



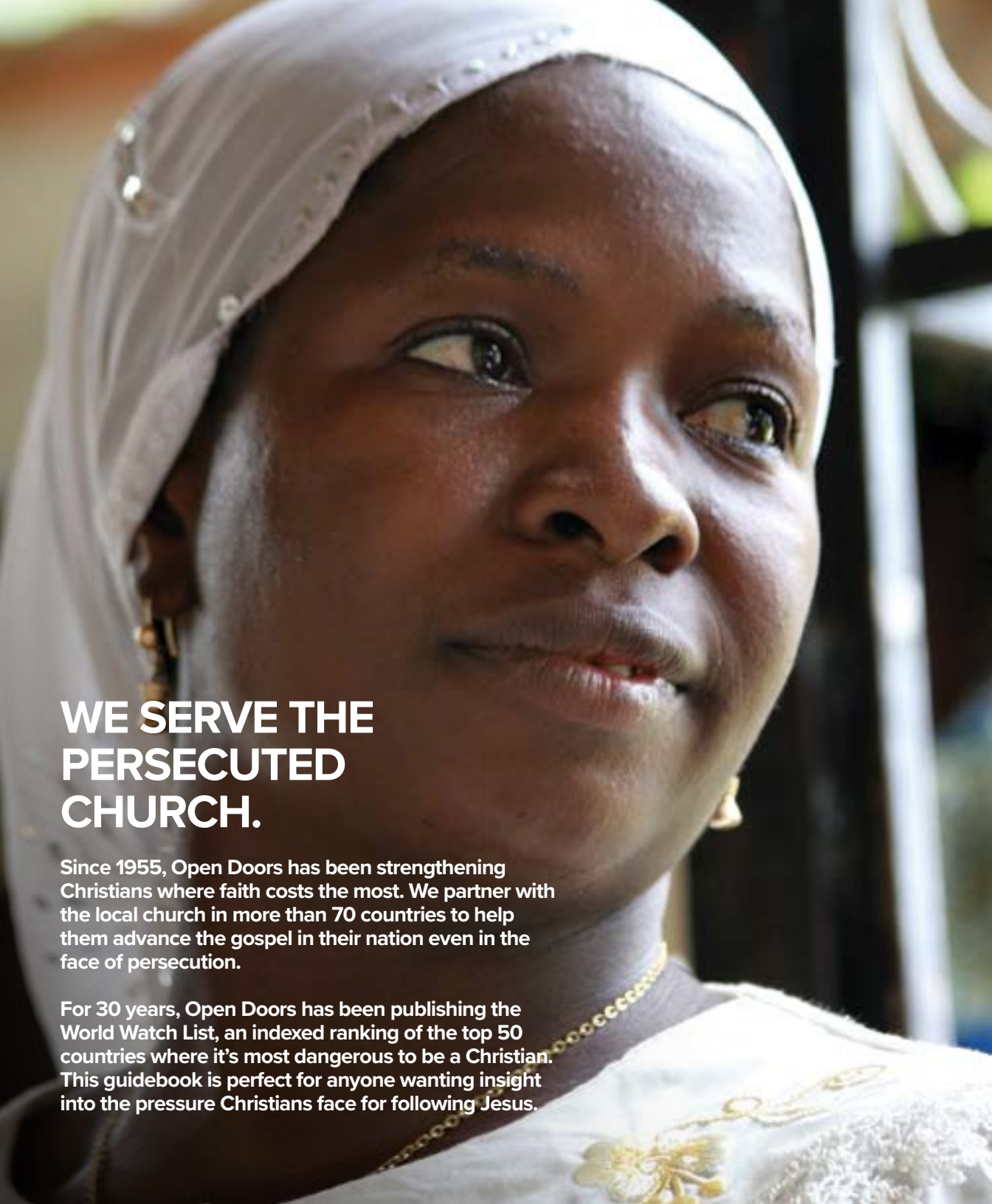
2023 WORLD WATCH LIST

THE TOP 50
MOST DANGEROUS
COUNTRIES IN
WHICH TO LIVE AS A
CHRISTIAN



Open Doors®

STRENGTHENING CHRISTIANS WHERE FAITH COSTS THE MOST



WE SERVE THE PERSECUTED CHURCH.

Since 1955, Open Doors has been strengthening Christians where faith costs the most. We partner with the local church in more than 70 countries to help them advance the gospel in their nation even in the face of persecution.

For 30 years, Open Doors has been publishing the World Watch List, an indexed ranking of the top 50 countries where it's most dangerous to be a Christian. This guidebook is perfect for anyone wanting insight into the pressure Christians face for following Jesus.

A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR



Welcome to the 30th anniversary edition of the World Watch List, a ranking of the 50 countries where Christians experience the most extreme persecution. Published every January, it is a unique, in-depth record of the places where faith in Jesus costs the most, helping to demonstrate the enormous scale of the persecution being faced by Christians around the world.

Every year, The World Watch List stirs more and more people to wake up to the reality of extreme persecution. It is more than just a list – it helps us not only to pray for the persecuted church, but also speak up for those who are being silenced, and to take action to help those in need of love and support.

The persecuted church is not merely surviving, it is active and alive. In these 50 countries – and many more – Christians are daring to demonstrate the life-changing reality of the Kingdom of God. But the challenges faced by these believers are increasing day by day – and they need the support of the wider body of Christ to help them stand firm and be a light to their nations.

In approximately 70 countries around the world, Open Doors' underground networks are providing our persecuted family members with Bibles and Christian literature, theological training, emergency relief, trauma care, livelihood training and advocacy support.

In the pages that follow, you'll read numbers and data that represent a growing and important segment of the global body of Christ. They are family members, brothers and sisters, who teach us what it means to follow Jesus daily no matter the cost. And we have the opportunity to stand with them.

As you read, be open to what God will say to you through the testimony of those who live with persecution as a day-to-day reality. I am confident your faith will be stretched as you pray, and that your relationship with the wider body of Christ will be enriched as you stand in solidarity with them.

Pastor Gary Stagg
Executive Director
Open Doors Canada

HOW THE WORLD WATCH LIST IS RANKED

Countries are ranked by the severity of persecution of Christians, calculated by analyzing the level of violent persecution plus the pressure experienced in five spheres of life.

These six components are each given a score out of 16 and two thirds. When you add up the six scores, you arrive at a total number out of 100.

Countries with scores between 41 and 60 points are categorized as high levels of persecution. Countries with scores between 61 and 80 points are categorized as very high levels of persecution. And finally, countries with scores between 81 and 100 points are categorized as extreme levels of persecution.



PRESSURE

Degree of pressure in 5 spheres of life
Max score per sphere: 16.7



Private life



Family



Community



National



Church

83.3



VIOLENCE

Amount of violent incidents against Christians and the Church
Max score: 16.7



Violence

16.7

EXTREME PERSECUTION

countries that score
81-100

VERY HIGH PERSECUTION

countries that score
61-80

HIGH PERSECUTION

countries that score
41-60

PRESSURE + VIOLENCE

Below are some questions asked by researchers to determine pressure and violence scores.



Private life

- Is conversion to Christianity allowed?
- Can they worship privately and possess religious materials?
- Do they have freedom of conscience and thought?



Family life

- How free are Christians to express their faith within their family?
- Is it possible to live as a Christian family, to celebrate Christian marriages and funerals?



Community life

- Can Christians live without harassment and discrimination in their local communities?
- How does their faith affect their education or employment?



National life

- Is it illegal for Christians to express their faith?
- Can they call themselves Christians on their ID or passport?
- Will the police come calling?



Church life

- Are Christians allowed to meet?
- And if they can, are they heavily monitored?
- Can Christian leaders be trained?



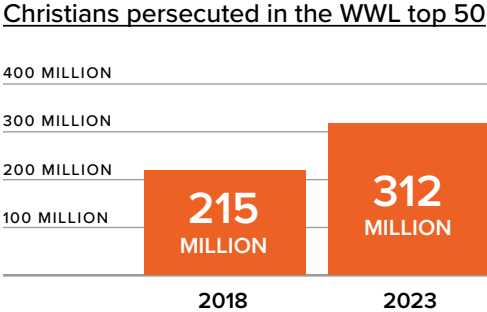
Violence

- Are Christians attacked mentally or physically?
- Are they arrested, abducted, tortured, imprisoned or even killed?
- Do they face sexual harassment?

PERSECUTION IN NUMBERS

During the research period* of the **World Watch List 2023**:

Worldwide, more than **360 million Christians** suffer high levels of persecution and discrimination for their faith. In Open Doors' World Watch List top 50 alone, 312 million Christians face very high or extreme levels.



APPROXIMATELY
1 IN EVERY 7 CHRISTIANS
AROUND THE WORLD IS PERSECUTED
BECAUSE OF THEIR FAITH

<p>5,621</p> <p>CHRISTIANS KILLED FOR FAITH-RELATED REASONS</p>	<p>2,110</p> <p>CHURCHES AND OTHER CHRISTIAN BUILDINGS ATTACKED</p>	<p>4,542</p> <p>CHRISTIANS DETAINED WITHOUT TRIAL, ARRESTED, SENTENCED AND IMPRISONED</p>	<p>5,259</p> <p>CHRISTIANS ABDUCTED</p>
---	---	---	---

Numbers reflected here are of incidences that were reported and are likely far below actual numbers.

*Research period: 10/1/2021-09/30/2022



PRAY FOR OUR PERSECUTED FAMILY

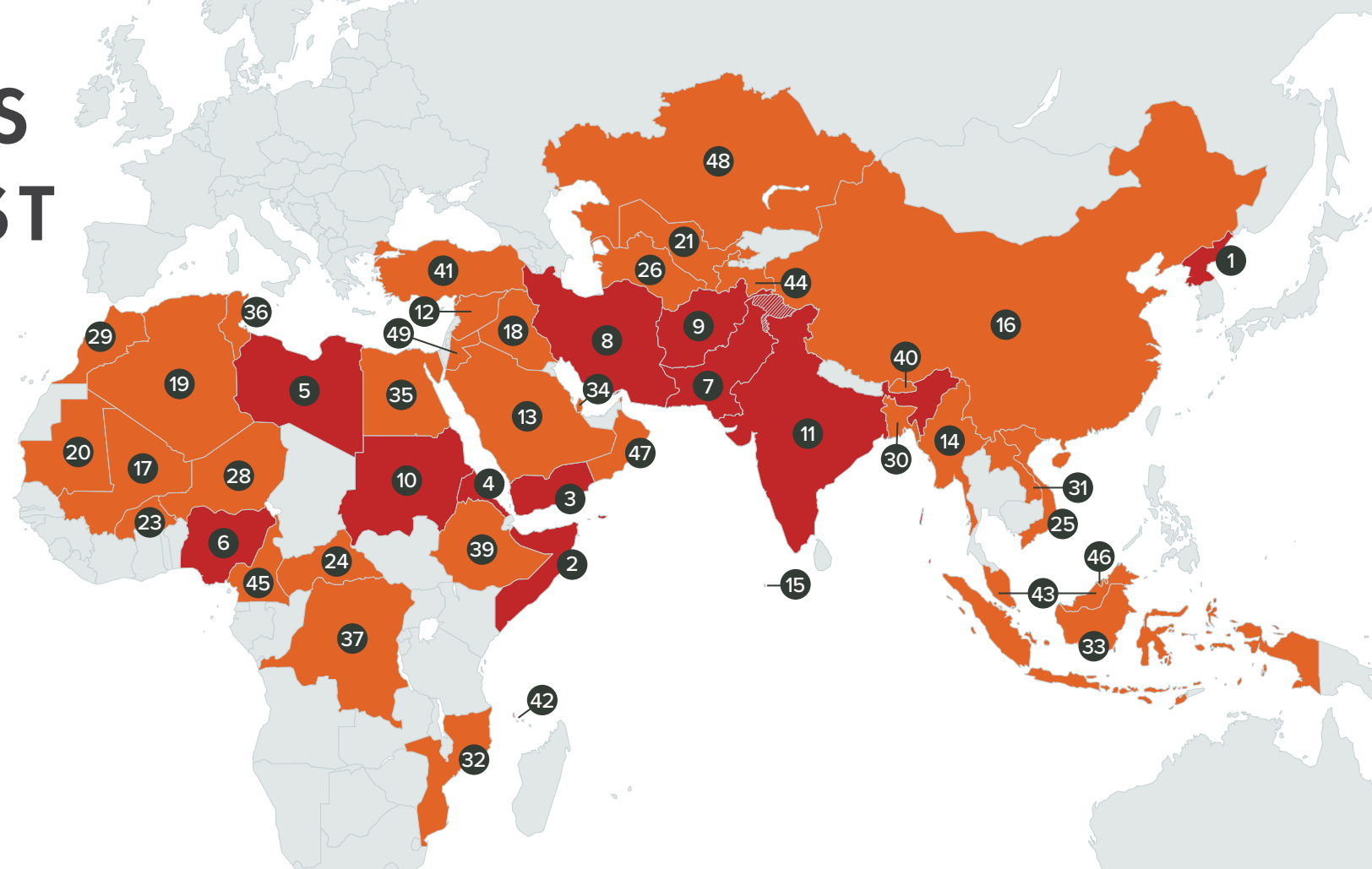
As you read through the 2023 World Watch List, you will learn about the 50 most dangerous countries to live in as a Christian. In addition, you will find information about how you can pray for each country.

The World Watch List is more than just facts and figures, it represents real people, our brothers and sisters in Christ, who are boldly following Him in places where faith costs the most. May this list guide your prayers for the worldwide Church.

PHOTO ©UNSPASH

2023 OPEN DOORS WORLD WATCH LIST

A ranking of the 50 countries where it is most difficult to be a Christian.



PERSECUTION LEVELS

- VERY HIGH
- EXTREME

- | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| ● 1 North Korea | ● 11 India | ● 21 Uzbekistan | ● 31 Laos | ● 41 Turkey |
| ● 2 Somalia | ● 12 Syria | ● 22 Colombia | ● 32 Mozambique | ● 42 Comoros |
| ● 3 Yemen | ● 13 Saudi Arabia | ● 23 Burkina Faso | ● 33 Indonesia | ● 43 Malaysia |
| ● 4 Eritrea | ● 14 Myanmar | ● 24 Central African Republic | ● 34 Qatar | ● 44 Tajikistan |
| ● 5 Libya | ● 15 Maldives | ● 25 Vietnam | ● 35 Egypt | ● 45 Cameroon |
| ● 6 Nigeria | ● 16 China | ● 26 Turkmenistan | ● 36 Tunisia | ● 46 Brunei |
| ● 7 Pakistan | ● 17 Mali | ● 27 Cuba | ● 37 Dem. Republic of Congo | ● 47 Oman |
| ● 8 Iran | ● 18 Iraq | ● 28 Niger | ● 38 Mexico | ● 48 Kazakhstan |
| ● 9 Afghanistan | ● 19 Algeria | ● 29 Morocco | ● 39 Ethiopia | ● 49 Jordan |
| ● 10 Sudan | ● 20 Mauritania | ● 30 Bangladesh | ● 40 Bhutan | ● 50 Nicaragua |



1

NORTH KOREA

SOURCE OF PERSECUTION

Communist oppression and dictatorial paranoia

POPULATION

25,991,000

CHRISTIANS

400,000

MAIN RELIGION

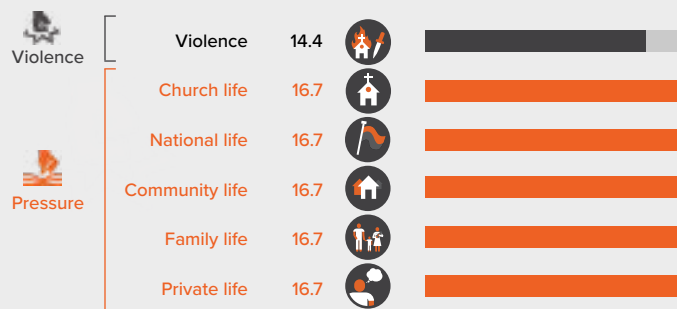
Agnosticism

LEADER

Kim Jong-un

PROFILE OF PERSECUTION

Maximum 16.7 per sphere

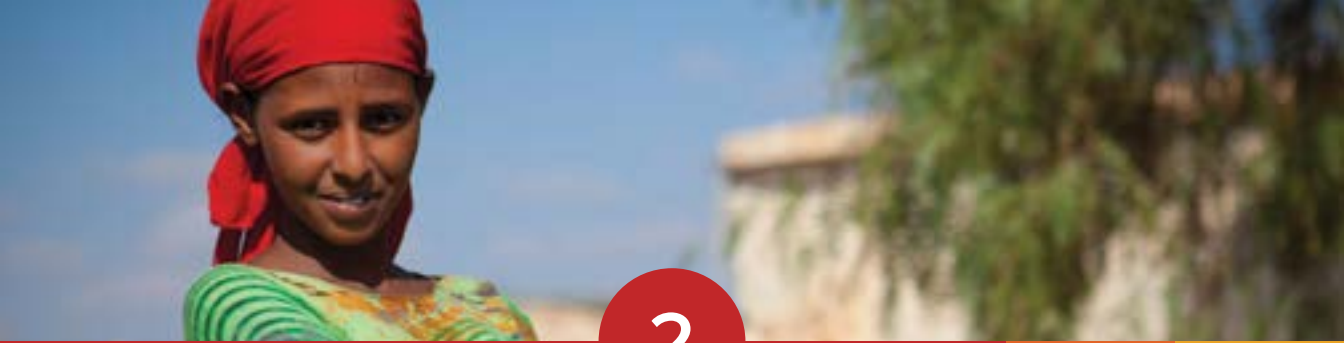


North Korea remains a brutally hostile place for Christians to live. If discovered by the authorities, believers are either sent to labour camps as political prisoners where the conditions are atrocious or killed on the spot – and their families will share their fate as well. Christians have absolutely no freedom. It is almost impossible for believers to gather or meet to worship. A new ‘anti-reactionary thought law’ makes it amply clear that being a Christian or possessing a Bible is a serious crime and will be severely punished.

The reason for such extreme persecution is that Christianity is seen as a particular threat to the dictatorial ideology and governance of the country’s barbaric regime. Christians are viewed as enemies of both the leadership and society in general.

