



CHAD: Country Dossier

June 2018



OpenDoors

Serving persecuted **Christians** worldwide

Open Doors International / World Watch Research Unit

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World Watch List 2018

		1. Private Life	2. Family Life	3. Community Life	4. National Life	5. Church Life	6. Violence	TOTAL SCORE WWL 2018	TOTAL SCORE WWL 2017	TOTAL SCORE WWL 2016	TOTAL SCORE WWL 2015	TOTAL SCORE WWL 2014
Rank	Country	Score	Score	Score	Score	Score	Score	Score	Score	Score	Score	Score
1	North Korea	16.7	16.7	16.7	16.7	16.7	10.6	94	92	92	92	90
2	Afghanistan	16.7	16.7	16.7	16.7	16.7	10.0	93	89	88	81	78
3	Somalia	16.0	16.2	16.1	16.3	16.4	10.4	91	91	87	90	80
4	Sudan	14.2	14.5	14.3	15.6	16.0	12.0	87	87	84	80	73
5	Pakistan	14.4	13.5	13.8	15.0	13.1	16.7	86	88	87	79	77
6	Eritrea	15.2	14.5	15.8	16.1	15.2	9.4	86	82	89	79	72
7	Libya	15.2	15.3	14.2	15.7	15.5	10.4	86	78	79	76	71
8	Iraq	14.7	14.7	14.9	14.9	15.1	11.3	86	86	90	86	78
9	Yemen	16.7	16.6	16.4	16.5	16.7	2.6	85	85	78	73	74
10	Iran	14.0	14.1	14.5	15.8	16.4	10.0	85	85	83	80	77
11	India	12.6	12.7	13.2	14.7	12.9	14.4	81	73	68	62	55
12	Saudi Arabia	14.9	13.7	14.2	15.5	16.4	4.1	79	76	76	77	78
13	Maldives	15.2	15.5	13.5	15.8	16.7	1.1	78	76	76	78	77
14	Nigeria	11.8	11.5	13.1	12.1	12.1	16.5	77	78	78	78	70
15	Syria	14.4	14.3	14.1	14.5	14.7	3.7	76	86	87	83	79
16	Uzbekistan	15.5	12.1	13.0	13.1	16.0	3.5	73	71	70	69	68
17	Egypt	11.3	12.8	12.2	11.7	9.5	12.4	70	65	64	61	61
18	Vietnam	12.4	8.4	12.7	14.2	13.8	7.4	69	71	66	68	65
19	Turkmenistan	15.2	10.3	12.9	12.8	15.2	1.9	68	67	66	63	62
20	Laos	12.9	8.6	13.6	13.9	14.9	3.5	67	64	58	58	62
21	Jordan	13.2	13.3	11.5	10.9	13.0	4.3	66	63	59	56	56
22	Tajikistan	13.3	11.3	11.8	11.8	12.9	4.3	65	58	58	50	47
23	Malaysia	12.0	14.9	12.8	12.4	9.3	3.9	65	60	58	55	49
24	Myanmar	11.6	11.1	13.2	10.4	11.0	7.8	65	62	62	60	59
25	Nepal	12.6	11.9	10.7	11.5	12.4	4.6	64		(not in WWL)		
26	Brunei	14.3	14.2	10.7	10.2	13.5	0.9	64	64	61	58	57
27	Qatar	13.4	12.9	11.7	11.3	14.1	0.0	63	66	65	64	63
28	Kazakhstan	12.8	10.0	10.2	12.2	13.7	3.7	63	56	55	51	49
29	Ethiopia	9.8	10.0	10.8	10.9	10.5	10.4	62	64	67	61	65
30	Tunisia	11.9	13.2	10.6	10.7	12.0	3.9	62	61	58	55	55
31	Turkey	12.5	9.7	9.8	11.7	9.6	8.7	62	57	55	52	(not in WWL)
32	Kenya	12.0	10.9	10.0	7.9	11.7	9.4	62	68	68	63	48
33	Bhutan	11.9	11.6	12.4	11.4	13.1	1.1	62	61	56	56	54
34	Kuwait	13.4	12.6	11.6	10.9	12.3	0.4	61	57	56	49	50
35	Central African Republic	9.0	8.1	10.1	8.9	8.8	16.1	61	58	59	67	67
36	Palestinian Territories	12.1	12.8	10.7	10.5	12.6	1.1	60	64	62	58	53
37	Mali	11.4	9.6	11.2	8.1	9.2	9.6	59	59	55	52	54
38	Indonesia	10.3	11.0	11.5	10.0	9.3	6.9	59	55	55	50	46
39	Mexico	8.3	7.6	12.1	10.7	9.7	10.4	59	57	56	55	(not in WWL)
40	United Arab Emirates	13.6	12.2	10.0	10.4	11.8	0.2	58	55	55	49	51
41	Bangladesh	10.4	8.8	11.4	9.6	7.5	10.0	58	63	57	51	46
42	Algeria	12.3	13.1	7.5	10.4	12.4	2.0	58	58	56	55	54
43	China	9.2	7.2	8.0	10.7	13.3	9.1	57	57	57	57	51
44	Sri Lanka	11.1	7.6	10.5	11.3	10.1	6.9	57	55	(not in WWL)	51	55
45	Azerbaijan	13.1	9.1	9.3	11.1	12.4	2.4	57	(not in WWL)	57	50	(not in WWL)
46	Oman	12.1	12.2	9.9	9.4	12.6	1.1	57	53	53	55	56
47	Mauritania	11.5	11.3	11.1	12.2	11.0	0.0	57	55	(not in WWL)	50	51
48	Bahrain	12.9	13.1	10.2	9.9	10.3	0.2	57	54	54	(not in WWL)	48
49	Colombia	7.9	7.6	11.9	8.6	8.5	11.9	56	53	55	55	56
50	Djibouti	12.2	12.2	10.3	9.9	11.7	0.0	56	57	58	60	46

