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World Watch Research

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# Chad: Persecution Dynamics

December 2024



**OpenDoors**

Serving persecuted **Christians** worldwide

Open Doors International / World Watch Research

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# Contents

World Watch List 2025 – Top 50.....	2
World Watch List 2025 – Ranks 51-78 .....	4
Copyright, sources and definitions .....	5
Reporting period .....	5
Brief country details.....	5
Map of country .....	6
Dominant persecution engines and drivers.....	7
Brief description of the persecution situation.....	7
Specific examples of violations of rights in the reporting period .....	7
Christian communities and how they are affected.....	8
Areas where Christians face most difficulties.....	8
Position on the World Watch List .....	9
Persecution engines.....	9
Drivers of persecution.....	11
The Persecution pattern .....	12
Pressure in the 5 spheres of life.....	13
Violence .....	20
5 Year trends.....	22
Gender-specific religious persecution / Female .....	24
Gender-specific religious persecution / Male.....	25
Persecution of other religious minorities .....	26
Trends Summary .....	26
Further useful reports.....	27
External Links .....	27

## World Watch List 2025 – Top 50

Rank	Country	Private life	Family life	Community life	National life	Church life	Violence	Total Score WWL 2025	Total Score WWL 2024	Total Score WWL 2023	Total Score WWL 2022	Total Score WWL 2021
1	North Korea	16.7	16.7	16.7	16.7	16.7	14.4	98	96	98	96	94
2	Somalia	16.5	16.7	16.6	16.6	16.7	11.1	94	93	92	91	92
3	Yemen	16.7	16.7	16.7	16.7	16.7	10.6	94	89	89	88	87
4	Libya	16.0	16.2	15.9	16.2	16.4	10.6	91	91	88	91	92
5	Sudan	14.1	14.2	15.5	14.9	15.3	16.1	90	87	83	79	79
6	Eritrea	14.6	14.9	15.5	15.9	15.9	12.2	89	89	89	88	88
7	Nigeria	13.5	13.9	14.6	14.9	14.5	16.7	88	88	88	87	85
8	Pakistan	13.6	13.9	15.0	15.0	12.9	16.7	87	87	86	87	88
9	Iran	15.0	14.6	13.5	15.9	16.5	10.9	86	86	86	85	86
10	Afghanistan	15.6	15.9	15.9	16.4	16.7	5.0	85	84	84	98	94
11	India	12.2	12.9	13.3	14.9	13.9	16.5	84	83	82	82	83
12	Saudi Arabia	15.2	15.3	14.8	15.8	16.6	3.3	81	81	80	81	78
13	Myanmar	12.6	11.1	13.5	14.1	12.9	16.5	81	79	80	79	74
14	Mali	11.1	10.1	14.7	13.0	15.2	15.6	80	79	76	70	67
15	China	13.2	10.1	12.8	14.6	16.1	11.1	78	78	77	76	74
16	Maldives	15.6	15.3	13.7	15.8	16.5	0.7	78	78	77	77	77
17	Iraq	14.2	14.4	14.3	14.8	13.9	6.1	78	79	76	78	82
18	Syria	13.5	14.4	13.9	14.4	14.3	7.0	78	81	80	78	81
19	Algeria	14.7	14.3	11.5	14.7	16.0	6.3	77	79	73	71	70
20	Burkina Faso	11.7	9.7	13.2	11.5	14.0	15.6	76	75	71	68	67
21	Morocco	13.2	13.8	11.6	12.9	14.3	8.3	74	71	69	69	67
22	Laos	11.8	10.7	13.5	14.1	13.9	9.8	74	75	68	69	71
23	Mauritania	14.6	14.2	13.8	14.2	14.2	2.8	74	72	72	70	71
24	Bangladesh	12.4	10.6	12.7	11.3	10.4	16.1	74	71	69	68	67
25	Uzbekistan	14.6	12.7	13.5	12.4	15.5	4.4	73	71	71	71	71
26	Cuba	13.2	8.5	13.9	13.3	15.1	9.1	73	73	70	66	62
27	CAR	10.3	8.6	13.9	9.6	14.0	15.6	72	70	70	68	66
28	Niger	9.4	9.6	14.5	7.7	14.6	15.7	72	70	70	68	62

Rank	Country	Private life	Family life	Community life	National life	Church life	Violence	Total Score WWL 2025	Total Score WWL 2024	Total Score WWL 2023	Total Score WWL 2022	Total Score WWL 2021
29	Turkmenistan	14.3	12.3	13.6	13.9	15.3	1.5	71	70	70	69	70
30	Nicaragua	12.4	7.6	13.7	13.3	14.1	9.6	71	70	65	56	51
31	Mexico	11.7	9.0	12.5	11.8	11.0	14.6	71	68	67	65	64
32	Oman	14.5	14.1	10.9	13.8	14.1	3.0	70	69	65	66	63
33	Ethiopia	9.9	9.7	12.6	10.4	12.1	15.6	70	69	66	66	65
34	Tunisia	12.4	13.2	10.1	12.6	13.8	8.1	70	69	67	66	67
35	DRC	8.0	7.9	12.6	10.8	14.5	16.1	70	67	67	66	64
36	Bhutan	13.2	13.2	12.3	14.1	14.2	2.2	69	68	66	67	64
37	Mozambique	9.3	8.5	13.9	8.4	12.5	15.9	68	68	68	65	63
38	Kazakhstan	13.3	11.6	12.2	12.8	14.2	4.3	68	65	65	64	64
39	Tajikistan	14.1	12.7	12.7	13.2	13.7	1.9	68	66	66	65	66
40	Egypt	12.7	13.7	12.1	12.4	10.9	6.3	68	68	68	71	75
41	Qatar	14.2	14.2	10.5	13.2	14.4	0.7	67	67	68	74	67
42	Comoros	12.7	14.0	11.2	12.4	14.2	2.6	67	66	66	63	62
43	Cameroon	8.8	7.6	12.6	8.4	13.1	16.1	67	66	65	65	64
44	Vietnam	10.8	9.5	12.2	14.1	14.1	5.9	67	68	70	71	72
45	Turkey	13.0	11.7	11.7	13.2	11.5	5.4	67	64	66	65	69
46	Colombia	11.0	7.9	12.7	11.5	10.5	12.6	66	68	71	68	67
47	Kyrgyzstan	13.5	10.3	11.7	11.4	12.4	6.9	66	59	59	58	58
48	Brunei	14.8	14.8	10.8	10.8	14.0	0.6	66	66	65	64	64
49	Chad	11.0	8.2	10.2	9.9	10.3	15.9	65	61	58	55	53
50	Jordan	12.9	14.3	10.4	12.2	12.8	2.4	65	65	65	66	64

