



Open*Doors*

**WORLD  
WATCH  
LIST 2025**

**THE TOP 50 COUNTRIES**

WHERE FOLLOWING JESUS COSTS THE MOST

**“ON MY ACCOUNT YOU WILL BE BROUGHT BEFORE GOVERNORS AND KINGS AS WITNESSES TO THEM AND TO THE GENTILES. BUT WHEN THEY ARREST YOU, DO NOT WORRY ABOUT WHAT TO SAY OR HOW TO SAY IT. AT THAT TIME YOU WILL BE GIVEN WHAT TO SAY, FOR IT WILL NOT BE YOU SPEAKING, BUT THE SPIRIT OF YOUR FATHER SPEAKING THROUGH YOU.”**

— MATTHEW 10:18–20

Jesus was clear from the start. Identifying with Him, believing in Him, simply talking about Him would come at a cost. The early church understood there is a price to pay for being a ‘witness’. It’s no coincidence that the Greek word for witness – *martus* – became our word ‘martyr’. Martyrs are people whose witness has cost them their life.

Today, the witness of the persecuted church comes at a similar cost. Persecuted Christians might not face ‘kings and governors’, but they know what it is to live under the gaze of the authorities, to be hauled in front of judges, secret police, local councils, party officials, village chiefs or heads of clans or families. But they also know the truth of Christ’s presence: they know what it is to have the ‘Spirit of the Father’ with them in the witness stand.

## **EYEWITNESS TRUTH**

That is the reality behind the World Watch List. Even in the countries in this book, the Spirit is active and the church

is alive and growing. Where believers have to keep their faith secret, they still find a way to tell others about Jesus. Where they are driven out of their homes, they still meet as a church. Where they are assailed with slander and lies, they still live out the truth.

And ‘truth’ is the key word. Because the World Watch List draws directly from the on-the-ground experience of persecuted Christians. This is not theoretical, it’s not produced in ivory-tower academia: it’s based on the accounts of real people in real situations. This is first-hand information. Eyewitness testimony.

## **BEING A WITNESS**

In the end, we are all witnesses. We witness to the light and life that is found in Jesus. And we are witnesses to what is happening to His followers around the world. We have the privilege of standing alongside them – through prayer, through giving and through speaking out on their behalf.

Your prayers and your support mean that they are not alone in the fight. They have, as Jesus promised, the presence of the Holy Spirit to strengthen them. But they also gain strength from us – from knowing that their family are standing with them, praying with them, speaking up on their behalf, seeing things through their eyes and joining in with the task that Jesus gave us – of being a witness.

Throughout this report, names marked with \* have been changed for security reasons

**MAPPING THE WORLD OF THE**

# **WORLD WATCH LIST**

**380 MILLION**

More than 380 million Christians face high levels of persecution and discrimination for their faith. That's one in seven Christians worldwide.

**23**

The number of years North Korea has been number one on the World Watch List.

— See *Eyewitness: Jung Jik* p.9

3,944

Christians were sexually assaulted, harassed or forcibly married to non-Christians

An estimated **500** incidents in Syria

54,780

Christians were beaten, threatened or physically and mentally abused

Some **10,000** of these were in Pakistan

209,771

Christians were forced to leave home, go into hiding or exile

More than **40,000** of these were in Myanmar

4,744

Christians were detained, arrested or sentenced for faith-related reasons

Over **2,100** of these incidents took place in India

4,476

believers were killed for their faith

**3,100** of these deaths were in Nigeria

28,368

attacks made on Christian homes, shops and businesses

Almost **20,000** of these attacks took place in sub-Saharan Africa



# AROUND THE WORLD...

## ... CHRISTIANS ARE BEING ATTACKED AND KILLED

The most violent region is sub-Saharan Africa, where weak government and political tensions allow Islamic extremism to flourish. Persecution is rising in countries such as **Burkina Faso (20)**, **Mali (14)** and **Chad (49)** which enters the top 50 for the first time. The *Arise Africa* campaign is a call to the church and the world to respond to this crisis.

— See *Arise Africa* p.44

Violence grows in situations of anarchy and internal conflict. Trapped in the chaos of civil war, Christians in **Yemen (3)**, **Sudan (5)** and **Myanmar (13)** are easy targets.

— See *Eyewitness: Zahra* p.11

But strong, authoritarian regimes are also places of officially sanctioned violence. In both **Kyrgyzstan (47)** – back in the top 50 for the first time since 2013 – and **Kazakhstan** (up nine places to **38**), churches and believers have been attacked by police and security services, or through locally orchestrated mobs.

## ... CHRISTIANS ARE BEING FORCED TO FLEE

The persecuted church is, increasingly, a displaced church, exiled to refugee or

IDP (internally displaced people) camps. **Sudan (5)** is facing the largest displacement crisis in the world: in a country of 49 million people, the number of IDPs by mid-2024 had surpassed 7.7 million. For already vulnerable Christians, the loss of home and community makes them even more of an easy target. In **Nigeria (7)**, radicalised Islamic Fulani militants continue to drive Christian communities from their lands. Conflict in the Manipur region in **India (11)** forced tens of thousands of Christians to flee for their lives – often with little more than the clothes on their back.

## ... CHRISTIANS ARE DRIVEN UNDERGROUND

More and more Christians are having to worship undercover. In **Afghanistan (10)** it is effectively impossible to publicly express your faith. In **Algeria (19)**, all Protestant churches have been forced to close and the number of Christians awaiting trial and sentencing is at an all-time high. In **China (15)**, the era of relative tolerance is over. Unregistered churches are now illegal. Ideological pressure and official indoctrination are used to direct church teaching. Religious education for children is banned. Many congregations are taking their fellowships underground, into isolated home groups.

— See *Eyewitness: Ming* p.23

## ... CHRISTIANS ARE ACTIVE AND THE CHURCH IS GROWING

Despite the destruction and displacement, despite the tyranny and terror, the church is active and alive. Even in **North Korea (1)**, the worst of all countries to be a Christian,





Representative image

some  
400,000  
believers  
still witness  
to the life  
and light of  
Jesus. As Lydia\*,  
a secret Open  
Doors fieldworker  
who supports North Korean  
believers outside the country says,  
‘Despite persecution, nothing and no one

can stop the church from growing.’

— See *Eyewitness: Jung Jik* p.9




## SYRIA

During the World Watch List recording period, the main problem in **Syria (18)** was crime and corruption, which continued to drive Christian emigration. As this year’s list was going to print, the Assad regime fell to rebel forces, leaving Christians in the church’s ancient heartlands facing renewed anxiety and threat.



## ABOUT THE WORLD WATCH LIST

Now in its 32<sup>nd</sup> year, the Open Doors World Watch List ranks the countries where the persecution of Christians is most extreme. Data is based on in-country, eyewitness information, using networks developed over decades. This data is converted into a ‘persecution score’, which is ranked into categories:

-  **Extreme 81–100 points**
-  **Very High 61–80 points**
-  **High 41–60 points**

The scores on the country profiles in this guide are rounded up to the nearest point, which is why some countries have the same points, but different rankings.

— See *‘What is the World Watch List?’* p.64

## DEFINING PERSECUTION

Persecution takes many forms, from insults and abuse, to discrimination

in education and the workplace, to outright violence. Open Doors categorises the different forms as ‘smash’ and ‘squeeze’. ‘Smash’ is physical, visible, violent: bombing, arson, shooting, sexual violence, kidnappings, forced evictions. ‘Squeeze’ is insidious, structural, suffocating: legal restrictions, cultural and religious discrimination, societal pressure and, above all, the inability to talk about or publicly display your faith.

— See *‘What do we mean by persecution?’* p.65

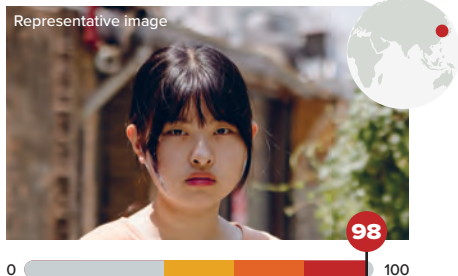
## ABOUT OPEN DOORS

For 70 years, Open Doors has stood alongside these faithful brothers and sisters, strengthening and supporting those who count the cost of following Christ. Our global underground networks work in more than 70 countries, including some of the most dangerous places on earth.

— See *‘70 years of standing with the persecuted church’* p.62

# 1 NORTH KOREA

Representative image



## POPULATION

26.2 million / 400,000 Christians

## LEADER

Kim Jong-un

**PERSECUTION SCORE 98 (+2) ↑**

If your Christian faith is discovered in North Korea, you will either be immediately executed, or deported to a horrendous labour camp that few survive.

The Kim regime relies on tightly controlling people's behaviour and beliefs. In early 2024, they announced stricter regulations against outside influences. It has been reported that about 30 teenagers were executed just for watching a South Korean drama last year. In this environment, even secret Christian worship and prayer is an enormous risk.

Open Doors secret workers are helping around 100,000 North Korean believers by providing vital food and aid from outside the country, shelter and training for refugees at safe houses in China, and training through radio broadcasting.

## PLEASE PRAY

- That God will give North Korean Christians eyes to see His light in the darkness
- For the estimated 400,000 secret believers in North Korea
- That God will refresh courageous believers with His peace.



In North Korea, despite the intense persecution, an estimated 400,000 believers still follow Jesus

*Image is representative*



EYEWITNESS / NORTH KOREA

# JUNG JIK

“My grandmother was a Christian, but I never knew,” says Jung Jik\*. “Every morning, when she cooked rice, she would mumble. Before she went to sleep, she sat down and mumbled. I thought she believed in some superstition, but looking back, I now know that it was Christian prayer.”

Her grandmother could not talk about her faith, for fear that her children or grandchildren would let the secret out. But she could pray for her family – and these prayers had a profound impact.

## “MY HEART STILL YEARNS FOR NORTH KOREA.”

After fleeing North Korea for food, Jung Jik’s father became a Christian, leading to his arrest and deportation. When Jung Jik’s siblings visited their father in prison before he died, he wrote on their hands that he was a follower of Jesus.

Jung Jik followed in his father’s footsteps – both becoming a Christian after fleeing North Korea

and spending time in prison.

Today, he lives in South Korea.

“My heart still yearns for North Korea,” he says. “There’s still a large underground church. Because you pray, many people are miraculously healed, and they experience God’s power. They come to faith.”

## NAMELESS AND POWERLESS

Jung Jik has been imprisoned twice and escaped – once by climbing an electric fence when the power was off, and the other when a guard asked him to return home to get him alcohol. “In prison, you are no longer considered human. They never called me by name, but by a number,” he says. “There was hardly any food. The husks of corn had no salt in them, otherwise prisoners would have energy to escape.”

## JUNG JIK ASKS

**“PRAY FOR MY CHILD WHO IS STILL IN NORTH KOREA. PRAY THAT I WILL SEE THEM AGAIN AND I CAN TELL THEM ABOUT JESUS.”**

\*Name changed for security reasons

## 2 SOMALIA



### POPULATION

18.7 million / hundreds of Christians

### LEADER

Prime Minister Hamza Abdi Barre

**PERSECUTION SCORE** 94 (+1) ↑

In Somalia, following Jesus is a matter of life and death.

Al-Shabaab, a violent Islamic militant group, is at war with the government and controls large swathes of the country. They enforce a strict form of Sharia (Islamic law) and are committed to eradicating Christianity from Somalia.

Even at home, any suspicion you have come to faith in Christ can result in house arrest, forced marriage, or threats to your life from your own family.

Open Doors supports Somali believers across the Horn of Africa through discipleship training and by equipping them to cope with severe persecution.

### PLEASE PRAY

- That secret Christians would know they are not alone
- That God would protect anyone in danger of attacks from Islamic extremist group al-Shabaab
- For secret believer parents: they need wisdom as they teach their children about Jesus.

## 3 YEMEN



### POPULATION

35.2 million / a small number of Christians

### LEADER

Chairman Rashad al-Alimi

**PERSECUTION SCORE** 94 (+5) ↑

Torn apart by civil war, life is very hard for everybody in Yemen, and even harder for Christians.

