

# MISSION ATLAS PROJECT AFTICA

## Niger Country Snapshot

Name:

People Groups: Hausa 56%, Djerma 22%, Fula 8.5%, Tuareg 8%, Beri Beri (Kanouri) 4.3%, Arab, Toubou, and Gourmantche 1.2%, about 1,200 French expatriates

Languages: French, Hausa, Djerma

Religion: Islam 90%, Christian and Traditional 7%

Economy: One of the poorest countries in the world, ranking last on the United Nations Development Fund index of human development. It is a landlocked, Sub-Saharan nation, whose economy centers on subsistence crops, livestock, and some of the world's largest uranium deposits.

Government: Republic, Capital in Niamey which lies on the Niger River.

Government and Religion: The government allows considerable freedom of religion and places few restrictions on missionary work. Islamic fundamentalists continue to push for the imposition of *Shari'a* law in the country.

Map:



Flag:



## Niger Country Profile

### Basic Facts

**Name:** *Republic of Niger*, conventional short form: *Niger*, local long form: *Republique du Niger*, local short form: *Niger*

**Population:** 12,525,094 (July 2006 est.)

**Established:** Independence from France 3 August, 1990; new constitution 1999.

**Location:** Western Africa, southeast of Algeria, Bordered by Algeria 956 km, Benin 266 km, Burkina Faso 628 km, Chad 1,175 km, Libya 354 km, Mali 821 km, Nigeria 1,497 km  
Totally landlocked

**Land Area:** 1.267 million sq km (*land:* 1,266,700 sq km *water:* 300 sq km), Twice the size of Texas

### Demographics

The estimated population of Niger is 12,525,094.

Children up to fourteen years of age account for 46.9% of the population. There are 2,994,022 male children between the ages of newborn to fourteen years of age. There are 2,882,273 female children between these same ages.

Adults between the ages of fifteen and sixty-four years of age account for 50.7% of the population. There are 3,262,114 males in this age category and 3,083,522 females. In the last age category, sixty-five years and above, there are 150,982 males and 152,181 females. This 65 plus group accounts for 2.4% of the population. The median age for males is 16.5 years, and the median age for females is 16.5 years.

The birth rate is 50.73 births for every 1,000 people. There are an estimated 7.46 children born to every woman. The infant mortality rate is 118.25 deaths for every 1,000 live births. The death rate is 20.91 deaths for every 1,000 people. The life expectancy for the total population is 43.76 years.

years. The life expectancy for males is slightly lower at 43.8 years. The life expectancy for females is 43.73 years.

There are forty-two different people groups in Niger. The Hausa are one of the largest people groups and account for over 56% of the population. Other major people groups include: Djerma 22%, Fula 8.5%, Tuareg 8%, Beri Beri (Kanouri) 4.3%, Arab, Toubou, and Gourmantche 1.2%, about 1,200 French expatriates

<https://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/print/ng.html>

## **Language**

French is the official language of Niger.

Hausa, Djerma, Fula, and Tamashek are other major dialects spoken by many of the people.

Numerous other languages and dialects are spoken by the 42 different ethnic groups currently living in Niger.

<https://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/print/ng.html>

## **Society/Culture**

Niger observes many national holidays. Christmas and New Year's Day are both celebrated. May 1st is Labor Day, and April 24th is Concord Day.

Independence Day is August 3, and December 18th is Republic Day.

Religious holidays include: Easter Monday, Tabaski (Muslim Feast of Sacrifice), Ramadan, and Mouloud (Muslim Celebration of Mohammed's birthday). In October, an annual festival called Hotungo is held by the nomadic peoples of Niger. In September there are two important Nigerien festivals—Cure Salee which is when cattle herders celebrate and the Bororos' festival where two different ancestral groups from the Wodaabe celebrate with dances and feasting. In April, the Wassankara, which is a political comedy festival, is held as well as the Sorko festival which involves water masters. In November, a bullfight occurs.

About 80% of Niger's population live in rural areas and support themselves by raising crops and tending to livestock. Most of the families can only manage to grow enough food for their own consumption. In 2005, disaster struck Nigerien families when low rain fall and locust attacks decimated much of the crops for that year. Families that needed food often found themselves starving or barely getting enough. Babies and toddlers were especially vulnerable to disease and malnutrition because they remained dependent upon their mothers' milk which disappeared as the mothers did not have enough to eat too. UNICEF and many other humanitarian aid groups have worked diligently to try to help the beleaguered people of Niger.

Another social issue in Niger is the fate of girls who are forced into early marriages because of traditional cultural practices. The government passes a law that said that girls should not be wed before 15 years of age; however, many girls are promised in marriage in infancy by their fathers.

Some girls as young as nine are secretly given to their groom's family and are married as soon as they reach puberty.

Early marriage customs are designed to keep girls from being sexually active before their marriage and also are designed to bring higher bride prices for young girls. Once girls are married, they will be expected to conceive and bear children immediately. Many women die in childbirth due to a lack of proper medical facilities in rural areas. Many young girls also become the second, third, or even fourth wife of a man. They will be under the supervision and authority of older wives or the groom's family. All children that are born to a union will generally belong to the father's family in cases of divorce. UNICEF and some other aid organizations are working to encourage village leaders to allow girls to attend school and to be able to abstain from forced marriages. Generally, village leaders have to be proactive in intervening on the girls' behalfs in order to stop fathers from marrying them off without the girls' consents. Once the girls are married, they may face physical abuse from their spouse. Divorced women no longer have a husband to help support them and probably have little or no education. They may be able to return to their father's family, but if the father's family does accept them, they may be required to marry again at the behest of the father. Those that don't return to their families may starve or become prostitutes. Humanitarian Aid organizations try to help women that find themselves in such circumstances.

Niger's population also faces many health risks. AIDS, polio, and malaria are serious threats to children's health. Lack of sanitary water can also lead children to develop diarrhea and other health related problems. Most of the drinking water comes from wells or ground water. The ground water is often polluted. Niger does have a safer underground water source; however, deep wells are very expensive to dig and must be maintained properly. The government is working in conjunction with other humanitarian groups to develop safer and more viable water sources for Nigeriens.

[http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/niger\\_1415.html](http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/niger_1415.html)

The government denies the existence of slavery in Niger; however, many NGO groups and news groups have recently been reporting its continued existence. In fact, in 2003 a law was passed by the government that made being a slave owner punishable by ten to thirty years of imprisonment and possible fines. BBC journalists have traveled throughout Niger interviewing former and current slaves.

The NGO group Timidria regularly reports the existence of slavery. The government passed legislation in 2003 that made slavery illegal; however, the NGO Timidria has reported that this law is not heavily enforced because many government officials themselves are slave owners. According to these groups, slavery is based upon years of silent but accepted cultural norms.

When Niger was a French colony, the colonial government banned the trafficking and sale of persons; however, this did not eradicate slavery altogether. Persons who were already slaves were still owned by their masters. Their children were also owned by their masters. The slaves of today are the offspring of ancestors that were also slaves.

