



THE CUMORAH FOUNDATION

Resources on LDS Church Growth and Missionary Work

October 2013

WELCOME!

The purpose of this newsletter is to provide monthly updates on LDS Church growth and missionary news stories and present a synopsis of recently completed educational resources and research. We are a privately funded initiative that provides resources online without cost. The Cumorah Foundation is not authorized or approved by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints or any other group.

CHURCH GROWTH DEVELOPMENTS

New Stakes

(provided with chronological ranking and date of creation)

35. Quito Ecuador Turubamba - 10/20/2013

New Districts

3. Divinópolis Brazil - 9/29/2013

Discontinued Stakes and Districts

No stakes or districts discontinued in October 2013

Locations Recently Reached by the Church

(city population rank, most recent population estimate)
precise population data from www.citypopulation.de

- Santo Tomas, Colombia (158th, 23,800)
- Nasivikoso, Fiji (N/A, N/A)
- Kpando, Ghana (53rd, 28,334)
- Blitar, Indonesia (63rd, 126,776)
- Udot, Micronesia (N/A, 1,774)
- Nitra, Slovakia (5th, 83,444)
- Auki, Solomon Islands (2nd, 5,105)

Locations Recently Closed by the Church¹

(city population rank, most recent population estimate) data from www.citypopulation.den

- Vidal, Argentina (N/A, 6,320)
- Stanthorpe, Australia (N/A, 4,955)

Additional Country LDS Newsroom Sites Launched

The Church recently launched newsroom sites for dozens of additional countries. Many of these countries have a tiny LDS presence such as Belarus and Kazakhstan. Currently the Church operates 64 country-specific newsroom sites that publish stories on recently completed humanitarian and development projects as well as noteworthy church growth and missionary developments. To view a list of these country newsroom sites, visit the [global edition of the newsroom site](#) and click on the upper right corner to view country-specific newsroom sites.

Rapid LDS Growth Continues in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire

Rapid LDS growth continues in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire. The number of wards in the city increased from 35 at year-end 2012 to 43 at present; a 23% increase in less than one year. Some of the most rapid growth has occurred within the original boundaries of the Cocody Cote d'Ivoire Stake where the number of wards doubled from nine in 2010 to 18 at present. In 2012, the Cocody Cote d'Ivoire Stake had the highest percentage of adult members who have submitted a family name for temple ordinances. Currently all five stakes have eight or nine wards. Click [here](#) to view a map of LDS units in Abidjan.



¹ *Cities where the only ward or branch was closed; some of these cities may continue to have a dependent unit and/or missionaries assigned

Seventh Stake Created in Quito, Ecuador

In October, the Church created a new stake in Quito, Ecuador bringing the total number of stakes in the Quito metropolitan area up to seven. The second most recently created stake was organized in 2009 from a district. New wards and branches have been regularly organized in the Quito area within the past few years although there have been several ward consolidations during this time. Quito appears a likely candidate for a temple announcement in the coming years due to distance from Guayaquil, two missions headquartered in the same city, and a sizable LDS presence.



Recent Missionary and Church Growth Developments in Sierra Leone

Several significant church growth and missionary developments are underway in Sierra Leone. In October, the Church created its fourth branch in Kenema. Kenema became its own district in late 2012 and had only one branch prior to late 2011. Missionaries report that the mission will open the fourth most populous city in the country (Makeni) to full-time missionaries within the next month and the mission will create the first branch. The first convert baptisms recently occurred in the member group that currently functions in the city. Up to 50 members previously baptized in other cities have relocated to Makeni over the years and currently attend group meetings. Missionaries report that scores of new missionaries will arrive to the mission by the end of the year and that several additional member groups and branches will be organized within the coming months.



Church Growth Developments in Thailand

Missionaries serving in the Thailand Bangkok Mission report that several member districts are close to becoming stakes, namely districts in Bangkok North, Chiang Mai, and Khon Kaen. The Church in Thailand has experienced a significant acceleration in convert baptisms, reactivation success, and advancements for male members to the Melchizedek Priesthood. Mission leadership has also begun experimenting with church planting efforts in Bangkok to spur greater growth.



Rapid Membership Growth and Good to Excellent Convert Retention in the Ghana Kumasi Mission

Missionaries serving in the Ghana Kumasi Mission report that most wards and branches will have baptized approximately 50 converts during 2013. Most locations experience good to excellent convert retention rates as reported by missionaries and as evidenced by the steady organization of new member groups, branches, and wards. Missionaries report that several new member districts and a new stake will be created in the coming months.



LDS Outreach Expansion Efforts Underway in Java, Indonesia

For the first time in decades, the Church in Java has begun to focus on opening additional cities to missionaries and forming member groups in these locations. In 2012, a member group was organized in Sidoarjo. Within the past couple months, missionaries report that the first sacrament meeting service was recently held in Blitar and efforts are underway to organize a member group in the city. Missionaries also report similar plans to establish a member group in Klaten.



Second Most Populous City in the Solomon Islands Opens for Missionary Work

Mission leaders in the Vanuatu Port Vila Mission report that missionaries have begun visiting Auki - the second most populous city in the Solomon Islands. The first LDS church services appeared to be held in October. Missionaries are currently preparing for the formation of a member group in the city that will be primarily supervised by the Honiara Solomon Islands District Presidency.



