



WOMEN AND GIRLS

HELPING-HAND APPEAL

PREPARATION

- ➔ Use the resources on the *Helping-Hand Appeal* web page:
 - ➔ Read the Helping-Hand 2026 info sheet - for leaders only
 - ➔ Prepare to share the Helping-Hand Appeal videos
 - ➔ Download the money box wrapper
- ➔ Learn more about the social enterprise, *Others* (optional)
- ➔ Provide paper and pens for members to jot notes on
- ➔ Source white card / paper, masking tape and an art medium, eg paints, crayons, pencils, pastels - or watercolour paper and watercolours
- ➔ Supply sari material scraps, eg from [Amazon.co.uk](https://www.amazon.co.uk), and sewing resources like needles, thread, buttons, sequins, beads - plus fillers like dried lavender, soap or stuffing
- ➔ Be ready to discuss and plan fundraising ideas

Additional resources

- ❖ *Video questions*
- ❖ *Prayer prompts*

Be sensitive as members may have personal experience of gender injustice.

INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

The Salvation Army is a global movement that supports community development programmes around the world - helping people to overcome the poverty and injustice they are experiencing and enabling them to build a better life and future. The Salvation Army United Kingdom and Ireland Territory partners with other territories and supports international development projects which fall within five focus areas: food security, clean water, anti-trafficking, emergency response and supporting women and girls.

The Helping-Hand Appeal exists to raise awareness about and funds for international community-based projects. Each year the appeal focuses on a different area of work, and during 2026 the focus is Women and Girls.

Freedom to flourish

Gender-based violence takes many forms and is overwhelmingly perpetrated by men against women. It is not confined to one country, culture, class or generation, but women living in poverty are disproportionately affected.

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When girls are forced into marriage and pregnancy before their bodies are ready, they face life-threatening harm.

When women are treated as inferior, as commodities, or as subjects of control and victims of domestic abuse, it rejects the truth that every person is created in God's image - equally loved and valued.

The Salvation Army runs a Health Care and Counselling Centre in the heart of Jashore, Bangladesh, within the city's brothel district. There a dedicated team help women find freedom from the exploitation experienced prior to and as result of working in the sex industry.

And for the children who call the brothel home, but who are vulnerable to abuse and neglect, the centre provides a safe space for them to learn, play and grow.

Through the listening ear of a Salvation Army chaplain, and by providing skills training, literacy classes and income-generating opportunities, the women are finding new ways to support themselves and their families.

The centre also mobilises community organisers to travel to neighbouring villages around Jashore to raise awareness of the dangers of child marriage and the injustices of gender discrimination and human trafficking.

The challenges are complex. There is no single, simple solution, so this project weaves together many strands to drive social change and try to address factors that feed exploitation. In essence it is about breaking the cycle of sexual exploitation.

Please be aware

Be ready to create a safe space and offer a sensitive approach to this subject. Some members of the group might feel negative emotions like shame or embarrassment as they consider that women - because of neglect, cruelty and exploitation - are left with no other choice but to consider sex work to support themselves and their families.

This topic might also trigger personal concerns around domestic abuse. Please contact familyministries@salvationarmy.org.uk for further support.

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ACTIVITIES

DISCUSS

Appreciating that this is a subject not regularly spoken of, reassure the group of a safe space and that there are no wrong answers, and if appropriate ask:

- ✳ How do you feel thinking and talking about the issues raised around violence against women and girls?

Share the *Helping-Hand Appeal* introduction video. Invite members to listen out for or jot down their answers to the questions below. You may also wish to display the *Video questions*. Encourage some conversation as members share their answers.

Please be aware

Some members may need time after watching the video, to process what they have seen, before considering the questions or activities. If so, take time to reflect with your group on what freedom to flourish means for women - both globally and locally.

- ✳ What does it mean for you to flourish in your life?
- ✳ What does it mean for the women in the video to flourish in their lives?
- ✳ How does life's circumstances impact a woman's ability to flourish?
- ✳ How can we respond to ensure women can flourish wherever they are?

