

HOPE & HELP

FOR PERSECUTED CHRISTIANS



CHRISTIANRESPONSE.ORG

ICR
International Christian Response

DIRECTOR'S TAKE

THE WORD OF GOD AND THE PEOPLE OF GOD ARE UNDER ATTACK.

In one sense, this is nothing new or strange in the history of Christianity. We find it in Scripture and throughout church history up to the present day. The authoritative claims of Christ, the Bible, and all believers who confess them have always challenged worldly authorities and powers. As a result, they lash out and persecute the body of Christ alongside the claims of Scripture.

Faithfulness to Christ always comes with a cost. Believers everywhere pay the price and have trouble for following Christ. Though these sufferings are difficult to bear, God redeems these hardships. It is the Lord who ordains and promises that all things work together for good for those who are called according to His purpose (Rom. 8:28). These experiences refine, shape, and mold us as Christians.

The costs Christians face include death, imprisonment, torture, beatings, rape, denial of access to children, loss of home, income and possessions, denial of education, hunger, exposure, ridicule, isolation, and so forth. It can be hard to trust that even these things are working together for good and that God has a plan.

You and I are part of this plan! God does not abandon His children – ever. He has united us to Himself and to one another. His Word instructs us to bear one another's burdens, encourage, pray, support, and share with those in need. ICR helps believers and churches carry this out by being a tool and a resource for those who want to know, pray, and give to our Christian family facing persecution.

ICR has deep relationships with the church in many of these environments of persecution, and we were honored to serve them through more than 300 projects in over 50 countries last year.

I pray this booklet gives you greater insight into why ICR exists and a sense of our desire to edify the church both here and around the world. I also ask you to consider how the Lord might use your gifts and talents as a member in the global body of Christ.

—JOE
ICR DIRECTOR



WHO WE ARE

MISSION

Mobilize spiritual and material support to encourage persecuted Christians to persevere and proclaim the Gospel.

VISION

Facilitate greater unity within the global church by serving as a faithful channel of prayer, support, and encouragement.

HOW ICR SERVES THE GLOBAL CHURCH

SUPPORT

Persecution is a normal part of following Jesus. Many of our brothers and sisters throughout the world experience all sorts of persecution for their faith in Christ. ICR is supporting our persevering, fellow believers as they faithfully endure persecution by meeting their urgent spiritual and physical needs (Heb. 13:3).

EQUIP

ICR is committed to partnering with the local church by finding indigenous, godly leaders who are making disciples and building up the body of Christ. ICR comes alongside these pastors and ministry leaders to ensure that they are supported as they “equip the saints for the work of the ministry, the building up of the body” (Eph. 4:12).

ADVANCE

ICR's desire is for the glory of Christ to spread throughout the world. We long to see the gospel proclaimed to all the peoples of the earth. ICR supports kingdom advancement efforts through initiatives focused on evangelism, discipleship, and church planting (Matt. 28:18-20).





TAKING ACTION

KNOW

ICR seeks to raise awareness of persecuted believers and the faithfulness of God, so that the American church will be encouraged and will minister to the needs of members in our body who are suffering. (1 Cor. 12:26)

PRAY

ICR desires to see the church fully united in prayer, because our prayers support persecuted believers and often encourage them. All Christians have the ability to pray, and some believers can even start dedicated prayer groups for persecuted Christians with resources from ICR. (Eph. 6:19-20)

GIVE

As spiritual and physical needs arise, ICR presents them to supporters here in the U.S. to invite partnership with the global church. We faithfully steward donations by working through trustworthy partners in the field and by maximizing the amount that reaches our persecuted family. Over the last five years, more than 90% of all donations have gone to the field. (2 Cor. 8:9, 13-15)

SERVE

Be an ambassador for persecuted Christians through ICR. Ambassadors are equipped with information and resources to mobilize their spheres of influence to act on behalf of our brothers and sisters in Christ. (1 Peter 4:10-11)

YOUR DOLLAR GOES A LONG WAY

FOR OVER 50 years, ICR has worked in dangerous and challenging places, providing spiritual and material assistance enabling persecuted Christians to proclaim the gospel and plant churches in more than 50 hostile countries.

