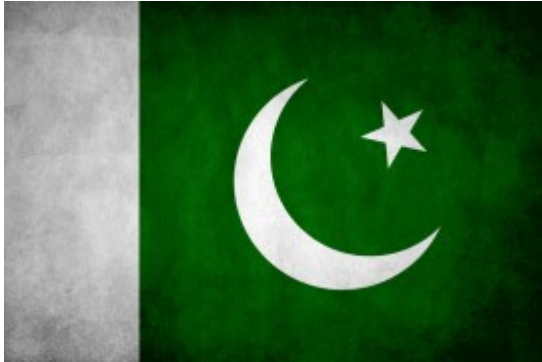

Pakistan

**Total area:**

796,095 km²

Population:

201,995,540 (2017)

Literacy:

38%

Official languages:

Urdu (National), English (Government)

GDP (PPP) per capita:

\$5,374 (2017 est.)

Life expectancy:

65 years

Religions:

96% Muslim, 2% Hindu, 2% Christian, <1% other religions

Prayer points

30 Days of Prayer for the Muslim World

The 30 Days of Prayer for the Muslim World is an international movement that began in 1993. It calls the church to make a deliberate but respectful effort to learn about, pray for, and reach out to our world's Muslim neighbours. It coincides annually with the important Islamic month of religious observation - Ramadan, a time of the year when Muslims are much more deeply aware of spiritual matters. Join the millions of Christians around the world, and churches and ministries from many denominations, who regularly participate in this largest ongoing prayer focus on the Muslim world. A new, full-colour prayer guide booklet - available each year in both adult and kids versions - is a proven tool to help Christians to understand and to persistently pray for Muslim neighbours and nations. Pray that many Muslims will have an encounter with Jesus during Ramadan this year. Copies of 30 Days of Prayer for the Muslim World Prayer Guide can be [ordered from Global Connections](#) [1] or www.30daysprayer.com [2]. (Global Connections - May 2020)

Programmes to break free from bonded labour

The mission of WorldShare's ministry partner ChrisFon is to 'Share the love of God through community development'. Their team engages in poverty-alleviation programmes in Pakistan, particularly with those in bonded labour, a form of slavery where people work for extremely low wages to pay off generational debts. Recently, ChrisFon gave sixteen families sewing machines and is providing the women with cutting and stitching lessons. Praise God that after just a few months of learning, they have been able to start sewing independently. This means they will not only be saving money they would have spent on buying clothes, but they can also earn money by sewing for other people. Please pray that this project would continue to bring hope, sustainability and dignity to those

who have been struggling for generations. (WorldShare - April 2020)

Difficulties as Christians in Pakistan

Christians (indeed any non-Muslims) are marginalised because of their faith, often forced to work at menial jobs such as in brick kilns or as domestic servants. A good education for their children is hard to find, and they are vulnerable to accusations of blasphemy purely to settle personal scores. Victims can be imprisoned for years before their cases are resolved and if they are exonerated there is no guarantee they won't be targeted by extremists. For some like Asia Bibi, who spent eight years on death row after being convicted of blasphemy, a charge later overturned by the Supreme Court, their only option is to leave the country. For those who convert to Christianity the risks are greater, as they are rejected by family and friends and can be forced into hiding. Pray for protection, justice and provision for Christians in Pakistan. (Release International - December 2019)

Inspiring examples of good leadership

'R', serving as a primary school teacher in Pakistan, reports that the local Junior Girl Guides were looking at leaders and leadership for their 'thinking day' earlier this year. In response to the question of what a leader is, one girl, aged eight, put up her hand and said: "They are corrupt men who drive Landcruisers." Sadly this was not a joke, it is what she actually believed. So we went on to look at some of the good leaders of Pakistan, such as Edhi who started an ambulance and other welfare services, the guide leaders, people running the SOS orphanage, etc. Please pray for these girls; for them to have good leaders to look up to, and for God to inspire in them a desire to be different. (Church Mission Society - June 2019)

