World
Watch
Research

Chad: Full Country Dossier

March 2023

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World Watch List 2023

Rank	Country	Private life	Family life	Community life	National life	Church life	Violence	Total Score WWL 2023	Total Score WWL 2022	Total Score WWL 2021	Total Score WWL 2020	Total Score WWL 2019
1	North Korea	16.7	16.7	16.7	16.7	16.7	14.4	98	96	94	94	94
2	Somalia	16.5	16.7	16.6	16.6	16.6	8.7	92	91	92	92	91
3	Yemen	16.7	16.7	16.7	16.7	16.7	5.9	89	88	87	85	86
4	Eritrea	14.6	14.9	15.5	15.9	15.7	12.2	89	88	88	87	86
5	Libya	15.6	15.5	15.9	16.1	16.3	9.1	88	91	92	90	87
6	Nigeria	13.8	13.8	14.6	14.8	14.4	16.7	88	87	85	80	80
7	Pakistan	13.4	13.8	14.8	14.8	12.9	16.7	86	87	88	88	87
8	Iran	14.5	14.6	13.8	15.8	16.5	10.7	86	85	86	85	85
9	Afghanistan	15.4	15.7	15.4	16.1	16.6	4.6	84	98	94	93	94
10	Sudan	14.1	14.2	14.9	14.9	15.5	9.4	83	79	79	85	87
11	India	12.3	13.1	13.0	14.8	13.3	15.7	82	82	83	83	83
12	Syria	13.2	14.1	13.6	14.1	14.1	11.3	80	78	81	82	82
13	Saudi Arabia	15.2	15.3	14.9	15.8	16.7	2.4	80	81	78	79	77
14	Myanmar	12.5	11.6	13.9	13.9	12.9	15.4	80	79	74	73	71
15	Maldives	15.4	15.3	13.8	16.0	16.4	0.2	77	77	77	78	78
16	China	12.9	10.0	12.7	14.5	15.6	11.1	77	76	74	70	65
17	Mali	11.1	10.1	14.7	10.3	15.1	15.0	76	70	67	66	68
18	Iraq	14.1	14.6	14.0	14.8	13.9	4.6	76	78	82	76	79
19	Algeria	14.1	14.1	11.5	13.7	15.1	4.8	73	71	70	73	70
20	Mauritania	14.5	14.2	13.3	14.1	14.2	1.3	72	70	71	68	67
21	Uzbekistan	14.9	12.7	13.9	12.7	15.6	1.5	71	71	71	73	74
22	Colombia	11.8	8.9	13.1	11.3	10.4	15.4	71	68	67	62	58
23	Burkina Faso	9.4	9.7	12.5	9.6	13.8	15.6	71	68	67	66	48
24	CAR	10.3	8.6	13.9	9.6	12.2	15.6	70	68	66	68	70
25	Vietnam	11.8	9.6	12.8	14.6	14.4	6.9	70	71	72	72	70
26	Turkmenistan	14.5	11.3	13.6	14.1	15.7	0.6	70	69	70	70	69
27	Cuba	13.1	8.3	13.1	13.2	14.9	7.0	70	66	62	52	49
28	Niger	9.4	9.5	14.5	7.7	13.1	15.4	70	68	62	60	52
29	Morocco	13.2	13.8	10.9	12.2	14.5	4.8	69	69	67	66	63
30	Bangladesh	12.6	10.7	12.8	11.3	10.6	10.7	69	68	67	63	58
31	Laos	11.7	10.2	13.3	14.2	14.0	5.0	68	69	71	72	71
32	Mozambique	9.3	8.5	13.9	8.4	12.5	15.6	68	65	63	43	43
33	Indonesia	11.3	12.0	11.6	11.1	9.2	12.8	68	68	63	60	65
34	Qatar	14.2	14.1	10.5	13.2	14.4	1.5	68	74	67	66	62
35	Egypt	12.7	13.5	11.6	12.1	10.8	7.0	68	71	75	76	76
36	Tunisia	12.0	12.8	10.4	12.0	13.5	6.5	67	66	67	64	63
37	DRC	8.0	7.9	12.6	9.7	13.0	15.6	67	66	64	56	55
38	Mexico	10.3	8.3	12.5	11.0	10.5	13.9	67	65	64	60	61
39	Ethiopia	9.9	10.3	13.1	10.4	12.1	10.6	66	66	65	63	65
40	Bhutan	13.2	12.3	11.6	13.9	14.2	1.1	66	67	64	61	64
41	Turkey	12.8	11.5	11.8	13.0	11.5	5.7	66	65	69	63	66
42	Comoros	12.7	14.0	11.2	12.4	14.2	1.5	66	63	62	57	56
43	Malaysia	12.8	14.3	11.4	12.2	11.1	3.9	66	63	63	62	60
44	Tajikistan	13.8	12.2	12.3	12.8	13.4	1.1	66	65	66	65	65
45	Cameroon	8.8	7.6	12.6	7.2	13.1	15.9	65	65	64	60	54
46	Brunei	14.8	14.6	10.1	10.9	14.4	0.4	65	64	64	63	63
47	Oman	14.0	14.1	10.3	13.3	12.9	0.6	65	66	63	62	59
48	Kazakhstan	13.2	11.6	11.9	12.7	14.2	1.1	65	64	64	64	63
49	Jordan	13.0	14.0	10.5	12.3	12.7	2.0	65	66	64	64	65
50	Nicaragua	10.8	5.9	11.9	12.8	13.6	9.4	65	56	51	41	41

Rank	Country	Private life	Family life	Community life	National life	Church life	Violence	Total Score WWL 2023	Total Score WWL 2022	Total Score WWL 2021	Total Score WWL 2020	Total Score WWL 2019
51	Kenya	10.3	9.2	11.4	8.0	11.5	13.3	64	63	62	61	61
52	Kuwait	13.5	13.7	9.8	12.3	13.1	1.1	64	64	63	62	60
53	Tanzania	9.3	10.8	10.3	8.6	8.7	15.6	63	61	58	55	52
54	UAE	13.4	13.4	9.9	11.2	12.8	1.1	62	62	62	60	58
55	Nepal	12.0	9.8	9.4	13.0	12.6	4.4	61	64	66	64	64
56	Djibouti	12.3	12.6	12.7	10.1	12.3	0.6	60	59	56	56	56
57	Palestinian Territories	13.0	13.3	9.7	10.3	12.0	2.0	60	59	58	60	57
58	Azerbaijan	13.2	10.0	9.5	12.0	13.6	0.6	59	60	56	57	57
59	Kyrgyzstan	12.9	10.2	11.0	10.4	12.0	2.0	59	58	58	57	56
60	Chad	11.6	8.2	10.2	10.2	10.3	7.6	58	55	53	56	48
61	Russian Federation	12.3	7.9	10.3	11.8	12.8	2.0	57	56	57	60	60
62	Sri Lanka	12.8	9.1	10.6	11.3	9.5	3.9	57	63	62	65	58
63	Rwanda	9.4	7.7	9.0	10.4	11.7	8.9	57	50	42	42	41
64	Venezuela	6.0	4.6	11.7	10.2	11.4	11.7	56	51	39	42	41
65	Burundi	7.6	7.8	9.4	9.8	9.7	11.1	55	52	48	48	43
66	Bahrain	12.7	13.3	8.7	10.7	8.8	0.9	55	57	56	55	55
67	Honduras	7.1	5.0	11.9	7.6	9.8	11.9	53	48	46	39	38
68	Angola	6.8	6.7	8.1	11.5	11.4	7.2	52	51	46	43	42
69	Uganda	8.1	5.0	7.4	6.7	9.2	14.8	51	48	47	48	47
70	Togo	9.2	6.7	9.3	7.1	11.0	5.4	49	44	43	41	42
71	Guinea	10.3	7.5	8.3	8.3	10.5	3.0	48	43	47	45	46
72	South Sudan	5.7	4.4	7.0	6.3	7.6	15.0	46	43	43	44	44
73	El Salvador	7.7	4.2	10.6	7.4	9.1	6.7	46	45	42	38	30
74	Ivory Coast	12.0	6.5	8.7	5.9	8.0	3.3	44	42	42	42	43
75	Gambia	8.3	8.2	8.9	8.8	8.9	1.1	44	44	43	43	43
76	Belarus	9.5	3.8	4.8	9.4	12.1	3.3	43	33	30	28	35

Copyright note

Sources and definitions

- This country report is a collation of data and analysis based around Open Doors World Watch List (WWL) and includes statistical information on world religions, Christian denominations and people groups prepared by the World Christian Database (WCD).
- Highlighted links in the text can be found written out in full at the conclusion of each main section under the heading "External links". In order to reduce the length of these reference sections, a table containing links to regularly used sources can be found at the beginning of the "Keys to Understanding" chapter under the heading "Links for general background information". Where one of these sources has been quoted in the dossier text, a quote reference is supplied as indicated in the second column of the table.
- The WWL 2023 reporting period was 01 October 2021 - 30 September 2022.
- The definition of persecution used in WWL analysis is: "Any hostility experienced as a result of one's identification with Christ. This can include hostile attitudes, words and actions towards Christians". This broad definition includes (but is not limited to) restrictions, pressure, discrimination, opposition, disinformation, injustice, intimidation, mistreatment, marginalization, oppression, intolerance, infringement, violation, ostracism, hostilities, harassment, abuse, violence, ethnic cleansing and genocide.
- The latest update of WWL Methodology including appendices can be found on the World Watch List Documentation page of the Open Doors Analytical website (password: freedom).