PRAYER POINTS

- Pray that the Holy Spirit will continuously pour supernatural peace and strength into believers held in labour camps
- Pray that Christians who bravely gather in secret will be protected from the prying eyes of the authorities.



2

SOMALIA

SOURCE OF PERSECUTION

Islamic oppression and clan oppression

POPULATION

16,842,000

CHRISTIANS

A few hundred

MAIN RELIGION

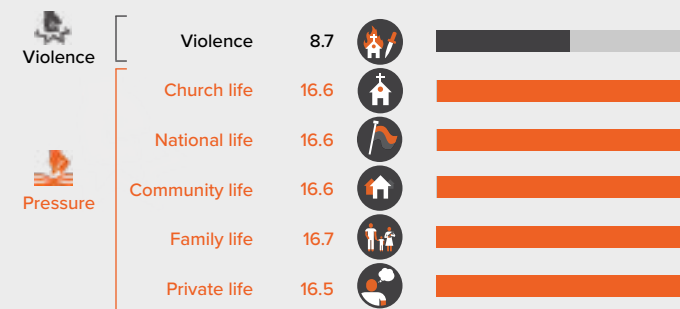
Islam

LEADER

Prime Minister Hamza Abdi Barre

PROFILE OF PERSECUTION

Maximum 16.7 per sphere

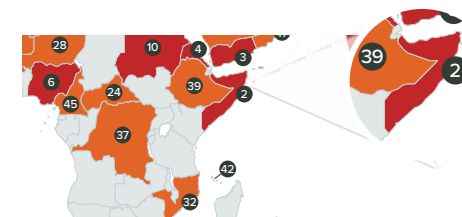


Somalia is a majority Muslim nation and society expects all Somalis to be Muslim. Imams in mosques and madrassas state publicly that there is no room for Christianity, Christians or churches. The violent insurgent group al-Shabaab has repeatedly expressed its desire to eradicate Christians from the country. Christians from Muslim backgrounds are regarded as high-value targets and may be killed on the spot if discovered.

Christians also face serious persecution from their family and community. Leaving Islam is regarded as a betrayal of the family and clan, and family members and clan leaders will harass, intimidate and even kill Somali converts. ‘Church life’ is simply not possible, so the few believers must meet in secret. Islamic militants have intensified their hunt for people who are Christian and in a position of leadership.

PRAYER POINTS

- Violent Islamic extremism is increasing. Pray for peace and for God’s protection over His church.
- Somali believers face great isolation. Pray that they will know God’s comfort and find ways to grow in their faith.





3

YEMEN



4

ERITREA

SOURCE OF PERSECUTION
Islamic oppression and clan oppression

POPULATION
31,155,000

CHRISTIANS
A few thousand

MAIN RELIGION
Islam

LEADER
Dr. Rashad Muhammad al-Alimi

PROFILE OF PERSECUTION Maximum 16.7 per sphere

Violence	Violence	5.9		<div style="width: 35%;"></div>
	Church life	16.7		<div style="width: 100%;"></div>
Pressure	National life	16.7		<div style="width: 100%;"></div>
	Community life	16.7		<div style="width: 100%;"></div>
	Family life	16.7		<div style="width: 100%;"></div>
	Private life	16.7		<div style="width: 100%;"></div>
	TOTAL:		89	

SOURCE OF PERSECUTION
Dictatorial paranoia and Christian denominational protectionism

POPULATION
3,662,000

CHRISTIANS
1,709,000

MAIN RELIGION
Islam

LEADER
President Isaias Afwerki

PROFILE OF PERSECUTION Maximum 16.7 per sphere

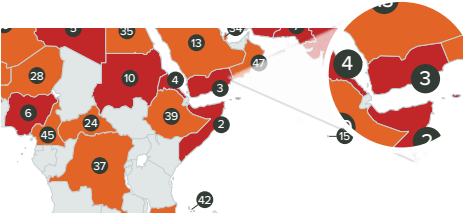
Violence	Violence	12.2		<div style="width: 73%;"></div>
	Church life	15.7		<div style="width: 94%;"></div>
Pressure	National life	15.9		<div style="width: 95%;"></div>
	Community life	15.5		<div style="width: 93%;"></div>
	Family life	14.9		<div style="width: 89%;"></div>
	Private life	14.6		<div style="width: 87%;"></div>
	TOTAL:		89	

It is extremely dangerous to be a Christian in Yemen, due to the country's strict Islamic laws and the presence of militant Islamic groups. The population is overwhelmingly Muslim and it is illegal to convert from Islam to Christianity.

Most believers from a Muslim background choose to practise their faith covertly. They cannot gather together, because of the growing fear that neighbours will report them to the local authorities. Displaying Christian symbols could lead directly to imprisonment, physical abuse or even execution.

All Yemenis are affected by the humanitarian crisis caused by the ongoing civil war, but Yemeni Christians are additionally vulnerable since emergency relief is mostly distributed through local Muslims and mosques, which allegedly discriminate against all who are not considered to be devout Muslims.

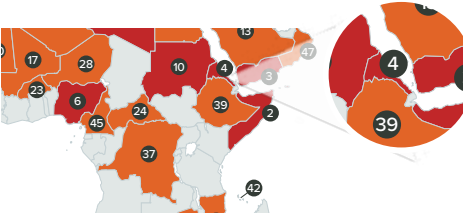
- PRAYER POINTS**
- Please pray for brave secret believers who still choose to follow Christ, despite the imminent dangers.
 - Pray for humanitarian aid to reach all people in need, including those on the margins of society.



For 20 years, Eritrea has only recognized three official Christian denominations: Orthodox, Catholic and Lutheran, and closely monitors these churches. Over the years, government security forces have conducted hundreds of house-to-house raids to catch other Christians. There are thought to be 1,000 Christians indefinitely detained in Eritrean prisons, not officially charged with anything. Some leaders of 'unofficial' churches have been imprisoned in terrible conditions for more than a decade, including solitary confinement in tiny cells.

The authorities perpetuate a stigma against believers and encourage neighbours to spy on and report each other. Those who have become Christians from Muslim backgrounds, or who leave the Eritrean Orthodox Church for a non-traditional church, face extreme pressure and persecution from their own families and communities.

- PRAYER POINTS**
- Pray that those in power have a huge change of heart towards Christians.
 - Pray for supernatural strength, hope and joy for imprisoned believers and their families.





5

LIBYA



PHOTO ©UNSPLASH

6

NIGERIA

SOURCE OF PERSECUTION

Islamic oppression and organized corruption and crime

POPULATION

7,041,000

CHRISTIANS

35,400

MAIN RELIGION

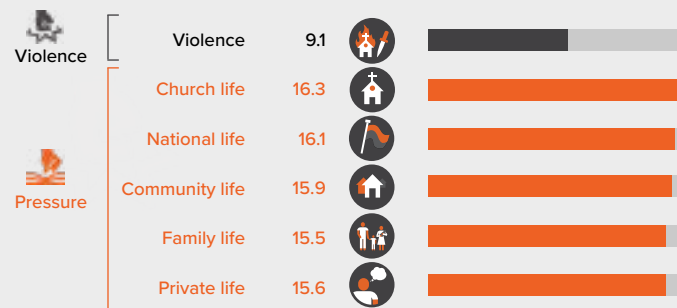
Islam

LEADER

Interim Prime Minister Abdul Hamid Mohammed Dbeibah

PROFILE OF PERSECUTION

Maximum 16.7 per sphere



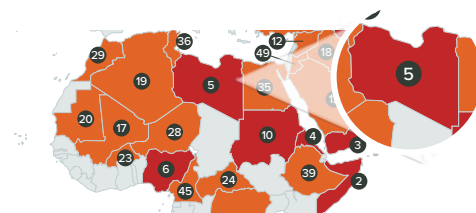
TOTAL: 88

Libya is effectively a lawless land where both native Christians and those passing through from other countries face extreme violence. With no central government to maintain law and order, both militant Islamic extremist groups and organized crime groups wield power. They target and kidnap Christians, and some believers have been killed.

If a Libyan from a Muslim background becomes a Christian, they are likely to face intense pressure and abuse from their family and the wider community to make them renounce their faith. They may even face death. Christians who publicly express their faith and try to share the gospel with others are likely to face arrest or retribution from extremist groups.

PRAYER POINTS

- Please pray for nationwide stability, law and order to come quickly to Libya.
- Pray that God would break the power of the organized criminal gangs exploiting vulnerable people.



SOURCE OF PERSECUTION

Islamic oppression and ethno-religious hostility

POPULATION

216,747,000

CHRISTIANS

100,420,000

MAIN RELIGION

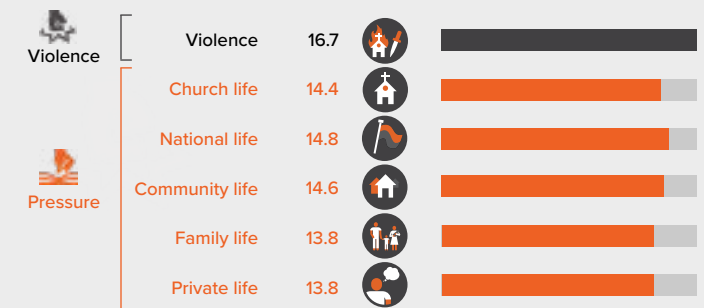
Christianity

LEADER

President Muhammadu Buhari

PROFILE OF PERSECUTION

Maximum 16.7 per sphere



TOTAL: 88

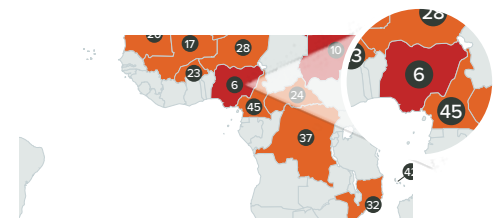
Christians in Nigeria suffer persecution from an ingrained agenda of enforced Islamification, which is particularly prevalent in the north of the country and has gradually been spreading south.

Since the northern states declared allegiance to Sharia (Islamic law) in 1999, this enforced Islamification has gained momentum, by violent and non-violent means. Attacks by Islamic militant groups have increased consistently since 2015, but the government has failed to prevent the rise in violence, which affects all Nigerians, but particularly Christians.

In the Sharia states of northern Nigeria, Christians face discrimination and exclusion as second-class citizens. Christians from a Muslim background also face rejection from their own families, pressure to give up Christianity, and often physical violence.

PRAYER POINTS

- Thank God for the courageous faith of believers in Nigeria, who refuse to deny Christ despite the dangers they face.
- Pray for an end to the violence inflicted by militant groups across Nigeria.





7

PAKISTAN

SOURCE OF PERSECUTION

Islamic oppression and dictatorial paranoia

POPULATION

229,489,000

CHRISTIANS

4,194,000

MAIN RELIGION

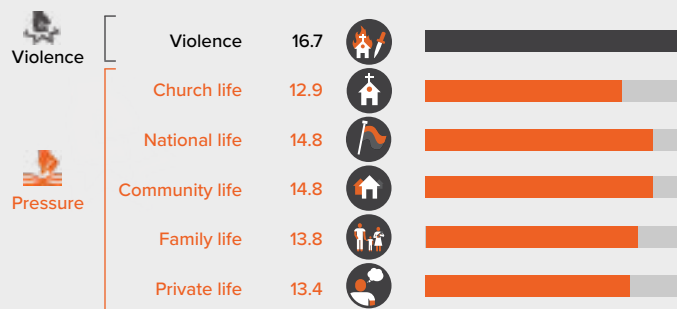
Islam

LEADER

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif

PROFILE OF PERSECUTION

Maximum 16.7 per sphere



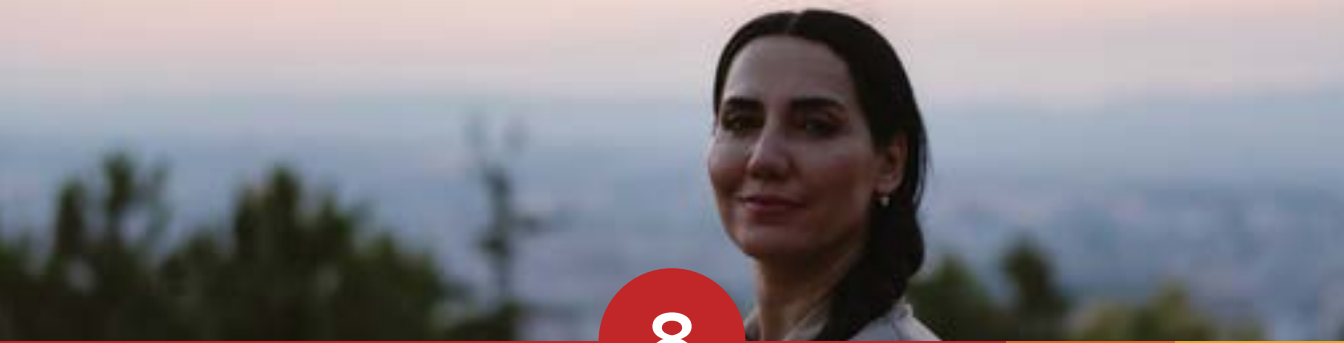
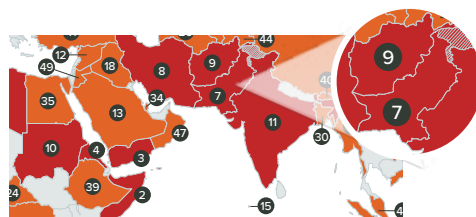
TOTAL: 86

Christians in Pakistan are considered second-class citizens and face discrimination in every aspect of life. Jobs that are seen as low, dirty and degrading are reserved for Christians by the authorities, who continue to push them to the margins of society. They lack proper representation in politics and although there were no major attacks against churches last year, there are almost constant attacks against individuals. Many do not feel safe to worship freely.

Pakistan's notorious blasphemy laws target religious minorities (including Muslim minorities) but affect the Christian minority in particular – roughly a quarter of all blasphemy accusations target Christians, who only make up 1.8% of the population. The number of blasphemy cases is increasing, as is the number of Christian (and other minority religion) girls being abducted, abused and forcibly converted to Islam.

PRAYER POINTS

- Pray that Pakistan's blasphemy laws will be changed so that Christians will be safe from false accusations.
- Pray for protection for women who suffer domestic violence and girls who are forced into marriage.



8

IRAN

SOURCE OF PERSECUTION

Dictatorial paranoia and Islamic oppression

POPULATION

86,023,000

CHRISTIANS

1,245,000

MAIN RELIGION

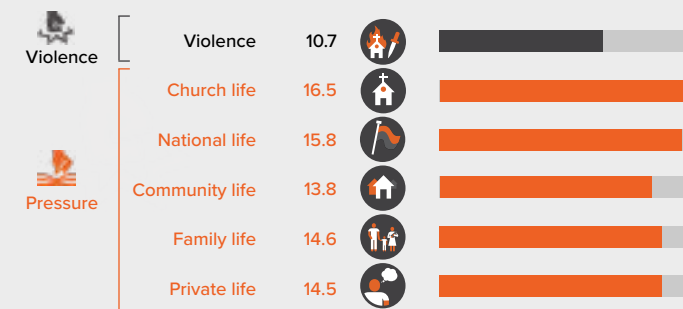
Islam

LEADER

Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei

PROFILE OF PERSECUTION

Maximum 16.7 per sphere



TOTAL: 86

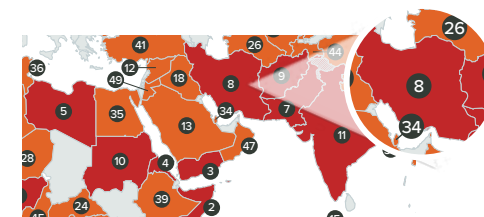
Iran is ruled by an increasingly strict Islamic regime, which views the existence of Iranian house churches as an attempt by Western countries to undermine Islam and the regime's authority.

When people from Muslim backgrounds become Christians, they can only meet in secret house churches. They are at great risk of being monitored, harassed, arrested and prosecuted for 'crimes against national security' – an accusation that is notoriously poorly defined, and can be abused. Iranian house church leaders and members have received long prison sentences involving physical and mental abuse.

There is an ancient history of Armenian and Assyrian Christians in Iran; these are protected by the state but treated as second-class citizens. They are not allowed to let Christians from Muslim backgrounds attend their services, nor are they allowed to worship in Persian, the national language.

PRAYER POINTS

- Pray that Christianity will no longer be portrayed as a foreign idea.
- Pray for strong faith and courage for the Iranian Christians meeting in secret.





9

AFGHANISTAN



PHOTO ©UNSPLASH

10

SUDAN

SOURCE OF PERSECUTION
Islamic oppression and clan oppression

POPULATION
40,754,000

CHRISTIANS
A few thousand

MAIN RELIGION
Islam

LEADER
Hibatullah Akhundzada

PROFILE OF PERSECUTION Maximum 16.7 per sphere

Violence	Violence	4.6		<div style="width: 27.5%;"></div>
	Church life	16.6		<div style="width: 99.4%;"></div>
Pressure	National life	16.1		<div style="width: 96.4%;"></div>
	Community life	15.4		<div style="width: 92.2%;"></div>
	Family life	15.7		<div style="width: 94.0%;"></div>
	Private life	15.4		<div style="width: 92.2%;"></div>
TOTAL:		84		

SOURCE OF PERSECUTION
Religious nationalism

POPULATION
45,992,000

CHRISTIANS
2,000,000

MAIN RELIGION
Hinduism

LEADER
Lieutenant-General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan

PROFILE OF PERSECUTION Maximum 16.7 per sphere

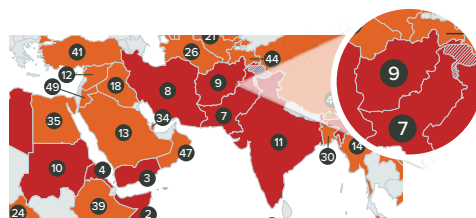
Violence	Violence	9.4		<div style="width: 56.3%;"></div>
	Church life	15.5		<div style="width: 92.8%;"></div>
Pressure	National life	14.9		<div style="width: 89.2%;"></div>
	Community life	14.9		<div style="width: 89.2%;"></div>
	Family life	14.2		<div style="width: 85.0%;"></div>
	Private life	14.1		<div style="width: 84.4%;"></div>
TOTAL:		83		

The Taliban's takeover of power in August 2021 has forced most Christians either further underground or away from the country entirely. Many (if not all) house groups closed, with believers forced to leave behind everything they own. More than a year after the Taliban's takeover, any promises they made about recognizing freedoms have proven to be false. Following Jesus remains a death sentence, if discovered. The rigid form of society imposed by the militant group leaves no room for deviation, meaning Christians – almost all of whom are converts from Islam – must keep their faith secret. Leaving Islam is considered shameful and punishable by death under the prevailing Islamic law.

