

Philo Global Newsletter

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Restoring Hope

Editorial by Jude Simion, *Executive Director of Philoi Global*

Over the past year, we have witnessed some of the most challenging conditions faced by displaced Christians. Conflict-driven displacement has surged, and pathways to safety have grown increasingly restricted. Many families continue to endure deep loss and prolonged uncertainty, navigating systems that leave them without direction or hope.

Government policies (particularly in Australia) offer limited and often inadequate pathways for persecuted Christians seeking safety. Within the humanitarian visa system, they are often marginalised further, leaving many trapped without a clear or viable route to protection. Left behind, they face growing uncertainty and exclusion, with their distinct vulnerabilities largely disregarded.

Time and again, we see that holding onto hope is one of their greatest struggles. For many, it is the only thing sustaining them through the uncertainty of displacement - a journey marked by loss, delay, and rejection.

Yet even in these circumstances, hope endures. We see it through the perseverance of families who continue to trust God amidst exile and instability, through the quiet acts of courage within communities who risk their own lives to care for one another, and in the faith that sustains them day by day.

As we reflect on this reality, we are reminded of you - our friends, supporters, and partners in this work. Through your prayers, generosity, and faithfulness, you are restoring hope where it is most fragile. You stand with those who feel forgotten, offering practical support and affirming these communities that they are seen, valued, and never alone.

Jesus Christ is our living hope, and through Him, we labour to restore hope to a church in exile. Your partnership with Philoi Global brings light into places where darkness seems overwhelming. Through your faithfulness, others are drawn to glorify our Father in heaven. Your support sends a powerful message to the underground church: they are remembered, seen, cherished, and deeply loved.

Blessings,
Jude and the Philoi Team



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Left Behind:

Afghan excluded from Australian resettlement after converting to Christianity

Ali* is an Afghan Christian who first encountered the Gospel through a missionary, converting from Islam in 2014.

He married Roksana, a single mother. At first, Ali concealed his faith, fearing her reaction. When he finally told her, she surprised him by wanting to know more. After asking many questions and hearing the Gospel from Ali, she eventually accepted Jesus and became a Christian too. Together, they have three sons.

During this time, Ali kept his faith hidden as his relatives were “radical Muslims” - but everything changed when they found his Dari-language Bible in his room.

“They told me I destroyed their reputation,” Ali recalls. “They kicked me out of the home, stating that I was an apostate - a sin punishable by death.”

As the eldest son, Ali carried familial authority and managed his father’s business after his father fled to Australia. Now a permanent resident, his father is seeking to resettle the rest of the family through Australia’s humanitarian program.

But because of his conversion, Ali was disowned by his father for bringing shame upon the family.

Consequently, he and Roksana have been removed from the family’s migration application. (Ali understands that his family’s application has already completed both the interview and medical check processes.)

Over time, the risks intensified. As converts, former government affiliates, and members of the Hazara community, Ali and Roksana became increasingly visible to the Taliban.

“We know you are infidels, and of your past work,” the Taliban had said. “Either repent, or we will execute you according to Sharia law.”

Soon after, the Taliban raided their home. Warned by neighbours that a warrant had been issued for their arrest, the family fled to Pakistan.

Trapped in Exile

In Pakistan, Ali and his family registered with UNHCR but could not disclose their conversion - the basis of their asylum claim. Leaving Islam is considered apostasy and can carry a death sentence. Fearing exposure, they continue to conceal their faith, knowing discovery could cost them their lives.

Supported by Philoi and a sponsoring church, they applied for an Australian Humanitarian visa, only to have their application rejected.



“
Here in Pakistan we have no hope for a safe life. Lack of food, shelter, security...here we live under the worst situation.

”
– Ali

Ali's case highlights a critical gap. While Australia prioritises family-linked applications and UNHCR referrals, Ali was excluded from both - rejected by his family because of his faith, and unable to safely access protection through official channels.

Access to UNHCR support is also often unsafe or out of reach for converts, leaving people like Ali without a clear path to safety.