## World Watch List 2025 – Ranks 51-78

Rank	Country	Private life	Family life	Community life	National life	Church life	Violence	Total Score WWL 2025	Total Score WWL 2024	Total Score WWL 2023	Total Score WWL 2022	Total Score WWL 2021
51	Malaysia	12.8	13.7	11.7	12.4	11.2	3.0	65	64	66	63	63
52	Azerbaijan	13.3	10.2	9.6	12.2	13.7	5.6	65	60	59	60	56
53	Kenya	10.3	9.2	11.4	8.0	11.5	13.9	64	63	64	63	62
54	Nepal	12.2	10.6	9.5	12.6	12.3	5.9	63	62	61	64	66
55	Tanzania	9.3	10.8	10.3	8.6	8.7	15.4	63	62	63	61	58
56	Russian Federation	12.7	7.9	10.7	13.1	14.1	4.4	63	58	57	56	57
57	Djibouti	12.3	12.6	12.7	10.1	12.1	1.7	61	61	60	59	56
58	Kuwait	13.1	13.6	9.4	12.0	12.2	0.9	61	61	64	64	63
59	Indonesia	10.9	11.9	10.9	11.6	10.2	5.7	61	66	68	68	63
60	UAE	13.3	13.4	9.5	11.3	12.8	0.6	61	61	62	62	62
61	Sri Lanka	12.7	8.7	11.5	11.5	8.5	7.6	60	60	57	63	62
62	Palestinian Territories	13.1	13.3	10.3	10.7	12.1	0.2	60	60	60	59	58
63	Burundi	7.6	7.8	9.4	9.8	9.7	14.6	59	57	55	52	48
64	Rwanda	9.4	7.7	9.0	10.4	12.1	9.4	58	58	57	50	42
65	Honduras	7.9	4.7	11.7	7.3	9.9	13.1	55	55	53	48	46
66	Togo	9.2	6.7	10.4	7.1	11.5	9.3	54	52	49	44	43
67	Bahrain	12.0	13.2	8.6	11.3	8.5	0.6	54	55	55	57	56
68	Guinea	10.3	7.5	8.3	8.3	10.5	8.9	54	52	48	43	47
69	Ukraine	6.8	5.0	7.8	12.5	13.5	7.2	53	44	37	37	34
70	Angola	6.8	6.7	8.1	11.5	11.4	8.3	53	52	52	51	46
71	Venezuela	6.3	4.4	11.1	10.0	10.8	9.6	52	53	56	51	39
72	Uganda	8.1	5.0	7.4	6.7	8.8	16.1	52	52	51	48	47
73	Ivory Coast	12.0	6.5	8.7	5.9	8.0	9.6	51	44	44	42	42
74	Lebanon	11.5	10.1	7.0	6.2	6.7	7.2	49	48	40	35	34
75	Gambia	8.3	8.2	8.9	8.8	8.9	4.4	48	47	44	44	43
76	South Sudan	5.7	4.4	7.0	6.3	8.1	15.6	47	46	46	43	43

Rank	Country	Private life	Family life	Community life	National life	Church life	Violence	Total Score WWL 2025	Total Score WWL 2024	Total Score WWL 2023	Total Score WWL 2022	Total Score WWL 2021
77	Belarus	9.9	3.7	5.0	10.8	14.1	3.1	47	46	43	33	30
78	Philippines	9.2	6.6	6.6	6.1	5.7	8.5	43	40	32	34	26

## Copyright, sources and definitions

World Watch Research has divided up the previously named Full Country Dossier into two separate documents:

- [Background country information](#) (published annually in summer)
- Persecution dynamics (published annually in January).

These documents are the property of World Watch Research (WWR), the research department of Open Doors International. They include data and analysis based around Open Doors World Watch List (WWL) and 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 end of each document under the heading “External links”. These documents may be used and distributed free of charge, but please always acknowledge the source as: © Open Doors International.

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 can be found on the research pages of the Open Doors website: <https://www.opendoors.org/en-US/research-reports/wwl-documentation/>.

## Reporting period

The WWL 2025 reporting period was 1 October 2023 - 30 September 2024.

## Brief country details

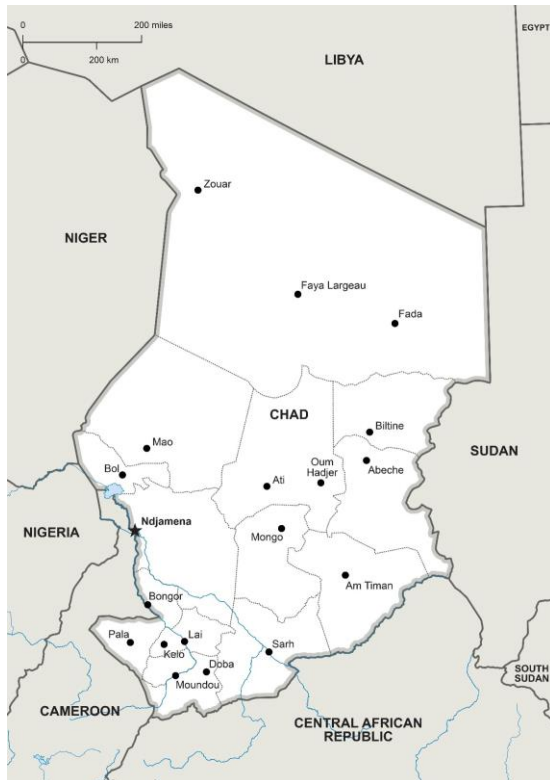
Chad: Population (UN estimate for 2024)	Christians	Chr%
18,847,000	6,003,000	31.9

*Zurlo G A and Johnson T M, eds., World Christian Database, Leiden/Boston: Brill, accessed May 2024*

Chad: Religious context	Number of adherents	%
Christians	6,003,000	31.9
Muslim	11,339,000	60.2
Hindu	0	0.0
Buddhist	3,000	0.0
Ethnic religionist	1,258,000	6.7
Jewish	0	0.0
Bahai	213,000	1.1
Atheist	2,700	0.0
Agnostic	22,600	0.1
Other	6,400	0.0
<i>OTHER includes Chinese folk, New religionist, Sikh, Spiritist, Taoist, Confucianist, Jain, Shintoist, Zoroastrian.</i>		

Zurlo G A and Johnson T M, eds., *World Christian Database*, Leiden/Boston: Brill, accessed May 2024

## Map of country



## Dominant persecution engines and drivers

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

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

### Brief description of the persecution situation

Located in a region fraught with insecurity and conflict, Chad faces immense challenges due to its proximity to countries struggling with violent jihadist groups. This precarious position deeply influences the country's internal stability, with a conservative society that is often gripped by fear of the growing influence of extremist ideologies. In such an environment, being a Christian comes with significant risks, particularly in rural areas where fear often keeps believers from attending church services.

In regions dominated by Islam, individuals who convert to Christianity are especially vulnerable, often forced to practice their faith in secret to avoid violent backlash from their families or communities. The situation is particularly dire in the southwestern part of the country, where armed groups have increasingly targeted Christians. In May 2023, several Christians were killed, their properties were burned, and many were displaced from their homes. The presence of jihadist groups like Boko Haram amplifies this hostile environment, especially for converts to Christianity who also face discrimination in IDP camps and coercion to renounce their faith. Although the Constitution may promise religious freedom, local authorities frequently refuse to recognize Muslim-to-Christian conversions, for example, when individuals change their Muslim names to Christian ones. This refusal can create significant challenges, such as preventing the individual from updating official documents to reflect their new identity. Without recognition, the person may face legal and bureaucratic obstacles in various aspects of life, including employment, education and access to services; mandatory church registration adds another layer of difficulty. Christians, particularly converts, find themselves navigating a precarious existence, constantly under threat from political, social and extremist forces.

