

THE GREAT COMMISSION STRATEGY



**JOSHUA
PROJECT**

Who is Joshua Project?

We are a research organization.

We gather data on ethnic people groups around the world.

We track which communities have the least access or response to the gospel.

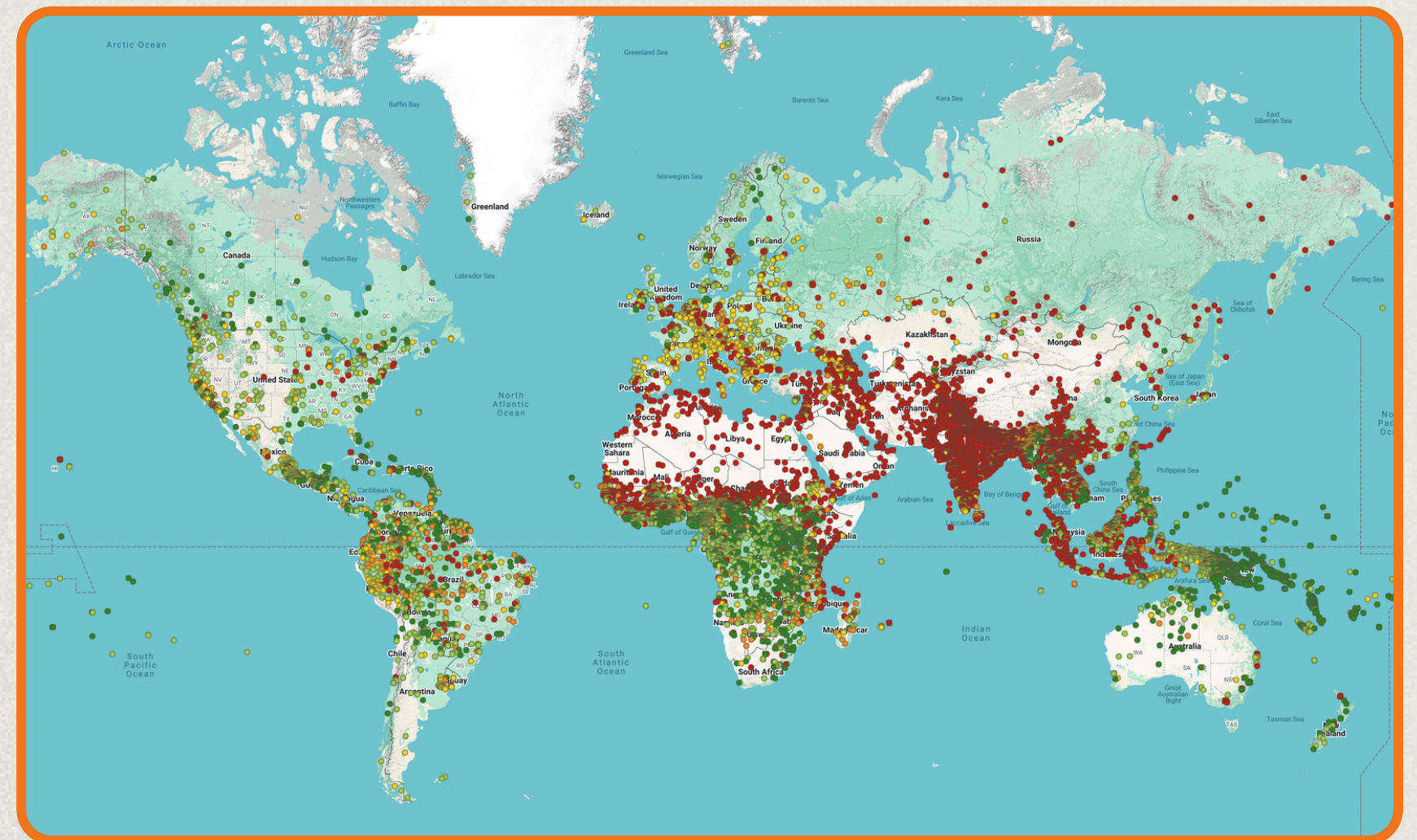
Then, we make that information available.



The great commission **compass** for the global church



- Churches and individuals can use the data to pray strategically.
- Mission organizations can use it to deploy workers effectively.
- Anyone can access the data for free.
- We don't send missionaries ourselves.
- We highlight where the gospel need is greatest.
- We provide maps and data so the Church can respond.