Ali and Roksana now remain in limbo. They cannot return to Afghanistan, and are unsafe in Pakistan. And Australia, the country that is protecting his father, has closed its doors to Ali.

A Partnership of Restored Hope

Ali and Roksana's story reflects a disheartening reality: displacement is rising, but pathways to safety continue to narrow. For the church in exile, holding onto hope is often the greatest daily struggle.

Because of your partnership with Philoi Global, families like Ali's are not left to face this alone. Your support reminds them that they are remembered and strengthens their resolve to hold onto hope in the midst of displacement.



Interested in supporting families like Ali's? Scan the QR code or visit philoiglobal.org/exodus-fund

Light and Hope

Philoi fundraising concert, Brisbane

The *Light and Hope* concert held in March 2026 was a wonderful success, celebrating Philoi Global's work with persecuted and displaced Christians. Our heartfelt thank you to the performers Elliott, Leanne, and Jennifer, as well as Tricia Greenham and others who made this event possible. Your talent and generosity have blessed many communities.



Strengthening Refugee and Migrant Care

Trauma Care Intensive - AMECET Ministries

The four-day **Simplified Trauma Care Toolbox** in Sydney proved highly impactful, bringing together frontline workers and ministries serving refugees and migrants across Australia. Hosted in partnership with AMECET Ministries, it created a dynamic and unified space for learning, connection, and collaboration - grounded in a shared commitment to standing with displaced communities.

Adrian and Sherene Wi bring extensive global experience, working among refugee populations and indigenous communities across Canada, Greece, Uganda, Kenya, Taiwan, and more.

Through their leadership, participants were equipped with practical, trauma-informed approaches to address the complex needs of displaced communities. Through this partnership, we continue to envision together a world where all displaced communities receive effective, trauma-informed care.

"Honestly, this workshop was life-changing. It is so impactful to finally have training that combines soul, spirit, and body. I wish more people could hear it!"

— Attendee, 2026

Brief Project Overview

Afghan Christians Resettle in Brazil

Brazil:

We are grateful to share that 45 Afghan Christians are safely resettled in Brazil.

Due to long delays and some rejections in the Australian Humanitarian visa process, many of these families were left in limbo. We thank God that Brazil stepped in and opened its doors, providing a new beginning for those who had nowhere else to turn.

Philo continues to walk alongside these families, offering pastoral care, practical support, and guidance as they rebuild their lives in Brazil.



Afghan Christians being greeted by their Brazilian hosts

Agápai: New Project Launch

Rwanda, D.R.C., Uganda:

Globally, UN food programs have dramatically scaled down, leaving many displaced groups without support.

Through trusted local partners across Africa, the Agápai Project directs aid to those most in need. The project reflects the early church practice of 'Agápai' where believers cared for each other and the poor through shared meals and fellowship.

"Although the needs are so great, the intervention from Agapai brought immediate relief and renewed hope to roughly 250 Christian families."



Congolese refugees receiving essential food relief through the Agápai Project

Visa Assistance for Afghan Believers

Afghanistan & Pakistan

Over 40 Afghan Christian families are receiving help to maintain their valid visa status through documentation support, as stricter deportation policies increase their risk.

As converts, many face imprisonment or death if forcibly returned to Afghanistan. Through your support, they are able to navigate complex legal processes and vital advocacy for their protection.

"We can't thank you enough for being the one who reminds us that we are all loved by God. It means a lot to us."



A forcibly displaced Afghan family having church together in Pakistan

Although not all initiatives can be listed here, we have provided a wide range of support to displaced communities, including migration assistance, pastoral care, food relief, medical aid, psychosocial support, livelihood programs, educational support, and advocacy - along with many other vital interventions.

Additional countries include: Armenia, Canada, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kenya, Libya, Malaysia, Tajikistan, New Zealand, Sri Lanka, the United Arab Emirates, and more.

Targeted Emergency Medical Assistance

Afghanistan & Pakistan:

Access to healthcare remains one of the most urgent yet limited needs for displaced believers. Your support ensures they receive critical, timely care.