Security measures needed for Punjab churches

Churches in Pakistan's Punjab province have been instructed to put security measures in place by the provincial government because of fears of an attack. The authorities issued a notification to close or seal churches in the province if adequate measures were not taken. Please pray for those Christians in Punjab province amid this latest threat of attack. Christians in Pakistan feel particularly vulnerable after the hardliner reaction to the acquittal of Christian prisoner Asia Bibi. Asia, who was falsely accused of blasphemy, spent ten years behind bars, eight of which were on death row. (Release International - April 2019)

Protection of female human rights defenders

Female human rights defenders in Pakistan regularly face harassment and online bullying both for their work defending the rights of others and because of their gender. Pray that the government would create safe spaces in which they can work, and that God would protect them and bless them with much needed resources. (Christian Solidarity Worldwide - April 2019)

Mobile medical clinics provide counselling

Mobile medical clinics were recently carried out in two villages within an unreached area of Central Asia. Over 450 people were seen in the four days the clinic ran and individuals were able to share their health and life concerns. Many who came to see the psychologist had problems which caused ill health and depression. The team remarked how many of these individuals had sad eyes. But, once they had the opportunity to share their stories away from others in the community, they could see ways to solve their problems. At the clinic, miracles were happening: sad eyes became bright! Counselling gave them hope for the future. Pray for these people to begin a journey with Christ as a result of the medical help they received from believers. (Reach Beyond - December 2018)

Reaching the Pushtuns

Did you know that Pakistan has the second largest population of Muslims in the world? This country and those surrounding it have enormous populations of Muslims and limited access to the Gospel. The KPK region is home to the Pushtun people. It is a religiously conservative province with close ties to Afghanistan and was the area where the Taliban was birthed in the 1970s to combat Russian

occupation. Please pray for the proud and hospitable Pushtuns, that they would come to know the God of forgiveness, the God who loves them, the Prince of Peace. The Baluchistan region (bordering Iran and Afghanistan), although rich in gas and oil, is the poorest and least developed province in Pakistan. It has also been very difficult for gospel workers to gain permission to live there. Please pray for peaceful solutions to the conflict with the central government and for the gospel to spread among the Baluch. (Frontiers - September 2018)

Mob attack

In Pakistan, our partner "Peter" is facing severe persecution and needs your prayers. Peter is a Muslim-background believer, regularly facing the scorn of his nation's Muslim majority. On several occasions, he has had to leave cities because his life was under threat. Most recently, he was due to appear in court because of the work he does, but the case has been postponed because the second party did not attend. With the case still not concluded, a mob descended on Peter's home, forcibly removing him and his family. For the last week or so, they have been sleeping out in the open. This is not only an uncomfortable situation but also a dangerous one in the circumstances. Pray with us that the Lord would provide graciously for his servant in this time of need. (AsiaLink - July 2018)

The Pakistani church

Pakistan is the second largest Muslim nation on earth. Its population of 194 million is 96% Muslim. Today the Pakistani church is small but resolute and growing in understanding of the need to reach out to its Muslim neighbours. Few believers come from Muslim backgrounds. The church needs training in outreach, but there is also a great need for pioneers to reach the 98% of people groups (mostly Muslims) without access to the gospel. This is a time of great opportunity, as Pakistani Muslims are increasingly open and searching for truth and hope. Pray for the Pakistani church to be a bold and effective witness to its Muslim community, for labourers with a desire to go and live in this country, and for Pakistani Muslims to find the one true God they are searching for. (Frontiers - July 2018)

Forged into slavery

There are 3 million slaves in Pakistan, vast numbers of these are trapped in bonded slavery in brick kilns or agriculture. Many people in the rural areas of Pakistan are living in severe poverty and whole communities have no access to education. Brick kiln owners and landowners take advantage of them by offering high-interest loans and trapping them into bonded labour. False contracts and forged accounting by the owners can leave families working in the kiln for decades, unaware of the fact that they have repaid their original loan many times over. Pray for deliverance for those trapped in slavery in Pakistan, that they can find freedom and hope for a better future. (WorldShare - May 2018)

2 Million Slaves in Pakistan

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Blasphemy laws in Pakistan

Christians continue to suffer injustice under the blasphemy laws in Pakistan, where simply an accusation of blasphemy against Islam, the Qur'an or Islam's prophet Muhammad can lead to attacks or imprisonment. One of those behind bars is Christian Zafar Bhatti, who was sentenced to life imprisonment after being accused of sending blasphemous text messages from his mobile phone. He says there have been several attempts on his life in jail, including a near-fatal poisoning in 2013. Pray that his appeal will be successful and that other Christians falsely accused will also receive justice.

