

MISSIONARY ATLAS PROJECT

AFRICA

Benin

Benin Snapshots Section

Country Name: Republic of Benin

Country Founded in: August 1, 1960

Population: 8,078,314

Government Type: (national, regional and local) republic

Geography/location in the world: Benin is located on the West coast of Africa between Togo and Nigeria. Burkina Faso lies directly north of Benin.

Number of people groups: 69

Picture of flag:



Religion Snapshot

Major Religion and % of population:

Christian 42.8% (Catholic 27.1%, Celestial 5%, Methodist 3.2%, other Protestant 2.2%, other 5.3%)

All religions and % for each:

24.4% Muslim, 17.3 %

Vodun, 6%

Other traditional religions, 1.9% other religions,
and 6.5% no religious affiliation

Government interaction with religion: The democratic government, which was established in 1991, has been generally tolerant of all religions. Churches are free to operate private schools and missionaries are allowed to work in the country. All churches do need to register with the Ministry of the Interior. In rural areas, local headmen of different ethnic groups may attempt to exert strong social pressure against Christian adherents or missionaries. There was one case where a local leader tried to claim that a certain lake could not be used by Christian adherents,

but the government responded by saying that all religious groups should be allowed equal access to the lake. <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2006/71286.htm>

All information unless otherwise noted is gathered from <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/bn.html>

Benin Country Profile

Basic Facts

Country Name

Republic of Benin

Demographics

The population of Benin is 8,078,314.

Children under the age of fourteen make up 43.9% of the population. In that age group, there are 1,788,248 males and 1,754,940 females. People between the ages of fifteen and sixty-four make up 53.7% of the population. There are 2,138,649 males and 2,203,291 females in this age group.

The final age group consists of people who are over the age of sixty-five. This age group accounts for 2.4% of the population. There are 77,844 males and 115,342 females in this age group. The median age for males is 17.3 years, and the median age for females is 18.1 years.

The birth rate is 38.1 births for every 1,000 people. This means that each woman will usually have an average of 5.08 children. The infant mortality rate is 77.85 deaths for every 1,000 live births. The life expectancy of the average adult is 53.44 years. For males, the life expectancy is 52.28 years while for females it is 54.63 years.

There is a very high risk of disease. Some food or waterborne diseases that are threats include: bacterial and protozoal diarrhea, hepatitis A, and typhoid fever. Malaria and yellow fever are also problems. The AIDS epidemic may also cause concern for travelers. There were also cases of meningococcal meningitis reported in 2007.

Language –

French is the language used by the government and is used in schooling as the children grow older. Ethnic languages are often used in the lower grades for instruction. Each ethnic group has their own distinct language. In the south, many people are familiar with Fon or Yoruba. In the north, Bariba and Peul may be used as trade languages. Aja is another language often heard in Benin as a trade language.

Society/Culture –

Beninese society is still largely agrarian although the urban population is expanding rapidly. In rural areas, men may often leave their wife or wives at home while they go in search of work. Women may plant small gardens or sell products in the local market to help supplement the family income. They are also expected to have several children. Most women will experience pregnancy an average of six or more times during her lifespan. Most births will occur at home since medical facilities may be hard to reach or too expensive.

Government agencies and NGO's are working to provide more adequate medical care for families. Initiatives to eradicate polio and measles as well as to combat malaria have helped to lessen the effects of these diseases. However, the infant mortality rate remains high. To many Beninese, the hospital is the place where people go when they are near death. Traditional healers are often consulted in the case of minor illnesses.

Boys and girls are often expected to work to help increase the family income because of the great economic hardships faced by a vast majority of Beninese families. Benin, in cooperation with other West African countries and UNICEF, is working to eradicate the problem of human trafficking that some people have called a form of modern slavery. In a typical scenario of human trafficking, the mother or father of a boy or girl will sign a contract with a family member or even a stranger. This contract usually states that the child will work for a year or more in return for payment. Often after the contract is signed, the family member or stranger will take the child to an urban area or even to another country where the child will be forced to work in harsh conditions doing extremely heavy labor. The child may never see the parents again and can possibly face mental, physical, or sexual abuse.

Arranged marriages are very common in Benin. Fathers will usually either receive money or service from the prospective groom. Sometimes other family members will also help to arrange the marriage. Many times weddings may take several days or weeks while great celebrations are held. In some areas, girls are separated from the general community and taken care of by the older women of the village or family a few days before the wedding. The soles of the girl's feet and the palms of her hands may be dyed black until the night before the wedding begins. On this night, the girl will be cleansed for her wedding by her female relatives.

Soccer and ritualistic dancing are very important parts of Beninese culture. Music often plays an important role. In fact, Benin has sometimes been called the land of songs. Musicians and dancers are greatly respected for their skills. Other crafts may include weaving and the making of specialized musical instruments.

There are many different types of national foods in Benin. One common food is called la pate that is a type of paste made by boiling different types of grains like millet. Sauces are also common components of Beninese meals and may be made from vegetables or with some type of meat. The right hand is used to dip into a common bowl. The left hand is never used and is considered unclean. Another popular dish in Benin is gari, which is made from manioc. Sodabi or palm wine and chapalo or millet beer are also commonly offered drinks.

Greetings are very important in Benin. People are expected to greet each other even if they do not know the person that they are addressing. Muslims will expect greeters to ask about the wellbeing of family members. Shaking hands is a common cultural practice in the south but has been uncommon in northern areas in the past. The right hand is offered. The left hand is considered unsanitary. All visitors are offered water to drink as they enter a house. Refusing the water is highly insulting. Visitors who are concerned about the potability of the water may pour a little of the water on the ground as a sign that they are sharing the water with accompanying spirits. In Benin, most people have a strong belief in the existence of supernatural spirits which surround all people. When elders or highly esteemed people are greeted, people often kneel as a sign of respect.

There are many different days that are celebrated as national holidays in Benin. January 1st is celebrated as New Year's Day while May 1st is Labor Day. August 1st is Independence Day, but since the days of Kerekou's socialist regime, this holiday has become a time for people to stay at home and enjoy a quiet day with their families. October 26th celebrates the contributions of the armed forces of Benin. Ascension on May 25th, Whit Monday on June 5th, Assumption on August 15th, All Saints' Day on November 1st, and Christmas Day on December 25th are all Christian holidays recognized by the Beninese government. Tabaski, the Prophet's Birthday, and the ending of Ramadan are Muslim holidays that are recognized by the Beninese government. January 10th has now been set aside by the Beninese government as the national day to celebrate Vodun.

<http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/benin.html>

Worldmark Encyclopedia of Cultures and Daily Life Volume 1

Government –

The democratic government was established in 1991. The current President is Thomas Yayi Boni. He maintains a cabinet of advisers whom he appoints. The president is elected by the people and serves a five-year renewable term. There is a national assembly with 83 seats. Members are elected by the people and retain the seat for four years. Suffrage is universal for all people over eighteen. However, there is a strong likelihood that not all women exercise their right to vote. National law is based on French civil law and custom. The Supreme Court is the highest court in the land. The government has not accepted compulsory ICJ jurisdiction.

The government has been generally tolerant of all religions. Churches are free to operate private schools and missionaries are allowed to work in the country. All churches do need to register with the Ministry of the Interior. In rural areas, traditional civic or religious leaders attempt to influence society against new believers.

Economy –

In the past, political instability hampered economic development. Marxist rule also caused much economic distress. Today the economy is still primarily based upon farming and agriculture. The national GDP is \$8.989 billion. Agricultural products make up 32.8% of the GDP. Agricultural products include: cotton, corn, cassava (tapioca), yams, beans, palm oil, peanuts, cashews, and livestock.

