

Monday 12th November

Introducing Indonesia

Pop: 260 million

Muslim: 215 million (83%)

With thousands of islands, Indonesia is a unique and fascinating archipelago situated between Australia and mainland Asia. Indonesia draws tourists in their millions each year and has generated a great deal of scientific interest in its natural marvels and plethora of plant and animal species. For a single country it boasts the most incredible array of peoples, cultures and biodiversity; one that you might expect from several different nations combined.



The fact that Indonesia is home to the world's largest Muslim population originates from Arab settlement on the islands back in the 4th century. Islamic influence grew with

the birth of Islam a few centuries later - often melding with Indonesian spiritual traditions. European conquest is believed to have catalysed this growth, as Indonesians sought to oppose Westerners' presence by adopting stronger Islamic values. Islam now plays a significant role in Indonesian life; notably in government, politics and spiritual practices.

Following Indonesia's independence from the Dutch in 1949, the church suffered persecution from the country's second president, Suharto, and his government. Evangelism was hugely restricted during this time, leaving the church unprepared for the task of sharing the gospel with its Muslim neighbours when Suharto's leadership ended in 1998. Indonesia is now developing a greater openness to other faiths, which is creating new opportunities for gospel witness.

The effort of long-term workers in Indonesia is playing a significant role. Over the years, many of these workers have seen fruit in working in partnership with Indonesian believers to develop their hearts for the unreached Muslim peoples around them. Today Indonesia is seeing large movements of Muslims coming to faith. Almost all are being led by local believers... and sometimes believers who were led to faith by foreign workers. There's something exciting happening; kingdom growth amongst Muslims in Indonesia is greater than has been seen in any other area of the world.

However, nearly 182 million people live within people groups that have no access to the good news. There is an immense task ahead in Indonesia - for the existing church, for the body of new believers and for those who come alongside to envision and disciple them. Most unreached peoples are found in villages and rural areas, and more intentional effort is needed to cross the cultural and physical divides in order for them to hear the good news of Jesus. Time, patience and investment in relationships are then essential to seeing long term impacts of God's love in each of these communities.

We are now at a key time for more workers to both pioneer, and continue mobilising and joining in with the efforts of local churches. With more discipleship of indigenous believers, raising up of visionary leaders and more workers sent to places where the gospel hasn't gone before, we can believe for many more to turn to the Saviour.

- Pray for the effectiveness of the Word of God as it is distributed throughout the region and as Muslims read it for the very first time.
- Ask for revival among national believers and that they would share their faith with their Muslim neighbours.

- Islamic practice there is steeped in folk traditions. Ask God to help workers discover how to share His infinite love and power with Muslims.

Tuesday 13th November

Recent earthquake and tsunami

There are several large islands in Indonesia, including Sulawesi, which is the world's eleventh largest island. This was where the recent earthquake struck on the 28th of September.



The 7.5 magnitude earthquake triggered a devastating 3 metre high tsunami, which together has led to over 1,950 deaths and injuries to more than 2,300 people. Over 5,000 people are reported missing and over 62,000 internally displaced.

Palu in Central Sulawesi on the west coast was the hardest hit city as this was where the tsunami came into the bay and destroyed many surrounding towns and villages. Thousands of homes, hotels, shopping centres and several mosques were destroyed. There are over 2.4 million people affected and over 16,000 in Palu city alone were displaced. The tsunami also came into the beach area of Donggala about an hour north of Palu on the west coast, causing huge devastation there. Rivers of soil swept away entire neighbourhoods in this whole area.

The central part of the island is very mountainous, meaning the peninsulas are remote from each other. This geography, combined with collapsed infrastructure, cracked roads and loss of power lines makes communication and reaching those affected on the island very difficult.

This was the second earthquake in two months to hit Indonesia and claim hundreds of lives.

International aid of food, water and medical supplies has helped, but many are now left to try to come to terms with the loss of their loved ones, their homes and their livelihoods.

- Let's pray for the people of Indonesia and particularly of Sulawesi as they come to terms with this disaster and try to rebuild their lives.
- Pray for God's saving grace for those who do not yet know Him and let's pray that through this disaster, Muslims will come to find the One who is dependable.
"And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock." Matt 7:25
- We thank God for all those involved in the continued coordination of rescue and relief efforts. Pray these efforts will be efficiently and safely carried out and through this people will see the love of Jesus.

