



Pakistan

Islamic Republic of Pakistan

Asia

Geography

Area 796,095 sq km, which includes 83,700 sq km of UN-divided Kashmir controlled by Pakistan. Arid mountains in the north and west. Desert in the east and southeast. Vast irrigation schemes in the fertile Indus River valley.

Population	Ann Gr	Density
2010	184,753,300	2.19%
2020	226,186,778	1.94%
2030	265,689,904	1.53%

Currently home to approximately 1.3 million refugees from Afghanistan. A few million migrant workers are in the Persian Gulf, Arab Peninsula and elsewhere. There is a lack of recent published national data on the economy and population.

Capital Islamabad 855,648. **Other major cities** Karachi 13.1 million (urban agglomeration up to 18 million); Lahore 7.1mill; Faisalabad 2.8m; Rawalpindi 2.0m; Multan 1.7m; Gujranwala 1.7m; Hyderabad 1.6m; Peshawar 1.4m. **Urbanites** 37%. **Population under 15 yrs** 37%. **Life expectancy** 66 yrs.

Peoples

Pakistan's ethnic population and the groups enumerated below must be understood in the context of ethnicity, language and caste – a far more complex arrangement than in most nations. People cluster and people group affiliations remain under review, and the group names can be misleading if one assumes they are informed only by geographical or linguistic factors.

South Asian 81.4%.

Urdu Muslim 30.5%. 103 groups. Rajput Muslim 8.6%; Arain Muslim 5.3%; Sayyid 3.2%; Ansari 2.3%; Kumhar Muslim 2.0%; Mochi 1.9%; Teli Muslim 1.5%; Machhi Muslim 1.3%; Lohar Muslim 1.1%; Mirasi Muslim 1.0%.

Jat 16.0%. 3 groups.

Sindhi 12.8%. 32 groups. Sindhi Sama 1.2%.

Punjabi 7.6%. 65 groups. Awan Muslims 2.9%; Tarkhan Muslim 1.6%; Mussali 1.4%.

Bengali 6.8%. Shaikh 6.0%; Hajam 0.8%.

Rajasthani 3.7%. 19 groups. Gujar Muslim 2.4%; Gujjars 1.3%.

Kashmiri 1.3%. 22 groups.

Brahui 1.2%.

Other people clusters 2.1%. Including many smaller Hindi and Gujarati peoples.

Indo-Iranian 18.1%.

Pashtun 13.6%. Many undocumented Afghan refugees and immigrants swell this number further.

Baloch 4.4%. 6 groups.

Other 0.5%. Turkic, Tibetan, Arab, Parsi, Eurasian peoples.

Literacy Officially 56%, but a more realistic estimate is 25–45%, depending on socio-economic and religious group. **Official language** English is the official government language, Urdu is the national language and becoming widely understood by most Pakistanis. **All languages** 77. **Languages with Scriptures** 6Bi 9Nt 14por.

Economy

Agriculture, light industry and the service sector dominate. High inflation, huge budget deficits and widespread corruption are all crippling factors in economic development. Severe shortages of electricity and gas disrupt normal life and reduce the effectiveness of industry. Poverty affects much of the population, especially in rural areas. Around 20% live below the poverty line. Much of the GDP is spent on the military and security. The fight against radical Islamist groups is a huge drain economically, and huge debts or bankruptcy will only serve the Islamists further. This issue, combined with poverty and unemployment, creates dissatisfaction and resentment against the government and foreign influences. Rapid population growth, limited land and water and a crumbling infrastructure are other factors that must be addressed. The devastation of the August 2010 floods not only wrought immediate havoc, but caused damage to development and infrastructure that will take years to fully recover from.

HDI Rank 141*/182. **Public debt** 51% of GDP. **Income/person** \$1,022 (2% of USA).

Politics

Muslim politicians lobbied for a separate state, resulting in the partition of British-ruled India at independence in 1947. Pakistan's subsequent history includes four conflicts with India, the loss of East Pakistan (which became Bangladesh), the destabilizing effects of decades of war in Afghanistan and almost constant political upheaval. A series of governments have each been as corrupt as their predecessors. Most recently, politics is increasingly polarized between modern secularists and an Islamist

extremist minority that has close ties with the Taliban in Afghanistan. After leading a military coup in 1999, General Musharraf brought a semblance of order during a time of Islamist-generated upheaval. He eventually stepped down from the presidency in 2008 under threat of impeachment, replaced by the civilian widower of former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, whose party led a civilian coalition government. The unavoidable problems with Afghanistan, an awkward dynamic with America and the West and continued tensions with India (especially over disputed Kashmir) dominate foreign relations.