WWL 2018 Persecution Watch Countries¹

		1. Private Life	2. Family Life	3. Community Life	4. National Life	5. Church Life	6. Violence	TOTAL SCORE WWL 2018
Rank	Country	Score	Score	Score	Score	Score	Score	Score
51	Comoros	11.7	11.5	9.1	9.4	13.9	0.4	56
52	Kyrgyzstan	11.7	9.5	10.0	8.1	11.6	2.8	54
53	Tanzania	10.1	10.3	10.1	9.5	9.0	3.9	53
54	Russian Federation	11.1	8.4	10.1	8.9	10.7	2.0	51
55	Morocco	10.4	11.5	7.6	8.8	12.0	0.6	51
56	Cuba	8.5	4.9	10.7	10.4	12.2	2.4	49
57	Uganda	10.9	8.7	9.5	8.7	4.8	3.9	46
58	Niger	9.9	9.7	9.0	7.0	7.1	2.6	45

¹ These countries reached a score of 41 points or more but did not receive enough points to be included in the WWL Top 50.

CHAD – Country Dossier (June 2018)

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Introduction

This country report is a collation of documents based around [Open Doors World Watch List \(WWL\)](#)¹ including statistical information on world religions, Christian denominations, and people groups prepared by the World Christian Database ([WCD](#))². Further news and analysis is supplied by [World Watch Monitor](#)³ and WWR staff.

CHAD		
World Watch List	Score	Rank
WWL 2018	No published details	-
WWL 2017	No published details	-
WWL 2016	No published details	-
WWL 2015	No published details	-
WWL 2014	No published details	-

¹ See: <https://www.opendoorsuk.org/persecution/countries/>

² WCD website: <http://www.brill.com/publications/online-resources/world-christian-database>

³ See: <https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/>

WWL 2018: Keys to understanding CHAD

Link for general background information:

BBC country profile: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-13164686>

Recent country history

Chad is a land locked country sharing borders with Libya, Sudan, the Central African Republic, Cameroon, Nigeria and Niger. The country has been inhabited since at least 500 BC and in the 8th century AD Berbers began migrating to the area.⁴ Approximately 130 languages are spoken in the country, with Arabic and French as the official languages. In 1960 (often referred to as “the year of Africa”) Chad was one of the seventeen African countries to gain independence. However, the situation following the declaration of independence was not what many Chadians had envisioned and different factions emerged. The man they called a father of their independence, François Tombalbaye, became an autocratic president. One of the main challenges to Tombalbaye's rule was a guerrilla group operating in the north of the country called Frolinat (Front for the National Liberation of Chad). French troops helped the president put down the revolt, but were unable to defeat the northern rebels. Tombalbaye remained in power until he was assassinated in 1975.⁵

In the 1975 coup General Félix Malloum took power but was in conflict with rebel forces in the northern part of the country. What exacerbated the situation was that the rebels were financed by Libya, who were claiming possession of the Aouzou Strip (the northern part of Chad). In 1977, Gaddafi ordered his tanks to enter Chad to annex the strip.⁶ In 1979, General Malloum was forced to flee the country and Goukouni Oueddei, the leader of the Front for the National Liberation of Chad, came to power. In 1980, Libya sent its troops to help Oueddei who was willing to acknowledge Libya's claim over the Aouzou Strip. Oueddei had to fight a formidable rebel force led by Hissene Habre. In 1982, Habre seized power but Goukouni Oueddei continued fighting in the northern part of the country. In 1990, Idriss Deby, ousted Habre with the support of Sudan and seized power.⁷ Habre flew to Senegal and was put on trial in November 2015 for atrocities committed during his leadership.⁸ Violence and rebellions have continued under President Deby. He tried to sign peace agreements with different rebels in the country in 2002⁹ and 2003¹⁰ but with little success. Deby also faced other serious challenges: In 2007, the Darfur crisis led the UN Security Council to authorize a “UN-European Union peace-keeping force to protect civilians from violence spilling over from Darfur in neighboring Sudan.”¹¹ In 2006, with the help of the Sudanese government, rebel forces

⁴ See: <http://www.infoplease.com/country/chad.html>, last accessed 5 March 2018.