Family ties are extremely important in Nigerien society. According to Timidria and the BBC, masters deliberately separate young children from their parents in order to alienate them from the

parents who are slaves and to promulgate the children's acceptance of their slave status. Young boys and girls may serve as domestic house servants or work in the fields. Slaves are at the mercy of their masters and may be beaten, starved, or even sexually abused. When boys and girls reach marriageable age, they will be married to the person of their master's choice. Masters always encourage their slaves to have many children. Slaves that do escape may also face bleak lives because they have no family groups or societal ties to help them develop lives outside of their previous life of servitude.

The U.S. State Department, also mentions that children are vulnerable to exploitation. Some devout Muslim families will give a son to a Qu'ranic teacher in the city so that the boy will be able to receive an education. While the boy may receive instruction by learning verses from the Koran, he will also be required to beg in the streets for the Qu'ranic teacher. Girls and boys are both sometimes sent by their families to cities to work for a supposedly reputable business, but in reality the business is a front for prostitution or for gold mining interests. Girls are often forced into prostitution while boys are sent to work in wretched conditions in gold mines until they drop of exhaustion and overwork.

<http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2005/61585.htm>

<http://www.antislavery.org/homepage/antislavery/award/nigerbackground2004.htm>

[http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/programmes/from\\_our\\_own\\_correspondent/4250709.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/programmes/from_our_own_correspondent/4250709.stm)

<http://abcnews.go.com/International/story?id=813618&page=1>

[http://www.irinnews.org/S\\_report.asp?ReportID=46200&SelectRegion=West\\_Africa](http://www.irinnews.org/S_report.asp?ReportID=46200&SelectRegion=West_Africa)

## **Government**

Niger is divided into seven political regions and then further divided into districts. Each region is led by a prefect who is appointed by the national government.

President Mamadou Tandja was elected president through democratic elections in December of 1999. He serves as both the leader of the government and the head of state. Presidents serve terms of five years and may run for a second term. The President also serves as head of the armed forces.

Hama Amadou has been the Prime Minister since 1999. The Prime Minister is selected by the President from a list of three candidates. The list of candidates is generated through the majority. A 26 member cabinet also is appointed by the President.

The government is held responsible by the National Assembly, a 113 seat unicarmel legislative body, over which the President presides. All Assembly representatives are elected through a popular ballot. Usually the National Assembly will meet twice in a year. There are approximately twenty-four different political parties in Niger.

The judicial system is a mixture of French civil law and customary law. The Supreme Court is the highest court in Niger and decides constitutional matters.

<https://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/print/ng.html>

<http://www.nigerembassyusa.org/profile.html>

## **Economy**

Economists sometimes call Niger the poorest or second poorest nation in the world. Ninety percent of the population are involved in some form of agricultural work. Sixty-three percent of the population live below the poverty line. The GDP is \$11.28 billion.

Agricultural products include: cowpeas, cotton, peanuts, millet, sorghum, cassava (tapioca), rice; cattle, sheep, goats, camels, donkeys, horses, and poultry. Industries include: uranium mining, cement, brick, soap, textiles, food processing, chemicals, and slaughterhouses. In 2005 there was a severe lack of rainfall as well as a locust plague. Many animals and crops were affected. The government is seeking to help the agricultural crisis by encouraging dry cropping, the development of hydro-agricultural resources, and better land management. The government is also seeking to replace traditional subsistence farming techniques with more modern practices.

Niger receives foreign aid from many different sources including France, UNICEF, and the U.S. Mining is an important industry in Niger. In the past, uranium was a very valuable export. Currently, with the waning interest in uranium, gold has become a more important source of revenue.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Economy\\_of\\_Niger](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Economy_of_Niger) <https://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/print/ng.html>  
<http://www.nigerembassyusa.org/profile.html>

## **Literacy**

Literacy rates are lower among girls than among boys. About 25.8% of all boys can read and write while only 9.7% of the girls can.

The government provides free education for boys and girls, but many families can't afford school supplies or other necessities. Also, boys and girls are, according to the parents, needed at home to help with chores. Girls are more likely to be kept at home than boys because girls will be married at an early age. Boys from Islamic families may attend Qu'ranic schools.

Most of the classes are taught in French although the government has recently been trying to establish a new educational practice whereby classes will be taught in French and the other eight major languages used by Niger's population.

<http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2005/61585.htm>

## **Land/Geography**

Niger is surrounded by Libya, Nigeria, Chad, Benin, Burkina Faso, and Algeria. It does not have any coastline of its own but must depend on its neighbors for access to the sea.

The northern part of the country is largely desert while the southern part is suitable for farming. In fact, 60% of the land is part of the Saharan zone. The Tenere area has little vegetation although further south there are oases that have fauna and different types of trees. The south of Niger is in the Sahelian zone and contains more lush plant life. Two main sources of water are the Niger River and Lake Chad. The Kamdougou Yobé is another river that flows in parts of

Niger near the Nigerian border. In the north, there may be as little as 6.5 inches of rain while in the south there could be as much as 24 inches of rain during the rainy season.

Days are usually hot while nights get cooler. There are two main seasons—the dry season and the rainy season. Herders will move their livestock throughout Niger in search of fodder during times of little rainfall. Some bandits have been known to set up road blocks in rural, remote areas in certain parts of Niger. Travelers are urged to proceed cautiously when traveling in unfamiliar areas.

<http://www.nigerembassyusa.org/profile.html>

## History

The land of Niger has long been an important cultural and economic crossroads for several different ancient African empires. The Songhai, the Kanem-Bournou, the Gao, and the Hausa all controlled parts of Niger and the flow of trade at some point in history. European explorers began to explore, and the French colonized the area beginning in 1900. They gained control by 1922 over even the areas occupied by the Tuareg.

From 1922 until 1946, Niger was just a part of French West Africa. In 1958, it became part of the French community and then in 1960 received its full independence. The first government of Niger was led by *Hamani Diori*.

The constitution was adopted in August of 1960 and provided for a president and national assembly. In 1974, Diori's government was toppled by Seyni Kountché who remained in power until his death in 1987. Ali Saibou took control of the government and eventually acquiesced to demands for a more democratic government.

A transitional government took the place of Saibou's government in 1991, and in 1993 Mahamane Ousmane was elected president. Due to tensions between Ousmane and his prime minister, tensions rendered the new government relatively powerless. This gave Ibrahim Baré Maïnassara an opportunity to overthrow the government in 1996. Maïnassara's government appealed to Libya for help and was known for its human rights abuses.

In 1999, Daouda Malam Wanké staged a coup and took control of the government. He allowed the formation of a transitional government until democratic elections could be held again. In 1999, Tandja Mamadou was elected president and civilian rule returned to Niger.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History\\_of\\_Niger](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_Niger) <http://www.nigerembassyusa.org/profile.html>

## Christian History

The first Christians in the Niger Region were immigrants from other African empires where Islamic forces had driven them away. They came in the 600's but were swallowed by the dominant Islamic culture. Catholic missionaries arrived in 1931 and began working among the Hausa people. The Sudan Interior Mission began work in Niger in 1923 and has started many different humanitarian efforts including work among those with leprosy.

All information is collected from *World Christian Encyclopedia*.