Religion

An Islamic republic with a Sunni majority. Previous governments pursued Islamization of the legal system, taxation and public life as well as discrimination against all religious minorities, despite widespread popular misgivings. Despite its contravention of the constitution, shari'a law is increasingly applied – even to Christians and Hindus – especially in areas where Islamist groups have control or influence. This gives numerous opportunities to oppress Shi'a and Ahmaddiya Muslims, Hindus and Christians. There is a notable degree of religious freedom promised to minorities by law, but in practice, non-Muslims and non-Sunnis must practice their faith cautiously and under varying degrees of threat from Islamists.

Religions	Pop %	Population	Ann Gr
Muslim	95.80	176,993,661	2.2%
Christian	2.45	4,526,456	1.8%
Hindu	1.60	2,956,053	2.2%
Baha'i	0.05	92,377	2.2%
Sikh	0.03	55,426	2.2%
Other	0.03	55,426	2.2%

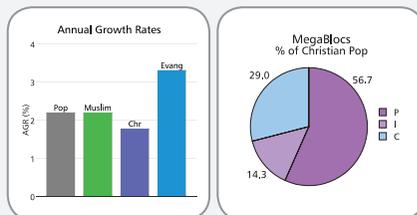
Non-religious	0.02	36,951	17.4%
Ethnoreligionist	0.02	36,951	2.2%

Shi'a Muslims constitute 15–20% of the Muslim population. The Ahmaddiya are a deviant sect of Islam that is not considered Muslim by the state. However, they are also included in the Muslim percentages here.

Christians	Denoms	Pop %	Affiliates	Ann Gr
Protestant	25	1.39	2,567,000	1.5%
Independent	37	0.35	643,000	2.7%
Catholic	1	0.71	1,320,000	2.1%
Marginal	1	<0.01	4,000	2.5%

Churches	MegaBloc	Congs	Members	Affiliates
Church of Pakistan	P	1,980	920,000	1,430,000
Catholic Church	C	121	713,514	1,320,000
Presbyterian Ch of Pak	P	340	72,564	484,000
Associated Ref Pres Ch	P	288	43,165	180,000
United Pentecostal Ch	P	2,411	33,750	135,000
Salvation Army	P	150	57,485	96,000
Full Gospel Assemblies	P	83	19,814	64,000
Pakistan Gospel Assem	I	3,000	30,000	60,000
Bethany Chs (Brethren)	P	148	13,333	44,000
National Methodist Ch	P	17	9,500	27,170
Other denominations[54]		3,147	432,808	693,467
Total Christians[64]		11,685	2,345,9334	533,637

TransBloc	Pop %	Population	Ann Gr
Evangelicals			
Evangelicals	0.6	1,140,589	3.3%
Renewalists			
Charismatics	0.4	793,882	3.8%
Pentecostals	0.2	300,570	5.0%



Answers to Prayer

1 Prayer movements within Pakistan – and for Pakistan from abroad – have quickly multiplied and grown. Thousands intercede for breaking events, emerging needs and long-standing challenges. A troubled land such as Pakistan surely stands in need of prayer.

Challenges for Prayer

1 Pakistan's government alternates between inept civilian parties crippled by infighting and corruption, and autocratic military dictatorships. Economic and social development is then hindered, while too much power and wealth lies in the hands of a few elite. The country is under stress from fundamentalist forces in Pakistan's west and neighbouring Afghanistan as well as in the Punjab. Tensions with India and long-standing troubles in Kashmir, a region driven by religious and political divisions, also threaten stability. Pray that Pakistan would be freed from spirits of lawlessness and violence

that continue to bleed the nation. Pray for the raising of leaders of integrity and a government that will be effective in moving the nation forward and uplifting those who most need their protection and assistance. That Pakistan persists as a nation at all is a testament to the amazing resilience and flexibility of its people.