The country is now ruled by three different powers, none of which is sympathetic to Christianity. Anyone thought to be Christian can face monitoring, detention, torture, ill-treatment and even murder. Persecution has increased as Houthi rebels – an Islamic militant group – have expanded their control. In the last year, at least one Christian was killed for his faith, and dozens of house churches in Houthi-controlled areas can no longer meet.

Open Doors partners support the body of Christ in Yemen by raising prayer, distributing relief aid, training believers and pastors, and offering shelter, protection and livelihood support.

### PLEASE PRAY

- That God would bring peace and justice to Yemen
- For protection for Yemeni Christians from Islamic extremists
- That the underground church in Yemen would flourish.



EYEWITNESS / YEMEN

# ZAHRA

The text messages will be forever etched into Zahra's\* mind.

They were sent to her friend, Anis\*, after she walked a street with him and his son. "We wanted to kill you today, but we saw you with others," they said. "We don't want to harm them, but we're coming for you." A week later, Anis was killed.

"I was haunted by the messages," says Zahra. "I was terrified. What if I were next?"

## **"THE CHURCH, THOUGH IN SECRET, IS GROWING!"**

However, Zahra is unflinching in her calling. "I visit women in their homes, help them with housework and cooking, so I can build relationships to lead them to Christ," she explains.

It requires an astonishing sensitivity to God's voice. *"Shall I go to this meeting today? Maybe we should move our meeting to Zoom.* These are questions I ask God. When I enter a house, I might not come back out. We live among wolves."

But just as Zahra witnesses the dangers facing Yemeni believers, she also sees

God moving.

"I'm comforted and encouraged when I see how the church, though in secret, is growing!"

## **SURVEILLANCE AND SECRECY**

Secret meetings, coded messages and pseudonyms – these are all part of what it means to follow Jesus in Yemen, given the increasingly suffocating surveillance and restrictions. "It's like we have our own language," says Saad\*, a church leader.

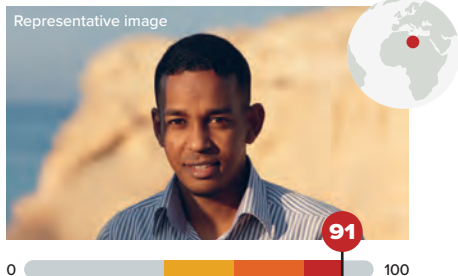
## **ZAHRA ASKS**

**"PRAY THAT GOD WILL GIVE ME STRENGTH, AND GUIDE ME TO HEAR HIS VOICE, SO I CAN SERVE HIM."**

\*Names changed for security reasons



## 4 LIBYA



### POPULATION

7 million / 35,500 Christians

### LEADER

Prime Minister Abdul Hamid Dbeibeh

**PERSECUTION SCORE** 91 (no change) ↔

In Libya, following Jesus is a huge risk for anyone. Libyan Christians with a Muslim background face violent pressure from their families and communities to renounce their faith.

Foreign Christians, especially those from sub-Saharan Africa, are targeted by Islamic militant and criminal groups. These groups kidnap and sometimes brutally kill Christians. The lack of a central government to enforce law and order makes the situation even more precarious.

Open Doors works with local partners and churches in North Africa to provide leadership and discipleship training, livelihood support, legal aid, trauma counselling, Bibles and pastoral care.

### PLEASE PRAY

- That Libya won't erupt into a civil war that would further endanger believers
- For God's protection on Christian migrant workers at risk from extremist groups
- That secret believers would be able to contact each other and grow in their walk with Christ.

## 5 SUDAN



### POPULATION

49.4 million / 2 million Christians

### LEADER

Lieutenant-General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan

**PERSECUTION SCORE** 90 (+3) ↑

Sudan was on a path towards religious freedom, but a coup and devastating war has dashed these hopes.

Sudan is now home to the world's largest displacement and hunger crisis. The conflict has given Islamic extremists more opportunity to target Christians; more than 100 churches have been damaged and Christians have been abducted and killed.

New Sudanese Christians face such severe opposition that they tend to keep their faith secret, even from their own children.

Open Doors works through local church partners in Sudan to strengthen persecuted Christians through persecution survival training, discipleship training and economic empowerment projects.

### PLEASE PRAY

- For an end to Sudan's civil war, where Christians have been caught in the crossfire
- For the brave Christians who continue to serve the vulnerable during the war
- That God would be with and provide for believers forced to flee their homes.

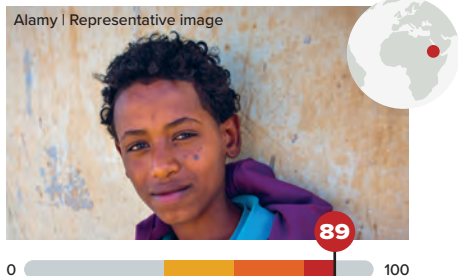
**“MUCH OF THE  
CHURCH IN SUDAN  
ARE ON THE RUN.”**

**– FIKIRU\*, OPEN DOORS  
RESEARCHER**

All Sudanese are suffering in the war, but Christians also face exclusion, discrimination and persecution.



## 6 ERITREA



### POPULATION

3.8 million / 1.7 million Christians

### LEADER

President Isaias Afwerki

**PERSECUTION SCORE 89** (no change) ↔

It's incredibly dangerous to follow Jesus in Eritrea. Last year saw another mass arrest of Christians.

Only certain denominations are recognised by Eritrea's government, with harsh persecution for Evangelicals and other non-traditional churches, and for any believer from a Muslim background. Government security forces have conducted house-to-house raids, sending hundreds of Christians to the notorious, inhumane prisons.

Eritrea is often called the 'North Korea of Africa' – phone calls and internet usage are heavily monitored, and Christians suffer the most.

Open Doors works through local church partners in Eritrea to provide economic empowerment projects, discipleship training and persecution survival training.

### PLEASE PRAY

- That the Christians arrested last year will be freed
- For God's provision for the families and children of those arrested
- For God's protection on believers forced into military service against their will.

## 7 NIGERIA



### POPULATION

229.2 million / 106.6 million Christians

### LEADER

President Bola Tinubu

**PERSECUTION SCORE 88** (no change) ↔

More Christians are killed for their faith in Nigeria than anywhere else in the world, according to Open Doors research.

Violence from Islamic extremist groups is escalating, with targeted attacks by Fulani militants, Boko Haram and other militants spreading further and further south. The attacks are brutal: many believers are killed, with women often kidnapped and sexually assaulted. Militants destroy their homes and churches. Millions of Christians have fled and now live in displacement camps.

Open Doors works through local church partners in Nigeria to strengthen Christians with discipleship and persecution survival training, trauma care, relief aid and economic empowerment projects.

### PLEASE PRAY

- For Christians whose loved ones have been killed or abducted
- That God would work in the hearts of Nigerian leaders to protect Christian citizens and communities
- For the millions of Christians and others who have been displaced by violence.

# MANGA

**“I live as a Christian and I’m ready to die as Christian.”**

That’s what Manga said to Boko Haram militants when they placed a knife on his neck and asked him to deny his faith. As he began to bleed profusely, Manga recalled Jesus’ words on the cross: “Father, forgive them, for they don’t know what they’re doing.” (Luke 23:34)

“Miraculously, the pain vanished,” he recalls. “I felt the presence of God. I felt His hands on my neck.” The militants left Manga, assuming he was dead – just as they had killed

his father in the attack. “At some point I was clinically dead, but God restored my life.”

“My life was taken away, it’s never like before. I miss my dad,” he continues.

“But what has been my anchor and my strength is that we are pilgrims in this world. We have a home, far better than this world, which we await to return to.”

**“AT SOME POINT I WAS CLINICALLY DEAD, BUT GOD RESTORED MY LIFE.”**

## MIRACLES AND RISK

Like many persecuted Christians, Manga has seen miracles, but his life remains at risk. “I cannot go back home to be with my family, and each day we live mindful of our security,” he says, highlighting the devastating long-term impact attacks in sub-Saharan Africa can have on believers. “Our life is not normal any more, like other people’s.”

## MANGA ASKS

**“YOUR PRAYERS SHOULD BE FOR STRENGTH TO REMAIN FIRM, AND THAT FIRE FOR JESUS, WHICH IS BURNING IN OUR HEART, SHOULD KEEP ON BURNING.”**





## 8 PAKISTAN



### POPULATION

245.2 million / 4.5 million Christians

### LEADER

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif

**PERSECUTION SCORE** 87 (no change) ↔

Pakistan's notorious blasphemy laws are often used to target minority groups, especially Christians.

While the death sentence is rarely carried out, being accused of blasphemy makes people very vulnerable to attack. In June 2024, an elderly man was killed by an angry mob after being falsely accused of desecrating the Quran.

The number of Christian girls abducted, abused and forcefully converted to Islam is growing. Christians suffer widespread discrimination in the workplace.

Open Doors is active in the Persian Gulf countries, including Pakistan, through the HOPE (Helping Others Pray and Encourage) Community.

### PLEASE PRAY

- That God changes the hearts of decision-makers in Pakistan on blasphemy laws
- That Christians will live joyfully, knowing they are not second-class citizens in God's eyes
- For God's protection on Pakistani Christian women who can be forced into Islamic marriage.

## 9 IRAN



### POPULATION

89.8 million / 800,000 Christians

### LEADER

Ayatollah Ali Khamenei

**PERSECUTION SCORE** 86 (no change) ↔

The Iranian government views people becoming Christians as a 'threat to national security' – a Western attempt to undermine Islam and the regime.

House churches are often raided, with leaders and church members arrested, prosecuted, and given long prison sentences. The historical Armenian and Assyrian churches are protected, but their members are treated as second-class citizens. They must not worship in Persian or talk about their faith with Muslims.

But despite persecution, the church in Iran is growing steadily.

Open Doors raises prayer support for the Christians in Iran.

### PLEASE PRAY

- That Iran's new president would pursue religious freedom for all Iranians
- For secret believers – that God would give them wisdom and courage as the church in Iran grows
- For the mental and physical well-being of Christians in prison and their families.



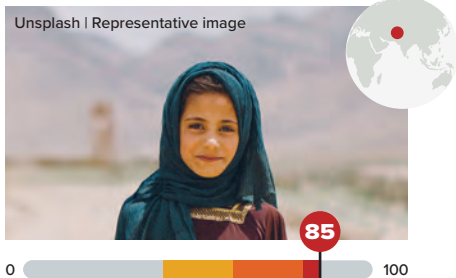
WWL  
09

**“I’M NOT WITHOUT PURPOSE.  
GOD IS WORKING THROUGH ME  
TO ENCOURAGE AND ASSIST  
WOMEN WITH BROKEN HEARTS  
AND IDENTITIES SHATTERED BY  
THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC.”**

– SIMIN\*, IRAN

Arrested and interrogated for her faith, Simin escaped Iran and now supports other victims of persecution.

## 10 AFGHANISTAN



### POPULATION

43.4 million / thousands of Christians

### LEADER

Supreme Leader Hibatullah Akhundzada

**PERSECUTION SCORE 85 (+1) ↑**

Most Afghan Christians come from Muslim backgrounds; practising their faith openly is impossible.

Leaving Islam is considered shameful, and it's punishable by death under Islamic law, which has been increasingly enforced under the Taliban. Afghan believers may have no option but to flee if the government discovers their faith.

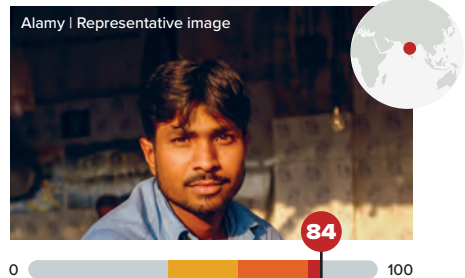
A new believer's family, clan or tribe may try to preserve its 'honour' by punishing the convert through pressure, violence or even murder – with women most at risk.

Because of the risks faced by our partners and the people they serve, we are restricted in the information we can provide about Afghanistan.