Wednesday 14th November

Los Pueblos Abandonados – written by a Frontiers worker

I asked a Spanish-speaking friend, “What’s the word for ‘unengaged peoples’ in Spanish?”

What he said went right to my heart.



“Los pueblos abandonados,” he said, which means the abandoned people.

Does your heart cry out for los abandonados?

There are enough workers in the eminently liveable cities of London and Vienna, Istanbul and Amman! There must be more courageous Christians who want to go where there is no path, where no footsteps have gone ahead, where there are no pins in the missions map.

The places where some of the pueblos abandonados live are among the 17 million Indonesians on the island of Sulawesi.

Official statistics put the Muslim population there at just over 96%, with Protestant and Catholic Christians numbering just above 2%. This is where more workers are needed in Indonesia to bring the good news of the gospel and even more so following the recent tragic events we read about yesterday.

- Pray for the Holy Spirit to open doors and create opportunities for the gospel in the lives of individuals, families, villages and communities in Sulawesi.
- Pray for more labourers to go and live and represent our Lord Jesus Christ in Sulawesi.
- Pray that churches across the world would be moved by the numbers of ‘abandoned people’ in Sulawesi yet to meet Jesus, and that they would become sending churches.
“How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching?” (Romans 10:14)

Thursday 15th November

The Bugis – an unreached people group

Pop: >5 million

Muslim: 99%

The Bugis are the dominant people group in Sulawesi. They number over five million and live mainly in the south of the island.

They make their living by hunting, fishing, farming, raising livestock or making handicrafts. Those who live in the mountains make their livelihood as farmers and those living along the coastal regions usually work as fishermen. They are known for their craftsmanship in boat-building. However, many

Bugis have left their home area to seek success and wealth and have moved to other large Indonesian islands and nearby Malaysia.

Two of the most important cultural values for Bugis are *siri* (personal honour) and *siri-pesse* (communal honour). A person must defend, maintain and build his own *siri*. If a person's *siri* is offended, serious forms of revenge may follow.

The Bugis believe very strongly that certain days are special, with good fortune for events and activities held on the first Wednesday and last Thursday of each month. Conversely, they consider Saturday to be a bad day and more likely to bring misfortune.

The Bugis are well known for their fervent adherence to Sunni Islam. Global Prayer Digest reported how this has led to hostility towards Christianity, so few Christian workers have persevered in reaching them. While on a prayer drive a few years ago, church-planting mission teams realised how crucial prayer was to begin reaching people. Even so, after two years of sharing Christ, follow up and prayer, only one household had become believers. Three other households had received Christ through this network, bringing the total to seventeen people that came to the Light. There are only approximately ten known Bugis churches, and they are presently not reproducing.

Prayer is a key to breaking spiritual strongholds and rescuing people from the kingdom of darkness and bringing them into the Kingdom of Light.

- Let's pray that the eyes of the Bugis will be opened to see Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour.
- Since we know that prayer is crucial in preparing hearts to receive Christ, let's cry out to God for many Bugis households to turn from the strongholds of Islam to freedom in Christ.
- Pray for workers who are willing to persevere in this hostile environment.

Do you know? The origin of the name 'bogeyman'? During the Spice Islands trade of centuries ago, the Bugis people were known as marauding sea-faring pirates. Parents would tell their children that they must behave or they would be given over to the 'bogeyman.'

Sources: <http://www.globalprayerdigest.org/issue/day/2014/06/27>
<http://www.prayingforindonesia.com/the-islands-of-indonesia/sulawesi/>

Friday 16th November

Gorontalo people – an unreached people group Pop: 1 Million Muslim: 98%

Among over 1 million Gorontalo in Sulawesi, there are believed to be only about 3,200 followers of Christ. This people group live in the northern part of the island, in an area made up of extensive coastlines, rugged mountains and a large central valley with a beautiful lake at its centre.

The Gorontalo have traditionally lived along the coast and in the fertile lowlands beside rivers and streams. They make their living by farming or fishing. Today quite a few are active in various businesses, from selling used clothing in the marketplace to running national companies. A number are powerful national figures.

