



 **OpenDoors**

'Where most needed' Impact report

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NOTE

Please treat this report as confidential, but you are welcome to share the prayer points

Thank you

On behalf of our persecuted church family, thank you for your partnership – giving to our work to strengthen our brothers and sisters in extreme circumstances around the world. We are grateful for your continued support that enables us to do the Lord's work ministering to those in great need.

Your gift has been used where it is needed most and has enabled us to provide vital practical and spiritual support to persecuted Christians. The following pages focus on specific areas of the ministry to give you a deeper understanding of how your funds may have been used. Please know that we love to talk about the people and projects you are supporting and welcome any questions you have about the ministry.

Please continue to uphold our suffering brothers and sisters in Christ. As Brother Andrew said; our prayer goes where we cannot.

May this report challenge, encourage and inspire you.



Central Asia: growing authoritarianism

World Watch List 2025 research shows that the Central Asian church is under surveillance. For nearly 70 years, until 1991, countries in this region were part of the Communist regime that adopted authoritarian policies towards citizens and severely restricted religious practices. Even today, those in power impose restrictions on religious activities, allegedly to maintain national security and social order.

2024 saw a wave of arrests and interrogations of Christians. Under the guise of national security, authorities have been known to impose restrictions on religious gatherings, the production and distribution of religious literature, evangelistic work and religious activity among children and young people.

COUNTRY REPORTS

Kyrgyzstan re-entered the top 50 on the World Watch List this year, for the first time since 2013. Ranked 61st a year ago, the Central Asian country has risen to 47 on the World Watch List 2025. This was, by far, the biggest move on the list, and the primary reason was a sharp uptick in violence against the church.

For example, in March, armed representatives of the State Commission on Religious Affairs raided St Nicholas Catholic Church in Talas, forced departing worshippers back inside, and held the congregation there until two nuns had signed a statement admitting to 'illegal missionary activities' and 'spreading their ideology'.

Such assaults helped to drive up Kyrgyzstan's historically low violence score. This happened against a backdrop of a presidency that has been concentrating power for several years. Amnesty International said in April 2024 that the authorities had 'intensified their campaign to stifle all forms of public criticism and peaceful dissent'. New laws enacted in March 2024 against alleged "foreign representatives" have triggered state action against churches. Overly broad definitions of political activity are also being used to curb the right to freedom of association.

It was a similar story in neighbouring Kazakhstan, up to 38 in 2025. Again, this was due to a pronounced increase in violence against Christians. Since 2010, the Kazakh regime has taken a more authoritarian character, and a 2019 change in leadership brought no real improvement for Christians.

Open Doors work in Central Asia

Through your support, Open Doors is supporting the church in Central Asia to stand strong through partners with the following activities:

- Children and youth camps
- Leadership training
- Trauma counselling
- Literature and Bible distribution
- Relief aid
- Microcredit and loans
- Vocational training

RAHIM

Rahim* received a microloan from Open Doors partners to start his own landscape design business. His business is now doing so well that he had to hire an additional employee and Rahim is also planning to open another store.

Rahim wrote: *"You've influenced me so much in a positive way. Even my parents haven't done as much in my life. With you, I learned how to hold a shovel correctly, and not to be afraid of these tools. But most importantly, my mindset has changed, I understand that I need to learn to discipline myself, to train a lot. You gave me the opportunity to equip myself. I was able to learn the realities of business without having to go through major consequences."*

"I am grateful because you lovingly led me throughout the project, helped me to see the reality, and showed me the right steps to follow to improve myself and my business acumen."



IRINA

Irina* received Christian literature from Open Doors partners. She sent this message:

"Thank you so much for sharing various materials with me throughout this month. Three years ago, I came to believe in Jesus Christ, but because of persecution and difficulties in my family, my faith began to weaken. For those three years, I lived in darkness and felt a pain in my heart that I had betrayed Jesus."

"But after reading the different books you gave me, my love for Jesus began to burn in my heart again. I repented, and with tears in my eyes, I asked Jesus to forgive me and accept me again. After praying, I felt an inexplicable joy in my heart. I promised the Lord that I would never leave Him and that I would serve Him for the rest of my life. My depression, emptiness and guilt disappeared. I was completely free!"

*Names changed for security reasons



North Korea: complete denial of rights

North Korea has been at the top of the Open Doors World Watch List for all but one year since 2002.

Freedom of religion or belief, freedom of assembly and freedom of expression are non-existent in North Korea. Apart from state-sponsored churches in Pyongyang – largely seen as 'show churches' for propaganda purposes – any manifestation of religious beliefs is prohibited. The 'Anti-reactionary Thought Law', enacted in 2020, included the Bible among banned books. This reveals that Christianity is still seen by the state as a grave danger.

CHRISTIANITY IN NORTH KOREA

Due to the country's isolation, it is difficult to give exact numbers of Christians, but Open Doors estimates that there are between 300,000 and 500,000 Christians in North Korea. It is almost impossible for these Christians to gather for worship. For those who dare to meet, utmost secrecy is essential for their survival.

PRISON CAMPS

If discovered by the North Korean government, Christians face deportation to a political prison camp, hard labour or execution. Sharing one's faith or bringing religious literature into the country may lead to detention and forced labour. Choi Chun-gil, Kim Jung-wook and Kim Kook-kie were detained as political prisoners in 2013. All three have been held incommunicado after receiving life sentences in 2015.

The North Korean government continues to deny the existence of political prison camps despite the undeniable evidence collected by international bodies.