Industry makes up 13.7% of the GDP while services accounts for 53.5%. Industries include: textiles, food processing, construction materials, and cement. There is a total labor force of 3.211 million people. Thirty-three percent of the people live under the poverty level. China, Indonesia, India, Netherlands, Niger, Togo, and Nigeria are all export partners of Benin. Import partners include: China, France, and Thailand. Benin is a participating member of ECOWAS.
<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/bn.html#Econ>

Literacy –

During the colonial and early post-colonial period, Benin had a very good education system due to the efforts of Catholic missionaries. However, due to the internal strife during the 1970's and 1980's, the educational system declined. Today only 34.7% of the population can read and write. About 47.9% of the male population can read and write while only 23.3% of the female population can read and write.

UNICEF is sponsoring several different educational initiatives to encourage not only women's rights but also to foster the growth of girls' school attendance. Older girls are often assigned younger girls to mentor. Also, UNICEF attempts to involve local leaders in preventing early marriage and encouraging school attendance.

In Benin, where girls' fathers receive money or services from a prospective groom, girls are often promised in marriage without their consent at young ages—sometimes as early as 11 or 12 and usually by 15 or 16. Mothers may often want their girls to attend school, but the father usually has the final authority. While public education is free, books and uniforms are costly. If a family has to choose whether to send a boy or a girl to school, they will choose the boy because the girl will be expected to stay at home and help her mother until she is married.
<http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/benin.html>

Land/Geography –

Benin is located on the West coast of Africa between Togo and Nigeria. Burkina Faso lies directly north of Benin. Benin is just slightly smaller than Pennsylvania. In southern Benin, the coastal plain extends north from the Atlantic Ocean giving way to areas of plateaus. Grand-Popo and Cotonou are the two major ports of Benin.

Many of the plateaus have rivers which provide an adequate water source for the area. Continuing northward, the landscape changes again and becomes more flat before spiking into mountainous areas along the Togo border. Savanna and some remaining forest areas predominantly provide the verdure of Benin. Benin's rainy seasons go from April to July and again from September to November. At other times, the land turns quite dry.

The temperature usually ranges from 75 degrees to 88 degrees. Roads can become quagmires during the rainy seasons, and some remote towns may be totally inaccessible.
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Geography_of_Benin
<http://www.infoplease.com/ce6/world/A0856903.html>

History

Benin's history can be traced back to the kingdom of Dahomey that began to be very powerful in the early 1700's. The leaders of this kingdom became actively engaged in the slave trade and thus gained great influence and wealth through their interactions with European slavers. This kingdom was well known for sacrificing slaves at the death of a king and also for its use of women as soldiers.

Despite a conflict with the Yoruba kingdom of Oyo which caused the Dahomien rulers to pay tribute, the kingdom of Dahomey remained influential until around 1893. The French slowly took control of different areas of Dahomey until the final conquest in 1893 when it became a French protectorate. Dahomey formally became part of the colony of French West Africa in 1904.

During the colonial period, the French built an infrastructure and allowed the Catholic church to establish mission schools. In 1946, Dahomey officially became an independent territory of France that allowed it to gain full independence in 1960. Hubert Maga, who had been the Prime Minister under French rule, was the first President. He was, however, deposed in 1963 by Justin Ahomadegbé. In 1969, Lt. Col. Paul-Émile de Souza, in turn, ousted Ahomadegbé. In 1970, elections were not held, and Hubert Maga, Sourou Migan Apithy, and Justin Ahomadegbé attempted to share power for a short two years until Mathieu Kérékou seized control of the government.

Kérékou formed a socialist state and renamed Dahomey the country of Benin. Under Kérékou's regime, civil rights were repressed. The economy faltered to the point that he was finally forced to change policies so that in 1990 multiparty elections were held. With the advent of multiparty elections, Nicéphore Soglo became the new leader of Benin, a title he would only hold for six years before Kérékou was re-elected. After Kérékou announced that he would not seek re-election in 2006, Thomas Yayi Boni was elected as the new President of Benin.

<http://www.infoplease.com/ce6/world/A0856906.html>

<http://www.infoplease.com/country/profiles/benin.html#history>

<http://www.infoplease.com/ce6/world/A0856906.html>

Christian History

The Catholic Church established the very first mission station in Benin in Ouidah in 1680. First, Portuguese priests and then French clergy worked with indigenous people groups there. As early as 1830, there were around 2,000 Catholic converts in the southern coastal region of Benin. In 1860, the African Missions of Lyons began work in the interior of Benin. The church grew and a seminary to train priests was established in 1913. In 1960, the first African archbishop began to work in Benin. The Catholic Church is primarily influential in urban areas.

Methodist missionaries started the first Protestant church in 1843 in a town called Abomey. This missions group established work among the Fon and the Gun people groups. Assembly of God churches have been started in the areas inhabited by the Somba and Pilapila people groups. ECWA is active among the people groups in central Benin. The Heavenly Christianity Church

was an indigenous church that was started in 1947. In the 1990's, many people in Benin became interested in the Pentecostal church due to revivals held throughout the country.

Religions

All information unless otherwise noted comes from the World Christian Encyclopedia Volume One

Non Christian

Vodun

Vodun began in Benin. It was based on traditional religions in Benin in which ancestors and other spirits of the dead were worshipped. After the coming of Roman Catholic priests, certain beliefs of the Catholic Church mixed with the traditional religious beliefs of different ethnic groups. This strange mixture of beliefs led to the creation of the Vodun religion (sometimes also called Voodoo).

As Africans were kidnapped and carried to the Americas during the slave trading days, Vodun became a part of life in areas like Haiti and Brazil. In the Vodun religion, spirits are worshipped and sacrifices are prepared to appease the spirits. A priest or priestess leads the people under the influence of an Ioa spirit. Witchcraft and spirit possession are integral parts of the belief systems of this religion. Twins are also considered sacred in this religion.

http://encarta.msn.com/encyclopedia_761552787/Vodun.html

Islam

Islam came to Benin when traders first began visiting the area centuries ago. Members of Islam come from the Hausa, Yoruba, Fulani, Dendi, and Bariba peoples. Many of the Muslim peoples tend to live in city areas and be involved in business. About twenty percent of the Beninese is probably Muslim adherents while still also practicing some tenets of Vodun.

Apostolic Church of Togo and Benin Divine Healer's Temple

This group began work in Benin around 1960. In 1995, there were ten congregations and a total of 4,000 members in all.

Christ Groups

These are isolated home churches from a revival campaign in 1980. There are forty-three churches and a total of 2,000 attendees.

Gospel Faith Mission

This church was started by missionaries from Nigeria in 1976. Most of its members are from the Yoruba people group. It is an African independent Apostolic church. In 1995, there were twenty-one churches and five thousand attendees in all.

Celestial Church of Christ/ Heavenly Christianity Church

This church started as a schism of the Cherubim and Seraphim Society in 1947. Its members come from the Gun, Nago, Mina, and Ewe people groups. In 1995, there were 300 congregations and a total of 60,000 congregants. It is an African independent Apostolic church

Jehovah's Witnesses

This group began work in Benin around 1935. Its headquarters are in Cotonou. In 1995, there were 81 churches and 10,400 members in all.

New Apostolic Church

This church was started around 1980 by the New Apostolic mission whose headquarters are in Zurich, Switzerland. There are 100 congregations and a total of 14,524 members.

Catholic Church

The Catholic Church began work in 1680. There are currently eight dioceses and two archdioceses. Cotonou and Parakou are archdioceses.