WWL 2023 Situation in brief / Chad

Brief country details

Chad: Population (UN estimate for 2022)	Christians	Chr%
17,414,000	6,120,000	35.1

Data source: Johnson T M and Zurlo G A, eds, World Christian Database (Leiden/Boston: Brill, accessed April 2022)

Map of country

Chad: World Watch List	Points	WWL Rank
WWL 2023	58	60
WWL 2022	55	63
WWL 2021	53	62
WWL 2020	56	58
WWL 2019	48	60

Ranks are shown above whenever the country scored 41 points or more in the WWL 2019-2023 reporting periods

Dominant persecution engines and drivers

Chad: Main Persecution engines	Main drivers
Islamic oppression	Violent religious groups, Non-Christian religious leaders, One's own (extended) family, Citizens (people from the broader society), including mobs
Dictatorial paranoia	Government officials, Organized crime cartels or networks
Organized corruption and crime	Government officials
Clan oppression	Ethnic group leaders

Engines and Drivers are listed in order of strength. Only Very strong / Strong / Medium are shown here.

Brief description of the persecution situation

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 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 of 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, Christians with a Muslim background will not dare to apply for registration for their groups.

Specific examples of violations of rights in the reporting period

- Christians in the south are largely excluded from political power. (Source: Global Freedom Index 2022)
- Christians often face discrimination from local officials and violence from Boko Haram and Fulani militia - including abduction.
- Christians are under constant threat of attack from violent Islamic militants, and from rebels from the north.
- On 3 November 2021, Chadian military forces attacked a Catholic priest in Walia neighborhood in NDjamena (NDjamena) for not letting them use the church as a resting area.

Specific examples of positive developments

According to US Department IRFR 2021:

- *October 2021:* Following criticism from the legal community, the central government annulled an agreement establishing the Islamic practice of *diya* (financial compensation paid to victims of violence) in the Christian majority southern province of Mandoul.

WWL 2023: Keys to understanding / Chad

Links for general background information

Name	Quote Reference	Link	Last accessed on
Amnesty International 2021/22 country report – covering 154 countries	AI country report 2021/22 (pp. 120-122)	https://www.amnesty.org/en/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/POL1048702022ENGLISH.pdf	30 June 2022
BBC News country profile	BBC country profile	https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-13164686	30 June 2022
Bertelsmann Transformation Index country report 2022 – covering 137 countries	BTI report 2022	https://bti-project.org/en/reports/country-dashboard/TCD	30 June 2022
CIA World Factbook	CIA Factbook	https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/chad/	30 June 2022
Crisis24 country report (Garda World) – covering 193 countries	Crisis24 country report	https://crisis24.garda.com/insights-intelligence/intelligence/country-reports/chad	30 June 2022
Economist Intelligence Unit Democracy Index 2021 – covering 167 countries	EIU 2021 (p. 58)	https://pages.eiu.com/rs/753-RIQ-438/images/eiu-democracy-index-2021.pdf	30 June 2022
FFP's Fragile States Index 2022 – covering 179 countries	FSI 2022	https://fragilestatesindex.org/country-data/	30 August 2022
Freedom House's 2022 Democracy index – covering 29 countries, Chad not included	Democracy Index 2022	https://freedomhouse.org/countries/nations-transit/scores	
Freedom House's 2022 Global Freedom index – covering 210 countries	Global Freedom Index 2022	https://freedomhouse.org/country/chad/freedom-world/2022	30 June 2022
Freedom House's Freedom on the Net 2022 report – covering 70 countries, Chad not included	Freedom on the Net 2022	https://freedomhouse.org/countries/freedom-net/scores	
Human Rights Watch World Report 2022 (country chapter) – covering 100+ countries	HRW 2022 country chapter	https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2022/country-chapters/chad	30 June 2022
Internet World Stats 2022	IWS 2022	https://www.internetworldstats.com/africa.htm#td	30 June 2022
RSF's 2022 World Press Freedom Index – covering 180 countries	World Press Freedom 2022	https://rsf.org/en/chad	30 June 2022
Transparency International's 2021 Corruption Perceptions Index – covering 180 countries	CPI 2021	https://www.transparency.org/en/countries/chad	30 June 2022
UNDP's Global Human Development Indicators (country profile) – covering 189 countries	HDI profile	https://hdr.undp.org/data-center/specific-country-data#/countries/TCD	30 June 2022
US State Department's 2021 International Religious Freedom (country profile)	IRFR 2021	https://www.state.gov/reports/2021-report-on-international-religious-freedom/chad/	30 June 2022
USCIRF 2022 country reports – covering 15 CPC / 12 SWL, Chad not included	USCIRF 2022	https://www.uscirf.gov/countries	
World Bank country overview – covering 178 countries	World Bank overview 2022	https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/chad/overview	30 June 2022
World Bank country profile data – covering 222 countries	World Bank data profile	https://databank.worldbank.org/views/reports/reportwidget.aspx?Report_Name=CountryProfile&Id=b450fd57bar=ydd=yinf=nzm=ncountry=TCD	30 June 2022
World Bank Macro Poverty Outlook 2022 – covering 147 countries (divided per region)	Macro Poverty Outlook 2022 (pp. 18-19)	https://thedocs.worldbank.org/en/doc/bae48ff2fefc5a869546775b3f010735-0500062021/related/mpo-ssa.pdf	30 June 2022

Recent history

Chad is a landlocked country sharing borders with Libya, Sudan, the Central African Republic, Cameroon, Nigeria and Niger. In 1960 (often referred to as "the year of Africa") Chad was one of seventeen African countries to gain independence. However, many different factions soon emerged. The man who was referred to as the father of their independence, François Tombal-

baye, became an autocratic president. Tombalbaye's rule was challenged by a guerrilla group operating in the north of the country called FROLINAT (Front for the National Liberation of Chad). Even though French troops helped the president put down the revolt, they were unable to defeat the northern rebels totally. Tombalbaye remained in power until he was assassinated in 1975 (History of Chad, accessed 16 March 2023).

The 1975 coup saw General Félix Malloum take power. However, he was in constant conflict with rebel forces operating in the northern part of the country. They were financed by Libya (BBC country profile), which claimed possession of the Aouzou Strip (the northern part of Chad) and annexed it in 1977. In 1979, General Malloum was forced to flee the country and Goukouni Oueddei, the leader of FROLINAT, came to power. In 1980, Libya sent in 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 Déby ousted Habre with the support of Sudan and seized power (The New Humanitarian, 19 April 2006). Habre fled to Senegal and was put on trial in November 2015 for atrocities committed during his leadership (Human Rights Watch, 23 November 2015).

Violence and rebellions have continued under the leadership of President Déby. The country has also been fighting against Boko Haram in the Lake Chad Basin area. In 2018, the National Assembly amended the Constitution allowing the president to stay in power for over ten years.

Presidential elections were held in Chad on 11 April 2021. Incumbent Idriss Déby, who served five consecutive terms since seizing power in the 1990 coup, was running for a sixth term. Provisional results released on 19 April showed that he had won reelection with 79% of the vote. However, on 20 April 2021, it was suddenly announced by the armed forces that Déby had been killed in action while leading his country's troops in a battle against rebels calling themselves the Front for Change and Concord in Chad (FACT).He has since been replaced by his son, Mahamat Idris Déby, as the current president of the republic under military control. It is expected that Mahamat Déby will govern for an eighteen month period (starting April 2021) after which free and democratic elections will be held once the transition period is over (BBC News, 20 April 2021).

In the context of violence, coups and other issues that affect the country and the region, Christians have also suffered as they are often seen as being allies to the 'other side' and foreign agents.

Political and legal landscape

Chad is a republic and introduced multi-party democracy in 1996. In the same year, a multi-party presidential election was held and Déby won the election. Déby was declared the 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 (BBC News, 25 April 2011). In 2016 and 2021, Déby won further terms in office as president.

Over the years, the government of Chad has been accused of carrying out torture, extra-judicial killings, unlawful detention and more (Amnesty International, 7 February 2008). Freedom of the

press, freedom of expression and assembly have been restricted. In a significant development that is believed to have set a precedent in Africa, the former president of Chad, Issene Habre, was [convicted](#) in May 2016 (by an African Union-backed court) of crimes against humanity for atrocities committed during his rule and sentenced to life imprisonment in Senegal (BBC News, 30 May 2016), where he died in August 2021.