For a detailed and updated financial report, go to ChristianResponse.org/Financials



NIGERIA

IN 2014, HANNATU'S HUSBAND was captured by Islamic militants, who then turned him over to a corrupt military unit. When she approached the military group to find her husband, Hannatu was beaten and told she would never see her husband again. Months later, the militants attacked Hannatu's village; she was forced to run away with her four children. While in a refugee camp, Hannatu lost a daughter to illness because of the unsanitary conditions. Then Hannatu got connected with an ICR partner. They provided rent, clothing, and monthly support for Hannatu as she completed tailor training at Thread and Light Widows' Center. Today, she is active at church, and through counseling and mentoring, Hannatu has experienced God's healing. Hannatu is now providing for her family, while ICR will continue to support education for her children.

In northern Nigeria, two terrorist organizations — Boko Haram and ISWAP — are active and frequently attack Christians. Making matters worse, radicalized Fulani herdsmen have threatened to exterminate Christian ethnic groups and routinely attack Christian villages. At least 5,000 Christians were killed by herdsmen or terrorists in central Nigeria last year, more than anywhere else in the world. There are an estimated 40,000 Christian widows whose spouses were killed during the many years of ongoing anti-Christian violence.





WHAT *WE* DO

- Provide holistic care to Christian widows
- Supply our brothers and sisters with basic needs, including food
- Conduct discipleship-focused seminars and training
- Encourage pastors through spiritual and practical support
- Take care of orphans through a comprehensive program
- Offer Christian education to children from persecuted families

A GLIMPSE INTO ONE OF THE 50+ COUNTRIES WHERE ICR SERVES

SYRIA

LAST YEAR, A COALITION OF ARMED REBEL GROUPS SWEEPED INTO SYRIA'S SECOND LARGEST CITY, Aleppo, overwhelming it in a matter of 72 hours. As rebel tanks rolled through the city, hundreds of thousands of people tried to flee. Within days, the rebels fought their way across Syria, taking the major cities before invading the capital city of Damascus. President Bashar al-Assad fled to Russia, finally leaving the country he and his family ruled tyrannically for decades. ICR partners told us, "We don't know what will happen next." Christians, Kurds, Shiites, and other minority groups are fearful. They are painfully aware that the Islamists enforced a strict form of Islamic law during their previous rule. The Islamists who conquered Damascus promised to hand over power to a new government, but no one knows what this will really mean. Right now, converts are at the greatest risk. They fear harsh persecution and death.

WHAT *WE DO*

- Distribute food packages and hygiene kits
- Provide housing for displaced families
- Give emergency medical care as needed
- Provide emergency needs for Christian families fleeing persecution



The future of Syria is uncertain. Power vacuums often lead to further instability and suffering. There is danger that dormant conflicts will flare up and that the various Islamist groups will compete for control. ICR partners are pleading for prayer. Many people are exhausted after 14 years of war and need healing. The once vibrant economy is destroyed. But no matter which direction the government goes, Jesus Christ still reigns supreme.



INDIA

IN A TYPICAL HINDU EXTREMIST ATTACK on Christians in India, radical Hindus entered the home of an elderly Christian convert woman in the state of Chhattisgarh. The mob, which included women, beat the elderly woman badly. Leaving her crumpled on the floor, the mob then moved to the homes of two other Christian families in the village. They attacked them, then moved to their fields, where they stole and looted the harvest. Later, all 21 Christian families in the village were summoned to a meeting, where they were told to convert to Hinduism or abandon the village. Afraid, 14 families agreed to give up their faith. But seven families stood firm. In the months since, their belongings have been stolen and they've been harassed at every turn. But they refuse to give up on their Savior.

This large Hindu-majority country has had a minority Christian population since the disciple Thomas first brought the gospel to India around 52 AD. In recent decades, the ideology of Hindutva, or believing India must be a pure Hindu nation, has surged. The Hindu nationalist government has tightened restrictions on religious freedom across the country. For example, there is targeted surveillance of churches, Christian institutions, and ministries. Foreigners involved in Christian work were expelled from the country. Hindu nationalist extremists often target and attack churches and Christians.





WHAT *WE DO*

- Provide legal aid to believers falsely accused under anti-conversion laws
- Supply food support to displaced people
- Pay rent/provide housing to displaced Christians
- Set up small businesses for persecuted believers
- Give medical care for persecuted Christians
- Support evangelism and church planting efforts



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