

World
Watch
Research

Tanzania: Full Country Dossier

March 2023



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Open Doors International / World Watch Research

March 2023

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Introduction

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

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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 / Tanzania

Brief country details

Tanzania: Population (UN estimate for 2022)	Christians	Chr%
63,299,000	35,230,000	55.7

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

Map of country



Tanzania: World Watch List	Points	WWL Rank
WWL 2023	63	53
WWL 2022	61	55
WWL 2021	58	57
WWL 2020	55	60
WWL 2019	52	57

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

Dominant persecution engines and drivers

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

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

Brief description of the persecution situation

All WWL categories of Christian communities in Tanzania are experiencing persecution to some degree, however, Christians with a Muslim background on Zanzibar are affected the most severely. Bullying, harassment and sometimes physical attacks have been observed in the country. The conservative Islamic presence has influenced policymakers to adopt policies that impact Christians directly or indirectly at the local and national level.

Islamic oppression (Strong), blended with Clan oppression (Medium): Jihadists from both Tanzania and Mozambique have been targeting Christians. Converts from Islam to Christianity have been expelled from family homes in Zanzibar and the Coastal region. Muslims require strict adherence to modest dress codes and Christians are bullied, discriminated against and ostracized in the community.

Dictatorial paranoia (Medium): Church activities are monitored by state authorities. Church leaders still fear openly criticizing the government concerning social injustice as this has led to harassment in the past.

Specific examples of violations of rights in the reporting period

- The government has seriously restricted many rights (for details, see AI country report 2021/2022).
- Converts from Islam to Christianity have been expelled from family homes in Zanzibar and the Coastal region.
- There have been mob attacks (also bullying and harassment) by youth targeting Christians.

Specific examples of positive developments

At the beginning of March 2022, [religious leaders](#) representing a variety of religious groups attended a meeting at the State House with President Samia Suluhu Hassan and requested him to end legal proceedings against members of the political opposition, in particular the charges of terrorism against Freeman Mbowe, leader of opposition party Chadema (The East African, 3 March 2022). The latter was released in the same month.

External Links - Situation in brief

- Specific examples of positive developments: religious leaders - <https://www.theeastafrican.co.ke/tea/news/east-africa/religious-leaders-in-tanzania-mbowe-case-3735882>

WWL 2023: Keys to understanding / Tanzania

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. 360-362)	https://www.amnesty.org/en/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/POL1048702022ENGLISH.pdf	27 June 2022
BBC News country profile	BBC country profile	https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-14095776	27 June 2022
Bertelsmann Transformation Index country report 2022 – covering 137 countries	BTI report 2022	https://bti-project.org/en/reports/country-dashboard/TZA	27 June 2022
CIA World Factbook	CIA Factbook	https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/tanzania/	27 June 2022
Crisis24 country report (Garda World) – covering 193 countries	Crisis24 country report	https://crisis24.garda.com/insights-intelligence/intelligence/country-reports/tanzania	27 June 2022
Economist Intelligence Unit Democracy Index 2021 – covering 167 countries	EIU 2021 (p.57)	https://pages.eiu.com/rs/753-RIQ-438/images/eiu-democracy-index-2021.pdf	27 June 2022
FFP's Fragile States Index 2022 – covering 179 countries	FSI 2022	https://fragilestatesindex.org/country-data/	24 August 2022
Freedom House's 2022 Democracy index – covering 29 countries, Tanzania 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/tanzania/freedom-world/2022	27 June 2022
Freedom House's Freedom on the Net 2022 report – covering 70 countries, Tanzania not included	Freedom on the Net 2022	https://freedomhouse.org/countries/freedom-net/scores	
Human Rights Watch World Report 2021 (Not included)	HRW 2021	https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2021	
Internet World Stats 2022	IWS 2022	https://www.internetworldstats.com/africa.htm#tz	27 June 2022
RSF's 2022 World Press Freedom Index – covering 180 countries	World Press Freedom 2022	https://rsf.org/en/tanzania	27 June 2022
Transparency International's 2021 Corruption Perceptions Index – covering 180 countries	CPI 2021	https://www.transparency.org/en/cpi/2021/index/tza	27 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/TZA	27 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/tanzania/	27 June 2022
USCIRF 2022 country reports – covering 15 CPC/ 12 SWL, Tanzania not included	USCIRF 2022	https://www.uscifr.gov/countries	
World Bank country overview – covering 178 countries	World Bank overview 2022	https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/tanzania/overview	27 June 2022
World Bank country profile data – covering 222 countries	World Bank profile (2020 data)	https://databank.worldbank.org/views/reports/reportwidget.aspx?Report_Name=CountryProfile&b450fd57tbar=ydd=yinf=nzm=ncountry=TZA	27 June 2022
World Bank Macro Poverty Outlook 2022 – covering 147 countries (divided per region)	Macro Poverty Outlook 2022 (pp. 86-87)	https://www.worldbank.org/en/publication/macro-poverty-outlook	27 June 2022

Recent history

Shortly after achieving independence from Britain in 1961, Tanganyika and Zanzibar merged to form the United Republic of Tanzania in 1964. In 1967, President Julius Nyerere made the Arusha Declaration, unveiling his political philosophy of egalitarianism, socialism and self-reliance. From 1965, presidential elections were held every five years with a one-party system. In response to opposition and international pressure, a multi-party system was introduced in 1992. The October 1995 presidential and legislative elections in Zanzibar, were the first to be held since the restoration of multiparty democracy. The ruling party claimed victory and Benjamin Mkapa became the president despite claims of voting irregularities. Benjamin Mkapa served for two terms until he was replaced by Jakaya Kikwete in 2005.

In October 2015, John Magufuli and his ruling party [won](#) the presidential election with 58% of the votes (BBC News, 29 October 2015). In Zanzibar, where life for Christians has always been considerably harder than on the mainland, the results of the 2015 election for the island's parliament and the president were [annulled](#) due to irregularities (BBC News, 28 October 2015).

Since 2015, when the 5th government assumed office, there have been many changes in the political, economic, social and technological arena. There have also been changes in policy practices and the law which directly or indirectly affect Christians and influence the level of freedom of religion in Tanzania. However, the country failed to hold a constitutional referendum which had been scheduled for April 2015 (with opposition parties and the Catholic Church saying they would campaign against it). Neither in 2019 nor 2020 was the draft Constitution presented

to the public for voting. It incorporates a provision that allows the application of Sharia courts in the whole country - a change from the previous approach which had limited the application of Sharia courts to Zanzibar, an approximately 99% Muslim majority Island. Church leaders believe that if this draft is adopted in this form, it will have a massive impact on Christians.

Despite difficulties caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, Tanzania decided to go ahead with elections scheduled for 28 October 2020. President John Magufuli won re-election as the candidate for the governing Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM) party but suddenly died in March 2021 at the age of 61, after suffering briefly from heart complications (according to reports). He was succeeded by his deputy, Vice-president Samia Suluhu Hassan, who was sworn in as the new president within 24 hours as constitutionally required on 19 March 2021. President Hassan is expected to serve the remainder of Magufuli's five-year term (BBC News, 18 March 2021).