Protestant/ Evangelicals/ Pentecostals

African Union Mission

This group began work in Benin in 1895. In 1995, there were twenty congregations and a total of 2,200 congregants in all.

Apostolic Church of Nigeria

This church was begun by Nigerian missionaries from Lagos who arrived in Benin in 1950. The church originally based its doctrine on Pentecostal ideals. There are forty-eight churches in the Deve area. Congregants usually come from the Yoruba, Gun, Adja, and Mina people groups. In 1995, there were 170 congregations and a total of 17,000 congregants.

Assembly of God

This denomination began work in Benin in 1938. The headquarters of the denomination are located in Cotonou, and most mission work occurs among the Somba and Pilapila people. In 1995, there were 50,000 members and a total of 240 congregations.

Baptist Church

Southern Baptist missionaries started this church in 1970. In 1995, there were twenty-one congregations and a total of 9,000 members in all.

Cherubim and Seraphim Society

This group originated in Nigeria as a indigenous Pentecostal movement and has spread throughout different parts of West Africa. The Society came to Benin in 1933 and has congregants among the Gun people. In 1995, there are approximately 200 congregations with a total of 12,000 members in all.

Church of God of Prophecy

This church was started around 1980 by a missions group from the United States. It is Pentecostal. In 1995, there were seven congregations and a total of 525 members in all.

Church of the Foursquare Gospel

This church started around 1970. In 1995, there were 29 churches and a total of 2,402 members. It is Pentecostal.

Evangelical Baptist Mission

This church was started in 1970 by missionaries from the U.S. In 1995, there were twelve congregations and a total of 2,800 congregants.

Evangelical Christian Church of West Africa

This church was started by SIM missionaries in 1946. It is a member of ECWA. In 1995, there were 124 congregants and ten thousand members in all. Thirty-three percent of the members were from the Bariba people group while thirty-two percent were from the Logba people. Another thirteen percent came from the Fulani and Nago people groups.

Protestant Methodist Church of Benin

This denomination started work in Benin in 1843. In 1995, there were 357 congregations and a total of 90,000 members in all.

Seventh Day Adventist Church

This church was begun by missionaries from the United States around 1970. In 1995, there was one congregation with approximately 527 members.

United African Methodist Church

This church was started in 1927 as a mission. Its headquarters are in Lagos. In 1995, there were 69 churches and a total of 15,700 members. Sixty-eight percent of the members come from the Gun people while another thirty-two percent come from the Yoruba people.

United Pentecostal Church

This church was started in 1985. In 1995, there were five congregations and a total of six hundred congregants.

People Groups

Some reporting groups place Catholics, marginal Christian groups, and evangelicals in a category Christian Adherents. When this term is used in this report, “Christian Adherents” is placed in quotation marks to indicate this usage

43728

Adja (591,982)

The Adja people live in the Mono region in the Sous-Préfectures of Aplahoué, Djakotomè, Dogbo, Klouékanmè, Lalo, and Tovinklin. They belong to the Guinean people cluster. Some alternate names for the Adja include Aja, Ajagbe, Hwè, and Aja-Gbe. The Aja people speak a language called Aja. The Aja people are linguistically and culturally related to the Fon ethnic group. Some adults also use Ewe or French. Aja is used at home and in the marketplace. Government officials primarily use in school and French. Nineteen percent of the people are literate in Aja because of literacy classes offered since 1995.

There are some differing reports concerning the predominant religion of the Adja people. People Groups lists the predominant religion as “other.” SIL reports from 2002 state that most of the people practice some form of indigenous religions or a syncretic form of Christianity. Joshua Project states that forty-five percent of the people are “Christian adherents” while 34.90 % of the population practice indigenous religions. Then, the remaining twenty percent of the people are supposed to be Muslim converts.

Also, according to Joshua Project, only ten percent of the “Christian adherents” are evangelicals. Fifty-eight percent of the Christian adherents are Roman Catholics while twenty-five percent attend independent churches. Another fourteen percent are Protestants while the remaining three percent belong to alternative types of Christian groups.

The Jesus Film and other Christian videos are available. Also, gospel recordings exist, but the Bible has not been translated into their language.

The Aja people normally live in mud huts with grass thatched roofs. Some huts have tin roofs too. The huts are usually built in a circle, but there are no connecting walls between the huts. Schools are often held under brush arbors.

<http://africamissions.org/africa/ajarep.htm>

<http://www.sil.org/silesr/2002/020/SILESR2002-020.pdf>

12296

Aguna (31,650)

The Aguna people live around the village of Agouna in the Djidja Subprefecture of the Zou Province. They speak a language called Aguna and are part of the Yoruba people cluster. Two alternate names for this people group include: Awuna or Agunaco.

Forty-five percent of the Aguna people practice indigenous religions while twenty-eight percent are Catholic. The remaining twenty percent are Muslims. About 3 percent of the people are evangelicals. The remaining three percent belong to alternative types of Christian groups.

The Bible has not been translated into their language, and the Jesus Film is unavailable. Gospel recordings exist.

12297

Aizo (344,792)

The Aizo people live in the provinces of the Mono and Atlantique. They speak a language called Ayizo Gbe and are part of the Guinean people cluster. Most people are also bilingual in Fon. Some alternate names for this people group include: Ayizo, Aizo, or Ayizo-Gbe.

There is some discrepancy in the research pertaining to the predominant religion of the Aizo people. People Groups states that the predominant religion is animism. However, Joshua Project states that forty-nine percent of the people are “Christian adherents” while 47.90 % practice indigenous religions. One percent are also Muslims while another 2 percent belong to an alternative religion.

Seven percent of the “Christian adherents” are supposed to be evangelicals. Forty percent of the Christian adherents are Roman Catholics while thirty-five percent are Protestants. Another twenty-two percent attend independent churches while the remaining three percent belong to alternative types of Christian groups.

A Bible translation is needed and the Jesus Film is unavailable. Gospel recordings do exist.

12305

Anii (65,238)

The Anii people live in the southern part of the Aracora Province in the Bassila Subprefecture. They also can be found living in Togo. They speak a language called Anii and are part of the Guinean people cluster. Some alternate names for this people group include: Gisida, Basila, Bassila, Baseca, Winji-Winji, or Ouinji-Ouinji. Anii families live together in large areas called compounds which are comprised of mud huts with tin roofs and no electricity or running water. Each family grows yams. Yams are very important to the Anii.

There is some discrepancy in the research pertaining to the predominant religion of the Anii people. People Groups states that the predominant religion is Islam. However, Joshua Project says that sixty-two percent of the people are “Christian adherents” while twenty percent are Muslims. The remaining eighteen percent are supposed to practice ethnic religions.

Among the “Christian adherents,” eighty-five percent are Roman Catholics while eleven percent attend independent churches. Another three percent are Protestants while the remaining one percent belong to alternative types of Christian groups.

The Bible has not been translated into their language, and the Jesus Film is inaccessible. Gospel recordings exist.

12302

Bariba (521,909)

The Bariba people live in the Borgou Province. They are the largest people group in this area. They also live in Togo, Burkina Faso, and Nigeria. They speak a language called Baatonum and are part of the Gur people cluster. Some people are also familiar with French. The literacy rate in their own language is one to thirty percent. Some alternate names for this people group include: Baatonu, Baatombu, Baruba, Bargu, Burgu, Berba, Barba, Bogung, Bargawa, or Barganchi. The people actually prefer the name “Baatonu.”

The predominant religion is Islam. Dendi traders first introduced the Islamic faith to the Bariba. Thirty-seven percent of the people are Muslims while thirty-five percent practice indigenous religions. Another 27.4% are Christian adherents while .10% of the people claim to be non-religious.

