

## The Yawo people of Malawi and Mozambique

### **The People Group**

The majority of Yawo live in South-Eastern Malawi and North-Western Mozambique. They adopted Islam more than a hundred years ago after their interaction with Arab slave traders. Whilst many Yawo have moved to cities in Mozambique and Malawi to access work and educational opportunities, many still live in rural villages. Yawo people are highly aware of the power of the spiritual realm and its impact on their daily lives. Most Yawo live in fear of the spiritual realm.

Social and religious homogeneity are extremely important in Yawo society which means becoming different, even in small ways, is significant. This is one of the key barriers the Yawo face in accepting the truth of the Gospel, as it can be challenging for believers to maintain family and social links after deciding to follow Jesus.

### **The Global Interaction team among the Yawo**

Our intercultural team among the Yawo are an established, growing and vibrant team. They have developed deep relationships within the Yawo community which are built on mutual trust and genuine care. Their everyday involvement in community life has increasingly seen them invited to be a part of important cultural events.

In both Malawi and Mozambique, small but growing groups of Yawo men and women are meeting to explore God's stories. Some are at the beginning of their journey with Jesus and others have chosen to follow Him. They are a witness to God's grace and faithfulness. The team is partnering with others to produce a Ciyawo translation of the Bible and improve adult literacy rates, as well as establishing other projects and programs that respond to the physical and spiritual needs of the communities.

### **Prayer Needs**

- Pray for intercultural workers to develop deep cultural understanding so they can communicate the message of Jesus in ways that make sense to their Yawo friends
- That Yawo believers will discern what it looks like to follow Jesus in distinctively Yawo ways
- For the Yawo believers to seek opportunities to share the Good News within their communities
- That seekers will connect with the team and begin to explore Jesus

### **Pray for the Team Members**

#### **MALAWI**

Jean-Claude and Joyce  
Jonno (Team Leader) and Heather  
Tim and Mel  
David and Susie (candidates)  
Gary and Shirley (based in Australia)  
Gunther and Sarah (candidates)  
Ian (based in Australia)

#### **MOZAMBIQUE**

Ben and Sam  
Cam and Kath  
Tobias and Heather  
Sally  
Scott and Rebekah

## Stories of Hope from Malawi and Mozambique

### **Seeking Truth Together**

Scott and Bek share about a group of Yawo men hungry to dig into the Bible, "This year, Scott started every weekday morning sitting with a group of five men reading the Bible. These men reviewed previous stories, read new passages and discussed what it meant for their lives. One of the men, the only follower of Jesus in the group, often took the lead, asking others questions from what had been read and exploring its application to their lives.

These men had been working with the team on a number of building projects, and as that work came to end it was unclear how or if the group would continue. With no decision made by the group and recognising that a number of the men had said they'd be helping their families more now they didn't have paid work, on their last day together Scott informed them that he would be continuing to read the Bible outside every Thursday morning and any or all of them would be welcome to join him.

That first Thursday Scott thought he might be reading on his own, but four of the five men turned up with word that the fifth couldn't make it but would be there the next week. And each week since they've all continued to come! Please pray for these men, that as they talk, pray and engage with the Word of God they would be impacted."

### **Witnessing Growth**

In both Malawi and Mozambique, small but growing groups of Yawo men and women are meeting to explore God's stories.

Cam shares, "I've had the privilege of working through a series of Bible stories with a small group of guys over the last few months. Just last week we finished the story set with the stories of the death and resurrection of Jesus and the coming of the Holy Spirit. As we chatted, it was agreed within the group that there is life in the stories of Jesus.

I've been reminded time and time again here that God's Word has power and that it does not return to Him void (Isaiah 55). As we continue to meet, I'm excited to see what God has planted and what will grow and what I will get to learn by seeing these men encounter God through Jesus."

Scott and Bek continue to journey with some Yawo friends and are seeking God to discern what the next steps in these relationships are. They pray that these friends would be open to hearing the truth of Jesus and come to know Him in a way that is meaningful to them.

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