As reported in Freedom House's Global Freedom Index 2022:

- The country is rated as "not free".
- "Chad has been ruled by a military government since April 2021, when a group of senior officers seized power in a coup d'état following the death of longtime president Idriss Déby Itno. The military regime, led by the former president's son, announced that it would oversee an 18-month transition period, which can be renewed once, followed by elections."
- "In April [2021], incumbent president Idriss Déby Itno was reelected to a sixth term in office in an election marred by a government crackdown on political dissent. Later that month, Déby was allegedly killed by rebel forces while visiting Chadian soldiers fighting in the north of the country".
- "Following Déby's death, a transitional military council (TMC) comprised of senior military officers and headed by his son took control of the country in an April coup d'état. The TMC announced that it would oversee an 18-month transition period, which can be renewed once, followed by "free and fair" elections".
- "In September [2021], the ruling TMC appointed a 93-member National Transitional Council (NTC) to serve as an interim legislature for the transitional government. In October, the former president of the National Assembly, Haroun Kabadi, was appointed president of the NTC".
- "In December [2021], the NTC approved two laws granting amnesty to approximately 300 members of armed rebel groups for crimes ranging from terrorism to the recruitment of child soldiers. Civil society organizations criticized the amnesty for only applying to a small sub-set of rebels".

The Higher Islamic Council in August 2022 also ruled that women are now liable for a [fine](#) of up to $30 known as "amchilini" for rejecting a marriage proposal (The Telegraph, 11 August 2022).

Religious landscape

Chad: Religious context	Number of adherents	%
Christians	6,120,000	35.1
Muslim	9,856,000	56.6
Hindu	0	0.0
Buddhist	2,700	0.0

Ethno-religionist	1,269,000	7.3
Jewish	0	0.0
Bahai	143,000	0.8
Atheist	2,500	0.0
Agnostic	15,700	0.1
Other	5,200	0.0
OTHER includes Chinese folk, New religionist, Sikh, Spiritist, Taoist, Confucianist, Jain, Shintoist, Zoroastrian.		

Data source: Johnson T M and Zurlo G A, eds, World Christian Database (Leiden/Boston: Brill, accessed April 2022)

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. Chad is now a Muslim majority country.

Although Chad is a secular republic, Islam is the majority religion and pervades the whole of society causing some Chadians to show hostility and intolerance towards Christians whom they regard as 'infidels'. The Arab, Kanembu, Bornu and Buduma ethnic groups are mostly Muslim and have an antagonistic relationship with the Wadai Bulala, Kobe, Tama, Barma and the Mesmedje ethnic groups, who are mostly Christian.

According to the US State Department (IRFR 2021):

- "Most northerners practice Islam, and most southerners practice Christianity or indigenous religions. There is a significant Muslim presence in the south, but a minimal Christian presence in the north. Religious distribution is mixed in urban areas, and indigenous religions are often practiced to some degree along with Islam and Christianity."

Economic landscape

According to the World Bank's Macro Poverty Outlook 2022 (pp. 18-19):

- ***Economic growth:*** Chad's economy has performed below potential since the 2014-15 oil price shock. Notwithstanding the 2018-19 recovery, annual GDP growth contracted by 1.1 percent on average over the past six years, which, given the rapidly growing population, translated into an annual decrease in per capita income of 4.1 percent.
- ***Inflation:*** As containment measures on domestic supply chains were slowly lifted, inflation dropped from 3.5 percent to one percent in 2021. Food inflation was 3 percent, significantly lower than the rest of Sahel. Chad's monetary and exchange rate policies are managed by the regional Central Bank, which supported regional reserve accumulation by raising its policy rate to 3.5 percent and the marginal lending facility rate from 5 to 5.25 percent. As a result, regional reserves increased to 3.4 months of imports from 3.1 months in 2020, thanks also to regional fiscal consolidation policies and rising oil prices.

- *Imports/Exports:* Oil constitutes about 20 percent of GDP, 35 percent of revenue, and 75 percent of exports. Export value increased by 55.3 percent due to the increase in oil prices (66.4 percent), helping the current account deficit narrow from 7.8 percent of GDP to 5.6 percent in 2021.
- *Expenditure:* Total expenditure, on the other hand, increased by almost 2 percent of non-oil GDP mainly due to a 12 percent growth in the wage bill and higher security spending.
- *Public debt:* Total public debt slightly increased while debt services remained too high; the Government has requested a debt restructuring under the G20 Common Framework to help restore debt sustainability.
- *Investment:* The country relies heavily on foreign assistance and foreign capital for most public and private sector investment. Nevertheless, investment is difficult due to limited infrastructure, lack of trained workers, extensive government bureaucracy and corruption.
- *Poverty:* "The extreme poverty rate (US$1.9/ day per capita, 2011 PPP) is projected to have increased by more than 2 pp between 2020 and 2021, reaching 37.8 percent, with the number of extremely poor increasing from 5.8 to 6.2 million. The COVID-19 crisis further impacted the livelihoods of poor and vulnerable households. In high-frequency phone surveys in 2021, 76 percent of households reported a loss in their total household income and 21 percent of households seeking health care could not get access to it."
- **Post COVID-19 scenario:** "Based on current projections for oil prices, the global recovery, and the Government's gradual fiscal consolidation program, the economy is expected to. grow by 2.8 percent in 2022 (-0.2 percent per capita). The positive outlook for the oil sector, services, and agriculture should strengthen over the medium-term, with growth averaging 3.7 percent per annum. Higher global energy and food prices due to the Russia-Ukraine war is projected to increase inflation in 2022."

According to the Heritage Foundation's [2022 Index of Economic Freedom](#) (page 140):

- *Economic freedom:* "Chad's economic freedom score is 49.8, making its economy the 146th freest in the 2022 Index. Chad is ranked 34th among 47 countries in the Sub-Saharan Africa region, and its overall score is below the regional and world averages. Chad's business freedom is severely repressed. Poor infrastructure, a dearth of skilled labor, inadequate and unreliable electricity, weak enforcement of contracts, and high taxes are just some of the things preventing improvement. Illegal child and forced labor persist. The government maintains subsidies to inefficient state-owned enterprises, and the country's economy remains distorted by heavily subsidized oil. A five-year trend of very slowly expanding economic freedom ended this year, but Chad has recorded a 0.8-point overall gain of economic freedom since 2017, mostly due to increased fiscal health, and has progressed incrementally within the top half of the 'Repressed' category. Scores for government spending and monetary freedom are very good, but rule of law and most other indicators exhibit weaknesses."

Social and cultural landscape

According to the CIA Factbook:

- *Main ethnic groups:* Sara (Ngambaye/Sara/Madjingaye/Mbaye) 30.5%, Kanembu/Bornu/ Buduma 9.8%, Arab 9.7%, Wadai/Maba/Masalit/Mimi 7%, Gorane 5.8%, Masa/Musseye/ Musgum 4.9%, many others (2014-15 est.)
- *Main languages:* French (official), Arabic (official), Sara (in the south), more than 120 different languages and dialects
- *Urban population:* 23.8% of the total population (2021)
- *Rate of urbanization:* 4.1% annual rate of change (2020-2025 est.)
- *Median age:* 16.1 years
- *Expected years of schooling:* 7.3 years
- *Literacy rate, adult (15 years of age and above):* 22.3%
- *Employment to population ratio (15 years of age and older):* 69.4%
- *Unemployment, total:* 1.9% of labor force
- *Unemployment, youth (ages 15-24):* is 3.1%

According to the UNHCR Operational data portal (updated 28 February 2023):

- *Refugees/IDPs:* As of 28 February 2023, updated records of refugees and IDPs in Chad were estimated at 594,933 and 381,289 respectively. There were also 5,064 asylum seekers registered in the country.

According to UNCHR Global Focus 2020:

- "Despite ... limited resources, the Government of Chad continues to have a positive and welcoming attitude towards refugees. For more than a decade, it has hosted around 340,000 Sudanese refugees in the east, 100,000 Central African refugees in the south and opened doors to more than 15,000 Nigerian refugees from Boko Haram insurgency in the Lake Chad region."

According to the UN Global Human Development Indicators (HDI country data profile):

- *Human Development Index:* 0.398 with a ranking of 187 out of 189 countries. Chad is one of the poorest countries in the world.
- *Life expectancy at birth:* 54.2 years
- *Gender Development Index (GDI):* 0.764
- *Poverty:* 38.4% of the population are living below the income poverty line, PPP $1.90 a day.

Technological landscape

Chad is among the poorest countries in Africa. Coups and civil wars have made progress in the country very difficult. One of the areas affected is technology. The country still depends on non-electronic methods for doing business.

According to Internet World Stats (IWS 2022):

- *Internet usage:* 13 % of the population – survey date: December 2021 (most recent survey available at time of writing)
- *Facebook users:* 3.4% of the population – survey date: January 2022

According to the World Bank country profile:

- *Mobile phone subscriptions:* 48 per 100 people

According to [BuddeComm research](#) (updated March 2023):

- "Chad finally gained access to international fibre bandwidth in 2012. Its national backbone infrastructure remains underdeveloped. The World Bank-funded Central African Backbone (CAB) project takes in Chad, while the country is also party to a Trans-Saharan Backbone project which will link a fibre cable to Nigeria and Algeria".