## Religions

### Non-Christian

*Islam*—Ninety percent of Nigeriens are Muslim. Islamic missionaries and traders first arrived in Niger sometime during the 11<sup>th</sup> century. The Tijaniya brotherhood has a strong influence over the lives on many Muslim believers. Some Muslim believers practice a syncretic form of Islam mixed with ethnic religious beliefs.

*Africa Indigenous Religions*—Traditionalists usually practice a mixture of ancestor worship and animism. About 8% of the population are animists.

*Bahai*—According to the U.S. State Department, there is a small group of Bahai adherents in Niger

### Christian Cults and Sects

*Cherubim and Seraphim*—This is a schismatic church founded by Nigerians and Dahomeans around 1960. In 1995, there were 10 churches and a total of 1,000 congregants in all.

*Church of the Open Door*—This church was begun around 1965. In 1995, there was one congregation with 120 members.

*New Apostolic Church*—This church was started around 1980. Its headquarters are in Zurich Switzerland. In 1995, there were 50 congregations and a total of 3,478 congregants in all.

*Jehovah's Witnesses*—This group began work around 1960. In 1995, there were 7 congregations and a total of 500 congregants in all.

### *Catholic/ Orthodox Churches*

The Catholic Church began work in Niger in 1931. In 1995, there were 21 parishes and a total of 19,000 congregants in all. There are two main dioceses in Niamey and Maradi. The bishop of Niamey is Michel Christian Cartatéguy. The bishop of Maradi is Ambroise Ouédraogo.

### Protestant/ Evangelical/ Pentecostals



*Assembly of God*—This church was founded around 1985. In 1995, there were two churches and a total of 400 members in all.

*Baptist Church*—This church was founded by Southern Baptist Missionaries around 1973. In 1995, there was congregation with about 117 members.

*Celestial Church of Christ*—This church was begun around 1968. In 1995, there were 12 congregations and a total of 1,100 congregants in all.

*Cooperation Evangelique Mondiale*-There is no information available about this church group.

*Evangelical Churches of Niger*—This church was founded in 1923 by SIM. Ninety-eight percent of its members belong to the Hausa people group. Tuareg and Beriberi people also belong to this church. In 1995, there were 80 churches and a total of 5,500 members in all.

*Evangelical Baptist Missions*—This group began work in 1927. In 1995, there were nine congregations and a total of 1,000 members in all. Ninety percent of the congregants were members of the Yoruba people group. The remaining ten percent were from the Zerma people group.

*International Baptist Church*—This church was founded in 1966 by the Baptist International Missions group. In 1995, there was one congregation with 64 members.

*Isolated Radio Believers*—There are an estimated 10,000 people that may listen to God's word by radio who either can't attend an organized church because of the remoteness of their location or due to societal constraints.

*Methodist Church*—This church was started in by migrants from Togo and Benin. In 1995, there was one church with 100 members.

*Saharan Evangelical Mission*—This group began work around 1980. In 1995, there was one congregation with 17 members.

*Sahara Desert Mission*—There is no information about this mission group except that they work among the Tuareg people group.

*Southern Methodist Church*—There is no available information about this church group.

*World Wide Missions*—There is no available information about this church group.

## **People Groups**

All info unless otherwise noted is taken from [www.joshuaproject.net](http://www.joshuaproject.net)

### **00000**

Americans (1,300)

Americans are primarily Christian adherents.

**00000**

Anglo-Canadian (1,100)

Anglo-Canadians are predominantly Christian adherents.

**00000**

Arab, Algerian (200,000)

The Algerian Arabs living in Niger have migrated from Algeria over centuries of time. Some live in small towns while many others live in more rural settings. They speak a specialized dialect of Arabic. They are also completely devoted to Islam. Because of the importance of family ties in society and because of the horror that most families have over a Muslim leaving their faith, it is very difficult for anyone to commit openly to Christ. Muslims believe that anyone who leaves the faith will not go to heaven. If someone becomes a Christian believer, their family will ostracize them in order to preserve the honor of the family. There are no known Christian adherents or evangelicals. The Bible has been translated into their language, and the Jesus Film is accessible. Gospel recordings can also be found.

While some of the Algerian Arabs can trace their lineages back to ancient noble families in Arabia, most are from peasant lineages and work as farmers. They grow a variety of crops like wheat and peas but may also grow fruit if they can. They also are herders. Men work in the fields while women stay at home and take care of the children and other household chores. Boys are highly prized because they will carry on the honor of the family. Girls are put to work with their mothers. Boys may attend Quranic School where they can learn verses of the Koran and how to be a good Muslim, but they will also help their fathers.

**00000**

Arab, Levantine (7,800)

The Levantine Arabs are descended from Arabic peoples that originally migrated from Lebanon. They speak a dialect of Arabic called the Northern Levantine dialect. Some alternate names for this people group include: Lebanese Arab, Lebanese Shiite, or Lebanese Sunni. They are predominantly Sunni Muslims. Only 39.99% are Christian adherents. The number of evangelicals is unknown. One agency is committed to working with this people group, and a group of churches have been established. Portions of the Bible have been translated into their language, but the Jesus Film is inaccessible. The Four Spiritual Laws tract is also available. Gospel recordings can be found.

**00000**

Arab, Libyan (6,600)

The Libyan Arabs migrated across the border from Libya to Niger. They speak Arabic, but it is a specialized dialect from Libya. Some alternate names for this people group include: Kharga, Bedouin, Selima, Tripolitanian Arab, or Northwest Egyptian Bedawi Arab. The Libyan Arabs are predominantly Sunni Muslim. They are one of the least reached people groups. In fact, the

number Christian adherents and evangelicals is unknown. The Four Spiritual Laws tract has been translated into the Libyan Arabic dialect, but gospel recordings don't exist. The Jesus Film is also unavailable.

#### **00000**

Arab, Shuwa – Baggara (89,000)

The Shuwa-Baggara Arabs are descendants of Arabs who moved into North Africa centuries ago and married different African ethnic groups. While they have primarily retained Arab facial features and customs, they have also absorbed some of the physical characteristics and societal customs of the surrounding people groups. They speak a dialect of Arabic called Shuwa. Some alternate names for this people group include: Baggara, Chad Arab, Shuwa Arab, or Shuweihat.

The Shuwa-Baggara Arabs are predominantly Sunni Muslims. They are one of the least reached people groups. In fact, there are no known Christian adherents or evangelicals. The New Testament has been translated into their language, and the Jesus Film is accessible. Gospel recordings can also be found. No agency has committed to work with this people group.

The Shuwa-Baggara are usually a nomadic people because they move their cattle herds from place to place in search of good grazing land. They will establish villages where they will plant their crops but often they will leave their crops to grow while they migrate with their farm animals. The primary domicile of the Shuwa-Baggara people is a tent that is owned by the wife. She is responsible for making the tent and insuring that it is well cared for. She will take the milk produced from the cattle herd and sell it and other items to raise money for her household. Men work in the fields and care for the herds, but they usually don't stay with their families. Often they will even leave their families for a year at a time while they go in search of better grazing land. Polygamy is accepted. Usually when a man has more than one wife, each wife will live in separate places. One will travel with him while the other remains behind to monitor the growth of the crops.