Video questions

- ✳ What are some of the reasons that women end up working in the brothel?
(Debt, deception, abandonment)
- ✳ How does the local Salvation Army centre help, and what are some of the outcomes?
(Major Champa visits every day and listens. Women share their stories and work with The Salvation Army to find a way out.)
- ✳ How and why are the children supported?
(They are given sanctuary and a safe space to learn and play. They are vulnerable to abuse and neglect.)
- ✳ How long has The Salvation Army worked in Jashore?
(30 years)

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- ✿ What are some of the other issues that The Salvation Army raises awareness of outside the city?
(Child marriage, gender discrimination and human trafficking)
- ✿ What are the aims of The Salvation Army's work in Jashore?
(Respect, dignity, to break the cycle of sexual exploitation, and to give women and children a path to freedom)

After watching the video, ask:

- ✿ What did you notice or observe from the video?
- ✿ How does life in Bangladesh differ from where we live?
- ✿ Was there anything you could compare or contrast to, with your own life?

LEARN

Share the other **Helping-Hand video stories** with the group, stories from women who have found freedom and are flourishing.

Others

If your group wishes to know more, more information about the social enterprise *Others* is available on [Salvationist.org.uk](https://www.salvationist.org.uk).

PRAYER

Use the *Prayer prompts* handout to pray for key areas:

- ♥ Safety, healing and freedom for women and girls
- ♥ Strength and wisdom for The Salvation Army's workers
- ♥ Protection and flourishing for children
- ♥ Impactful community outreach

Encourage members to pray for these areas, as individuals or as small groups. If members prefer to write their prayers, consider using the tape-resist art (craft activity) as a backdrop.

More prayers for the Helping-Hand Appeal feature in **Prayer Matters** every Wednesday during February and March 2026, as part of the Justice and Reconciliation focus.

CRAFT

Create some tape-resist art. Stick strips of masking tape on to the card/paper to create an abstract geometric pattern. Using an art medium like paints or pencils,

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colour each section between the shapes until the whole page is filled with colour. If you are using paint, leave it to dry before the next stage.

Carefully remove the masking tape to reveal a colourful piece of tape-resist art.

Prayer

Perhaps use the art as a backdrop for prayer. Write a prayer, such as those suggested in the *Prayer prompts*, in each of the different coloured areas, bringing God-colours into those situations.

SEW

Encourage your group to get creative with some **colourful sari material**. Items created could be sold to help raise funds.

They could make, for example:

- ❖ *Heart-shaped Christmas tree decorations,*
- ❖ *Coasters,*
- ❖ *Bunting or*
- ❖ *Lavender bags.*

FUNDRAISE

Ask your group to share ideas and to plan together how you can fundraise for the Helping-Hand Appeal throughout the year. Can they set a target to raise a certain amount of money over this year, or have a dedicated session and take up an offering? Don't forget to use the **Money Box Wrapper**. Wrap it around a container and use at fundraising events or for collecting change all year round.

Here are some fundraising goals:

- ❖ £75 could help establish and train a community-based Child Marriage Prevention Committee
- ❖ £180 could fund a human rights seminar for women experiencing sexual exploitation.
- ❖ £450 could provide educational support for 25 children
- ❖ £1,125 could run the Children's Drop-in Centre for six months
- ❖ £2,250 could run the Children's Drop-in Centre for an entire year



BIBLE READING/THOUGHT

Matthew 5:14-16

 'Here's another way to put it: You're here to be light, bringing out the God-colours in the world. God is not a secret to be kept. We're going public with this, as public as a city on a hill. If I make you light-bearers, you don't think I'm going to hide you under a bucket, do you? I'm putting you on a light stand. Now that I've put you there on a hilltop, on a light stand - shine! Keep open house; be generous with your lives. By opening up to others, you'll prompt people to open up with God, this generous Father in heaven.'

(Matthew 5:14-16 *The Message*)

Matthew 5 features Jesus teaching to a huge crowd of people; people were curious and crowds started to gather everywhere he went. This must have been quite inconvenient for those in the population who were wanting to go about their everyday business, so Jesus took the crowd away to a hillside.

Jesus created a quiet space where he could teach the people without too much interruption and distraction. There he draws out difficult concepts about what being blessed really means: to be able to fully lean into God, his provision, his mercy and his love.

The fact that he commences this significant sermon with what it means to be blessed indicates that the people then - and we now - need to be reminded to lean into God every day and in every circumstance.