Thousands of Afghan refugees are now living in countries bordering Afghanistan, often in poor conditions in camps for displaced people, and many Christians are among them.

PRAYER POINTS

- Pray for the protection of secret believers and that God's close presence will bring peace, joy and hope to their hearts.
- Pray that those who have fled to neighbouring countries will be led to places where all their needs are met.

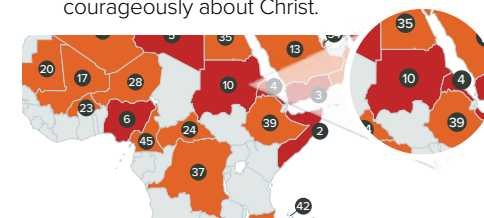


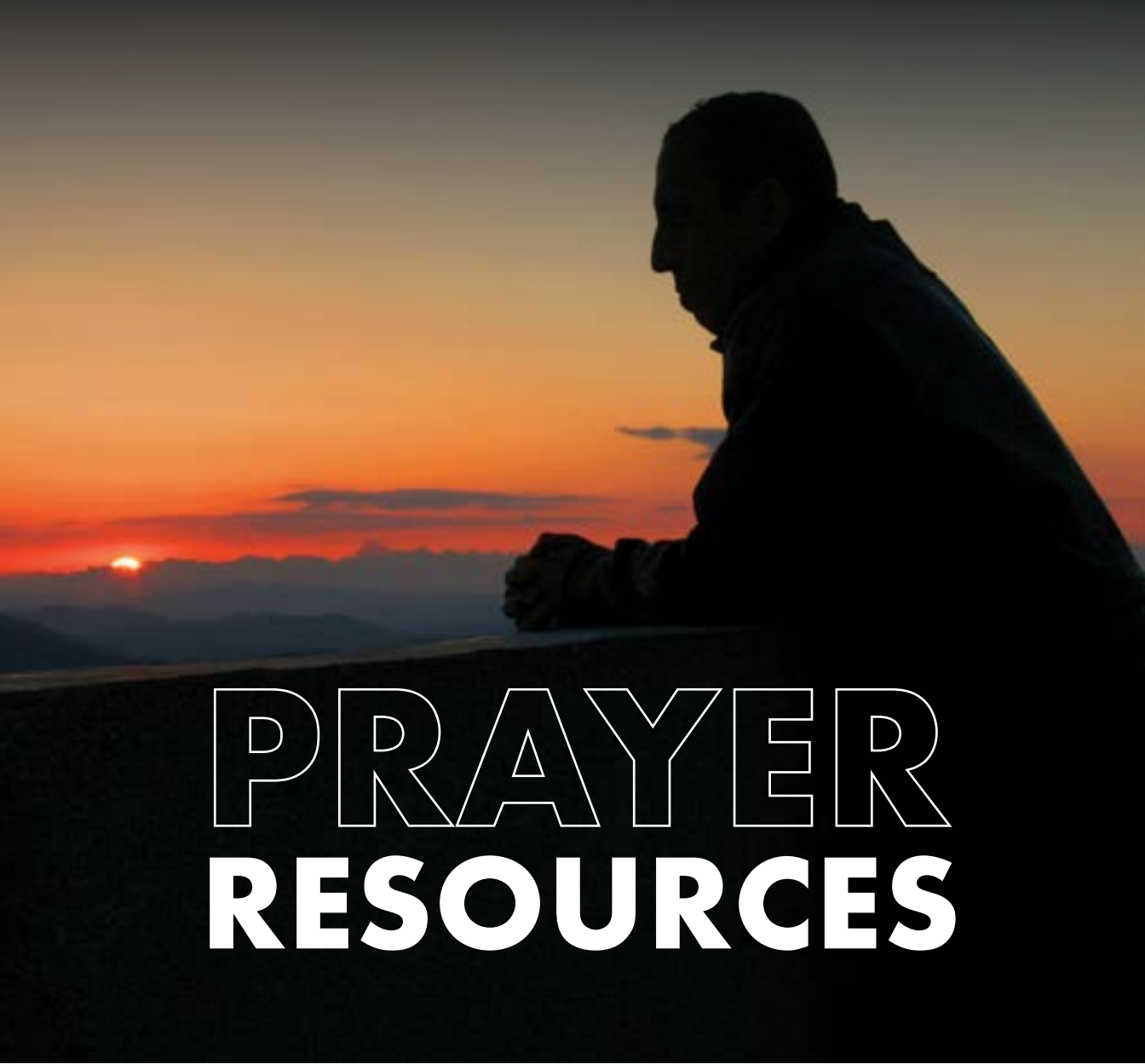
After Omar al-Bashir was ousted in April 2019, Sudan's transitional government introduced exciting changes to the legal framework guaranteeing basic human rights for all Sudanese, no matter their ethnicity, gender or religion. However, mass protests led to the resignation of Prime Minister Abdallah Hamdok in January 2022, and there are fears that Sudan will return to the authoritarian years of the former president. This could undo the positive steps made towards religious freedom under the transitional government. Although the death penalty for leaving Islam has now been abolished, there are fears that this punishment could be reinstated.

Christians are still vulnerable to extreme persecution from both their communities and their own families, particularly if they have converted from Islam. Converts may face sexual assault and domestic violence in their homes, as well as being vulnerable to imprisonment and violence.

PRAYER POINTS

- Pray for peace to prevail in Sudan and that God will establish rulers who enforce lasting respect for human rights.
- Pray that believers from Muslim backgrounds will grow in their knowledge of Christ and have wisdom to speak courageously about Christ.





PRAYER RESOURCES

Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

Open Doors produces prayer resources for you to pray for all God's people throughout the year. We invite you to join Canadians and Christians around the world in prayer for those who are persecuted for their faith.

ii pause
A MOMENT FOR THE PERSECUTED CHURCH

Pause is designed to help churches and families connect regularly with their persecuted family around the world through prayer.

Every month, a new toolkit in both English and French is available to download for free!

Visit www.opendoorscanada.org/pause to learn more and to download the toolkit.

IDOP



International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church will take place November 5, 2023.

Free downloadable prayer resources are available beginning of September for church use or personal use.

For more information, visit: www.opendoorscanada.org/IDOP

ONE WITH THEM
JUNE 2023

For the month of June, Open Doors Canada sets aside time for prayer for those held captive for their faith.

Continue to remember those in prison as if you were together with them in prison, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering.

Hebrews 13:3

Visit www.onewiththem.ca for prayer resources.

TUESDAY

Join us online on *the first Tuesday of every month* for 45 minutes as we pray through the latest requests from for our persecuted family.

Sign up by emailing prayer@odcan.org and indicate which time you prefer: 7pm EST or 7pm PST

We would love to pray for you. Send us your prayer requests and the staff at Open Doors Canada will pray for you.

Email: prayer@odcan.org





PHOTO ©PEXELS

11

INDIA



PHOTO ©PEXELS

12

SYRIA

SOURCE OF PERSECUTION
Religious nationalism

POPULATION
1,406,623,000

CHRISTIANS
69,494,000

MAIN RELIGION
Hinduism

LEADER
Prime Minister Narendra Modi

PROFILE OF PERSECUTION Maximum 16.7 per sphere

Violence	Violence	15.7		<div style="width: 93.4%;"></div>
	Church life	13.3		<div style="width: 79.6%;"></div>
Pressure	National life	14.8		<div style="width: 88.6%;"></div>
	Community life	13.0		<div style="width: 78.4%;"></div>
	Family life	13.1		<div style="width: 78.4%;"></div>
	Private life	12.3		<div style="width: 73.7%;"></div>
TOTAL:		82		

SOURCE OF PERSECUTION
Dictatorial paranoia and Islamic oppression

POPULATION
19,365,000

CHRISTIANS
603,000

MAIN RELIGION
Islam

LEADER
President Bashar al-Assad

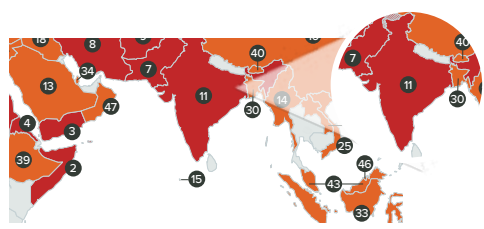
PROFILE OF PERSECUTION Maximum 16.7 per sphere

Violence	Violence	11.3		<div style="width: 67.6%;"></div>
	Church life	14.1		<div style="width: 84.4%;"></div>
Pressure	National life	14.1		<div style="width: 84.4%;"></div>
	Community life	13.6		<div style="width: 81.4%;"></div>
	Family life	14.1		<div style="width: 84.4%;"></div>
	Private life	13.2		<div style="width: 78.4%;"></div>
TOTAL:		80		

In recent years there has been a big increase in Hindutva, an ideology that believes only Hindus are true Indians, and that Christians, Muslims and other religious minorities have ‘foreign’ roots and must be expelled. Increasing numbers of states are implementing anti-conversion laws, supposedly to stop Hindus being forcibly converted to other religions, but in reality, they are often used as an excuse to harass and intimidate Christians who are just doing things like distributing aid or having a private church meeting.

The Christians most at risk are those who have come to faith from a Hindu background. In some parts of India, many face constant pressure to return to Hinduism, social exclusion, discrimination at work, physical assaults and are sometimes even killed.

- PRAYER POINTS**
- Pray for a change of narrative around Indian identity that accepts minority faiths.
 - Pray that converts’ genuine faith would have a powerful effect on their families and neighbours.

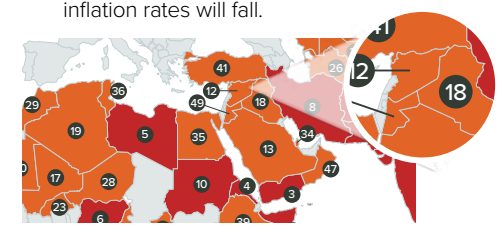


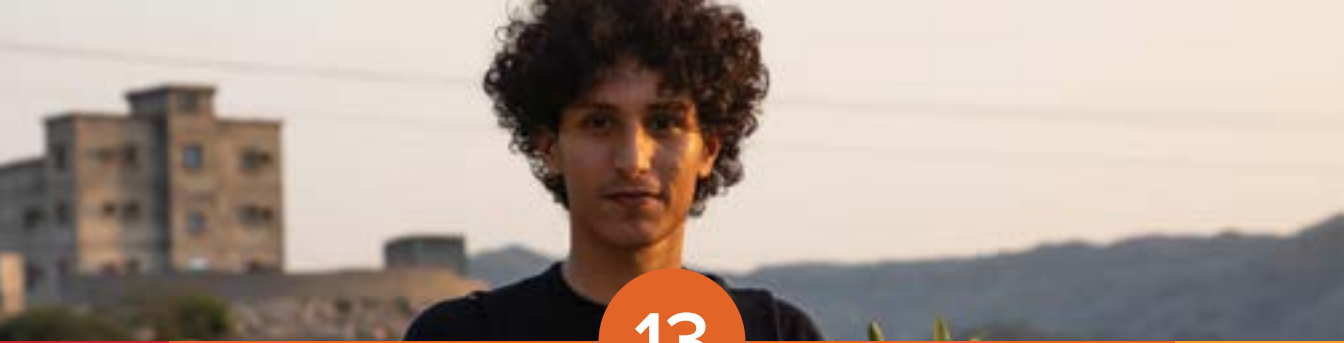
Years of conflict and instability have created an environment in which persecution can flourish with impunity.

In the few areas controlled by Islamic militants, leaders of traditional churches are targeted for kidnap or attack. This is designed to intimidate the Christian community. Most church buildings have either been demolished or repurposed as Islamic centres. Public expressions of Christian faith are prohibited. Even in government-controlled areas, evangelism and converting from Islam to Christianity are seen as a threat to social stability and are therefore heavily suppressed.

Christians from a Muslim background experience particular pressure from their families and communities because their conversion is seen as a slight to the family’s honour. Converts are at risk of being expelled from their family homes or worse.

- PRAYER POINTS**
- Thank God that, despite the dangers, brave Christians are being salt and light in their communities.
 - Pray for peace and stability. Pray that the government will have the wisdom to stabilize the economy and that soaring inflation rates will fall.





13

SAUDI ARABIA

SOURCE OF PERSECUTION

Islamic oppression and clan oppression

POPULATION

35,845,000

CHRISTIANS

2,165,000

MAIN RELIGION

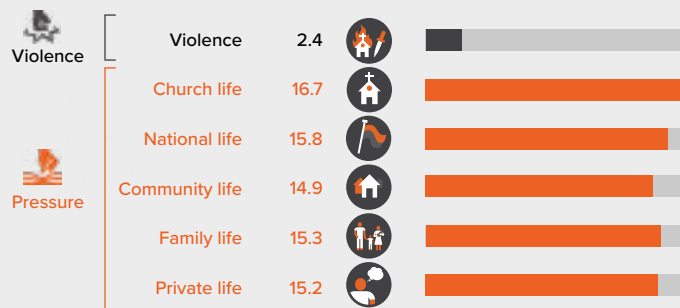
Islam

LEADER

King Salman bin Abdulaziz al-Saud

PROFILE OF PERSECUTION

Maximum 16.7 per sphere



TOTAL: 80

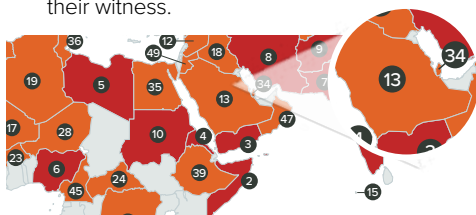
Saudi Arabia is a highly conservative Islamic nation and other religions cannot be practiced openly. It remains one of the few countries in the world where church buildings are forbidden.

Most Christians in Saudi Arabia are migrant workers from Asia and Africa. Foreign Christians are severely restricted from sharing their Christian faith and gathering for public worship. Those who do so risk detention and deportation.

There are also a small number of Saudi Christian converts. Conversion from Islam to Christianity is unacceptable under Islamic law, so many live as secret believers. Those whose faith is discovered face severe pressure, especially from their families. Despite the risks, the small number of Saudi Christians is slowly increasing and some are boldly sharing their Christian faith on the internet and Christian satellite TV channels.

PRAYER POINTS

- Pray that secret believers who are isolated will find ways to connect with other believers online.
- Thank God for the courage of believers who are sharing their faith. Pray that God will continue to build His church through their witness.



14

MYANMAR

SOURCE OF PERSECUTION

Religious nationalism and dictatorial paranoia

POPULATION

55,227,000

CHRISTIANS

4,421,000

MAIN RELIGION

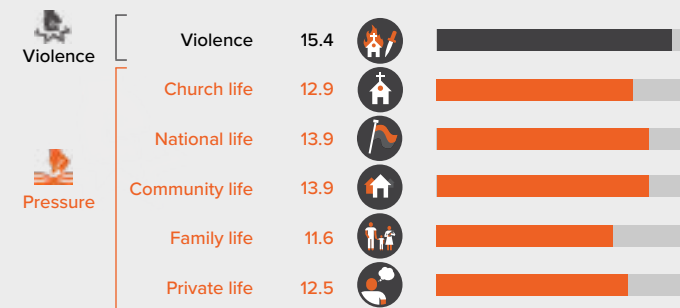
Buddhism

LEADER

General Min Aung Hlaing

PROFILE OF PERSECUTION

Maximum 16.7 per sphere



TOTAL: 80

The situation in Christian areas has taken a turn for the worse since the military took control in February 2021. Fighting has increased across the country and the Christian minority is bearing the brunt of these attacks. More Christians than ever have become internally displaced people or refugees, and are living in camps or churches without adequate food and healthcare.

The daily reality is that Christians do not enjoy the same rights and legal protection as the Buddhist majority. Christians are often victims of violent attacks conducted with impunity. Even in predominantly Christian states, long-established churches have suffered attacks and Christian aid workers and pastors have been killed. Government forces attack Christian villages and churches, while Buddhist monasteries remain largely untouched.

PRAYER POINTS

- For reconciliation between religious groups in Myanmar and an end to the habitual discrimination against Christians.
- Pray for the protection of the thousands of vulnerable people who are now refugees or internally displaced due to the ongoing conflict.





PHOTO ©UNSPASH

15

MALDIVES

SOURCE OF PERSECUTION

Islamic oppression

POPULATION

541,000

CHRISTIANS

A few hundred

MAIN RELIGION

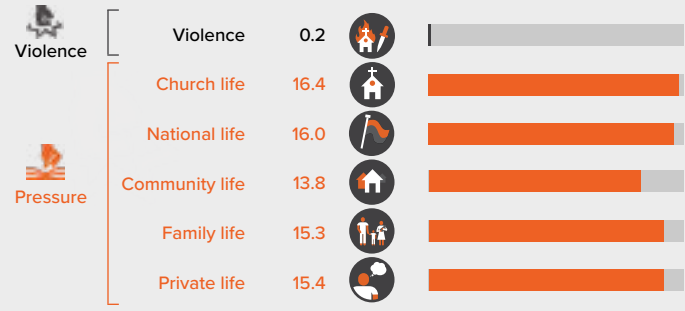
Islam

LEADER

President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih

PROFILE OF PERSECUTION

Maximum 16.7 per sphere



TOTAL: 77

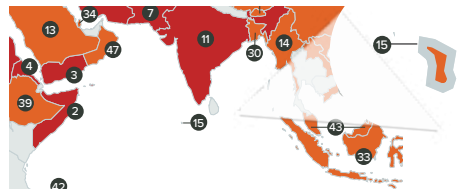
The government of the Maldives considers all citizens Muslim, so Christian converts have to follow Jesus in the greatest secrecy. If discovered, they can be stripped of their citizenship or even given the death penalty.