<http://www.joshuaproject.net/peopctry.php?rop3=108972&rog3=NG>

#### **13594**

Bambara (28,000)

The Bambara people speak a language called Bamanankan and are part of the Malinke-Bambara people cluster. Some alternate names for this people group include: Kpeera and Noumou.

The Bambara people are predominantly Sunni Muslim, and they practice folk Islam. The use of fetishes and spirit worship is quite common. People go to sorcerers or witches for spiritual help if they experience misfortune. When boys and girls are circumcised, they join secret societies that teach them the practices of their society. Many of these practices are ritualistic and based upon the original animistic religious beliefs of the ancestors of the Bambara people. The Bambara highly value the traditions and customs of their family and social groups. It is very difficult for individuals to believe in Christ against the strong pressure of their families and friends. Only 4% of the population are Christian adherents, and 3.5% are evangelicals. The complete Bible has been translated, and the Jesus Film is available. Gospel recordings can also be heard.

The Bambara men have complete control over the women. Marriages are arranged by the families of the bride, and she and her children are considered the property of the husband. Marriages contracts are made for the mutual advancement of the families and the community—not the choice of the bride. Men may take up to four wives. Most of the time extended families will live together in a single compound. It is very important for a man to have multiple wives as having wives is seen as a sign of prosperity. Even elderly women will be expected to remarry following the demise of their husband. Female circumcision was routinely practiced until recently.

The Bambara are farmers and hunters. Their life and customs are heavily influenced by their economic choice of livelihood. While the Bambara have different types of livestock, they will leave their herding to the Fulani so that they can focus on their crops.

The society of the Bambara is stratified into three major groups—the Komo, the Kore and the Ntomo. The Komo are the elders. Each group has different types of head dresses that signify their level and importance. These head dresses are made by talented craftsmen. Statues and other important religious objects are also hand carved by the artisans of the Bambara.

Most Bambara villages could have up to 600 inhabitants. Each household is called a gwa and is made up of large extended families. Sometimes as many as sixty people can live in one household. The members all usually engage in the same type of trade—either farmers or artisans.

#### **00000**

Bariba, Bargu (72,000)

The Bariba people speak a language called Baatonum and are part of the Gur people cluster. Some alternate names for this people group include: Baatumbu, Bargu, Batonu, Nikki, and Burku.

The Bariba people practice a form of folk Islam. They have mixed traditional ethnic religious beliefs about the spirit world with the basic tenets of Islam. The number of Christian adherents and evangelicals is unknown. Multiple agencies are involved in trying to reach this people group, and a group of churches has been established. The complete Bible has been translated into their language, and the Jesus Film has been reproduced. Gospel recordings can be found.

While the oral tradition of the Bariba claims that the people group descended from a famous Persian warrior named Kisra, scholars think that they actually have Sudanese and Voltaic roots. Their society is patrilineal. Women will generally work in the fields and raise the children. The Bariba live in walled villages, but sometimes they will also build a smaller house close to their herds. They primarily raise yams, sorghum, millet, corn, rice, peanuts and beans.

From *The Peoples of Africa* by James Olson

#### **00000**

British (400)

The British living in Niger are predominantly Christian adherents.

### **13596**

Buduma (4,800)

The Buduma people can be found throughout Nigeria, Niger, Chad, and Cameroon. They live on the islands in Lake Chad which is on the border of all four countries. Lake Chad is shrinking every year as rainfall lessens and water use increases. They speak a language called Buduma and are part of the Chadic people cluster. Some alternate names for this people group include: Boudouma or Yedina.

The Buduma people are predominantly Muslim. They are one of the least reached people groups. One percent of the people are Christian adherents, and only one percent of the population are evangelicals. One agency is committed to working with this people group. No church has been established, but there are scattered believers. There is currently no Bible translation available to the Buduma people. The Jesus Film is also inaccessible. Gospel recordings can be found.

Many years ago the Buduma people were infamous raiders to the great dismay of their victims. Today they are much more peaceful and sedate. They are mainly fishermen, but they also raise livestock. In fact, most of their diet consists of fish and milk with some types of cereals sometimes added for more nutrition. Because their villages are located on islands in Lake Chad, they need to be expert boatmen as well as good swimmers.

The Buduma people don't believe in marrying outside of their own ethnic group usually. Sometimes a man may marry a girl that is outside of his clan, but he will never bring her to his village.

<http://www.joshuaproject.net/peopctry.php?rop3=101697&rog3=CD>

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Buduma>

### **43750**

Deaf (unknown)

The Deaf population of Niger use French Sign Language. They are predominantly Muslims. The number of Christian adherents and evangelicals is unknown.

### **13598**

Dendi (77,000)

The Dendi people live close to the borders of Benin and Burkina Faso. They speak a language called Dendi and are part of the Songhai people cluster. An alternate name for this people group is Dandawa.

The Dendi people, like most Songhai, are syncretic Muslims. They still practice some forms of ancestor worship and animism. There are no known Christian adherents or evangelicals among the Dendi. They are one of the least reached people groups. In fact, there are currently no

missions agencies that are committed to working with this people group. The New Testament has been translated into their language, and the Jesus film is accessible. Gospel recordings can be heard, and radio broadcasts occur.

While Dendi in other areas may be more involved in commercial activities, most of the Dendi in Niger are farmers and herders. Men will work in the fields to grow sustenance for their families while women keep garden plots and see to household duties. Trading is a popular past time, and regular market days are held.

Most men will marry more than one wife. The first wife has the most prestige and may exert influence over the other wives to some extent. Each wife will live in a different domicile with her children. Family ties are extremely important to the Dendi. Household consist of different families from the same lineage living closely together.

### **00000**

French (7,200)

The French in Niger are predominantly Christian adherents.

*Fulani* The following three groups belong to the Fulani people group which is the largest people group in West Africa. While each of the sub-branches may have some small differences, the following description will cover most of the general cultural facts about the Fulani. Each group seems to have several alternate names which often overlap for each sub-group.

There are two main groups within the society of the Fulani—the Toroobe who are aristocratic and the Bororo which are herders and farmers. The Toroobe often live in towns and work diligently to preserve Islamic culture and religion. They may also work in a variety of business or government positions. In fact, they highly value education. The Bororos' lives are centered around the movement of their cattle herds. Settlements will be established where females and the elderly will stay while the men and boys will move with the cattle to find good grazing land. Those that remain will build gardens. Ninety-two percent of the most Fulani peoples will have this semi-settled village. Men that travel with the cattle may range for miles to find good pasture for their hungry herds but they will always know exactly which cattle belongs to them because of the way they breed their animals. Men are very careful to keep away from other groups' herds that have been sick.

The Fulani highly value their traditional moral values such as honesty and courage. People are expected to be restrained or undemonstrative in public. Families usually live in extended groups. Men herd the animals, and women do the milking and other household chores. The women will take the milk and sell it. Milk and milk products along with millet form the major staples of the Fulani diet. Meat is usually only eaten at festivals or special ceremonies.

<http://www.gamji.com/fulani3.htm> <http://www.wagateway.org/NigerianSokoto.htm>

[http://www.global12project.com/2004/profiles/p\\_code4/505.html](http://www.global12project.com/2004/profiles/p_code4/505.html)

<http://www.joshuaproject.net/peopctry.php?rop3=110780&rog3=NG>

### **13608**

Sokoto Fulani (241,000)

The Sokoto Fulani live in the area around Dogondoutchi and to the Chadian border. They speak a language called Central-Eastern Niger Fulfulde and are part of the Fulani/ Fulbe people cluster. An alternate name for this people group is Wodaabe.

