

FINISHING THE TASK AND THE MILLION VILLAGE CHALLENGE:

A CALL TO FINISH THE TASK

[HTTPS://FINISHINGTHETASK.COM](https://finishingthetask.com)

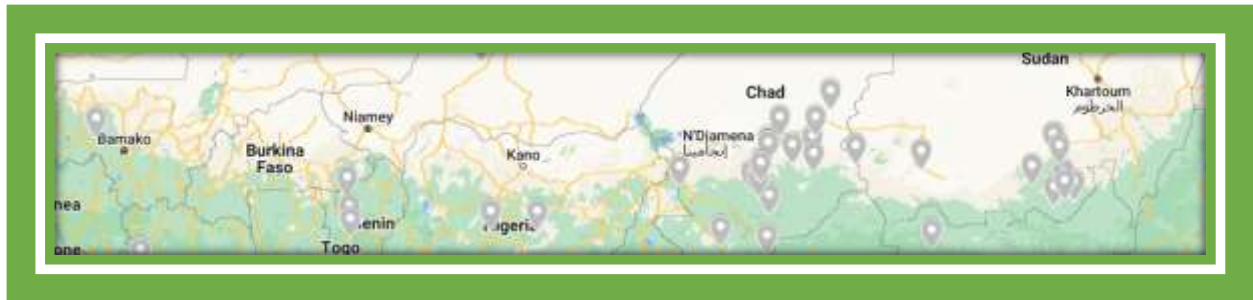


“Finishing the Task,” led by Rick Warren, is calling the global church to partner together to run faster and farther toward the goal of a church among every 1000 people worldwide. The Million Village Challenge is a call to the church to bring Gospel transformation to a million villages - multiplying disciples, planting churches, and lifting poor communities out of cycles of poverty and disease. These two movements have and must converge if we are to bring the Gospel of the Kingdom to the unreached peoples of the earth.

A quick glance at the map above, downloaded from Finishing the Task, indicates that most of the unengaged unreached peoples live in high poverty areas in Asia and Africa. That is where the convergence begins.

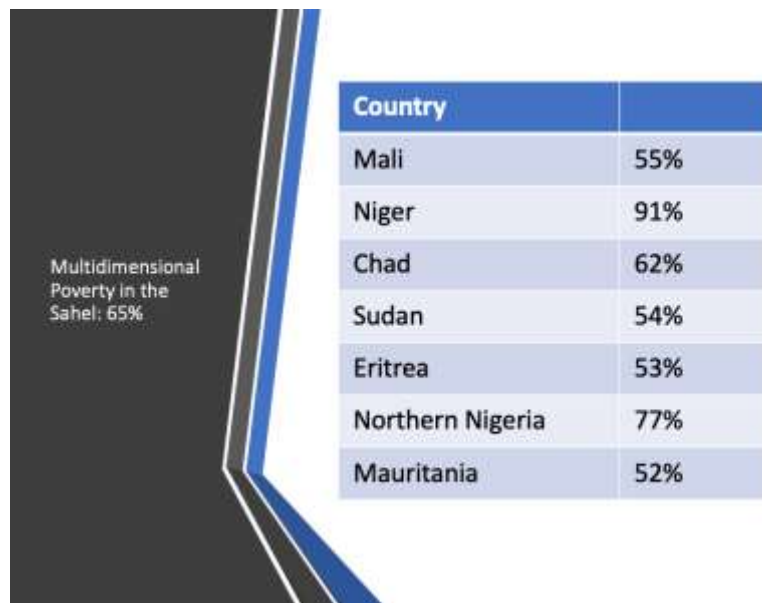
A CALL TO A MILLION VILLAGES

[HTTPS://MILLIONVILLAGE.ORG](https://millionvillage.org)



Preliminary research indicates that a large percentage of those without any Gospel witness among them live in multidimensional poverty in rural poor areas. I have chosen, for purposes of this letter, to offer a case study from the Sahel region of Africa. There are 344 unreached peoples in this region, 31 of them marked out on the “Finishing the Task” map as prioritized unengaged unreached ethnic groups. These peoples not only have no gospel witness among them, but also live in abject poverty.

The chart at the right indicates the percentage of the people living in multidimensional poverty in rural areas. The raw numbers would suggest that it will be impossible to establish a church among every thousand people in this region without a strategy for ministry among the poor – ministry that serves both the physical and spiritual needs of the people.



About half of the multidimensional poor worldwide are classified as destitute. The percentage is likely higher in the Sahel. The destitute are those among the multidimensionally poor that suffer from one or more of the following:

- They have no one in their home with more than one year of schooling
- They live in households that have lost two or more children to preventable causes
- They have someone at home currently suffering from severe malnutrition
- They don't have clean water or must walk 45 minutes to get it
- They have only a dirt floor

Another way of understanding the depth of poverty in the Sahel is to examine child mortality rates. Countries in the Sahel have some of the highest child mortality rates in the world. Chad and Northern Nigeria have the highest rates with more than one in ten children dying before the age of five. In 2020, we lost approximately 966,800 children in the Sahel to preventable causes.

So many of the unreached are living in rural poverty. If we are going to finish the task among them, we must concentrate resources and effort on transformational strategies such as Community Health Evangelism (CHE) that multiply disciples among the poor while lifting their communities out of cycles of poverty and disease. For more information on the CHE strategy, go to <https://chenetwork.org>.