NEW RESOURCES

CASE STUDIES

[Augmenting the Size of the Indian Full-time Missionary Force: The Urgent Need and Strategies for Growth](#)

India is the world's second most populous country with over 1.22 billion people. Notwithstanding the enormous size of the population, the LDS Church in India maintains a comparatively tiny missionary force of less than 200 missionaries administered by two missions headquartered in Bangalore and New Delhi. This case study briefly reviews the history of the Church in India and articulates the urgent need for augmenting the size of the full-time missionary force in India. Strategies for increasing the number of missionaries serving in India are described and challenges for accomplishing this task are analyzed. Growth trends in the number of missionaries serving from other nearby countries are summarized. Limitations to this case study are provided. Future prospects for increasing the size of the full-time missionary force in India are predicted.

[Comparing the Growth of Latter-day Saints and Jehovah's Witnesses in the Democratic Republic of the Congo](#)

The LDS Church has experienced some of its most rapid international growth in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DR Congo) within the past three decades. Jehovah's Witnesses have experienced similar growth trends compared to the LDS Church although Witnesses established a presence three decades earlier than the LDS Church and have more aggressively expanded national outreach. This case study reviews the history of the LDS Church and Jehovah's Witnesses in the DR Congo. A synopsis of membership growth trends, the expansion of national outreach, and the extend of worldwide outreach among Congolese for both denominations is examined. Factors that have influenced growth trends for both denominations are identified and discussed. The growth of other proselytism-focused groups that operate in the DR Congo is summarized. Limitations to this case study are identified and prospects for future LDS and Witness growth is predicted.

[Opportunities for National Outreach Expansion in Cambodia](#)

Notwithstanding strong membership and congregational growth rates during most years in the 1990s and 2000s, the Church in Cambodia has experienced slow national outreach expansion in recent years notwithstanding strong receptivity and several major cities that continued to be unreached. This case study summarizes recent church growth and missionary developments in Cambodia and identifies past successes expanding national outreach. Opportunities and challenges for opening additional areas of the country to missionaries are analyzed. Trends in outreach expansion and church growth in Cambodia are compared to other areas of Southeast Asia. A synopsis of the growth and size of other proselytizing Christian groups that operate in Cambodia is provided. Limitations to data utilized in this case study are identified and the outlook for church growth and national outreach expansion is predicted.

[Prospective LDS Outreach in Northeast India](#)

With a combined population of approximately 46 million, northeast India comprises the eight administrative states of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim, and Tripura. Although several administrative states in Northeast India have a Christian majority or large Christian minority and greater religious freedom than other regions of India, the Church has never extended missionary activity into this region. This case study reviews the history of the Church administering northeast India and provides recommendations for how to effectively establish an LDS presence into this region. Challenges for initiating an LDS presence in northeast India are identified. The growth of the Church in other regions of India is summarized and the size and growth of other proselytizing Christian groups in northeast India is provided. Limitations to this case study are identified and prospects for future growth are predicted.

[Recent Missionary and Church Growth Developments in Vietnam](#)

With 92.5 million inhabitants, Vietnam is the world's fourteenth most populous country. This case study reviews the history of the Church in Vietnam since the early 1990s and identifies past growth successes and opportunities and challenges for future growth. A comparative growth section compares the size and growth of the LDS Church in Vietnam to other Southeast Asian countries that experience limited religious freedom. A synopsis of the size and growth of nontraditional proselytizing Christian groups that operate in Vietnam is provided. Limitations to this case study are discussed and prospects for future growth are predicted.

[Slow LDS Growth in Bangladesh](#)

Bangladesh is inhabited by 164 million people and ranks as the world's eighth most populous country. No other country populated by more than 10 million people has a higher population density than Bangladesh. The LDS Church established its initial presence in Bangladesh during the 1980s and early 1990s but has since experienced very slow membership growth and has not created any new congregations. This case study reviews the history of the Church in Bangladesh. Past church growth and missionary successes are identified and opportunities and challenges for future church growth and the establishment of formal missionary activity are analyzed. The growth of the Church in other South Asian countries is summarized and the size and growth of other missionary-focused groups that operate in Bangladesh is reviewed. Limitations to this case study are identified and the outlook for future growth is predicted.

NEW RESOURCES (continued)

ENCYCLOPEDIA OF MISSIONARY WORK AND CHURCH GROWTH (MISSIOLOGY)

- [Area Seventy](#)
- [Children of Record](#)
- [Convert Baptisms](#)
- [Group \(Church Unit\)](#)

UPDATED RESOURCES

CASE STUDIES

[LDS Outreach among the Nivacle Amerindians in Paraguay](#)

The Nivacle or *Chulupí* are an Amerindian group native to the sparsely populated Boquerón Department of northwestern Paraguay. Population estimates range from as few as 5,195 to as many as 25,000. In 1980, the LDS Church baptized the first converts in Boquerón and today numbers among the most prominent religious groups established among the Nivacle. This case study provides a brief synopsis of the Nivacle people, the history of the LDS Church among them, and identifies successes, opportunities, and challenges for future growth. A comparative growth section compares and contrasts the growth of the Church among the Nivacle with other Amerindian groups in the region and other proselytizing faiths. Limitations to this case study are identified and the outlook for future growth is predicted.

[LDS Outreach Expansion in Awasa and Surrounding Areas in Southern Ethiopia](#)

Ethiopia has a population of approximately 94 million that primarily follows Christianity and Islam. The LDS Church established its initial presence in Ethiopia during the early 1990s in Addis Ababa and opened a branch in a second city (Debre Zeit) in 2002. In the late 2000s, the Church established a branch in the southern portion of the country for the first time in Awasa and experienced rapid outreach expansion in the early 2010s. This case study provides background information on the Awasa area and reviews the history of the LDS Church in the area. Past growth successes are identified and opportunities and challenges for future growth are analyzed. A comparative growth section compares LDS growth in the Awasa area to other locations in East Africa and summarizes the growth and size of other missionary-focused Christian groups that operate in the Awasa area. Limitations to this case study are identified and prospects for future growth are predicted.