Joshua Project tracks each *People Group*

The original biblical mandate

Therefore go and make disciples of all *nations*, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
(Matthew 28:19 NIV)

“And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all *nations*, and then the end will come”.
(Matthew 24:14 NIV)

Know then that it is those of faith who are the sons of Abraham. And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the *Gentiles* (ethne) by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, “In you shall all the *nations* (ethne) be blessed.” So then, those who are of faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith. (Galatians 3:7-9 NIV)



ETHNOS / ETHNE
Greek Translation

(nations or people groups)

In Christ, we inherit the
promise of Abraham.



But what is a People Group in *today's language*?

THE SHORT ANSWER

A people group is a community of people who share a common identity. That shared identity can come from language, religion, ethnicity, culture, or history.

FOR MISSION STRATEGY

A people group is the largest community where the gospel can spread freely. Once it crosses a barrier of language or acceptance, it has entered a different people group.

Languages and Cultural Identity

In most regions, language is the main dividing line. These can be referred to as ethno-linguistic people groups.

Community context matters

In South Asia, caste and tradition also shape group identity. These are called jati or communities.

Two types of barriers

Understandability: people cannot grasp the message.
Acceptance: people will not receive it due to social walls.

No perfect classification

Experts debate how to draw the lines. Joshua Project uses the terms 'people' and 'people group' interchangeably.

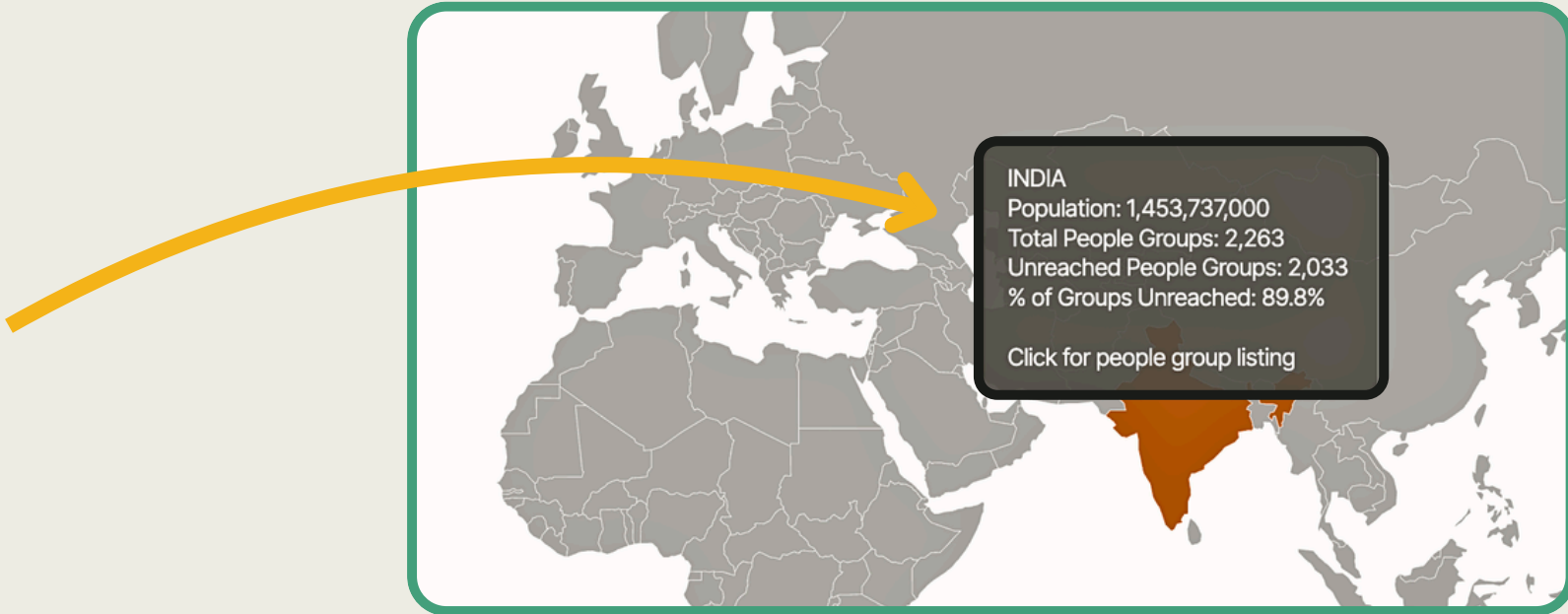


Why do People Groups matter *more than* countries?