### PLEASE PRAY

- For God to protect and encourage the secret believers in Afghanistan
- That even as the Taliban's brutal regime stays in power, God will touch their hearts and change these men
- For the thousands of Afghan refugees. Ask God to help them find community and hope.

## 11 INDIA



### POPULATION

1.4 billion / 73.2 million Christians

### LEADER

Prime Minister Narendra Modi

**PERSECUTION SCORE 84 (+1) ↑**

Hindu nationalists believe that all Indians should be Hindu. The increasing popularity of this idea has stoked a wave of violence.

Twelve states now have anti-conversion laws, which are abused to target Christians and stop them sharing their faith. Uttar Pradesh recently added life imprisonment as a possible sentence for this crime.

Last year's elections forced the nationalist BJP to form a coalition government with parties that support religious freedom. But for now, violence against Christians continues in many states.

Open Doors local partners strengthen the church in India by providing Bibles, emergency aid, persecution survival training, and livelihood and community development projects.

### PLEASE PRAY

- That the new coalition government protects the rights of all Indians
- For peace and reconciliation in Manipur State, where Christians experienced terrible violence in 2023
- For church leaders who are falsely accused under anti-conversion laws.

EYEWITNESS / INDIA

# MANSI & DHIRU

What if your wedding day arrived – only for it to be cancelled, because of persecution for your faith?

That's exactly what happened to Mansi\* and Dhiru\* in India. As their big day neared, Mansi and her family were accused by Hindu extremists of forced conversions and told to renounce their faith. "Even if you kill us, we will not renounce our Lord Jesus," said Mansi's mother. "We will continue to love the Lord, go to church, and live out our faith." The police got involved and the couple had to cancel their wedding, just hours before it was due to begin.

**"EVEN IF YOU KILL US,  
WE WILL NOT RENOUNCE  
THE LORD JESUS."**

Helped by Open Doors local partners, Mansi and Dhiru have since moved to another state and got married. "It was overwhelming to experience such loss," says Mansi. "We trusted God and took a leap of faith, and He honoured us by sending help through you. I'm encouraged to see support through God's people whom I've never met."



## VENGEANCE AND DELIVERANCE

In India, persecution often comes from believers' own families. After her dad died, Mansi's uncle said it was because of the family's faith. In vengeance, he cursed Mansi. "I felt the devil's attack, groaning in pain," she says. "My mother prayed fervently for me and I was delivered."

**MANSI AND DHIRU ASK  
"PLEASE PRAY AS WE HAVE  
MANY PLANS, BUT WE  
WANT GOD'S WILL TO BE  
DONE. WE DON'T KNOW  
ANYTHING ABOUT THE  
FUTURE, BUT WE WANT TO  
FULFIL GOD'S PURPOSE."**

\*Names changed for security reasons

## 12 SAUDI ARABIA

Alamy | Representative image



81



### POPULATION

37.5 million / 2.3 million Christians

### LEADER

King Salman Bin Abdulaziz al-Saud

**PERSECUTION SCORE** 81 (no change) ↔

In Saudi Arabia, it's illegal to leave the Islamic faith – and new Christians will face intense opposition from their communities.

Because of this, most Saudi Christians follow their faith very secretly. But believers are becoming bolder, sharing their Christian faith with others online and through Christian TV channels – though Saudis caught doing this have faced serious repercussions.

Christian workers from other countries cannot share their faith with local Saudis, and worship gatherings are restricted.

Open Doors supports the body of Christ on the Arabian Peninsula by organising prayer, distributing Scripture resources, and training believers and pastors.

### PLEASE PRAY

- That believers here would find a place to worship and grow in knowledge of the Lord
- For immigrant Christians who meet secretly, to receive God's protection and wisdom
- For God to bless all those who reach out to share the gospel in Saudi Arabia.

## 13 MYANMAR

Alamy | Representative image



81



### POPULATION

55 million / 4.8 million Christians

### LEADER

General Min Aung Hlaing

**PERSECUTION SCORE** 81 (+2) ↑

As Myanmar enters the fifth year of an increasingly violent conflict, the Christian minority are among those bearing the brunt of the attacks.

Since the military coup in early 2021, Christians have encountered greater violence and tighter restrictions. More Christians than ever have been driven out of their homes to find refuge in churches, displacement camps or the jungle. Many are going hungry.


Last year, the government enforced military conscription, which led to many young Christians leaving the country. Believers are scattered.

Open Doors partners strengthen believers in Myanmar through literature distribution, discipleship and leadership programmes, livelihood support, and youth, children and families ministries.

### PLEASE PRAY

- That God will enable Christians to endure the long-term consequences of the coup
- That Christians caught in the conflict will be peacemakers
- For the leaders of Myanmar's military to see that Jesus is the true source of peace.





**“SO MANY HAVE  
BEEN KILLED.  
PLEASE PRAY  
FOR THE SAFETY  
OF CHRISTIANS  
IN THE COUNTRY.”**

**– KO AUNG\***

Ko Aung is one of many thousands in Myanmar who have been forced to flee for following Jesus and who are now being supported by Open Doors partners.

## 14 MALI

Alamy | Representative image



80



### POPULATION

24 million / 542,000 Christians

### LEADER

Transition President Assimi Goïta

**PERSECUTION SCORE** 80 (+1) ↑

The Islamic extremist insurgency that began devastating the north of Mali in 2012 continues to have huge implications for Christians.

Churches have been burned down and many Christians fled their homes. Although some have returned under police protection, they live under the threat of attack. In some areas they have been denied access to water and land to grow crops. It's very dangerous to share the gospel in the north.

The jihadist violence is spreading southward, and the country's institutions are breaking apart.

Open Doors works through local church partners in Mali to provide persecution survival training, discipleship programmes and economic empowerment projects.

### PLEASE PRAY

- That God would protect believers who are targeted by Islamic extremist groups
- For Open Doors partners in Mali as they strengthen believers who have lost so much
- For political stability and religious freedom for all Malians.

## 15 CHINA

Alamy | Representative image



78



### POPULATION

1.4 billion / 96.7 million Christians

### LEADER

President Xi Jinping

**PERSECUTION SCORE** 78 (no change) ↔

In recent years, the Chinese government has aggressively tried to ensure all religious expression is in line with official Chinese Communist philosophy.

Unregistered churches, long tolerated by the Chinese government, are now being closed down when discovered. State-approved churches are facing stronger restrictions over what they preach. Children under 18 are forbidden from attending.

Surveillance is a normal consequence of being a church leader in China. Expressing Christian faith is increasingly complicated.

Open Doors partners support believers in China with discipleship and persecution survival training, presence ministry, relief response, literature and by serving the younger generation of believers.

### PLEASE PRAY

- That believers experience growth in their faith even as persecution rises
- For protection for believers in areas where Islam or Buddhism are the primary faiths
- That church leaders would feel Christ's presence as they are pressurised and monitored

# MING

“I’m on my way to the old place.”

That’s the carefully coded message Ming\* would send to his contacts, after loading his car with Bibles in a hidden alley in China. Knowing that the authorities were monitoring phones, any wrong word could be costly.

One day, their worst fears were realised when Ming and his friends were arrested. Miraculously, Ming was set free, but the arrest put him firmly on the authorities’ radar. Today, they sometimes show up and search his home. Ming’s also lost his business and his father-in-law stops him from seeing his wife and daughter.

**“THE GREAT COMMISSION ENCOURAGES ME TO STAY COMMITTED TO THE CALL OF SHARING THE GOSPEL.”**

Despite this, he remains determined to pursue his calling. “I feel heavily the burden of taking part in the Great Commission in Matthew 28:19-20, which energises and encourages me to stay committed to the call of sharing the gospel to my people,” says Ming.

## SPIES AND ISOLATION

In China, people are given incentives to inform on their neighbours. It means that



many believers, like Ming, don’t know whom to trust – and it adds to their isolation. “I need to make friends cautiously and identify the right people to share things with,” says Ming. “Since there may be spies pretending to be Christians even in Christian communities, I must stay vigilant.”

## MING ASKS

**“THANK YOU FOR PRAYING. I FEEL THAT I AM NOT BY MYSELF. THROUGH YOUR PRAYERS, I CAN FEEL THAT GOD HAS BEEN LOOKING AFTER ME TO MAKE ME FEEL SECURE.”**

\*Name changed for security reasons





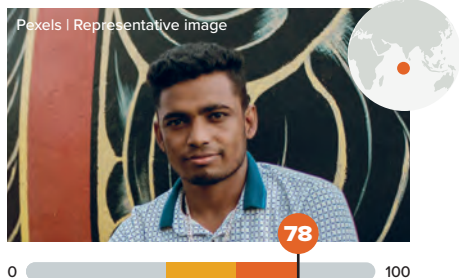
Extremist groups in Mali have driven huge numbers of Christians from their homes. In the town of Bankass, the local church was overwhelmed with displaced Christian families. Thanks to your support, Open Doors partners were able to provide 320 families with vital relief aid.







## 16 MALDIVES



### POPULATION

518,000 / hundreds of Christians

### LEADER

President Mohamed Muizzu

**PERSECUTION SCORE 78** (no change) ↔

The Maldives is an island paradise for tourists from around the world – but not for Maldivians who choose to follow Jesus.

This nation declares itself 100% Muslim. Within the country's close-knit communities, any deviation from Islamic values is easily spotted. Christian believers may be stripped of their citizenship, lose their state benefits and be isolated from society.

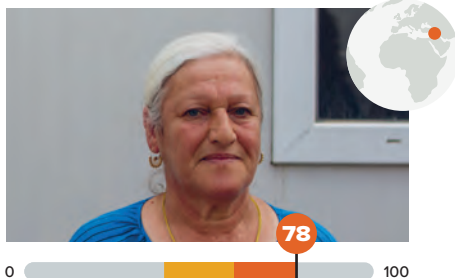
Foreign Christians working in the tourist sector have slightly more freedom, but their gatherings are strictly monitored. Many are too scared to meet.

**Open Doors raises prayer support for persecuted believers in the Maldives.**

### PLEASE PRAY

- That secret believers will be able to access the Bible in their own language this year
- For Christians to find opportunities to meet, pray and worship with one another
- That the Lord would open the eyes of tourists and travellers to the situation facing Christians in the Maldives.

## 17 IRAQ



### POPULATION

46.5 million / 187,000 Christians

### LEADER

President Abdul Rashid

**PERSECUTION SCORE 78** (-1) ↓

Iraqi Christians face increasing pressure from various groups, especially since the rise of Shia militias backed by Iran.

While so-called Islamic State (IS) still poses a threat, attacks from Turkey and Iran have devastated predominantly Christian villages, forcing many to flee.

The Assyrian and Chaldean churches are seriously affected by discrimination and violence from militant groups and government authorities. Pressure on converts from Islam is intense, often forcing them to hide their faith.

**Open Doors local partners strengthen the church in Iraq with training, trauma care, delivering Bibles, livelihood projects and microloans, rebuilding homes and churches, and crisis relief.**

### PLEASE PRAY

- For the Christians returning home and rebuilding ten years after IS exiled them
- For God's blessing on the trauma care programmes supporting those who suffered at the hands of IS
- For believers from Muslim backgrounds facing danger at home.

## 18 SYRIA



### POPULATION

24.3 million / 579,000 Christians

### LEADER

Interim leader

**PERSECUTION SCORE 78 (-3) ↓**

Syria has a historic Christian community, which is afforded some degree of openness in their faith. But Christians from other denominations can face great danger.

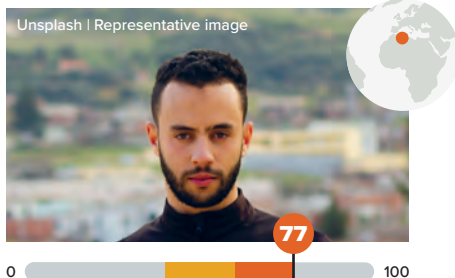
The legacy of the takeover of Syria by groups with certain ideologies can still be seen. Large numbers of Christians left their place of origin to go to other majority Christian areas as internally displaced people, or have left the country. While some believers have returned to rebuild their lives and communities, there are still far fewer than there used to be.