(Release International - January 2018)

Persecution in Pakistan

Ask God to sustain and strengthen His people in Pakistan, amid severe persecution. 'Alian' (name changed), an 18-year-old believer in Punjab, suffered a brutal assault - but police seem reluctant to investigate. The Christian teenager was beaten, gang-raped and forcibly converted to Islam - and left unconscious. When Alian was found after the attack, he was taken to hospital, where he was threatened and told to remain silent, according to his family. Police initially dismissed his rape allegations. They have since arrested several suspects but appear to be pressuring the family to drop the case. Pray that God will comfort, heal and restore Alian, and deliver justice for him and other Christians in Pakistan who have been persecuted simply because of their faith. (Release International - November 2017)

Blasphemy Laws

Pakistan's blasphemy laws are sometimes used to settle personal scores and Christians are often wrongly accused and convicted. In February, Adnan Prince, a Christian evangelist facing the death penalty was granted bail due to apparent gaps in the investigation. Adnan had been in prison since November 2013, after he tried to correct misconceptions about Christianity in a Muslim book. He was accused by a work colleague of insulting Islam and Muhammad, and defiling the Qur'an. His lawyer said that Adnan still faces the death penalty. Please pray for Adnan and those facing similar ordeals because of their faith in Jesus. They would want us to pray that the Lord would use them in a mighty way to show his love to those who are prosecuting them. (AsiaLink) (AsiaLink - May 2017)

Unlawful Marriages.

Forced marriage and conversion is a real problem for Christian and Hindu girls in Pakistan. The girls are abducted by Muslim men and forced to marry against their will. Once this happens they automatically become Muslim. Ayesha and Samira are two Christian sisters who were taken out of college by their father and a local mullah. They were taken to the mosque and forced to marry two Muslim men they had never seen before. They are now in hiding. Please pray for their protection and that they can escape these unlawful marriages. (Christian Solidarity Worldwide - September 2016)

Suicide bomb attack

Pray for protection for the vulnerable Christian minority in Pakistan in the wake of the suicide bomb attack in Lahore on Easter Sunday. One man whose son was killed told Release: 'We have no more tears.' Although the attack was deliberately targeted at Christians a number of Muslims were killed. Pray for all the bereaved, injured and traumatised, that all would know God's healing touch. More than 70 were killed and 350 injured. On the same day thousands of Islamist extremists demonstrated in the capital demanding the execution of Asia Bibi, a Christian whose appeal against the death sentence for blasphemy is pending in the Supreme Court. Pray Asia's appeal would succeed and that the widely misused blasphemy laws would be repealed. (Release International - May 2016)

Recovery operation

Pakistan's monsoon-fuelled floods have left many families without a home, food, good health, and a secure future. Over a million people have been displaced by flooding that has affected 2,500 villages and claimed the lives of 191 Pakistanis. Please pray for families who have been left bereft by the floods. Pray that help can get to them quickly. Pray for the floods to relent so the clean-up and recovery operation can start and people can begin to rebuild their lives. (Tearfund - September 2015)

Christians accused of blasphemy

Pakistan's Christian community has felt increasingly vulnerable since the September 2013 bombing of All Saints Church in Peshawar. In March 2015, at least 19 people were killed when bombs were detonated outside two churches in the Christian colony of Youhannabad, Lahore. Less than a fortnight later, armed motorcyclists opened fire on St Peter's Church and High School in the Township area of

Lahore. Christians are also vulnerable to being falsely accused under the country's blasphemy laws. Punjab officials are fast-tracking cases where they believe defendants are accused of blasphemy without basis - but have excluded Christians from the process for fear of a violent reaction by hardliners. Pray that the government will increase security for the Christian minority and reform the blasphemy legislation so that the innocent are protected. (Release International - May 2015)