The Sokoto Fulani are predominantly Muslim. Only .06% are Christian adherents, and .04% are evangelicals. There are about four different mission groups working to reach this people group, and there is one known church. Progress is slow because most of the Fulani are devoutly Muslim. They are often ostracized if they convert to Christianity. There is an unbound Bible and a video of God's Story is also available. The Jesus Film is not available, and gospel recordings aren't accessible. The Sokoto Fulani are one of the least reached people groups.

### **13613**

Fulani, Western (542,000)

The Western Fulani live in the area around Niamey, the capital city of Niger. They speak a language called Western Niger Fulfulde and are part of the Fulani, Fulbe people cluster. Some alternate names for this people group include: Bororo, Gorgaabe, Peul, Dalloi, and Mbororo.

The Western Fulani are predominantly Sunni Muslims. Their religious ideology is actually a syncretic form of Islam mixed heavily with traditional animistic beliefs. At major events, animals are sacrificed. Only .01% of the people are Christian adherents, and only .01% of the population are evangelicals. Multiple agencies are involved in trying to reach this people group, but no church has been established. There are some scattered believers. Portions of the Bible have been translated, and the Jesus Film is accessible. Gospel recordings can be found.

### **13595**

Fulbe-Mbororo (482,000)

The Fulbe-Mbororo live close to the border between Nigeria and Niger. Two major towns in their territory are Maradi and Zinder. They speak a language called Nigerian Fulfulde and are part of the Fulani/ Fulbe people cluster. Some alternate names for this people group include: Bororo, Igboro Fulani, Katsina-Bororo, Kano, or Peul.

The Fulbe-Mbororo are predominantly Muslim. The number of Christian adherents is unknown, but .07% of the population are evangelical believers. Multiple agencies are currently working to reach this people group, and one church has been established. Portions of the Bible have been translated, and the Jesus Film is available. Gospel recordings and radio broadcasts can be heard too.

### **13599**

Gurma, Manchoma (36,000)

The Gurma people live near the border of Burkina Faso. They speak a language called Gourmancema and are part of the Gur people cluster. Some alternate names for this people

group include: Bigulimanceba, Gourmanc, Gourma, Gourmancheba, Gourmantche, Migulimancema, and Gulmachema.

The Gurma are predominantly animists. In fact, only five percent of the population are Christian adherents, and 1.2% are evangelicals. One agency is on-site currently working with this people group, and a group of churches have been established. The New Testament has been translated into their language, and the Jesus Film is accessible. Gospel recordings and radio broadcasts can also be found.

The Gurma are herders and farmers. Men work the fields, and women raise the children. The Gurma like to have other people work for them. In fact, having other people do the work in the fields is considered a mark of success. The Gurma society has very strict rules. People must not show fear.

<http://www.mnsu.edu/emuseum/cultural/oldworld/africa/gurmaculture.html>

### **13600**

**Hausa** The Hausa are originally from Nigeria. In fact, they are the largest group in Africa. They speak a language called Hausa. The Hausa language is a major trade language in West Africa, and many different people groups have adopted not only the Hausa language but also many of the Hausa customs and beliefs. Some alternate names for this people group include: Adarawa, Arawa, Arewa, Fellata, Hausa Fulani, Hausa Ajami, Maguzawa, Hausawa, Soudie, Kurfei, or Tazarawa. Joshua Project subdivides the Hausa that live in Niger into two subgroups. General information is listed here, but specific information for each sub-group is listed below. People groups only lists the Hausa as one large ethnic group in Niger.

The Hausa are 99.9% Muslim. About 150 years ago, Muslim missionaries came to Hausaland and succeeded in converting the Hausa to Islam. They are considered one of the least reached people groups. The Bible has been translated into the Hausa language, and the Jesus Film is accessible. Gospel recordings and radio broadcasts can also be found. Hausas that do convert to Christianity face severe persecution in the form of shunning and betrayal by non-Christian family members. Since a Hausa's identity is tied to his family and clan, the emotional and physical persecution is extremely hard on new believers.

Oral legends among the Hausa state that the people are descended from a man called Bayajida who killed a snake that threatened the village thereby winning the hand of the queen. The sons of Bayajida founded Hausaland. The Hausa once ruled themselves but were later conquered by many different ethnic groups, the last being the Fulani.

The Hausa may be involved in many different types of work. Many in rural areas are farmers who grow traditional crops like millet or rice while others are traders or professionals. Markets are very important gathering places for men to come and discuss issues facing the village. Women will be expected to make different types of items to be sold at the market.

Men may marry more than one wife, and girls are promised in marriage by age 12 to 15. Women are expected to care for the children and attend to household duties. Divorce is a societal problem, but many women will remarry because society expects them to do so. Extended



families are usually very influential in rural areas. Males and females will both be expected to listen to their elders.

<http://www.global12project.com/2004/profiles/clusters/8035.html>

<http://www.sim.org/pg.asp?pgID=2&fun=1>

<http://www.joshuaproject.net/peopctry.php?rop3=103733&rog3=UV>

Hausa, Adarawa (4.439,000)

The Adarawa Hausa live between Niamey and Maradi on the border between Niger and Nigeria. Only .10% of the population are Christian adherents, and only .05% are evangelicals.

Hausa, Mauri (452,000)

The number of Christian adherents and evangelicals among this people group are unknown or unavailable.

### **39312**

Iberogen, Igdalen (33,000)

The Iberogen live between Tahoua, Agadez, and Ingall. They speak a language called Tagdal and are part of the Songhai people cluster.

The Iberogen and Igdalen peoples are predominantly Muslim. There are no known Christian adherents or evangelicals in their villages. They are one of the least reached people groups. No active church planting or evangelistic efforts have occurred for the last two years. The Bible has not been translated into their language, and the Jesus Film is unavailable. Gospel recordings do not exist.

Some linguistic experts from SIL went to the villages of the Iberogen and the Igdalen and actually determined that some of the peoples there consider this ethnic group to actually be two separate peoples. Some legends say that the Igdalen were the former masters of the Iberogen but there is no clear record of this. In fact, the Iberogen have an aristocratic class in their society. Most of the villages are small, and there is a headman that oversees the major decisions for the village. Some of the Igdalen have settled around watering holes and are business people while others still maintain herds. By and large, most of the Iberogen are engaged in crop production. The Iberogen produce very special mats that are bought by many different migrating nomadic peoples and are highly prized. Milk from the cattle is also sold at the local market. Most of the children in the village do not attend public school so they only speak Tagdal. Only recently have some children been encouraged to attend schools. Women are apparently strictly secluded. There were no women on the research team so the team was never allowed to even see a woman. This would be normal in a strict Muslim society. The Iberogen are sometimes seen as the holders of Islam for the Tuareg even though they are not ethnically related. In fact, Iberogen men and women would not intermarry with a Tuareg.