Security situation

Boko Haram, based in northern Nigeria, has also created problems for Chad. The Islamist group has sent suicide bombers to the region bordering with Nigeria and killed civilians and Chadian soldiers. An example of one such attack took place on 22 May 2022: ISWAP operatives [abducted and executed three Christians](#) in the Litri region on the Chad-Nigeria border (Spotlight on Global Jihad, 19-25 May 2022).

The Chadian government has participated in attempts at restoring security and peace in the region. In 2013, Chad sent troops to the Central Africa Republic to mitigate the violence that followed the coup. Chadian troops also helped French forces in retaking the northern part of Mali from Islamist rebels. Chadian troops are also 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 terrorism in the region, Western governments were forced to stay quiet about issues of repression occurring within the late Déby's regime.

Chad consulted with the governments of Nigeria, Benin, Niger, and Cameroon in August 2015 to seek solutions to the security problems caused by Boko Haram. The country has also conducted very swift judicial process; in 2015, ten Boko Haram members were formally [executed](#) after they were tried and sentenced to death (The Guardian, 30 August 2015). There are however other rebel groups active in Chad. The late President Déby reportedly died after being wounded while [fighting rebels](#) in the northern part of the country (New York Times, 20 April 2021).

According to the Crisis24 country report (Last update: 8 April 2022):

- "Overall, Chad has experienced improved stability over the past decade, amid increased investment in security resources and a peace deal with Sudan to cease the sponsoring of insurgent groups operating across the two countries' borders. However, the death of longtime president Idriss Déb in April 2021 has significantly destabilized the country's political system. Déby's son has taken power under the guise of a transitional military council, suspending the Constitution in the process. The new junta has faced numerous

large-scale protests from Chadian civil society and opposition groups. However, France (Chad's main security partner) continues to back the junta."

- "Chad's involvement in military operations against terrorist groups in the region has made it the target of extremists, and the country remains vulnerable to further attacks."

Christians have been the target of Boko Haram on many occasions in neighboring countries. Thus, it is safe to conclude that the threat of Boko Haram significantly affects Christians in Chad too (as exemplified in the attack on 22 May 2022 mentioned above).

Trends analysis

1) Chad is sandwiched between very volatile countries

Libya, Sudan, CAR, Niger, Nigeria, and Cameroon are all neighboring countries dealing with a variety of conflicts. If the situations in these countries deteriorate, Chad will be seriously impacted. The lives of Christians in the country will not only be affected by what happens in Chad itself, but also by what will happen in those neighboring countries.

2) Boko Haram and the Darfur crisis continue to threaten internal stability

Despite the international community's support to mitigate instability in neighboring countries, Boko Haram and the continuing Darfur crisis are still threatening to destabilize the country (UN News, 21 February 2018). The current levels of conflict in the country and political instability could lead to a deepening crisis, despite support from the international community. Another important factor is Boko Haram: If the action of the joint task-forces which were 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 close to 600,000 refugees. Thus, if the problem in Darfur is not resolved, stability in eastern Chad is hardly possible. If this situation continues, Christians will remain susceptible to violence and various other restrictions.

3) Security concerns following death of President Déby (senior)

The death of Chad's President Idriss Déby raised concerns about stability in the country and throughout West Africa. The late president was an essential ally in the fight against terrorism and it is not quite clear what the situation will be like with the new transitional government. According to some security experts, there is uncertainty about the stability of the current interim arrangement by the military council and about unity within the ranks of the army (VOA News, 23 April 2021). There is a possibility that Islamist insurgents will actually use the opportunity to further destabilize the country. This could have ripple effects across West Africa.

4) Christians remain vulnerable

Due to the situation outlined above, the Christian community remains very vulnerable due to a variety of factors:

- The dictatorial regime - Political opposition figures and a section of civil society are highly critical of the Transitional Military Council. They are concerned about its defiance of the constitutional requirement that the National Assembly's president oversee the transition,

and about the takeover of power by the army.
- Jihadists in the region
- The continual influence of ultra-conservative/Wahhabi Islam and the increasing presence of rebel groups in the northern part of the country.

External Links - Keys to understanding

- Recent history: assassinated - http://www.historyworld.net/wrldhis/PlainTextHistories.asp?historyid=ad40#ixzz410R0Gran
- Recent history: seized power - http://www.irinnews.org/feature/2006/04/19/idriss-deby-president-under-siege
- Recent history: put on trial - https://www.hrw.org/blog-feed/trial-hissene-habre
- Political and legal landscape: boycotted - http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-13187097
- Political and legal landscape: accused - https://www.amnesty.org/en/press-releases/2008/02/chad-authorities-must-act-prevent-extrajudicial-executions-20080207/
- Political and legal landscape: convicted - https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-36411466
- Political and legal landscape: fine - https://www.telegraph.co.uk/world-news/2022/08/11/people-who-refuse-marriage-proposals-chad-fined/
- Economic landscape: 2022 Index of Economic Freedom - https://www.heritage.org/index/country/chad
- Social and cultural landscape: UNHCR - https://data.unhcr.org/en/country/tcd
- Social and cultural landscape: Global Focus 2020 - https://reporting.unhcr.org/node/10505
- Technological landscape: BuddeComm research - https://www.budde.com.au/Research/Chad-Telecoms-Mobile-and-Broadband-Statistics-and-Analyses
- Security situation: abducted and executed three Christians - https://www.terrorism-info.org.il/app/uploads/2022/05/E_080_22.pdf
- Security situation: executed - http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/aug/30/chad-executes-10-members-boko-haram-firing-squad
- Security situation: fighting rebels - https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/20/world/africa/president-chad-killed.html
- Trends analysis: Darfur crisis - https://news.un.org/en/story/2018/02/1003251
- Trends analysis: stability - https://www.voanews.com/africa/chad-president-debys-death-raises-security-concerns-west-africa

WWL 2023: Church information / Chad

Christian origins

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

Church spectrum today

Chad: Church networks	Christians	%
Orthodox	0	0.0
Catholic	2,734,000	44.7
Protestant	1,365,000	22.3
Independent	698,000	11.4
Unaffiliated	1,323,000	21.6
Doubly-affiliated Christians	0	0.0
Total	**6,120,000**	**100.0**
(Any deviation from the total number of Christians stated above is due to the rounding of decimals)		
Evangelical movement	1,577,000	25.8
Renewalist movement	470,000	7.7

Data source: Johnson T M and Zurlo G A, eds, World Christian Database (Leiden/Boston: Brill, accessed April 2022)

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:** *Christians 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.* **Evangelical movement:** *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.* **Renewalist movement:** *Church members involved in Pentecostal/Charismatic renewal.*

Most Christian communities and churches are to be found in the south.

Areas where Christians face most difficulties

Islamic oppression is particularly evident in the Kanem, Salamat, Lac and Sila regions. The influence of radical Islam 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.

Christian communities and how they are affected

Communities of expatriate Christians: Expatriate Christians are not involuntarily isolated in Chad and so are not counted as a separate WWL category.

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.

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 is also a 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 generally viewed as being '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 more recent appearance in the country and their more visible activities, these communities tend to be more exposed to violent opposition.

WWL 2023: Persecution Dynamics / Chad

Reporting period

1 October 2021 - 30 September 2022

Position on the World Watch List

Chad: World Watch List	Points	WWL Rank
WWL 2023	58	60
WWL 2022	55	63
WWL 2021	53	62
WWL 2020	56	58
WWL 2019	48	60

Ranks are shown above whenever the country scored 41 points or more in the WWL 2019-2023 reporting periods

While average pressure increased only very slightly, the violence score went up from 5.6 to 7.6 points, due largely to a greater number of Christian houses and businesses being attacked. Christians often face discrimination from local officials and violence from Boko Haram and armed Fulani herdsmen - including abduction. Those who live outside the capital, N'Djamena, especially around the Lake Chad basin, live in constant fear of attack. 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. In general, pressure and violence in the country is shaped by many factors, mainly:

- As in other Sahel countries, Christians in Chad are not immune from the influence of Boko Haram and al-Qaeda-linked jihadists. Those who live outside N'Djamena, especially around the Lake Chad basin, live in constant fear of attack.

- Chad is bordered by some of the most volatile countries in Africa: Niger, Nigeria, Cameroon, Sudan, Libya, and CAR. All these countries are affected by the presence of violent Islamic militants in one way or another. In this context, Chad government forces have been fighting Boko Haram in collaboration with other countries in the region.

Persecution engines

Chad: Persecution engines	Abbreviation	Level of influence
Islamic oppression	IO	Very strong
Religious nationalism	RN	Not at all
Ethno-religious hostility	ERH	Not at all
Clan oppression	CO	Medium
Christian denominational protectionism	CDP	Weak
Communist and post-Communist oppression	CPCO	Not at all
Secular intolerance	SI	Not at all
Dictatorial paranoia	DPA	Medium
Organized corruption and crime	OCC	Medium

The scale for the level of influence of Persecution engines in society is: Not at all / Very weak / Weak / Medium / Strong / Very strong. For more information see WWL Methodology.

Islamic oppression (Very strong)

There is no organization as such that is trying to bring Chad under Islam, but through co-operation with Arab 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.