Open Doors raises prayer support for Christians in Syria.

### PLEASE PRAY

- For the people of Syria to heal after years of war, economic uncertainty and natural disasters
- For peace for all people in Syria
- For the church in Syria to remain a beacon of hope.

## 19 ALGERIA



### POPULATION

46.3 million / 144,000 Christians

### LEADER

President Abdelmadjid Tebboune

**PERSECUTION SCORE 77 (-2) ↓**

There has been another sharp increase in government pressure against the Algerian Protestant church.

In 2023, almost all of Algeria's Protestant churches were ordered to close. The remaining churches were forced to stop meeting in 2024, isolating many Christians.

It is prohibited to 'shake the faith of a Muslim' – a law that restricts Christian expression in many ways. New Christians, most of whom have Muslim backgrounds, risk a strong backlash from their community and extended family.

Open Doors works with local partners and churches in North Africa to provide leadership and discipleship training, livelihood support, legal aid, trauma counselling, Bibles and pastoral care.

### PLEASE PRAY

- That God will allow the few remaining Protestant churches to remain open
- For wisdom and boldness for Algerians daring to share their faith
- That every believer in Algeria would be able to find a Christian community and enjoy fellowship.

## 20 BURKINA FASO



0 100

### POPULATION

23.8 million / 6.2 million Christians

### LEADER

President Ibrahim Traore

**PERSECUTION SCORE** 76 (+1) ↑

In recent years, there has been a rapid rise in violence against Christians in Burkina Faso, and hundreds of churches have closed.

The rise of violent Islamic extremist groups has forced Christians to flee, and even cities that used to be safe are now risky. Believers living in areas where these groups are active have been targeted, kidnapped and killed, with Christian schools and churches destroyed. Converts from Islam are often rejected by their families.

Open Doors works through local partners to strengthen Christians in Burkina Faso by providing persecution survival training, relief aid, and spiritual and trauma care.

### PLEASE PRAY

- For the many believers forced to leave home by Islamic militants
- For Christians who have endured violence: ask God to bind up their wounds
- For church leaders trying to minister to their flock while forced to flee. Pray for God's encouragement and strength.



Like thousands of church leaders, Pastor Soré's congregation have been driven from their land

# PASTOR SORÉ

**It was the third Islamic militant attack on his village in Burkina Faso that made Pastor Soré take his family and flee as refugees.**

“When the terrorists come to churches and find Christians, they tell them that Christianity’s time is over, and they should turn to Islam,” says the pastor. “They warn Christians to stop conducting services. After warning, when they come back later and find you in the church, they kill you.”

The family are among two million people displaced in Burkina Faso, many of them Christians driven from their homes by extremism. Because of an overcrowded displacement camp, Pastor Soré and his family, and the 15 other children they care for, created a makeshift shelter on an empty piece of land.

“I do believe that we are displaced, but Jesus is not and will never be displaced from our lives,” he adds. “He is always with us.”

“Another thing that strengthens my faith is that, despite our difficult condition, Jesus brings other people who get saved,” he says. “This shows me that He is with us and is in control.”

## SNAKES AND SUPPLY

Pastor Soré led a thriving church, his children went to school, their home had beds and access to water, and their farm flourished. But in a day, it was all taken away from them, leaving them awfully exposed – in more ways than one. “Every night I had to be watchful, killing snakes, while my family slept,” says the pastor. Thankfully, with the support of Open Doors local partners, the family have received practical and pastoral care. “We wholeheartedly praise God for such blessings.”

## PASTOR SORÉ ASKS

***“PRAY THAT ALL CHRISTIANS IN BURKINA FASO, PARTICULARLY THOSE WHO ARE DISPLACED AND LIVING WITH ME, STAY FIRM IN THEIR FAITH.”***



**“WE KEEP GOING  
AND TRUST GOD TO  
PROVIDE EVERYTHING  
FOR US.”**

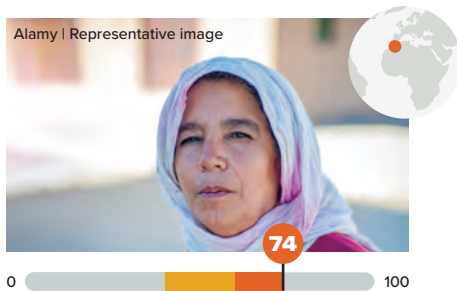
— VEE, LAOS

Pastor Vee has been thrown out of his village and faced death threats and violence. Yet through his work 90 people have come to Christ.





## 21 MOROCCO



### POPULATION

38.2 million / 33,000 Christians

### LEADER

King Mohammed VI

**PERSECUTION SCORE 74 (+3) ↑**

Morocco has a socially conservative, 99% Muslim society. This puts a lot of pressure on Christians, especially those from Muslim families.

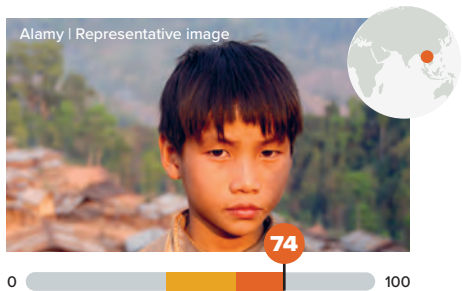
Christians cannot get official permission to gather, so meet in house churches: these have faced some violent attacks over the past year. It's not illegal to become a Christian, but it is illegal to 'shake the faith of a Muslim'. This means that new Christians, and anybody expressing their faith in Jesus, even online, may be arrested and interrogated.

Open Doors partners in North Africa provide leadership and discipleship training, livelihood support, legal aid, trauma care, Bibles and pastoral care.

### PLEASE PRAY

- That God would help the Moroccan church be salt and light
- That Christians will be wise and courageous as they live for Jesus and work out how to share their faith
- For peace for converts from Islam facing pressure from their families and communities.

## 22 LAOS



### POPULATION

7.7 million / 224,000 Christians

### LEADER

President Thongloun Sisoulith

**PERSECUTION SCORE 74 (-1) ↓**

In Laos, Communist authorities heavily monitor all religious activities, even those of registered churches.

About 75% of government-approved congregations don't have a building. All gatherings must be reported to the administration, so running an unregistered house church is risky.

New Christians face severe rights violations. They are seen as outsiders to the Buddhist-animist community and face violent opposition from their families and local authorities. Local leaders may incite the community to turn against new believers, running them out of the village.

Open Doors partners provide Bibles and Christian materials, leadership training, discipleship programmes, socio-economic development, practical aid and advocacy.

### PLEASE PRAY

- That God will help believers expelled from their villages find a safe place to live
- For the families of pastors and other church leaders who have been killed
- For the Lord's protection over Christians monitored by the Communist authorities.

# THE TOP 50 COUNTRIES

## PERSECUTION LEVELS

- Extreme
- Very high

**1** NORTH KOREA  
**2** SOMALIA  
**3** YEMEN  
**4** LIBYA  
**5** SUDAN  
**6** ERITREA  
**7** NIGERIA

**8** PAKISTAN  
**9** IRAN  
**10** AFGHANISTAN  
**11** INDIA  
**12** SAUDI ARABIA  
**13** MYANMAR  
**14** MALI

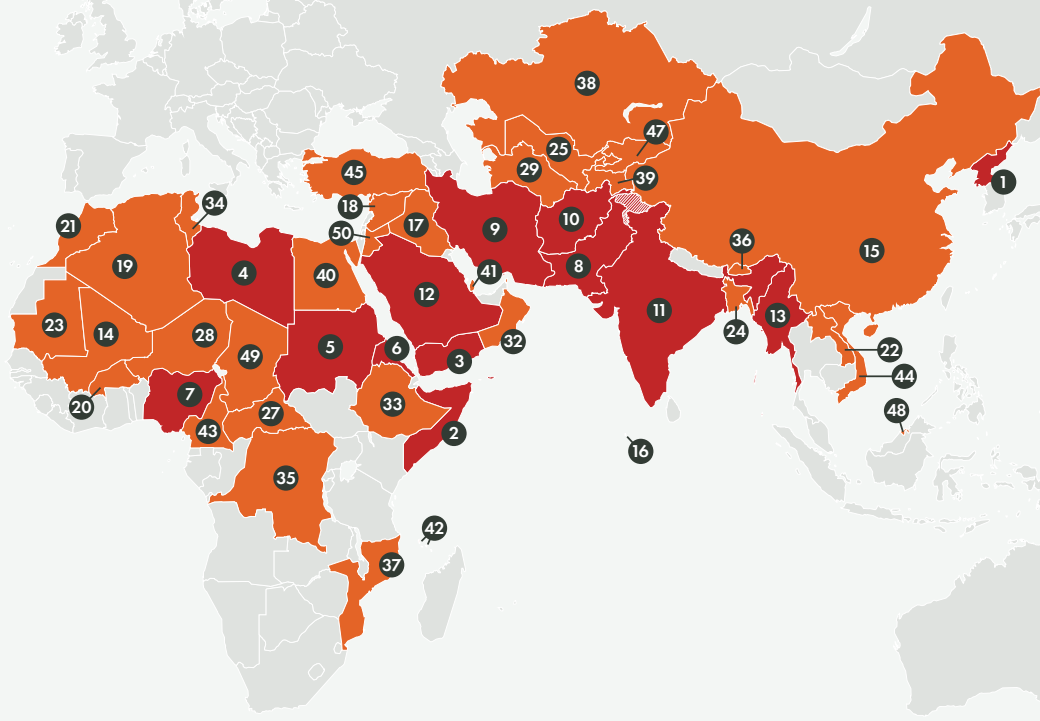
**15** CHINA  
**16** MALDIVES  
**17** IRAQ  
**18** SYRIA  
**19** ALGERIA  
**20** BURKINA FASO  
**21** MOROCCO

**22** LAOS  
**23** MAURITANIA  
**24** BANGLADESH  
**25** UZBEKISTAN  
**26** CUBA  
**27** CAR (Central African Republic)



**“BUT YOU WILL RECEIVE POWER WHEN THE HOLY SPIRIT COMES ON YOU; AND YOU WILL BE MY WITNESSES IN JERUSALEM, AND IN ALL JUDEA AND SAMARIA, AND TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH.”**

— ACTS 1:8



**28 NIGER**

**29 TURKMENISTAN**

**30 NICARAGUA**

**31 MEXICO**

**32 OMAN**

**33 ETHIOPIA**

**34 TUNISIA**

**35 DRC (Democratic Republic of Congo)**

**36 BHUTAN**

**37 MOZAMBIQUE**

**38 KAZAKHSTAN**

**39 TAJIKISTAN**

**40 EGYPT**

**41 QATAR**

**42 COMOROS**

**43 CAMEROON**

**44 VIETNAM**

**45 TÜRKİYE**

**46 COLOMBIA**

**47 KYRGYZSTAN**

**48 BRUNEI**

**49 CHAD**

**50 JORDAN**

## 23 MAURITANIA



### POPULATION

5 million / 11,000 Christians

### LEADER

President Mohamed Ould Ghazouani

**PERSECUTION SCORE 74 (+2) ↑**

In Mauritania, Christianity is viewed as a negative Western influence, and anyone who comes to faith in Christ faces severe hostility from the authorities and their families. They may even have to leave the country.

It's against the law to leave Islam, with the death penalty technically possible. Islamist groups also pose a threat. Baptisms happen in secret, but many believers feel even this is too risky. Christians may connect online, but lack of privacy in families makes this difficult.

Open Doors works with local partners and churches in North Africa to provide leadership and discipleship training, livelihood support, legal aid, trauma counselling, Bibles and pastoral care.

### PLEASE PRAY

- That believers will be able to find ways to meet together and grow in faith
- For laws that forbid leaving Islam to be overturned, so all people would be able to follow the religion they choose
- That God would protect His people from extremist groups and maintain political stability in Mauritania.

