

Bambara Muslims



Quick Facts

Population: 3,800,000

Mali: 3,400,000

Ivory Coast: 250,000

Senegal: 70,000

France: 30,000

Religion: Islam–Sunni

Believers: 0.11% (MBB)

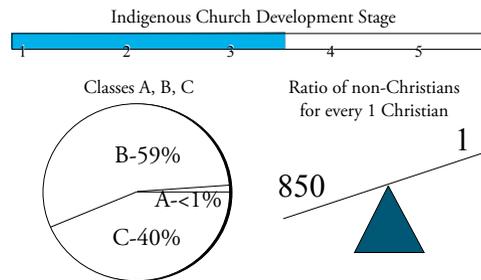
Scriptures: NT, OT

Ministry Tools: JRGT

C Status: 3

M Status: 3

MS Subgroups: 20+



Class A- Are members of a Culturally Relevant Church
 Class B- Have close access to a CRC, but have not yet joined
 Class C- Have no reasonable or close access to a CRC

Identity: The Bambara are a Mande people, related to the Soninke and Malinke, which have been in the process of converting to Islam over the last fifty years. They are now about 85% Muslim and comprise over 30% of the Malian Muslim population.

Lifestyle: The Bambara have a complex pattern of socialization involving secret societies and labor guilds. Traditionally, young men are inducted into an association called *ton*, which provides the work force for intensive periods of agricultural preparation and harvesting. Others are inducted into specialized and exclusive work groups, (such as weavers, potters, sculptors and smiths), depending on their perceived natural abilities, where they learn the secrets of a particular trade.

Customs: In the larger ethnic complex of West Africa, the Bambara prided themselves on their settled agricultural base, considering this to be superior to

the Soninke traders, Fulani herders, and Somono fishermen. In order to survive as agriculturalists in the harsh and unpredictable Sahel environment they had to develop a community approach, with an egalitarian regard for everyone who participated in the harvest. Thus in a given community everyone had equal claim on their neighbor's graneries.

Religion: In the year 1900 only a small fraction of the Bambara were Muslims (less than 3%), and most rejected Islam's influence in favor of their native religion. However, the coming of the French and the development of commerce and Westernized education, created a movement of young people who wished to be free from traditional Bambara social restrictions. This desire was then fanned into flame after WWII when Islam and nationalism merged together in a drive to push out the French.

Christian Outreach: There is a great battle underway among the Bambara

for the spiritual direction of their people. They are torn between Islam, Christianity and their traditional beliefs. Thousands of animistic Bambara have come to Christ, but where Islam has become well established there is much greater resistance to the gospel. As a result, very little effort is being focused on reaching Muslim background Bambara.

How to Pray:

✞ The entire Bambara traditional society has been thrown into a state of chaos. Pray that the Church might model what it means to be a Kingdom people.

✞ There are eight mission agencies planting churches among the Bambara. Pray that each of these might catch a vision for developing special strategies for reaching "high-identity" Muslim communities.

✞ Among the Bambara are six peoples, including a large group of Fulani (Wassalunke), who have adopted the Bambara language. Pray that these "hidden-peoples" might not be overlooked in missionary efforts.

✞ Pray for a strong missions movement among the emerging Bambara Church that will reach all the surrounding Muslim peoples.

Every year 37,000 Bambara Muslims die without Christ.