### Specific examples of violations of rights in the reporting period

- Christians are frequent targets of violence from radical Islamic groups like Boko Haram and Fulani militia, with reports of abductions and persistent threats.
- The activities of armed groups in the southwest have intensified, leading to the displacement of Christians, with their properties destroyed and burned.
- Despite the government's ban on Wahhabism, the ideology is gaining traction, contributing to an environment of fear and insecurity, particularly for Christian converts.



- Young Imams in the country are increasingly radicalized, creating an environment of intimidation that exacerbates the challenges Christians face.
- Public worship is particularly challenging for Christians in northern and northeastern areas, as well as regions outside the capital, due to these threats.
- Restrictions on church building further complicate the establishment of places of worship, adding another layer of difficulty for Christians in these areas.

## Christian communities and how they are affected

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

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

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

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

## Areas where Christians face most difficulties

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

*Islamic oppression* is particularly evident in the Kanem, Salamat, Lac and Sila regions. The influence of radical Islam is also notable in the sultanates of Wadai, Bagirmi, and Fitri. Religion partly reflects the regional (north vs. south) political fault lines and division in the country.

## Position on the World Watch List

Chad: World Watch List	Points	WWL Rank
WWL 2025	65	49
WWL 2024	61	56
WWL 2023	58	60
WWL 2022	55	63
WWL 2021	53	62

Chad’s World Watch List 2025 score rose by 4 points, from 61 to 65, ranking #49. This increase primarily stems from a significant rise in violence, which jumped from 10.6 to 15.9 points. The surge reflects the growing influence of Islamic radicalism and threats from groups such as Boko Haram and armed Fulani herdsmen, leading to heightened discrimination, abductions, and forced displacement of Christians. Over the last few years, Chad’s score has consistently risen by at least two points annually, underscoring a steady decline in conditions for Christians. The situation is especially difficult in regions outside N’Djamena, where Christians often resort to practicing their faith in secrecy due to the influence of radical groups. Chad’s proximity to unstable borders compounds these security issues, especially within IDP camps where hostility toward Christians is increasingly prevalent

## Persecution engines

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

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

**Islamic oppression (Very Strong)**

While there is no centralized organization striving to Islamize Chad, the influence of Islamic extremism is quite pervasive. In collaboration with Arab nations, numerous schools, universities and mosques are being established to disseminate radical Islamic ideologies. This has catalyzed the radicalization of specific segments of the population, creating an increasingly hostile environment for Christians. The presence and activities of extremist groups like Boko Haram in the region further amplify this Islamic oppression, making it a predominant mechanism of persecution in Chad.

**Dictatorial paranoia (Medium, bordering High)**

Since his ascendancy to power in 1990 through a Zaghawa-led rebellion, President Idriss Déby manipulated religious and ethnic sentiments to consolidate power and marginalize opposition. His authoritarian regime was characterized by the repression of dissenting voices and the quelling of political freedoms. After the death of Idriss Déby in April 2021, his son, Mahamat Déby, seized power in what effectively amounted to a coup d'état, circumventing the constitutional process. Originally, a transition to civilian rule was promised for October 2022, but this timeline was unilaterally extended by an additional two years. Public protests against this extension were met with a forceful crackdown by security forces. Within this authoritarian regime, civil liberties are severely constrained, including freedom of expression, assembly, religion, and even the right to seek judicial remedies. Legislative, provincial and municipal elections are now scheduled for 29 December 2024 ([Africa News, 22 August 2024](#)).

**Organized Corruption and crime (Medium, bordering High)**

Chad's low score of 20/100 on Transparency International's 2023 Corruption Perceptions Index ([CPI 2023 Chad](#)) highlights the rampant corruption and the absence of rule of law. This lawlessness provides fertile ground for jihadist and organized criminal activities which seriously affect religious freedom.

**Clan oppression (Medium)**

Particularly in northeastern Chad, notably in the Ennedi region which is the homeland of the Zaghawa-born Débys, persecution based on ethnic differences is a frequent experience for Christians. In the south, where indigenous African religions are dominant, Christians often face coercion to participate in traditional rituals. They also confront intra-ethnic pressures, as leaders within their own ethnic communities exert influence to conform to traditional practices.

## Drivers of persecution

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

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

### Drivers of Islamic oppression

- **Violent religious groups (Very Strong):** Radical groups such as Boko Haram and the Sanusiyya Brotherhood are notorious for carrying out violent attacks against Christians, particularly in the southern parts of Chad. These acts of violence often extend to relatives of converts, making them key drivers of *Islamic oppression*.
- **Non-Christian leaders (Strong):** In Chad's northern areas, local Islamic officials are known to discriminate against Christians. These officials often restrict access to basic government services for Christians, especially those who have converted from Islam. Experiences of overt hostility and

delays in service are common in such scenarios.

- **Immediate and extended Family (Medium):** Conversion to Christianity often leads to strong negative reactions from both immediate and extended family members. Such converts are usually subjected to various forms of harassment, including eviction from their homes and denial of access to family resources.
- **Citizens (Medium):** Within Muslim-majority communities, visible Christians and especially converts from Islam are commonly ostracized by their neighbors and wider society.

#### Drivers of Dictatorial paranoia

- **Government officials (Medium):** Chad's authoritarian government severely limits freedoms, such as those of expression and association, both of which are critical for religious freedom. Previous leaders, like President Idriss Déby, had encouraged the influence of Islam over other religions as a tactic for consolidating power.

#### Drivers of Organized corruption and crime

- **Government officials (Medium):** The pervasive corruption within the governmental structure enables those targeting Christians to act without fear of legal consequences, fostering a culture of impunity.
- **Organized criminal networks (Medium):** The existence of organized criminal networks, some with international connections, adds an additional layer of complexity to the risk factors affecting Christians in Chad. These networks capitalize on the government's inability to enforce law and order, thereby escalating acts of persecution.

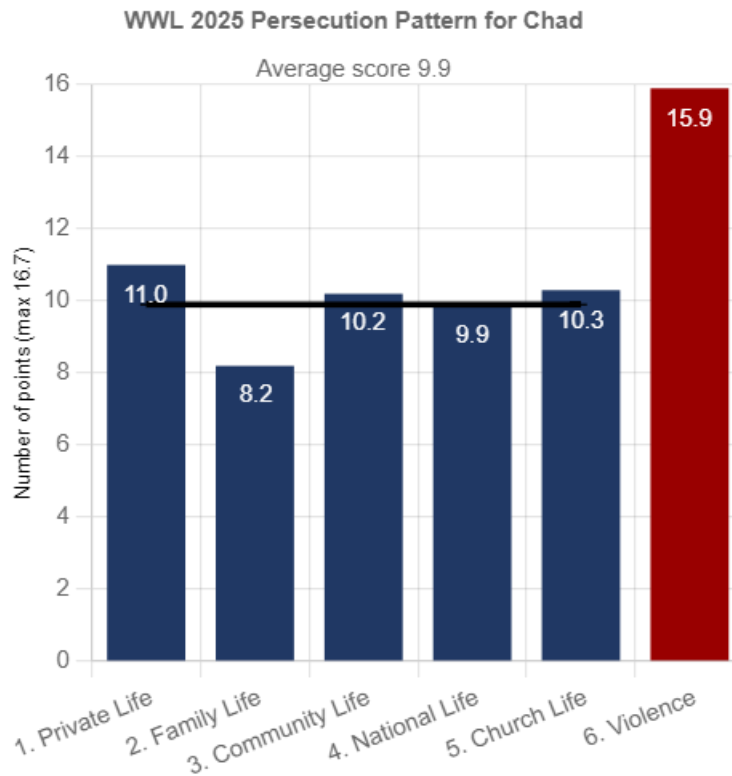
#### Drivers of Clan oppression

- **Ethnic leaders (Medium):** In regions where traditional African religions are dominant, especially in the south, ethnic and community leaders frequently force Christians to partake in traditional rituals. Christians who refuse, face social and material penalties, losing community benefits and support.