2 The 2010 monsoon floods wrought devastation from north to south as a gorging Indus River swept away homes, farmland and even entire villages. At least 1,500 people were killed, hundreds of thousands left homeless and an estimated 20 million affected by disease or lack of basic resources. Pray for Christians – those from Pakistan and those bringing aid from outside – to demonstrate the love of Jesus in meeting both the short-term and long-term needs created by this disaster. Pray also that God might use this tragedy to open new doors for the gospel into these regions, among the least reached in the world.

3 Fundamentalist Islam, driven by the Taliban, is upheld by a minority, but impacts the whole nation. It has escalated violence against religious minorities (including Shi'a Muslims), shattered social cohesion and divided the country. It also disables economic development and keeps millions in poverty through the disruption it causes and the values it endorses. Of particular note for prayer:

- a) **The violence and war** conducted by insurgents, especially in the scenic northwestern Swat Valley, emptied hundreds of villages, towns and schools, cost thousands of lives and disrupted the lives of millions. The militants' success gave them temporary control over the region and forced concessions by the government, which has largely wrested control back.
- b) **The imposition of shari'a in the northwest** – a result of government compromise with the militants – spells woe for many, especially non-Muslims. It also invites further aggression from the militants, since such tactics previously yielded significant gains and concessions.
- c) **The proliferation of madrasas** (estimated at 20,000 in number) – religious schools that in shari'a-controlled areas usually offer little education beyond memorizing the Quran and pushing the brand of Islam favoured by the militants. These schools, located throughout Pakistan, exist in part due to the lack of quality state-run schools and the expense of private ones, and they produce a new generation of recruits for the militant cause.
- d) **The status of women under such militant values** is miserable. They endure almost no freedoms or rights, minimal education and widespread domestic abuse; social structures and cultural morés make it extremely hard to evangelize them.

Pray that the true nature of such an expression of Islam might be exposed for all to see, and thereby rendered powerless. Pray for safety for those most at risk under the rule of shari'a. Pray for the government to have insight in how to deal with this force that appears impossible to root out.

4 Discrimination and persecution against religious minorities take many forms and are directed not only against Christians but also against Hindus, Ahmaddiyas and Shi'a Muslims. The list of wrongs perpetrated makes for very sobering reading.

- a) **Institutionalized discrimination against minorities** has increased since the government started pursuing a policy of Islamization in the 1980s. This affects government posts, employment and education opportunities, and much of public life. It also entrenches the lower status of minorities and prevents their social and economic advancement. Financial and social inducements to convert to Islam also present a problem to non-Muslims, who are generally poorer and have fewer career and education opportunities.
- b) **The notorious blasphemy law** imposes the death penalty on anyone who defames Mohammed, and life in prison for anyone who defiles a Quran. Extremists routinely use the law – as a pretext for underlying personal motives of revenge or envy – to falsely accuse innocents and stir up enough religious frenzy to generate mob justice. Half of those charged under the blasphemy law have been Muslim.
- c) **Persecution and violence** are reality for many Christians and for others. Frequently, churches are vandalized or destroyed and people are beaten, murdered, abducted, raped or forced to convert. Police are usually either cowed by or complicit with the fanatics and mobs, and reparation or justice is often not attained.
- d) **An atmosphere of intimidation and fear** pervades the lives of Christians and other minorities. Although sharing the gospel is legal, few Christians try to do so with Muslims due to fear of violent repercussions. Christians' prevailing negative attitudes towards Muslims must also be overcome.

Pray that religious freedom might be maintained, both in law and in practice. Pray that those seeking to abuse Pakistan's laws to foment terror and hate might themselves be subject to justice. Pray that Christians might always be prepared to share about Jesus, and to repay prejudice with forgiveness and violence with love.

5 The Church continues to grow despite many obstacles. In effect, most Christians exist as second-class citizens, coming from poor backgrounds and classes. Pray for:

- a) **Revival.** Poverty, illiteracy and lack of teaching have hastened corruption, carnality and lowering spiritual standards. Substance abuse occurs frequently enough among Christians to be a terrible testimony to Muslims. There are pockets of real devotion (perhaps 10% are reckoned to be committed, vivid believers), but the large majority of the Church is nominal or immature.
- b) **Spiritual leadership in churches.** Leadership struggles, court cases, factions and divisions are far too common. Many minister for the financial gain to be had. Pray for the raising up of humble, committed leaders with a passion to serve the Church.
- c) **Unity.** Recent intensified persecution and violence serve to bring somewhat more unity among Christians, but much further progress is needed. The National Council of Churches and the Pakistan Evangelical Alliance aim to draw Christians together and foster united prayer and collaborative ministry.
- d) **Finances.** Most Christians are from poor backgrounds, and material support from the outside world appears to be decreasing. Secure compounds for churches, Bible schools and other Christian facilities are now necessary for higher security measures, which are financially costly or downright unaffordable. Much of Christian-used infrastructure is in disrepair with few resources just to maintain, let alone increase, buildings. Pray for creative solutions to this long-term issue.
- e) **Relationship to the state.** Despite discrimination and often outright hostility from the government, most Pakistani Christians love their nation and wish it to prosper. Believers are considering demonstrable ways they can be both Christian and Pakistani. Pray for a healthy dynamic between state and Church, and that Christians might be a blessing to their land.
- f) **Education** is an area in which Christians could potentially have great strategic impact on Pakistan. In the past, schools run by Christians helped shape many of the country's top leaders. But many Christians who receive quality higher education leave Pakistan for better opportunities abroad. Pray that more might stay as redemptive influences in Pakistan.

6 Leadership training is a hugely critical need for the Church. Pray for educational and training institutions, for an increase in students, for wise and godly leadership, for sufficient qualified faculty and for adequate financial resources. Give thanks for the new generation of emerging Pakistani leaders, and pray that a higher proportion of them may be able to serve in national churches without needing the support of foreign agencies.

- a) **Residential training centres.** There are 12 Protestant and six Catholic theological colleges and Bible schools, most significantly Gujranwala Theological Seminary, United Bible Training Centre, Full Gospel Assembly (FGA) Bible College, Zarephath Bible Institute and St. Thomas' Theological College.
- b) **Church-based training centres.** Most denominations also use TEE courses from the Open Theological Seminary in Lahore which has 3,000 students in more than 200 centres taking accredited courses up to the bachelor of theology level.
- c) **Bible Correspondence courses.** The Pakistan Bible Correspondence Institute operates out of five cities, with around 3,300 enrolled. It also sends out large numbers of NTs and copies of the JESUS film. Enrolment for these courses has declined of late; pray for a resurgence in student numbers. The vast majority of Muslim-background believers have taken a BCC as part of their spiritual pilgrimage.

7 Outreach by Pakistani Christians is an issue needing major change. Few Muslims have ever come to Christ because the existing Church emerged from the lowest rungs of society – mainly Hindu Dalits of the Punjab and Hindu tribal peoples of the Sindh. Huge cultural boundaries exist between the Muslim majority and the Christian minority. Little has been done to reach Muslims or even Hindus. Many factors conspire to make Christians fearful, introspective and silent, yet despite the negatives, there is a considerable degree of freedom to openly share the gospel for those with the boldness and faith. **OM** teams challenge many believers to become involved in outreach. Pray for

Christians to be impassioned and equipped to share their faith and to answer the claims and questions of Muslims. Signs of an awakening in this area are appearing, and a small but growing number of indigenous believers are starting to reach out cross-culturally.

8 **Believers from a Muslim background** are in a unique and challenging situation. Islam, particularly under shari'a, has grave or deadly punishments for apostates. Yet increasing numbers of Muslims are coming to faith in Jesus, often through media such as literature, radio, TV as well as dreams and visions and the witness of Pakistani Christians. Some are ex-militants. Churches, comprised mostly of Hindu-background and lower caste believers, do not know how to integrate and disciple these people, and so the large majority of them revert to Islam, turn to atheism or retreat to private faith. Some networks of Muslim-background believers are emerging for mutual spiritual support and discipleship. Pray for such networks to spread and fellowships to form for these believers so that they do not easily fall away. Ask the Lord to raise up leaders for these believers, and for their protection. Pray that any such movement will develop solid disciples with hearts to reach other Muslims.