Children out of school

Pakistan has the world's second highest number of children out of school, and two-thirds of these are girls. Tearfund's partner, the Primary Education Project (PEP) is working hard to change this situation. They currently run 84 schools in marginalised, rural areas of Pakistan, with a particular focus on reaching girls. They've also trained 106 teachers in high-quality, child-friendly teaching methods. Tragically, schools in Pakistan have recently been targeted by extremists. A violent attack on a Peshawar school in December left around 150 people dead. Ask God to comfort all those mourning the loss of loved ones, and pray that children will be able to attend school safely. Pray for PEP as they plan to open 20 new schools in 2015, as well as setting up 15 women's empowerment groups. (Tearfund - March 2015)

Fleeing from the Taliban

On 14th June last year the Pakistan army started an operation against the Taliban in North Waziristan, a mountainous region in the tribal areas. As a result of the conflict, almost a million people have been forced to flee their homes. Miranshah is a small town in North Waziristan situated about 65km from Bannu, the district headquarters. The residents of Miranshah and its surrounding areas were asked to evacuate immediately when the conflict began. Hundreds of people fled, leaving their homes and belongings behind. Tearfund is supporting its partner ABES to organise a daily medical camp providing healthcare, hygiene education and nutritional supplements for the displaced community. The doctors and nurses in ABES' team have helped 975 people so far. The conflict between the army and the Taliban may continue for another six months, so the displaced people will not be able to go back to their homes - if they still have homes to go to. Pray for ABES as they plan to continue providing assistance over the coming months. (Tearfund - January 2015)

Devastating floods

An estimated 20 million people in south Asia have been affected by devastating floods triggered by monsoon rains - the worst in 50 years. Across India, Pakistan and Bangladesh, loved ones have been killed, homes and livelihoods lost and vital infrastructure destroyed. Tearfund's partners are battling extreme weather conditions and extensive flood damage to get emergency aid including food and shelter to those most in need. (Tearfund - November 2014)

Faith strengthened

Fifty girls in Pakistan, aged 16 to 17, had their faith strengthened through short Bible courses at a women's training centre according to a CMS mission partner who teaches at the centre. "At the end of one course, several girls shared how they had made a personal commitment to follow Jesus, had discovered how to read the Bible with understanding, how their prayer life had been renewed and how they had learned to get along better with others, forgiving and forbearing, rather than quarrelling." Pray that these recent school-leavers will continue to grow spiritually. Disciple-ship is a key need in Pakistan, as Christians are a small, often-pressured minority. (Church Mission Society - November 2014)

The Eastern Baloch

Many of the Baloch people in Pakistan live in harsh climatic living conditions, cut off from any large civilisation. Educational levels are low and many are illiterate. Governmental development schemes have largely been of little effect to the Baloch people. Ask God to raise up believers in Pakistan and overseas to reach out to the Baloch. Pray for believers, that they would fearlessly stand firm in their faith against persecution. (Frontiers - September 2014)

Dry wells

The Thar Desert, in the south of Pakistan's Sindh province, is an arid region of rolling sand hills with a population of around 1.3 million. Over the last two years' rainfall during the monsoon season has been minimal, and crops have suffered. The water table has lowered to the extent that wells have started to dry up, leading to a scarcity of drinking water. Tragically, in the last few months more than 100 children have lost their lives because of malnutrition and other illnesses related to the drought. The landscape is littered with dead cows and sheep with vultures circling ominously in the sky. Pray for the government relief operation, for local churches that are mobilising resources to help the people in need, and for Tearfund partners PVDP and SSEWA-Pak, who are monitoring the situation. (Tearfund - May 2014)

Hit and run

Friends of a popular Pakistani preacher killed by a hit-and-run driver suspect he may have been murdered because of his conversion from Islam. Rashid Mehmood, 33, came from a rich, influential Muslim family but turned to Christ in 2005. Though he trained as a lawyer, he decided to become a pastor and to preach the Gospel, despite strong opposition from his relatives. He was riding on a motorbike driven by another pastor friend on Boxing Day when a car began to chase them, then deliberately drove into them. He suffered serious head injuries and died later in hospital. Pray that God will comfort Rashid's church and strengthen their faith so they will continue his ministry by reaching out with boldness and love to their community. (Release International - March 2014)