For starters, there is a clear biblical mandate to proclaim the gospel to every people group. "...from every nation, **tribe, people, and language** will stand before the Lamb." (*Revelation 7:9 NIV*)

Another reason is that, if you pay attention to the news, countries occasionally change their borders and names.

Joshua Project *also* tracks the progress of the gospel in **countries, continents, and regions**. Yet, focusing on People Groups will always be the main objective.



Country	Population	10/40 Window	People Groups	Unreached Groups	% Unreached Groups	Popl in Unreached	% Popl in Unreached	Primary Religion	Progress Scale ▲	% Evangelical	% Christian Adherent	Est. Workers Needed *
Afghanistan	43,595,000	•	58	58	100.0 %	43,595,000	100.0 %	Islam		0.0 %	0.0 %	900
Algeria	47,390,000	•	37	34	91.9 %	47,311,000	99.8 %	Islam		0.0 %	0.1 %	962
Maldives	508,000	•	4	4	100.0 %	508,000	100.0 %	Islam		0.0 %	0.0 %	13
Western Sahara	578,000	•	10	10	100.0 %	578,000	100.0 %	Islam		0.0 %	0.0 %	16
Azerbaijan	10,272,000	•	34	25	73.5 %	9,950,000	96.9 %	Islam		0.2 %	2.2 %	209
Bangladesh	174,504,000	•	278	256	92.1 %	172,568,000	98.9 %	Islam		Unknown	0.5 %	3,594



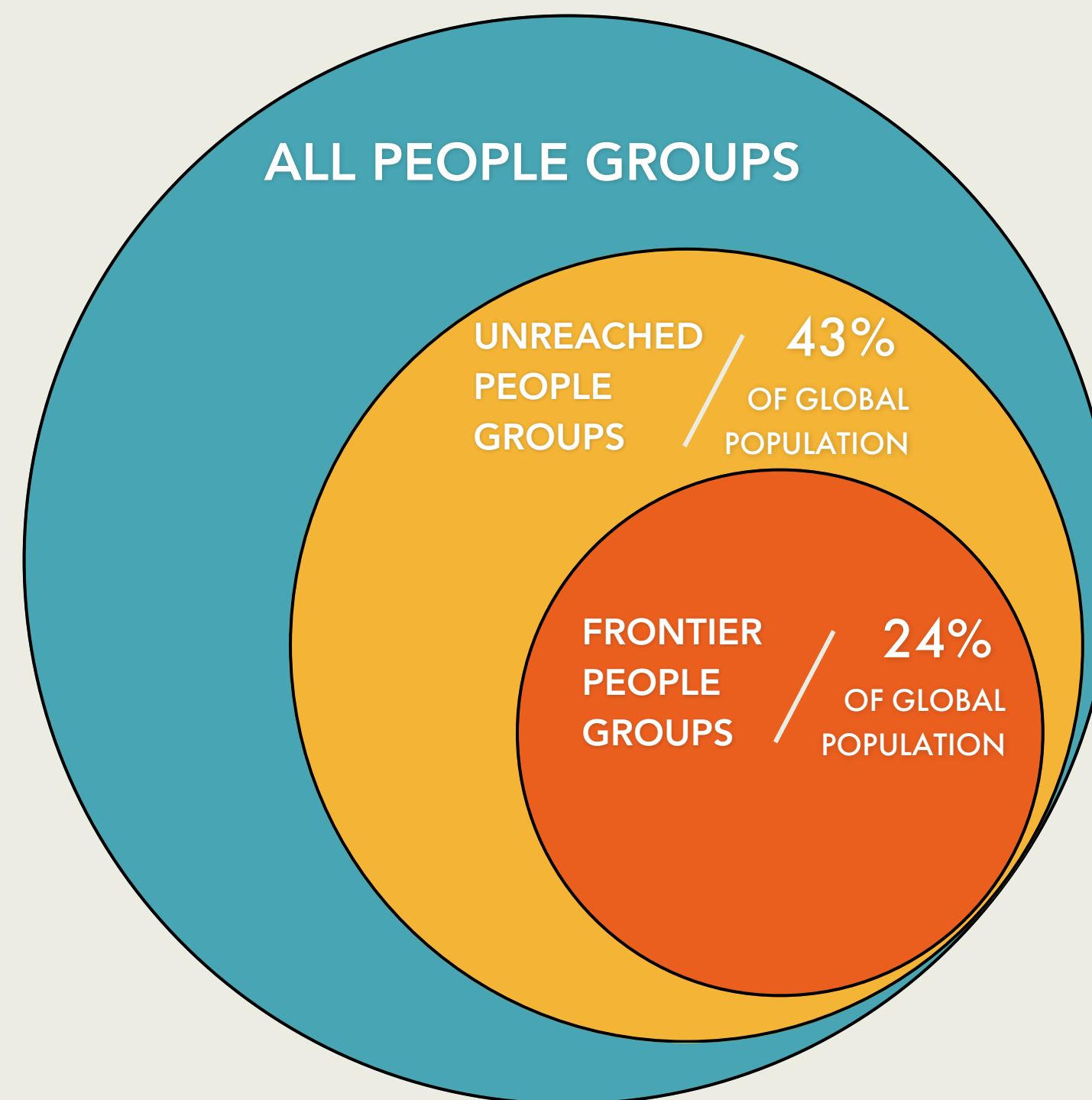
How many people groups are there?