<http://www.sil.org/silesr/1999/008/nsonghay.html#2.2>

### **13602**

Kanembu (17,000)

The Kanembu people are thought to be the offspring of a once might people who ruled the Kanem-Borno Empire which was found around Lake Chad. Today the Kanembu people can be found in Chad, Niger, and Nigeria. They speak a language called Kanembu and are part of the Kanuri-Saharan people cluster. Two alternate names for this people group include: Kanembou and Karkawu.

The Kanembu people are predominantly Sunni Muslims. Only one percent of the population are Christian adherents, and one percent of the population are evangelicals. They are considered to be one of the least reached people groups. Multiple agencies are involved in trying to reach the Kanembu for Christ. The Bible has not been translated into their language, and the Jesus Film is inaccessible. Gospel recordings can be found.

Most of the Kanembu people are farmers but they may also have livestock herds as well. Living on Lake Chad many will also be involved in the collecting of natron, a local mineral. There is usually a headman of each village that handles the secular affairs of the village but there will also be a Muslim religious man to direct the Islamic activities. If children go to school, they will attend a Qu'ranic school under a Muslim teacher.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kanembu\\_people](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kanembu_people)  
[http://www.global12project.com/2004/profiles/p\\_code2/1371.html](http://www.global12project.com/2004/profiles/p_code2/1371.html)

**Kanuri** The ancestors of the Kanuri people were the rulers of the Borno Empire. Some legends also say that the Manga people originated from Yemen and then were later conquered by the Kanuri and became one of the subgroups. In Niger, there are four Kanuri subgroups listed by Joshua Project. People groups just lists two subgroups.

Many of the Kanuri are farmers who also may herd animals to supplement their food supply. Horses are a sign of wealth and honor for Kanuri men. Those living in the cities will also engage in many different trades or even enter politics. Children are usually kept at home and taught their traditional work from their parents. Boys will attend Qu'ranic schools at the mosque.

Some young men will be adopted by an older man who is the head of a household. They will work for him while teens and eventually he will help them get married by providing the money for their bride or sometimes the bride herself. As in many Muslim cultures, men may marry up to four wives. Young men hope that their first wife will be a virgin but many times they marry those that have been married previously because the bridal dowry is much less expensive. Divorce is quite common among the Kanuri. The Kanuri are predominantly Sunni Muslims. About 1,000 years ago, their people group first accepted Islamic customs and beliefs, and they are resistant to people coming to "convert" them. They are happy to receive visitors who are interested in their language and customs.

<http://archives.tconline.org/news/lastfrontier/archive/Manga.html>  
<http://www.sim.org/PG.asp?pgID=86&fun=1>

**00000**

Kanuri, Bilma (22,000)

The Bilma Kanuri live in the Northeastern part of Niger in the Kawar Region. They speak a language called Bilma Kanuri and are part of the Kanuri-Saharan people cluster. The town of Bilma is known for its gardens and salt production.

The Bilma Kanuri are predominantly Sunni Muslim. They are one of the least reached people groups. The number of Christian adherents and evangelicals are unknown. There are no known missions groups concurrently working with this people group. There are no ministry resources available either.

**13603**

Kanuri, Manga (428,000)

The Manga Kanuri live on the border between Nigeria, Chad, and Niger. They speak a language called Manga Kanuri and are part of the Kanuri-Saharan people cluster.

The Manga Kanuri are predominantly Sunni Muslims. About 1,000 years ago, their people group first accepted Islamic customs and beliefs, and they are resistant to people coming to “convert” them. They are happy to receive visitors who are interested in their language and customs. Only .01% of the people are Christian adherents and evangelicals. Due to the hard work of translators, portions of the scripture have been translated into the Manga Kanuri language. Multiple agencies are working among this people group. There has been no church established yet. The Jesus Film is unavailable, but gospel recordings exist.

**00000**

Kanuri, Tumari (48,000)

The Tumari Kanuri speak both Hausa and their primary dialect of Tumari Kanuri. They are part of the Kanuri-Saharan people cluster. They are predominantly Muslim. Only .01% of the people are Christian and adherents, and .01% are evangelicals. There are currently no mission agencies working with this people group. There are no ministry tools available. They are one of the least reached people groups.

**13614**

Kanuri, Yerwa (120,000)

The Yerwa Kanuri live in the eastern part of Niger on the border between Niger, Nigeria, and Chad. They speak a language called Central Kanuri and are part of the Kanuri-Saharan people cluster. They are predominantly Sunni Muslim. There are no known believers in this people group, but one agency is committed to working with them. The Jesus Film is available, and the New Testament has been translated. Gospel recordings can be found, and radio broadcasts can be heard.

**00000**

Kawar (65,000)

The Kawar people are a sub-group of the Hausa people cluster. They speak Hausa and are predominantly Muslim. In fact, there are no known believers. There is no record of a missions group working with this people group.

### **13605**

Maure, Moor (206,000)

The Maure people are part of the Hassaniya Arab people cluster. They can be found in Cote d'Ivoire, France, Gambia, Mauritania, Morocco, Niger, Senegal, and the Western Sahara. They speak a language called Hassaniyya. Some alternate names for this people group include: Bidan, Bidan Maure, Black Moor, Haratine, Hassaniya, or White Moor.

The Maure people are predominantly Muslim. The Qadiri and the Tajani are influential in clan and religious life. The number of Christian adherents is unknown. No agency is currently trying to evangelize the Maure people. The Jesus Film has been produced in their language, and gospel recordings exist. No Bible translation is available. Because of their remoteness, the Maure people probably don't have much contact with gospel.

The Maure people have a very strict caste system that is based upon the ancestry of the father. While slavery is technically illegal according to the constitution, some non-identified forms still exist in practice among these nomadic peoples. Because of the history of violence, there are highly evolved forms of politically correct behavior when different clans meet in the desert. Simple hand gestures can indicate a person's willingness to listen to a comment.

The Black Maure people are the lower social classes of the group of people that speak Hassaniyya. They are descendents of the Bani Hassan people who invaded the area in the fifteenth century. In the past, they have been a very nomadic people. Over the last several centuries, the Black Maure people were attacked and raided by different people groups so they have developed very specialized ways of greeting and interacting with peoples from other ethnic groups.

The White Maure people are closely related to the Black Maure people but are thought to be superior because they are considered to be the upper two social classes made of warriors and religious leaders. The warriors protect the religious leaders and the religious leaders return the favor by teaching the children the Qur'an and social traditions. The religious leaders also serve the medical needs of the warriors.

### **13606**

Mossi, Moore (13,000)

The Mossi speak a language called Moore and are part of the Gur people cluster. They live in Benin, Cote D'Ivoire, France, Ghana, Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger, Senegal, and Togo. Some alternate names for this people group include: Moose or Moshi.

The Mossi in Niger predominantly practice ethnic religions. Eight percent of the population are Christian adherents while one percent of the people are evangelicals. There are multiple agencies

involved in missions work with the Mossi, and there is a reproducing church movement. The complete Bible has been translated, and the Jesus Film is available. Gospel recordings can also be found. Radio broadcasts can also be heard.

The Mossi are a patrilineal society. The oldest living male of a family group is called the Vieu. All of the males under his authority will defer to his ultimate judgment. While much discussion from all family members may occur when there are major decisions to be made, the Vieu still retains the ultimate authority.