## 24 BANGLADESH



### POPULATION

174.7 million / 950,000 Christians

### LEADER

President Mohammad Shahabuddin

**PERSECUTION SCORE 74 (+3) ↑**

Violent riots and political turmoil gripped Bangladesh in 2024. Extremist groups used the chaos as a chance to target Christians, burning their homes.

In Bangladesh, anyone becoming a Christian is at risk, whether their background is Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist or tribal. Fearing attack from all sorts of extremists, Christians usually meet in small, secret groups.

Last year, members of the majority-Christian Bawm ethnic group were killed and many forced to flee, caught up in a complex political conflict.

Open Doors partners provide persecuted survival training, discipleship, Bibles and other Christian literature, literacy programmes and socio-economic empowerment, and emergency aid.

### PLEASE PRAY

- For strength, healing and comfort for the victims of recent attacks
- For the believers rebuilding and recovering from the 2024 cyclone
- For the brave Bangladeshi believers who live out their faith even though it puts them at risk.

# RUMANA

At school, Rumana is alone. “I don’t have any friends because I’m a Christian,” she says. Even her teachers tell students not to be her friend. One day, when she was pushed down the stairs, she went to her teacher for help. “He didn’t listen to me and instead called me a liar.”

Rumana has been mocked and attacked by children whilst walking to church, and neighbours have verbally abused her, even shouting death threats. The worst moment was when she returned from school to find her home on fire. “I saw my father crying and writhing on the ground. There was nothing left from the house. I was crying, too.”



Despite everything, Rumana and her family – all of whom come from a Muslim background – continue to follow Jesus. “Jesus loves me,” she says. “It’s only because of Jesus’ love that I have survived until now, despite all the persecution.”

**“I DON’T HAVE ANY FRIENDS BECAUSE I AM A CHRISTIAN.”**



## REFUSAL AND REJECTION

“No one from our village offered any help,” says Rumana, recalling the day her home was set alight. “All of them were just watching.” When Rumana’s father collapsed, a neighbour refused to let him rest in their home, for fear of being targeted by the community. A cousin also refused to take him to hospital. One woman welcomed him, but as Rumana’s father became responsive, she asked him to leave.

## RUMANA ASKS

**“I PRAY TO GOD EVERY DAY FOR MY CLASSMATES. EVEN IN MY LUNCHTIME PRAYER, I ALSO PRAY FOR THEM.”**



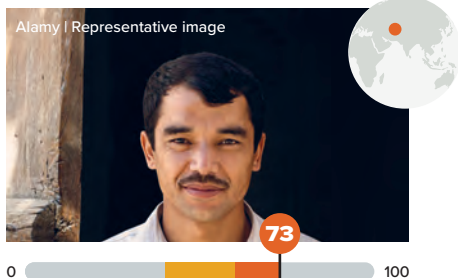


**“WE ASK FOR PRAYER  
THAT THE LORD’S  
PLANS CONTINUE IN  
OUR NATION”**

**– MIGUEL\***

During his 20 years in ministry, Pastor Miguel was interrogated more than 50 times. Now he works with Open Doors to strengthen and support thousands of Christians in Cuba.

## 25 UZBEKISTAN



### POPULATION

35.7 million / 406,000 Christians

### LEADER

President Shavkat Mirziyoyev

**PERSECUTION SCORE 73 (+2) ↑**

Uzbekistan is a former soviet state, and it's still ruled by an authoritarian government that heavily monitors the population – especially religious groups.

Christians groups are kept under surveillance. In the last year, churches not approved of by the state have been raided, with people arrested, threatened and fined.

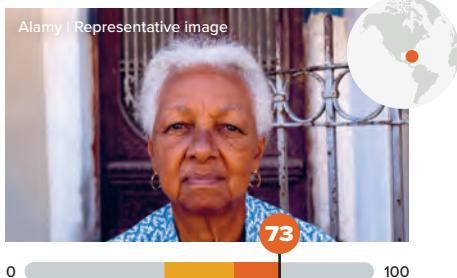
Converts from Islam face the most persecution – from both the state and their own families. They may be threatened, locked away, divorced, disowned or physically abused.

Open Doors strengthens the church in Central Asia by providing relief aid, Bibles, ministry training, prayer support, vocational training and microloans, as well as projects such as rehab centres.

### PLEASE PRAY

- For Uzbek Christians to persevere and be witnesses to Christ's love
- That unregistered churches won't be targeted or harassed by authorities
- For believers facing opposition from their families to know God's love and strength with them.

## 26 CUBA



### POPULATION

11.2 million / 6.8 million Christians

### LEADER

President Miguel Díaz-Canel

**PERSECUTION SCORE 73 (no change) ↔**

Cuba's Communist Party reacts harshly to opponents and tries to control the church.

As a humanitarian crisis continues, Christian activists who criticise the regime face interrogation, smear campaigns, travel restrictions, prison sentences or harassment. Their family members also face threats, such as losing custody of their children.

The government often refuses to register new churches, forcing many to operate illegally, which makes them vulnerable to fines, property confiscation and even demolition.

Open Doors local partners provide Bibles, livelihood projects, biblical training, leadership development projects, care and support for children and pastors' families, and socio-economic development.

### PLEASE PRAY

- That all churches would be allowed to remain open
- That the authorities who monitor churches would be touched by the message they hear
- For Cuban church leaders targeted by state authorities.

## 27 CAR (Central African Republic)



### POPULATION

5.9 million / 4.4 million Christians

### LEADER

President Faustin-Archange Touadera

**PERSECUTION SCORE 72 (+2) ↑**

Life in the Central African Republic (CAR) has been dangerous for more than ten years.

A civil war began in 2013, sparking violence along both ethnic and religious lines. Christians are often caught in the middle – if they speak out against violence they can be targeted, with churches burned and entire communities displaced.

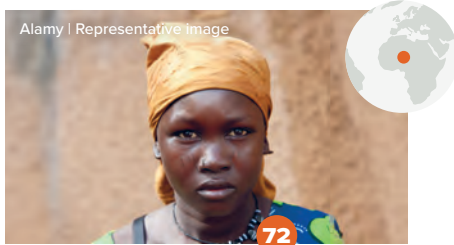
Some of the armed groups also attack Christians simply because of their faith, with women facing sexual violence.

Open Doors partners support believers in the Central African Republic with persecution survival training, economic empowerment projects and trauma care.

### PLEASE PRAY

- For an end to the long civil war in CAR
- For God's protection and healing for Christians being targeted by extremist groups
- For emotional, spiritual and physical healing for the survivors of sexual violence.

## 28 NIGER



### POPULATION

28.2 million / 69,200 Christians

### LEADER

Interim leader Abdourahmane Tchiani

**PERSECUTION SCORE 72 (+1) ↑**

Since the coup in 2023 which caused political chaos, the jihadist group *al-Sunnah wa Jama'ah* has made life increasingly difficult for Christians in Niger.

In areas under their control, church services have become risky. Attacks and kidnappings have limited Christians' freedom and safety, and there has also been a rise in attacks on Christian properties, including schools.

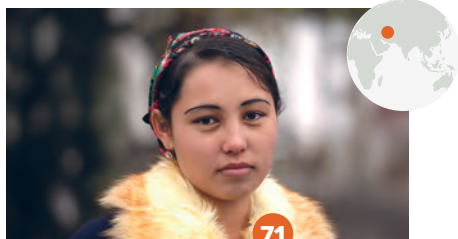
The slow, complex legal process for registering a church is seemingly used to prevent Christians from gathering.

Open Doors partners strengthen persecuted Christians in Niger through economic empowerment programmes, leadership and discipleship training, persecution survival training and pastoral care for new believers.

### PLEASE PRAY

- That God will bring order to political chaos
- That God will protect Christians from Islamic militant attacks
- For converts from Islam – especially young people – who face rejection and oppression.

## 29 TURKMENISTAN



### POPULATION

6.6 million / 164,000 Christians

### LEADER

President Serdar Berdymukhamedov

**PERSECUTION SCORE 71 (+1) ↑**

Turkmenistan is a former soviet state still ruled by an authoritarian government that heavily monitors the population.

Printing or importing Christian materials, holding unofficial meetings, or even downloading Christian songs can result in a fine or worse. Christian leaders are the most closely observed. Even the country's historical Russian Orthodox and Armenian Apostolic churches can find their services being monitored. Most Turkmen are Muslims – those who become Christians can expect strong opposition from their community.

Open Doors strengthens the church in Central Asia by providing relief aid, Bibles, ministry training, prayer support, vocational training and microloans, as well as projects such as rehab centres.

### PLEASE PRAY

- That the leadership in Turkmenistan will have their hearts softened, and ultimately find the hope of Jesus
- For greater unity among Christians and their leaders
- For a way for Bibles to get to believers hungry for Scripture.

## 30 NICARAGUA



### POPULATION

7.1 million / 6.8 million Christians

### LEADER

President Daniel Ortega

**PERSECUTION SCORE 71 (+1) ↑**

Nicaragua is experiencing political unrest, economic decline and many protests against the current government. Christians have paid a heavy price for speaking out.

Church leaders have been harassed and arrested, properties seized, Christian schools, TV stations and charities closed, and churches intimidated. Some leaders have fled the country, and many more have been deported. Hundreds of Christian organisations have lost their legal status in the last year as the government tries to silence the church.

Open Doors strengthens the persecuted church in Nicaragua by providing Christian literature, discipleship training, emergency relief aid, legal advice and education for pastors.

### PLEASE PRAY

- For God's protection on church leaders who speak out against injustice
- That persecution survival training would help believers live as salt and light
- That believers monitored by the government won't be deterred from sharing the gospel.



## 31 MEXICO



### POPULATION

129.4 million / 123.3 million Christians

### LEADER

President Claudia Sheinbaum

**PERSECUTION SCORE** 71 (+3) ↑

In Mexico, many active Christians are at risk from criminal gangs and drug cartels. The run-up to last year's election was the most violent in Mexico's history.

Christians who bravely speak out against criminal groups and gangs, or who are involved in community work or evangelism, are deemed a threat – and that makes them a target. In some indigenous communities, those who decide to leave ancestral and traditional beliefs to follow Jesus face ostracism, fines, incarceration and forced displacement.

**Open Doors strengthens persecuted believers in Mexico with biblical training, legal support, trauma care and socio-economic aid.**

### PLEASE PRAY

- That God will protect His people living where drug cartels and criminal gangs are present
- That God will continue to draw to Himself believers from indigenous communities
- For God to strengthen Open Doors local partners, building Jesus' kingdom of hope and peace.





# SERGIO

Sergio\* was praying with someone when they heard motorbikes outside revving their engines very loudly. “I thought about getting up and going to see what was happening, but I felt from God that I should not go out, so I did not pay attention and we continued praying,” he says.

Hours later, Sergio’s neighbour called him and said she had seen two men pointing guns at his house earlier, waiting for the door to open. They left after no one answered.

In northern and central parts of Mexico, missionaries like Sergio are deemed an obstacle to drug cartels. That’s because they often reach out to help children, the very people the criminals see as potential customers and recruits.

Marcos\*, another missionary in an area largely controlled by cartels, told Open Doors that at the beginning of this year he repeatedly saw luxury vans with tinted windows (widely used by the cartels) driving around his church while he was teaching the children he works with. “This is a problem for us as

missionaries, because we must think of strategies that allow us to fulfil the Great Commission and at the same time take care of ourselves and our families,” says Marcos.

## EXPRESSION AND ATTENTION

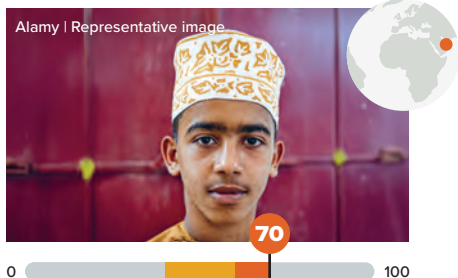
Praying before eating food in a restaurant can be dangerous for Christians living in areas in Mexico where drug cartels are prominent, as are other public expressions of faith. That’s because it draws attention to those whose lives and ministries could be a target for the cartels.