counted by People Groups across country

Total People Groups **10,430**

Unreached People Groups **4,500**

Frontier People Groups **3,220**
(Subset of Unreached People Groups)



NOTE: 71% OF UNREACHED PEOPLE GROUPS ARE FRONTIER PEOPLE GROUPS



So what does it *actually* mean to be unreached?

standardized progress levels and statistical thresholds

e.g. Frontier People Group Profile on Joshua Project

Level	Description	Criteria
1a	Unreached (Frontier) - Less than 1 in 1,000 (0.1%) identify as Christians in any way. *	Evangelicals <=0.1% Professing Christians <=0.1%
1b	Unreached (non-Frontier) - Few evangelicals and little, if any, history of Christianity. ■	Evangelicals >0.1% and <=2% Professing Christians >0.1% and <=5%
1	Unreached (All) - Few evangelicals and few who identify as Christians. Little, if any, history of Christianity. *+■	Evangelicals <= 2% Professing Christians <= 5%
2	Minimally reached - Few evangelicals, but significant number who identify as Christians.	Evangelicals <= 2% Professing Christians > 5% and <= 50%
3	Superficially reached - Few evangelicals, but many who identify as Christians. In great need of spiritual renewal and commitment to biblical faith.	Evangelicals <= 2% Professing Christians > 50%
4	Partially reached - Evangelicals have a modest to moderate presence.	Evangelicals > 2% and <= 10%
5	Significantly reached - Evangelicals have a significant presence.	Evangelicals > 10%

JOSHUA PROJECT

Sikhwal Brahmin in India

The Sikhwal Brahmin have only been reported in India

Photo Source: Anonymous

Adopt the Sikhwal Brahmin

Prayer Cards

Population 48,000	Main Language Wagdi
Largest Religion Hinduism 100.00%	Christian * 0-0.1%
Evangelical 0-0.1%	Progress

* Data can be from various sources including official census, agencies, and

Progress Status on People Group Profiles



What is a **Frontier** People Group?

Frontier People Groups (FPGs) are a subset of Unreached People Groups, and are even harder to reach.

These communities have less than 1 in 1,000 Christians and no meaningful access to the gospel from within their own culture.



Why are Frontier People Groups the least reached?

Closed to Outsiders

Many FPGs live in countries that restrict or ban foreign visitors and missionaries. Physical access is severely limited or illegal.

War and High Violence

Conflict, instability, and extreme danger make sustained ministry nearly impossible in many frontier regions.

Deep Cultural Distance

Strong differences in worldview, religion, and culture create significant barriers. Many FPGs hold beliefs that are far from a Christian framework.

No Existing Network

Missionaries go where they have connections. If there's no gospel movement in a group, there are no local believers to invite or receive workers, creating a self-reinforcing gap.



UNREACHED PEOPLE GROUP (UPG)

Less than 2% Evangelical Christian

- May have a small but present Christian community
- The gospel has a foothold, but hasn't spread widely
- Missionaries are often active in these groups
- Roughly 4,490 UPGs exist worldwide
- Represent 43% of the world's population

FRONTIER PEOPLE GROUP (FPG)

Less than 0.1% Evangelical Christian

- Virtually no indigenous Christian witness
- No known gospel movement within the group
- A subset of UPGs, even less reached
- Roughly 3,220 UPGs exist worldwide
- Represent 24% of the world's population

*FPGs are
a subset
of UPGs*



Where does the data come from?