⁵ See: <http://www.historyworld.net/wrldhis/PlainTextHistories.asp?historyid=ad40#ixzz410R0Gran>, last accessed 5 March 2018.

⁶ See: <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-13164690>, last accessed 5 March 2018.

⁷ See: <http://www.irinnews.org/feature/2006/04/19/idriss-deby-president-under-siege>, last accessed 5 March 2018.

⁸ See: <https://www.hrw.org/blog-feed/trial-hissene-habre>, last accessed 5 March 2018.

⁹ See: http://peacemaker.un.org/sites/peacemaker.un.org/files/TD_020107_PeaceAgreementChadandMDJT.pdf, last accessed 5 March 2018.

¹⁰ See: <http://www.britannica.com/place/Chad-Year-In-Review-2003>

¹¹ See: <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-13164690>, last accessed 5 March 2018.

managed to encircle N'Djamena, however, they failed to unseat the president. In 2008, a more coordinated attack was launched by rebel forces. The UN Security Council requested member states to back the president. Finally, with the help of the French government, Deby's forces repelled the attacks.¹²

The rise of Boko Haram in northern Nigeria has also created problems in Chad. The Islamist group has sent suicide bombers to the region bordering with Nigeria and killed civilians and Chadian soldiers. Chad consulted with the governments of Nigeria, Benin, Niger and Cameroon in August 2015 to seek solutions to these security problems. The country has also conducted very swift judicial process and executed ten Boko Haram members after they were tried and sentenced to death.¹³ After US President Trump added Chad to the list of citizens banned from entering the United States, Chad withdrew its troops from fighting Boko Haram in October 2017.¹⁴ This will have negative impact on Christians in Chad and in the region.

The religious landscape

Chad is a Muslim majority country. WCD estimates the population of Muslims at just over 57% and Christians at 35.2%, which is much in line with the US State Department 2016 Religious Freedom report.¹⁵ Pew Research puts the percentage of Muslims at 55.3% Muslims and Christians at 40.6%.¹⁶

The political landscape

Chad is a republic and introduced multi-party democracy in 1996. In the same year a multi-party presidential election was held and Deby won the election. Deby was declared winner in the following three presidential elections (in 2001, 2006, and 2011). Some of the elections were boycotted by opposition parties angry over the government's unwillingness to allow opposition parties to campaign freely and fairly.¹⁷ Bertelsmann Index agrees with this: "Universal suffrage, the right to campaign for office and democratic elections exist on paper but not in practice. Violations of the principles of free and fair elections have consistently marred elections..."¹⁸

Chad has participated in the restoring of security and peace in the region. In 2013, Chad sent troops to Central Africa Republic to mitigate the violence that followed the coup. Chadian troops also helped the French forces in retaking the northern part of Mali from the Islamist rebels. Furthermore, Chadian troops are fighting Boko Haram militants in their own country as well as in Cameroon. Because the government is playing a vital role in the fight against

¹² See: <http://query.nytimes.com/gst/abstract.html?res=990CE6DE163FF937A25757C0A9609C8B63>, last accessed 5 March 2018.

¹³ See: <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/aug/30/chad-executes-10-members-boko-haram-firing-squad>, last accessed 5 March 2018.

¹⁴ See: <http://www.newsweek.com/trump-travel-ban-chad-boko-haram-684078>, last accessed 5 March 2018.

¹⁵ See: <https://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/irf/religiousfreedom/index.htm#wrapper>, last accessed 5 March 2018.

¹⁶ See: http://www.globalreligiousfutures.org/countries/chad#/?affiliations_religion_id=0&affiliations_year=2010®ion_name=All%20Countries&restrictions_year=2015, last accessed 5 March 2018.

¹⁷ See: <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-13187097>, last accessed 5 March 2018.

¹⁸ See: http://www.bti-project.de/uploads/tx_itao_download/BTI_2014_Chad.pdf, last accessed 5 March 2018.

terrorism in the region, Western governments are forced to stay quiet on issues of repression within Deby's regime. In 2016, Deby won a fifth term in office as president. It is believed that he has serious health problems and is known to have traveled to France for medical treatment.