## CHRISTIANS IN MEXICO ASK

**“PRAY THAT WE WILL  
CONTINUE TO FOLLOW  
GOD’S WORD AND NOT  
LOSE HOPE, THAT OUR  
HEARTS WILL BE STRONG  
AND THAT THE CHURCH  
WILL GROW. MAY WE  
NOT FALTER IN THE WAY  
OF THE LORD, BECAUSE  
IT IS NECESSARY THAT  
WE GO THROUGH THIS  
PERSECUTION TO REACH  
THE KINGDOM OF GOD.”**

\*Name changed for security reasons

## 32 OMAN



### POPULATION

4.7 million / 187,000 Christians

### LEADER

Sultan Haitham bin Tarik al-Said

**PERSECUTION SCORE 70 (+1) ↑**

Converts to Christianity face total opposition from their family, due to a strong clan mentality.

While most Omanis practise a moderately conservative form of Islam, believers can still be expelled from their homes and jobs, and face problems over child custody and inheritance. Many keep their faith hidden.

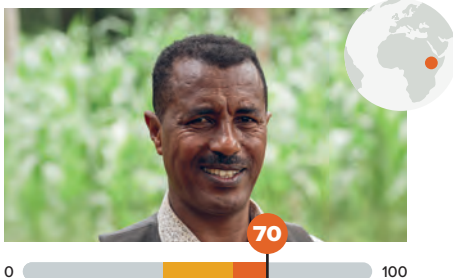
Immigrant Christian communities are tolerated, as long as they avoid sharing their faith with Muslims – but their meetings are monitored. All religious organisations must be registered with the authorities.

**Open Doors supports the body of Christ on the Arabian Peninsula by organising prayer, distributing Scripture resources, and training believers and pastors.**

### PLEASE PRAY

- For church communities, that God will protect them
- That immigrant believers would have wisdom and boldness in living out their faith
- For Open Doors partners on the Arabian Peninsula to shine the light of Christ.

## 33 ETHIOPIA



### POPULATION

129.7 million / 77.5 million Christians

### LEADER

Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed

**PERSECUTION SCORE 70 (+1) ↑**

In Ethiopia, Christian communities are facing serious religious freedom issues. Non-traditional Christians get the worst treatment from local authorities.

Converts from Islam, and those from Ethiopian Orthodox backgrounds, face intense family opposition. In some regions, Christians are attacked by Islamic mobs and denied community resources, leading to isolation.

During recent political violence and regional conflicts, many churches were attacked and destroyed, and even those seeking refuge in churches weren't safe from violence.

**Open Doors partners strengthen Christians in Ethiopia with leadership and persecution survival training, and economic empowerment projects.**

### PLEASE PRAY

- For people who have left another faith to join an evangelical community and now face opposition
- For believers living in unstable parts of Ethiopia where they may be targeted
- For unity among all Christians in Ethiopia.

## 34 TUNISIA



### POPULATION

12.6 million / 23,300 Christians

### LEADER

President Kais Saied

**PERSECUTION SCORE** 70 (+1) ↑

For a Tunisian, being known as a Christian could mean you lose your job, reputation and – in the worst cases – your whole community.

The authorities monitor church gatherings and converts are most at risk, as well as any believers who share their faith. Recently, many Christians who've migrated from sub-Saharan Africa have fled Tunisia due to racist abuse.

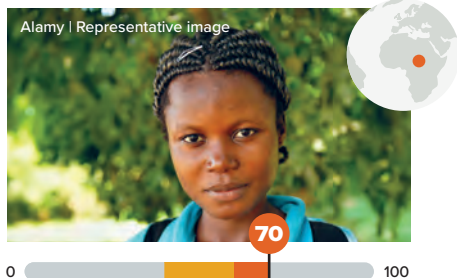
Despite persecution and opposition the church in North Africa is growing.

Open Doors works with local partners and churches in North Africa to provide leadership and discipleship training, livelihood support, legal aid, trauma counselling, Bibles and pastoral care.

### PLEASE PRAY

- For converts from Islam, that they would be sheltered from abuse and rejection
- For justice and an end to violence against migrants in Tunisia
- For God to help Tunisian Christians – who aren't allowed to worship publicly – find community.

## 35 DRC (Democratic Republic of Congo)



### POPULATION

105.6 million / 100.6 million Christians

### LEADER

President Félix Tshisekedi

**PERSECUTION SCORE** 70 (+3) ↑

The last year has seen an escalation in the shocking attacks against Christians in DRC.

The Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), an extremist group with ties to so-called Islamic State, has carried out coordinated attacks, abducting and killing dozens of Christians, displacing thousands and leaving believers living in fear.

The M23 rebel group also targets Christians, making the situation even worse. The mix of militant threats, family pressures and political interference creates a dangerous environment for Christians in the east of the country.

Open Doors works through local partners to support Christians in the DRC through persecution survival training, economic empowerment projects and trauma care.

### PLEASE PRAY

- The violence in the eastern part of DRC is staggering. Ask God to be close to His hurting people.
- For stability and hope for displaced Christians who have lost everything
- For new believers to grow strong and mature in faith.

## Will you stand with the church in Africa?

# JOIN THE *ARISE AFRICA* CAMPAIGN

### WHAT IS THE *ARISE AFRICA* CAMPAIGN?

Millions of Christians in sub-Saharan Africa face violent persecution for their faith. They are being attacked, displaced and killed – yet no one is talking about it. That's why the African church are calling on their global church family to stand with them through the *Arise Africa* campaign. It aims to see the global community acknowledge and act against extreme violence and to support the church to persevere – and to be resilient, resourceful and influential.

### WHY IS IT NECESSARY?

**Violence is increasing:** According to Open Doors research, over 90% of Christians killed for their faith last year were in sub-Saharan Africa, and 3,100 believers were killed in Nigeria alone. This rising violence is being driven largely by Islamic extremists taking advantage of political instability in the region.

**Christians forced to flee:** 16.2 million Christians in sub-Saharan Africa are displaced by violence and conflict, with many ending up in camps for internally displaced people (IDPs). While persecution is not the sole driver, there is strong

evidence that huge numbers of these believers have been specifically targeted for following Jesus.

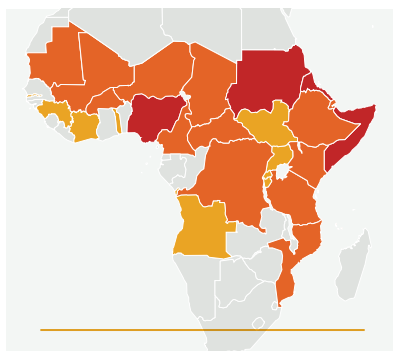
### HOW IS IT MAKING A DIFFERENCE?

Your prayers and support are already making a huge difference. Ramata's\* worst fears came true when her husband was killed in the night by Boko Haram extremists. In the Far North region of Cameroon where she lives, Christians are high-value targets for Islamist extremists.

**"God never left me and  
I didn't leave Him."**



Ramata's husband was killed by extremists, leaving her to look after her children alone



Fifteen countries in sub-Saharan Africa are in the World Watch List Top 50. 16.2 million Christians are displaced in this region.



Pastor Barnabas – a church leader in an IDP camp in north Nigeria

They elbowed Ramata out of the way when she tried to save her husband.

The trauma Ramata experienced meant that she could not go back to her house for three months. “When I am alone, all kinds of questions come to mind. Everything that happened comes back. It is hard to live with these feelings,” she says.

After Ramata’s ordeal, local Open Doors partners came alongside her with emergency aid and trauma care, and helped her to start a small business so she could provide for her children. She was even able to return to her home. “God helped me: He sent you and you supported me,” she says. “Some of the painful thoughts are already leaving my mind.

“God never left me and I didn’t leave Him.”

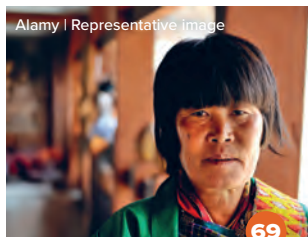
## STOP THE VIOLENCE. START THE HEALING.

You can sign the *Arise Africa* petition, which calls upon the global community to ensure that Christians and other vulnerable individuals in sub-Saharan Africa are treated with dignity and respect by providing robust protection from attacks, ensuring justice and bringing healing and restoration to all affected communities.

You can add your name to the petition, share it, find ways to pray, and discover more at [opendoorsuk.org/ariseafrica](https://opendoorsuk.org/ariseafrica)



## 36 BHUTAN



### POPULATION

792,000 / 18,800 Christians

### LEADER

King Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck

**PERSECUTION SCORE 69 (+1) ↑**

Everyone in Bhutan is assumed to be Buddhist. If you become a Christian, you will be watched with suspicion, and your community will make efforts to bring you back to Buddhism.

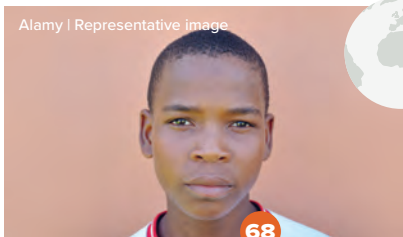
No churches are officially recognised by the state, which means that Christians who gather in homes are acting illegally. Local authorities often refuse to issue Christians with the right paperwork to file loan applications, property registration, job applications and ID card renewal.

Open Doors local partners strengthen the persecuted church in Bhutan through prayer support and other practical emergency support.

### PLEASE PRAY

- For believers in Bhutan who can only attend churches that exist in a legal grey area
- For believers who have converted from Buddhism and are rejected by their families
- That 'illegal' believers will find their worth and citizenship in God's kingdom.

## 37 MOZAMBIQUE



### POPULATION

34.9 million / 20 million Christians

### LEADER

President Filipe Nyusi

**PERSECUTION SCORE 68 (no change) ↔**

The rise of Islamic extremism in the north of Mozambique has had a devastating impact on the lives of believers.

Churches have been torched, pastors abducted and killed. In 2024, extremists launched a campaign targeting Christians called 'Kill Them Wherever You Find Them'.

Christians are also caught in the crossfire of the conflict between government forces and jihadist groups, and are targeted for speaking out against drug cartels, making them even more vulnerable to violence and displacement.

Open Doors supports persecuted Christians in northern Mozambique by providing emergency aid, persecution survival training and economic empowerment projects.

### PLEASE PRAY

- For protection for believers in the unstable northern part of Mozambique
- For comfort and healing for Christians severely traumatised by violent attacks
- For Open Doors partners who work in Mozambique to be protected as they seek to strengthen the faith of believers.

## 38 KAZAKHSTAN



### POPULATION

19.8 million / 5 million Christians

### LEADER

President Kassym-Zhomart Tokayev

**PERSECUTION SCORE** 68 (+3) ↑

In Kazakhstan, religious freedom is heavily restricted by the country's Religion Law dating back to 2011. The government is continuing to tighten its control over society, leading to increased surveillance, raids on meetings and arrests.

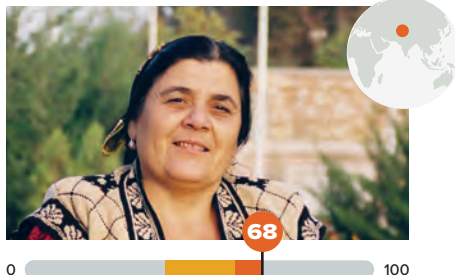
Christians who have converted from Islam suffer the most. They face persecution from both the state and their own families, friends and communities. Some are locked up by their families, beaten and eventually expelled from their communities.

Open Doors strengthens the church in Central Asia by providing relief aid, Bibles, ministry training, prayer support, vocational training and microloans, as well as projects such as rehab centres.

### PLEASE PRAY

- That God would protect churches from the misuse of the Religion Law
- For church leaders being monitored by the Kazakhstan authorities
- That God's Word would find its way to every believer where Bibles are currently scarce.

## 39 TAJIKISTAN



### POPULATION

10.3 million / 62,600 Christians

### LEADER

President Emomali Rahmon

**PERSECUTION SCORE** 68 (+2) ↑

Despite the country officially having freedom of religion, the Tajikistan government restricts religious activities.