Joshua Project integrates people group data from many trusted sources, supplemented by original field research to validate and triangulate findings. We continually incorporate new information to improve accuracy and coverage.

Passively-managed Data Sources

- Researchers and research networks (global, regional, national) who study people groups, languages, and religion.
- On-site workers and field partners, such as long-term missionaries who report from the ground.
- Mission organizations, denominations, and affinity networks that share aggregated or approved updates.

Proactive Data Sources

- Our own **regional and national** representatives who conduct field research to verify data and reconcile conflicting reports.
- Web research and reviewed crowd-sourced submissions that we validate before use.
- Public datasets (census, government statistics) and reference compilations (ethnographies, language catalogs).

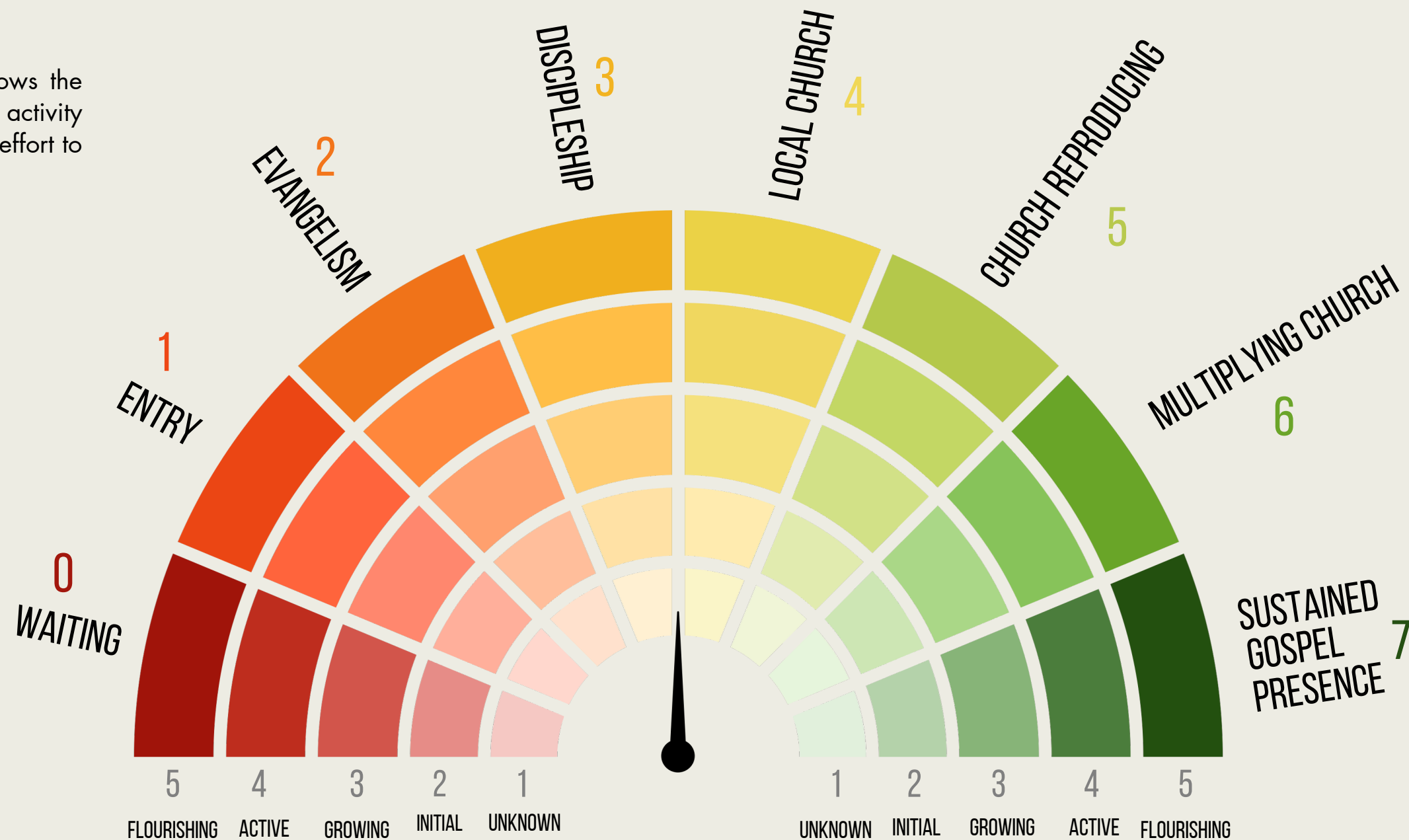
NOTE: Sources and methods vary by region and topic. We document what we can and communicate uncertainty clearly so you can interpret the data with appropriate context.