Mandatory death sentence

An influential court in Pakistan is calling for the mandatory death sentence for blasphemy. If implemented, the move could result in further attacks and accusations against Pakistan's Christian minority. Currently, most defendants convicted of blasphemy are serving a life sentence, even though the official penalty for defaming Islam's prophet Mohammed is death. While blasphemy cases are brought against other religious groups, including Muslims, the number brought against Christians is disproportionately high. Continue to pray for justice for Christians in Pakistan. (Release International - January 2014)

Suicide bombing

Many have been saddened by the suicide bombing of All Saints' church in Peshawar, Pakistan, in September which killed 85 people. Philip Chandi of PFES (Pakistan Fellowship of Evangelical Students) writes: "We do not have words to express our grief... We have lost many shining stars of our community: successful and dedicated young people... We are encouraging people to remain peaceful and keep praying. We are also motivating students to write about this incident and the experiences of victims." Pray for those directly affected and also for the student ministry throughout Pakistan. If ever there was a time for Pakistani students to stand firm and be equipped as leaders, it is now. (IFES - November 2013)

Severe monsoon floods

According to Pakistan's National Disaster Management Authority, severe monsoon floods during August affected around 330,000 people in 770 villages, left more than 100 dead and destroyed 2,400 homes. Punjab was the worst affected province, with hundreds of villages being inundated by the flood waters. Food and water purification supplies are being distributed by Tearfund partners in two of the worst affected provinces. With existing clean water sources, such as boreholes, damaged by the floods, water purification tablets are vital to prevent people drinking from unsafe supplies and therefore being exposed to waterborne diseases. Please pray for these relief efforts and for people rebuilding their lives after the loss of loved ones, homes, crops or livelihoods. (Tearfund - September 2013)

Imprisoned for blasphemous texts

Three Christians in Gojra have been imprisoned, accused of sending blasphemous texts. Tensions are

high in the Punjab community where a blasphemy row sparked violence in August 2009 which left eight Christians dead and many homes destroyed. On 13th July Sajjad Masih Gill, 29, was sentenced to life imprisonment. Shafqat Masih and Shagufta Bibi, a couple with four young children, have been held in jail since their arrest. Police claimed that local hardliners were demanding the death sentence for the couple. Pray that God will be close to Sajjad, Shafqat, Shagufta and their families and that all three will be released soon. Pray for peace for Christians in Gojra: ask God to protect and strengthen them. Pray for wisdom for local officials dealing with these cases and that they will do nothing to inflame the situation further. (Release International - September 2013)

Alleged torture and murder

In June, thousands of Christians in Punjab took to the street in protest at the alleged torture and murder of a teenager in police custody. Eighteen-year-old Adnan Masih died at Sharaqpur Sharif city police station in the district of Sheikhpura, after being held for six days. Adnan, a fridge and air-conditioning mechanic who worked in nearby Lahore, was arrested over the alleged kidnap of a young Muslim woman. His family allege that Adnan was brutally tortured over six days and then killed. CLAAS (Centre for Legal Aid Assistance and Settlement) was summoned by villagers to help them to register a case with police against Adnan's alleged attackers. They allege that Adnan was targeted because of his faith. Three police officers have since been arrested. Ask God to comfort Adnan's family and give them the strength they need to pursue justice for him. Pray God's protection over CLAAS as it seeks to obtain justice for Adnan. (Release International - July 2013)

Road to recovery

In Pakistan, many families are still on the road to recovery following the 2010 floods - the worst in the country's history. Two thousand people were killed, and around 25 million affected. Many people lost the crops or livestock they relied upon to earn a living. Therefore part of the recovery process has involved providing seeds for planting new crops, and distributing animals to people who lost their own. Other projects undertaken have included shelter building, health education and disaster awareness training. Pray for these people as they work to rebuild their lives, that they would continue to become more resilient, confident, and hopeful for the future. (Tearfund - January 2013)

