

Praying for Afghanistan

(Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Iran)

Geography

Area: 652,225 sq km (Dry and mountainous but with fertile valleys. This strategic land has been fought over by rival foreign empires for nearly three thousand years.)

Population: 29,117,489 **Annual Growth:** 3.51%

Capital: Kabul **Urbanites:** 24.8%

Peoples

People Groups: 76 (93% unreached)

Official language: Pashtu (used by 50% of population), Dari (Afghan Persian, used by 70%) **Languages:** 41 All languages

Religion

Christians: 14,559 **Evangelicals:** 8,442 **Muslim:** 29,074,395

Answer to Prayer

The increase of Afghan believers is impossible to document, yet undeniable. At least several hundred Afghans now follow Christ, when 20 years ago perhaps a few dozen were believers.



Specific prayer needs listed on back.

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Afghanistan Specific Prayer Needs

The upheaval of the last 30 years reduced the country to ruin and destitution. The Soviets (1979-89), the Mujahedeen (1992-96) and the Taliban (1996-2001) all perpetuated different problems and failed to build up the nation. Over one million died and an estimated four million children were orphaned. Though the country still suffers from conflict, progress has been made in those areas where there is peace. The suffering takes many forms; Afghans perceive poverty and lack of security to be the greatest problems. Pray for practical, timely and sustainable solutions to each of these: **a) Continued threat of violence.** *The Taliban are very active and often operate from civilian buildings or in civilian guise. Hundreds of thousands of land mines and other undetonated ordnance still litter the country.* **b) Health risks.** *Afghanistan is the world's most dangerous place for a child to be born. Infant mortality rate is among the world's highest. Many causes of death are preventable (diarrhoea, cholera, dysentery and pneumonia), but lack of health care and clean water (78% do not have regular access to clean water) causes many deaths. Refusal to allow women to receive medical care from men causes high maternal mortality rates.* **c) The disabled.** *There are an estimated one million people suffering with disabilities, mostly with damaged or destroyed limbs as a result of war. In remote areas, many are still being injured by landmines. This is one of the world's highest proportions of disabled people, in a nation with little provision for their care or rehabilitation.* **d) Poverty and living standards.** *Most Afghans live in poverty. There is little employment. Many who fight for the Taliban do so largely to collect the wage offered. Some 80% of the population seek to exist by subsistence farming, but access to water is a problem, especially since almost all irrigation was destroyed by war. Fewer than 15% of homes have access to electricity. Yet employment opportunities are increasing, and the economy is improving in the stable areas.* **e) Drugs** *are a scourge on the nation, and indeed the world, as Afghanistan grows 90% of the world's opium-producing poppies. Poppy cultivation has long been the main internal source of income, peaking at one-third of the GDP (a proportion now greatly reduced due to the massive influx of aid). This lucrative harvest heavily financed the Taliban. Failure to find a sustainable alternative crop drives impoverished farmers to continue, despite its prohibition in Islam. Pray for the success and feasibility of alternative agricultural projects. Heroin and opium addicts abound in Afghanistan (up to one million drug users) and globally. Every year, more Westerners and Russians die from heroin and opium overdoses than there were fatalities during all the years of Soviet and then NATO occupation.*