Political and legal landscape

The United Republic of Tanzania is a multiparty republic consisting of the mainland and the semi-autonomous Zanzibar archipelago, with Unguja and Pemba as its main islands. The nation is an electoral democracy considered "partly free" by Freedom House (Global Freedom Index 2022). There has been a general improvement in the state of political rights in the country over the past several years. Even so, Tanzanian authorities restrict the rights of freedom of assembly and expression. Moreover, state security forces have been involved in the torture and extrajudicial killings of civilians, and pre-planned civil demonstrations are generally banned. Likewise, freedom of the press has been increasingly suppressed and officials at times censor the content of radio and television broadcasts. A serious level of impunity exists in Tanzania: Virtually no police officer or other official security personnel has been convicted for extrajudicial killings since 2002, despite the fact that there have been numerous reports of law enforcement officials committing unlawful killings, as well other forms of mistreatment and physical abuse.

In Tanzania's unitary presidential democratic republic, the late president – John Magufuli [5th president] – served both as head of state and as head of government, giving him a very significant level of power. He was most vocal against freedom of speech; in just three years, over four media outlets were shut down either indefinitely or for long periods of time. In March 2018, the Tanzania Communications Regulatory Authority began requiring bloggers and digital publishers to register with the government and pay a \$920 license fee. The Electronic and Postal Communications (Online Content) Regulations also required Internet cafes to install surveillance cameras, and bloggers to report on-site visitors and other operational details. All these efforts were in a move to curtail any criticism of the government (which Christian leaders had also been involved in). These signs indicated a strong progression towards the formation of a dictatorial regime.

Since taking over power in March 2021, President Samia Hassan has reversed a number of repressive policies put in place by her predecessor, whose administration was criticized for its heavy-handed crackdown on the press. She ordered that officials "free" some previously banned media outlets and further indicated that her country's response to the COVID-19 crisis would henceforth be "based on science", whereas John Magufuli had systematically played down the seriousness of the pandemic. However, the arrest of main [opposition party leader](#) (whose party was preparing to hold a conference on constitutional reform in Mwaza, northern Tanzania) and

his detention on terrorism charges has diminished the democratic credentials of the new president (HRW, 22 July 2021). This was followed by the arrest of [several more members](#) of Tanzania's main opposition party Chadema, the latest crackdown on a group pushing for constitutional reform in the country (Al-Jazeera, 4 September 2021).

In 2022, the government reversed such authoritarian tendencies. Calls on the government from within and outside the country to free Freeman Mbowe led the prosecution to drop charges against him and the court to order his [release after seven months](#) in detention (Al-Jazeera, 4 March 2022). Moreover, recent rapid diplomacy by President Samia Suluhu Hassan, [reversing the isolationist](#) posture of her predecessor to reengage with the international community and woo foreign investment, has brought hope of progress (Al-Jazeera, 3 May 2022).

According to AI country report 2021/2022:

- The Constitution guarantees rights to equality, personal freedom, life, privacy, freedom of expression, religion, assembly, association, information and the right to take part in public affairs. However, in reality, the government has seriously restricted these rights. Rights to freedom of expression, association, and peaceful assembly in the run-up to the October [2020] elections were curtailed. The authorities severely restricted media freedom, claiming they were curbing the “spread of false news” on the pandemic. Media outlets were shut down for reporting on political events. Furthermore, opposition politicians and hundreds of their supporters were arbitrarily arrested and beaten by the police, and others were killed, while most fled the country with their families after the elections, fearing persecution.

As explained by [Human Rights Watch](#) (HRW) on 28 October 2019:

- New legislation was introduced (and existing laws enforced) that repress independent reporting and restrict the work of media, NGOs, and political opposition groups: “The government, through the NGO registrar, has exerted more control over NGOs by increasing bureaucratic requirements for NGOs and threatening to deregister them for non-compliance. All NGOs are now required to publicly disclose financial information and submit extensive registration documentation.” The authorities have thus stepped up censorship of the media. The Ministry of Information, Culture, Arts and Sports has shut down radio stations and newspapers and suspended live transmissions of parliamentary debates. In such an environment of restriction and intimidation, Christian leaders and their congregations are faced with a simple alternative - speak up against the ongoing challenge, become the prophetic voice and face imprisonment - or comply with the unjust and unfair restrictions and censorship imposed on them.

According to Freedom House (Global Freedom Index 2022):

- “Freedom of religion is generally respected and interfaith relations are largely peaceful, though periodic sectarian violence has occurred. Muslims are believed to be a minority nationwide, but almost all Zanzibaris practice Islam. Political tensions between mainland Tanzania and Zanzibar often play out along religious lines. The government occasionally raises the specter of interreligious conflict as an excuse to detain political rivals, contribut-

ing to a general sense that Muslims are sometimes treated unfairly by authorities. Religious services were not restricted in Tanzania during the COVID-19 pandemic.”

Gender perspective

The Tanzanian political and legal landscape remains restrictive towards women and girls. Statutory, customary and Islamic laws constitute the overarching legislative framework that governs marriage and divorce laws. Whilst on the decline, child marriage remains an issue of concern, with 31% of girls marrying before the age of 18 ([Girls Not Brides](#)). In June 2018 the Constitutional Court ruled that child marriage was illegal and the minimum age of marriage should be raised to 18. Whilst challenged in 2018 by the Attorney General, who argued it interfered with the ‘culture of the land,’ it was upheld. It should be noted however that customary marriages are exempt from the law, which remain prevalent. Tanzania further lacks comprehensive legislation that specifically addresses domestic violence, marital rape or violence against women ([OECD, 2019](#)).

Religious landscape

Tanzania: Religious context	Number of adherents	%
Christians	35,230,000	55.7
Muslim	20,297,000	32.1
Hindu	556,000	0.9
Buddhist	14,100	0.0
Ethno-religionist	6,631,000	10.5
Jewish	300	0.0
Bahai	276,000	0.4
Atheist	37,500	0.1
Agnostic	191,000	0.3
Other	64,850	0.1
<i>OTHER includes Chinese folk, New religionist, Sikh, Spiritist, Taoist, Confucianist, Jain, Shintoist, Zoroastrian.</i>		

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

Tanzania is a majority Christian nation, with an estimated Christian population of 55.7% according to the World Christian Database 2022 estimates. However, the religious demography is very different when comparing mainland Tanzania with the island Zanzibar. While most of the mainland population is Christian (with a Muslim population concentrated in the coastal region), the vast majority of residents of Zanzibar are adherents of Islam. This Muslim majority archipelago has become a region with significant challenges for the Christian population over the last few years. For example, Christians have not received equal access to justice due to the

bias against Christians in court and Christians have been punished for cooking during daylight hours of the month of Ramadan.