## The Persecution pattern

As can be seen in the chart below, the WWL 2025 Persecution Pattern for Chad shows:

- The average pressure on Christians is high at 9.9 points, slightly less than the level in WWL 2024, which was 10.1 points.
- Pressure is highest in the *Private sphere*, scoring 11.0 points, followed by the *Church sphere* with 10.3 points, and the *Community sphere* with 10.2 points. These scores reflect the various forms of pressure Christians face in their personal lives, religious practices and community interactions.
- The level of violence is categorized as 'extremely high' at 15.9 points, an increase of over 5 points from the 10.6 points registered in WWL 2024.



## 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 2025 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://www.opendoors.org/en-US/research-reports/wwl-documentation/>.*

### Pressure in Block 1 / Private sphere

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

Conversion from Islam to Christianity in Chad is strongly opposed, often forbidden, and can result in severe consequences for converts who face expulsion from their families, social ostracism, and even confinement, such as house arrest, imposed by relatives or local communities to prevent the practice of their new faith. The deeply entrenched cultural and religious opposition stems from viewing conversion not only as a spiritual shift but as a betrayal of communal identity. For instance, a Muslim father physically abused a recent convert and denied him financial support for higher education, underscoring the economic consequences of conversion. When Islamic groups rule an area, religious freedoms are not protected by the government. This means that people who convert are open to violence, exclusion and threats from both ordinary citizens and extremists. This makes the risks of conversion very high and widespread.

***Block 1.8: It has been risky for Christians to speak about their faith with those other than immediate family (extended family, others). (3.25 points)***

Converts from Muslim backgrounds face a myriad of persecution challenges when discussing their faith with individuals beyond their immediate family, particularly in northern and northeastern Chad, where Islam is deeply entrenched. Converts are often viewed as betraying their cultural and religious heritage, leading to significant opposition from extended family members and the wider community. Attempts to coerce converts into renouncing their faith are common and can involve emotional pressure, social exclusion and, in some cases, physical intimidation. In these regions, where religious and cultural identity are tightly interwoven, openly practicing or discussing Christianity can expose converts to severe hostility, making their faith journey particularly precarious.

***Block 1.6: It has been risky for Christians to access Christian radio or TV, or Christian material on the Internet. (3.00 points)***

Accessing Christian radio, television, and online materials is extremely challenging for Christians in Chad, particularly for those in the northern and northeastern regions. Christians from a Muslim background face heightened risks, as seeking out Christian content can draw suspicion from family members, local communities and even authorities. The predominance of a single state-owned television channel limits the availability of diverse religious content, while the government's cautious approach to media often views religious broadcasts as potentially destabilizing. In this environment, Christians must discreetly access faith-based resources to avoid accusations of proselytization, increased scrutiny and potential threats to their safety. For many, these challenges further isolate them from the broader Christian community and resources needed to sustain their faith.

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

Revealing Christian faith through personal expression, such as blogs, social media posts (or wearing Christian symbols) is highly challenging for Christians in Chad. Public declarations of faith can attract negative attention from local communities and authorities, particularly in regions where Islam dominates. The societal perception of Christianity as a threat to traditional norms creates an environment where openly expressing faith can result in social exclusion, harassment and even legal complications. For many Christians, such pressure discourages visible or written expressions of their beliefs. For Christians from a Muslim background, the risks are significantly higher. Converts who express their Christian faith through any form of media or public display face intense scrutiny from family members, neighbors and religious leaders. Online platforms such as Facebook or personal blogs often become avenues for identifying and targeting converts, with posts leading to severe consequences, including threats, physical harm and forced renunciation of faith.

## **Pressure in Block 2 / Family sphere**

***Block 2.6: Christian couples have been hindered in adopting children or serving as foster parents because of their faith. (2.75 points)***

Christian families in Chad face significant societal challenges in adopting or fostering children due to deeply rooted religious and cultural norms. Although adoption policies do not formally restrict adoption based on religion, the informal nature of adoption—often involving care for orphaned

relatives—complicates matters in a context where religious identity plays a critical role. Muslim families frequently oppose Christian couples adopting children, particularly if the child’s biological family was Muslim, fearing the influence of Christian beliefs. Similarly, Christian families may resist Muslim individuals adopting Christian children, concerned about the potential loss of the child’s Christian upbringing.

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

Children of Christians in Chad, especially those of converts from Islam, often face harassment and discrimination in various settings, including schools, playgrounds and community spaces. Similar to their parents, these children face societal pressures and stigmatization, with classmates and peers mocking them for their association with Christianity. They are frequently insulted or accused of betraying the Muslim faith, creating an environment of hostility and exclusion. In regions such as Abéché, children from Christian families regularly encounter derogatory remarks and conflicts in school, further isolating them from their peers and undermining their sense of belonging and safety in their communities.

***Block 2.10: Christian spouses and/or children of Christians have been subject to separation for prolonged periods of time by circumstances relating to persecution. (2.75 points)***

Christian spouses and children in Chad, particularly within convert families, often endure times of prolonged separation due to societal and familial pressure tied to persecution. Extended families and local communities, especially in regions hostile to Christianity, actively encourage such separation to isolate Christian influences and coerce converts into renouncing their faith. Such separation occurs through abductions or the displacement of individuals fleeing persecution. For instance, during the WWL 2025 reporting period, a local community drove a convert from Islam from his home, resulting in a traumatic separation from his wife and children. Such actions inflict profound emotional and psychological harm while underscoring the systemic efforts to weaken Christian families and discourage conversions.

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

Forcing people to renounce their faith is a significant pressure faced by Christian converts in Chad, but the spouses of converts often endure the greatest challenges. Extended families and communities frequently target the spouse, pressuring them to separate from the convert and framing this as necessary to preserve family honor or to protect their children. This coercion disproportionately affects spouses, who are caught between their commitment to their own immediate family and the intense societal expectation to distance themselves from someone perceived as betraying their former faith. In many cases, extended families and community members threaten to take away children or ostracize the entire household if the spouse does not act against the convert. Such pressure creates immense emotional and social strain for spouses, often leaving them isolated and burdened with the responsibility of navigating community hostility and familial disruption.