9 **Pakistan lies at the very heart of the unevangelized world.** Over 350 peoples and castes can be regarded as unevangelized. Many of these have no churches, no Christians, no missionaries and no witness. Pakistan is the world's second-largest concentration of unengaged, unevangelized peoples and the world's second largest Muslim population. Few countries, if any, present a greater challenge for missions. Pray for the calling of more intercessors, advocates and missionaries for these people in such hard places:

- a) **The Punjabi majority** on the Indus plain. Few of these highly populous Muslim groups have been reached. There are some fellowships among them as well as growing numbers of secret believers.
- b) **The Pashtuns** of the North-West Frontier with Afghanistan are famed as combative, clannish and fundamentalist, comprising the majority of the Taliban. They control the lucrative drug and weapon trades in Pakistan and Afghanistan. Over two million live in Karachi. There are only two known Pushtu-speaking fellowships, but a response to the gospel is beginning. A handful of expatriate workers and agencies are committed to ministry among them, but those who learn the language come under intense spiritual attack. Some claim the Pashtun heartland is one of the most spiritually oppressive places on earth.
- c) **The Seraiki-speaking peoples** have thus far been largely ignored by Christian work, with very few Christian resources available to them. Largely rural, they number 14 million, divided among 200 peoples speaking Seraiki as either their primary or secondary language.
- d) **The Sindhi peoples** are among the poorest and least-evangelized people groups in the world. There are only a couple hundred known believers from a Muslim background and no truly Sindhi congregation among these groups which number up to 25 million people. FEBA, TWR and GFA broadcast in Sindhi as well as other languages. WV runs a hospital that meets many health needs, especially for women. An International Sindhi Partnership links churches and agencies interested in the Sindhi. Signs of the Holy Spirit's working among the Sindhi are becoming evident.
- e) **The Baloch and the Brahui.** Some 75% of the world's ten million Baloch live in Pakistan. They are notoriously difficult to reach – Balochistan is geographically inhospitable, poor and very hard to access for expatriates, but some Baloch are very responsive to the gospel. Over one million live and work in Karachi. Only a few hundred Baloch and Brahui believers are known globally with reports of increasing numbers coming to faith, but the vast majority of them remain untouched by the gospel.
- f) **The Mohajirs** are Urdu-speaking peoples who are native to India. They are highly urbanized and make up nearly half of Karachi's population. They are financially more prosperous than most groups and are quite accessible, yet there is only one fellowship and only one church-planting team trying to reach as many as 10 million Mohajirs.
- g) **The peoples of the far north.** Over 27 smaller people groups live in the mountain valleys of Kashmir, Kohistan, Swat, Dir, Chitral, Gilgit and the Hunza. The Kalash are largely animist but are increasingly becoming Muslim. All the other peoples are Muslim – Sunni, Shi'a and Ismaili. Pray especially for the Burusha of the Hunza, the Tibetan-related Balti, the Khawari of Chitral, the Shina, the Kohistani and Turbvali as well as the numerous smaller groups. There are only a few Christians and a handful of fellowships among these peoples.
- h) **Karachi** is a chaotic city with a huge population (double the official population figures), inter-ethnic conflicts, kidnappings, violent crimes and widespread drug addiction. Karachi has six peoples

of over one million population (Pashtun, Sindhi, Baloch, Punjabi, Bengali and Urdu-speaking Mohajirs) and nine more over 100,000. Only three have a dedicated team of missionaries focused on reaching them. **CMS** and others have a ministry to some of the two million addicted to drugs or at risk. Karachi is the business and economic centre, the locus of ethnic interaction and an easier place for foreigners to work. As such, it is the strategic key to reaching and influencing Pakistan with the gospel.

- i) **Afghan refugees.** Between 1–1.8 million immigrants remain in Pakistan's north, most of whom are there to stay. Most are Dari- and Pushtu-speaking, but there are also many Uzbek, Tajik and other groups. Many are moving from refugee camps into the cities. For years, Christian groups have faithfully offered aid and assistance, often at great risk to themselves. As a result, there are a number of Afghan believers in Karachi and Islamabad. Pray for dedicated Christians, both foreign workers and nationals, to reach Afghans in Pakistan's cities.
- j) **The Ahmadiyya** are a missionary-minded Muslim sect, largely driven underground in Pakistan by persecution. Viewed as heretics by other Muslims, they are one of the most intensely persecuted religious groups in Pakistan. Few of the four million Ahmaddiya in Pakistan or the 10 million worldwide have ever come to Christ, but their sufferings are making them more open for the good news. Currently no groups are focused on reaching them.