Dictatorial paranoia (Medium)

President Idriss Déby came to power in 1990 when his Zaghawa-led rebel group took power through armed struggle. To maintain power at all costs, the government uses religious and ethnic sentiments to get support from tribal groups. The president ruled the country with an iron fist, arresting and persecuting opposition groups. Déby died in April 2021 and was replaced by his son Mahamat Déby. No reforms have been introduced and the son replaced the father without following the constitutional order of power transfer.

Clan oppression (Medium)

In north-eastern Chad (particularly in the Ennedi region, homeland to Zaghawa-born president of Chad, General Déby) the persecution of Christians based on perceived ethnic differences is a commonplace experience. In the southern parts of the country, where African traditional reli-

gions have a stronghold, Christians are pressured into taking part in their rituals and festivals – and also experience pressure from leaders of their own ethnic group.

Organized corruption and crime (Medium)

Chad is a very corrupt nation and scored just 20/100, ranking 164 in Transparency International 2021 Corruption index (CPI 2021). This environment of impunity and lack of rule of law has given any person or group a free license to persecute Christians. It also gives jihadists the possibility of exploiting the situation.

Drivers of persecution

Chad: Drivers of persecution	IO	RN	ERH	CO	CDP	CPCO	SI	DPA	OCC
	VERY STRONG			MEDIUM	WEAK			MEDIUM	MEDIUM
Government officials								Medium	Medium
Ethnic group leaders				Medium					
Non-Christian religious leaders	Strong								
Religious leaders of other churches					Weak				
Violent religious groups	Very strong								
Citizens (people from the broader society), including mobs	Medium								
One's own (extended) family	Medium								
Organized crime cartels or networks								Medium	

The scale for the level of influence of Drivers of persecution in society is: Not at all / Very weak / Weak / Medium / Strong / Very strong. Please note that "-" denotes "not at all". For more information see WWL Methodology.

Drivers of Islamic oppression

- *Non-Christian religious leaders (Strong):* In the northern parts of the country, local Muslim officials mistreat Christians and often refuse to give them access to government services. They frequently make Christians wait longer and have been openly hostile to Christians with a Muslim background.
- *Violent Religious groups (Very strong):* 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. Family and relatives of converts are also significant drivers of *Islamic oppression*.
- *One's own (extended) family (Medium):* Family members of converts do not accept the conversion of their family members to Christianity. They harass them, expel them and deny them access to resources.

- ***Citizens (people from the broader society) (Medium)***: If someone is seen as a convert, or if there is a Christian in a Muslim-majority community, it is often the case those Christians would be ostracized.

Drivers of Dictatorial paranoia

- ***Government officials (Medium)***: These are mainly government officials and political parties. The government is not democratic and curtails some fundamental rights like freedom of association and expression which are intrinsically related to freedom of religion. In order to consolidate his base and hold onto power, President Déby senior had been encouraging the influence of Islam in society at the expense of Christians and adherents of African traditional religions.

Drivers of Clan oppression

- ***Ethnic leaders (Medium):*** 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 adhering to traditional African religions in the south.
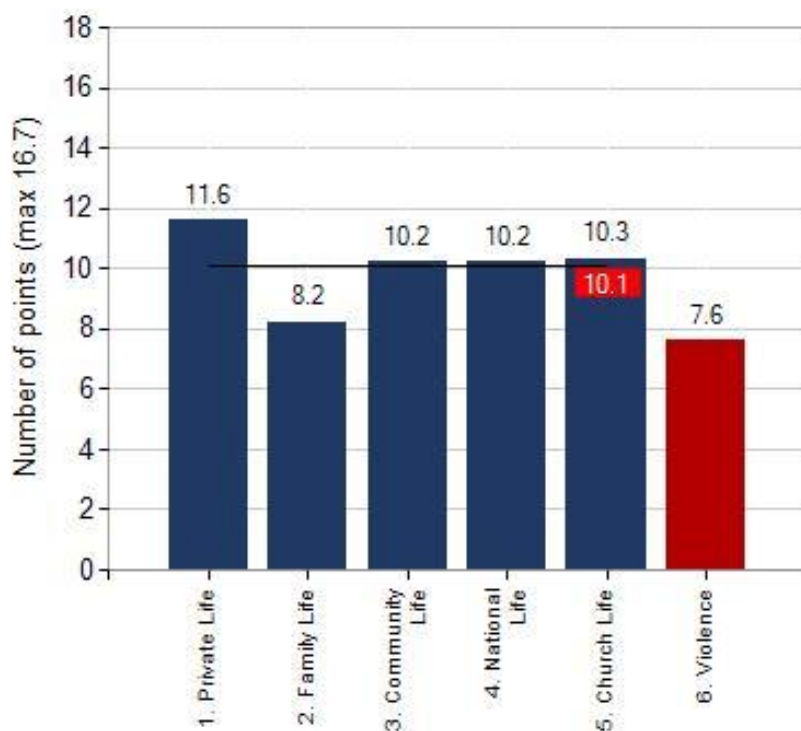
Drivers of Organized corruption and crime

- ***Government officials (Medium):*** Government officials are so corrupt that it is easy for the those who discriminate, harass, or even abuse Christians to act without any accountability. Furthermore, the fact that those who are in power to apply law are compromised with corruption means persecutors are encouraged or given chances to carry out more acts of persecution.
- ***Organized networks (Medium():*** Various criminal networks have ties with groups in other countries.

The Persecution pattern

The WWL 2023 Persecution pattern for Chad shows (see chart below):

- The average pressure on Christians in Chad is high at 10.1 points, a rise from 9.9 points in WWL 2022.
- Pressure in the *Private sphere* score is the highest at 11.6 points, followed by the *Church sphere* with 10.3 points and the *Community and National spheres* with a score of 10.2 points.
- The level of violence is categorized as 'high' at 7.6 points, up from 5.6 points in WWL 2022.

WWL 2023 Persecution Pattern for Chad

Pressure in the 5 spheres of life

In each of the five spheres of life discussed below, four questions have been selected from the WWL 2023 questionnaire for brief commentary and explanation. The selection usually (but not always) reflects the highest scoring elements. In some cases, an additional paragraph per sphere is included to give further information deemed important. (To see how individual questions are scored on a scale of 0-4 points, please see the "WWL Scoring example" in the WWL Methodology, available at: https://opendoorsanalytical.org/world-watch-list-documentation/, password: freedom).

Pressure in Block 1 / Private sphere

Block 1.1: Conversion has been opposed, forbidden, or punishable, including conversion from one type of Christianity to another. (3.25 points)

Chad is a Muslim majority nation located in a region where radicalization is growing fast, also among the general population. There are no laws that prohibit conversion; however, Muslim families and communities oppose those who would leave Islam to join Christianity. This opposition has serious implications for resource-sharing, marriage, child custody and inheritance.

Block 1.2: It has been risky for Christians to conduct acts of Christian worship by themselves (e.g. prayer, Bible reading, etc.). (3.00 points)

The last 15 years have seen a rise in violence against Christians. As mentioned under 1.1, conversion from Islam to Christianity will be opposed and can lead to killing in remote areas. If a convert is seen praying or reading the Bible, they will be dealt with violently, which is why most

conduct such acts in hiding. Those who are caught doing so, face consequences in terms of losing basic necessities and other rights, community participation and so forth. They may also be expelled from homes and communities.

Block 1.4: It has been risky for Christians to reveal their faith in written forms of personal expression (including expressions in blogs and Facebook etc.). (2.75 points)

The country is is under an authoritarian regime and is being influenced by Islamic radicalization. First, freedom of expression is generally restricted in Chad. Secondly, there is the community and family situation: Christians who live outside the capital city, especially those who are converts to Christianity, may be attacked by their families if they discuss their faith and be expelled from their communities.

Block 1.3: It has been dangerous to privately own or keep Christian materials. (2.50 points)

This form of pressure is mostly the case in the context of of conversion (due to family and community pressure or to being discovered by jihadists). Those who live with their Islamic or ATR families must make sure that they hide their Bibles of Christian materials. Non-convert Christians who live in remote areas are also affected and need to keep their materials out of sight because they can never be sure who might be spying on them for jihadist groups.

Pressure in Block 2 / Family sphere

Block 2.9: Children of Christians have been harassed or discriminated against because of their parents' faith. (2.75 points)

Harassment of Christians in a Muslim-majority country has become a common experience for Christians in many countries particularly in countries with a similar socio-political landscape to Chad. Chad and the region have seen increasing Islamic radicalization which has created intolerance toward Christians. Children of Christians go through the same ordeal as their parents. Often at school, children of known converts are insulted by classmates who tell them that they have betrayed the Muslim faith and will go to hell.

Block 2.3: Christians have been hindered in celebrating a Christian wedding for faith-related reasons. (2.50 points)

This is particularly related to safety. As stated above, Chad and the region have seen increasing Islamic radicalization. This has created an environment where Christians find it difficult to live their Christian life openly. For example, it is often risky to celebrate Christian weddings with Christian songs and traditions. In areas where the radical groups like Boko Haram have access, such celebrations can put the lives of Christians at risk. In other places, it can lead to expulsion from the community or refusal to allow access to community resources.