Because of your generosity, we have been able to provide emergency medical support to persecuted Christians in high-risk regions. This includes aiding a Christian leader's recovery following a violent attack, and supporting two vulnerable women who have suffered severe physical and emotional trauma.

"By your kindness, the doctor is able to care and monitor her."



H was able to receive emergency dental surgery after a severe infection*

Rohingya Christians Thrown Overboard

Southeast Asia:

In early 2025, Indian authorities detained 15 Rohingya Christians and forcibly deported them to Myanmar, throwing them overboard during the transfer. As a small minority within the largely Muslim Rohingya community, they endure intense persecution and profound social ostracisation.

After months of danger and uncertainty, they have now reached a safer country. Registered with UNHCR, they continue to receive support through trusted partners as they pursue long-term protection and rebuild their lives.



One of the Rohingya Christian families

Innovation of New Migration Pathways

Australia:

As resettlement options narrow, skilled migration pathways in Australia are being explored. Through partnerships with Christian businesses, displaced Christians with professional skills are connected to sponsorship, offering a sustainable path to long-term stability.

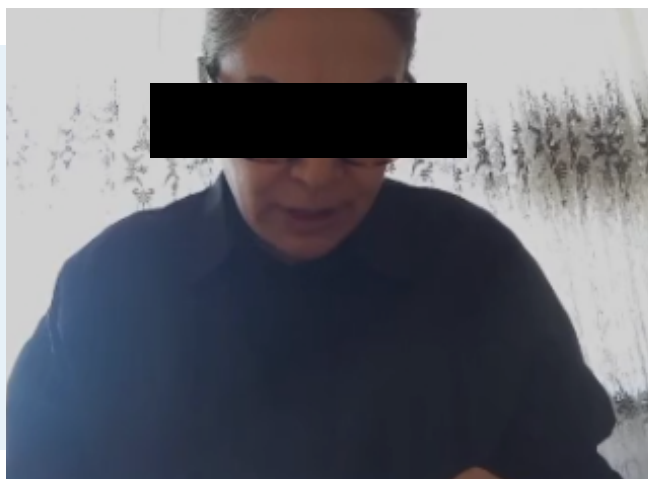
We are currently working with a Christian school in Sydney to sponsor N*, a young Afghan professional, while also exploring similar opportunities for six other qualified individuals who may benefit from this pathway.



Image of N - a potential candidate for this Professional Pathway.*

Advocating to the UNHRC:

Addressing global protection gaps faced by forcibly displaced Christians



“
I suffered for **21 days** in
solitary confinement.

— Lena

In October 2025, Philoi partnered with the World Evangelical Alliance and the Refugee Highway Partnership to host an advocacy side event at the **UN General Assembly**.

The gathering was addressed by the UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief, Dr. Nazila Ghanea, and provided a critical platform to highlight the growing challenges faced by religious minorities in displacement.

The event focused on the increasing vulnerability of believers fleeing persecution. Several refugees we have supported shared recorded testimonies, detailing the realities they face - deportation, imprisonment, violence, and even death - often as a direct result of their conversion or Christian identity.

One such story shared, was Lena's.*

Lena heard about Christianity through a friend and was baptised in Iran. She soon became involved in a house church, helping distribute Bibles and gather believers in secret.

Each time Lena and her husband would gather believers for worship, the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) would disperse them by force.

In 2016, the IRGC stormed their home, confiscating Christian materials and blindfolding both Lena and her husband. She was taken to Evin Prison - Iran's most notorious detention facility.

“I was interrogated, questions were asked about my faith in Christ,” she recalls. “I was accused of acting against national security. They tortured me physically and psychologically, and I suffered for 21 days in solitary confinement.”

Lena was later released on bail, but the court handed down a severe sentence: 10 years and 6 months in prison. Her lawyer warned that the ruling left them with no real option - if they remained in Iran, they would likely not survive.

They fled to Turkey where they have been for 10 years. Every day they worry that they will be forcibly deported back to Iran, where she would face imprisonment, and likely, death.