Only nine percent of the Christian adherents are evangelicals. Fifty-four percent of the Christian adherents are Roman Catholic while thirty-five percent are Protestants. Another ten percent attend independent churches while the remaining one percent belong to alternative types of Christian groups. The complete Bible had been translated by 1997. The Jesus Film and other Christian videos are also accessible. Gospel recordings and radio broadcasts can be heard. Finally, tracts are also available in their language.

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. Usually there is one main leader with several sub leaders who govern village life. 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. About ninety-five percent of the homes have no running water. Also there is limited electricity. The average salary is about \$40.90 per month. In Bariba culture, people may ask to borrow any item and the owner is expected to share. Also, people may speak rather quickly and abruptly. On the other hand, people are much more relaxed about time. Few people own watches and life really revolves around the growing seasons. Newcomers to villages will often be quite surprised at the Bariba’s lack of concern about time.

From The Peoples of Africa by James Olson <http://members.aol.com/huskygold/home/peacecorps.html>

12303

Basa (1,617)

The Basa people speak a language called Tchumbuli and are part of the Guinean people cluster.

Some discrepancy is encountered regarding the research pertaining to the predominant religion of the Basa people. People Groups states that the predominant religion is Christianity. However,

Joshua Project states that seventy-five percent of the population practice indigenous religions while twenty-five percent are Christian adherents. Also, according to Joshua Project only six percent of the Christian adherents are evangelicals.

Sixty percent are Roman Catholic while twenty-five percent are Protestants. Another thirteen percent attend independent churches while the remaining two percent belong to alternative types of Christian groups.

The Bible has not been translated into their language, and the Jesus Film is unavailable. Gospel recordings exist.

12307

Bialaba (84,157)

The Bialaba people live in the Materi Subprefecture of the Atakora Province. They also have settlements in the Ouessi Subprefecture of the Borgou Province. They speak a language called Biali and are part of the Gur people cluster. Some people are also familiar with French. Less than one percent of the people can read and write in their own language. Some alternate names for this people group include: Bieri, Bjeri, Bjerb, or Berba. The French colonial government called this people group “Burba” but the people themselves prefer the name Bialaba.

Ninety-three percent of the people practice indigenous religions. Those that practice indigenous religions believe in reincarnation of the soul. They also believe in different types of spiritual forces which can help or adversely affect humans. Seven percent are Christian adherents. Only one percent of the Christian adherents are evangelicals. Seventy percent of the Christian adherents are Roman Catholics while fourteen percent attend independent churches. Another fifteen percent are Protestants while the remaining one percent belong to alternative types of Christian groups. The Bible has not been translated into their language, and the Jesus Film is inaccessible. Gospel recordings exist.

The Bialaba are subsistence farmers and grow crops like millet. They still use traditional farming methods. They also have livestock. Their villages are unique because the houses are usually two stories high. Market day is very important to the Bialaba.

Men may marry more than one wife, although the first wife usually has more prestige. Each wife will have her own dwelling place for herself and her children. Marriages are arranged for each girl when she is born.

http://www.global12project.com/2004/profiles/p_code5/1365.html

12306

Bulba (1,014)

The Bulba people live in the Tanguiéta Subprefecture of the Atakora Province. They speak a language called Notre and are part of the Gur people cluster. People use Notre for many social occasions and at home; however French or Biala is used for school instruction and in church. Some people are familiar with Waama. Some alternate names for this people group include: Nootre, Burusa, or Boulba.

Ninety-five percent of the people practice indigenous religions while five percent are Christian adherents. The number of evangelicals is unknown.

The Bible has not been translated into their language, and the Jesus Film is not available. Gospel recordings can be found.

12308

Busa (49,195)

The Busa people live in Northeast Benin. They speak a language called Bokobaru and are part of the Mande people cluster. Some alternate names for this people group include: Busa-Bokobaru, Zongben, or Zōgbe. Recently, many have moved into the cities to seek jobs as civil servants, businessmen, and craftsmen. Most remain as farmers growing yams, sorghum, millet, and corn for themselves while they produce rice, peanuts, cotton, and beans for money. Their predominant religion is listed as “Other.”

Some portions of the Bible have been translated into their language, but the Jesus Film is inaccessible. Gospel recordings and radio broadcasts can be heard.

12309

Busa-Boko (58,033)

The Busa-Boko people live in the Borgu Province. They speak a language called Boko and are part of the Mande people cluster. Speakers often are familiar with several other languages including: French, Hausa, Yoruba, Baatonum, or Fulfulde. Some alternate names for this people group include: Bokonya, Bokko, or Boo. The people live on the savanna and raise crops.

Fifty percent hold to their traditional beliefs which include ancestor worship, shaman healers, and spiritual forces. Thirty-five percent are Muslims while fifteen percent claim Christianity with two percent being evangelical. Seventy percent of the Christian adherents are Roman Catholics while eighteen percent attend independent churches. Another ten percent are Protestants while the remaining two percent belong to alternative types of Christian groups.

Portions of the Bible were translated from 1993 to 1998. They also have access to the Jesus Film. Gospel recordings also exist.

12310

Cabe (133,245)

The Cabe people live in the Tchaourou Subprefecture of the Borgou Province. They also can be found living in towns in the Savè and Ouèssè subprefectures of the Zou Province. They speak a language called Ede Cabe and are part of the Yoruba people cluster. Most people can speak Yoruba quite well and may also be familiar with French. The literacy rate in their first language is below one percent. An alternate name for this people group is Cabbe or Shabe.

Eighty-eight percent of the population practice indigenous religions while twelve percent are Christian adherents. One percent of the Christian adherents are evangelicals. Sixty-five percent of the Christian adherents are Roman Catholics while twenty-four percent attend independent churches. Another ten percent are Protestants while the remaining one percent belong to alternative types of Christian groups.

There is a questionable translation need, and the Jesus Film is inaccessible. Gospel recordings do not exist.

12313

Cenka (507)

The Cenka people live around the village of Tungan Bage in the Segbana Subprefecture of the Alibori Province. A larger group of this people live in Nigeria where they have primarily began to speak Hausa or Dendi. They speak a language called Kyenga and are part of the Mande people cluster. An alternate name for this people group is Tyenga. They claim to have descended from the legendary Kisra who fought Muhammad in battle. During the thirteenth century, they were a part of the Songhai Empire. Moroccans invaded them during the sixteenth century and forced their relocation. Most work today as farmers.

The people predominantly practice ethnic religions; however, Islam is rapidly gaining influence among this people group in Nigeria. Currently, approximately seventy percent of the people practice traditional religions while thirty-three percent have converted to Islam. Only seven percent of the population are Christian adherents, and the number of evangelicals is unknown.

There are no ministry tools available in their own language.

12314

Chakosi (16,168)

The Chakosi people live in a few villages in the Cobly and Boukombe subprefectures of the Atakora Province. They speak a language called Anufo and are part of the Guinean people cluster. Some alternate names for this people group include: Chokosi, Chakosi, Chokossi, Tchokossi, or Anufo. In fact, in Togo, they are usually referred to as Anufo.

The predominant religion of the Chakosi people is Islam. In fact, sixty-two percent of the people are Muslims while another twenty-eight percent practice indigenous religions. Ten percent are Christian adherents, and five percent of those are evangelicals. Forty percent of the Christian adherents are Protestants while thirty-five percent are Roman Catholics. Another twenty-four percent attend independent churches while the remaining one percent belong to alternative types of Christian groups.

The New Testament had been translated by 2006, and gospel recordings exist. However, the Jesus Film is unavailable.