Even foreign Christians working in the islands' tourist sector are closely watched by the authorities and must not express or discuss their faith with local citizens. If they do, they may be fined, deported or even imprisoned.

The Maldives is made up of very close-knit communities, making it very difficult to talk to or meet up with anybody secretly. Christian faith must be kept so private that two members of the same family could be believers without the other ever knowing. Mutual encouragement and fellowship are huge challenges.

PRAYER POINTS

- Pray for believers to safely communicate with one another and access Bible materials.
- Pray that Christians feeling isolated will know God's presence and love.



WORLD WATCH LIST MARKS 30 YEAR ANNIVERSARY

AN INTERVIEW WITH FRANS VEERMAN MANAGING DIRECTOR, WORLD WATCH RESEARCH

WHY WAS THE WORLD WATCH LIST CREATED IN THE FIRST PLACE?

The World Watch List was created in 1993 for strategic planning purposes. After the fall of the Iron Curtain, in November 1989, resources were freed up to expand the work into other countries where Christians were persecuted.

Open Doors leadership appointed someone (1) to do research into Open Door's involvement in countries where they were already active to see whether they should step up their activities; (2) to do research to see if Open Doors was missing countries, where persecution was high, and where they had no involvement yet.

The researcher who was appointed developed a simple questionnaire to assess persecution levels in the world, leading to the production of the first World Watch List in January 1993.

WHAT DIFFERENCE HAS THE WORLD WATCH LIST MADE?

The outcomes since that first World Watch List 30 years ago have been a crucial factor in changing the work of Open Doors for and with persecuted Christians in Communist countries, and later Islamic countries. It has made a difference in how we support persecuted Christians in any country in the world where needed, regardless of the source of persecution.

WHAT STORY DOES IT TELL US ABOUT THE PAST 30 YEARS?

Over the last 30 years, the World Watch List has shown us that persecution is growing. We can

see this by the number of countries that score at least a minimum threshold value for persecution, according to our methodology.

Persecution has also intensified. The average score for the Top 50 countries for the first WWL 1993 and the most recent WWL 2022, has increased by more than 25%.

HOW HAS THE WORLD WATCH LIST IMPACTED THE EXPERIENCE OF PERSECUTED CHRISTIANS?

The World Watch List contributes to Open Doors' mission of ensuring that no one suffers persecution alone, by standing with them and being the voice of the voiceless, in many places, and on many platforms.

In a special way we trust that our work encourages persecuted Christians, when they learn that their plight does not go unnoticed by many around the world.





16

CHINA



17

MALI

SOURCE OF PERSECUTION
Communist oppression

POPULATION
1,448,471,000

CHRISTIANS
96,700,000

MAIN RELIGION
Agnosticism

LEADER
President Xi Jinping

PROFILE OF PERSECUTION Maximum 16.7 per sphere

Violence	Violence	11.1		<div style="width: 66%;"></div>
	Church life	15.6		<div style="width: 93%;"></div>
Pressure	National life	14.5		<div style="width: 87%;"></div>
	Community life	12.7		<div style="width: 76%;"></div>
	Family life	10.0		<div style="width: 60%;"></div>
	Private life	12.9		<div style="width: 77%;"></div>

TOTAL: 77

SOURCE OF PERSECUTION
Islamic oppression and organized corruption and crime

POPULATION
21,474,000

CHRISTIANS
490,000

MAIN RELIGION
Islam

LEADER
Interim President Assimi Goita

PROFILE OF PERSECUTION Maximum 16.7 per sphere

Violence	Violence	15.0		<div style="width: 89%;"></div>
	Church life	15.1		<div style="width: 90%;"></div>
Pressure	National life	10.3		<div style="width: 62%;"></div>
	Community life	14.7		<div style="width: 88%;"></div>
	Family life	10.1		<div style="width: 60%;"></div>
	Private life	11.1		<div style="width: 66%;"></div>

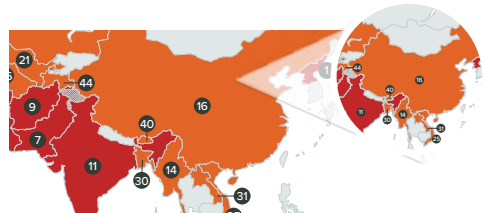
TOTAL: 76

Tightening restrictions and increasing surveillance are putting Christians in China under intensifying pressure, as the Communist Party seeks to limit all threats to its power. Surveillance in China is among the most oppressive and sophisticated in the world, and Christian leaders are particularly vulnerable to its scrutiny, leading to imprisonment and, in a small number of cases, abduction.

New restrictions on internet and social media – together with the 2018 regulations on religion, which continue to be revised – are putting severe limitations on Christian freedom. Many churches are being monitored and closed, whether they are independent or belong to the Three-Self Patriotic Movement. It remains illegal for those under 18 years of age to attend church.

PRAYER POINTS

- Pray that Christians facing the burden of surveillance will be given strength, wisdom and boldness as they navigate challenges.
- Pray that young people who've not previously experienced persecution will be equipped to stand strong in their faith.

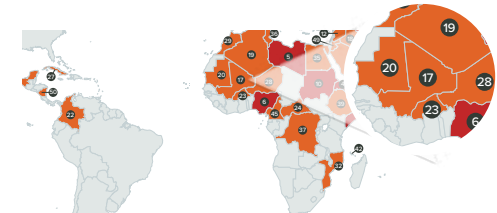


Around ten years ago, Islamic extremist groups took control of northern Mali, burned down churches and forced out the Christian population. The Christian community there has never fully recovered, and Christians in that area still live with the threat of violent attacks, especially if they share the gospel.

Mali has gone through great political instability in the last few years, and the leadership vacuum has strengthened the Islamic extremist groups and expanded their territory. This has put Christians at greater risk of violence in various parts of the country. Militant Islamic extremists abduct people, including Christians, and kill them or keep them in sexual slavery. Others are pressured to join the groups, where they will be forcibly converted to Islam and made to fight.

PRAYER POINTS

- Pray for stability, law and order to return to Mali.
- Pray for Open Doors partners' work to help vulnerable Christians earn a living.
- Pray that new believers will find fellowship with other Christians.





18

IRAQ



19

ALGERIA

SOURCE OF PERSECUTION

Islamic oppression

POPULATION

42,165,000

CHRISTIANS

164,000

MAIN RELIGION

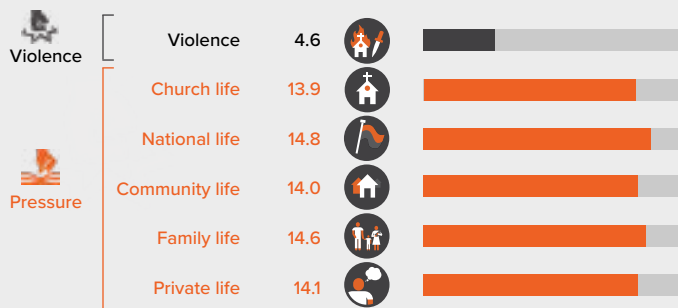
Islam

LEADER

Prime Minister Mohammed Shia al-Sudani

PROFILE OF PERSECUTION

Maximum 16.7 per sphere



TOTAL: 76

SOURCE OF PERSECUTION

Islamic oppression

POPULATION

45,350,000

CHRISTIANS

139,000

MAIN RELIGION

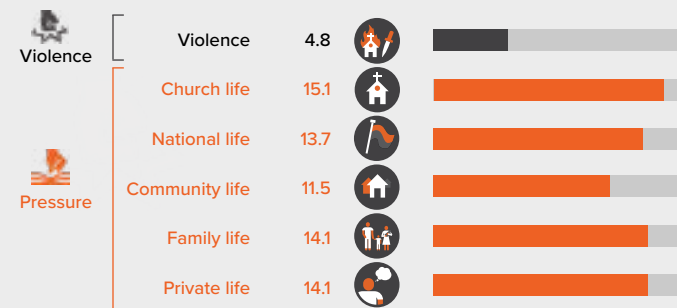
Islam

LEADER

President Abdelmadjid Tebboune

PROFILE OF PERSECUTION

Maximum 16.7 per sphere



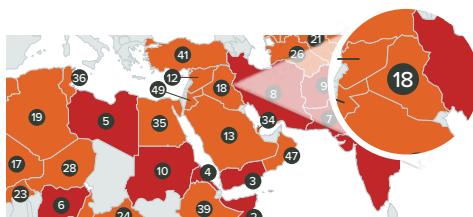
TOTAL: 73

Iraqi Christians experience discrimination, harassment and violent persecution, without protection from the state. Iraq is home to many churches, but all are seriously affected by intolerance, discrimination and persecution. In central and southern Iraq, many Christians choose not to display their faith in public to avoid harassment or discrimination at work, university or when trying to cross checkpoints.

Believers from Muslim backgrounds experience intense pressure from their families, clan leaders and communities, which can lead to being expelled from the family, losing the means to get married, or being forcibly divorced and losing their inheritance and access to their children. They may be arrested and prosecuted under blasphemy laws. It's not surprising that some choose to keep their new faith a secret.

PRAYER POINTS

- Pray for peace and stability to come to Iraq so Christians can return home.
- Pray for God's protection and courage for new believers from Muslim backgrounds.

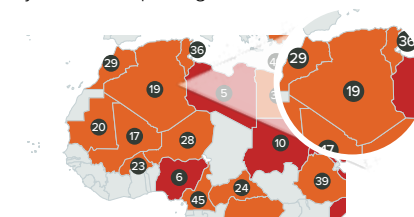


Most Algerian believers are converts from Islam. They can face discrimination, harassment and pressure to follow Islamic customs from family and the wider community. More recently, Christians have increasingly experienced restrictions and pressure from state officials to renounce their faith. Laws that regulate non-Muslim worship are also used to quell the influence of Christianity. This includes the prohibition of anything that would 'shake the faith of a Muslim' or could be used as a 'means of seduction intending to convert a Muslim to another religion'. These laws are sufficiently vague to be used to target and harass believers.

Meanwhile, 16 previously closed church buildings remained sealed, while other churches were ordered to close during the past year. Several other churches have had to cease their activities.

PRAYER POINTS

- Pray that the Holy Spirit will help Christians in Algeria to stand firm in their faith.
- Pray that believers will have opportunities to gather with other believers for fellowship and discipleship.
- Pray for the reopening of closed churches.





20

MAURITANIA

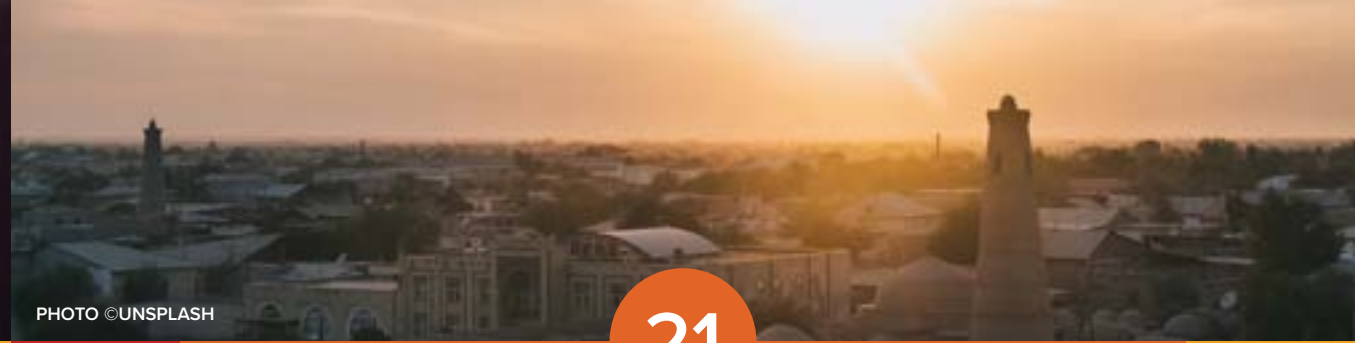


PHOTO ©UNSPASH

21

UZBEKISTAN

SOURCE OF PERSECUTION

Islamic oppression

POPULATION

4,902,000

CHRISTIANS

11,000

MAIN RELIGION

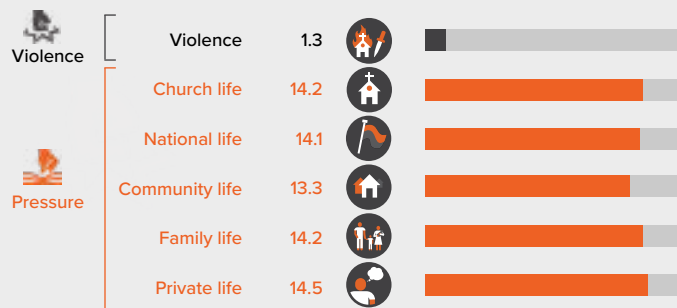
Islam

LEADER

President Mohamed Cheikh el Ghazouani

PROFILE OF PERSECUTION

Maximum 16.7 per sphere



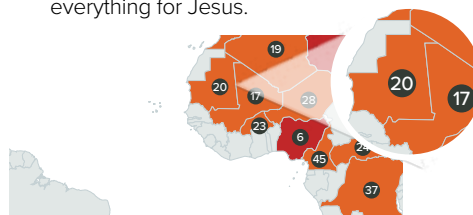
TOTAL: 72

Mauritania does not allow freedom of religion; it is illegal to leave Islam and follow another faith. Christian converts face very severe pressure. In many cases, they are shunned, expelled from their homes, or physically abused. If they make their faith public, Christians can be accused of apostasy, with severe consequences, or charged by the authorities with terrorism or cyber-crime offences. Christians have been detained and prosecuted for ‘undermining national security by insulting Islam and threatening Mauritania’s sacred principles’.

It is very difficult for Christians to meet or worship together, and almost impossible for believers who have converted from Islam. Even foreign nationals holding Christian meetings could be seen as evangelizing to local Muslims – for which they can be prosecuted.

PRAYER POINTS

- Pray that the families of new believers would have open hearts and minds, instead of rejecting the believer.
- Pray for Open Doors partners and other Christians working to support secret believers and those who’ve lost everything for Jesus.



SOURCE OF PERSECUTION

Dictatorial paranoia and Islamic oppression

POPULATION

34,382,000

CHRISTIANS

351,000

MAIN RELIGION

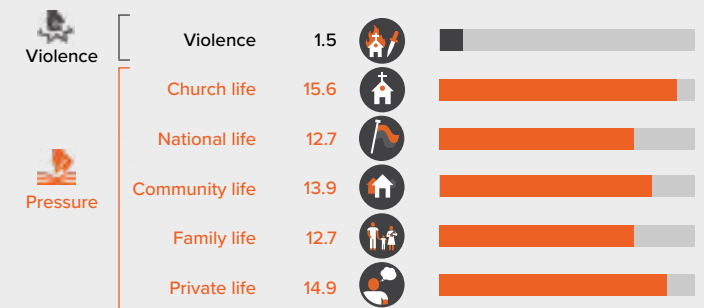
Islam

LEADER

President Shavkat Mirziyoyev

PROFILE OF PERSECUTION

Maximum 16.7 per sphere



TOTAL: 71

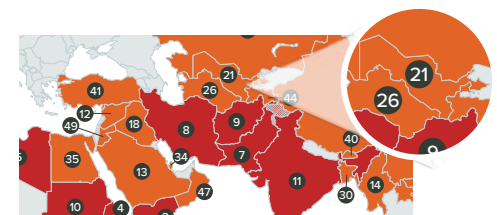
Freedom of religion remains severely restricted in Uzbekistan. The government is staunchly secular and no religious activities beyond state-run and state-controlled institutions are allowed.

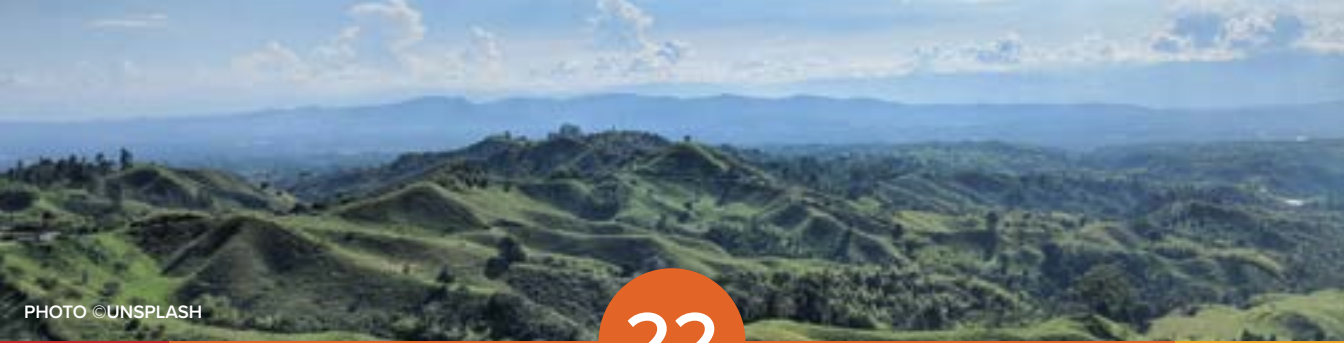
Except for foreigners, all Christians experience pressure because of their faith. Churches from non-traditional denominations are frequently raided. Attendees may be threatened, arrested or fined. Church leaders are fined, detained, denied exit visas to leave the country, or put under house arrest to spread fear throughout their congregations.

Christian converts are likely to be pressured by their families to return to Islam through house arrest, disinheritance, physical and verbal abuse, or eviction from the family home. In conservative regions, converts may be kidnapped by their own community and married off to a Muslim. As a result, most converts choose to hide their faith.

PRAYER POINTS

- Pray for God to protect secret believers. Pray that they draw close to God in their own covert times with Him.
- Pray that God will soften the hearts of those who have rejected a family member for their Christian faith.