“I thank God that I have Jesus Christ, and for brothers and sisters who can hear my voice. But conditions here as refugees are unspeakable,” she admits. “It is true that we have refuge in Christ, however life here is unbearable. We are deprived of basic rights.”

Status of Refugees in Turkey

Since September 2018, Turkey has assumed full responsibility for refugee status determination, with the UNHCR no longer conducting interviews or issuing decisions within the country.

As a result, many asylum seekers - particularly Iranians who were previously registered with UNHCR - find their earlier registrations no longer carry legal weight. Even though Lena was registered with the UNHCR, the Turkish authorities still rejected her refugee claim.

Her application to Australia was also unsuccessful, as Australia primarily prioritises humanitarian referrals made directly by the UNHCR or an immediate family member. Lena's experience reflects the reality for many displaced believers, whose persecution is often compounded by systems that leave them with little protection and few viable pathways to safety.

Hope for Emerging Reform

At the event, we raised concerns about asylum processes that can overlook the lived realities of faith-based persecution, particularly where individuals risk deportation despite credible threats to their lives. There was a clear call for

stronger protections and more informed decision-making. The discussion also highlighted cases where asylum seekers are returned to countries where their faith places them in immediate danger, underscoring the need for fair and thorough assessment processes.

As a result, the event strengthened dialogue between policymakers and faith-based organisations. It built momentum toward policy reforms that recognise the realities faced by converts and religious minorities, ensuring that no one is returned to severe persecution.



Philoi Global CEO (Jude Simion) presenting virtually at the Side Event in NYC, alongside World Evangelical Alliance and Refugee Highway Partnership.

Partnering with Professionals:

Using your expertise to uplift persecuted Christians

Partnering with Professionals connects qualified experts with forcibly displaced Christians who lack access to essential professional support.

By offering just 60 minutes of pro bono guidance, professionals across fields such as law, medicine, education, engineering, counselling, and trades, can deliver practical assistance and tangible hope to those suffering for their faith.

Many displaced believers urgently need expert support, whether for migration advice, medical assessments, counselling reports, or guidance on future career pathways.

Join this network and use your skills to bring practical help to those who need it most.

*"Your professional support during our visa process **changed our lives...** Knowing that you were Christians gave us the comfort and trust we needed on the journey."*

— Pakistani refugee, 2025



For more, scan the QR code or visit philoiglobal.org/partnering-with-professionals

Standing in the Gap:

A Reflection on Ezekiel 22

During the final years before Jerusalem's destruction in the Old Testament, the nation was falling apart morally, spiritually, and politically. In Ezekiel 22, God lists Israel's sins: princes shed blood and abused power (v.25), priests disregarded God's law (v.26), officials took advantage of the poor (v.27), and communities mistreated foreigners (v.29).

Every level of leadership failed. In the ancient world, gaps in a city wall meant weakness and danger. Israel had many such gaps - places where no one upheld truth, justice, or mercy.

Today, similar gaps remain. Systems and policies fail the vulnerable, injustice persists, and many lose hope. God still asks: *"Who will stand in the gap?"*

Stand with us as we intercede, lament, and **pray** for forcibly displaced Christians.

Protection and safety. Ask God to shield refugees, especially persecuted Christians, from violence, exploitation, and danger as they flee their homes.

Hope and strength. Pray that God restores hope to those who feel abandoned, weary, or afraid, and that they experience His presence in their suffering.

Justice and provision. Intercede for fair treatment and compassionate policies that enable refugees to live in safety, to rebuild their lives, and worship freely.

Be part of restoring hope to the church in exile.

Your support changes lives. You place food in a mother's hands, help a young believer access trauma care, and strengthen ministries serving displaced Christians. Because of love in action, these vulnerable families are reminded that they are not forgotten - they are seen, cherished, and deeply loved.

Choose how you'd like to connect with us today. You can opt out at any time!

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NEWS: Select how often you'd like to receive news and updates from the field.

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"Thank you for your compassion, your prayers, and your generosity. May the Lord abundantly bless you and your ministry. With gratitude and hope, Adam." - Displaced Afghan believer*

**Names changed due to security reasons.*