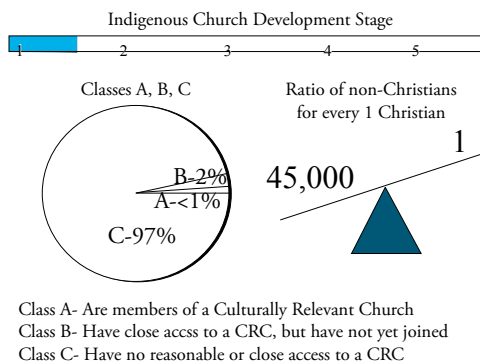


# Minangkabau



## Quick Facts

**Population:** 9,000,000  
 West Sumatra: 4,500,000  
 Indonesian Cities: 3,000,000  
 Riau: 550,000  
 Malaysia: 450,000  
**Religion:** Sunni Islam  
**Believers:** 0.002%  
**Scriptures:** NT  
**Ministry Tools:** JGRT  
**Church Status:** 1  
**Mission Status:** 1  
**MS Subgroups:** 12+



**Identity:** Although the exact origin of the Minangkabau is unknown, their language is closely related to Melayu (Malay) and their mythology suggests they descend from intermarriage between Melayu immigrants (said to be princes) and the indigenous peoples of West Sumatra.

**Lifestyle:** In well-watered areas, the Minangkabau engage primarily in wet-rice cultivation. Women take a leading role in this activity, and typically own the land itself, according to their traditional inheritance rules. The men will engage in entrepreneurial activities, such as restaurants and retail stores, seeking their fortune all throughout Indonesia. Those who are successful will return home as heroes during harvest season. In less watered areas, cash-crops are grown, such as rubber and coffee.

**Customs:** The Minangkabau have been a matrilineal society for centuries—a

cultural value enshrined in their own origin mythology. However, although the family name and inheritance is passed down through the mother, it is the mother's brother that is responsible for leading the family. Due to this system, inheritance disputes often occur when a male has bought land through commercial endeavors of his own.

**Religion:** The Minangkabau are Sunni Muslims of the Shafi school. The Shafis are one of the most conservative schools of Islamic jurisprudence. They base their laws on the Quran, and will not accept any Hadiths (traditional sayings of Muhammad) that contradict it. Minangkabau culture has also been strongly influenced by a Hindu-Buddhist past, evidenced today in their birth rituals and marriage ceremonies. Curing rituals are clearly animistic, though frowned upon by more orthodox Muslims.

**Christian Outreach:** Missionary activity among the Minangkabau has been

limited, and they remain one of the least-reached peoples in Indonesia. Although the Bible was completed and published in 1997, all copies were confiscated by West Sumatran authorities. There is one small fellowship among them, but most known believers remain isolated and undisciplined.

## How to Pray:

✞ Divorce is high among the Minangkabau, and women are under great pressure to both manage their homes and earn money for the family. Pray for special ministry to Minangkabau women that they might find their strength in Christ.

✞ Minangkabau men frequently come in contact with believers in their business travels. Pray that God would burden many of these believers to share the gospel with their Minangkabau friends and clients.

✞ Ask God to intervene supernaturally to enable the wide distribution of the Minangkabau New Testament in West Sumatra.

✞ West Sumatra has over 10,000 Minangkabau villages without a church. Pray that God would thrust out hundreds of church planters and evangelists among them.

**Every year 80,000 Minangkabau die without Christ.**