10 **Young people** are a major subject for prayer, since 37% of the population are under age 15 and 50% are under 24. School enrolment is low (only 40% in state schools), but thankfully rising as child-labour rates decline. Pray about these issues:

- a) **Rural youth**, two-thirds of Pakistan's young people, must deal with poverty and the perpetuation of medieval practices – such as child labour, bonded labour (often lasting multiple generations) and forced marriages (often of children to repay debts). They usually have little chance of advancement in life and little opportunity to hear the gospel.
- b) **Young urbanites** face endemic corruption in both education and employment practices as well as disillusionment with politics and the system in general. The future holds grave danger if these issues are not addressed; eager recruiters for militant groups easily prey on such youth.
- c) **Drug addiction is a massive challenge.** Studies indicate up to seven million chronic drug abusers, many of whom are university students or from the educated class.
- d) **Ministry specifically to young people** is rare but gaining momentum. Good work is being done by SU, **OM**, Church Foundation Seminars and the Christian Youth Development Organization. **PFES(IFES)** has 70 groups with 1,000 students in 10 cities. **CCCI** has 74 national staff operating in 20 cities. Discipling and training Christian young people for future impact, leadership and mission are strategic investments of ministry. Pray for the development of more resources specifically for them.

11 **Christian missions have worked** in Pakistan since 1833. Presbyterian, Anglican, Methodist, Catholic and, later, Salvation Army missionaries pioneered the work. Other missions, predominantly evangelical, entered Pakistan around the time of independence. There is a great need for workers in this country of immense challenges.

- a) **Pray for many more labourers**, especially among Muslims in the east and south of Pakistan. Post-9/11, a large number of missionaries left Pakistan and never returned. This left an overwhelming void of workers, especially among the roughly 128 million Muslims in Punjab and Sindh Provinces. Pray for greater awareness of this need. Pray that God might place a burden for Pakistan on the hearts of many. Pioneer workers among unevangelized peoples is the greatest need, but it requires a real calling, a profound faith and a long-term commitment.
- b) **Expatriate workers** continue to minister in Pakistan. One can still get a missionary visa in this otherwise closed country, but entering is getting more difficult. Opportunities to serve abound in medical, educational and equipping ministries within established and legally recognized organizations. There are, of course, other creative-access ministry possibilities. The work of mission hospitals continues to have significant impact. Most expatriates still work with established churches and Hindu minorities, but that is changing. While numbers of Western workers are significantly down, others – Asians in particular – more than compensate for that decline. Pray for doors to remain open to Pakistan, and pray for protection and fruitfulness of mission work, especially that which is focused on the Muslim majority.

12 **Pakistanis have emigrated all over the world** in recent years – especially to the Middle East, North America, Britain and Australia. The Pakistani diaspora is around seven million strong. Very few of them have come to Christ, and Christians have generally done little to reach out to them. Praise God for accelerating efforts to reach the one million living in Britain and the more than two million Pakistanis living as labourers in the Arab Gulf region. Even so, more workers and more coordination are needed for this increasingly promising and fruitful, yet sensitive and at times dangerous, ministry.

13 **Christian media ministry.** In all of the following cases, developing resources that are relevant and contextualized for the prevalent Muslim culture is crucial and will be a blessing to the growing number of Muslim-background believers.

