



PRAY FOR EAST ASIA

Pray for The Philippines

The Lord reigns, let the earth be glad; let the distant shores rejoice.

— Psalm 97:1

Country Profile

About the Philippines

The Philippines contains a diverse range of ethnic groups, with each group clustered mainly in their own provinces. The three largest groups are the Tagalog, the Cebuano and the Ilocano. Chinese Filipinos form about 1.7% of the population. There are more than 170 different languages spoken across the Philippines; the most popular is Tagalog, followed closely by English.

The Philippines has one of Asia's fastest growing economies, with GDP growing at an average rate of 6.5% every year. Electronic goods, machinery and transport equipment are some of its key exports. However, the Philippines also has among the world's fastest population growth rates. There is an increasing need to create more jobs for the expanding labor force. Unemployment is high (at about 6%), and there is a large informal sector (about 38% of the working population). Population distribution is uneven; large areas are virtually uninhabited, while others have a relatively high population density.

Religion

Religion in the Philippines is heavily influenced by its history as a part of the Spanish Empire. After the end of the Spanish-American war in 1898, protestant missionaries began to arrive in the Philippines. The Philippines is a country open to the gospel, with an estimated 12% of the population professing to be evangelical Christians. Many of these are first generation believers needing intentional discipleship. 6% of the people follow Islam, mainly based in the southwest area of the country. The separation of church and state is constitutionally established in the Philippines, and Filipinos have the freedom of worship without discrimination.

The protestant church is growing in the Philippines; there are over 50,000 churches there today. Churches have to counter false religious teachings and doctrinal distortions among their congregations. It is very encouraging that the Filipino church has strong missionary zeal. More than 4,000 Filipino full-time missionaries work outside of the Philippines, sharing the gospel and planting churches. The Philippines has the largest diaspora network in the world, with more than 11 million Filipinos living overseas.

OMF Church Ministries

OMF workers have been serving among a wide range of peoples in the Philippines since 1952. They work in partnership with local churches in church planting, evangelism, and equipping ministries. With over 20,000 barangays (communities) still without an evangelical church, there are still many places share the good news.



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OMF Mission Sending Ministries

Since 1966 the Philippines Home Council (PHC) has been sending Filipinos to serve cross-culturally within the country, as well as in other countries in Asia. OMF aims to develop deeper relationships with sending churches of our Filipino missionaries and other partner churches; care for our missionaries; provide transformational learning for churches, missionaries and partners; share and be good stewards of God-given resources, as well as seek dynamic partnerships to further God's kingdom. The key challenge however is to stay relevant to the ever-changing church.

Population

- **Total:** 108 million
 - **Tagalog:** 28.1%
 - **Cebuano:** 13.1%
 - **Llocano:** 9%
 - **Bisaya:** 7.6%
 - **Ilonggo:** 7.5%
 - **Bikol:** 6%
 - **Waray:** 3.4%
 - **Others:** 25.3%

Religions

- **Roman Catholic:** 71%
- **Evangelical Christian:** 8-12%
- **Quasi-Christian groups, cults and sects:** 8%
- **Muslim:** 6%
- **Indigenous Tribal:** 2%
- **Chinese Buddhist:** 1%
- **Non-religious:** 1%

Lord, thank you for your love for all the peoples in the Philippines. Please continue to strengthen your church, raising up leaders that will bring peace through the good news of your gospel. Please keep using your people in the Philippines to share your good news with others around the world who have not had a chance to hear yet. We pray that the church will continue to be a powerful sending force in missions.