The Mossi are primarily farmers. Men will govern the family and own the fields, but the wives will work the fields. Children will help their mothers watch the younger children and till the fields. Each wife is not only responsible for caring for her husband's fields but also for working another field to provide food for herself and her children.

The Mossi live in large family compounds. The family decides what is best for the individual. It is very difficult for an individual to make a decision that the Vieu and the family would disapprove of. Parents arrange the marriages for the children—sometimes even before the child is born. Grooms will have to perform services for the bride's family and also give different types of presents to them. Once the bride lives with the groom, she becomes a part of his family. Her children belong to his family, and if the husband dies, she will most likely marry a brother of the original husband. Men may marry more than one wife.

<http://www.byhisgrace.cc/mossi/Mossi.htm>

### **13609**

Songhai-Koryaboro (735,000)

The Songhai—Koryaboro live along the Niger River throughout Niger but are predominantly located near the Burkina Faso and Mali borders. They speak a language called Koyraboro Senni Songhay and are part of the Songhai people cluster.

The Songhai are a very ancient people group. In fact, one of the great Malian empires was built by the Songhai ethnic group. They are also staunchly Muslim having first converted in the early part of the eleventh century, but they do practice a form of syncretic Islam that still permits sorcerers and encourages sacrifices to appease the spirits. Dances and costumes are used in ritualistic ceremonies to try to reach the spirit world.

Most Songhai men are farmers but they will also have cattle that are tended by the Fulani. Women are not allowed to go to funerals or to work in the fields with men. Instead they are expected to marry and raise the children. Women may plant gardens to supplement the family's food supply.

Girl's marriages will be arranged by their father's families, and they will be required to accept their bridegroom. Fathers will only arrange marriages to members from their own lineage. They will usually not permit grooms from other ethnic groups. Divorce is high among the Songhai. When divorce or death of a spouse occurs, the woman is sent back to her father's family. Her children are the property of the husband or his family. Even young children under the age of seven that may be allowed to go with her initially will later be returned to the father's family.

Three out of five children will die before their fifth birthday due to malnutrition or disease. Men may marry more than once (according to Islamic tradition) but few can afford to do so because a bride price may be quite expensive. Men that do marry a second wife will also be expected to set her up in a separate dwelling. No girl or woman wishes to be a second wife.

People usually live in extended family units. Even if men need to go and search for other work after the planting season, they still are the ultimate authority in their households. Children are expected to revere their elders and follow their instructions obediently.

<http://www.byhisgrace.cc/songhai/>

<http://www.joshuaproject.net/peopctry.php?rop3=210078&rog3=UV>

## **00000**

Soninke (unknown)

The Soninke people are predominantly Muslim. They were first converted by the Almoravids in the eleventh century. Those Soninke that aren't Muslim usually follow traditional indigenous religious practices. All community life centers around the family and the village. The Soninke people are very concerned about appeasing the spirits. They believe that each soul comes to the child when the child is named on the eighth day and leave the body each night as the child sleeps. People are concerned that witches might seize the soul of the child. They also believe that the soul will wander around the earth after death until it reunites with the body. They will ask the gessere, the village priest, to help them make the spirits happy. They watch anxiously for the fox and hyena who predict when the New Year should begin. There are very few believers and no established church because the persecution from the Muslims adherents is so intense. Multiple agencies are working with this people group, yet they are still considered to be one of the least reached people groups. Portions of the Bible have been translated, and the Jesus Film is available. Gospel recordings can also be found.

The Soninke have a very strict social structure. Men of the clergy receive training in Arabic. Most of the other men are traders or farmers. Many men today actually leave the village for months and sometimes even years at a time in order to work as migrant laborers in neighboring areas.

Polygamy is acceptable among the Muslims, but it is not as widely practiced today because of economic reasons. The prospective groom must pay a bride price that usually consists of clothing that the bride can use for her trousseau and also a payment to the family of the bride. Men have the supreme authority in the household, and elders are looked to for wisdom and advice. Today, though, because many of the men are traveling for months at a time, women are beginning to have a slightly stronger power among the Soninke. Muslim law allows daughters to inherit a small portion from their father's estate.

## **00000**

Tamanrasset Arabic (13,000)

The Tamanrasset Arabs live in Agadez and speak a form of Algerian Saharan Arabic. They are part of the Tuareg people cluster. They are one of the least reached people groups.

They are predominantly Sunni Muslims. The number of Christian adherents and evangelicals is unknown. Currently no mission agencies are working with this people group in Niger. The Bible has been translated, but it is in an unbound form. Gospel recordings exist.

#### **00000**

Tasawaq (12,000)

The Tasawaq people are a subgroup of the Songhai people cluster. They live in Ingal and Teguidda-n-Tessoumt in central Niger. They are one of the least reached people groups. The Tasawaq are predominantly Sunni Muslims. The number of Christian adherents and evangelicals is not known at this time. No mission agency is working with this people group at this time. Also, there are no ministry tools available.

**Tuareg** The Tuareg world has changed mightily over the last thirty years. Until the early 1970's most Tuareg followed the nomadic lifestyle of their ancestors. Familial connections were everything in the traveler's world where one wrong misstep in the harsh climate of the Sahara could mean instant death. A huge drought in the early 1970's, however, ended the nomadic lifestyle for many Tuareg. As animals began to die because of the lack of water and food, many of the Tuareg were forced to move to urban areas to merely be able to survive. Drawn by the conveniences of the modern cities as well as the stability of a wage-paying job, many Tuareg chose to remain in the cities long after the end of the drought. The Tuareg, who do continue their nomadic lifestyle, live in tents and move from place to place in search of good grazing for their livestock. Most eat some goat meat, but mainly depend on different types of cereals, dates, and milk for the mainstays of their diet.

The Tuareg in Niger have many different social classes. According to some news sources, they also own slaves. (please see Society/ Culture section for further information) The upper classes leave the domestic work and herding to the slave classes. Women have a slightly higher standing in Tuareg society. Women are not veiled, but rather they put a piece of cloth in front of their mouths. Some women have the time to write poetry or songs. They perform these during a ceremony called the ahal. Men wear a veil. They respect women who can recite poetry.  
From *Muslim Peoples* by Weekes

#### **13592**

Air Tuareg (234,000)

The Air Tuareg are one of the many Tuareg groups that roam through Niger and the Sahara desert. They speak a language called Tayart Tamajeq. They are one of the least reached people groups. They are predominantly Sunni Muslims. The number of Christian adherents and evangelicals is unknown. Multiple agencies are involved in trying to reach this people group, and there is one known church. The New Testament has been translated, but the Jesus Film is unavailable. Gospel recordings and radio broadcasts can be heard.

#### **00000**

Arabized Tuareg (289,000)

The Arabized Tuareg speak a form of Algerian Arabic. They are one of the least reached people groups. They are predominantly Sunni Muslims. One percent of the people are Christian adherents, and one percent of the people are evangelicals. One agency is on-site working with this people group. There is no organized church yet. The Bible has been translated into their language, and the Jesus Film has been reproduced too. Gospel recordings also exist.