Block 2.8: Christian children have been pressured into attending anti-Christian or majority religion teaching at any level of education. (2.50 points)

In Chad, particularly in the Northern Region, schools only have teachers of Islamic Religion and none for teaching Christian Religious Knowledge. This means children of Christians have no op-

tion but to attend Islamic classes. Furthermore, those from poor families have no option and their persecutors know that.

Block 2.11: Spouses of converts have been put under pressure (successfully or unsuccessfully) by others to divorce. (2.50 points)

As in other Muslim majority countries, in Chad inter-religious marriage is highly discouraged. In this context, spouses of converts from Islam are regularly put under pressure to divorce as a means of compelling the 'unfaithful' to face the consequences (i.e. punishment) or return to the Islamic fold. This has a huge impact on the future of the entire family as it leads to disintegration and possible psychological effects on both children and parents.

Pressure in Block 3 / Community sphere

Block 3.1: Christians have been harassed, threatened or obstructed in their daily lives for faith-related reasons (e.g. for not meeting majority religion or traditional dress codes, beard codes etc.). (3.75 points)

Harassment at community level has become one of the common forms of pressure on Christians in countries and areas where Christians are a minority. Christians face difficulties in obtaining employment and then face discrimination and harassment at the workplace. In the northern part of the country where Christians are the minority, discrimination and bullying is widespread. Also, in the past years, Boko Haram has attacked and destroyed the properties and businesses of many Christians, which has caused great fear and the displacement of many people.

Block 3.2: Christians have been monitored by their local communities or by private groups (this includes reporting to police, being shadowed, telephone lines listened to, emails read/censored, etc.). (3.00 points)

Monitoring is two-fold. First, in some cases, government agents monitor Christians in their communities. Secondly, as mentioned above, Chad has seen rising of radicalization which impacted relationships between different religious groups. Christians are being targeted for their faith. Their movement is highly monitored by radical groups. This is particularly the case for Christians (especially converts) who live in Muslim-dominated areas.

Block 3.3: Christians have been under threat of abduction and/or forced marriage. (3.00 points)

For many years, the Sahel region has seen Christians being abducted and, in many cases, foreign missionaries or aid workers have been targeted. Large numbers of Christian women or youth have also been kidnapped. In Chad, abductions are often carried out by Boko Haram. Forced marriage is also a threat for female converts, especially in remote areas and IDP-camps. This is seen as a strategy to prevent conversion from Islam to Christianity.

Block 3.4: Christians been hindered in sharing community resources because of their faith (e.g. clean drinking water). (3.00 points)

This is related to several issues at the community level, particularly 3.1. Christians face such obstruction in rural communities, in particular. Especially in the north and east of the country, access to drinking water is very difficult for Christians. Wherever there is a water collection point in Muslim majority areas, Christians will be discriminated against. In addition, also in IDP camps, Christians face serious discrimination, especially those who are known converts from Islam. In many circumstances, exposed converts leave their homes to avoid such community persecution.

Pressure in Block 4 / National sphere

Block 4.3: Christians have been forced by law or in practice to act against their conscience, e.g. regarding military service or in certain professions. (3.00 points)

Forcing Christians to act against their conscience has become one of the tools that persecutors use to either compromise Christians or to force them to flee. In Chad, this goes beyond military service and is more complex and localized. In some circumstances, Christians are forced to follow the orders of their chiefs in their local communities. These orders are at times against Christian faith and can involve corruption. If Christians oppose this, they risk losing their job and even their families' security.

Block 4.5: Christians have been discriminated against when engaging with the authorities (local administration, government, army, etc.) for faith-related reasons. (3.00 points)

This issue has two levels.

- Firstly, nepotism, intolerance and other persecution dynamics are at play. It affects all types of Christian community and is often the case when local authorities give priority to their fellow Muslims. It is particularly evident in the northern part of the county. In the context of growing radicalization, massive corruption and absence of rule of law, discrimination is clearly taking place.
- Secondly, the government discriminates against Christians, especially those who are not deemed to be supporters of the government.

Block 4.6: Christians have been barred from public office, or has promotion been hindered for faith-related reasons. (3.00 points)

This is related to 4.5. It is happening in a very subtle way, with or without the direct knowledge of government officials. In schools, civil service institutions and hospitals etc., Christians often face extreme pressure and either accept their second-class status or leave their job. The country has been presenting itself internationally as a true fighter against jihadists, yet the practice at home has been one of appeasing the local Islamic population.

Block 4.2: Officials have refused to recognize an individual's conversion as recorded in government administration systems, identify cards (etc.). (2.25 points)

This has to be seen in the context of culture and the growing religious tension in both the region and the country. At the national level, there is no written policy about this. However, society is conservative and according to sources at the local level, attempts to record ones conversion have been rejected.

Pressure in Block 5 / Church sphere

Block 5.1: Church activities have been monitored, hindered, disturbed, or obstructed. (3.50 points)

In many countries with a similar context, close monitoring is a major form of pressure faced by churches. There were several reports of cases in Chad where the activities of churches in Muslim and ATR-dominated areas were monitored and disrupted. Most Muslim and traditional tribal leaders believe that any church activity is an attempt to convert the local population to Christianity. It is also important to note that members of the dominant Christian denominations (such as Roman Catholics and traditional Protestant churches) will also at times monitor and obstruct the activities of the newer, non-traditional Christian groups. As one goes outside the capital city, the monitoring and interference get worse, especially in the northern part of the country. This issue has been growing in intensity over the years due to the presence of societal radicalization.

Block 5.2: It has been difficult to get registration or legal status for churches at any level of government. (3.50 points)

As per the country's laws, all religious groups should be registered with the Ministry of Territorial Planning, Urban Development and Housing. Religious groups which fail to do so, lose all legal rights which forces them to gather illegally. The registration process is complicated and at times very lengthy, with some officials asking for bribes. In some areas, communities will not allow churches to be built in their midst.

Block 5.5: Churches have been hindered from organizing Christian activities outside church buildings. (3.50 points)

Security and safety is important in this aspect. Chad is located in a region that has been terrorized by jihadist groups such as Boko Haram. Organizing outdoor Christian activities is risky and dangerous for Christians living in northern and central parts of the country, especially due to the influence of jihadist groups active in the border regions of neighboring countries. This is also sometimes true for Christians living in the remote southern part of the country where traditional chiefs control community activities. Chad is also run by a dictatorial regime and reports from human rights organizations state that - although churches may by law use public spaces for activities - rights such as freedom of expression and freedom of assembly are liable to be violated, leading to negative repercussions for churches.

Block 5.3: Christian communities have been hindered in building or renovating church buildings or in claiming historical religious premises and places of worship which had been taken from them earlier. (3.25 points)

In addition to the safety and security that could hamper church building, there are also other practical matters that are not necessarily outlined in the laws of the country. To build a church it is necessary to obtain an 'authorization of operation' permit; the application process for this can last a long time. Sometimes, church land is taken over by the state, forcing some church groups to move elsewhere. Building a new church outside the major cities and towns has become unthinkable.

Violence

Violence is defined in WWL Methodology as the deprivation of physical freedom or as bodily harm to Christians or damage to their property. It includes severe threats (mental abuse). The table is based on reported cases as much as possible, but since many incidents go unreported, the numbers must be understood as being minimum figures. The following 5 points should be considered when using the data provided in the Block 6 table:

1. Some incidents go unreported because the Christians involved choose not to speak about the hostility being faced. *Possible reasons for this may be:*

- *Doing so would expose them to more attacks. For example, if a family member is killed because of his/her faith, the survivors might decide to keep silent about the circumstances of the killing to avoid provoking any further attacks.*

- *In some circumstances, the reticence to pass on information may be due to the danger of exposure caused by converts returning to their previous faith.*

- *If persecution is related to sexual violence - due to stigma, survivors often do not tell even their closest relatives.*

- *In some cultural settings, if your loved one is killed, you might be under the obligation to take revenge. Christians not wishing to do that, may decide to keep quiet about it.*

2. Other incidents go unreported for the following possible reasons:

- *Some incidents never reach the public consciousness, because no one really knows about it; or the incident is simply not considered worth reporting; or media coverage is deliberately blocked or distorted; or media coverage is not deliberately blocked, but the information somehow gets lost; or the incidents are deliberately not reported widely for security reasons (e.g. for the protection of local church leaders).*

- *In situations where Christians have been discriminated against for many years, armed conflict can make them additionally vulnerable. Christians killed in areas where fighting regularly takes place are unlikely to be reported separately. Examples in recent years have been Sudan, Syria and Myanmar.*

- *Christians who die through the deprivation of basic necessities such as clean water and medical care (due to long-term discrimination) are unlikely to be reported separately. Christians are not always killed directly; they can be so squeezed by regulations and other oppressive factors that they die – not at once, but in the course of years. This often includes the deprivation of basic necessities such as clean water and medical care, or exclusion from government assisted socio-economic development projects. These numbers could be immense.*

3. For further discussion *(with a focus on the complexity of assessing the numbers of Christians killed for their faith) please see World Watch Monitor's article dated 13 November 2013 available at: https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2013/11/number-of-christian-martyrs-continues-to-cause-debate/.*