The Chakosi believe that their ethnic group has Manding origins and actually migrated to Togo and Benin sometime during the 1700's from Cote d'Ivoire. Mostly young men came with Islamic holy men as hired mercenaries for other local people groups. These young men decided to stay and got wives through conducting series of raids on neighboring peoples. The Chakosi were very territorial and were very warlike.

The Chakosi have a very strict social organization. Their society is divided into very specific social groups of nobles, commoners, and Muslim clergy. Usually there will be one main person to make the decisions for a village. If the head leader of the village cannot find a reasonable answer to a dilemma, he will refer the problem to the main leader of the area.

Most Chakosi today are farmers who grow cotton as a cash crop. Boys will help to herd cattle while girls help their mothers at home until they are married off by their fathers. Most do not get to attend a local school because their parents expect them to work at home or because their parents cannot afford the school fees. Women and men may both offer different products for sale in the local market. Men like to use bicycles to travel if they have been fortunate enough to purchase one. Women usually have no access to bicycles and thus are used to walking. The annual income for a family is usually around \$100. Most people struggle their entire lives just to raise enough food to survive. <http://www.joshuaproject.net/profiles/text/t100396.pdf>

12315

Ci (26,619)

The Ci people live in the Lalo Subprefecture of the Mono Province. They speak a language called Gbe Ci, and they are part of the Guinean people cluster. Some alternate names for this people group include: Cigbe, Tchi, or Ayizo-Ci. This language is very similar to Fon. In fact, there is an eighty percent lexical similarity with Fon. Yet, there is also a seventy-seven percent lexical similarity with Ayizo and fifty-nine percent with Aja. Most speakers consider their language to actually be a part of the Fon language. French is taught in schools and used by local government officials while Gbe Ci or Fon are used in other domains including church services. Less than one percent can read and write in their language. If a person attends literacy classes, the teachers will teach them to read and write in Fon.

Seventy percent of the people are Christian adherents with eight percent of those being evangelicals. The remaining thirty percent practice indigenous religions. Seventy percent of the Christian adherents are Roman Catholics while twenty percent are Protestants. Another eight percent attend independent churches while the remaining two percent belong to alternative types of Christian groups. The Bible has not been translated into their language, and the Jesus Film is inaccessible. Gospel recordings exist.

22415

Defi (15,201)

The Defi people live in the southeastern part of Benin in the Seme-Kpodji Subprefecture. They speak a language called Defi Gbe and are part of the Guinean people cluster. Defi and the Gun language are very similar. Most people are actually taught to read and write in Gun instead of in

Defi. Thus, the literacy rate in Defi is below one percent. French, Yoruba, Gun, and Defi are all used in church services. Muslims will also be accustomed to hearing Arabic when they attend religious services at the mosque.

Approximately 66.60 % of the people are Christian adherents with only four percent of those being evangelicals. Another 15.90 % practice indigenous religions. Sixteen percent are Muslims while .20% do not consider themselves to be religious. Forty-five percent of the Christian adherents are Roman Catholics while thirty-three percent attend independent churches. Another twenty percent are Protestants, and the remaining two percent belong to alternative types of Christian groups.

There are no ministry tools available in their own language.

12316

Dendi (49,585)

The Dendi people live along the Niger River in the Atakora and Borgou provinces. They also have settled in towns in Nigeria. This people group speaks a language called Dendi and are part of the Songhai people cluster. An alternate name for this people group includes: Dandawa. The history of the Dendi people says that they were once part of the Za kingdom which existed in Africa in the eighth century.

The Dendi people, like most Songhai, are syncretic Muslims. They are one of the least reached people groups. They still practice some forms of ancestor worship and animism. In fact, genji bi hori and yenaandi are both traditional ceremonies during the dry season in which the people offer sacrifices and dances in order to ask the spirits for help. Witchcraft and spirit possession are also common elements of village life. Only .07 % of the population is Christian adherents, and .03% are evangelicals. Sixty percent of the Christian adherents are Protestants while twenty percent are Roman Catholic. The remaining twenty percent of the Christian adherents attend independent churches. 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. Households consist of different families from the same lineage living closely together. Boys among the nobility will be strongly encouraged to maintain the purity of the family line by marrying a first cousin.

43072

Ditammari (152,013)

The Ditammari people live in the Boukombe and Natitingou subprefectures of the Atakora Province. The Ditammari people may also be found living in Togo. They speak a language called Ditammari and are part of the Gur people cluster. About one to five percent of the people can read and write in their own language. Some people are also familiar with Baatonum or French. Some alternate names for this people group include: Bataba, Tamari, Batammaraba, Somba, and Tamberma. Somba is actually considered to be derogatory and should not be used.

Eighty percent of the people are Muslims while six percent practice ethnic religions. Fourteen percent are Roman Catholic adherents and four percent are evangelicals. Another thirty-four percent attend independent churches while the remaining one percent belongs to alternative types of Christian groups.

The New Testament had been translated by 1989, and Christian tracts have been published. The Jesus Film is accessible, and other Christian videos have also been produced. Gospel recordings and radio broadcasts can be heard.

The Ditammari people live in houses called tatas. The tatas have two levels. The lower level is where the animals are kept and the upper level is where the family lives. The Ditammari people began constructing tatas like this during the slave raiding era. By putting the family on the second floor, raiders were less likely to be able to reach them. Outside of the tata, family altars will be built at the birth of each family member. When a family member dies, the altar is removed.

12336

Dompago (53,206)

The Dompago people primarily live around Kémériða in the Atakora Province. They speak a language called Lukpa and are part of the Gur people cluster. Between five and thirty percent of the people can read and write in their own language. Some alternate names for this people group include: Lokpa, Logba, Legba, or Lugba.

Eighty-four percent of the people practice ethnic religions while six percent have converted to Islam. Another seven percent of the population is Christian with three percent being evangelicals. Another nine percent attend independent churches while the remaining one percent belong to alternative types of Christian groups.

The New Testament had been translated by 1977. Christian tracts are also being printed. The Jesus Film and other Christian videos are accessible. Gospel recordings can also be heard.

12317

Ewe (55,683)

The Ewe people speak a language called Ewe and are part of the Guinean people cluster. Some alternate names for this people group include: Eibe, Ehwe, Eve, Vhe, Krepe, Krepi, or Popo.

The predominant religion is Catholic (69%). Christian adherents make up around three percent of the population. Another 25.8% of the people practice ethnic religions while the remaining 1.3% are Muslims. Twenty-two percent attend independent churches. Five percent are Protestants, and three percent belong to alternative types of Christian groups.

The complete Bible had been translated by 1931. The Jesus Film and other Christian videos are accessible. Gospel recordings and radio broadcasts can be heard.

The Ewe have a patrilineal society. Usually the descendent of the founder of a Ewe village would be chief. The Ewe are small-time farmers but are well-educated and influential. The Ewe tried to create their own state during colonial times but failed. However, the Ewe people remain active in politics and the civil service.

12319

Fon (2,011,780)

The Fon people live in the Zou Province, the Atlantic Province, and also in the southern part of the Abomey-Calavi and Ouidah subprefectures in the Littoral Province. Many Fon also live within the boundaries of towns that are predominantly inhabited by other ethnic groups. The Fon speak a language called Fon and are part of the Guinean people cluster. Some alternate names for this people group include: Fo, Fongbe, Fonnu, Fogbe, Dahomeen, or Djedji.

The predominant religion of the Fon is Catholic. In fact, forty-eight percent of people are Catholic adherents 1.8% being evangelicals. Seventeen percent attend independent churches. Another five percent are Protestants, and the remaining five percent belong to alternative types of Christian groups.