22

23

COLOMBIA

BURKINA FASO

SOURCE OF PERSECUTION

Organized corruption and crime and clan oppression

POPULATION

51,513,000

CHRISTIANS

49,002,000

MAIN RELIGION

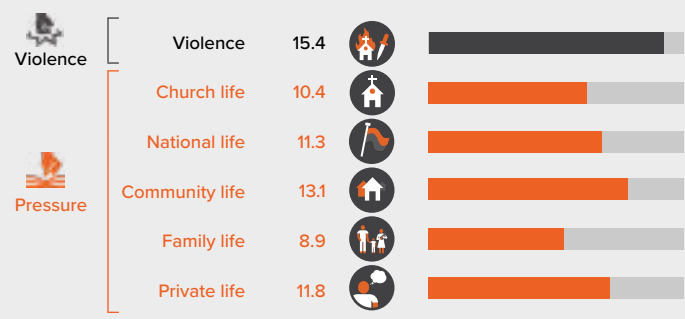
Christianity

LEADER

President Gustavo Francisco Petro Urrego

PROFILE OF PERSECUTION

Maximum 16.7 per sphere



TOTAL: 71

SOURCE OF PERSECUTION

Islamic oppression

POPULATION

22,103,000

CHRISTIANS

5,166,000

MAIN RELIGION

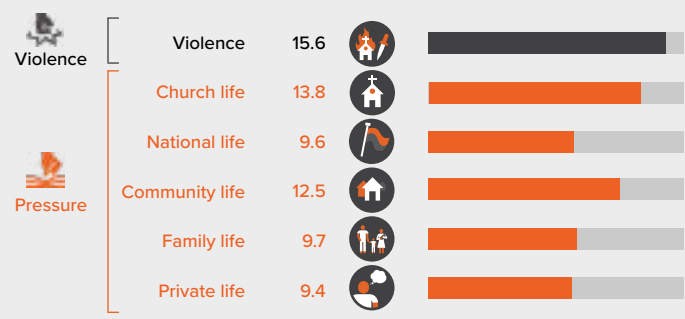
Islam

LEADER

President Ibrahim Traore

PROFILE OF PERSECUTION

Maximum 16.7 per sphere



TOTAL: 71

Persecution from armed guerilla groups and gangs intensified throughout the year. They see the church as a threat to their power and stability, particularly when gang members become Christians or church leaders speak out against violence and corruption. This leads to church leaders being threatened, harassed and even murdered, not to mention the mobility restrictions imposed by illegal means. Gang leaders target Christian families' children, trying to recruit or abduct them to undermine the church and force them into displacement.

In many indigenous communities, there is strong opposition to sharing the gospel. Indigenous Colombians who leave their traditional beliefs to become Christians can face violence or imprisonment, be denied their basic rights, and can be driven out of their ancestral lands and left displaced.

PRAYER POINTS

- Pray for God's strength and power for pastors facing constant harassment from criminal groups.
- Pray that new believers from criminal or indigenous backgrounds would inspire others with their courageous faith.



The expanding influence of jihadist groups in Burkina Faso is having a catastrophic impact on Christians. Believers have been targeted and killed in villages, churches and workplaces, and hundreds of churches have been forced to close, with many having been destroyed. The threat from extremist Islamic groups has even spread to cities that were previously beyond their reach.

Meanwhile, in addition to being targeted by jihadists, Christians from Muslim backgrounds face enormous pressure from families and communities to renounce their faith. Many are afraid to express their faith in public because of such threats.

There are over a million internally displaced people in Burkina Faso, a significant number of whom are Christians who have fled the rising jihadist violence.

PRAYER POINTS

- Pray that God will heal and comfort all those severely traumatized and affected by jihadist attacks.
- Pray for the protection of believers and local partners in the country, and for strength to stand firm in their faith.

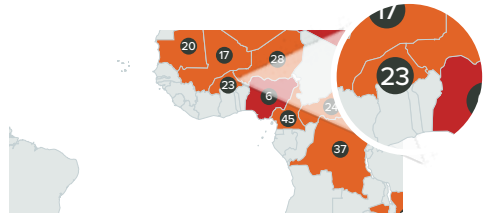




PHOTO ©UNSPASH

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

VIETNAM

SOURCE OF PERSECUTION

Islamic oppression, organized corruption and crime

POPULATION

5,017,000

CHRISTIANS

3,712,000

MAIN RELIGION

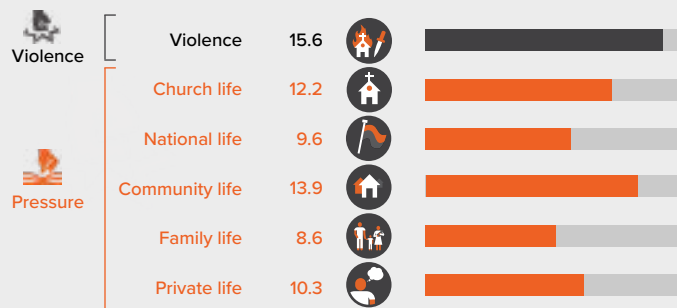
Christianity

LEADER

President Faustin Archange Touadera

PROFILE OF PERSECUTION

Maximum 16.7 per sphere



TOTAL: 70

SOURCE OF PERSECUTION

Communist oppression and clan oppression

POPULATION

98,954,000

CHRISTIANS

9,401,000

MAIN RELIGION

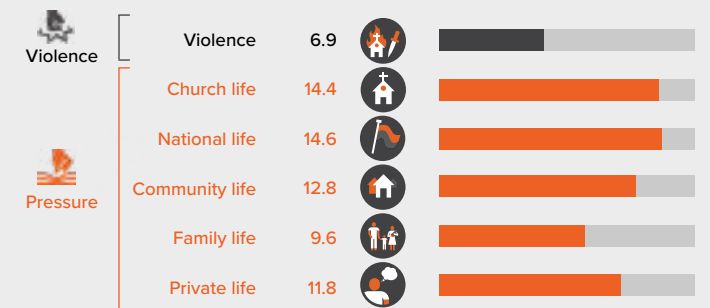
Buddhism

LEADER

President Nguyen Xuan Phuc

PROFILE OF PERSECUTION

Maximum 16.7 per sphere



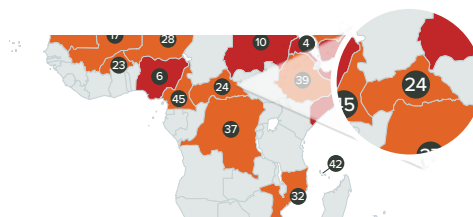
TOTAL: 70

Since 2013, the ongoing conflict in Central African Republic has resulted in thousands of Christians losing their homes and livelihoods. Today, many continue to live in camps for internally displaced people. Most of the country is occupied by armed militia groups who are responsible for a range of human rights abuses. When Christian leaders have publicly denounced the violence, they've been threatened, and their churches ransacked and torched. Pastors are especially at risk, with some even being attacked during church services.

Meanwhile, those who convert from Islam are at risk of persecution from their family and local community – including forced marriage and separation from children, for women.

PRAYER POINTS

- Pray for peace and stability in the country.
- Pray that Christians will be able to make a living, to provide not only for their families but also to reach out to their local communities.



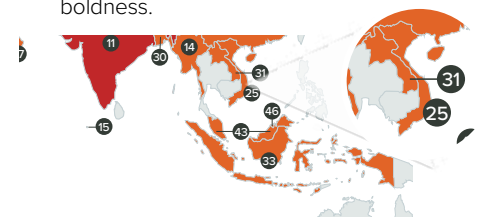
The government in Vietnam monitors Christian activity and exercises a high level of pressure on all Christians.

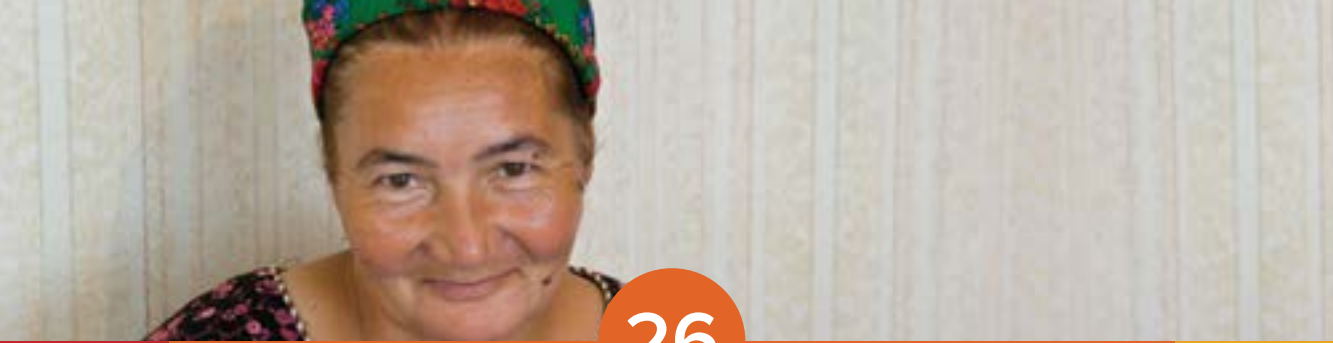
Historical Christian communities (such as Roman Catholic churches) enjoy a certain amount of freedom unless they become politically active. Evangelical and Pentecostal congregations, most of whom gather in house churches, are closely monitored and face discrimination at various levels of government and society.

Converts from a Buddhist or Ethnic-animist background face the most severe persecution, not only from the authorities, but also from their families, friends and neighbours. Since most of them belong to ethnic minorities like the Hmong, the Communist authorities are particularly suspicious of them. Their homes are sometimes destroyed, and they are then forced to leave their villages. Yet their numbers are reported to be growing.

PRAYER POINTS

- Pray for protection over women in northern provinces who are vulnerable to trafficking.
- Thank God that the church is growing among ethnic minority groups. Pray that new believers will grow in faith and boldness.





26

TURKMENISTAN



PHOTO ©UNSPLASH

27

CUBA

SOURCE OF PERSECUTION

Dictatorial paranoia and Islamic oppression

POPULATION

6,202,000

CHRISTIANS

66,700

MAIN RELIGION

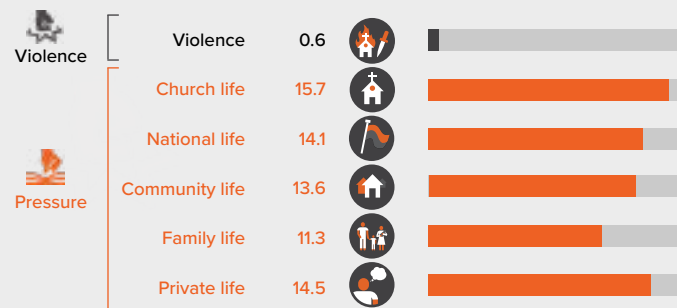
Islam

LEADER

President Serdar Berdimuhamedow

PROFILE OF PERSECUTION

Maximum 16.7 per sphere



TOTAL: 70

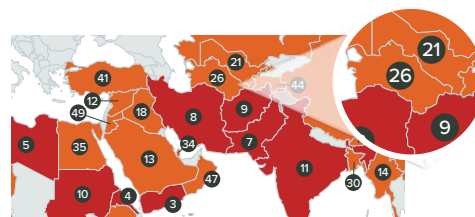
There is no freedom of religion in Turkmenistan. The government uses a huge network of police, secret services and local imams to closely monitor all religious activities. All religious groups are required to register with the authorities, but only those that have at least 50 members over age 18 are allowed to do so. All non-registered groups are effectively banned.

Churches are the target of police raids, and attendees may be arrested or fined. Printing and importing Christian materials is restricted, so there are few resources to support local Christians.

Christians from a Muslim background come under pressure both from the state and their family and community, who may subject them to house arrest, forced marriage and beatings to try to force them to return to Islam.

PRAYER POINTS

- Pray for courage for church leaders under pressure from the authorities. Pray that they will stand firm in their faith.
- Pray that Bibles and Christian literature will find their way safely to Christians, without interception from the authorities.



SOURCE OF PERSECUTION

Dictatorial paranoia and communist oppression

POPULATION

11,306,000

CHRISTIANS

6,936,000

MAIN RELIGION

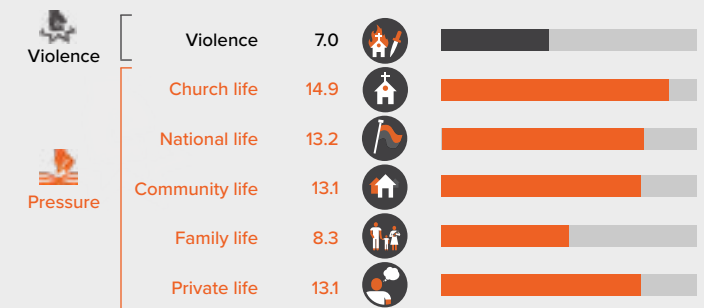
Christianity

LEADER

President Miguel Diaz-Canel

PROFILE OF PERSECUTION

Maximum 16.7 per sphere



TOTAL: 70

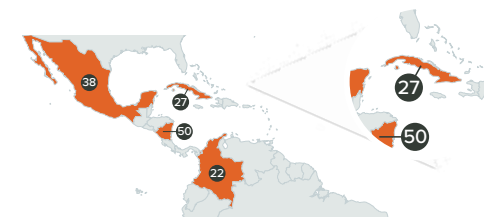
Cuba's communist regime is not tolerant of dissenting voices or any other institutions gaining influence or power. The church falls into both of these camps and, as a result, Christians experience persecution from the authorities.

Christian activists or church leaders speaking out against corruption or political issues can be arrested and imprisoned.

Communist Cuba has historically aimed to repress religion and reduce the church's influence. Today, this is done by refusing to register new churches or allow them to buy or use premises to meet legally. This forces many believers to meet illegally in unregistered house churches – if caught, they can then be fined, have their property confiscated or have their church shut down.

PRAYER POINTS

- Pray that the regime would relax its surveillance and honour religious freedom.
- Pray for Open Doors partners encouraging churches that feel isolated from the world.





28

NIGER

SOURCE OF PERSECUTION

Islamic oppression

POPULATION

26,084,000

CHRISTIANS

65,300

MAIN RELIGION

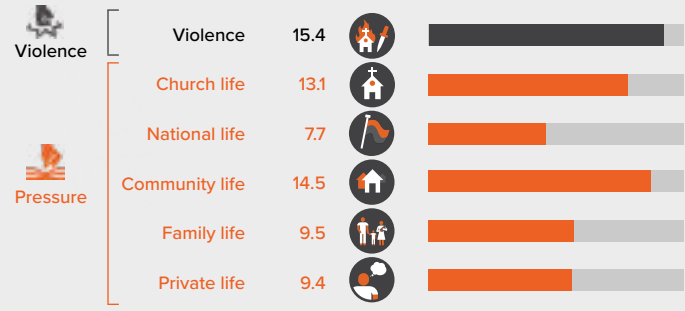
Islam

LEADER

President Mohamed Bazoum

PROFILE OF PERSECUTION

Maximum 16.7 per sphere



TOTAL: 70

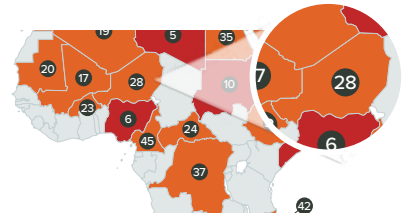
Islam is regarded as being part of Nigerien ethnicity. Conversion from Islam to any religion is considered a betrayal and Christian converts face hostility from their family and community. They may be rejected by their families, chased out of the family home, put under house arrest, or denied their inheritance rights.

The presence of militant groups such as Boko Haram, Islamic State's West Africa Province and others, remains a constant threat to state authorities and Christians in the country.

Christians in the nation are rarely able to secure employment within local government services and are frequently denied promotion. Christians have occasionally been hindered from gathering for meetings and the legal process for the registration of churches is very long and difficult.

PRAYER POINTS

- Pray for protection against violence from extremist groups operating in Niger.
- Pray for God to strengthen believers from Muslim backgrounds under pressure to deny their faith.



29

MOROCCO

SOURCE OF PERSECUTION

Islamic oppression

POPULATION

37,773,000

CHRISTIANS

31,300

MAIN RELIGION

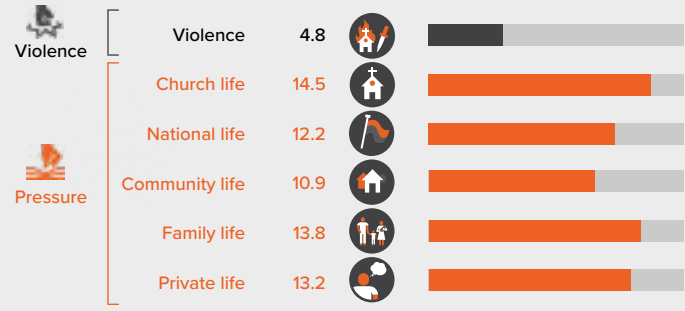
Islam

LEADER

King Mohammed VI

PROFILE OF PERSECUTION

Maximum 16.7 per sphere



TOTAL: 69

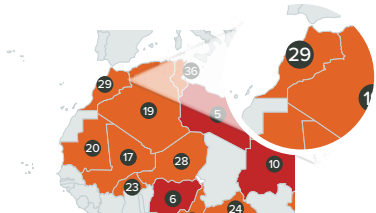
In North Africa, it's a criminal offence to 'shake the faith of a Muslim'. If Christians talk to others about their faith, they risk arrest and prosecution.

With Islamic extremists in the region, Christians face the threat of violent attacks on the grounds of their faith. In the public sphere, Christians become the targets for government interrogation, beatings or imprisonment. In work, they may be harassed by colleagues, or even made unemployed because of their faith. If their faith is known, many Christians are discriminated against in their job searches, and finding employment becomes almost impossible.

Distribution of Christian resources is restricted and Christians may suffer harassment, beatings and imprisonment if they are found with a Bible. Pressure from families and society can force Christians into isolation or relocation.

PRAYER POINTS

- Pray for tolerance of all faiths in North Africa and for Christians to have the freedom to gather.
- Pray for deepening of faith for Christians in North Africa, even when it is difficult to access resources.