Economic landscape

According to World Bank's Macro Poverty Outlook for Sub-Saharan Africa (Spring Meetings 2022, pp. 86-87):

- **GDP growth:** “High-frequency indicators suggest that economic activity is gradually recovering. The accommodation and restaurants, mining, and electricity sectors drove a sharp rebound of 5.2 percent in quarterly GDP during Q3 2021. Leading indicators such as cement production, electricity generation, private-sector credit, goods and services exports, nonfuel goods imports, telecommunications, mobility, and tourist arrivals all improved in 2021, though activity in most sectors remains below pre-pandemic levels. Meanwhile, the preliminary findings from a recent survey suggest that by the end of 2021, the proportion of heads of household indicating they were working was higher than the pre-pandemic level by about 5 percentage points, with stronger recovery for men than for women. As a result, the World Bank estimates a real GDP growth rate of 4.3 percent.”
- **GDP projection:** “Tanzania’s real GDP growth rate is projected to reach 5.3 percent in 2022 assuming continued easing of pandemic conditions and implementation of supportive policies for the private sector, but risks from an uncertain external environment have increased.”
- **Inflation:** Inflation remained low and stable averaging 3.7 percent in 2021 but increased to 4.0 in January 2022, largely driven by higher energy prices. Inflation driven by higher energy and grain prices caused by the Russia-Ukraine crisis could undermine purchase power, with the poor and the urban consumers being particularly vulnerable to food price rises putting poverty reduction at risk.
- **Current account deficit:** Tanzania’s current-account deficit has widened slightly to 2.0 percent of GDP at end-September 2021, as imports grew faster than exports. The current-account deficit was funded largely by external loans and, and to a lesser extent, by foreign direct investment. The current-account deficit is projected to widen to 3.9 percent of GDP in 2022 due to rising imports (capital goods and oil), which will more than offset an expected increase in export.
- **Poverty:** The national poverty rate is estimated to have declined marginally from 27.1 percent in 2020 to 27.0 percent in 2021, driven by the recovery of employment and agricultural growth. The international poverty rate is projected to fall by more than a percentage point to 48.6 percent in 2021 and drop to below the pre-crisis level. But to reduce poverty, the recovery must create more jobs, not least for low-skilled workers, enable growth for small enterprises, and foster productivity of agriculture, on which three-quarters of poor households depend.
- **Effect of COVID-19:** Although Tanzania avoided a recession in 2020, the pandemic further exacerbated existing challenges, reversing some of the gains in poverty reduction achieved over the last decade. Tanzania’s policy response to COVID-19 in the first half of 2020 was moderate and relatively short-lived. However, the global slowdown and travel bans reduced exports of services related to tourism, reducing employment in this sector and in related activities. Exports of manufactured goods also decreased due to a contraction in

global demand. Private sector credit growth plunged to 3% in December 2020 from 11.1% a year earlier. Imports of capital goods dropped by 14.8% in 2020 due to diminished orders for construction materials and machinery. However, in the short to medium term, the global economic recovery is expected to bolster demand for Tanzanian exports and financing of the infrastructure projects as the government maintains an improvement in the business environment and prudent fiscal management to foster a swift recovery.

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

- Tanzania's economic freedom score is 59.5, making its economy the 93rd freest in the 2022 Index. The score shows a decline of 1.8 points from previous year. Tanzania is ranked 10th among 47 countries in the Sub-Saharan Africa region (down by two from previous year), and its overall score is above the regional average but below the world average. .

Once a socialist state, Tanzania has made the transition to a market economy over the past 15 years, although the government still owns all land in the country and is heavily involved in the telecommunications, banking, energy and mining sectors. Since 1990, the country has received approximately 1 billion USD in aid annually. However, the economy remains largely underdeveloped and the current infrastructure is inadequate to support extensive business operations. Subsequently, Tanzania is one of the world's poorest countries and is ranked near the bottom of the United Nations' Human Development Index (HDI profile). Accounting for over 20% of GDP, the industrial sector is one of the smallest in Africa and the main industrial activities are dominated by small and medium-sized enterprises specializing in food processing. In general, the manufacturing sector is concentrated in Dar es Salaam and primarily targets the domestic market. However, the main basis for economic growth are the gold and tourist industries. Recently, natural gas discoveries (primarily offshore) led to predictions that the region could become the world's third-largest exporter of natural gas.

According to the World Bank's country overview:

- "Growth is expected to strengthen over the next two years, assuming pandemic conditions ease and the external environment improves. The real GDP growth rate is projected to reach 4.5–5.5 percent in 2022 and average about 6 percent over the medium term as exports and domestic demand recover. Risks to Tanzania's economic outlook have moderated, but the recovery continues to hinge on external developments and domestic health policies, as well as continued support to the private sector."

Chinese investment

China is Tanzania's number one trading partner and investor. According to [TanzaniaInvest](#) (Latest update: 21 December 2022):

- "As of October 2022, the Tanzania Investment Centre (TIC) registered a total of 1,098 Chinese projects worth USD 9.6 billion in mainland Tanzania, while 15 Chinese projects worth USD 202.2 million were registered in Zanzibar, creating a total of 300,000 jobs." "In 2021, Tanzania exported USD 606 million worth of goods and services to China. The main exports from Tanzania to China were Other Oily Seeds (USD 143M), Raw Copper (USD

61M), and Refined Petroleum (USD 32M). Additionally, Tanzania also exported Iron and Steel (USD 25.7M), Fruits and Nuts (USD 24.6M), and Live Animals (USD 20.9M)."

- "According to the World Bank, Tanzania is expected to export USD 9.982 billion worth of goods and services to China in 2022. The main exports from Tanzania to China are expected to be Other Oily Seeds, Raw Copper, and Refined Petroleum."
- "In 2021, Tanzania's imports from China added up to roughly TZS 6,207 billion (around USD 2.7 billion), up 1.1% year-on-year. Tanzania's main imports from China were Machinery (\$764M), Electrical Machinery (\$711M), and Iron and Steel (\$552M). Tanzania's total imports from China were up 8.6% compared to 2020."
- "According to the World Bank, Tanzania is expected to import USD 3.851 billion worth of goods and services from China in 2022. The main imports from China are expected to be Machinery, Electrical Machinery, Iron and Steel, and Plastics."

Gender perspective

Women remain particularly economically disadvantaged in Tanzania, primarily due to patrilineal inheritance practices; women do not have equal inheritance rights under either statutory, customary or Islamic law (OECD, 2019). Projects such as one the World Bank recently endorsed for \$150 million funding, [Land Tenure Improvement Project](#) (LTIP), will benefit women by helping them to secure their land holding and use rights, both as individual holders and beneficiaries of communal land rights (World Bank Press Release, 21 December 2021).

Social and cultural landscape

According to the UNDP's HDI profile and CIA Factbook:

- **Main ethnic groups - mainland:** African 99% (of which 95% are Bantu consisting of more than 130 tribes), other 1% (consisting of Asian, European, and Arab); **Zanzibar:** Arab, African, mixed Arab and African.
- **Main languages:** Kiswahili or Swahili (official), Kiunguja (the name for Swahili in Zanzibar), English (official, the primary language of commerce, administration, and higher education), Arabic (widely spoken in Zanzibar), many local languages.
- **Median age:** 18.2 years
- **Urban population:** 36.7% of total population (2022 est.)
- **Rate of urbanization:** 4.89% annual rate of change (2020-2025 est.)
- **Expected years of schooling:** 8.1 years (there is gender parity in terms of education access. However, in 2017 President Magufuli banned girls from school if found to be pregnant. The Government has since committed to finding ways for pregnant girls to return to school (HRW 2021).
- **Literacy rate, adult (15 years of age and older):** 77.9%
- **Employment to population ratio (15 years of age and older):** 81.8%
- **Unemployment, total of labor force:** 2.0%
- **Unemployment, youth (15-24 years old):** 3.6%

The country is facing a major demographic challenge in the form of a rapidly growing youth population. Growing urbanization likewise puts greater pressure on the government to address the health, employment, and social needs of those living in the impoverished city slums.