On the other hand, 43.4% of the people practice ethnic religions. Eight percent of the population is Muslim. The New Testament was translated by 1993. Tracts are also available. The Jesus Film and other Christian videos are accessible. Finally, gospel recordings and radio broadcasts can be heard.

The Fon have a patrilineal society. A man may have more than one wife and may choose to divorce his wife if he wishes. When someone dies or on the anniversary of an important person's death, the Fon will hold dances and have drumming ceremonies for days. The Fon culture, as a whole, does believe in reincarnation.

12320

Foodo (28,389)

The Foodo people live around the town of Semere in the Ouake Subprefecture of the Atakora Province. They speak a language called Foodo and are part of the Guinean people cluster. Many people are also familiar with Tem, Kabiye, or French. Only about one to five percent of the people can read and write in their own language.

Some discrepancy exists pertaining to the research about the predominant religion of the Foodo people. People Groups states that the predominant religion is Christianity. However, Joshua Projects states that 99.98 % of the population are Muslims while only .02% are Christian adherents. The people are divided between Catholic and protestant. The Bible has not been translated into their language, and the Jesus Film is inaccessible. Gospel recordings exist.

The Foodo originally came from Ghana in the seventeenth or eighteenth centuries. They began to form treaties with the Tem during the nineteenth century and have retained those close ties to this day. Today many of the people are farmers who raise yams, millet, sorghum, corn, and peanuts. Others have engaged in trade or politics. Usually one man leads each village and makes the legal decisions for the group. However, people can go to the local police for further assistance with legal matters.

12322

Fulfulde Benin-Togo (362,213)

The Fulfulde of Benin-Togo live in the Atakora and Borgou provinces. They speak a language called Borgu Fulfulde and are part of the Fulani people cluster. Some alternate names for this people group include: Peulh, Peul, or Fulbe-Borgu. About one percent of the people can read and write in their own language.

The Fulfulde are predominantly Sunni Muslims. In fact, ninety-seven percent of the population are Muslims while 1.6% practice ethnic religions. Only .6% are Catholic adherents with .8% of those being evangelical.

There is no complete Bible translation, and the Jesus Film is not available. There are gospel recordings in the Fulfulde language.

Scholars believe that the Fulani originally migrated from North Africa or the Middle East. The Fulani are physically set apart from other African people groups by their lighter skin and thinner noses. They take pride in the fact that these physical differences may point to Caucasian ancestry.

The Fulfulde do not believe in ever showing fear, but the greatest emotional stress to the Fulfulde is to feel lonely. People may talk to friends and family in order to eradicate their loneliness; however, they should never show their desire for companionship in public. This fear of loneliness would probably make it very difficult for people to consider conversion because they must be aware that they would be excommunicated from their friends and family if they decided to become a Christian.

For boys to be considered men, they must undergo a test of manhood in which their friends beat them with sticks. The boys must not acknowledge any feelings. In fact, boys should look like they wish for the trial to continue. The boys that succeed in the trial become men and may see their scars as a source of pride. There have been deaths because of this ritual.

The Fulfulde raise cattle and goats, and their whole culture is centered around herding. Being a nomadic people, the Fulfulde will move with the herds as the cattle and goats need different grazing areas during the different seasons. For example, during the rainy season, the herds can feed near a central village. However, during the dry season, the herds may have to be moved to other areas to find food. A man's social status is determined by the number of animals he possesses, and the bride price also centers around how many animals the prospective bride will bring to her husband and his family.

The men's jobs in the village differ greatly from that of the women. While the women are responsible for raising the children and making meals for the family, the men tend the herds and make their own clothes. In fact, making clothes is a way for men to show pride in themselves.

12324

Ga (7,722)

The Ga people live in Benin, Togo, and Ghana. The majority of the Ga people live in Ghana where their language is a predominant trade language. They speak a language called Ga and are part of the Guinean people cluster. Some alternate names for this people group include: Amina, Gain, Accra, or Acra.

The predominant religion is Christianity. Twenty-five percent of the population practice ethnic religions, and the remaining five percent are non-religious. Sixty-five percent of the people adherents are Roman Catholics while twenty percent are Protestants. Another twelve percent attend independent churches while the remaining three percent belong to alternative types of Christian groups.

The complete Bible had been translated by 1997. The Jesus Film is accessible, and gospel recordings exist.

The Homowo festival which marks the beginning of the year for the Ga people is extremely important. Centuries ago, the Ga people experienced a time of terrible famine. When that time had passed, they celebrated by having the first Homowo ceremony. From that time on, the Ga people yearly celebrate this festival which is also known as the "hooting at hunger" ceremony.

Funerals are also really important to the Ga people. Elaborate coffins, which may cost families members, a large amount of money are created to honor the dead. Coffins are often shaped to represent one specific aspect of the life of the deceased.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ga_people

22416

Gbessi (60,805)

The Gbessi people live in the Kpomasse, Alada, and Tori-Bossito subprefectures of the Atlantic Province and along Lake Aheme in the Bopa Subprefecture of the Mono Province. They speak a language called Gbesi Gbe. An alternate name for this people group is Gbessin.

Fifty-five percent of the population practice ethnic religions while around forty-five percent are catholic adherents. One percent of the people are evangelicals. Another eighteen percent attend independent churches while the remaining two percent belong to alternative types of Christian groups.

There are no ministry tools reported in their language.

12325

Gun (559,342)

The Gun people live in the Akpro-Misserete, Avrankou, Adjara, and Porto-Novo subprefectures of the Weme Province in southeast Benin. They speak a language called Gun and are part of the Guinean people cluster. Many people are also familiar with French or Fon. About one to five percent of the people can read and write in their own language. Some alternate names for this people group include: Alada, Alada-Gbe, Gun-Alada, Gun-Gbe, Goun, Egun, Gu, Gugbe, Seto-Gbe, or Toli-Gbe.

About 66.60 % of the population is Catholic with less than four percent being evangelicals.

Another 15.90 % of the people practice ethnic religions. Another sixteen percent are Muslims. Thirty-three percent attend independent churches.

The complete Bible had been translated by 1972, and other types of printed materials are available. The Jesus Film and other videos are also accessible. Gospel recordings also exist.

12326

Gurma (63,338)

The Gurma people live in northern Benin in the Atakora Provinces. They speak a language called Gourmanchéma and are part of the Gur people cluster. Some alternate names for this people group include: Gourmantche, Gurma, Goulmancema, Gulimancema, and Migulimancema. About five to ten percent of the people can read and write in their own language.

Fifty percent of the people practice indigenous religions while thirty-eight percent are Muslims. Another twelve percent are Catholic and less than one percent being evangelicals. Catholics outnumber protestant by vast numbers. Another eight percent attend independent churches, and the remaining two percent belong to alternative types of Christian groups.

The New Testament had been translated by 1990, and the Jesus Film is accessible. Gospel recordings and radio broadcasts can be heard.

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>

12327

Hausa (6,840)

The Hausa people live in the provinces of Atacora and Borgou. They usually settle in larger towns and market villages. 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.

The Hausa are 99.9% Muslim. About 150 years ago, Muslim missionaries came to Hausaland and succeeded in converting the Hausa to Islam. They Hausa 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. Only 0.1% of the population are Christian adherents. Sixty percent of the Christian adherents are Protestants while thirty-five percent are Roman Catholics. The remaining five percent attend independent churches.

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>

12328

Ica (82,284)

The Ica people live in the Bante subprefecture of the Zou Province. They speak a language called Ede Ica and are part of the Yoruba people cluster. People are also familiar with French and

Yoruba. About thirty percent of the people can read and write in their own language while about forty percent can read and write in French. Arabic is used by Muslims in their religious ceremonies at the mosque.