LEGAL DISCRIMINATION

Severe violations of fundamental rights inflicted on Christians originate from the 'Songbun' system. Introduced in the early years of Kim Il-sung, the system categorises all North Korean citizens into one of three broad classes: the core, the wavering and the hostile. Christians are included within the hostile category. Even North Koreans who are descendants from Christian families, but do not hold that faith themselves, may suffer discrimination under this classification system.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS

North Korean women and girls who escape to China are particularly vulnerable to sex trafficking. Victims are usually trafficked from North Korea on false offers of employment, and later sold as brides or sex slaves into China or other South East Asian countries. Victims are trafficked to the border and then transported to safe houses, brothels or buyers. Sexual violence and rape are common during these journeys. Some of these trafficked women and girls encounter churches and missionaries and convert to Christianity – they may face severe persecution as a result if forcibly returned to North Korea.

Open Doors work with North Koreans

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

WHAT MINISTRY WITH NORTH KOREAN WOMEN LOOKS LIKE

China's one-child-policy has created an incredibly imbalanced society. Many girls were abandoned by their parents, resulting in a shortage of women and a surplus of men. Chinese women who want to marry usually choose men with a bright or at least stable future ahead of them. Poor men with little education, who work as farmers or labourers in the countryside, have the fewest possibilities of finding a spouse.

Many men save up money and buy a North Korean wife from human traffickers. The North Korean women are driven across the Chinese border, hoping to escape the horrible conditions in North Korea, but are lied to by traffickers – and then are at the mercy of these smugglers once they cross the border.

Open Doors comes alongside these women, providing them with practical aid, pastoral care, fellowship and Bible study. The hope is that some of these women will be discipled and, at some point, want to return to their homeland, becoming future female leaders of the North Korean church.

Ha-Joon* was able to visit a women's ministry gathering in China, where trafficked North Korean women come together for Bible study and worship.

Ha-Joon and the women spent most of the day singing the Lord's praises, sharing about their lives, praying and reading the Bible. *"We worshipped together, which was really special,"* Ha-Joon shared.

"One of the day's highlights was singing and dancing with the ladies. That brought a lot of happiness to the group," Ha-Joon says. *"They laughed a lot."*

Ha-Joon was also impressed with the women's memorisation skills. *"There was one woman who could recite 50 verses without hesitation!"* she remembers.

Ha-Joon was able to visit the women on behalf of the many Open Doors supporters worldwide. *"When our founder, Brother Andrew, travelled to the persecuted church around the world, his main purpose was simply to be there,"* she says. *"He called this 'presence ministry'. I'm very grateful that I could do presence ministry to this isolated group of Christians. This was only possible thanks to the prayers and generous support of our donors. On behalf of the North Korean women and our local fieldworkers, we thank you for your love, care and support."*

*Name changed for security reasons

Celebration of your giving

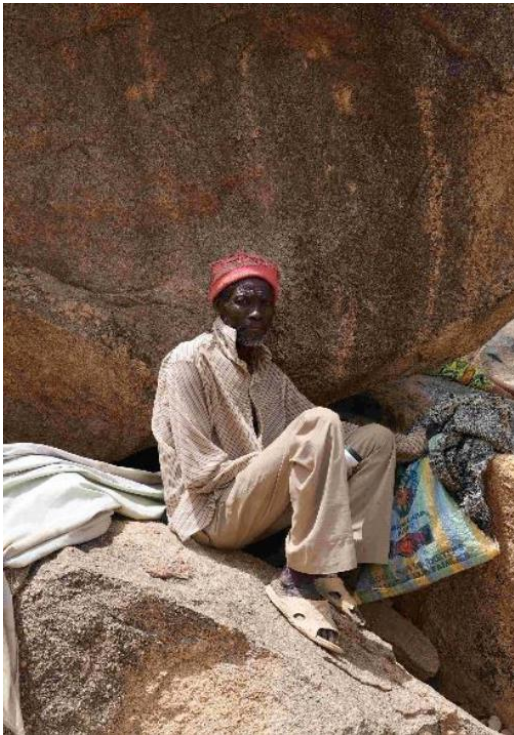
Your gift has been a great blessing to our persecuted family where it is most difficult to be a Christian. As an encouragement to you, we include a few testimonies from beneficiaries who we have supported around the world.

All illustrations use recent project costs.

Bhumika* from Nepal: Open Doors partners helped her to open her own shop

"God blessed me with this shop through you and it has become a great support for me. Now, I am able to buy medicines for myself, and also groceries. Moreover, I feel happy to give offerings and tithes in the Lord's house. I also help other believers who are in need. I feel satisfied to help them with the blessing I got from the Lord because Jesus showed that example to us and I want to follow His steps."

£209.70 could enable a Christian in Nepal to take part in an income-generation programme.



Pastor Moustafa*, a Cameroonian believer living in a camp for internally displaced people (IDPs): Open Doors provided his community with relief aid and trauma care

"You are very different from other organisations... You come to us, the IDPs. You sit on the mat or even on the ground with the refugee. You cry with the orphans. You listen to the widows and cry with them. You go to the hospital and visit the wounded. You pray with us and you pray for us. Then, after you've discussed it with God, you bring your help. What you are doing is a blessing of the Lord for us. You have shared in our sufferings. Our people know that outsiders care for them. We are no longer alone in this suffering. Thank you for all your support."

£31 could give vital support to a displaced believer, providing food, clothing, shelter and medical care.

**Names changed due to security reasons*

Please pray

- For the North Korean women's deeper spiritual growth and maturity. Pray that they will seek the Lord wholeheartedly and grow in wisdom and understanding. May they walk in obedience to Him and trust in His guidance each day
- That the violence across Cameroon will end and that all who have been displaced will be able to return home
- For the Holy Spirit to work in yet more wonderful and precious ways to draw people in Central Asia to Jesus
- That God will bless and protect all Open Doors staff working around the world.

