



Psalm 12:5-8 (NIV)

⁵ “Because the poor are plundered and the needy groan, I will now arise,” says the LORD. “I will protect them from those who malign them.” ⁶ And the words of the LORD are flawless, like silver purified in a crucible, like gold refined seven times. ⁷ You, LORD, will keep the needy safe and will protect us forever from the wicked, ⁸ who freely strut about when what is vile is honored by the human race.

[LENTEN PRAYER GUIDE: WEEK 5]

Ongoing conflict and turmoil in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) has left women and children particularly vulnerable to exploitation and abuse. Corruption and a lack of legal action means that those who are vulnerable, or who have been exploited, rarely get the protection and justice they deserve. Far too often, the exploitation of women is ignored, or even worse, condoned.

Poverty only compounds the situation. Many women have lost their husbands to war or AIDS. Unskilled and unschooled, they struggle to provide for themselves and their children.

Protector and helper, bring an end to this violence in the DRC. Bring to justice those who have perpetuated exploitation and abuse, and give affected women the comfort they need. Show them that they are not alone, and equip them to care for their children.

In addition to the emotional and psychological effects of growing up in a conflict zone, children in the DRC are also at risk of violence. Often, their basic rights are ignored. More than 7 million children aren't in school. Usually, it's because they don't have access to education. But sometimes, they choose not to attend for fear of being attacked on their way.

Dear God, we know you see the injustices being done to your children in the DRC. Give us the courage to respond boldly in raising our voices against the violence done to women and children. Protect children from physical and psychological harm and bring peace to the region so they can pursue their education and build a better life without fear.

In the community of Gemena, a lack of basic healthcare also poses a serious risk to the well-being of mothers and children. Across the DRC, nearly two in five births are not attended by a skilled professional, and less than half of pregnant mothers receive ongoing antenatal care. This contributes to high mortality rates for both mothers and infants.

Healer and provider, please give women and children the care that they need. Provide medicine, clinics, and health workers who can give mothers and children life-saving care. Give mothers opportunities to change their circumstances, and equip them to provide for their children.