Ninety-four percent of the population practice ethnic religions while six percent are Catholic. The Catholics make up the vast majority of the followers of religion other than ethnic. Around three percent attend independent churches. The remaining two percent are Protestants. Only .3% are evangelicals.

There are no ministry tools available in their language.

12329

Idaca (44,337)

The Idaca people live in the Dassa-Zoume and Glazoué subprefectures of the Collines Province. They speak a language called Ede Idaca and are part of the Yoruba people cluster. About fifty percent of the people can read and write in their own language while about forty-four percent are literate in French. Another fifty-nine percent can read the Yoruba language. Many people are familiar with Fon and Yoruba. Some alternate names for this people group include: Idaaca, Idaasa, or Idáítsà.

Ninety-three percent of the people practice indigenous religions while seven percent are Christian adherents. The Idaca people believe that every person has a soul that either goes to be with the spiritual forces or is reincarnated. They make offerings to appease the spiritual forces that they believe are at work in nature around them. Seventy percent of the Christian adherents are Roman Catholics while twenty percent attend independent churches. The remaining ten percent are Protestants. Only .7% of the Christian adherents are evangelicals. There are no ministry tools available in their language.

Most of the Idaca are farmers who use traditional farming methods to till the land and produce crops like yams, millet, and sorghum. Men do most of the agricultural work, but women will also lend a hand when necessary. People often supplement their diets through fishing or gathering food from the bush. Livestock are used for hides and for ceremonial purposes. Trading can also bring welcome revenue to a family. Men may marry more than one wife.

13260

Ife (133,442)

The Ife people live in the Savalou Subprefecture of the Collines Province. They speak a language called Ife and are part of the Yoruba people cluster. Less than one percent can read and write in their own language. Some alternate names for this people group include: Baate, Ana, Ana-Ife, Anago, or Ede Ife.

Sixty-six percent of the people practice ethnic religions. Around 16% of the people are Protestants while 12% percent are Roman Catholics. Another twenty-four percent attend

independent churches while the remaining one percent belongs to alternative types of Christian groups. Fifteen percent of all Christian adherents are evangelicals.

Portions of the Bible had been translated by 1995. The Jesus Film and other Christian videos are also accessible. Gospel recordings and radio broadcasts can be heard.

12330

Ije (32,343)

The Ije people live in the subprefectures of Pobe and Ketou of the Plateau Province. They also have settlements in the Ouigni Subprefecture of the Zou Province. They speak a language called Ede Ije and are part of the Yoruba people cluster. Some people are familiar with Fon or French. There is a 99% similarity between Ede Ije and the Yoruba language so most people can comprehend Yoruba. There is a literacy development program in Yoruba. An alternate name for this people group is Holi.

Ninety-four percent of the population practice indigenous religions. Sixty-five percent of the people who do not follow ethnic religion are Roman Catholics while thirty percent of the non ethnic religion followers are Protestants. Another four percent attend independent churches, and the remaining one percent belong to alternative types of Christian groups. Translation work is needed, and the Jesus Film is unavailable. Gospel recordings can be heard.

12331

Kabiye (78,786)

The Kabiye people live in scattered villages in the Ouake, Djougou, and Bassila subprefectures of the Donga Province. They speak a language called Kabiye and are part of the Gur people cluster. Arabic is used at the mosque. Some alternate names for this people group include: Kabre, Kabye, Kabure, Cabrais, or Cabrai.

The people predominantly practice indigenous religions. In fact seventy-six percent of the population practice ethnic religions while six percent are Muslims. The remaining eighteen percent are Catholic and three percent being evangelicals. Another twelve percent attend independent churches. The remaining three percent belong to alternative types of Christian groups.

The complete Bible had been translated by 1999. The Jesus Film and other Christian videos are also accessible. Gospel recordings also exist. There is very strong opposition from leaders sometimes for people who choose to leave traditional ethnic beliefs in favor of whole-hearted obedience and belief to Christ. Many new believers face temptations to continue to practice some ethnic traditions and to forsake a whole-hearted allegiance to Christ so that their friends and families will not ostracize them. Many churches also desperately need more strong male leadership.

12333

Ko (33,366)

The Ko people live in the Zou Province, Atlantic Province, and in the southern part of the Abomey-Calavi and Ouidah subprefectures of the Littoral Province. There are many Ko that live among other people groups in southern Benin and in some towns of northern Benin. There are also Ko people living in the country of Togo. They speak a language called Fon and are part of the Guinean people cluster. Two alternate names for this people group are Kotafon or Ko-Gbe.

Ninety-two percent of the people practice indigenous religions while eight percent are adherents of non-ethnic religions. Only three percent of the non-ethnic adherents are evangelicals.. Another eight percent are Protestants, and the remaining one percent belong to alternative types of Christian groups.

The Bible has been translated into their language, and the Jesus Film is accessible. Gospel recordings exist.

12334

Kotokoli (54,473)

The Kotokoli people speak a language called Tem. This language is actually used as a trade language. About one to five percent of the people can read and write in their own language. Many people also are familiar with French. Some alternate names for this people group include: Cotocoli, Tim, Timu, or Tembe. The Kotokoli people originally came from Burkina Faso. Today they live in Togo and Benin. Their hereditary leader called the Uro usually leads the people from Sokode.

Seventy-four percent of the population is Muslims while seventeen percent continue to practice the indigenous religions of their ancestors. 7.2 percent of the people are Catholics and 1/08% percent are Protestants. Another seven percent attend independent churches while the remaining one percent belong to alternative types of Christian groups.

The Bible has not been translated into their language, but the Jesus Film and other Christian videos exist. Also, gospel recordings can be found. Radio broadcasts can also be heard.

The Kotokoli are farmers and traders. They raise many different types of crop including sorghum, millet, pumpkins, and yams. While they raise cattle and other herding animals, they generally do not care for the animals themselves. Rather they hire Fulani to milk the cattle and take care of them. The Kotokoli use the manure from the herd animals as a natural fertilizer, and they also use the animals to bargain for brides and for ceremonial purposes. Most of the men work in the fields and/or as traders while the women stay home and care for the house and children. Women are responsible for gathering materials like wild berries or grasses that could be used for food or to make their houses.

Families usually build mud houses that are strung together around a central open area. They build high walls around the outside of the family dwelling to keep outsiders from seeing in. Parents will arrange the marriage for the children. Men who wish to marry a woman must perform some service for the bride's family and also give them a certain number of cattle. As in

most Muslim cultures, the man is allowed to take up to four wives; however, the first wife has the most status. All of the families answer to a headman who in turn answers to a district leader who eventually answers to the Uro in Sokode.

12335

Lama (76,007)

The Lama people live in several villages that lie northwest of Boukombe in the Boukombe Subprefecture of the Atakora Province. They also live in the Djougou and Bassila subprefectures of the Donga Province. They speak a language called Lama and are part of the Gur people cluster. Many people are also familiar with French. About one to five percent can read and write in their own language. Two alternate names for this people group include: Lamba or Losso. Most of the people are farmers who enjoy playing soccer in their spare time.

Eighty-three percent of the population practice indigenous religions while five percent are Muslims. Around 6 percent are evangelicals. Evangelicals outnumber Catholic in Benin. Another fourteen percent attend independent churches, and the remaining one percent belong to alternative types of Christian groups.

The New Testament had been translated by 1993, and the Jesus Film is accessible. Gospel recordings exist.

