

# THE CHURCH ON THE RUN

IDP & REFUGEE REPORT 2022

Christians report being forcibly displaced from their homes in **58 of the top 76 World Watch List countries** because of their religious identity, either as a sole or contributory factor.

There are currently **20.7 million refugees and 48 million Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)** around the world, according to the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR), which demonstrates the magnitude of this issue.

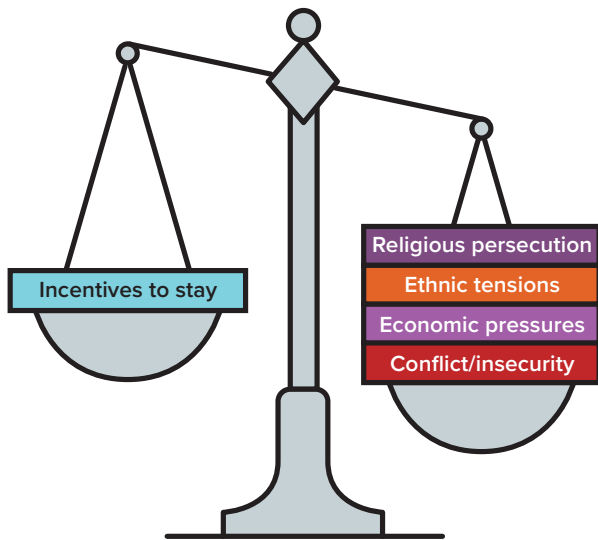
The story behind why each individual flees is unique, typically a consequence of conflict, natural disaster, persecution and many other factors. **Religion is part of a complex tapestry of reasons why people flee.**

**‘The Church on the Run: 2022 IDP & Refugee Report’** looks at these reasons to understand persecuted Christians’ experiences in complex situations, addressing how faith interacts with drivers of displacement and what challenges Christians face once they become refugees or IDPs.

**FULL REPORT RELEASE:**  
[opendoors.org/therefugeereport](https://opendoors.org/therefugeereport)

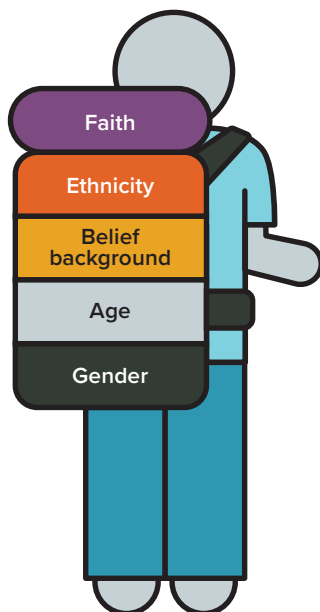
**Gaining a complete picture of religious persecution requires study of both the static and the displaced church.**

Religious persecution alone, or the combination of many layers of pressure, can push a person past the tipping point where they feel they have no other option but to flee their home.



The unique story of each displaced Christian once they have been forced to leave varies based their personal layers of vulnerability. This might include age, gender, belief background (such as Muslim-background believers), socio-economics, location and ethnicity.

For example, the experience of a female North Korean escapee who becomes a Christian on the Chinese border after reading the Bible for the first time will be vastly different to that of a young Christian boy fleeing the clutches of gangs in Mexico.



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## HAMID'S STORY

Hamid\* fled Afghanistan many decades ago. When he settled in a country of perceived safety, he became a Christian and started evangelizing in refugee camps. It was here that he received harsh persecution from the Muslim community who felt he had betrayed them and their faith.

He faced violent physical attacks both in the camps and in the streets. His Bible was torn apart and those who attacked him also threatened to kidnap, rape and kill his children. For their safety, he took them out of school but when seeking help from authorities he was told everything that happened to him was his own fault and responsibility for being a Christian.

Despite experiencing such harsh pressures from the community in which he settled he still shares his faith with refugees, while also supporting believers in Afghanistan experiencing severe persecution under Taliban rule.

Hamid thanks God for the opportunities persecution gave him: "I allowed myself to see these times as opportunity, for my faith to strengthen and refine like gold through fire," he shared.

**"I have even more love to share with the Afghan people and will continue to share the word of God even through these times."**

*\*Name changed to protect his identity.*