### Pressure in Block 3 / Community sphere

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

In their communities, Christians endure extensive persecution due to their faith, particularly in northern and northeastern Chad, where extremist ideologies and cultural norms dominate. In regions influenced by Boko Haram, this persecution manifests as harassment, threats, and daily obstructions that impact almost every aspect of life. In public spaces, Christians frequently face hostility, with insults and physical intimidation being commonplace. Community members may refuse to interact with Christians in markets or shared facilities, further isolating them socially. This persecution also extends into professional life, where Christians face discrimination in hiring and workplace environments in their community. Employers in predominantly Muslim regions may avoid employing Christians or subject them to harassment, limiting their economic opportunities. Leadership roles are often inaccessible to Christians, as a preference for Muslim dominance in decision-making positions creates systemic barriers to advancement. For many, the constant threats and obstruction in their daily activities serve as a means to suppress their visibility and force them into compliance with the dominant religious and social norms. This hostile environment underscores the daily challenges Christians face in these regions.

***Block 3.7: Christians have been pressured by their community to renounce their faith. (3.50 points)***

Christians in Chad, particularly converts from Islam, face relentless pressure from their communities to renounce their faith. All Christians experience this to some extent, but converts, perceived as betraying their former religious and cultural identity, bear the brunt disproportionately. Communities employ various tactics to put pressure on Christians, ranging from social exclusion and public insults to more direct threats against their safety and livelihood. For example, Christians may be denied access to communal resources, barred from participating in social events, or subjected to public humiliation to coerce them into abandoning Christianity. For converts, the stakes are even higher, as they often lose the vital support of their extended families and close-knit communities, which are central to survival in many parts of Chad. Community members monitor their actions and relationships, compounding this isolation and making the practice of their new faith exceedingly difficult.

***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)***

In regions dominated by Muslim communities, Christians face significant challenges due to constant surveillance and monitoring by local elders, youth groups and Boko Haram informants or sympathizers. This scrutiny often involves reporting Christians' activities to community leaders or authorities and shadowing their movements, creating a climate of fear and restriction. The government also monitors communication channels, specifically targeting Christians deemed unsupportive of the regime. These individuals must exercise extreme caution in their communications, as any perceived dissent can lead to further harassment or punitive actions. This environment makes it increasingly difficult for Christians to practice their faith openly, engage in community activities, or voice their concerns without fear of retaliation.

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

Christians in Chad face severe risks of abduction and forced marriage, driven by the activities of Boko Haram and local community practices. In areas around Lake Chad, Boko Haram frequently abducts Christians, especially women and girls, as part of its violent campaigns. These abductions often lead to forced conversions and marriages, with victims subjected to extreme abuse and isolation. Beyond Boko Haram-controlled regions, forced marriages are also prevalent in the northern, northeastern, and southwestern parts of Chad. Particularly in volatile areas and Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps, the targeting of Christian women and girls intensifies their vulnerability due to lack of protection.

**Pressure in Block 4 / National sphere*****Block 4.8: Christians have been hindered in expressing their views or opinions in public. (3.50 points)***

Christians in Chad face profound challenges to freedom of expression, navigating a complex environment marked by both systemic repression and targeted religious discrimination. At the national level, dictatorial practices severely curtail freedom of expression for all citizens, as dissenting voices are suppressed and public criticism of authority is met with harsh consequences. However, Christians' faith exacerbates this repression, making them doubly vulnerable. As citizens, they suffer the same restrictions as others under an authoritarian regime, and as Christians, they face additional challenges due to religious marginalization. At the local level, the situation becomes even more complicated. Christian perspectives are often dismissed, ridiculed or silenced, particularly in regions dominated by other religious or cultural groups. Christians attempting to raise their voice on issues of justice, peace or societal reform encounter resistance not only from government authorities but also from local community leaders who regard their faith-based views as a challenge to the prevailing norms. This double vulnerability makes it exceedingly difficult for Christians to advocate for their beliefs or participate meaningfully in public discourse, as any attempt to do so risks both political and social retaliation.

***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)***

For faith-related reasons, Christians in Chad have faced discrimination when interacting with authorities, including local administrations, government officials and the army. At the local level, Christians often find their concerns dismissed or undermined by officials influenced by community biases. For instance, a second-year Christian student who approached local authorities about the wrongful arrest of a fellow student faced overt bias and disregard, reflecting a widespread pattern of prejudice. At the national level, Christians experience unexplained delays or outright denials in their applications for essential services or official documentation, particularly in regions dominated by Islamic influence. These discriminatory practices extend to their interactions with law enforcement and public administrators, where their faith frequently serves as a basis for marginalization and inequitable treatment.

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

Christians in Chad also face significant barriers to accessing public office or advancing in their careers due to their faith. Employment and promotion processes often discriminate against Christians, with positions of leadership or influence systematically reserved for individuals from the majority faith, regardless of qualifications. This bias is particularly evident in government institutions and public sector roles, where an unspoken preference for aligning with the religious majority excludes Christians from meaningful participation. In many cases, Christians are overlooked for promotion or excluded from decision-making processes, further entrenching their marginalization. These systemic challenges reflect the broader struggle of Christians in Chad to achieve equal representation and opportunities within public and professional spheres.

***Block 4.14: Those who caused harm to Christians have deliberately been left unpunished. (3.00 points)***

The rule of law and equality before the law are deeply compromised for Christians in Chad, often resulting in perpetrators of persecution against them going scot-free. First, the government itself participates in persecution, enabling its drivers to act without fear of consequences. Secondly, the design of societal and institutional structures does not support Christians, leading to unequal treatment and perpetuating a cycle of impunity. Amidst the prevailing hostility towards Christians, there is a troubling pattern where perpetrators of violence against Christians often go unpunished. This dynamic reflects a policy of appeasement by some officials, allowing individuals accused of harming Christians to evade justice. For instance, reports suggest that police often release individuals implicated in Christian killings, particularly Muslims, from custody during investigations, or they disappear mysteriously. The government's apparent silence or inaction in addressing such cases raises serious concerns about its commitment to justice and the protection of the Christian community, further eroding trust in the rule of law.

**Pressure in Block 5 / Church sphere**

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

In Muslim-majority areas of Chad, including the northern, northeastern, Lake Chad basin regions where Boko Haram holds influence, and parts of the southwest, church activities face significant monitoring, hindrance and obstruction. Local communities in these areas often make it difficult for churches to conduct their activities openly, subjecting them to societal hostility, harassment, and interference. Government agents often view church activities as a potential threat to state hegemony, compounding this resistance. Churches advocating for justice, criticizing local customs, or addressing practices tied to African Traditional Religion (ATR) encounter additional challenges as their positions are perceived as destabilizing to traditional and political authority. Government agents have been known to send plainclothes operatives to monitor church gatherings, sermons, and events, further obstructing the freedom of association and expression. Reports from human rights organizations highlight that these measures often lead to undue restrictions on church operations, including delays in obtaining permits for gatherings, disruptions during services, and the intimidation of church leaders. This kind of ongoing interference not only makes it harder for churches to do their jobs, but it also shows how society and institutions are trying to push Christian communities to the edges in these areas.