The government of Chad has been accused of torture, extra-judicial killings, unlawful detention and more.¹⁹ Freedom of the press, expression and assembly have been restricted. The 2014 report by the US State Department for Human Rights writes that the "use of torture; arbitrary arrest and detention, incommunicado detention, and lengthy pretrial detention; denial of fair public trial; and executive influence on the judiciary"²⁰ do exist in Chad. Free speech and free press are curtailed. According to the 2010 Human Rights Watch report, "the government continues to suppress free speech"²¹, even though a new media law has been passed. Reporters Without Borders ranks the country 135th out of 180 countries in its 2015 report on freedom of the press.²² Freedom House has rated the country as "not free."²³ In a significant development that is believed to have set a new precedent in Africa, the former president of Chad, Issene Habre, has been convicted (by an African Union-backed court) of crimes against humanity for atrocities committed during his rule and sentenced to life in prison in Senegal.

The socio-economic landscape

Despite the instability within the country and neighboring states, Chad's economy has been growing, mainly due to the export of crude oil. The World Bank 2014 report puts the country's GDP at \$13.92 billion and the GDP growth at 7.3%.²⁴ According to the OEC (Observatory of Economic Complexity): "In 2013, Chad exported \$2.73B and imported \$1.09B, resulting in a positive trade balance of \$1.63B. Its GDP per capita was \$2.09k."²⁵ The country's market (economic freedom) is rated as "repressed" by Heritage Foundation which also puts the country 162nd in the world ranking and 38th in Sub-Saharan Africa.²⁶ The country's top export destination countries are the USA, Japan and India.

Concluding remarks

The future of Chad depends on many factors. The conflict in the country and political instability might lead to another crisis or coup. At the moment this is unlikely to happen since the international community is supporting the country to mitigate the severe instability in neighboring countries. Also, another important factor is Boko Haram. If the action of the joint task-forces established to fight Boko Haram in the region is not backed up with political, economic and social reforms, the ideology of Boko Haram may continue to be influential. Also, Chad suffers from the continuing Darfur crisis, including the hosting of more than 200,000 refugees. Thus, if the problem in Darfur is not resolved, stability in eastern Chad is hardly

¹⁹ See: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/press-releases/2008/02/chad-authorities-must-act-prevent-extrajudicial-executions-20080207/>, last accessed 5 March 2018.

²⁰ See: <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/236554.pdf>, last accessed 5 March 2018.

²¹ See: <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2011/country-chapters/chad>, last accessed 5 March 2018.

²² See: <https://index.rsf.org/#!/index-details/TCD>, last accessed 5 March 2018.

²³ See: <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2015/chad>, last accessed 5 March 2018.

²⁴ See: <http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/chad>, last accessed 5 March 2018.

²⁵ See: <http://atlas.media.mit.edu/en/profile/country/tcd/>, last accessed 5 March 2018.

²⁶ See: <https://www.heritage.org/index/country/chad>, last accessed 5 March 2018.

possible. If this continues, Christians will remain susceptible to violence and various other restrictions.

WWL 2018: Church History and Facts

How many Christians?

Pop 2017	Christians	Chr%
14,965,000	5,269,000	35.2

Source: WCD, May 2017

How did Christians get there?

- Even though Roman Catholic priests attempted to establish a Christian mission as early as the 1660s, this was only possible after the French fully controlled the country after the First World War. A fully institutionalized presence was established in 1946.
- Baptist missionaries first entered Chad in 1925
- In 1927 by the Sudan United Mission entered the country.
- Seventh-day Adventists have been active in the country since 1967.

What church networks exist today? ²⁷

Orthodox	Catholic	Protestant	Independent	Unaffiliated	Double-aff	Evangelical	Renewalist
0	2,278,000	1,578,000	702,000	712,000	0	1,749,000	859,000

Source: WCD, May 2017

According to WCD statistics, just over 43% of all Christians in the country belong to the Roman Catholic Church. Various Protestant groups have formed a *Fédération des Églises Évangéliques du Tchad* which has strong links to the World Evangelical Alliance.

²⁷ **Orthodox:** Eastern (Chalcedonian), Oriental (Pre-Chalcedonian, Non-Chalcedonian, Monophysite), Nestorian (Assyrian), and non-historical Orthodox. **Roman Catholics:** All Christians in communion with the Church of Rome. **Protestants:** Christians in churches originating in or in communion with the Western world's 16th-century Protestant Reformation. Includes Anglicans, Lutherans and Baptists (any of whom may be Charismatic) and denominational Pentecostals, but not Independent traditions such as Independent Baptists nor independent Charismatics. **Independents:** Believers who do not identify with the major Christian traditions (Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Protestant). **Unaffiliated Christians:** Persons professing publicly to be Christians but who are not affiliated to churches. **Doubly-affiliated Christians:** Persons affiliated to or claimed by 2 denominations at once. **Evangelicals:** Churches, denominations, and individuals who identify themselves as evangelicals by membership in denominations linked to evangelical alliances (e.g., World Evangelical Alliance) or by self-identification in polls. **Renewalists:** Church members involved in Pentecostal/Charismatic renewal movements.