How is the data measured?

collaborative phases of engagement tool for research

Phases of Engagement (8 phases): Shows the observable progression of gospel activity within a people group, from no known effort to sustained local gospel presence.



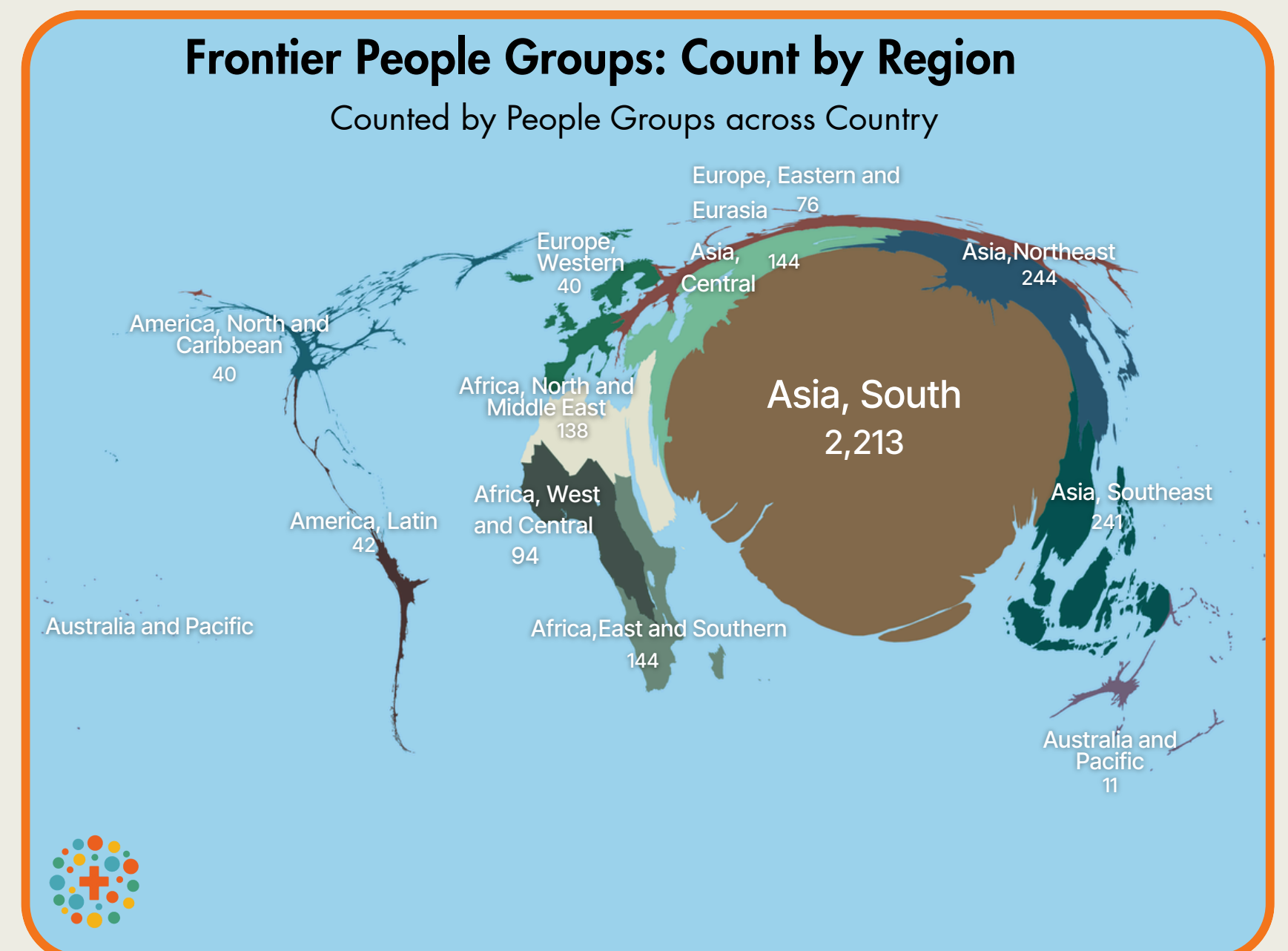
