



Reaching Muslims in Asia: Indonesia

A Broken Necklace of Pearls

The island nation of Indonesia is like a beautiful pearl necklace whose string has broken, both physically and spiritually.¹

Physically the nation resembles a broken necklace as it is the world's largest archipelago, composed of over 17,000 islands covering an area larger than the continental United States. These islands are like pearls, each beautiful in rainforests, river valleys, volcanic peaks, beaches, coral reefs, and an abundant diversity of wildlife and cultures.

Spiritually it is broken, too. Trust in the central government and its institutions has been severely shaken. In recent years it has been said that this, the fourth largest nation in the world, has teetered on the brink of disintegration. Economic and political chaos, compounded by a historically repressive government and ethnic strife, could melt down into a Bosnia-like crisis across three thousand miles of the equator. World leaders watch Indonesia and fear disruption of oil shipments. Environmentalists fear damage to the world's second largest rainforest and vast coral reefs. Stockbrokers worry over the commodities of oil, natural gas, tin, gold and uranium produced by Indonesia's resource rich outer islands. Moderate politicians in neighboring countries fear the repercussions of Islamic fundamentalists rising up to seize control.

God sees things differently. God loves the people of Indonesia. He gave them rich resources and joy in diversity to make something beautiful of their lives, not something broken. Each culture is like a pearl to God, something that has grown beautiful in spite of hardship.

While Bahasa Indonesia is the national language, more than 700 unique languages are spoken in this nation! Culturally this nation is a mosaic of ethnicities, each with a unique language, traditions, religion, etc. There's nothing "homogenous" about Indonesia! It is probably more diverse than any Western nation has become by immigration in the past 2 centuries.

This will help you when you hear the following facts to not make the mistake of thinking of the people, of Islam or of the Church in Indonesia as one monolithic entity. It's not. Understanding the cultural and religious diversity will help you understand and pray with wisdom for this nation. Indonesia is, along with all the above, also the largest Muslim population country in the world. But it is not 100% Muslim. About 82% of its approximate 235 million citizens are Islamic while the Church (all types of Christians combined) represent about 12% of the population. That means the Church numbers about 28 million – almost as large as Canada's entire population!

Yet the Church, by and large, is not reaching out to their Muslim neighbors with the Good News of Jesus Christ. We returned from there just last month having surveyed 100 church leaders from almost 1 dozen denominations. What did



While in Indonesia last month we happened across these three Muslim girls walking home from school. Who will teach them "Jesus loves me?"

we find? Less than a single handful had even ever attempted to reach out to Muslims, but none of them tried reaching them in the language the Muslim's spoke. Needless to say, they were very ineffective in their attempts.

There are still 128 unreached people groups in Indonesia. "Unreached" people groups are those cultures wherein the Church does not exist or is still so small they cannot possibly reach the rest of their people group with the Gospel, so someone must come from "outside" and reach into their culture with the Good News of Jesus Christ.

How shall they hear? ... asks the Holy Spirit through Paul in Romans 10. How shall some one tell them? And how will those Communicators go...unless we send them? Will you join me in praying Jesus' commanding prayer...

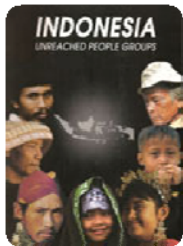
*"Lift up your eyes! The fields are ripe! But where are the workers?! PRAY YE THEREFORE the Lord of the Harvest to **thrust forth** more laborers!"* (Charles' "paraphrase" of John 4:35-36 & Luke 10:2 !)

I believe, as we pray specifically for these Asian nations, God will respond, raising up national believers and new workers from Canada and abroad, to go and share His Good News with Asian Muslims who need to hear, see and come to know His love in Jesus Christ.

And I believe YOU are one of God's intercessors, tipping the scale in their favour. THANK YOU for your prayer support and partnership! You're awesome!

References: ¹ Much of this material adapted from *Indonesia's Unreached People Groups*, © IPN – Indonesia, 2003. Additional facts and figures courtesy of Wikipedia.org.

Resources:



Has God touched and burdened your heart to pray for Indonesia? Will you "adopt" this nation or one of her 128 unreached people groups to be your special prayer focus? This full color and beautifully illustrated book will help you pray for all or one of these groups. Order your \$10 copy today via the following link: <http://www.freshwinddistributing.com/product.php?productid=16149>



Will you consider the idea of **praying for a specific terrorist**?! Can you imagine that as believers begin to pray consistently for Terrorists, they come into the Kingdom of God? It's been done before – the Apostle Paul! And it's happening still today. We're told in Iraq and other Muslim countries that former terrorist are becoming some of the best evangelists and church planters. You *can* make a difference in today's news headlines! Go to www.atfp.org to review and consider adopting your own terrorist for prayer!

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT US:

info@cmocanada.org

www.cmocanada.org