Religious context (selection)

Christian	Muslim	Hindu	Buddhist	Ethno-religionist	Jewish	Bahai	Atheist & others ²⁸
5,269,000	8,566,000	0	2,200	987,000	0	121,000	15,800

Source: WCD, May 2017

Islam first came to the country in the 11th century but did not become a national religion until the 16th and 17th centuries when the country became a route for the Muslim slave trade. Today, just over 57% of the population is Muslim, according to WCD statistics.

Notes on the current situation

- Boko Haram militancy is a challenge for Christians in the country.
- Some of the specific challenges that Christians face include compulsory military service. Even though it is not a serious problem in the country, the government does not accept any reason whatsoever for avoiding military service.
- Another challenge is the obligatory form of church registration. As per law, failure to register can lead to a prison sentence of up to one year.

WWL 2018: Short & Simple Persecution Profile

Reporting period: 1 November 2016 - 31 October 2017

Where persecution comes from

There is no organization as such that is trying to bring Chad under Islam, but through co-operation with Muslim countries, schools, universities and mosques are being built to promote radical Islamic teaching and values. This contributes to the radicalization of segments of society and hostility against Christians. The activities of Boko Haram in the region also contribute to the prevalence of *Islamic oppression* as a Persecution engine in Chad. In the southern parts of the country, African traditional religions have a strong hold and initiation ceremonies and rituals for youngsters are common. In this context, Christians are pressured into taking part in such rituals and festivals – and also experience pressure from leaders of their own ethnic group.

How Christians are suffering

A convert from Islam to Christianity may need to hide his/her conversion to avoid violent and hostile reactions from family and relatives. Private acts of worship and devotion have to be done secretly. In Muslim dominated parts of the country, Islamic mobs may sometimes disturb the celebration of Christian weddings. For Christians with a Muslim background, it is difficult to raise their children in accordance with their Christian faith because the children will be bullied

²⁸ This category includes Atheists, Agnostics and New religionists.

and the parent's conversion will also be exposed. Christians, especially converts, also face hostility and discrimination in IDP camps. In Fada and Mourtcha there are reported cases of Christians from Muslim families being forced to give up their Christian faith to avoid being denied food and the payment of school fees. The Constitution stipulates separation of religion and state and provides for freedom of religion and equality before the law without distinction as to religion. However, at a local government level, there have been instances where the authorities have refused to recognize the conversion of Muslims to Christianity. There is a mandatory church registration law in Chad with the possibility of imprisonment for failure to register. However, given the risk to converts, communities of Christians with a Muslim background will not dare to apply for registration.

Examples

- In the WWL 2018 reporting period, a 19-year-old Christian convert in Zouar, on the border to Libya, was almost killed by his maternal uncle due to his conversion from Islam to Christianity.
- A Pentecostal church was destroyed in August 2017 by the initiation leaders of a local ethnic group in Danamadji in the south of the country. Members of the church fled to safety.
- In the WWL 2018 reporting period, an abducted 17-year-old Christian girl in Dar Tama was forced into marriage with a Muslim man.

WWL 2018: Persecution Dynamics

Reporting period: 1 November 2016 - 31 October 2017

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Position on World Watch List (WWL)

Score and rank are not available.

Persecution engines

Persecution engines in Chad ²⁹	Level of influence
Islamic oppression	Strong
Religious nationalism	Not at all
Ethnic antagonism	Strong
Denominational protectionism	Weak
Communist and post-Communist oppression	Not at all
Secular intolerance	Not at all
Dictatorial paranoia	Weak
Organized corruption and crime	Weak

Islamic oppression (Strong):

There is no organization as such that is trying to bring Chad under Islam, but through co-operation with Muslim countries, schools, universities and mosques are being built to promote radical Islamic teaching and values. This contributes to the radicalization of segments of society and hostility against Christians. The activities of Boko Haram in the region also contribute to the prevalence of Islamic oppression as a persecution engine in Chad.

Islamic oppression is particularly prevalent in the Kanem, Salamat, Lac and Sila regions. The influence of radical Islamism is also notable in the sultanates of Wadai, Bagirmi, and Fitri. Religion partly reflects the regional (north vs. south) political fault lines and division in the country. Although Chad is a secular republic in principle, Islam is still the religion of the majority and pervades the life of most Chadians some of whom show hostility and intolerance towards Christians whom they consider as infidels.

Ethnic antagonism (Strong):

The Arab, Kanembu, Bornu and Buduma ethnic groups are mostly Muslims and have an antagonistic relationship with the Wadai Bulala, Kobe, Tama, Barma and the Mesmedje ethnic groups who are mostly Christians. In northeastern Chad (particularly in the Ennedi region, homeland to Zaghawa-born president of Chad, General Deby) the persecution of Christians based on perceived ethnic differences is a commonplace experience. In the southern parts of the country, African traditional religions have a strong hold and initiation ceremonies and rituals for youngsters are common. In this context, Christians are pressured into taking part in such rituals and festivals – and also experience pressure from leaders of their own ethnic group.