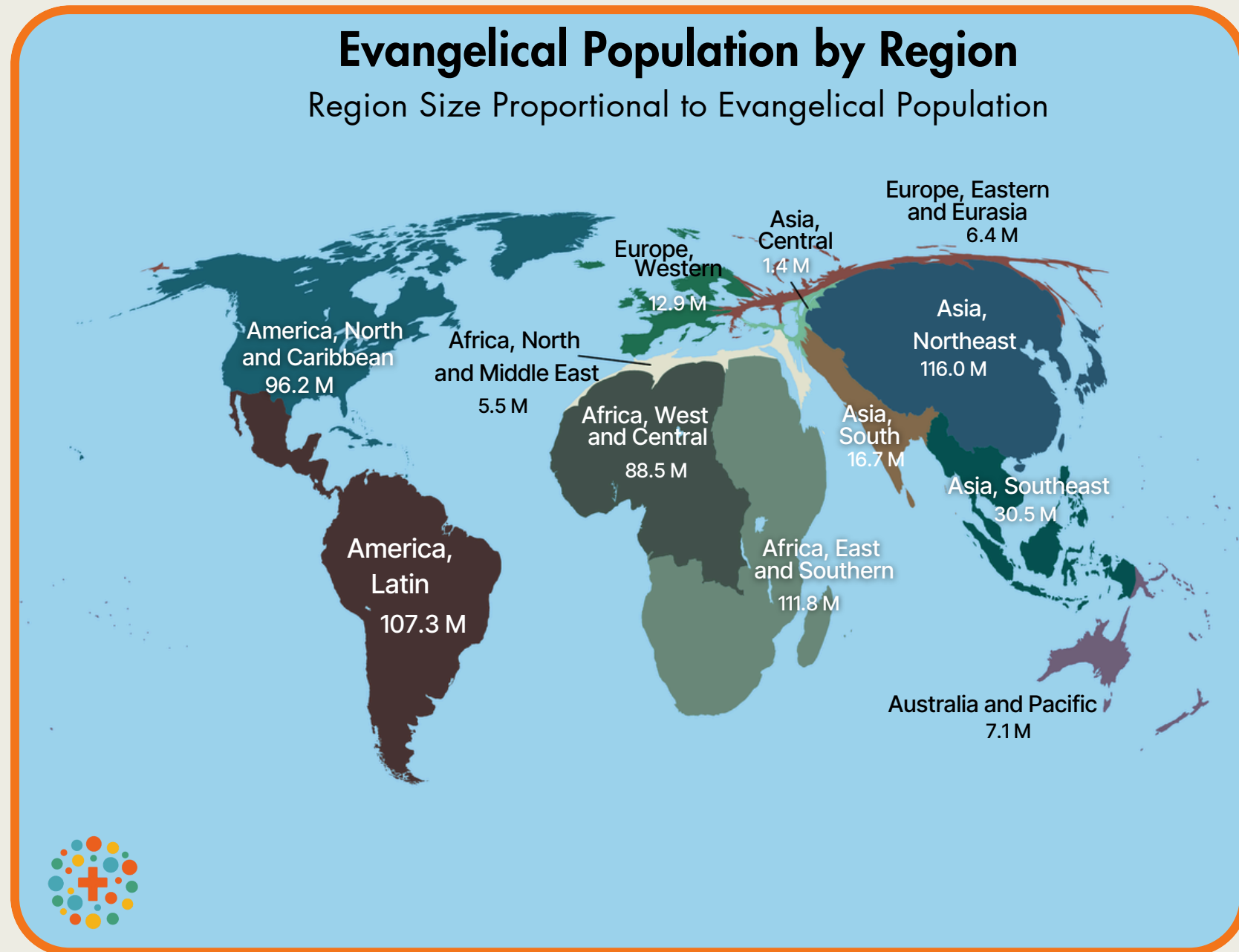
Strength of Engagement - Depicts the depth and breadth of current ministry activity within a given phase of engagement.

Engagement Accelerators - A self-assessment tool suggesting practices teams can use to identify gaps, choose next steps, and catalyze movement to the next phase.