There are many elements of the Christian life that are illegal without a permit, from holding a meeting, to training leaders, to printing Christian literature. Under-18s are not allowed to attend church, and you must not share your faith.

Church meetings are increasingly raided by the authorities, with members being interrogated and pressured to inform on others. They can even be imprisoned.

Open Doors strengthens the church in Central Asia by providing relief aid, Bibles, ministry training, prayer support, vocational training and microloans, as well as projects such as rehab centres.

### PLEASE PRAY

- For courage for Christians meeting up under the threat of government raids
- For a change in heart for government officials towards religious freedom
- For protection on Christian workers who bring in God's Word and other Christian resources.

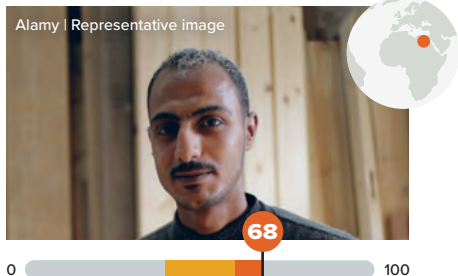


A secret baptism in a house in Central Asia. Roeslan\* is a serving police officer. If he were to share his faith he risks losing his job and being disowned by his family. Yet nothing can diminish the joy he feels at this moment.





## 40 EGYPT



### POPULATION

114.5 million / 10.1 million Christians

### LEADER

President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi

**PERSECUTION SCORE 68** (no change) ↔

Egyptian President al-Sisi speaks positively about Christians and attempts to promote unity, but local authorities often fail to protect Christians from attacks by Islamic extremist groups.

In rural areas, Christian women are harassed on the streets and Christian children are often bullied. Building new churches is difficult in certain parts of Egypt. New Christian converts can face pressure and hostility from their Muslim families and communities, as well as detention by security services.

Open Doors partners in Egypt support the church throughout the country with literacy training, education, advocacy, medical outreach, and youth, family and women's ministries.

### PLEASE PRAY

- For brave believers who take on the risk of leaving Islam to follow Jesus
- For God to sustain Christians who experience discrimination and abuse because of their faith
- For Christians who've been attacked, or have loved ones who've suffered attacks.





# MARIAM

“My heart was torn apart,” says Mariam\* after Muslim extremists killed her husband – simply for being kind to his Christian brothers and sisters.

“This area, where he worked as a contractor, was known for intense persecution – Christians suffer a lot because of their faith and they are discriminated against daily,” explains Mariam. “However, my husband never felt afraid and used to help the Christians there and donate to sick and needy people.

“That’s why radical Muslims wanted to get rid of him, and they used to threaten him a lot. They wanted him to stop helping needy Christians in the area. My husband was a brave man and never listened to them and continued helping others.”

Tragically, the extremists’ threats weren’t merely words. In 2017, they murdered him at work. “They killed my soulmate and my life partner,” says Mariam. “He left behind four young daughters who are in real need of their father’s love.”

## QUESTIONS AND LAMENT

“Why did God do this? Why has he forsaken us?” asked Mariam. Given all our persecuted family have seen and experienced, lament is a crucial part of their Christian walk. As Open Doors local partners listened to her, acknowledged her pain and gave livelihood support, the family saw God in a whole new way. “I’ve seen God’s practical love through your love, care and presence,” says Mariam. “I believe that God is my Heavenly Father and He has never forsaken me. We stopped blaming God, and we worship Him instead.”

## MARIAM ASKS

**“GOD, THANK YOU FOR SHOWING ME MERCY AND PROTECTING OUR SMALL FAMILY. I BELIEVE YOU HAVE THE ABILITY TO CHANGE BAD CIRCUMSTANCES TO BETTER ONES. THROUGH EVERY CHALLENGE I FACE, I ASK THAT YOU FREE ME FROM WORRY AND FEAR, AND BRING ME YOUR PEACE. IN JESUS’ NAME, AMEN.”**

\*Name changed for security reasons

## 41 QATAR



### POPULATION

2.7 million / 381,000 Christians

### LEADER

Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani

**PERSECUTION SCORE** 67 (no change) ↔

Christians in Qatar are either workers from non-Muslim countries, or converts from Islam – and the two rarely interact.

A select number of migrant workers' churches are allowed to meet in the official religious complex outside Doha. Qatari citizens are not allowed to enter, and migrants must not speak about Christianity to Muslims or they may be deported.

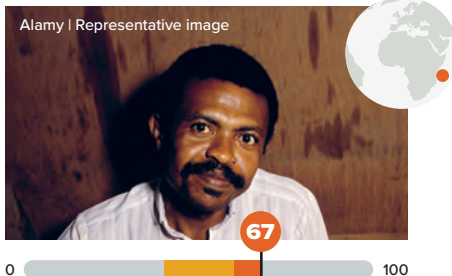
Qatar is increasingly using advanced technology to monitor everybody, causing Christians in Qatar to become very careful.

Open Doors supports the body of Christ on the Arabian Peninsula by organising prayer, distributing Scripture resources and training believers and pastors.

### PLEASE PRAY

- That native Qataris would be permitted to convert from Islam without repercussion
- For Qatar's secret Christians: ask God to protect their faith and help them find other believers
- Thank God that so many migrant Christians in Qatar are able to meet and worship Him.

## 42 COMOROS



### POPULATION

868,000 / 5,500 Christians

### LEADER

President Azali Assoumani

**PERSECUTION SCORE** 67 (+1) ↑


In the Comoros islands, it's illegal to talk about any faith other than Sunni Islam. Any foreigner suspected of evangelising can be deported, and local Christians who preach Christianity will be prosecuted.

Christian worship cannot be carried out in public. Christians can only legally worship in three designated churches. Converts from Islam can face significant pressure from their families and communities, as can anyone who is found to have Christian materials in their possession.

Open Doors works through local partners to strengthen the persecuted church in East African islands through discipleship and economic empowerment projects.

### PLEASE PRAY

- For new believers, especially those rejected by their families and communities
- That Christians would be able to worship more openly
- Ask God to change hearts and laws so that anybody in the Comoros islands can legally follow Jesus.



**“YOU GAVE US MAIZE,  
YOU GAVE US OIL, YOU  
GAVE US FISH. WE LACK  
WORDS TO THANK YOU.”**

**— AID RECIPIENT, CAMEROON**

Thanks to our supporters, thousands of Christians fleeing violence have been supported in Cameroon

## 43 CAMEROON



67



### POPULATION

29.4 million / 17.1 million Christians

### LEADER

President Paul Biya

**PERSECUTION SCORE** 67 (+1) ↑

Christians in Cameroon face violence and attack from Islamic extremist groups, especially in the Far North region.

Here, Boko Haram and Islamic State West African Province regularly attack, and Christians can be abducted or murdered. Converting from Islam or owning a Bible is very dangerous. Many churches have stopped meeting.

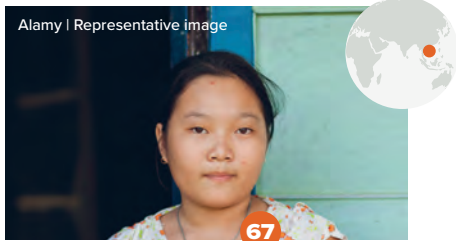
Many Cameroonians are suffering from a massive humanitarian crisis caused by conflict. Christians have been accused by both sides of 'harbouring the enemy', and had their churches and property destroyed.

Open Doors partners strengthen persecuted Christians in Cameroon by providing emergency relief aid, trauma care, economic empowerment projects and spiritual care for new believers.

### PLEASE PRAY

- For God to comfort and heal those who have endured unspeakable violence
- For those still coming to Jesus despite the danger to grow in faith
- For an end to government corruption and instability in Cameroon.

## 44 VIETNAM



Alamy | Representative image

67



### POPULATION

99.5 million / 9.8 million Christians

### LEADER

President Luong Cuong

**PERSECUTION SCORE** 67 (-1) ↓

In rural Vietnam, villagers follow traditional ethnic-animist religions, and persecution towards anybody who becomes a Christian is fierce. Believers can have their homes destroyed and be run out of the community.

Local authorities will threaten, fine and sometimes imprison leaders of unregistered churches; they're particularly suspicious of Christians from minority ethnic groups like the Hmong. Despite this, Hmong Bible teachers bravely travel miles by motorbike into remote areas to train believers in secret Bible schools.

Open Doors local partners strengthen persecuted believers in Vietnam with relief and practical aid, advocacy support, Christian resources, leadership and discipleship training, and socio-economic development projects.

### PLEASE PRAY

- For God to comfort Vietnamese Christians who are oppressed and abused
- For blessing on the work of Open Doors partners
- For believers in unregistered churches to follow Jesus without impediment.



# BARNABAS

“Oh God, what should I do?”

There were 200 believers before Barnabas\* at a river waiting to be baptised when word reached him that police were on their way. They’d be there in 20 minutes. At a loss about what to do, Barnabas prayed.

“Suddenly, I had an idea,” he says. “I asked all of them to go to the river. I told them to dip themselves in the river after I declared them baptised in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Within three minutes, 200 people were baptised!

“We ran to another village, and I gave them Holy Communion and shared with them the meaning of baptism. The police went to the river, but we were no longer there. They complained

that they were given the wrong information.

“Many times over the years, God was our Rescuer.”

## ILLEGAL AND UNDERGROUND

For three decades, helped by Open Doors local partners, Barnabas has run an underground Bible school that’s trained more than 10,000 people and led to the establishment of more than a thousand churches.

**“WITHIN THREE MINUTES, 200 PEOPLE WERE BAPTISED!”**

It’s an astonishing number – but it’s costly. “Sharing the gospel is illegal,” he says. “That is why, when we share the gospel with another, we know that we will experience persecution. We accept suffering. We know that we can be arrested any time.”

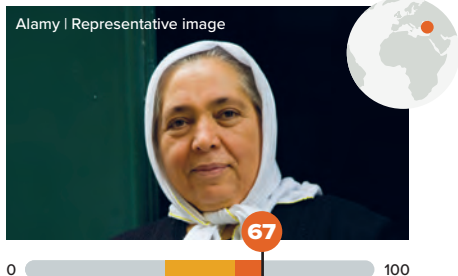
## BARNABAS ASKS

**“PLEASE REMEMBER TO PRAY FOR US AND SUPPORT US SO WE CAN SHARE THE GOSPEL WITH ALL VIETNAMESE IN THE FUTURE.”**

\*Name changed for security reasons



## 45 TÜRKİYE



### POPULATION

86.3 million / 257,000 Christians

### LEADER

President Recep Tayyip Erdogan

**PERSECUTION SCORE** 67 (+3) ↑

There is a strong sense of nationalism in Türkiye today, which sees being Muslim as part of Turkish identity. Although Christianity has a very long history here, it is still seen as a negative Western influence, even by secular Turks.

It's not illegal to become a Christian, but most converts face strong pressure from their families to change their minds, with the threat of being disowned. Christian asylum seekers and job hunters are discriminated against. Even traditional Greek and Armenian churches face legal obstacles.

Open Doors raises prayer support for persecuted believers in Türkiye. Through local partners, Open Doors supports Persian-speaking refugee believers with training, resources and practical support.

### PLEASE PRAY

- That there would be an openness to accepting people of all faiths as true Turks
- For strength for converts from Islam, particularly those rejected by their families
- Praise God that many believers in Türkiye can worship Jesus openly.

## 46 COLOMBIA



### POPULATION

52.3 million / 49.7 million Christians

### LEADER

President Gustavo Petro

**PERSECUTION SCORE** 66 (-2) ↓

Guerilla groups in Colombia often attack the Christians in their territories, especially if they think they are opposing the 'business' of their associated drug cartel.

Church leaders are particularly at risk because they try to influence the young people whom guerilla groups want to recruit.

In some indigenous communities, Christian preachers and converts can be seen as traitors to the tribe or community and be imprisoned or disowned.