²⁹ The scale for the level of influence of Persecution engines and Drivers in society is: Not at all / Very weak / Weak / Medium / Strong / Very strong.

Drivers of persecution

Drivers of persecution in Chad	Level of influence
Government officials at any level from local to national	Very weak
Ethnic group leaders	Strong
Non-Christian religious leaders at any level from local to national	Strong
Christian religious leaders at any level from local to national	Weak
Violent religious groups	Very strong
Ideological pressure groups	Not at all
Normal citizens (people from the general public), including mobs	Strong
Own (extended) family	Strong
Political parties at any level from local to national	Medium
Revolutionaries or paramilitary groups	Not at all
Organized crime cartels or networks	Not at all
Multilateral organizations (e.g. UN) and embassies	Weak

Drivers of Islamic oppression:

In the northern parts of the country, local officials mistreat Christians and often refuse to give them access to government services. These Muslim officials frequently make Christians wait longer and have been openly hostile to Christians with a Muslim background. In order to consolidate his base and hold onto power, President Idriss Deby seems to be encouraging the influence of Islam in society at the expense of Christians and believers of African traditional religions in southern regions. Boko Haram and the Sanusiyya Brotherhood have perpetrated serious acts of violence in the country many times. These have targeted Christians in particular, especially in the south. There have also been occasions in previous WWL reporting periods where mobs in some communities have attacked Christians, for instance when the [burqa was banned](#)³⁰ by the government for security reason. Family and relatives of converts are also significant drivers of Islamic oppression in Chad. The ruling party, Mouvement Patriotique de Salut (Patriotic Salvation Movement) has policies that support the marginalization and persecution of Christians in the country.

Drivers of Ethnic antagonism:

Some traditional/religious Leaders use ethnicity as a tool to mobilize their followers and persecute Christians. Traditional leaders sometimes try to force Christians in their community to take part in rituals associated with their ethnic group's customs. When Christians refuse, they are denied the support and benefit they would normally enjoy as members of that ethnic group. Christians are particularly exposed to this kind of pressure in connection with initiation ceremonies for children in ethnic groups that adhere to traditional African religions in the south.

³⁰ See: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-33166220>, last accessed 22 February 2018.

Context

Chad is a land locked country sharing borders with Libya, Sudan, Central African Republic, Cameroon, Nigeria and Niger. Following independence from France in 1960, different factions in the country emerged causing conflict and instability. In 2016, President Deby, who assumed office in 1990 claimed to have won his fifth term in office. However, due to his failing health there is uncertainty about the political future of the country. In 2013, Chad sent troops to Central Africa Republic to mitigate the violence that followed the coup there. Chadian troops also helped French forces in retaking the northern part of Mali from the control of Islamic militants. Chadian troops are also fighting Boko Haram militants in their own country as well as in Cameroon. Because the government is playing a clear role in the fight against terrorism in the region, President Deby's administration enjoys good relations with the West. Chad's economy is mainly dependent the export of crude oil. The country's top export destination countries are the USA, Japan and India. Despite its oil export, Chad is a very poor country in which almost 40% of the population live in poverty. The country still relies on foreign aid and assistance.

The government of Chad has been accused of torture, extra-judicial killings, unlawful detention and more. Freedom of the press, expression and assembly have been restricted. Human rights organizations accuse the government of using torture, arresting its opponents arbitrarily and unlawfully. Free speech and free press are also curtailed. In a significant development that is believed to have set a precedent in Africa, the former president of Chad, Issene Habre, was [convicted](#)³¹ for crimes against humanity carried out under his rule. He was sentenced to life imprisonment in Senegal by an African Union-backed court in May 2016.

The rise of Boko Haram in northern Nigeria has worsened the human rights and security challenges in Chad. Apart from Christians, adherents of African traditional beliefs and some Sufi Islamic sects can be considered as religious minorities in Chad. In addition to banning Sufi religious groups, the government also monitors other Islamic religious orders. Adherents of African traditional religions also face discrimination and abuse by their predominantly Muslim northern compatriots who are privileged by the state.

Christian communities and how they are affected

Communities of expatriate Christians:

Communities of expatriate Christians do not exist as a separate WWL category in Chad.

Historical Christian communities:

The Roman Catholic Church and Greek Orthodox Church are the main denominations in this category. In the Ouaddaï and Salamat regions, the Catholic Church was denied access to land acquired for the purposes of building a church and hospital. There are also Protestant denominations – such as Methodists - facing restrictions on their evangelistic activities and outreach projects.

³¹ See: <https://edition.cnn.com/2016/05/30/africa/habre-africa-chad-war-crimes/index.html>, last accessed 22 February 2018.