In its country overview, the World Bank states:

- The national poverty rate is estimated to have declined marginally from 27.1 percent in 2020 to 27.0 percent in 2021, driven by the recovery of employment and nonfarm business revenue. “Urban poverty rates are significantly higher among female-headed households (20.3 percent) than among male-headed households (14 percent), and the share of employed women dropped from 79 percent in 2004-05 to 72 percent in 2015-16. Women are much more likely than men to be engaged in unpaid labor, and women with wage jobs tend to earn less than their male counterparts. Tanzania’s average fertility rate is high at 4.8 children per adult woman, and elevated fertility rates – including high rates of adolescent pregnancy – are correlated with decreased economic activity, lower levels of education, poverty, and diminished female agency.”
- “While the poverty headcount ratio at national poverty line (\$1.35 per person per day in PPP) has declined modestly over time, falling from 28.2% of population in 2012 to 26.1 in 2019, Tanzania’s rapid population growth has caused the number of people living below the national poverty line to steadily increase. In 2020, the pandemic-induced economic slowdown caused the poverty rate to rise to an estimated 27.2%, compounding the effect of population growth on the absolute number of people living in poverty. Notwithstanding, following two decades of sustained growth, Tanzania reached an important milestone in July 2020, when it formally graduated from low-income country to lower-middle-income country status”.

According to [UNHCR's Refugee Population Update](#) (31 December 2022):

- **Refugees:** As of 31 December 2022, Tanzania hosted some 247,207 refugees and asylum-seekers mainly from Burundi (67.4%) and the Democratic Republic of Congo (32.4%). 50% were female and 56% children. The majority have been placed in three main refugee camps, with a small urban population in Dar es Salaam.

According to UNDP's HDI profile:

- **Human Development Index (HDI):** Tanzania is ranked 163rd out of 189 countries with a HDI value of 0.529
- **Life expectancy at birth:** 65.5 years
- **Gender Development index (GDI):** 0.948
- **Gender inequality index (GII): 0.556.** The GII measures gender inequalities in three important aspects of human development—reproductive health, empowerment and economic status. In 2019 Tanzania ranked 140th out of 162 countries.

Gender perspective

Within Tanzania’s patriarchal context, women and girls continue to assume subservient roles within the family and community sphere. Domestic abuse is reportedly high in Tanzania, yet is rarely made public due to widespread impunity for perpetrators and fear of reprisals ([CEDAW, 2016](#); [OECD, 2019](#)). Social and cultural norms impact whether or not a woman pursues divorce (and assets) as it is viewed as improper for women to demand a share of her ‘husband’s property’ and invites community stigma ([OECD, 2019](#)). Thus many women become destitute if a

marriage breaks down, or stay trapped in abusive marriages.

Technological landscape

According to Internet World Stats (IWS 2022):

- **Internet usage:** 37.0% of the population – survey date: December 2021
(Latest available survey at time of writing)
- **Facebook usage:** 10.2% of the population – survey date: January 2022

According to the World Bank country profile:

- **Mobile phone subscriptions:** 85.7 per 100 people.

A [GSMA \(2019\) report](#) highlighted that 77% of women in Tanzania owned mobile phones, compared with 86% of men. The gender gap widens when considering mobile internet usage (22% of women compared to 40% of men).

According to [BuddeComm Research](#) (Publication date: March 2023):

- "The government has sought to increase broadband penetration by a range of measures, including the reduction in VAT charged on the sale of smartphones and other devices, and reductions in the cost of data. Public opposition to a controversial tax on m-money transactions forced the government in late 2021 to reduce charges by 30%."
- "In late 2021, the government announced plans to extend the national backbone network from about 8,300km to 15,000km by 2023, and to provide ongoing connectivity to more countries in the region. Domestically, Vodacom Tanzania contracted Eutelsat to provide satellite broadband services to areas of Tanzania which lack connectivity, while World Mobile has launched a balloon-based broadband network in Zanzibar."

Tanzania's technological landscape is advancing dramatically. Chinese investment in the country (see above: *Economic landscape*) is making the construction of infrastructure affordable.

Security situation

In the past, the radical Islamic group UAMSHO (a Swahili acronym for the Association for Islamic Mobilization and Propagation) used Zanzibar as a springboard to further its radical Islamic agenda in Tanzania. Over the last years, the influence of the group has significantly diminished.

There have been reports of people being kidnapped; for instance, Africa's youngest billionaire was [abducted](#) by criminals in 2018 (BBC News, 11 October 2018). Children have also been kidnapped for witchcraft purposes, often children with albinism. According to CNN reporting on 28 January 2019, in January 2019, the police discovered [bodies of ten children](#) who had gone missing - "their teeth and private parts" had been removed. It is difficult to know whether this practice of kidnapping affects Christians in particular. The government pledged to address the matter.

Another emerging problem for Tanzania is the issue of jihadist activity in neighboring Mozambique, which has led to cross-border raids into Tanzania. According to a report by [AllAfrica](#) on 19 October 2020:

- "[T]he terrorists entered Tanzania by sea, going up the Rovuma river that forms the border between Mozambique and Tanzania. The raiders burnt down houses, destroyed an armored vehicle and stole money and military equipment. The terrorist network that calls itself 'Islamic State' claimed responsibility for the attack, and said it had killed three Tanzanian soldiers."

The US Department of State travel advisory considers Tanzania to be a critical threat location and has warned that terrorist groups could attack in Tanzania with little or no warning, especially in the southern Tanzanian region of Mtwara. Since the jihadists are constantly demanding the introduction of Sharia law in the region, this is particularly alarming for Christians.

Furthermore, Christians who are openly critical of government actions are being targeted for reprisals by security forces or ardent government supporters.

Trends analysis

1) Increasing tension between Christians and Muslims is a cause for concern among the country's political elite

Although Tanzania is a Christian-majority nation and the tension between Christians and Muslims is more or less limited to the coastal areas and Zanzibar, if it is not addressed comprehensively, it could cause serious instability. Now that some of the highest officials (including the president) are Muslims, some Christian politicians think that the power distribution is no longer in balance. But the nomination of Christian Dr Philip Mpango to the vice-presidency has calmed the tension to some extent.

2) Islamic militancy in the country has been more or less contained, but a new threat is emerging

As in other countries in the region, Islamic radicalization through local militants and foreign funding has created a wealth of challenges to the country in general and to Christians in particular. It is hoped that the new president will continue to act firmly to weaken any growing radicalization in the country. However, if the current president's response is not complemented by political reforms to address relevant issues, it is possible that an organization like UAMSHO and its supporters could re-emerge. For the moment, it is a jihadist group in neighboring Mozambique which has been a cause for concern in the country: First, the Mozambique group has been conducting cross-border raids. Secondly, this group might well inspire the formation of a similar group in Tanzania.

External Links - Keys to understanding

- Recent history: won - <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-34669468>
- Recent history: annulled - <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-34656934>
- Political and legal landscape: opposition party leader - <https://www.hrw.org/news/2021/07/22/tanzanian-opposition-leader-supporters-arrested>