Open Doors strengthens the persecuted church in Colombia through Bible distribution, training, trauma care, community development projects, emergency relief aid and assistance in legal proceedings.

### PLEASE PRAY

- For lasting peace between guerrilla groups and the Colombian government
- For those who come to faith in indigenous contexts and experience persecution from their communities
- For Christians living in areas controlled by cartels – pray for their protection and wisdom as they follow Christ.

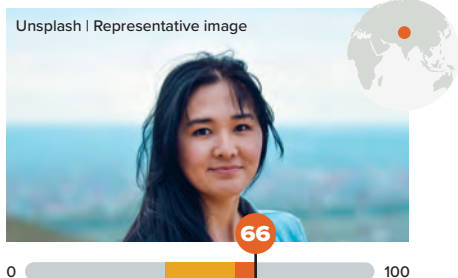
**“THE LOCAL CHURCHES  
EXPERIENCE MANY  
DIFFICULTIES AND  
PERSECUTIONS, BUT THEY  
STILL STAND STRONG.”**

— MIKE\*, VIETNAM

Pastor Mike travels long distances to disciple isolated believers. He also leads a secret Bible school in Vietnam.



## 47 KYRGYZSTAN



### POPULATION

6.8 million / 263,000 Christians

### LEADER

President Sadyr Japarov

**PERSECUTION SCORE** 66 (+7) ↑

In Kyrgyzstan, local authorities have considerable power and tend to be under the influence of the Muslim community. This has strong repercussions for converts to Christianity.

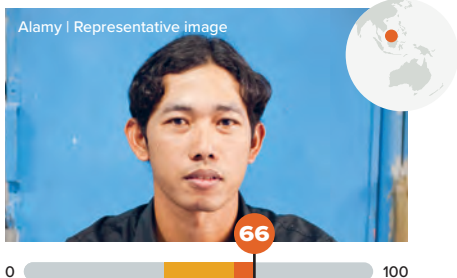
Some new believers are locked up for long periods by their families and beaten, and can be expelled by their community. There have been a number of violent incidents against believers this year, which is a major reason the country has jumped 14 places on the World Watch List.

**Open Doors strengthens the church in Central Asia by providing relief aid, Bibles, ministry training, prayer support, vocational training and microloans, as well as projects such as rehab centres.**

### PLEASE PRAY

- For safety and hope for Christians who have had to flee their homes
- That the hearts of Kyrgyz people would become open and accepting towards Christians
- That local leaders would allow Christians to bury their loved ones in the local cemeteries.

## 48 BRUNEI



### POPULATION

456,000 / 55,600 Christians

### LEADER

Sultan Sir Hassanal Bolkiah

**PERSECUTION SCORE** 66 (no change) ↔

Brunei has introduced Sharia (Islamic law), meaning that leaving Islam is punishable by law. Families will do everything possible to bring a Christian believer back to Islam.

Non-traditional Christian communities cannot be registered as churches, but are legally treated as secular organisations. As such, they are required to submit operational reports to the government every year. Ongoing restrictions on any kind of evangelism make it hard for Christians to reach out, especially to young people.

Since 2023, all children, including those from Christian families, have mandatory Islamic religious education incorporated into their studies.

**Open Doors raises prayer support for persecuted believers in Brunei.**

### PLEASE PRAY

- That God's Word will get to believers in Brunei with limited access to Bibles
- That churches will be able to stay open and disciple Brunei Christians
- That the monarchy in Brunei will be open to the truth of Jesus.



**“WHEN I PRAY,  
I FEEL LIKE I  
AM STEPPING  
CLOSER TO GOD.”**

**– RANA**

Many deaf people in Central Asia believe they are worthless. Rana secretly shares God's love with deaf women, many of whom feel loved and accepted for the first time in their lives.





WWL  
49

**“I GREET YOU ALL  
AND I THANK YOU  
FOR WHAT YOU  
HAVE GIVEN US.”**

— ROUKAYA\*, CHAD

Roukaya was disowned by her family when she became a Christian. Open Doors partners helped her with a microloan to buy products to sell at the market.



## 49 CHAD



### POPULATION

18.8 million / 6 million Christians

### LEADER

President Mahamat Idriss Déby Into

**PERSECUTION SCORE** 65 (+4) ↑

Chad faces huge challenges thanks to Islamic extremist groups like Boko Haram destabilising neighbouring countries, and occasionally operating within Chad itself.

In such an environment, following Jesus comes with significant risks, particularly in rural areas where fear often keeps believers from even attending church.

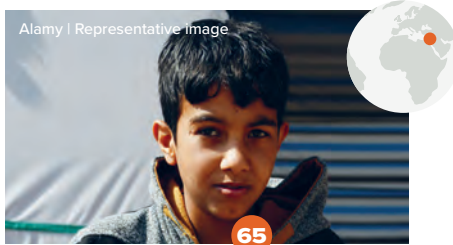
Last year, many Christians in Chad were displaced and their properties burned or destroyed. Local believers report a growing tide of Islamic extremism, especially among younger religious leaders who preach intolerance.

Open Doors local partners in Chad provide important resources like persecution survival training, discipleship, economic empowerment and care for new believers.

### PLEASE PRAY

- For protection on Christians who are at risk from Islamic extremist groups
- For God's presence to encourage Christians in Chad, particularly converts
- That God equips His people to serve the many refugees, displaced and poor people in Chad.

## 50 JORDAN



### POPULATION

11.4 million / 170,000 Christians

### LEADER

King Abdullah II

**PERSECUTION SCORE** 65 (no change) ↔

Christians in Jordan live in relative security under King Abdullah's leadership, which tolerates and somewhat supports recognised churches.

Christian communities are still monitored to some extent, and can face discrimination and restrictions against public preaching. Meanwhile, Christians from Muslim families risk beatings, arrest and even death for openly sharing their faith, and those helping them are often threatened and obstructed.

Lately, Jordan is showing a trend toward greater Islamic conservatism, driven largely by the civilian death toll in Gaza.

Open Doors local partners support the church in Jordan with training, relief and rehabilitation projects.

### PLEASE PRAY

- That Christian worship in Jordan would offer light and hope for the whole region
- For converts from Islam, whose faith in Jesus can make them a target for abuse
- That God would help the monarchy of Jordan to see the love of Jesus in the lives of Jordanian believers.



## Open Doors

# 70 years of standing with the persecuted church

**For 70 years, Open Doors has stood alongside Christians who face persecution for their faith.**

It began with our founder, Brother Andrew, travelling to Poland in 1955 and encountering beleaguered Christians behind the Iron Curtain. Today, 70 years later, that journey continues, with thousands of partners working through global underground networks in more than 70 countries.

Since 1955, the most dangerous places have changed. The biggest threats to Christians around the world have shifted over time. Brother Andrew concentrated on the oppressions of Communism, but now the most violence comes from Islamic extremism.

Over those 70 years, so many of our brothers and sisters have laid down their lives for Jesus. They could confidently say, alongside Paul, that to live is Christ and to die is gain (Philippians 1:21). But over those 70 years, there is another story too. Thousands, millions of stories. Stories of individuals, families and communities whose lives have been transformed by the help and encouragement of Open Doors partners. Towns, regions and countries that have seen the light of Christ shone by a church equipped with strength and resilience. Persecution is growing at a heartbreaking pace – but the church is growing too!

Whatever the need, whatever the threat, whatever the darkness faced, Open Doors continues to support the church

in the most crucial ways. Whether that's smuggling Bibles and Christian literature, offering legal advice, training church leaders and other Christians, or providing vital practical support such as emergency aid and trauma care.

The result is a real connection between believers. Because we are one family. We are one body. If one part hurts, we should all feel pain.

As Brother Andrew put it: "If I cannot feel their pain, I should get scared: maybe I'm an artificial limb. A wooden arm cannot feel pain. I don't want to be a wooden arm. I want to be alive!"

That, perhaps, is the great gift that connecting with the persecuted church can give to us: their stories help to restore feeling to our faith. We are informed, inspired and impacted. And prepared to play our part, working in partnership to bring the light and love of Christ into some of the darkest places on earth.

### STAY INFORMED. BE INSPIRED.

Go to [opendoorsuk.org](https://opendoorsuk.org) to find more stories of courageous faith and to explore a wide range of resources to help you deepen your connection with the persecuted church.



Pakistan, 1988



China, 2001



Ethiopia, 2005



Iraq, 2007



India, 2012



Hope4ME Petition, 2017



Colombia, 2019



Mali, 2024



# WHAT IS THE WORLD WATCH LIST?

The Open Doors World Watch List is a unique, reliable, comprehensive ranking of the countries where the persecution of Christians is most extreme.

## UNIQUE...

because, as far as possible, our data is gathered at grass-roots level, using in-country networks and local partners on the ground. This ensures that the data reflects the real, everyday experience of Christians.

## RELIABLE...

because over three decades, the list has gained a reputation for credible, dependable information. Our approach and analysis are independently audited by the International Institute for Religious Freedom.

## COMPREHENSIVE...

because it measures persecution in all its forms: not only violence, but also the level of freedom Christians have to practise their faith in their private, family, community, national and church life. And while the published World Watch List currently includes 50 countries each year, research is conducted in 150 countries.



Destruction to a Christian village in north Nigeria

# WHAT DO WE MEAN BY PERSECUTION?

Open Doors defines persecution against Christians as ‘any hostile action towards a person or community motivated by their identification with the person of Jesus Christ’.

Hostility takes many forms. It can be visible and violent, where churches are burnt, believers attacked, Christians kidnapped and killed. But it can also be a more subtle, more attritional force. Millions of Christians live in a culture of hostility and intolerance, trying to exercise their faith against a background of discrimination and injustice.

Persecution can also be regional. This is why many ‘countries you might consider ‘Christian’, like those in sub-Saharan

Africa, can appear on the list. Nigeria, for example, has the biggest church auditoriums in the world. But that is in the south. In the north (and increasingly, the central) region, Christians are in a minority, and radical Islamic groups like Boko Haram and Fulani militants can create havoc.

This is why the real, lived, eyewitness experience of believers remains the core of the World Watch List. Because what matters is not the official, grandiose governmental statements about freedom of belief. What matters is what really happens on the ground when people try to follow Jesus in their everyday lives.



You can find more details on Open Doors' methodology and research at [opendoorsuk.org/www](https://opendoorsuk.org/www)

In Central Asia, Christians meet for a secret Bible study

# KEEP SHARING THE FAITH OF THE PERSECUTED CHURCH

Thank you for standing with your persecuted church family.

Your prayers, gifts and actions will strengthen persecuted Christians living in the countries where following Jesus comes with the greatest risk. Here are some other ways in which you can continue your journey.

## KEEP ON PRAYING

Sign up for weekly emails which will inform and inspire you with news and prayer requests from the world of the World Watch List. On the Open Doors website you can also find a range of resources to help you and your church pray with the persecuted church.

## KEEP ON SUPPORTING

Your gift can give an isolated Christian a precious Bible, help rebuild shattered homes and churches, provide persecuted Christians with vital food and medicine. Whatever you give will make a difference.

## KEEP ON SPEAKING OUT

Tell others what is happening. Raise your voice to those with influence and power. Tell your church about their persecuted brothers and sisters, using our resources for churches.

Find out more at [opendoorsuk.org](https://opendoorsuk.org)

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## MORE WORLD WATCH LIST RESOURCES

### Children's Prayer Passport and Activity Map

Crammed with information and activities, this family-friendly resource is a great way to help children pray for the persecuted church.





# Smuggle light into darkness

Joo Min\* escaped North Korea – one of the darkest places on earth to be a Christian. After meeting Jesus in an Open Doors safe house, she chose to risk everything by returning with the gospel.

Your support can help believers like Joo Min smuggle more light into darkness.

**Every £38** could help provide six months of safe housing and relief aid to a family of North Korean refugees fleeing extreme persecution.

Visit **[opendoorsuk.org](https://opendoorsuk.org)** to make your gift today, return the enclosed envelope or phone **01993 460015**. Thank you.

\*Name changed and re-enactment image used for security reasons



## Open Doors

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