Communities of converts to Christianity:

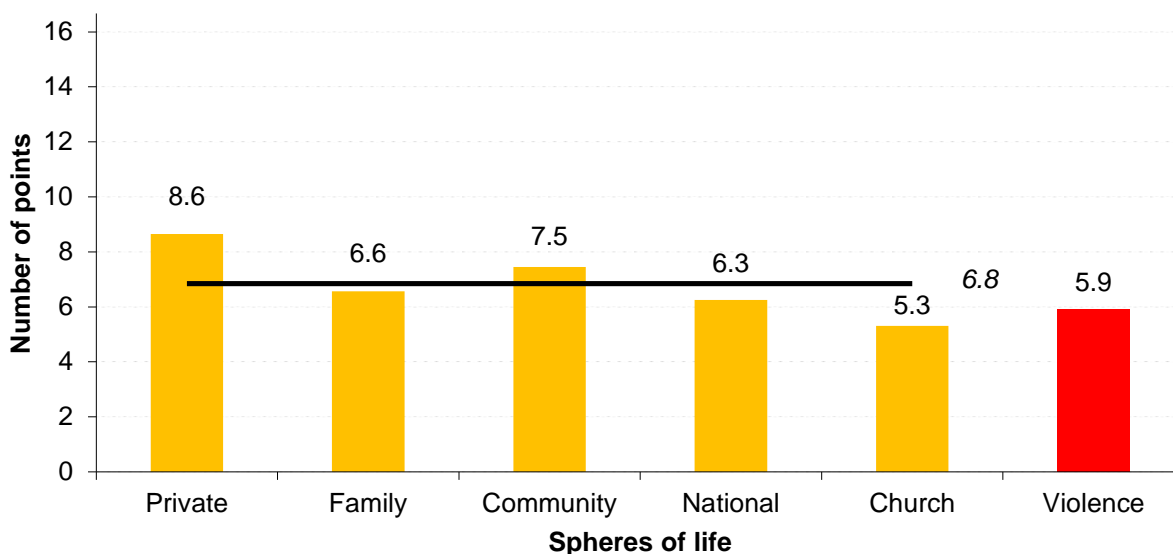
In eastern and northern Chad, Christians of Muslim background are forced to worship in secret and hide their faith for fear of persecution and being disowned by radical Islamic family members. In the southern part of the country, there are also sizable number of converts from African indigenous religions. Their level of persecution is not as severe as that experienced by converts from Islam, but they still face pressure to take part in non-Christian religious rites.

Non-traditional Christian communities:

Pentecostal and charismatic churches are active in some parts of Chad. These churches are considered as 'sects', and members face pressure and insults. For example, Pentecostal members of the Nigerian Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG) in Baga Sola were attacked by Muslims during its Easter Program in 2017. Due to their recent entry into the country and their more visible and active presence, these communities tend to be more exposed to violent opposition.

Pressure in the 5 spheres of life and violence

WWL 2018 Persecution Pattern for Chad



(The maximum score for each block is 16.7)

The WWL 2018 Persecution pattern for Chad shows:

- The average pressure on Christians in Chad is 6.8.
- Pressure is strongest in the *Private sphere* which particularly reflects the difficult life experienced by Christians with a Muslim background.
- The WWL 2018 score for violence is 5.9 which is roughly 3 points lower than in WWL 2017, reflecting the reduced capability and activity of Boko Haram in the country.

Private sphere:

A convert from Islam to Christianity may need to hide his/her conversion to avoid violent and hostile reactions from family and relatives. Private acts of worship and devotion have to be done secretly. Hostility towards converts in the far north and northeastern regions of the country is life-threatening. The confined living conditions in the country, particularly in refugee/IDP camps, make acts of private worship difficult and risky.

Family sphere:

In Muslim dominated parts of the country, Islamic mobs may sometimes disturb the celebration of Christian weddings. For Christians with a Muslim background, it is difficult to raise their children in accordance with their Christian faith because the children will be bullied and the parent's conversion will also be exposed. In the northern region, children may also be forced to study Islam at school. This has made teaching and learning Christian doctrine and values in some parts of the Republic of Chad impossible. Violent attacks have also caused the separation of Christian families, and there have been occasions where spouses of converts have been pressured into getting a divorce. There have also been reports of abduction and forced marriage of Christians in the country.

Community sphere:

In the rural areas of Chad, especially in the north and east of the country, access to drinking water is difficult for Christians; communities in Muslim majority areas give priority to Muslims where there is water available at a well. Christians, especially converts, also face hostility and discrimination in IDP camps. In Fada and Mourtcha there are reported cases of Christians from Muslim families being forced to give up their Christian faith to avoid being denied food and the payment of school fees. In the northern parts of the country there have also been reports that civilians were often taxed or told to pay more because it was believed they were Christians. Many Christians have also been forced to allow their children to go to initiation in accordance with indigenous religious beliefs.