4. The use of symbolic numbers: *In cases where it has been impossible to count exactly, a symbolic round figure (10*, 100* etc.) is given and indicated with an asterisk. A symbolic number of 10* could in reality even be 100 or more but the real number is uncertain. A symbolic number of 100* could go well over 1000 but the real number is uncertain. A symbolic number of 1,000* could go well over 10,000 but, again, the real number is uncertain. The same applies for symbolic numbers 10,000*, 100,000* and 1,000,000*: Each could indicate much higher numbers, but WWR chooses to be cautious because the real number is uncertain.*

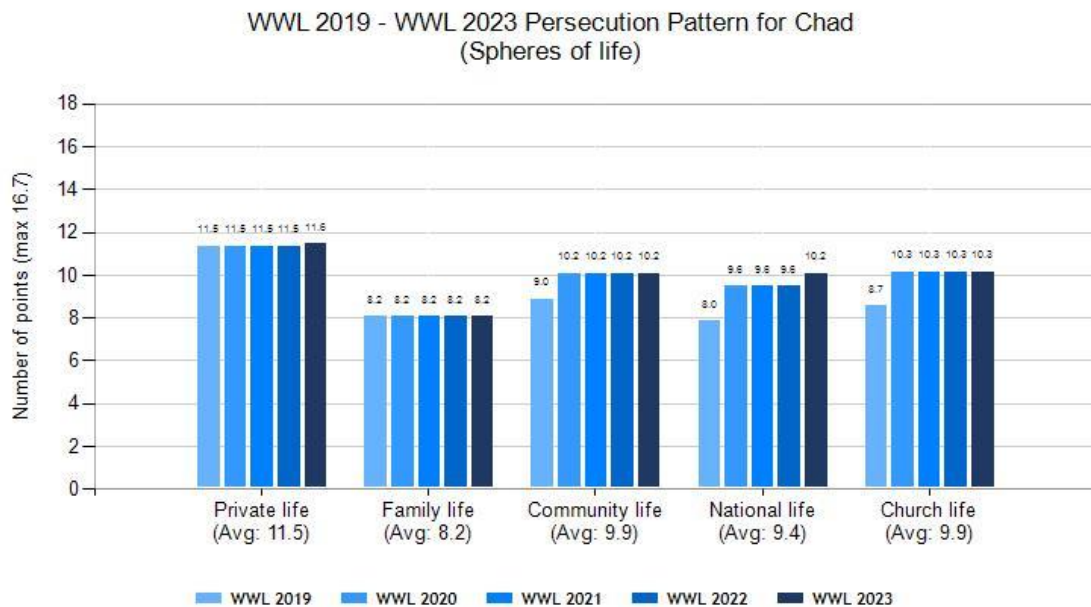| Chad: Violence Block question	WWL 2023	WWL 2022
6.1 How many Christians have been killed for faith-related reasons (including state sanctioned executions)?	5	0
6.2 How many churches or Christian buildings (schools, hospitals, cemeteries, etc.) have been attacked, damaged, bombed, looted, destroyed, burned down, closed or confiscated for faith-related reasons?	2	6
6.3 How many Christians have been detained for faith-related reasons?	0	0
6.4 How many Christians have been sentenced to jail, labor camp, sent to psychiatric hospital as punishment, or similar things for faith-related reasons?	0	0
6.5 How many Christians have been abducted for faith-related reasons (including Christians missing in a persecution context)?	5 *	0
6.6 How many Christians have been raped or otherwise sexually harassed for faith-related reasons?	10 *	10 *
6.7 How many cases have there been of forced marriages of Christians to non-Christians?	10	10 *
6.8 How many Christians have been otherwise physically or mentally abused for faith-related reasons (including beatings and death threats)?	10 *	10 *
6.9 How many houses of Christians or other property (excluding shops) have been attacked, damaged, bombed, looted, destroyed, burned down or confiscated for faith-related reasons?	10 *	0
6.10 How many shops or businesses of Christians have been attacked, damaged, bombed, looted, destroyed, burned down, closed or confiscated for faith-related reasons?	10 *	0
6.11 How many Christians have been forced to leave their homes or go into hiding in-country for faith-related reasons?	10	10 *
6.12 How many Christians have been forced to leave the country for faith-related reasons?	0	0

5 Year trends

The following three charts show the levels of pressure and violence faced by Christians in the country over the last five WWL reporting periods.

5 Year trends: Average pressure

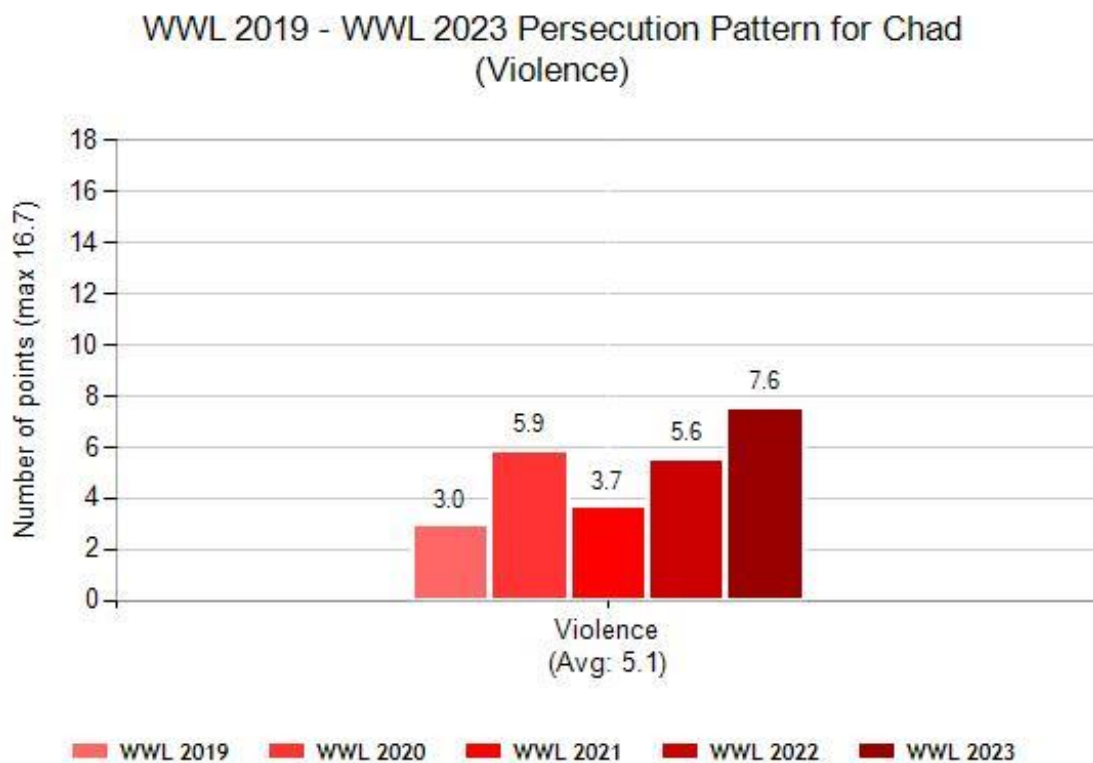| Chad: WWL 2019 - WWL 2023 Persecution Pattern history	Average pressure over 5 Spheres of life
2023	10.1
2022	9.9
2021	9.9
2020	9.9
2019	9.1

The average pressure on Christians in Chad was stable at the 9.9 point level for three consecutive reporting periods (WWL 2020- WWL 2022), and rose to 10.1 points in WWL 2023. This high level reflects the emergence of various Islamic militant groups in the region which also impacts the local religious discourse.

5 Year trends: Pressure in each sphere of life

The chart above shows that the average pressure in the *Private sphere* has been highest over over the five WWL reporting periods scoring the five year average of 11.5 points, followed by the *Community* and *Church spheres* at a five year average of 9.9 points. In general, pressure has stabilized in all spheres of life, although there was a marked rise in WWL 2023 in *National life*.

5 Year trends: Violence against Christians

WWL 2019 - WWL 2023 Persecution Pattern for Chad
(Violence)

[Bar chart showing "Number of points (max 16.7)" on the y-axis from 0 to 18, with bars for Violence (Avg: 5.1): WWL 2019 = 3.0, WWL 2020 = 5.9, WWL 2021 = 3.7, WWL 2022 = 5.6, WWL 2023 = 7.6]

Legend: WWL 2019, WWL 2020, WWL 2021, WWL 2022, WWL 2023

Violence in Chad does not show a consistent pattern, however the last three reporting period do show a rising trend, with the highest recorded level of all the 5 years in WWL 2023, which is indeed a worrying situation.

Gender-specific religious persecution / Female

Group	Female Pressure Points
Economic	Denied inheritance or possessions; Discrimination/harassment via education; Economic harassment via business/job/work access; Economic harassment via fines
Political and Legal	Denied custody of children; Forced divorce; Forced marriage
Security	Abduction; Incarceration by family (house arrest); Violence – physical; Violence – sexual
Social and Cultural	Denied access to social community/networks; Violence – psychological; Violence – Verbal
Technological	-

Women are subservient to men in Chadian society. Reflecting these norms, Chad remains one of just three countries in the world where married women require permission from their husbands to open a bank account – an estimated 15% of women have their own bank account (Georgetown, "Women, Peace and Security Index 2021/22"). Within this predominately Islamic, patriarchal context, Christian women are vulnerable both on account of their religion as well as their gender.