1. Prayer
2. Vision Casting
3. Mobilization/Sending
4. Meeting Needs/Compassion
5. Research/ Cultural Insights
6. Training/Equipping
7. Scripture/Resource Access
8. Multi-node Engagement
9. Collaborative Engagement
10. Critical Contextualization
11. Multiplying Efforts
12. Marketplace Involvement

The *imbalance* of the greatest need

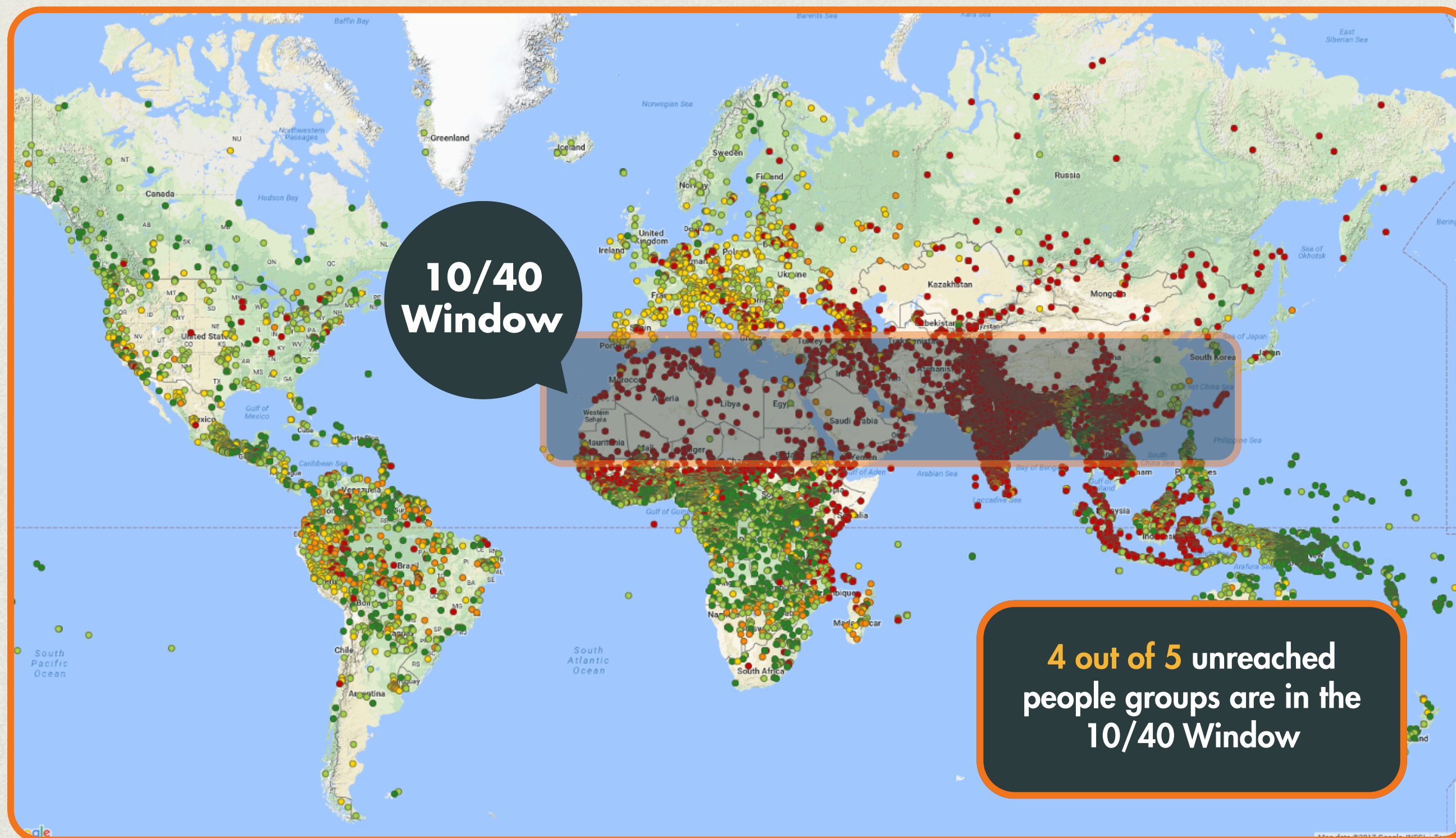
(global gospel access, according to the data)



NOTE: Cartograms displaying the regional evangelical population and the number of frontier people groups by region



Where are these unreached peoples?





**SO, WHAT ARE YOUR NEXT STEPS
TOWARDS COMPLETING THE
GREAT COMMISSION?**

PRAY. GIVE. GO. SERVE.

Visit [JoshuaProject.net](https://joshuaproject.net) to discover your calling.

joshuaproject.net