- Political and legal landscape: several more members - <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/9/4/tanzania-in-new-crackdown-on-opposition-party>
- Political and legal landscape: release after seven months - <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/3/4/tanzanian-opposition-leader-freed-after-seven-months-in-custody>
- Political and legal landscape: reversing the isolationist - <https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2022/5/3/back-online-tanzanias-president-fixes-predecessors>
- Political and legal landscape: Human Rights Watch - <https://www.hrw.org/report/2019/10/28/long-i-am-quiet-i-am-safe/threats-independent-media-and-civil-society-tanzania>
- Political and legal landscape: Girls Not Brides - <https://atlas.girlsnotbrides.org/map/tanzania>
- Political and legal landscape: OECD, 2019 - <https://www.genderindex.org/wp-content/uploads/files/datasheets/2019/TZ.pdf>
- Economic landscape: 2022 Index of Economic Freedom - <https://www.heritage.org/index/country/tanzania>
- Economic landscape: TanzaniaInvest - <https://www.tanzaniainvest.com/china>
- Economic landscape: OECD, 2019 - <https://www.genderindex.org/wp-content/uploads/files/datasheets/2019/TZ.pdf>
- Economic landscape: Land Tenure Improvement Project - <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2021/12/21/tanzania-new-world-bank-financing-to-secure-land-rights-for-up-to-two-million-citizens>
- Social and cultural landscape: UNHCR's Refugee Population Update - <https://reporting.unhcr.org/index.php/document/4269>
- Social and cultural landscape: CEDAW, 2016 - https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CEDAW/C/TZA/CO/7-8&Lang=En
- Social and cultural landscape: OECD, 2019 - <https://www.genderindex.org/wp-content/uploads/files/datasheets/2019/TZ.pdf>
- Social and cultural landscape: OECD, 2019 - <https://www.genderindex.org/wp-content/uploads/files/datasheets/2019/TZ.pdf>
- Technological landscape: GSMA (2019) report - <https://www.gsma.com/mobilefordevelopment/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/GSMA-Connected-Women-The-Mobile-Gender-Gap-Report-2019.pdf>
- Technological landscape: BuddeComm Research - <https://www.budde.com.au/Research/Tanzania-Telecoms-Mobile-and-Broadband-Statistics-and-Analyses>
- Security situation: abducted - <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-45821361>
- Security situation: bodies of ten children - <https://edition.cnn.com/2019/01/28/africa/tanzania-kids-mutilated-intl/index.html>
- Security situation: AllAfrica - <https://allafrica.com/stories/202010190976.html>

WWL 2023: Church information / Tanzania

Christian origins

Christianity originally came to Tanzania with the Portuguese early in the 16th century. However, the Portuguese Roman Catholics were not active in evangelizing the indigenous population and hence the presence of Christianity was superficial. In 1844, two German Protestants - Johann Krapf and Johan Rebmann - came to Tanzania as missionary-explorers representing the British-based Church Missionary Society. However, there was little growth in the Church until 1860, when Roman Catholic priests came to Zanzibar, and 1863 when the Catholic missionary society 'Holy Ghost Fathers' was established there. Tanzania was also territory explored by David Livingstone on behalf of the London Missionary Society in the 19th century. Following the official German occupation of Tanganyika in 1885, several Lutheran missionary societies flourished. In 1938 seven churches came together and formed the Federation of Lutheran Churches of Tanganyika.

Church spectrum today

Tanzania: Church networks	Christians	%
Orthodox	13,300	0.0
Catholic	17,851,000	50.7
Protestant	18,876,000	53.6
Independent	1,437,000	4.1
Unaffiliated	329,000	0.9
Doubly-affiliated Christians	-3,276,000	-9.3
Total	35,230,300	100.0
<i>(Any deviation from the total number of Christians stated above is due to the rounding of decimals)</i>		
Evangelical movement	9,996,000	28.4
Renewalist movement	6,819,000	19.4

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.

The Roman Catholic church, the Lutheran church and Seventh-day Adventists are some of the main Christian denominations in mainland Tanzania. There are also numerous Pentecostal Christian groups.

Areas where Christians face most difficulties

The island of Zanzibar and mainland coastal areas (including Dar es Salaam) are the main areas where Christians face major difficulties when living out their faith.

Christian communities and how they are affected

All categories of Christian communities in the country face persecution in one way or another.

Communities of expatriate Christians

These are mainly found on the islands such as Pemba and Mafia. They keep separate from Christians with a Muslim background because if they were to mix, their security would be jeopardized. Also, the community leaders on the Island of Zanzibar monitor expatriates. In other parts of the country, expatriate Christians are not involuntarily isolated.

Historical Christian communities

Roman Catholic and Lutheran churches face persecution both from the Muslim community in Zanzibar and from the national government (through curtailment of their activities) if they accuse the government of acting unjustly.

Converts to Christianity

In Muslim dominated areas (Zanzibar and the mainland coastal region) Christians with a Muslim background suffer permanent pressure and often violence. Persecution is mainly driven by Islamic religious leaders and the surrounding Muslim community.

Non-traditional Christian communities

Non-traditional Christian communities are the fastest growing in the country. At least 8% of the population belong to these Pentecostal, Evangelical, Baptist and non-denominational churches. These churches face persecution from Islamic sources and also - on a much weaker scale - from Historical Christian churches (for instance, when their theology and activities are publicly criticized). They experience many challenges, e.g. in obtaining permission to build new churches and in getting permits for assembly and preaching.

WWL 2023: Persecution Dynamics / Tanzania

Reporting period

1 October 2021 - 30 September 2022

Position on the World Watch List

Tanzania: World Watch List	Points	WWL Rank
WWL 2023	63	53
WWL 2022	61	55
WWL 2021	58	57
WWL 2020	55	60
WWL 2019	52	57

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

Reason for the increase in score: Although average pressure did not rise, the violence score increased from 13.7 to 15.6 points. Killings, church attacks, arrests, abductions etc. were all in double figures. The very conservative Islamic presence has influenced government officials to adopt policies that impact Christians directly or indirectly at the local and national level.

Persecution engines

Tanzania: Persecution engines	Abbreviation	Level of influence
Islamic oppression	IO	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	Very weak
Dictatorial paranoia	DPA	Medium
Organized corruption and crime	OCC	Not at all

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 (Strong), blended with Clan oppression (Medium)

The Union of Tanzania has two contrasting demographic realities: The majority of mainland Tanzanians are Christians, and the majority of the population on the island of Zanzibar are Muslims. In the past, *Islamic oppression* was more prominent in Zanzibar. That threat has been dealt with as UAMSHO more or less stopped operating and using violence. UAMSHO currently seems to have lost momentum (since its leaders have been arrested or have left their leadership role). Nevertheless, its radical ideology has taken root and continues to create problems both for Christians and the government. Thus, in recent WWL reporting periods, although there has been no direct violence aiming to bring the region under the strict control of Islam, other non-violent acts have illustrated this intention. The next threat of violence currently seems to be emanating from the jihadist group operating in Mozambique.

Dictatorial paranoia (Medium)

Church activities have been monitored in Tanzania by the state authorities. As one of the main voices against persecution of any kind, be it religious or non-religious, church leaders were previously in a position where they could speak out freely against perpetrators of injustice even where the perpetrators were allied with the government. With the fifth administration under President Magufuli, things became different: Church leaders found they could no longer openly criticize the government, and any accusations concerning social injustice were met with resistance and harassment. The change in leadership in 2021 has not yet brought significant change to the country as a whole. The nation is still struggling to get away from the authoritarian practices which dominated the recent past.

Drivers of persecution

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

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

Drivers of Islamic oppression, blended with Clan oppression

The drivers of persecution in Tanzania are predominately those who subscribe to the radical ideology propagated by Wahhabists in the country and members of UAMSHO. Muslim family and community leaders are also drivers especially when dealing with converts from Islam. Generally, the following are the main drivers of *Islamic oppression*:

- **Non-Christian religious leaders (Strong):** Muslim sheiks and imams have been continuously preaching inflammatory rhetoric during sermons. (It was a religious leader/jihadist who created UAMSHO.) Non-Christian religious leaders, especially those based in Zanzibar, impose strict adherence to dress codes and during the month of Ramadhan no one is allowed to eat in open places, regardless of whether you are Muslim or non-Muslim. The leaders have encouraged a mentality in their adherents to shun and criticize openly persons who wear jeans or clothing which exposes skin during Ramadan.
- **Citizens (Strong):** In Zanzibar and the coastal region it has been reported that ordinary citizens participated in persecuting Christians by bullying, discrimination, and ostracizing Christians in the community. Muslims require strict adherence to modest dress codes, refraining from eating openly during Ramadan and shunning those who openly wear Christian symbols such as crosses on chains. They also curtail freedom of worship for Christians; Arabic poetry is frequently heard on public transport but you would never hear

Christian music being played in public.

