Christians are subject to violent persecution and discrimination, much of it directly linked to Pakistan’s notorious blasphemy laws, which are widely abused. There have been 224 Christian victims of the blasphemy laws since they were passed in 1986. The most notorious case was that of Asia Bibi who, after 10 years in custody including many years on death row, was finally acquitted by the Supreme Court in October 2018. She eventually left Pakistan in May 2019 to start a new life with her family in Canada. With guilty blasphemy verdicts carrying the death penalty and radical Islamists gaining more political power in the region, Christians are living in fear for their lives. Conversions to Christianity in particular carry tremendous risk. Attacks on churches have occurred in some places.

Christians also suffer from institutionalized discrimination. Jobs considered low, dirty and belittling are often held by Christians – for example, Christian workers make up a very high proportion of the sewerage and street cleaning workforce despite comprising only 1.5 percent of the population.1 Many Christians are exceptionally poor and some are victims of bonded labor. However, middle class Christians also face marginalization and persecution. In the Punjab region Christian and Hindu girls continue to be abducted and forced into marriage.