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

Securing registration or legal status for churches in Chad is a complex and often burdensome process managed by the Ministry of Interior. Churches must initially obtain a six-month temporary authorization, which is often renewable but fraught with bureaucratic challenges, particularly for Christian institutions. During periods when authorization is not granted, churches are not recognized as legal entities, preventing them from opening bank accounts and leaving them vulnerable to harassment, closure, and even confiscation of their properties. The lack of legal status can also lead to severe consequences, including outright banning of church activities. Founding members of unregistered churches risk imprisonment of up to one year or fines exceeding \$800 (500,000 Chadian Francs). These measures not only deter the establishment of new churches but also create significant operational challenges for existing ones. The protracted and unpredictable nature of the registration process, coupled with the potential for punitive actions, places many churches in a precarious position, undermining their ability to function and serve their communities effectively.

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

Organizing Christian activities outside church compounds is extremely challenging in Chad, particularly in regions beyond the capital, N'Djamena. In many areas, especially near borders with Islamist regimes or in regions affected by Boko Haram, such activities are not only difficult but can also become dangerous. The government imposes strict regulations, making it nearly impossible for churches to hold events outside their premises. Public religious gatherings require official authorization, but the government rarely grants these permissions, especially in areas where security concerns justify the restrictions. Even in relatively peaceful regions, organized Christian activities outside church compounds attract scrutiny from local authorities and community leaders, complicating the process further. Violating these restrictive policies can lead to fines, harassment, or even the forced cancellation of events.

***Block 5.8: Christian preaching, teaching and/or published materials have been monitored. (3.50 points)***

Christian preaching, teaching and published materials are subject to extensive monitoring in Chad, reflecting a broader atmosphere of authoritarian control and community-level resistance to religious diversity. Government authorities, driving *Dictatorial paranoia*, actively surveil these activities to maintain control and ensure that no discourse challenges state power or the prevailing order. National Security officers are often present during major religious events to oversee sermons and teachings, ensuring that they do not include content perceived as critical of the government or its policies. At the community level, particularly in Muslim-dominated regions, local leaders and influential figures monitor Christian activities to preserve their religious hegemony. In these areas, Christian teachings and publications are closely scrutinized to prevent perceived encroachments on Islamic traditions. Community leaders may discourage or obstruct the distribution of Christian materials, seeing them as threats to the social and religious order. In regions affected by Boko Haram, such as the Lake Chad Basin, the surveillance of Christian activities becomes even more pronounced. Boko Haram sympathizers and informants often monitor churches and Christian gatherings, reporting activities they

deem problematic to local authorities or extremist networks. This additional layer of scrutiny intensifies the challenges for Christian communities, leaving little room for religious expression and creating an environment of fear and suppression. These overlapping dynamics of governmental control, community resistance, and extremist influence severely restrict the ability of Christians in Chad to preach, teach, or disseminate their faith openly.

## 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 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. 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 WWL chooses to be cautious because the real number is uncertain.*

Chad: Violence scores per Block 6 question in questionnaire	WWL 2025	WWL 2024
6.1 How many Christians have been killed for faith-related reasons (including state sanctioned executions)?	11	7
6.2 How many churches or public Christian properties (schools, hospitals, cemeteries, etc.) have been attacked, damaged, bombed, looted, destroyed, burned down, closed or confiscated for faith-related reasons?	10 *	3
6.3 How many Christians have been detained for faith-related reasons?	8	10 *
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)?	18	13
6.6 How many Christians have been raped or otherwise sexually harassed for faith-related reasons?	10 *	10 *
6.7 How many cases have there been of forced marriages of Christians to non-Christians?	10 *	10 *
6.8 How many Christians have been otherwise physically or mentally abused for faith-related reasons (including beatings and death threats)?	100 *	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?	167	100 *
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?	15	100 *
6.11 How many Christians have been forced to leave their homes or go into hiding in-country for faith-related reasons?	1000 *	100 *
6.12 How many Christians have been forced to leave the country for faith-related reasons?	10	10 *

## 5 Year trends

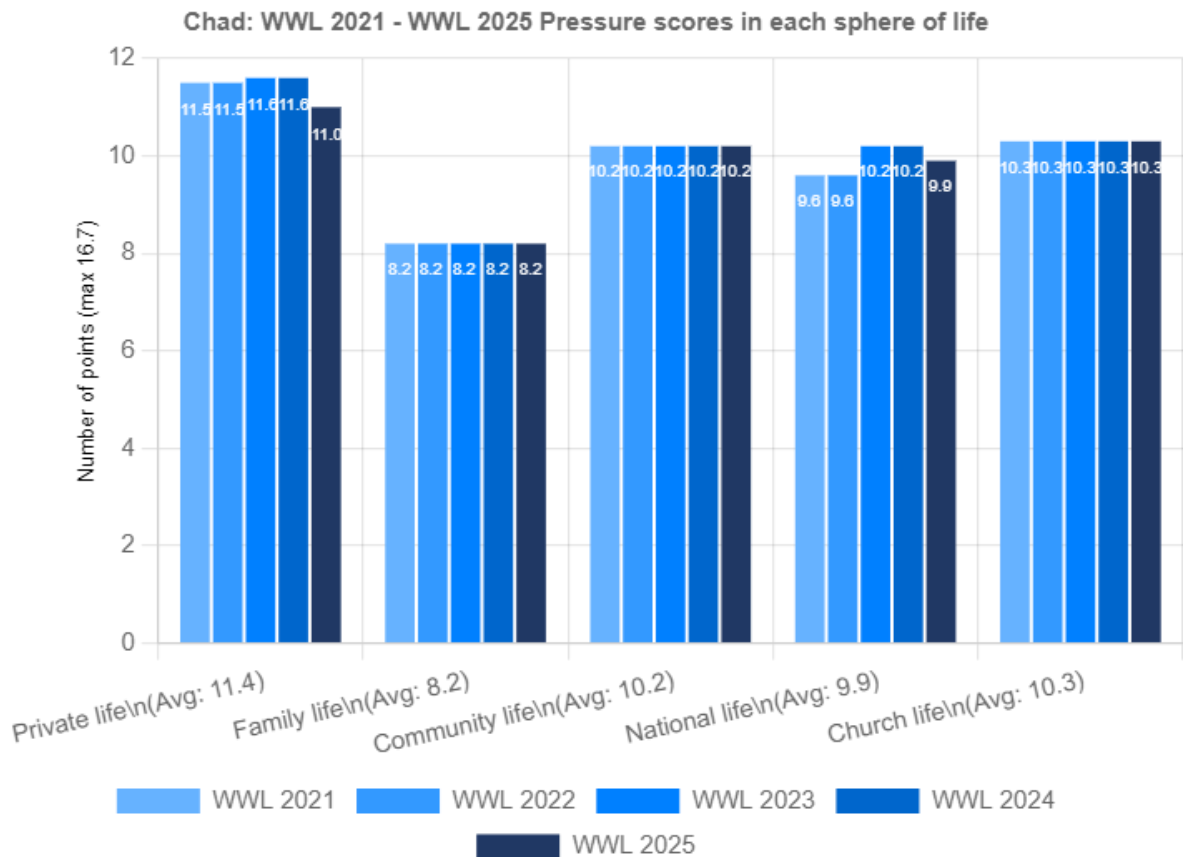
The following three charts show the levels of pressure and violence faced by Christians in the country over the last five WWL reporting periods.