How are you blessed today?

The setting for our appeal this year is probably not a familiar one for many, if any, of us, unless you have been involved in some specific ministry or work with women. But did you notice how colourful it was? The clothing, the decoration in and on the buildings, the furnishings, the cloth the women were sewing and creating with - there was colour and vibrancy everywhere.

The Salvation Army in Jashore, and most especially Major Champa who attends the brothel every day, brings out the 'God-colours' as she listens to and brings some comfort and hope to the women and the children there. She blesses that dark and isolating place with her faithfulness, consistency and compassion.

It is not easy or comfortable to think about the situation that the women and their children are in. It can be distressing to know of the work the women undertake and the reality of what some of the children are exposed to. They can certainly

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testify to being, as The Message translation puts it, ‘*at the end of your rope*’ (v3) and having ‘*lost what is most dear to you*’ (v4).

The Salvation Army offers the truth that God is already in that place. The faithfulness, consistency and compassion that empowers Major Champa comes from the fact that she knows the embrace of ‘*the One most dear*’ (v5).

PRAYER

Father God, there is so much in this world that is confusing and frightening. We have thought today about women and children who are in a situation that is very different from our own - a situation that is hard to think about. But we thank you that The Salvation Army is at work in places where your blessing is needed, where people need to know you and be assured of a way out.

We pray especially now for the team in Jashore, that you will faithfully enable them to shine your light in that place and that The Salvation Army’s important work internationally with women and girls can continue as we support with our prayer and our donations.

Help us to be generous with our lives, to open up to others as far as we are able, and in turn enable others to open up to you.

Amen.

SONGS

- ♪ SASB 870 ‘Jesus bids us shine with a clear, pure light’
[Video](#) (no lyrics, three verses) feat Sunbury Junior Singers by Music and More (1:38)
[Lyric video](#) (four verses) by Let’s seek (1:39)
[Piano instrumental lyric video](#) by Shalom Hymn (2:08)
- ♪ SASB 261 ‘Lord, the light of your love is shining (Shine, Jesus, shine)’
[Duet lyric video](#) by Droitwich Spa Salvation Army (3:28)
[Lyric video](#) by Graham Kendrick Music (4:14)
- ♪ SASB 220 ‘Great is the darkness that covers the earth (Come, Lord Jesus)’
[Brass instrumental lyric video](#) by Stotfold Salvation Army (2:58)
[Lyric video](#) uploaded by David Bertenshaw (6:05)
[Lyric video](#) feat Keswick Praise video by Highfield Community Baptist Church (3:58)

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WEBSITE AND CONTACT DETAILS

- Connect website: www.salvationarmy.org.uk/connect
- Family Ministries website: www.salvationarmy.org.uk/families
- Emails: familyministries@salvationarmy.org.uk
- Facebook: @sarmyfm
- Twitter: @ukifamily
- Instagram: safamily_ministries



Family Ministries

Having faith in the family

Providing intergenerational support, training and resources for
Children | Adults | Everyone

VIDEO QUESTIONS - NEXT PAGES

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**What are some of the
reasons that women
end up working
in the brothel?**



How does the local Salvation Army centre help, and what are some of the outcomes?

Connect



**How and why are the
children supported?**

Connect



**How long has The Salvation
Army worked in Jashore?**



**How do you feel thinking
and talking about the issues
raised around violence
against women and girls?**

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PRAYER PROMPTS



Safety, healing and freedom for women and girls

Pray that those experiencing violence and exploitation will find protection, support and paths to freedom.

May unjust attitudes and practices be dismantled so that the God-given dignity of every person is recognised and honoured.



Strength and wisdom for The Salvation Army's workers

Pray that God will equip the staff from The Salvation Army project in Jashore with compassion, resilience and guidance as they accompany women in Bangladesh towards safe, sustainable futures.



Protection and flourishing for children

Pray that children growing up in the brothel district of Jashore will be kept safe from abuse and neglect, and that the centre's learning and play spaces will nurture their wellbeing, education and hope.



Impactful community outreach

Lift up the community organisers who travel to neighbouring villages to raise awareness of child marriage and gender-based violence.

Pray that their efforts will create lasting social change and address the root causes of exploitation.