- a) **Bible translation** is a big challenge with only seven of Pakistan's 70 languages having a NT or Bible. Translation teams are working on 16 languages; three more need extensive revision; eight have definite translation needs and six more need further research. Many existing translations are old, outdated or not in use. Modern Urdu and Sindhi translations are a point for praise; the same need exists for Punjabi and Seraiki in particular. An Urdu translation that incorporates terminology more appropriate for Muslim Urdu speakers is also needed. Pray for expatriates and nationals to be called and equipped for translation work.
- b) **Literature production.** The interdenominational MIK Christian Publishing House was pioneered by Brethren missionaries. Here, a wide range of Christian literature, including SGM publications, is translated, edited and published. Other publishing and translation ministries are adding to the catalogue of Christian books available, particularly in Urdu.
- c) **Literature distribution.** The Bible Society has a vital Bible printing, translating and distribution network. OM teams and, increasingly, national ministries such as Potohar Fellowship are distributing more printed gospel materials. More new material is needed for the contemporary Muslim public.
- d) **Audio recordings.** GRN has recordings to distribute in 98 languages and dialects. Pakistan Christian Recording Ministries (Urdu, Punjabi and Seraiki), Good News Studios/TEAM (Urdu and Hindko) and IBRA (Pashto) are also producing Bible, evangelistic and teaching materials. Audio cassettes and CDs have a potentially huge impact in a Muslim country such as Pakistan.
- e) **Radio** is, for millions, the only way to hear the good news. The need remains for mature, trained Christians to produce more programmes. Several radio ministries are broadcasting into Pakistan, including GFA, IBRA, HCJB, TWR, FEBA and AWR. The government monopoly of medium-wave radio means that shortwave is widely used and listened to. Pray for more workers, more languages, more programmes, more broadcast hours and more who listen and respond. FEBA broadcasts 2.5 hours per day in Urdu, Punjabi, Pushtu, Sindhi, Siraiiki, Hindko, Balti and Chitrali. TWR broadcasts in Urdu and Pushtu. IBRA broadcasts five hours of Pushtu per week.
- f) **Video material.** TEAM is producing a raft of Christian video materials, and some indigenous organizations are moving into this ministry as well. The JESUS film (and Magdalena, the version focused on reaching women) has been translated into 22 languages of Pakistan. Projection teams show these in local communities; pray for their protection and for receptiveness to the gospel.
- g) **Cable television** is a newer medium increasingly being used by the national church. Christian radio stations are illegal, but Christian TV channels and programmes are allowed. Pakistan Christian Network, Jesus Christ Television and Gospel Broadcasting Network are three such examples with potential viewerships of millions. Pray that such channels would effectively minister to Christians and be a helpful witness to Muslim viewers in explaining and demonstrating the gospel.
- h) **Internet sites.** Areas of Internet Christian outreach and support have great potential: online evangelistic sites, discipleship and teaching materials, apologetics for answering Islam and even Bible translations. Online chat facilities would allow Christians to interact with seekers when security and safety are issues. Computers and mobile phones, especially in cities, allow more people access to these gospel materials and have the potential to reach many more in the future. Internet accessibility also allows the truth about Christianity and the Bible to be told and potentially brings transparency to social, economic and political issues where deceit once ruled. However, false teachings and anti-Christian propaganda also proliferate through this same medium.

14 **Pakistan's regions are widely diverse**, and each presents unique challenges. Pakistani history and culture, the centralized government and the pervasive influence of Islam make for a national identity, but a few regionally specific comments are warranted. Pray for each of these

regions, that Jesus might be made known more widely, more deeply and more quickly.

- a) **Punjab**, the densely populated fertile plains of the Indus and tributaries. Although the location of the majority of Pakistan's Christians (primarily nominal), this region has a higher number of unreached individuals per Christian worker than any place in the world. A conservative, but more Sufi-influenced than fundamentalist, brand of Islam predominates. Lahore, Pakistan's most culturally influential city, is in this region. With nine million people in the Lahore area, this city is 95% Muslim and contains communities of all major people groups in Pakistan.
- b) **Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa** (formerly North-West Frontier Province) and FATA (Federally Administrated Tribal Areas) are the mountainous regions bordering Afghanistan. Fundamentalist Islam and the Taliban are strong here, and shari'a is implemented in much of this area dominated by Pashtun tribal groups. It remains chaotic and dangerous, for Christians and Christian workers in particular.
- c) **Azad Kashmir**, the Pakistani-administered part of the highly contested Kashmir region. Apart from the strained relations with India as a result of contentious claims over this region, Kashmir is a place of great need. Earthquakes in 2005 and 2007 took over 150,000 lives and rendered millions homeless. The aid and relief given by Christian groups had a very positive impact among the Muslims of this mountainous area. Some continue to minister here.
- d) **Balochistan** is an arid and infertile region that is very poor and underdeveloped with a sparse population. It is dominated by the staunchly Muslim Baloch. There are very few Christian workers in this region, but the smallest beginnings of some people movements exist.
- e) **Sindh** is the very arid, even desertified, and very poor region of the south. Sufism saturates the area. The Sindh is where most Hindu tribal groups (and most Hindu-background believers) are, and home to a young, indigenous church. The Muslim population is much less resistant here than in other areas; a growing number of Muslim-background believers exists among them. It is also home to Karachi, Pakistan's largest, most dynamic and ethnically diverse city, which could be considered a region unto itself.