

Kanuri



Quick Facts

Population: 5,500,000

Nigeria: 4,000,000

Niger: 500,000

Sudan: 250,000

Chad: 130,000

Religion: Islam–Sunni

Believers: 0.002%

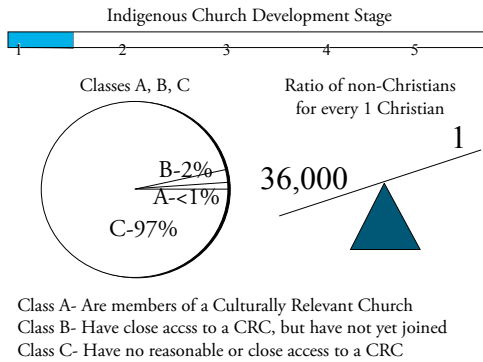
Scriptures: NT

Ministry Tools: JRT

C Status: 1

M Status: 1

MS Subgroups: 20+



Identity: The Kanuri are a cluster of peoples speaking related Nilo-Saharan dialects, which were absorbed by the Bornu empire and merged into a complex heterogeneous society, beginning in the 14th century A.D. The Bornu empire was founded by the ruling family (Saifawa) of the northern Kanem empire. There are numerous occupational and positional castes among them.

Lifestyle: During the agricultural season, which lasts for about 5 to 6 months out of the year, men, women and children of the peasant class will all participate in field work. Throughout the remainder of the year, women are usually confined to their home, and men may engage in craft production, depending on their speciality. Children have their own set of tasks, including animal herding, water transporting, and caring for younger siblings.

Customs: Kanuri society is segmented

between those with high, middle and low status. Quranic scholars and politicians have high status, whereas musicians (considered beggars) and money lenders have low status. In the middle, are the traders, craftsmen, and farmers.

Religion: The Kanuri have been Sunni Muslims since the 14th century. Islam began making inroads as early as the 11th century through the influence of trans-Saharan Muslim traders. There is a high percentage of participation in the full Muslim calendar, including the fasts, and the five pillars are faithfully observed. Islamic law exerts a strong influence in reinforcing traditional Kanuri authority structures (despite Westernization), governing husband and wife relationships, children and elders, as well as rulers and populace. In the evenings, children attend classes to memorize verses of the Quran in Arabic, and to receive instructions from the *mallam*.

Christian Outreach: There are at least

a dozen church-planting mission agencies working among the Kanuri in Nigeria, though progress has been slow, especially among the Manga subgroup. Even so, a few small fellowships have been established in strategic locations, and the New Testament has recently been completed. Among the Yerwa Kanuri in Niger and Chad, there is hope of a movement to Christ with recent professions of faith.

How to Pray:

☞ Women are regarded with general suspicion as social disturbers, and are legally inferior to men. Not surprisingly, the Kanuri have one of the highest divorce rates in the world, approaching 80% and up. Pray for specialized outreach to meet this incredible need.

☞ Christian broadcasts from Trans World Radio in Kanuri are resulting in a large and positive response. Pray for effective follow-up with listeners and inquirers.

☞ Pray for spiritual breakthrough among the noble class in Kanuri society, which exerts such strong influence over every family.

☞ Pray for the efforts of two agencies completing the OT translation, which is so foundational in communi-

**Every year 50,000
Kanuri die
without Christ.**