The Gorontalo have been Muslim since the 16th century. They observe Friday prayers with colleagues from work. Many residents also walk to their neighbourhood mosque for evening prayers. Each village has one to three mosques.

Despite being strongly Islamic, many Gorontalo still believe in motolohuta (supernatural creatures) and hulobalangi (mysterious powers) of which they are both fearful and fascinated. Others believe that the graves of people who possessed supernatural power in ancient days are sacred.

Yet their beliefs do not bring them the life they so desire. Perhaps this is illustrated by a story published by Global Prayer Digest about Jawaria, a Gorontalo woman and a faithful follower of Islam. She was introduced to Ati who followed Jesus and was radically different from anyone else Jawaria had ever known. Ati trained Jawaria to take selected Bible stories, one at a time, and then discuss them with her household.

As Jawaria honestly thought about her life, she realised she had many unmet needs. She felt like one who had been invited to know Allah and yet was always separated by a great chasm between herself and a holy and just God. She wondered if the stories in the Bible held the answer.

- Pray for those such as Jawaria who have studied the Bible, but are torn between their long-held Islamic beliefs and the truth of the Word of God. Let's pray the veil is removed and they can begin a life-giving relationship with our good and loving Father.
- We praise God for bold and faithful workers such as Ati and yet we know so many more workers are needed. Please pray to God to move people's hearts to go to these unreached people.
- Pray for the church-planting efforts among the Gorontalo so many may find God's true and straight pathway found in Jesus alone.

Sources: [https://joshuaproject.net/people_groups/11931/ID](https://joshuaproject.net/people_groups/11931>ID)
<http://www.globalprayerdigest.org/issue/day/2013/06/27>

Saturday 17th November

Makassar – an unreached people group Pop: >2.3 million Muslim: 97%

The Makassar live mainly in the southern part of the southwestern peninsula of Sulawesi. The heart of their area is Makassar, the capital city of the province of South Sulawesi and the largest city on the island.

The primary source of income among the Makassar is rice farming; however, they are also well known throughout Indonesia for their skill in trading and as fishermen. Their houses are often built on stilts, two metres above the ground. Makassar houses in the plains and beach areas are close to each other and those in the mountains are spread out. The fishermen living on the beaches build their houses in rows facing the sea or the main road. Villages like these are known as *kampung pajaku* (fishermen villages). Farmers build their houses around the fields and their villages are known as *kampung pamarri* (farmer villages). Each village usually has a centre (*pecci tana*) which formerly was considered a sacred place, marked by a sacred (*banyan*) tree.

The Makassar are almost all Muslim, but traditional beliefs are still influential, especially in the remote areas. They maintain beliefs in gods and ancestral spirits, giving ritual offerings in the required manner. They believe the ancestral spirits have a direct influence on their daily lives, so special ceremonies are held at the beginning of the planting and harvest seasons.

The Makassar also believe there are only limited blessings from Allah. Their human leaders are perceived to have power and no one else is allowed to challenge this reality.

An article in the Global Prayer Digest illustrates this through the following story:
“Since fresh water was in short supply, it seemed to the foreign missionaries that a Makassarese community would want their help. They were in for a surprise when they approached the village elders about a possible well-digging project. The terse lipped Makassar leader rubbed his chin and glared at them. He said, “We refuse to lift a finger for the digging of your water wells. Furthermore, if others choose to help you, we shall not allow them to benefit. We will block their ability to obtain clean water.”

Today, among over two million Makassar, there are only approximately six hundred followers of Christ; that is around 0.3%.

- Let's cry out for the truth to be known among the Makassar people, who are bound by lies that lead them to put their hope in gods and people that cannot save them.
- Cry out for softened hearts among this unresponsive people group.
- Pray for protection for persons of peace from among the Makassarese who are presently being taught the Word of God and that they will have wisdom and courage as they begin to minister to their people.

Sources: [https://joshuaproject.net/people_groups/13235/**ID**](https://joshuaproject.net/people_groups/13235>ID)

<http://www.globalprayerdigest.org/issue/day/2014/06/29>