

Yoruba Muslims



Quick Facts

Population: 8,500,000

Nigeria: 8,000,000

Benin: 220,000

Ghana: 200,000

Ivory Coast: 35,000

Religion: Islam–Sunni

Believers: 0.002%

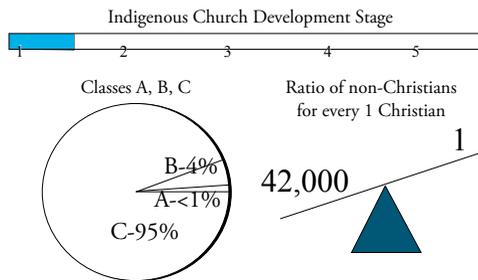
Scriptures: Yes–NT, OT

Ministry Tools: JT

C Status: 1

M Status: 1

MS Subgroups: 10+



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 Yoruba Muslims make up around 35% of the Yoruba ethnic group. The Yoruba are believed to have originated as a Sudanic people which conquered and absorbed many of the indigenous peoples in the forest belt of Nigeria. Some of these sub-groups began converting to Islam through Hausa missionary influence in the early 19th century.

Lifestyle: For centuries the Yoruba have organized themselves into a complex and highly structured city-state civilization. They achieved the greatest levels of technological sophistication in sub-Saharan Africa, and became famous for their blacksmithing, leatherworking, wood and ivory carvings, and glassmaking. Yoruba farmers grow yams, corn, millet and cacao. Women dominate the marketplace, and many become successful and wealthy traders.

Customs: The traditional Yoruba town has at its center a large and elaborate

palace of the political and religious leader of the area, called an *oba*. This palace will be surrounded by patrilineage compounds, each with its own headman. The compounds are inhabited by families which share a common male ancestor and which have rights to shared lineage farmland.

Religion: The Yoruba Muslims are primarily Sunni, and for a time were growing at a fast pace due to the British policy of “indirect rule,” which reinforced the power of Muslim *emirs* in the North. Muslims responded to Christian influence in Nigeria by imitating their practices, setting up their own schools (to offer alternatives to the mission schools) and societies, such as the Young Nwar-ud-Deen Society (set up to compete with the YMCA), and the Islamic Missionary Society (set up to counter the Church Missionary Society).

Christian Outreach: There has been renewed interest in reaching Muslims

by Christians in Nigeria. However, there is a tendency among some Christians to view this as a type of “Christian jihad”—that is a tit-for-tat response to the aggressive missionary efforts and growth of the Muslims themselves. Typically, converts are incorporated into existing churches and there is little effort to form special fellowships of Muslim background believers.

How to Pray:

🙏 Intercede for the salvation of every Muslim *oba* and patrilineal headman among the Yoruba that God would intervene supernaturally in their lives and use them to lead their clans and families to Jesus.

🙏 Pray for sensitive Christian outreach from Nigerian Churches. Ask God to grant creativity to new Muslim background believers to know the best way to remain in their Muslim families and compounds and be salt and light for the Kingdom.

🙏 Pray that God would raise up specialized media outreaches that are culturally relevant to Muslims, including a new Bible, as well as radio and TV broadcasts.

🙏 Pray for reconciliation and peace between Muslim and Christian communities.

Every year 50,000 Yoruba Muslims die without Christ.