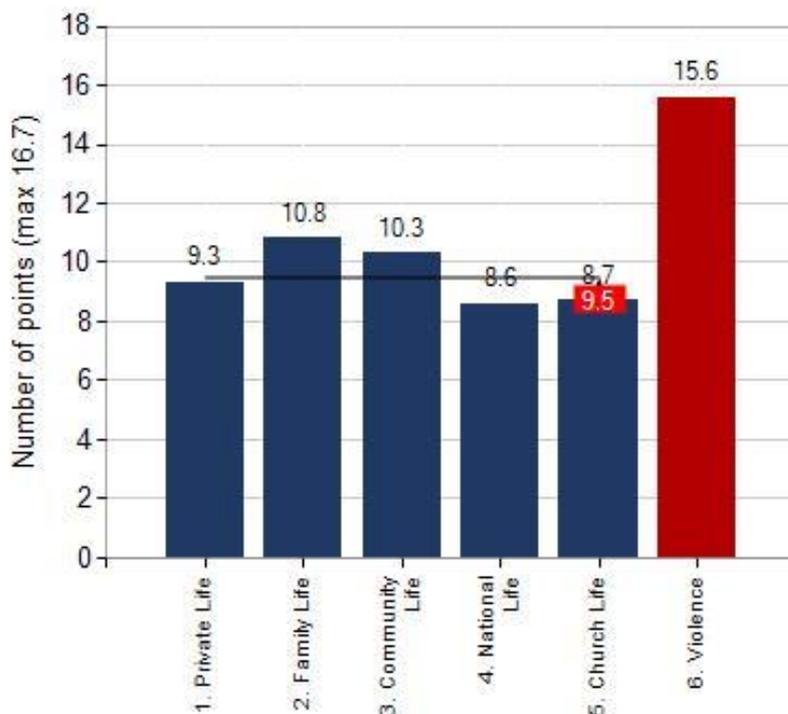
- **Violent religious group (Medium):** jihadists from Mozambique have become a cross-border threat to Christians in Tanzania. They are known by different names including *Ahlu al-Sunnah wal-Jamaah* (ASJ), *Ansar al-Sunnah*, IS– Mozambique. Cross-border raids have caused fear and anxiety among Christians.
- **Family (Strong):** Family (including extended families) are persecutors of converts. An Islamic family will reject anyone who leaves Islam to become a Christian.

Drivers of Dictatorial paranoia

- **Government officials (Medium):** The government of Tanzania under President John Magufuli was increasingly becoming an authoritarian regime. Government officials were intimidating critics, and church leaders were under pressure: When they spoke out against the administration, their churches ran the risk of de-registration. Under the new president, there have been no significant changes when it comes to freedom of religion.

The Persecution pattern

WWL 2023 Persecution Pattern for Tanzania



The WWL 2023 Persecution pattern for Tanzania shows:

- The average pressure on Christians in Tanzania is high at 9.5 points.
- The *Family sphere* score is the highest (10.8 points), followed by the *Community sphere* with a score of 10.3 points. This is an indication that converts from Islam face pressure from both family and community members when they try to live according to their Christian values and faith.
- The score for violence is extremely high at 15.6 points, up from 13.7 points in WWL 2022.

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 1.7: It has been risky for Christians to speak about their faith with immediate family members. (2.75 points)

Conversion in Muslim society is considered not only a taboo, but also betrayal. Thus, once one has left Islam and become a Christian, it is very risky to discuss faith matters with family members. This is often the case in Zanzibar and the coastal areas. But for other Christians, this is not a serious issue, except where family members cause friction by joining a different church denomination.

Block 1.1: Conversion has been opposed, forbidden, or punishable, including conversion from one type of Christianity to another. (2.50 points)

As mentioned under 1.7, conversion is not accepted in Muslim-majority areas and Zanzibar. Even though conversion is not outlawed in the country, family and community members often create serious obstacles. They bully and expel converts, shun them and cause dispossession of property. Those who convert face ostracization, expulsion and also face restrictions in access to community resources.

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.). (2.25 points)

In some areas, especially in the coastal areas and the Island of Zanzibar, personal expression of Christian faith is very risky. Converts who want express their views can be targeted by their family or community members. Even non-converts can be at risk if they live in a Muslim-majority area. Converts face harsher treatment, potentially leading to beatings, expulsion and other forms of pressure and violence.

Block 1.5: It has been risky for Christians to display Christian images or symbols. (2.25 points)

This is particularly the case for those who live in Muslim majority areas and it affects all categories of Christians in Zanzibar and the mainland coastal region. Simply wearing a cross can cause anger in the local community and is particularly dangerous for converts from Islam. All Christian denominations including converts can face serious problems that can lead to beatings and other forms of abuse. For this reason, Christians in areas dominated by a Muslim population often avoid displaying Christian symbols.

Pressure in Block 2 / Family sphere

Block 2.8: Christian children have been pressured into attending anti-Christian or majority religion teaching at any level of education. (3.25 points)

Children of Christians face such pressure in Zanzibar and the mainland coastal region, where the majority religion is Islam and Islamic studies are taught in all public schools. Christians who cannot send their children to a private school will thus face high levels of pressure to make their children attend such classes. See also below: 2.7.

Block 2.7: Parents have been hindered in raising their children according to their Christian beliefs. (3.00 points)

Especially Christians with a Muslim background in Muslim-dominated areas are not free to openly express their faith and are often forced to take their children through the Islamic madrasa school system, to attend mosque prayers and participate in the annual fast etc. This means Christians have to be careful what they tell their children, what values they want to instill in their children, and whether to take their children to church or not.

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

Children of Christians are deliberately targeted in some areas to put pressure on their parents. In predominantly Muslim areas of the country, it is common for young Christian schoolchildren to be deliberately given low marks in examinations and punished unfairly by some Muslim teachers. They also often face verbal abuse from fellow students, especially during Ramadan, if seen to be eating, drinking or even dressing in 'non-Islamic' ways.

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

In Muslim-dominated areas, celebrating a Christian wedding can be risky, since Muslim youth can easily be provoked into attacking the house where the celebration takes place. Past violent incidents in the country have affected the way Christians live their lives. Thus, Christians in Zanzibar have to celebrate weddings hidden from public view to avoid any 'insult' to the Muslim community.

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.). (3.25 points)

In Tanzania, as in many African countries where *Islamic oppression*, *Clan oppression* or *Christian denominational protectionism* are present, harassment and threats from the local community, and obstructions to daily life, are very common.

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)

Christians who live in Muslim-dominated areas are closely observed by neighbors and others to find any fault or excuse for opposing them. This is particularly the case in Zanzibar and the mainland coastal areas where Muslim youth are engaged in monitoring Christians. During the WWL 2023 reporting period, this issue has become particularly serious in areas that border Mozambique's Cabo Delgado province where jihadist groups are conducting cross-border attacks.