VIOLENCE IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA HAS REACHED NEW HEIGHTS

Violence against Christians continues to grow in Sub-Saharan Africa. On the 2023 World Watch List, there are 26 countries in the region with at least a high level of persecution (41+ total points). Five years ago, there were only 14. The combined scores for the 26 countries increased by 8% over last year. Half of those countries have violence scores in the “extremely high” range.

Christians continued to be brutally attacked in northern Nigeria and the violence spread to southern Nigeria. Boko Haram, ISWAP, Fulani militants and other armed bandits have conducted raids on Christian communities, killing, maiming, raping, kidnapping for ransom or forcing into sexual slavery. On average, more than 13 Christians in Nigeria are killed each day for their faith in Jesus Christ.

Conditions in large parts of Sub-Saharan Africa are ripe for violence. The general background is persistent, expanding political instability and economic hardship. This has led to the expansion of Jihadism. For instance, in Mali, the government has been weakened by repeated coups, allowing Jihadist groups to replace the government services in areas they control.

The Jihadist movement, which is seeking to expand in Africa, has forced Christians into constant motion, from their homes to displacement camps, or even to other countries. Insecurity, stemming from this experience of forced displacement, can then make Christians even more vulnerable to further violence. Christian women, in particular, can be easily targeted for sexual attack, while men are more likely to lose their lives.

PRAYER POINTS

- Ask for God’s protection and encouragement for those who face the growing threat of violence.
- Pray that governments would stand up to Jihadist groups and protect their citizens from violent attacks.
- Pray that God would bring healing and comfort to those who have experienced trauma.

PHOTO ©UNSPLASH

PHOTO ©UNSPLASH

30

BANGLADESH

SOURCE OF PERSECUTION

Dictatorial paranoia and Islamic oppression

POPULATION

167,886,000

CHRISTIANS

938,000

MAIN RELIGION

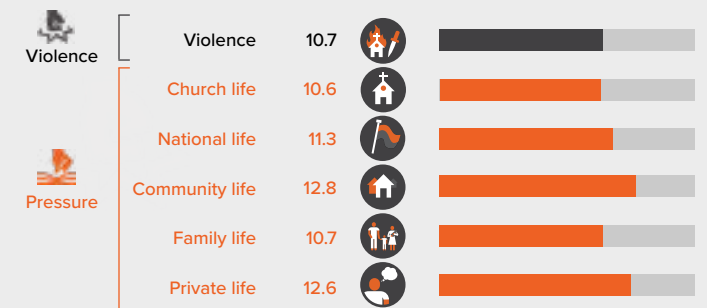
Islam

LEADER

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina Wazed

PROFILE OF PERSECUTION

Maximum 16.7 per sphere



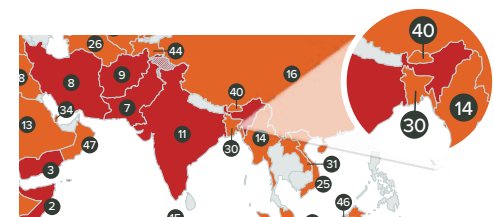
TOTAL: 69

In Bangladesh, the severest persecution is reserved for those who come from Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist or tribal backgrounds. Such believers can encounter restrictions, discrimination and even attacks. Gatherings with other Christians are often done in secret.

Protestant churches that are engaged in outreach among Muslim communities can also face persecution. The arrest of church leaders can destabilize Christian communities and make them feel afraid to gather for worship. Even other denominations which have historically faced less persecution in Bangladesh, such as those affiliated with the Roman Catholic Church, are increasingly facing attacks and death threats.

PRAYER POINTS

- Pray that Christians facing intense pressure for their faith will be strengthened by the Holy Spirit, the Word of God and the support of local believers.
- Pray for healing for those traumatized by attacks.



31

LAOS

SOURCE OF PERSECUTION

Communist oppression and clan oppression

POPULATION

7,481,000

CHRISTIANS

207,000

MAIN RELIGION

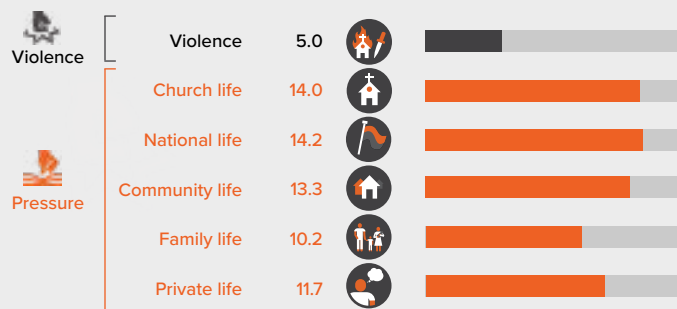
Buddhism

LEADER

President Thongloun Sisoulit

PROFILE OF PERSECUTION

Maximum 16.7 per sphere



TOTAL: 68

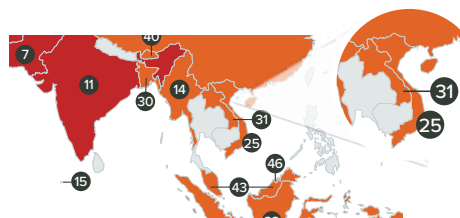
In Laos, Christians are generally viewed as Western-influenced 'enemies of the state'. Registered churches are heavily monitored, with few permanent buildings of their own. Believers of registered churches often meet in homes. Churches who cannot get permission to meet must meet secretly. Leaders of unregistered churches have been arrested; their families and churches must pay huge sums of money for their release.

Christians face discrimination in the workplace and may be barred from or lose their government jobs when their faith becomes known. Pastors in northern Laos say that Christian girls are increasingly targeted as brides to be trafficked into China.

People from the Buddhist-animist community who become Christians face pressure and violence from their families and the local authorities and are often expelled from their home village.

PRAYER POINTS

- Pray for an end to the unjust fines charged to release detained Christians.
- Pray that whole villages would come to know Christ through new believers.



32

MOZAMBIQUE

SOURCE OF PERSECUTION

Islamic oppression and organized corruption and crime

POPULATION

33,089,000

CHRISTIANS

18,589,000

MAIN RELIGION

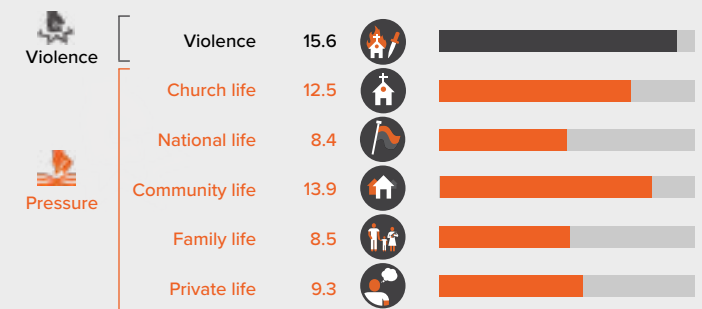
Christianity

LEADER

President Filipe Jacinto Nyusi

PROFILE OF PERSECUTION

Maximum 16.7 per sphere



TOTAL: 68

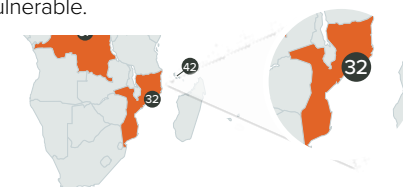
Christians face persecution from Islamic militants, particularly in the northern region of Cabo Delgado. People either stay in the region under daily threats of abduction, or they flee their homes and communities and fend for themselves. Many are traumatized by the violence, and those who are forced into marriage or the militia are often plagued by shame or stigma.

In other parts of the country, Christians who convert from a Muslim or African Traditional Religion background often face pressure from their families to renounce their faith. In some areas, drug cartels persecute Christians and target church youth workers.

Tensions in the country are exacerbated by government restrictions on freedom of religion, such as bans on all religious influence in public educational institutions and cumbersome registration requirements for religious groups.

PRAYER POINTS

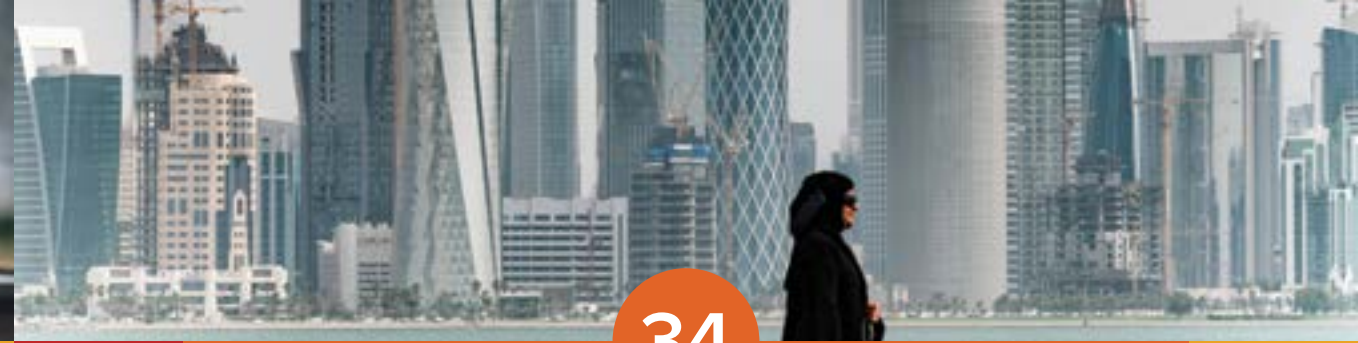
- Pray for peace in Mozambique, so Christians can go to church without fear of being abducted, attacked or killed.
- Thank God for the courage of those who are offering aid, and pray for wisdom and compassion towards the traumatized and vulnerable.





33

INDONESIA



34

QATAR

SOURCE OF PERSECUTION
Islamic oppression

POPULATION
279,135,000

CHRISTIANS
34,185,000

MAIN RELIGION
Islam

LEADER
President Joko Widodo

PROFILE OF PERSECUTION Maximum 16.7 per sphere

Violence	Violence	12.8		
	Church life	9.2		
Pressure	National life	11.1		
	Community life	11.6		
	Family life	12.0		
	Private life	11.3		

TOTAL: 68

SOURCE OF PERSECUTION
Religious nationalism

POPULATION
2,980,000

CHRISTIANS
409,000

MAIN RELIGION
Islam

LEADER
Emir Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani

PROFILE OF PERSECUTION Maximum 16.7 per sphere

Violence	Violence	1.5		
	Church life	14.4		
Pressure	National life	13.2		
	Community life	10.5		
	Family life	14.1		
	Private life	14.2		

TOTAL: 68

Indonesian believers brought up Muslim will likely face disapproval, intense pressure to return to Islam, verbal abuse and possibly social isolation. In some cases, families will withdraw all support. Married women may keep their new faith secret. Some women experience psychological abuse, including death threats, for practicing Christianity.

Churches seen to be spreading the gospel face opposition from Islamic extremist groups, especially in rural areas. In some regions of Indonesia, non-traditional churches struggle to get permission for church buildings, with the authorities often ignoring their paperwork.

Thanks to effective anti-terror police, physical violence towards Christians by Islamic extremists is not common, but many new Christians in Indonesia will seek to leave their home community and relocate somewhere else to get away from the harassment.

PRAYER POINTS

- Pray for a more open and tolerant society towards Christians in Indonesia.
- Pray that God would comfort those rejected by their own families for His sake.



Christians in Qatar fall into two categories: expat Christians and converts from Islam to Christianity.

Expat Christians form the largest group and are mostly migrant workers from Asia and Africa. They are not free to openly practice their faith. Expat churches are closely monitored and only a select number of churches have been allowed to establish buildings. They are restricted to a specially designated compound where space is often insufficient.

Converts from Islam to Christianity face more severe persecution, including discrimination, harassment and police monitoring. Conversion from Islam is not officially recognized and is likely to lead to loss of status and legal problems in property and domestic matters.

Qatari believers are few and keep their faith secret. They face intense pressure and bullying from their own families.

PRAYER POINTS

- Pray for secret believers in the Arabian Peninsula. Ask God to strengthen their faith and make His presence known.
- Thank God for the growing number of Christians in the Arabian Peninsula.

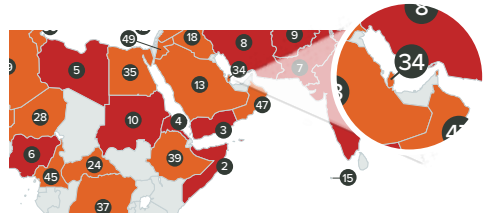




PHOTO ©UNSPLASH

35

36

EGYPT

TUNISIA

SOURCE OF PERSECUTION

Islamic oppression and dictatorial oppression

POPULATION

106,157,000

CHRISTIANS

9,695,000

MAIN RELIGION

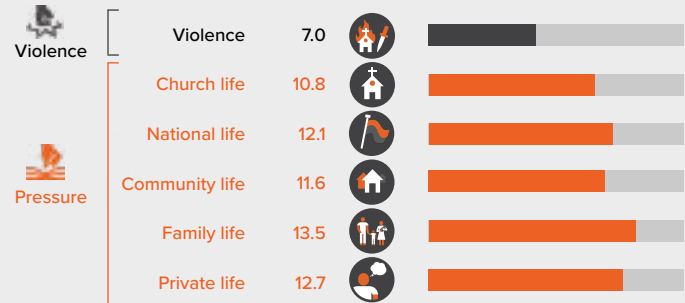
Islam

LEADER

President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi

PROFILE OF PERSECUTION

Maximum 16.7 per sphere



TOTAL: 68

SOURCE OF PERSECUTION

Islamic oppression and dictatorial paranoia

POPULATION

12,047,000

CHRISTIANS

22,500

MAIN RELIGION

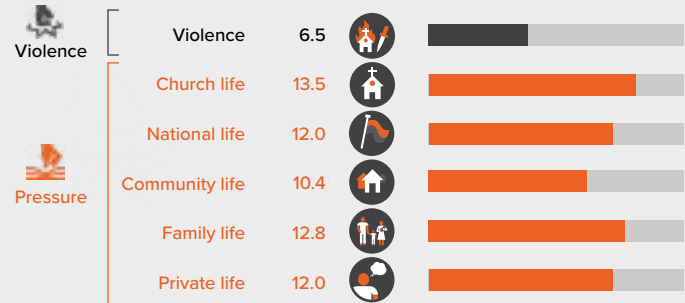
Islam

LEADER

President Kais Saied

PROFILE OF PERSECUTION

Maximum 16.7 per sphere



TOTAL: 67

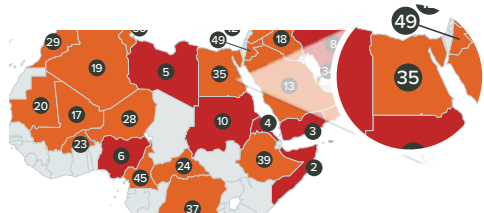
Christians in Egypt report that freedom of religion violations are mostly experienced in the community. Incidents vary, from Christian women being harassed while walking in the street, to a mob of angry Muslims forcing a whole community of Christians to move out, leaving their houses and belongings to be confiscated.

The lack of serious law enforcement and unwillingness of local authorities to protect Christians leave them vulnerable to all kinds of attacks, especially in Upper Egypt. Communal hostility and mob violence continue to cause difficulties.

Christians with a Muslim background experience difficulty living out their faith since they face enormous pressure from their families to return to Islam. The state also makes it impossible for them to get any official recognition of their conversion.

PRAYER POINTS

- Pray that the authorities would act to protect Christians' legal rights.
- Pray that the love and courage of Egyptian Christians would influence their neighbours and draw many people to Christ.



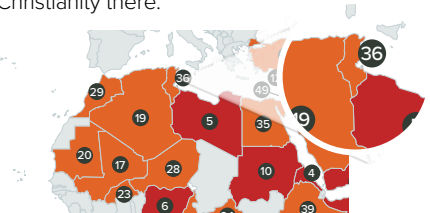
Tunisian Christians, almost all of whom are from a Muslim background, are discriminated against by family and society.

Conversion from Islam is socially unacceptable. If discovered, Christian converts are subjected to hostility from their family, colleagues and friends. In some cases, the aggression may escalate to physical violence. Usually, this backlash takes place behind closed doors. Their jobs may also be at risk.

Most Christian converts cannot worship openly and choose to hide their faith since it is dangerous to share their beliefs. Some brave Christians are willing to gather in worship and fellowship, but they tread carefully. If they're found to be part of a Christian gathering, they risk exposure and ostracism. They may be earmarked for monitoring by the security services.

PRAYER POINTS

- Pray for protection for believers from Muslim backgrounds. Ask God to soften the hearts of their families towards them.
- Praise God that He continues to make Himself known to the people of Tunisia, despite the risks associated with Christianity there.





37



38

PHOTO ©PEXELS

DEM. REPUBLIC OF CONGO

MEXICO

SOURCE OF PERSECUTION

Islamic oppression and organized corruption and crime

POPULATION

95,241,000

CHRISTIANS

90,570,000

MAIN RELIGION

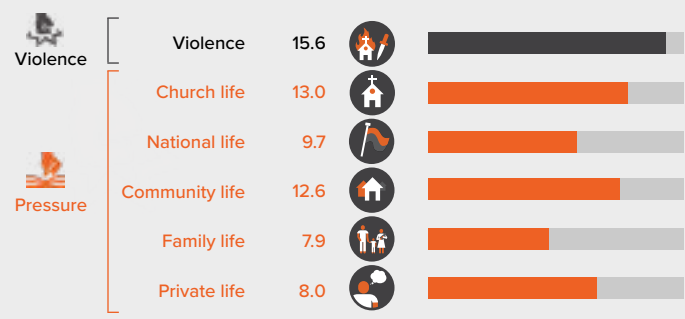
Christianity

LEADER

President Felix Tshisekedi

PROFILE OF PERSECUTION

Maximum 16.7 per sphere



TOTAL: 67

SOURCE OF PERSECUTION

Organized corruption and crime, and clan oppression

POPULATION

131,563,000

CHRISTIANS

125,738,000

MAIN RELIGION

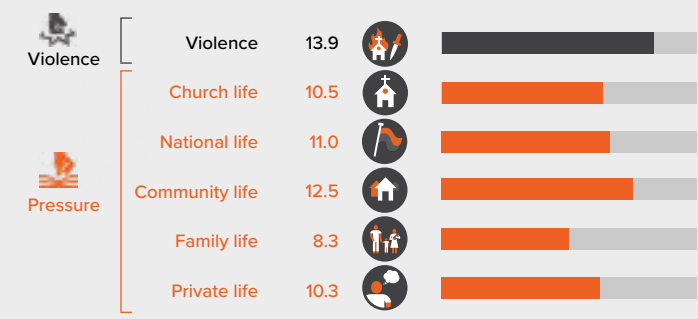
Christianity

LEADER

President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador

PROFILE OF PERSECUTION

Maximum 16.7 per sphere



TOTAL: 67

The eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) is a dangerous place for Christians. Rebel groups are fighting for control of the area, including an Islamic extremist group, which openly and brutally targets Christian homes and churches.

