo believer in Mozambique. Within his village there are very few others who follow Jesus. Keen to spend time talking about and learning from the Bible, Mr G began meeting with team member Scott to study the Bible and pray. However, it wasn't enough for just him to have the opportunity to grow in his faith and understanding of God, Mr G's heart was burdened for his community to know freedom in Christ too. So earlier this year, Mr G gathered a group of Yawo men to regularly meet with Scott and Cam so they too could have the opportunity to hear stories from the Bible and have spiritual discussions.

There are real challenges for Mr G as he seeks to live out his faith and remain within his community and culture. His wife and family are having difficulty understanding his decision to follow Jesus.

As the team journey with Yawo people, their prayer is that whole communities will respond to the message of Jesus, not only individuals. Pray with the team that others will join Mr G, forming a faith community of Yawo believers and seekers in the village.

Testimonies of God's Goodness

Cross-cultural worker Tim, along with a Yawo believer Waindi, recently visited a village group of believers. While there, a woman asked if we could pray for her sick friend who after visiting the hospital and local witchdoctor, had not improved. Waindi boldly asked her, "Why have you come here today?" Her answer was equally forceful. "I have heard God does miracles in this group!" Waindi explained to the woman how God gave power to Jesus, and through Him, we may have life. He also asked others who were listening to share how Jesus has helped them. In their gentle yet powerful way, about seven people offered testimonies of the power of God in their lives. Yawo people are from an oral society so they are master storytellers!

For the next 45 minutes, they heard story after story of God's goodness. Real life testimonies of sicknesses healed, relationships restored, evil spirits cast out and renewed peace - the peace that transcends understanding. If that wasn't amazing enough, the group leader then expressed that he thought a few of them could visit the surrounding four villages and share some of these stories. He said, "God hasn't given us these stories just for ourselves. They need to be told!"

Praise God for the growing group of believers and the way they are recognising God's power in their lives. Pray for God to be revealing Himself to them and strengthening their faith as they seek to share what they believe with Yawo people in surrounding villages.

**>>> For more stories of barriers being overcome,
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