National sphere:

The Constitution stipulates separation of religion and state and provides for freedom of religion and equality before the law without distinction as to religion. However, at a local government level, there have been instances where the authorities have refused to recognize the conversion of Muslims to Christianity. The majority of converts refrain from seeking official recognition and registration of their conversion due to fears of retaliation. In military service and in prisons much pressure is put on Christians to join the majority religion and become Muslims. Many Christians do convert because they find the circumstances and pressure unbearable. It is reported that in offices dominated by Muslims, there is discrimination in employment in the public service sector. When attacks against churches occur, some local authorities feign ignorance of the situation and fail to take any action. When Christians have cases in courts of law, the prevalence of corruption makes it difficult for them to get fair decisions when they refuse to pay bribes.

Church sphere:

There is a mandatory church registration law in Chad with the possibility of imprisonment for failure to register. However, given the risk to converts, communities of Christians with a Muslim background will not dare to get registration. Although this helps maintain their safety from attacks from the community and militant groups, it also means they are risking violating the law and legal sanctions. To build a church it is necessary to obtain authorization, which is a lengthy process. Established churches belonging to Roman Catholics and Baptist operate their own printing press and seminaries. But communities of converts have far less freedom and worshipping together or engaging in evangelism is risky.

Violence:

Due to the presence of militant groups like Boko Haram and the activities of radical elements in society at large, there is a serious risk of violent persecution, especially for converts from Islam. Attacks may be carried out by a convert's own family and not necessarily by strangers belonging to militant groups. The following are examples of incidents occurring within the WWL 2018 reporting period:

- In Zouar, on the border to Libya, a 19-year-old Christian convert was almost killed by his maternal uncle due to his conversion from Islam to Christianity.
- A Pentecostal church was destroyed in August 2017 by the initiation leaders of a local ethnic group in Danamadji in the south of the country. Members of the church fled to safety.
- In Dar Tama, an abducted 17-year-old Christian girl was forced into marriage with a Muslim man.

Gender profile of persecution

Female:

Young Christian girls are vulnerable to marriage by abduction and forced conversion to Islam. This is particularly the case in rural areas.

Male:

No data currently available.

Future outlook

Due to health problems, President Idris Deby might not be able to stay in office much longer. In the event of his death, a power struggle might ensue leading to conflict. If this were to happen, Islamic militant groups in the region would definitely try to take advantage of the situation and use the opportunity to expand their presence in Chad and use the country as a base of operation. There is also the risk that a less secular and more Islamist politician will take over as president.

Although the situation for Christians in Chad is currently by no means easy, in the event of conflict erupting as happened in Libya (Chad's northern neighbor), things could get much worse.

Policy considerations

Taking in to account the above persecution dynamics, Open Doors International suggests the following recommendations:

- The Government of Chad, should respect and promote the religious freedom of is Christian citizens and other religious minorities. In particular, it should work to bring an end to discriminatory and prejudicial attitudes and practices against Christians.
- The international community should in its engagement with the government of Chad, emphasize the need to respect human rights, including the freedom of religion. The government should be urged to hold accountable those who attack Christians and provide better protection to the safety and security of its citizens, including Christians.
- The international community should work to bolster the resilience and capacity of Chadian institutions, particularly to facilitate peaceful transition of power and avoid conflict and crises in the event of the passing away of the incumbent president.

WWR in-depth reports

There are currently no in-depth reports on Chad available at:
<http://opendoorsanalytical.org/reports/> (password: freedom).

Open Doors article(s) from the region

There are currently no Open Doors articles on Chad available at:
<http://opendoorsanalytical.org/articles/> (password freedom).

World Watch Monitor news articles

Up-to-date articles are available at: <https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/countries/chad/>

- [Lake Chad Basin crisis to dominate African Union Summit](#)
27 June 2017
The UN has described the situation in north-eastern Nigeria – one of the four countries in the Basin, alongside Cameroon, Niger and Chad – as the “greatest crisis on the continent”, the full extent of which has only been revealed as extremist militant group Boko Haram has been pushed back.

Recent country developments

Up-to-date articles are available at: <http://opendoorsanalytical.org/?s=Chad> (password: freedom).

- [Chad/Niger: Chad withdraws troops from fight against Boko Haram](#)
31 October 2017
As reported by Reuters on 12 October 2017, Chad has withdrawn hundreds of troops from neighboring Niger, where they had been helping local forces fight Boko Haram militants.
- [Europe/Nigeria and Lake Chad region: Conference seeks to avert humanitarian crisis](#)
16 March 2017
On 24 February 2017, an international conference took place in Oslo, Norway, seeking to mobilize greater international involvement and increased funding for humanitarian measures in Nigeria and the lake chad region.

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