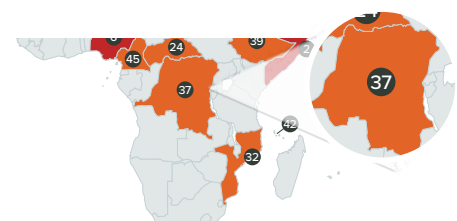
Christians in this area live with the threat of kidnapping, and terrible violence is commonplace.

There is little chance of justice through the legal system in DRC. Many Christians have been forced to flee their homes and seek refuge elsewhere.

People who have become Christians from Muslim or indigenous backgrounds face pressure to still participate in traditional religious activities. At the most extreme end of the scale, women who have converted to Christianity may be forcibly married, impregnated or divorced.

PRAYER POINTS

- Pray for stability and justice to return to eastern DRC.
- Pray for more opportunities to help churches providing trauma counselling and emergency aid.



There are an estimated 150 organized crime gangs in Mexico, financed by powerful drug cartels. Christians living in their territories risk being targeted.

Christian leaders can be viewed as a threat to a gang's authority and stability. Political instability and impunity contribute to injustice and several pastors and priests have been kidnapped and held to ransom, badly beaten, or killed.

Christian leaders involved in human rights or environmentalist activities, are at high risk of death, recruitment, sexual harassment, abduction, and forced displacement, as well as other forms of violence. Their relatives are also at risk.

In rural areas, new Christian believers who come from more ancestral and traditional backgrounds can be beaten, fined, harassed, denied use of public services, rejected and forced to be displaced by their communities.

PRAYER POINTS

- Pray for a return to law and order in the parts of Mexico where crime currently reigns.
- Pray for God's wisdom and power for Christians standing up to the criminal gangs in their areas.





39

ETHIOPIA

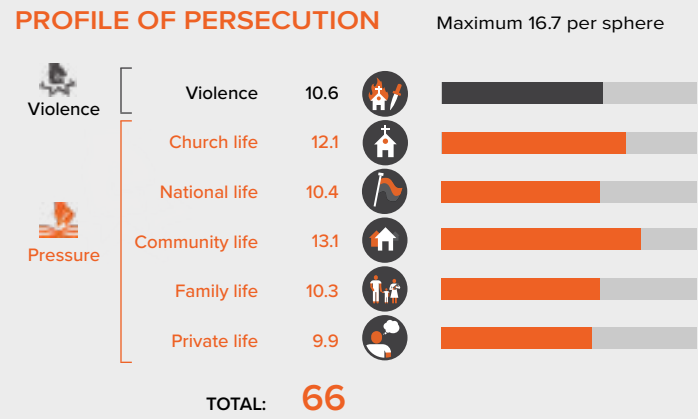
SOURCE OF PERSECUTION
Islamic oppression and Christian Denominational Protectionism

POPULATION
120,813,000

CHRISTIANS
72,396,000

MAIN RELIGION
Christianity

LEADER
Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed Ali

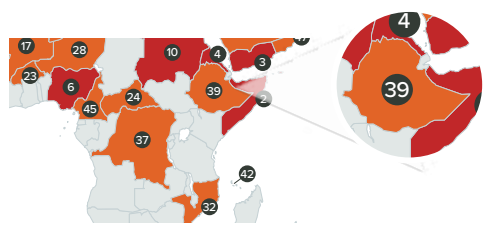


Christianity may be the majority religion in Ethiopia, but Christians living in certain areas and from certain backgrounds can lose everything for their faith.

People who convert to Christianity from Muslim backgrounds risk harsh mistreatment from their communities. Women face the threat of rape, forced marriage or (if married) divorce and separation from their children. In some areas, Islamic extremist mobs have attacked churches, taking advantage of a general rise in political violence. Christian converts can be threatened with death and are often forced to flee their homes.

There is also persecution for Christians who move from a traditional Ethiopian Orthodox Church background to a Protestant or non-traditional denomination. Believers found to be going to other Christian meetings can be completely shunned by their families.

- PRAYER POINTS**
- Pray for justice for Christians being denied their basic rights.
 - Pray that new Christians facing strong disapproval and persecution would know God's presence.



40

BHUTAN

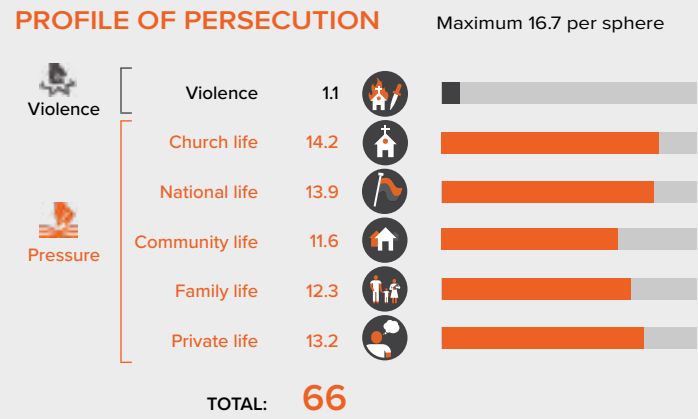
SOURCE OF PERSECUTION
Religious nationalism

POPULATION
788,000

CHRISTIANS
18,800

MAIN RELIGION
Buddhism

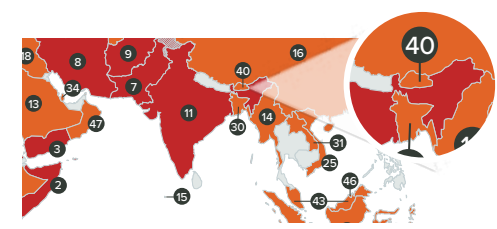
LEADER
King Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck



Since all Bhutanese citizens are expected to follow Buddhism, converts to Christianity can be exposed to harsh treatment from their family and local community in an attempt to pressure them into renouncing their faith. This includes losing their jobs or being disinherited. Some Christians are falsely accused of being bribed to convert. Being ostracized by family makes an enormous difference in a Bhutanese person's life, since the culture is very communal and the protection of family is crucial.

No churches have official state recognition, meaning that any Christians holding a service together are technically worshipping illegally. Local authorities often refuse to issue Christians with a 'non-objection certificate', which is essential for things such as jobs and registering property.

- PRAYER POINTS**
- Pray that those who have suffered loss of family, work or inheritance for their faith will have all their needs met.
 - Pray that the Holy Spirit will refresh and revitalize believers who are feeling particularly discouraged, bereft or weary.



BEYOND THE TOP 50

More than 360 million Christians suffer high levels of persecution and discrimination for their faith. In Open Doors' World Watch List top 50 alone, 312 million Christians face very high or extreme levels.

Beyond the top 50, there are even more countries that experience at least high levels of persecution.

Here is a list of the countries outside the top 50 which scored at least a high level of persecution:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|
| 51. Kenya | 64. Venezuela |
| 52. Kuwait | 65. Burundi |
| 53. Tanzania | 66. Bahrain |
| 54. United Arab Emirates | 67. Honduras |
| 55. Nepal | 68. Angola |
| 56. Djibouti | 69. Uganda |
| 57. Palestinian Territories | 70. Togo |
| 58. Azerbaijan | 71. Guinea |
| 59. Kyrgyzstan | 72. South Sudan |
| 60. Chad | 73. El Salvador |
| 61. Russian Federation | 74. Ivory Coast |
| 62. Sri Lanka | 75. The Gambia |
| 63. Rwanda | 76. Belarus |

PRAYER POINTS

- Pray that the church would be strengthened in these countries.
- Pray for boldness and courage for believers to continue to share the gospel.
- Pray for protection for believers as they faithfully follow Him.



PHOTO ©UNSPLASH

41

TURKEY

SOURCE OF PERSECUTION

Religious nationalism and Islamic oppression

POPULATION

85,562,000

CHRISTIANS

171,000

MAIN RELIGION

Islam

LEADER

President Recep Tayyip Erdogan

PROFILE OF PERSECUTION

Maximum 16.7 per sphere



Violence

Violence 5.7



Church life 11.5



National life 13.0



Community life 11.8



Family life 11.5



Private life 12.8

TOTAL: 66



Pressure

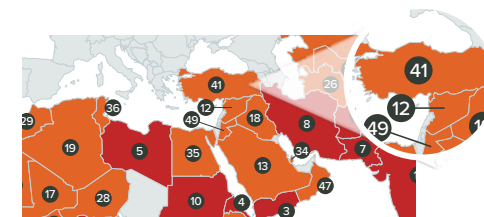
It may seem that the legal system in Turkey protects religious freedoms, but this is not what Christians there experience. Religious nationalism is very strong and is putting Christians under increasing pressure.

Nationalism and Islam are intrinsically linked. Anyone who is not Muslim is seen to be a disloyal Turk, so Christians are not regarded as full members of Turkish society. They have limited access to state employment and experience discrimination in private employment, especially where employers have ties to the government.

Although conversion from Islam to Christianity is not legally forbidden, converts are put under pressure by their families and communities to return to Islam. If their faith is discovered, they may be threatened with divorce and the loss of inheritance rights.

PRAYER POINTS

- Pray for Christian converts to feel loved and accepted by God, even when their own families reject them.
- Pray for the Turkish government to make policies that recognize Christians as equal to Muslims.





42

COMOROS

SOURCE OF PERSECUTION

Islamic oppression

POPULATION

907,000

CHRISTIANS

4,600

MAIN RELIGION

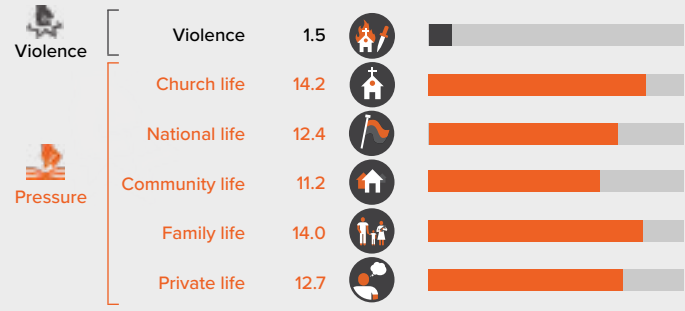
Islam

LEADER

President Aazali Assoumani

PROFILE OF PERSECUTION

Maximum 16.7 per sphere

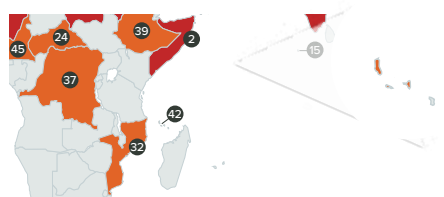


Comoros re-enters the top 50 after an increase in pressure from the government and a rise in reported incidents of violence. The government has said publicly that there is only freedom of religion for foreigners living in the country, not Comorians.

In Comoros, choosing to leave Islam to follow Jesus is so risky that those who do so have little option but to keep their faith secret. In fact, it can even lead to prosecution. It is illegal for followers of any religion except Islam to evangelize, so any Christian who shares their faith could face legal consequences. This will likely involve a fine and up to a year in prison. In some parts of the country, extremist groups threaten believers with violence.

PRAYER POINTS

- Pray for all Christians that are forced to keep their faith secret to have access to fellowship and discipleship.
- Pray for those facing pressure and persecution for their faith to feel the Holy Spirit empowering them to stand strong.



43

MALAYSIA

SOURCE OF PERSECUTION

Dictatorial paranoia and Islamic oppression

POPULATION

33,181,000

CHRISTIANS

3,054,000

MAIN RELIGION

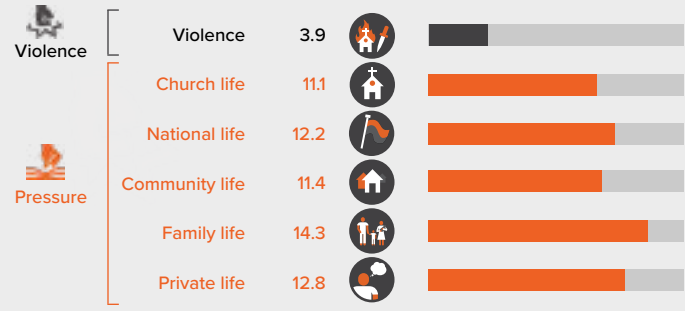
Islam

LEADER

King Sultan Abdullah Sultan Ahmad Shah

PROFILE OF PERSECUTION

Maximum 16.7 per sphere



Every ethnic Malay is expected to be Muslim. Malaysia's constitution says that to leave Islam is punishable by death, although this has never been implemented.

All converts from Islam are at risk. If they reveal their faith to their family, they are likely to experience extreme pressure to return to Islam and hostility from their neighbourhood. The family may try to 'protect' themselves by quickly marrying their daughter or son to a Muslim. If a Sharia judge agrees, girls can be married off below the age of 16. If a new Christian's faith is discovered by authorities, they could be arrested, interrogated about their Christian network, pressured to name church leaders and potentially imprisoned or sentenced to death.

PRAYER POINTS

- Pray for the authorities to stop interfering in Christian gatherings.
- Pray for Malaysian Christians to know God's love for them and reflect it strongly to others.





44

TAJIKISTAN

SOURCE OF PERSECUTION

Dictatorial paranoia

POPULATION

9,957,000

CHRISTIANS

64,100

MAIN RELIGION

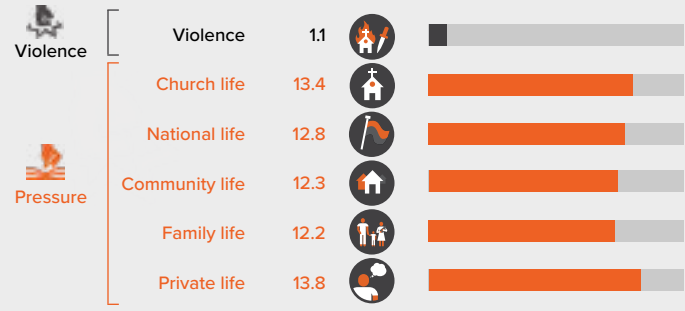
Islam

LEADER

President Emomali Rahmon

PROFILE OF PERSECUTION

Maximum 16.7 per sphere



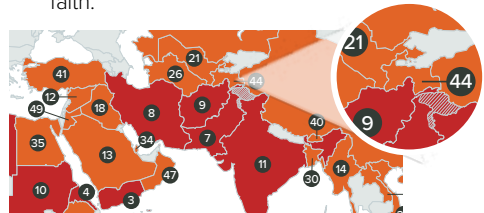
TOTAL: 66

Tajikistan's totalitarian leadership treats any perceived 'deviation' from cultural norms with suspicion. No religious activities beyond state-run and controlled institutions are allowed and religious laws that restrict religious freedom are strictly enforced.

Tajikistan has the highest percentage of Muslims in Central Asia. Christians make up only 0.6% of the population, most of which are Russian Orthodox. While Russian Orthodox churches are registered and accepted in the country, they tend to keep themselves separate from the local population. Protestants, regarded as 'extremists', face significant persecution. Church services are often disrupted. Christians face harassment and arrests for holding private prayer meetings or possessing 'illegal' religious material. Fines are imposed on Christians simply for practising their faith. All religious activities carried out by these groups are technically illegal.

PRAYER POINTS

- Pray for the Tajik government to recognize the right to freedom of religion and create laws that allow Christians to practise their faith freely.
- Pray for church leaders who are under pressure to be equipped to lead with full faith.



45

CAMEROON

SOURCE OF PERSECUTION

Islamic oppression

POPULATION

27,912,000

CHRISTIANS

17,032,000

MAIN RELIGION

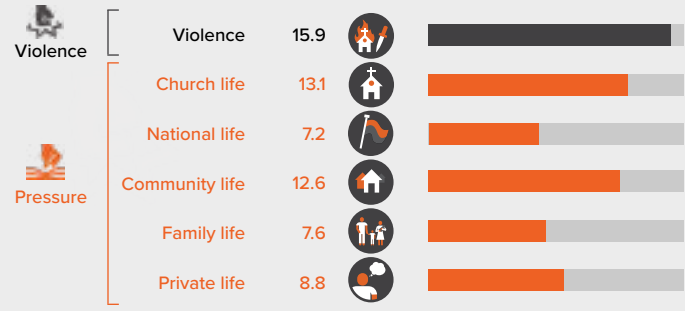
Christianity

LEADER

President Paul Biya

PROFILE OF PERSECUTION

Maximum 16.7 per sphere



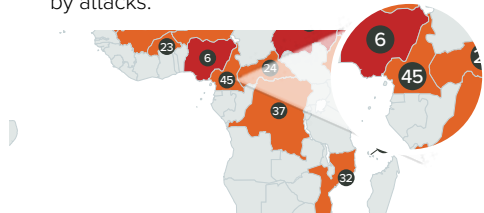
TOTAL: 65

In Cameroon, those who convert to Christianity from Islam are not free to express or share their faith, and doing so can bring hostility from family and the local community. They are at great risk if they are even discovered to own a Bible. Meanwhile, the influence of Islamic militants, particularly in the north, has hindered the activities of many churches.