### **13593**

Asben Tuareg (120,000)

The Asben Tuareg speak Tayart Tamajeq. They are one of the least reached people groups. They are predominantly Sunni Muslims. One percent of the people are Christian adherents, and one percent of the people are evangelicals. One agency is on-site working with this people group. There is one known church. The New Testament has been translated, and the Jesus Film is accessible. Radio broadcasts and gospel recordings can also be heard.

### **13601**

Hoggar Tuareg (30,000)

The Hoggar Tuareg speak Tahaggart Tamahaq. They are one of the least reached people groups. They are predominantly Sunni Muslims. The number of Christian adherents is unknown. No mission agency is working with this people group. Portions of the Bible have been translated. No other ministry tools currently exist.

### **00000**

Tahoua Tuareg (663,000)

The Tahoua Tuareg speak Tawallammat Tamajaq. They are one of the least reached people groups. They are predominantly Sunni Muslims. The number of Christian adherents is unknown. There are multiple agencies committed to working with this people group. There is one known church. Portions of the Bible have been translated. The Jesus Film is available, and gospel recordings can be heard.

### **13597**

Tuba, Daza (45,000)

The Daza Tuba live in Eastern Niger and speak a language called Dazaga. They belong to the Kanuri-Saharan people cluster. Some alternate names for this people group include: Dasa and Dazaga.

The Daza Tuba are predominantly Muslims. The number of Christian adherents is currently unknown. No mission agency is currently on site, but there is one known church. The Bible has not been translated, but the Jesus Film is accessible. Gospel recordings also exist.

The Daza Tuba have been herders, but their lifestyle is changing as the Sahara expands its borders. Millet and tea are main staples of the Daza Tuba diet. Milk and other vegetables are eaten when they are available.



Like many Muslim cultures, men may marry more than one wife when they can afford to do so. Women and men may have some say in whom they marry. Many marriages end in divorce.

## **00000**

Tuba, Teda (48,000)

The Teda Tuba live in Seguedine, Bilma, and Termit-Kaoboul. They speak a language called Tedaga and are part of the Kanuri-Saharan people cluster. They are one of the least reached people groups.

The Teda Tuba are predominantly Muslims. Some practice a mixture of animism and Islam while others are devout Muslims. There are no known Christian adherents or evangelicals. No mission agency is currently committed to working with this people group. The Bible has not been translated into their language, and the Jesus Film is inaccessible. Gospel recordings exist.

The Teda Tuba are a very fierce, warlike people group. In the past, they were greatly feared by other ethnic groups because of their raiding techniques. This nomadic group herds many different types of livestock including camels, donkeys, and goats. Women are in charge of the goats while the men will take care of the other types of animals. Dates and milk form a large part of the Teda Tuba diet.

The Teda Tuba society is patrilineal and has six social stratas. The slaves form the lowest strata and are required to do any agricultural work. Men may marry more than once if they can afford to do so.

## **13615**

Yoruba (43,000)

The Yoruba people are probably the second largest people group in West Africa today. They may be found living primarily in Nigeria but also inhabit Togo, Benin, Niger, Burkina Faso, and many other countries. In Niger, they are predominantly Sunni Muslims. Twenty-nine percent of the population are Christian adherents while 7.5% are evangelicals. The complete Bible has been translated into the Yoruba language and the Jesus Film is accessible. Gospel recordings and radio broadcasts can be heard.

The Yoruba people were probably originally a Sudanic people who migrated into Nigeria. Their first major city was called Ife-Ife. From the outset, the Yoruba people were more comfortable as city dwellers. While many farmed for a living, they still living in larger towns. Trading was also important for the Yoruba. They fought with the Fulani and certain areas came under Fulani control. At this time, many Yoruba began to convert to Islam. Today many of the Yoruba are either Islamic or Christian adherents. Many still practice some form of traditional beliefs as well. Converting to Islam or Christianity is often seen as a way of advancing economically. Islam is often more popular with some Yoruba because men may practice polygamy. While Islamic converts follow Muslim beliefs, the restrictions for Yoruba women are less enforced than other places in West Africa. From *Muslim Peoples* by Weekes

## **00000**

Zaghawa (65,000)

The Zaghawa people call themselves the Beri people. They speak a language called Zaghawa and are part of the Kanuri-Saharan people cluster. Some alternate names for this people group include: Awlad Mana, Zeghawa, Soghaua, and Zoghaua.

The Zaghawa are predominantly Sunni Muslims. In fact, there are no known Christian adherents or evangelicals. Some may still practice ethnic religions. In fact, people are very afraid of seeing the “evil eye.” Babies are protected from evil by covering their faces. Most towns and villages have a mosque and Muslim teachers. There is no mission agency commitment to this people group. The Bible has not been translated into their language, and the Jesus Film is unavailable. Gospel recordings exist.

Most people are farmers and herders. Women may go on long treks into the bush looking for the proper herbs. Some of the men become traders and travel for long distances in order to find items that are not readily available in their own area.

<http://www.global12project.com/2004/profiles/clusters/8029.html>

## **13616**

Zerma (4,458,000)

The Zerma people are a sub-group of the larger Songhai population. They speak a language called Zarma. Some alternate names for this people group include: Djarma, Zabarmawa, Zarma, Dyerma, and Zaberma.

The Zerma people are Sunni Muslims. They actually practice a syncretic form of Islam that is heavily reliant on the belief in sorcery and the spirit realm. Only .05% of the population are Christian adherents, and .02% of the people are evangelicals. There are organizations working with this people group in Niger. There is one known church. The complete Bible has been translated into the Zerma language, and the Jesus Film is also accessible. Gospel recordings and radio broadcasts can also be heard. The Zerma people are one of the least reached people groups.

Most of the Zerma people are subsistence farmers who grow traditional crops like millet and guinea corn. Men will work in the fields and will also take care of the livestock while wives will work to take care of household chores and small gardens near the house. Men may also choose to travel to coastal areas to try to find wage earning jobs to supplement the family income. Men may marry more than once if they are able to financially afford another wife. Each wife usually has her own house for herself and her children.

<http://www.zermateam.org/zermaprofile.htm>

### **Missiological Implications**

1. Evangelical Christians and Churches should seize the opportunities to evangelize the many people groups that are unreached in Niger Republic (*Operation World* indicates over 14 unreached groups live in the country).

2. Evangelical Christians and Churches should act on the freedom to evangelize and the openness of many Moslems to the Gospel.
3. Evangelical Christians and Churches should engage in efforts to evangelize and start churches among the least reached peoples—The Tuareg, The Zarma, the Kanui, the Songhai, the Tubu, and the Fulbe (Fulani) peoples
4. Evangelical Christians and Churches should seek to help in leadership training among the believers and congregations in Niger.
5. Evangelical Christians and Churches should seek to train people in Niger for Bible Storying as a method of proclamation.
6. Evangelical Christians and Churches should seize the opportunities to fill vast humanitarian needs in Niger.
7. Evangelical Christians and Churches should lead people in Niger and those who enter the country in methods of evangelizing Muslims and followers of traditional religions.
8. Evangelical Christians and Churches should hold Niger and its peoples up in prayer and seek out believers to share in the evangelism and church starting needs of the nation.

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