### 5 Year trends: Average pressure

Chad: WWL 2021 - WWL 2025	Average pressure over 5 Spheres of life
2025	9.9
2024	10.1
2023	10.1
2022	9.9
2021	9.9

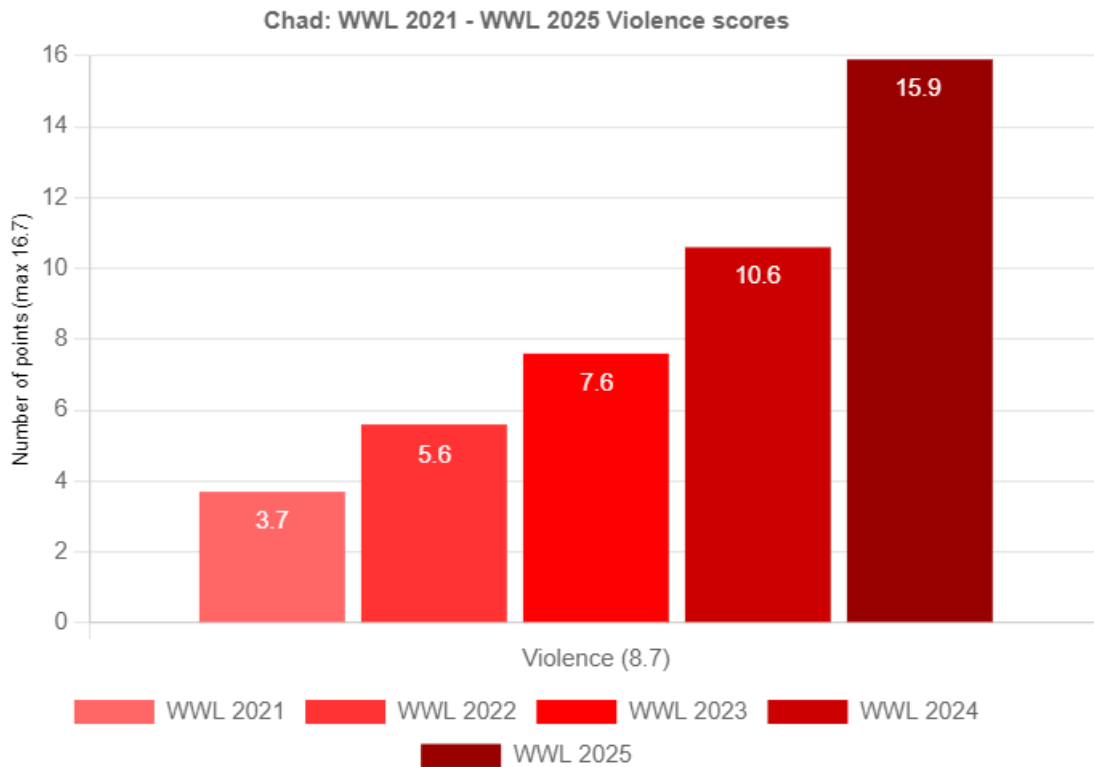
Over the last five WWL reporting periods, the average pressure on Christians in Chad has remained stable within the range of 9.9 - 10.1 points. This high level of pressure reflects the presence of various Islamic militant groups in the region which also impacts the local religious discourse.

### 5 Year trends: Pressure in each sphere of life



The chart above illustrates that, over the past five WWL reporting periods, the average pressure per sphere has been highest in the *Private sphere*, with a five-year average of 11.4 points. This is followed by the *Church and Community spheres*, scoring five-year averages of 10.3 and 10.2 points, respectively. The *Family sphere* records the lowest five-year average, with a score of 8.2. Overall, pressure levels appear to have stabilized across virtually all spheres of life.

**5 Year trends: Violence against Christians**



Nothing illustrates the worsening situation in Chad more clearly than the five-year trend in violence in Chad. In WWL 2021, the violence score stood at 3.7 points, rising progressively each year before reaching an alarming 15.9 points in WWL 2025, reflecting a steady and concerning escalation in the severity of violence faced by Christians in Chad.



## Gender-specific religious persecution / Female

Group	Female Pressure Points (WWL 2025)
Economic	Denied inheritance or possessions
Political and Legal	Denied access to social community/networks; Forced divorce; Forced marriage
Security	Abduction; Forced out of home – expulsion; Incarceration by family (house arrest); Violence – physical
Social and Cultural	Violence – psychological; Violence – Verbal
Technological	-

Despite some progress, gender gaps, gender-based violence and disadvantageous social norms facing women and girls persist. Women face forced divorce, forced marriage, abduction by violent groups, sexual violence, and practices like female genital mutilation (FGM), which remains a significant concern in Chad, with approximately 34.1% of women aged 15 to 49 having undergone the practice ([FGMCRI, accessed 13 December 2024](#)). Most FGM cases involve clitoridectomy performed on girls aged 5 to 12 ([UNICEF, Chad, Child protection, accessed 13 December 2024](#)). Within this predominately Islamic, patriarchal context, Christian women are vulnerable both on account of their religion as well as their gender.

Christian women in Chad face both violent and non-violent persecution for their faith. Christian women are also vulnerable to sexual violence at the hands of Islamic militants such as Boko Haram. Reports indicate that women are kidnapped and forced into marriage, particularly in rural areas and IDP camps. Survivors of sexual violence, often ostracized by society, face ongoing psychological trauma, while displaced populations exacerbate gender-based vulnerabilities. Since April 2023, more than 930,000 people have fled the war in Sudan into neighboring eastern Chad, intensifying strain on resources ([International Crisis Group, 14 November 2024](#)). Chad is experiencing its fifth consecutive year of severe food insecurity. In March 2024, the Cadre Harmonisé reported that food insecurity was 240% higher than in 2020 ([Concern USA, 7 November 2024](#)). These factors paired with a worsening socio-economic situation and shrinking [humanitarian support](#), creates a climate of instability where gendered vulnerabilities and violence are compounded (UNHCR Press release, 25 November 2022).

Christian converts from Islam face intense pressure to recant, including forced marriage, violence, and social exclusion. Early marriage remains common, with 61% of girls married before 18 ([Girls Not Brides Chad, accessed 13 December 2024](#)). Converts are often denied education and forced into marriages aimed at returning them to Islam. Female converts already married may face divorce, loss of child custody, and increased violence, leaving them vulnerable to exploitation or survival-driven practices. Reflecting on the ramifications of these pressures on converts, a local expert explained that “due to the vulnerabilities resulting from females being deprived of the basic necessities because of their conversion, some of these females resort to prostitution and other unwholesome practices to survive. Homes become broken and lack maternal care as a result of mothers being forcefully divorced or being deprived of contact with their children.”

Christian women and girls often struggle to access Christian community or attend church services due to familial restrictions, such as house arrest, excessive chores or physical abuse. Disinheritance and social isolation further compound their challenges.