Block 3.4: Christians been hindered in sharing community resources because of their faith (e.g. clean drinking water). (2.75 points)

In Tanzanian communities where Muslims have dug water wells, they ask all residents to respect Islam before accessing the well, which means they are to observe Muslim dress codes and use Islamic greetings. This is particularly a concern for all categories of Christian communities in Zanzibar and the coastal region. In local communities, the fundamental criterion for sharing resources is what religion you belong to.

Block 3.6: Christians have been hindered in participating in communal institutions, forums, etc., for faith-related reasons. (2.75 points)

As in 3.4 above, religion plays a key role in defining the role of community members in communal institutions. This happens in Muslim-dominated areas where Christians are required to abide by Muslim customs. Also, pressure is experienced in the predominantly Massai tribal area of Arusha and in Ukerewe District, where Christians are under pressure to participate in traditional African funeral rites.

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. (3.25 points)

This problem in Tanzania is not related to military service; it is more about regulations and practices as enforced by the local authorities. Thus, the concept of 'acting against one's conscience' needs to be interpreted broadly. This can be applied to the forced observance of Ramadan fasting rites by non-Muslims in Muslim-dominated areas, where all non-Muslims are forced to observe the day-long fasts or eat in secret to avoid being punished for 'disrespecting' Islam.

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)

In Muslim-dominated areas it is common for local government authorities to 'side' with Muslims whenever they voice any 'religious' grievance, thus effectively discriminating against Christians. This has been the case for several years.

Block 4.8: Christians have been hindered in expressing their views or opinions in public. (3.00 points)

Tanzania has seen numerous regimes with severe restrictions on freedom of expression, including freedom of religion. In the past, the ruling party has tried to use the Church for its own benefit and has also put pressure on church leaders not to speak out on matters about officials abusing their power. This is also the case in areas (especially in Zanzibar) where there is a Muslim majority. In these areas, there is considerable pressure on Christians not to publicly criticize local government policy. This intimidation has continued in the WWL 2023 reporting period.

Block 4.9: Christian civil society organizations or political parties have been hindered in their functioning or forbidden because of their Christian convictions. (3.00 points)

The government has long been accused of limiting space for civil society in the country. Organizations have been told to avoid 'politics', which means everything from providing social services to speaking publicly about injustice or human rights issues. In the run-up to the October 2020 presidential elections, church leaders were basically told to 'behave' or 'be booted'.

Pressure in Block 5 / Church sphere

Block 5.2: It has been difficult to get registration or legal status for churches at any level of government. (3.25 points)

There have been some changes in Tanzania regarding the registration of churches and other organizations. Citing Civil society organizations, the US State Department (IRFR 2021) states that "the government issued a new directive by the Registrar of Societies requiring all previously registered societies, including faith-based organizations, to reregister every five years, to intimidate leaders. Instead of the previous permanent registration status, all societies were required to be reevaluated every five years, and failure to reregister within the allotted time could result in deregistration." This is creating an environment of fear and intimidation. Fearing deregistration, church leaders may desist from speaking out against unjust laws or practices. Although this affects non-Christian organizations as well, for Christians it is a case of double vulnerability. Government bureaucracy is used as an excuse to delay church registrations in Muslim-dominated areas in particular. This forces many churches to register their ministries as NGOs instead.

Block 5.4: Churches have been hindered from organizing Christian activities inside their place of worship. (3.25 points)

There are many cases where Christian activities have been disrupted. For example, church leaders in Arusha and in Geita and Kagera administrative regions have reported being regularly interrupted when holding overnight prayers. Also, those in Arusha, Kigoma, and Dar es Salaam reported that they are not allowed to use loudspeakers when conducting their services. The main problems come from community mobs, sometimes with the implicit support of government officials.

Block 5.1: Church activities have been monitored, hindered, disturbed, or obstructed. (3.00 points)

Church activities are highly monitored in Tanzania. There are two major aspects to this issue: First, churches in Tanzania have been experiencing some forms of surveillance by the government, and church leaders have been warned not to get involved in political matters. They have been threatened otherwise with the de-registration of their churches. Christian leaders have made statements against local government election violence and against government restrictions on the freedom of speech. This is the sort of criticism the government does not tolerate. Secondly, there are community members in Muslim-dominated areas who persistently monitor church activities.

Block 5.5: Churches have been hindered from organizing Christian activities outside church buildings. (3.00 points)

The government of Tanzania has issued some directives that target civil society organizations, including churches. These regulations are intended to curtail the freedom of Christians, for instance in holding church activities outside the church compound. Outside activities often require 'permits.' Churches on the mainland are generally able to obtain all necessary permits for holding open-air meetings. However, this is not the case in Zanzibar, where special permission must be applied for and this is only given on condition that the open-air meeting will pause in silence to observe the Muslim call to prayer. In the past, some open-air church activities were actually brought to a halt with violence. Even though no such major incidents occurred during the WWL 2023 reporting period, church activities outside are watched carefully in places where the Muslim population is in the majority.

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.

Tanzania: Violence Block question		WWL 2023	WWL 2022
6.1	How many Christians have been killed for faith-related reasons (including state sanctioned executions)?	10 *	25
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?	10	11
6.3	How many Christians have been detained for faith-related reasons?	10	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)?	10	2
6.6	How many Christians have been raped or otherwise sexually harassed for faith-related reasons?	10 *	0
6.7	How many cases have there been of forced marriages of Christians to non-Christians?	10	0
6.8	How many Christians have been otherwise physically or mentally abused for faith-related reasons (including beatings and death threats)?	23	100 *
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?	16	10

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?	16	10
6.11 How many Christians have been forced to leave their homes or go into hiding in-country for faith-related reasons?	15	10 *
6.12 How many Christians have been forced to leave the country for faith-related reasons?	0	0

5 Year trends

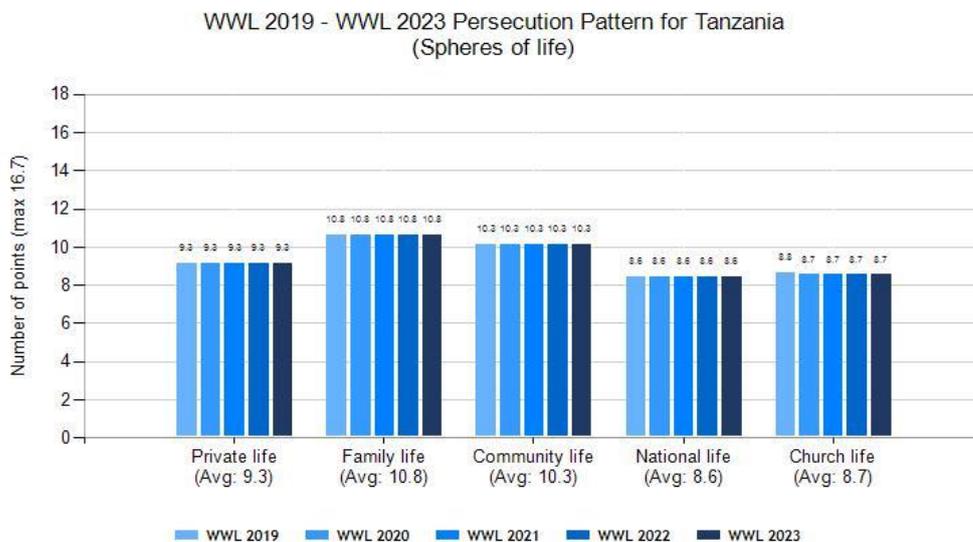
The following three charts show the levels of pressure and violence faced by Christians in the country over the last five WWL reporting periods.