Christian women in Chad face both pressure and violence on account of their faith. Christian women are also vulnerable to sexual violence at the hands of Islamic militants. A country expert explained: "There have been reports of Christian women being kidnapped and forced into marriage across parts of the nation where Boko Haram militia have wreaked havoc … particularly in rural areas and in Internally displaced people's camps." Women and girls who have been raped and consequently impregnated typically suffer ongoing psychological distress and low self-esteem. Traumatized rape victims sometimes view their children as a perpetual reminder of the crime committed against them. Local sources report that the wider society around them, too, is unsympathetic to their plight, viewing them as tarnished. More generally, sexual and gender-based violence has been exacerbated by forced population movement in the country, including the worsening socio-economic situation and shrinking humanitarian support (UNOCHA: Chad Situation Report, 15 January 2021; UNHCR, 25 November 2022).

Converts to Christianity from a Muslim background face strong pressure from their family and local community, the aim being to make them recant. The practice of forced marriage is widespread across Chad, particularly in rural areas (67% are married by 18; Girls Not Brides). Parents of converts may forcibly marry them to a Muslim, with the aim of restoring them to Islam. According to a country expert, girls who refuse these marriages can face serious repercussions, including violence from their parents and other members of their family or community. If already married at the point of conversion, the husbands of female converts are often pressured by their families and society to divorce them and deny them access to their children, to punish the 'unfaithful' and pressurize them into giving up their Christian faith. Gender-based violence in such marriages is commonly reported. Reflecting on the ramifications of such pressure and violence on converts, an internal source explained that "due to the vulnerabilities resulting from females being deprived of the basic necessities because of their conversion, some of these females resort to prostitution and other unwholesome practices to survive. Homes become broken and lack maternal care as a result of mothers being forcefully divorced or being deprived of contact with their children."

Women and girls may also find it difficult to access Christian community or attend church services, as they can easily be subjected to house arrest by their family. Some parents will restrict them by more indirect means, loading chores on to them to prevent them from leaving the house. Women and girls may also suffer physical beatings or disinheritance.

Gender-specific religious persecution / Male

Group	Male Pressure Points
Economic	Economic harassment via business/job/work access
Political and Legal	-
Security	Abduction; Forced out of home – expulsion; Military/militia conscription/service against conscience; Violence – death; Violence – physical
Social and Cultural	Violence – psychological; Violence – Verbal
Technological	-

Christian men and boys in Chad are most vulnerable to persecution from Islamic militant groups such as Boko Haram. Some have reportedly been abducted, forced to convert to Islam and forcibly recruited into the ranks of jihadist groups to serve as fighters. According to a source, men and boys, particularly in eastern Chad are "forced to organize self-defense groups, arming themselves primarily with spears, knives, poison-tipped arrows, etc., in order to discourage and defend against militia attacks in the absence of any substantial military or police presence provided by the Chadian government. Boys are also compelled to sleep in the open fields and watch over animals so they are not stolen by armed militias."

Initiation rituals in the southern regions of the country are also a cause for concern. These initiation rites usually take place every seven years and reportedly include floggings, sexual indignities, drugging, burning with coals and mock burials. Christians who do not flee will be forced to participate, and children of pastors will be especially targeted. Pastors who speak out against the dangers of these rituals have historically faced reprisals. In one case in 2018, Christians belonging to a church that had been vocal against the rituals were stripped, whipped and held in the woods until fines were paid. Upon return, these men struggled to look after their family due to the physical and mental trauma experienced. To prevent family disintegration, such men require support and education to reintegrate into Christian community. In areas like Bitkin, pastors have been the targets of verbal abuse and other more severe forms of hostility.

In addition, men and boys also face challenges at work, being denied jobs and promotion. This is, in part, due to the fact that they are required to make a public religious oath in order to attain a job in state offices. Christians are, therefore, hindered from attaining positions of influence and pushed into tighter economic circumstances. Senior military and government positions are dominated by Muslims, and Christians are finding it increasingly difficult to attain such posts. Families of Christian men and boys forcefully recruited into radical groups are also likely to suffer financial distress. A source explained: "Usually in the actions of armed militia groups, men and boys who do not have sufficient protection end up getting killed. Especially for Christian families, the loss of a father or son who is usually the breadwinner of the home is very devastating and can break up the family and throw other family members into economic hardships."

For male converts, when their conversion has become known, they have been isolated by family and local community. Some have also had their property burnt and damaged, been disinherited and expelled completely from their families, although no incidents have been reported in the 2023 reporting period. This places them in a difficult long-term economic position.

Persecution of other religious minorities

According to Freedom House's Global Freedom Index 2022:

- "The state imposes a number of religious restrictions, primarily against certain Muslim sects. Several sects deemed to promote violence are banned, despite limited evidence of such activity. Imams are subject to governance by the semipublic High Council for Islamic Affairs, which is led by a group of imams belonging to the Tijanyya Sufi order. Wearing burqas is banned by ministerial decree, and the government detains individuals who wear them in public."

According to US State Department (IRFR 2021):

- "The government maintained its ban on the leading Wahhabi association, but media said enforcement of the ban remained difficult and that Wahhabis continued to meet and worship in their own mosques. Local media said one reason Wahhabi groups continued their activities was that a number of government and security officials came from the same region or tribe as the Wahhabi leaders. According to local observers, the government continued to deploy security forces around both Islamic and Christian places of worship, in particular on Fridays around mosques and on Sundays around churches".

Future outlook

The outlook for Christians as viewed through the lens of:

Islamic oppression

The rise of Islamic militancy in the region has affected Chad as a country and Christians and other religious groups greatly, including what the militants call 'moderate Muslims'. The presence of these militants tends to push other Islamic groups in society towards a more conservative Islamic theology. If this trend continues, Christians will continue to face pressure and violence in the context of *Islamic oppression*. Even though Chad kept up its fight against jihadist groups, the fact that neighboring countries reduced its levels of counter-terrorist operations due to COVID-19 measures has had a significant impact on Chad's ability to control the expansion of jihadist influence. This will affect Christians not only in Chad, but also in the surrounding region. If the region is not stabilized, it is very likely that this engine will continue increasing in strength.

Dictatorial paranoia

The government of Chad is not democratic. Freedom of the press, expression and association are very much curtailed. In this context, Christians also face censorship. The question may arise: How can a government that is fighting jihadists (the number one driver of persecution in many countries) also be a persecutor of Christians? The answer is that, in the context of the war against Islamic militancy, most of the governments involved fight jihadists not to protect Chris-

tians but primarily to protect the state and their hold on power. The death of President Déby (senior) did not lead to democratization. In fact, the Constitution and the rule of succession were ignored when his son stepped in to replace him. That sidestepping of the constitutional provisions did not stir up much political opposition in WWL 2023 which shows the army is in firm control. The National Dialogue that opened in August 2022 was concluded without credible success (USIP, 12 October 2022). The election was postponed and the military junta decided to stay in power (Reuters, 3 October 2022). The president appointed his cabinet in October 2022. This status quo will likely continue.

Clan oppression

Just like many African countries, Chad is a country with numerous ethnic groups. Politics and religion at times follow ethnic lines. Some of the leaders of certain ethnic groups see Islam as part of tribal identity. That means if one leaves Islam, it is believed that that person also leaves the ethnicity he/she belongs to and shames the whole community. That can lead to serious problems for the convert. This situation will hardly change in the future.

Organized corruption and crime

If the government does not act against the lack of rule of law and the climate of impunity, this engine will continue to cause violence to be perpetrated against Christians and encourage jihadists to increase their influence. An international illicit trade route also passes through Chad and is likely to remain in place.

External Links - Persecution Dynamics

- Gender-specific religious persecution Female description: 15% - https://giwps.georgetown.edu/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/WPS-Index-2021.pdf
- Gender-specific religious persecution Female description: population movement - https://reports.unocha.org/en/country/chad/card/2yw6nJStpM/
- Gender-specific religious persecution Female description: humanitarian support - https://www.unhcr.org/uk/news/press/2022/11/638066eb4/unhcr-warns-rising-tide-hunger-insecurity-underfunding-worsening-gender.html
- Gender-specific religious persecution Female description: 67% are married by 18; Girls Not Brides). - https://atlas.girlsnotbrides.org/map/chad
- Future outlook: without credible success - https://www.usip.org/publications/2022/10/chads-national-dialogue-concludes-amid-uncertainties-transition
- Future outlook: junta decided to stay - https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/junta-set-stay-power-after-chad-delays-elections-by-two-years-2022-10-02/

Further useful reports

A selection of in-depth reports and smaller articles are available on the new Research & Reports page of the website od.org. As in earlier years, they are also available on the Open Doors Analytical website (password: freedom) using the following links:

- https://opendoorsanalytical.org/reports/
- https://opendoorsanalytical.org/?s=Chad