## Gender-specific religious persecution / Male

Group	Male Pressure Points
Economic	-
Political and Legal	Economic harassment via business/job/work access; Imprisonment by government
Security	Military/militia conscription/service against conscience; Violence – death; Violence – physical
Social and Cultural	Violence – psychological; Violence – Verbal
Technological	-

Men and boys in Chad face severe persecution, including targeted killings, arrests, physical violence, and economic harassment. In anglophone regions, young men are subject to unlawful searches and often endure violence, while others face kidnapping, military conscription, or forced labor. Christian men and boys are particularly vulnerable to attacks by Islamic militant groups like Boko Haram. In 2024, Boko Haram has intensified its activities in Chad, particularly in the Lake Chad region ([AP News, 2024](#); [AP News, 2024](#); [Le Monde, 2024](#)). Reports indicate they are abducted, forcibly converted to Islam, and recruited as fighters. In eastern Chad, many are forced to form self-defense groups, relying on rudimentary weapons to protect against militia attacks due to the lack of government security. Boys are often compelled to sleep in fields to guard livestock against theft.

Southern Chad presents additional challenges, such as forced participation in initiation rituals that involve floggings, burnings, and other abuses ([Open Doors USA, 16 Aug 2018](#)). Christians, especially pastors and their families, who oppose these practices face verbal abuse and severe persecution. In areas like Bitkin, Christian leaders are often targeted for speaking out.

Christians in Chad have faced workplace discrimination, historically being excluded from jobs or promotions due to religious oaths previously required for state office positions. Although the government amended the constitution in 2020 to allow secular oaths, senior government and military roles remain predominantly held by Muslims, contributing to economic disadvantages for Christian families ([US State Department IRFR 2020 Chad](#); [Barnabas Aid](#), accessed 13 December 2024). Additionally, the forced recruitment or loss of Christian men and boys to militant groups further deepens family hardships, often leading to financial ruin.

Male converts to Christianity face harsh treatment, including isolation, disinheritance and expulsion by their families and communities. While no incidents of property destruction or expulsion were reported in the WWL 2025 reporting period, converts remain vulnerable to long-term economic struggles due to their ostracization. Arrested Christians often endure torture and abuse in detention, with some dying as a result.

## Persecution of other religious minorities

According to Freedom House's [Global Freedom Index 2024](#) (Chad/D2):

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

According to the US State Department ([IRFR 2023 Chad](#)):

- "The government maintained a ban on a Wahhabi association from participating on the High Council of Islamic Affairs (HCIA), but media outlets said enforcement of the ban remained difficult and Wahhabis continued to meet and worship in their own mosques."
- "*Burqas*, defined by ministerial notice as "any garment where one sees only the eyes," are forbidden by ministerial decree. The ministerial notice also applies to *niqabs*, although this ban is routinely unenforced."

## Trends Summary

### 1) Geographical risk factors: Surrounded by nations in conflict

Chad's geographical position places it at significant risk, bordered by conflict-ridden countries such as Libya, Sudan, the Central African Republic, Niger, Nigeria and Cameroon. The country's stability is heavily dependent on the conditions in these neighboring nations. The crisis in Sudan is particularly troubling, with the ongoing conflict between Sudanese armed forces and the Rapid Support Units threatening to spill over into Chad (see below: *Trends Summary #2*). This regional instability exacerbates the vulnerability of Christians in Chad, whose safety is influenced not only by internal dynamics but also by the broader regional turmoil. The Sudanese crisis, which began in April 2023, has led to around 980,000 refugees flooding into Chad in 2024, creating a humanitarian crisis and disrupting trade between the two countries. The influx includes many Chadians who have returned from Sudan under dire circumstances.

### 2) Persistent threats: Boko Haram

Chad's security is precarious due to the ongoing threats from Boko Haram and the recent escalation of conflict in Sudan, particularly in the Darfur region. Without comprehensive political, economic, and social reforms, alongside continued military action against Boko Haram, the extremist group's influence could expand further. Additionally, the escalating conflict in Darfur puts immense pressure on Chad's eastern regions, increasing risks for the Christian population in these areas. In its [2024 annual report](#), the US Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) recommended that the US government "[a]ppoint a special envoy for Nigeria and the Lake Chad Basin to maximize US diplomatic efforts to address religious freedom violations and atrocity risk in Nigeria and the Lake Chad Basin."

### 3) Continuity of authoritarianism: Leadership under Mahamat Déby

Following the death of President Idriss Déby, his son Mahamat Déby assumed leadership and extended the scheduled transition to civilian government by two years. While this continuity might offer some stability, it also entrenches the authoritarianism that has characterized Chad for decades. The military-led transitional government raises concerns about the potential exploitation of this period of uncertainty by Islamist insurgents, threatening both Chad's internal stability and the broader security of West Africa.

### 4) Heightened vulnerability of Christians

Chad's Christian community is facing increasing threats due to a variety of factors:

- The current dictatorial governance structure, which has long defied constitutional requirements for a civilian-led transition and has drawn strong criticism from political opposition and civil society.
- Ongoing jihadist activities in the region, particularly from groups like Boko Haram and ISWAP.
- The rising influence of ultra-conservative Islam, especially Wahhabism, and the emergence of young imams who are increasingly confronting Christians, creating an environment of fear and hostility.
- The growing presence of rebel groups, particularly in northern Chad, which further destabilizes the region.
- In the southwestern part of the country, Christians have faced severe persecution, including the killing of several Christians in May 2023. In these attacks, houses were burned, and thousands were displaced, adding to the already precarious situation for Christian communities in Chad.

These factors collectively increase the risks faced by Christians, who are targeted by Islamic extremist groups.

## Further useful reports

Further background information per country and a selection of in-depth reports and smaller articles are available on the Research & Reports pages of the Open Doors website:

- <https://www.opendoors.org/en-US/research-reports/wwl-background/>
- <https://www.opendoors.org/en-US/research-reports/>.
- <https://www.opendoors.org/en-US/research-reports/reports/africa-recent-uptake-in-military-coups>

## External Links

- Copyright, sources and definitions: Background country information - <https://www.opendoors.org/en-US/research-reports/wwl-background/>
- Persecution engines description: Africa News, 22 August 2024 - <https://www.africanews.com/2024/08/22/chad-schedules-legislative-provincial-and-municipal-elections-for-december-29/>
- Persecution engines description: CPI 2023 Chad - <https://www.transparency.org/en/cpi/2023/index/tcd>
- Gender-specific religious persecution Female description: FGMCRI, accessed 13 December 2024 - <https://www.fgmcri.org/country/chad/>
- Gender-specific religious persecution Female description: UNICEF, Chad, Child protection, accessed 13 December 2024 - <https://www.unicef.org/chad/child-protection>

- Gender-specific religious persecution Female description: International Crisis Group - <https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/central-africa/chad-sudan/b202-tchad-limiter-limpact-de-la-guerre-au-soudan-dans-le-ouaddai#:~:text=Fleeing%20the%20war%20ravaging%20neighbouring,Ouadda%C3%AF%2C%20Chad.>
- Gender-specific religious persecution Female description: Concern USA - <https://concernusa.org/news/fighting-hunger-in-chad/>
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