5 Year trends: Average pressure

Tanzania: WWL 2019 - WWL 2023	
Persecution Pattern history	Average pressure over 5 Spheres of life
2023	9.5
2022	9.5
2021	9.5
2020	9.5
2019	9.5

The table above shows that the average pressure on Christians is high and has stabilized at a score of 9.5 points.

5 Year trends: Pressure in each sphere of life



The graph above shows that pressure in all *spheres of life* has stabilized in score from WWL 2019 onwards. The *Family* and *Community spheres* scored highest each reporting period, which is an indication that Christians in some places face pressure to live their family life according to their Christian values and struggle in their communities to live as an equal citizen. The *National sphere* scored lowest with 8.6 points.

5 Year trends: Violence against Christians



The graph above shows that the violence against Christians has steadily increased since WWL 2019, reaching the extreme level of 15.6 points in WWL 2023. This trend is particularly worrying for a Christian-majority country. Every year violence has increased by a least 1.9 points.

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
Political and Legal	Denied custody of children; Forced divorce; Forced marriage; Travel bans/restrictions on movement
Security	Abduction; Forced out of home – expulsion; Incarceration by family (house arrest); Targeted Seduction; Trafficking; Violence – physical; Violence – sexual
Social and Cultural	Denied access to social community/networks; Enforced religious dress code; Violence – psychological
Technological	-

Christian women in Tanzania face hostility both through subtle and violent means. In past years, this has included being denied access to communal resources such as community wells, being pressured into dressing according to an Islamic dress code, and being verbally harassed. Women can also be sexually assaulted. For example, a country expert explained that in some regions widows "are compelled to have affairs with another appointed person, as a means of what they call 'purification' from an omen of death of her husband". Christian women can be coerced into such practices against their beliefs.

Additionally, Christian women are sometimes intentionally deceived by Muslim men who pretend to be evangelical Christians, with the intent of coercing them into giving up their Christian faith. Furthermore, there is coercion to accept cultural practices such as female genital mutilation, polygamous unions and early child marriages among the Maasai. Christian maids working for Muslims are required to wear the 'Baibui' (long black gowns) while working or risk losing their jobs. A country expert reports that Christian businesses are also boycotted once it is noticed that the vendors, especially women, are not dressed in accordance with Islamic regulations.

Women in Kigoma region have been subjected to sexual violence over the past years. The attackers – known locally as [Teleza](#), which refers to the fact that they cover themselves in oil – typically break into the homes of women in the night. They are often armed and threaten violence, sometimes leaving the survivors with life-threatening injuries (African Arguments, 10 June 2019). Women who have been subjected to this violence are afraid to speak out as the community then isolates them or they are subjected to social stigma, branded as prostitutes. Initially, these men only targeted single women, almost as though they wanted to punish them for not adhering to the norms of society by getting married. However, now even married women are being targeted, with women as old as 70 also being attacked. The attacks are centered around a need to control women. In some locations, this affects Christians more than others.

Female converts to Christianity face the most intense persecution. They continue to face the prospect of forced marriage, forced divorce, expulsion from their homes and isolation from their families, denial of their inheritance and custody rights. Young female converts in particular are likely to be confined at home with severe restraints on their movement. Reporting on the case of Aliyah (name changed for security reasons), a female convert who in late 2021 was locked up by her Muslim father, a source revealed: "He wanted Aliyah to remain a Muslim. When Aliyah converted, she married a Christian man. But after the marriage, he took her by force and locked her up to force a divorce. Aliyah remains at her father's home up till now neither going to church nor to the mosque."

Due to such religious persecution, Christian Tanzanian women are often demoralized, traumatized and consequently unable to work effectively. This is reported to have a negative economic impact on the wider Tanzanian Church, as many women are unable to contribute, in part due to limited access to education.

Gender-specific religious persecution / Male

Group	Male Pressure Points
Economic	Economic harassment via business/job/work access
Political and Legal	-
Security	Forced out of home – expulsion; Violence – physical
Social and Cultural	Violence – psychological; Violence – Verbal
Technological	-

Christian men in Tanzania have been known to encounter discrimination and segregation in the workplace, particularly in Muslim companies (although this has not been reported in the 2023 reporting period). For instance, their wages may be cut, and their overtime allowances unpaid. In addition, they may be forced to observe prayers during official prayer times and are commonly targeted by Muslims who wish to convert them. “Persecution for men is mostly economic, in the form of being kicked out of their jobs, physical attacks and denied inheritance,” a country expert stated.

Such pressure at work places a long-term economic burden on Christian men as well as on their families, for whom they are the primary provider. The wider Tanzanian Church is further impacted, as without funds it struggles economically. It is also weakened in terms of attendance, as many men struggle to attend due to working hours.

Christian converts are affected by cultural and ethnic factors, particularly if they have a tribal background. If a Maasai warrior converts to Christianity, for example, and changes his hair from the traditional style, the tribal leaders (whose role is to preserve the culture of the tribe) often regard this act as a form of betrayal. Punishment may include physical harm with traditional weapons such as spears and arrows. Similarly, converts from a Muslim background will face harsh treatment and reprisals. Upon conversion, financial support is usually withdrawn. In 2022, one convert stopped attending church services because of the death threats he was receiving from his family. Many converts are forced to flee as a result of such pressure.

Persecution of other religious minorities

Besides Christians and Muslims, Tanzania’s demography includes Buddhists, Hindus, Sikhs, Bahai and animists. There are currently no reports about the mistreatment or persecution of these groups.

According to the US State Department (IRFR 2021):

- "On June 16 [2021], the Director of Public Prosecution dropped charges against 34 of the 40 members of the Association for Islamic Mobilization and Propagation (UAMSHO), an Islamist group advocating for Zanzibar’s full autonomy, who had been in custody on the mainland following their arrests in 2013 on terrorism charges."

Future outlook

The outlook for Christians as viewed through the lens of:

Islamic oppression, blended with Clan oppression

Christians in Tanzania are the majority, except around the coast and on the Island of Zanzibar. The persecution of Christians in these areas is likely to continue (despite showing some signs of improvement). Islamic militants in neighboring Mozambique are also expanding their influence in Tanzania, having conducted a number of cross-border attacks. The fact that there are now international military forces operating against the jihadists in Mozambique means there is a chance the insurgents might set up in Tanzania until those military operations in Mozambique are ended.

Dictatorial paranoia

In the past few years, the ruling party (Chama Cha Mapinduzi / Party of the Revolution) has been tightening its hold on power and strategically weakening the opposition. Before the 2020 general elections, Members of Parliament were induced or threatened to leave the opposition and join the ruling party; in doing so, they have been re-elected into their constituencies under the ruling party. This has cost the country millions of dollars. The treatment of Christians in the country is showing improvement in many areas, apart from in the political scene where Christians, like other citizens, are facing the consequences of speaking out against human rights abuses by the government. However, in his last few months in office, President Magafuli showed more cooperation with leaders of churches. With a new president in office since 2021, many hope that President Hassan will work towards opening up civic space. However, there have been no major changes so far that have improved the stifled environment for civil society and the Church.

External Links - Persecution Dynamics

- Gender-specific religious persecution Female description: Teleza - <https://africanarguments.org/2019/06/tanzania-strange-worrying-rise-oil-covered-rapists-kigoma-teleza/>

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=Tanzania>