The ongoing Anglophone crisis – a civil war that's been fought since 2017 – has made leaders who speak out against violence a target for separatist groups and the government. Some of the leaders of the rebel groups also force churches to pay taxes for their protections. While Cameroon is officially a secular country, there are predominantly Muslim areas where Islamic extremism continues to grow.

PRAYER POINTS

- Pray for the government and security forces in Cameroon to be stirred and equipped to address the country's growing insecurity problems.
- Pray for the Holy Spirit to pour comfort and hope into those severely traumatized by attacks.





46

BRUNEI

SOURCE OF PERSECUTION

Islamic oppression

POPULATION

445,000

CHRISTIANS

53,500

MAIN RELIGION

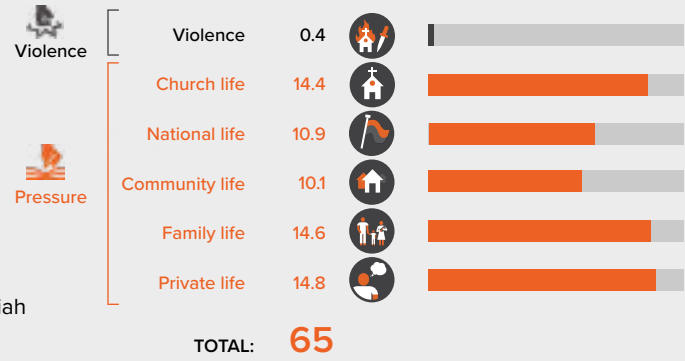
Islam

LEADER

Sultan and Prime Minister Sir Hassanal Bolkiah

PROFILE OF PERSECUTION

Maximum 16.7 per sphere



The growing implementation of Sharia (Islamic law) in Brunei – which applies to both Muslims and non-Muslims and has the goal of making the country fully Islamic – is making it increasingly challenging for the country’s tiny Christian minority to express and share their faith. Conversion from Islam is illegal, meaning converts can face enormous pressure to renounce their faith in Jesus.

All church activities are monitored by the authorities and surrounding community, and church leaders are warned against doing outreach or becoming too public. To encourage the spread of Islam, the government has been giving aid to those who become Muslims, which has led to some Christians being coerced into converting to Islam.

PRAYER POINTS

- Lift up church leaders as they disciple believers whilst navigating government restrictions and surveillance.
- Pray for the authorities to have a change of heart and give greater freedom to those who choose not to follow Islam.



CHINA’S MODEL OF OPPRESSION IS SPREADING THROUGHOUT AUTHORITARIAN STATES

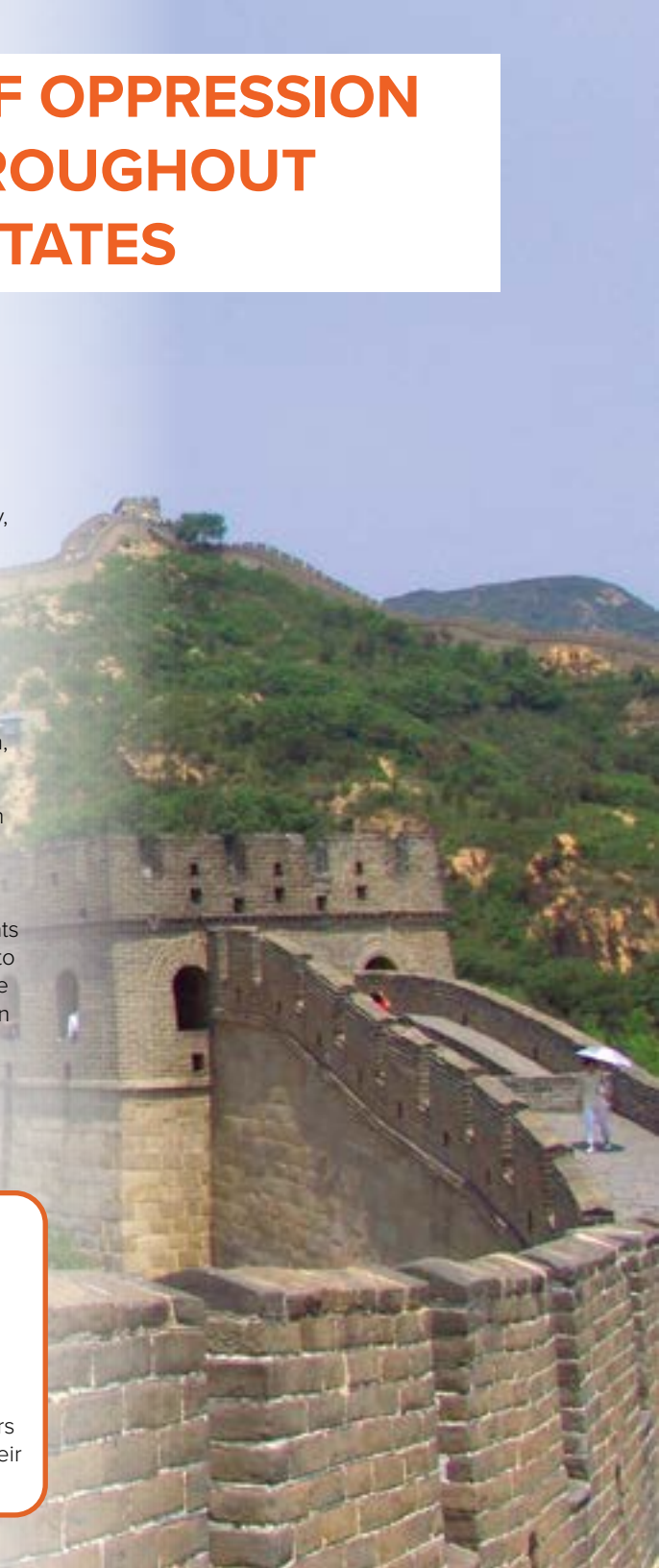
The apparent success of China is appealing to many leaders around the world. The promise of growth and prosperity, while being able to control all groups and individuals perceived as deviant, has triggered the interest of many leaders no matter their ideological background.

Authoritarianism is growing around the world. In Turkey, those loyal to President Recep Tayyip Erdogan control the government and most of the media, judiciary and academia. In Nicaragua, which enters the top fifty for the first time, President Ortega and his wife have tried to silence any dissenting voice. We now see similar trends extending to countries as diverse as Sri Lanka, Myanmar and Malaysia, joining such Central Asian states as Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and, of course, Russia.

The mere existence of Christian communities is a thorn in the flesh of the regimes in many of these countries. Even more so if Christian activists raise their voices frustrating the regime’s attempts to control its citizens. Using the language of “stability” and “security”, autocrats put immense pressure on church leaders in response to their persistent call for the respect of human rights, free participation of civil society, the rule of law, and election transparency. Those who refuse to support the ruling party can be branded as “troublemakers”, “disturbers of the peace” or even “terrorists”. They face arrest, demolition of church buildings, and the loss of church registration.

PRAYER POINTS

- Pray for Christians living under authoritarian governments. May they be strengthened in their faith and their trust in God grow.
- Pray for countries that are beginning to follow the authoritarian model of China. Pray that their leaders would see who it can lead to the oppression of their people.





47

OMAN



48

KAZAKHSTAN

SOURCE OF PERSECUTION
Islamic oppression

POPULATION
5,324,000

CHRISTIANS
193,000

MAIN RELIGION
Islam

LEADER
Sultan and Prime Minister Haytham bin Tariq bin Taimur Al-Said

PROFILE OF PERSECUTION Maximum 16.7 per sphere

Violence Pressure	Violence	0.6		<div style="width: 3.6%;"></div>
	Church life	12.9		<div style="width: 77.4%;"></div>
	National life	13.3		<div style="width: 79.6%;"></div>
	Community life	10.3		<div style="width: 61.7%;"></div>
	Family life	14.1		<div style="width: 84.4%;"></div>
	Private life	14.0		<div style="width: 83.8%;"></div>
TOTAL:		65		

SOURCE OF PERSECUTION
Dictatorial paranoia

POPULATION
19,205,000

CHRISTIANS
4,876,000

MAIN RELIGION
Islam

LEADER
President Kasym-Zhomart Tokayev

PROFILE OF PERSECUTION Maximum 16.7 per sphere

Violence Pressure	Violence	1.1		<div style="width: 6.6%;"></div>
	Church life	14.2		<div style="width: 85.0%;"></div>
	National life	12.7		<div style="width: 75.4%;"></div>
	Community life	11.9		<div style="width: 71.2%;"></div>
	Family life	11.6		<div style="width: 69.4%;"></div>
	Private life	13.2		<div style="width: 78.4%;"></div>
TOTAL:		65		

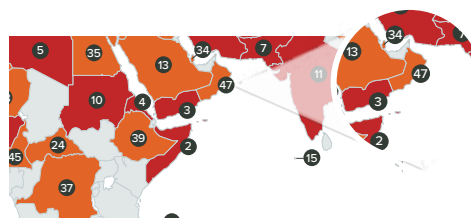
Omanis who convert to Christianity face pressure from their families and society to renounce their faith. They may be expelled from the family home and sometimes lose their jobs. Disinheritance is common, and if married, they may struggle to see their children, finding themselves on the losing side of a custody battle.

Migrant workers who convert to Christianity typically experience the same pressure they would in their home countries as they often live within their own national or ethnic communities. This could mean relative freedom for some, but intense persecution for others.

Expatriate Christian communities are tolerated, but they do experience surveillance and restrictions. All Christian organizations must register themselves, and meetings are monitored to record any political statements and if any Omanis are attending.

PRAYER POINTS

- Pray for Omani society to become more accepting of Christianity.
- Pray for Open Doors partners working in the Arabian Peninsula to find new believers and provide them with the support they need.

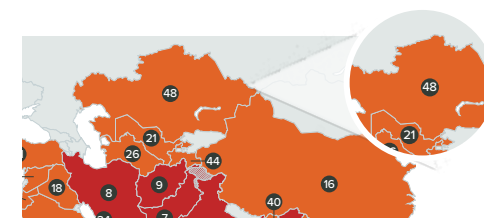


Since 2011, religious freedom has been restricted in Kazakhstan, a country where government surveillance and control continues to increase.

Russian Orthodox Christians are generally left alone by the state as long as they do not try to influence Muslim-background Kazakhs. However, believers from Muslim backgrounds are persecuted by both the state and their own communities. When somebody becomes a Christian, they are at a high risk of being locked up by their families, kept from any other Christians, verbally and physically abused and potentially cut off from their family and community. The authorities monitor and raid meetings of Christian converts and may arrest and imprison their church leaders. Additionally, converts and church leaders are at particular risk of losing employment due to their faith.

PRAYER POINTS

- Pray for provision for Christian families struggling to earn a living.
- Pray for protection over churches meeting in secret.





49

JORDAN

SOURCE OF PERSECUTION

Islamic oppression

POPULATION

10,301,000

CHRISTIANS

170,000

MAIN RELIGION

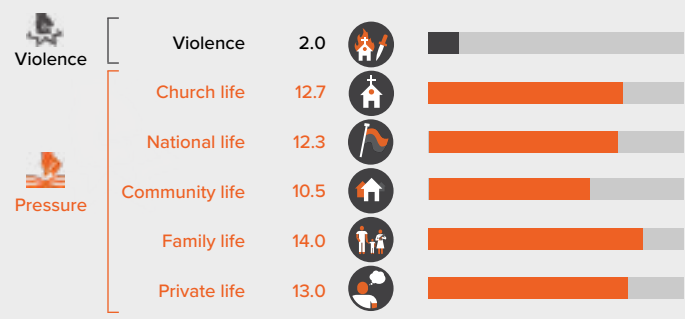
Islam

LEADER

King Abdullah II

PROFILE OF PERSECUTION

Maximum 16.7 per sphere



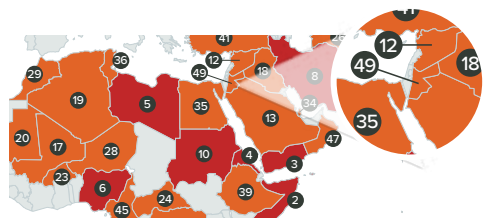
TOTAL: 65

Jordan is tolerant as long as everybody stays in their religion of birth. Some Christians, like those from an Orthodox or Catholic background, live a relatively safe and stable life. However, for non-traditional churches, those perceived to be sharing the gospel, and for Muslim background believers, there is persecution.

Christian communities are monitored in Jordan, and a Christian from a Muslim background can face beatings, arrest or even being killed, if they are open about their new faith. Believers from Muslim backgrounds have been subject to days of interrogation and beatings, while being pressured to inform on other Christians. Those seen to be helping or encouraging Muslim converts can face threats and have their daily lives made very difficult.

PRAYER POINTS

- Pray for Christians of all backgrounds to be respected for living lives of integrity.
- Pray for Jordan's authorities to be able to stifle the growing threat of Islamic extremism.



50

NICARAGUA

SOURCE OF PERSECUTION

Dictatorial paranoia

POPULATION

6,779,000

CHRISTIANS

6,437,000

MAIN RELIGION

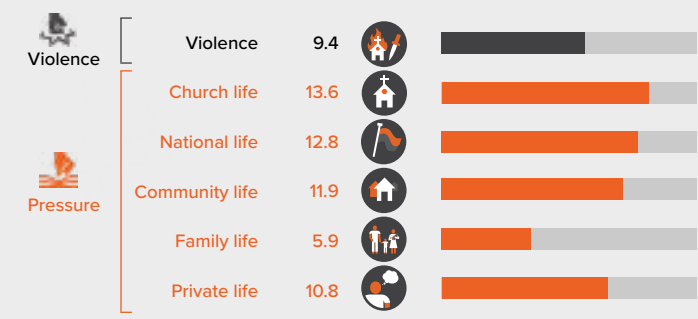
Christianity

LEADER

President Jose Daniel Ortega Saavedra

PROFILE OF PERSECUTION

Maximum 16.7 per sphere



TOTAL: 65

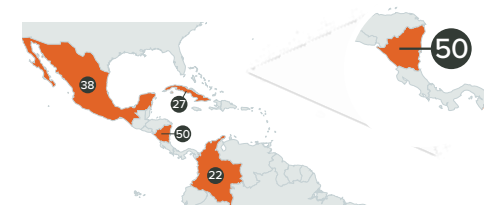
Churches in Nicaragua that speak out against injustice and human rights violations by the government are viewed as destabilizing agents. This makes them a target for hostility, which can include intimidation, harassment, monitoring, arrests and even attacks. These extreme measures even extend to Roman Catholic Churches.

The government is particularly hostile to churches that provided shelter and care for people during the widespread protests which broke out against the country's dictatorial regime in 2018. To this day, these churches are still experiencing retribution from the government, including slander and surveillance.

Meanwhile, recent elections and changes to the law have been used as a pretext to label church leaders as terrorists and coup-plotters. This has led to increasing restrictions on churches and other Christian organizations.

PRAYER POINTS

- Pray for those affected by government hostility to be healed of their ordeals and strengthened to follow Jesus.
- Pray for government opposition to not deter Christians from boldly sharing their faith.



ADDITIONAL PRAYER RESOURCES

- Text “PRAY” to (647) 694-4906 to receive prayer requests by text message. Approximately 2 texts per month.
- Listen or watch the World Watch Weekly podcast on your preferred podcasting platform with new podcasts posted every Wednesday.
- Sign up for email and receive the monthly prayer calendar with daily prayer points. Sign up at www.opendoorscanada.org
- Join Open Doors Canada staff members for a time of prayer online on the first Tuesday evening of the month. Email prayer@odcan.org for more information.

WWW.OPENDOORSCANADA.ORG/PRAY

what we do

For more than 65 years, Open Doors has been strengthening Christians where faith costs the most, helping them to be the Church in some of the most dangerous places on earth.

Our work is broken down into 4 main categories:

- Bible and Christian Literature
- Prayer, Advocacy and Presence Ministry
- Christian Community Development
- Leadership Training and Discipleship

When you support the persecuted church, you join the global secret network that delivers hope to persecuted Christians in more than 70 countries.

For more information, visit our website: www.opendoorscanada.org



Prayer, Advocacy and Presence Ministry

Open Doors believes that no follower of Jesus should be isolated and that through prayer, advocacy and presence ministry, we can stand with our persecuted family.



Bibles and Christian Literature

Last year, Open Doors distributed more than 1.3 million Bibles and Christian literature.



Christian Community Development

Last year, Open Doors helped more than 685,000 Christians with emergency relief, community development, education and medical care.



Leadership Training and Discipleship

Last year, Open Doors trained more than 3.3 million persecuted Christians through leadership and discipleship courses, trauma care training and persecution survival seminars.



ONE PARTNERSHIP

Our brothers and sisters around the world understand the high cost of faith in Christ. For more than 65 years, we've seen **their stories** as **our call to action**.

A regular monthly gift is the most effective way to ensure the needs of persecuted believers are met in a timely manner.

[JOIN THE PARTNERSHIP](#)

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TO JOIN ONE PARTNERSHIP, PLEASE VISIT:
WWW.OPENDOORSCANADA.ORG/ONE-PARTNERSHIP



HOW **you** CAN HELP

PRAY

Open Doors founder, Brother Andrew, said, “Our prayers can go where we cannot...there are no borders, no prison walls, no doors that are closed to us when we pray.”

Commit to praying for the Persecuted Church.

ACT

As members of one body, let us stand with those who suffer for the sake of Christ.

Write letters of encouragement to believers; petition our government to stand for religious freedoms around the world; or raise your voice for our persecuted family by sharing about them with your circle of influence.

Be a voice for those who have no voice.

GIVE

Through your generosity, you are helping our persecuted family to stand strong and enabling them to shine the brightest in some of the world's darkest places.

OpenDoors®

STRENGTHENING CHRISTIANS WHERE FAITH COSTS THE MOST

Open Doors Canada
8-19 Brownridge Rd.
Halton Hills, ON L7G 0C6

(905) 636-0944 | opendoors@odcan.org

Member of Canadian Centre of Christian Charities; and
Evangelical Fellowship of Canada

Registered Charity No 11906 8799 RR0001 © Open Doors 2023

www.opendoorscanada.org



[/OpenDoorsCanada](https://www.instagram.com/OpenDoorsCanada)