Persians in Pakistan

Although many Persians in Iran and the West have come to faith, there are more than 150,000 Persian people living in Pakistan who have yet to hear the gospel. Most Persians are Shi'a Muslims of the Ithna Ashari branch and are radical in their adherence to Islam. Persian culture is strongly based around the nuclear family. Pray that the traditional Muslim culture of the Persians will soften, creating open doors for the gospel. Pray for teams of believers, including Iranians, to be raised up who will share the love of Christ with Persians in Pakistan. (Frontiers - November 2012)

The Kolai

Nestled between five of the world's highest mountain peaks, in the north of Pakistan, live the Kolai people. The vast majority of the Kolai are Sunni Muslim and some also practice Shamanism. Shamanists believe there is an unseen world of gods, demons, fairies, and ancestral spirits, and thus they depend on shamans to cure the sick, communicate with the gods, and influence events in the human realm. Pray that God will raise up teams of believers to go to the Kolai people and share the love of Christ with them. Ask too for the hearts of the Kolai to be open to the Gospel. (Frontiers - November 2011)

Fearing for their lives

Pakistani converts to Christianity are often rejected by their families, friends and work colleagues as 'apostates' or even forced to go into hiding in fear of their lives. One young woman, who married a Christian and converted from Islam despite threats from her family, was attacked by an intruder in her home. She believes that the man, who poured kerosene on her stomach, had been sent by her family. Another convert, who was tied up and beaten by members of his own family, says his family

will kill him if they find out where he is living. Please pray for safety, peace, wisdom and strength for these Christians. (Release International - November 2011)

A brighter future

Most of the 5 million Christians in Pakistan are nominal and gather together in city slums and village colonies. Half are under the age of 20 and, of these children and young people, most have never been to school. There are not enough government schools to meet the needs of the exploding population and prejudice against Christians deters many parents from sending their children to schools that reinforce Islamic values. There are few church schools and, out of necessity, those there are often charge fees beyond the reach of poor Christians and end up teaching wealthy Muslims. The pressure of poverty forces many to send their children to work, sweeping streets, in brick kilns, or in carpet factories, where they are easy prey for the unscrupulous in society. Pray for safety for these children and for the ministry of those working to offer them a brighter future. (Echoes International - July 2011)

Tuberculosis

Some 1.5 million Pakistanis suffer with TB and each year there are 250,000 new cases. Most patients are young and from poor families, with malnutrition decreasing their resistance to the disease. However, TB clinics run in partnership with local churches are making a real impact on the situation, saving lives in some of Pakistan's most remote and poor areas. Pray for God's blessing on this ministry and for more communities to be freed from this disease. (Tearfund - July 2011)

Converting to Islam

Officials in Pakistan confirm the number of people converting to Islam from other religions, especially Christianity, is on the rise. An estimated 50 to 60 Christians are thought to 'embrace' Islam each month through their signing of official documents, which state that they accept Islam, "without any greed or pressure and promise to remain in the religion for the rest of their life." Pray for the Christians of Pakistan. Pray that the truth of Christ within them would grow larger than the threat of those around them. (AsiaLink - May 2011)

The Wanesti

The Wanesti people are a group of Muslims in Pakistan who speak Waneci and number over 120,000 people. As no gospel material is available in their own language, the Wanesti are only able to hear about Jesus through the trade languages of the larger people groups that surround them. Pray for the Scriptures to be translated into their own language. Pray too for teams to be formed who are willing to go, live and work amongst the Wanesti people. Ask God to open doors of opportunity for believers to be able to share their faith. (Frontiers - September 2010)

Education for Christian families

Starfish Asia was set up in 2003 to help Christian families in Pakistan. There are about 2.5 million children from Christian families who have little or no education due to poverty, discrimination or the shortage of facilities. This in turn makes them vulnerable to exploitation by unscrupulous employers. Starfish Asia currently supports 5,000 children in 28 schools and homes. Some of the schools also offer classes for adult literacy, sewing, cooking and computing, and use the facilities for prayer and outreach. Please hold this valuable ministry in your prayers. (Echoes International - July 2010)

Source URL: <https://www.globalconnections.org.uk/prayer/southern-asia/pakistan>

Links

[1] <https://www.globalconnections.org.uk/shop/30-days-of-prayer-2020>

[2] <http://www.30daysprayer.com>