12339

Mandinka (7,722)

The Mandinka people live in many different parts of West Africa. There are many different names for this people group as well. A general name for this people is Maninka.

The Maninka are predominantly Sunni Muslims. Ninety percent of the Maninka in Benin are Muslims. They were evangelized by Muslim traders that encouraged them to accept the basic tenets of the Muslim faith while still allowing them to keep their beliefs in the interference of magic and the spirit realm in their daily lives.

Six percent are still completely devoted to their ethnic religions. The Maninka people see god as someone to fear. They believe that they must appease the angry, vengeful spirits that would bring misfortune into their lives. To that end, they consult with diviners and other spiritual beings who might be able to help them in times of sickness.

Only .30% are evangelicals with a higher percentage following the Catholic Church.

The New Testament has been translated, and the Jesus Film is accessible. Gospel recordings can also be found.

The Maninka are a patrilineal society. Parents usually arrange girls' marriages. Men, as Muslims, may marry more than one wife. Women will do household work and take care of the children while men take care of the animals and the fields.

There is a strict social strata in the Maninka culture. Descendants of the first settlers of a Maninka village are generally the leaders of that village. Musicians called griots are held in high esteem because they will pass on the oral traditions of the people. Blacksmiths are also very important to the Maninka people.

12337

Maxi (162,523)

The Maxi people live in the Collines Province in the subprefectures of Dassa-Zoume, Savalou, Bante, Glazoue, and Ouessi. The Maxi people also live in the country of Togo. There are three languages that have close lexical similarity: Fon (80%), Ayizo (68%), and Aja (51%). Many people are also familiar with French or Fon. Two alternate names for this people group include: Maxi-Gbe or Mahi. They are part of the Guinean people cluster.

Reporters indicate some discrepancy pertaining to the predominant religion of the Maxi people. People Groups states that the predominant religion is Christianity. However, according to Joshua Project, sixty-six percent of the population practice ethnic religions while thirty-four percent are "Christian adherents." Four percent of the "Christian adherents" are evangelicals. Sixty percent of the Christian adherents are Roman Catholics while twenty percent are Protestants. Another nineteen percent attend independent churches, and the remaining one percent belong to alternative types of Christian groups.

The Bible has not been translated into their language, and the Jesus Film is inaccessible. Gospel recordings exist.

12340

Mbelime (31,967)

The Mbelime people live in 5 villages in the Boukombe Subprefecture and also in towns in the Coby Subprefecture of the Atakora Province. They speak a language called Mbelime and are part of the Gur people cluster. Most people are also familiar with French or Ditammari. Some alternate names for this people group include: Mbilme, Niendi, or Niende. People call themselves 'Bèbèdibè'. Foreigners should not use the term Niende because this name is considered to be derogatory.

The predominant religion is Islam. In fact, sixty percent of the population is Muslims while twenty percent practice ethnic religions. Of the remaining 14% are Catholic and around 5 % evangelical. Another thirteen percent attend independent churches while the remaining two percent belong to alternative types of Christian groups.

The Bible has not been translated into their language, and the Jesus Film is inaccessible. Gospel recordings can be found.

12341

Mina (185,957)

The Mina people live in the Mono and Atlantique provinces. They speak a language called Gen and are part of the Guinean people cluster. About one to five percent of the people can read and write in their own language. Most are also familiar with French. Gen is used as one of the languages in Benin's national literacy campaign. Some alternate names for this people group include: Ge, Gen-Gbe, Mina-Gen, Guin, Gegbe, or Popo.

Almost seventy percent of the people are Catholic adherents while twenty-seven percent practice indigenous religions. The remaining three percent are non-religious. Another fourteen percent attend independent churches, and the remaining one percent belong to alternative types of Christian groups. Only four percent of all the Christian adherents are evangelicals.

The New Testament had been translated by 1962, and the Jesus Film is accessible. Gospel recordings exist.

The Mina are farmers and raise crops like millet, plantains, and maize. The Mina were one of the groups that sold slaves to the Europeans during the Slave Coast era. Today they are active in political and commercial circles and exert influence over societal issues.

12342

Mokole (109,093)

The Mokole people live in Kandi and other villages to the north and east in the Borgou Province. They speak a language called Mokole and are part of the Yoruba people cluster. Less than one percent of the people can read and write in their own language. Many people also know French. Some alternate names for this people group include: Mokollé, Mokwale, Monkole, or Féri.

Some discrepancy pertaining to the predominant religion of the Mokole people exists in the literature. People Groups states that the predominant religion is Islam. However, Joshua Project states that sixty-eight percent of the population practice ethnic religions while only twenty percent are Muslims. Around 11 percent of the people are Catholic adherents with less than 1 % being evangelicals.. Another nine percent attend independent churches while the remaining one percent belong to alternative types of Christian groups.

The Bible has not been translated into their language, but Christian tracts are available. The Jesus Film is not accessible, but gospel recordings exist.

12343

Mossi (27,869)

The Mossi people speak a language called Moore and are part of the Gur people cluster. Some alternate names for this people group include: Moose, More, Mole, or Moshi.

Forty percent of the Mossi people are Muslims while thirty-five percent are Christian adherents. The remaining twenty-five percent practice ethnic religions. Over 18% of the Mossi are Catholics and about 12% are Protestants. Another fourteen percent attend independent churches, and the remaining three percent belong to alternative types of Christian groups.

The complete Bible had been translated by 1993, and the Jesus Film is accessible. Gospel recordings exist.

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>

12344

Nago (558,560)

The Nago people live in southeastern Benin in the Plateau Province. They speak a language called Ede Nago and are part of the Yoruba people cluster. Many people are familiar with French or Yoruba. Yoruba is used in the national literacy campaign so people who can read and write will usually be able to do so in Yoruba and not Ede Nago. Some alternate names for this people group include: Nagots or Nagot.

The predominant religion of the Nago people is Christianity. Sixty-four percent of the population is Catholic adherents with only 1.5% being evangelicals. Another twenty-four percent of the people practice ethnic religions and the remaining ten percent are Muslims. Nineteen percent attend independent churches. The remaining one percent belong to alternative types of Christian groups.

There is a translation need, and the Jesus Film is inaccessible. Gospel recordings can be found.

12345

Nateni (58,713)

The Nateni people live in the Atakora Province. Tayakou is the center of traditional beliefs and practices. They speak a language called Nateni and are part of the Gur people cluster. Speakers also use Baatonum or French.

Eighty-eight percent of the population practice indigenous religions while seven percent are “Christian adherents.” Another three percent are Muslims, and two percent are non-religious. Fifty percent of the Christian adherents are Protestants, and forty-five percent are Roman Catholics. Another four percent attend independent churches, and the remaining one percent belong to alternative types of Christian groups.

The Bible has not been translated into their language, and the Jesus Film is inaccessible. Gospel recordings exist.

Most people are agriculturalists. They use simple tools like hoes to cultivate the land. Men usually arrange marriages for their daughters as infants. Men may have multiple wives.

12346

Pila (91,335)

The Pila people live in the Djougou area of the Atakora Province. They speak a language called Yom and are part of the Gur people cluster. About two percent can read and write in their own language. About ten percent speak Dendi and three percent are also familiar with Dompago. Some alternate names for this people group include: Pilapila or Kpilakpila.

Fifty-one percent of the population practice ethnic religions while thirty-four percent are Muslims. Another 9 % are Catholics and and less than three percent being evangelicals. Another nineteen percent attend independent churches, and the remaining one percent belong to alternative types of Christian groups.

The New Testament had been translated by 1985, but the Jesus Film is inaccessible. Gospel recordings exist.

12347

Saxwe (200,022)

The Saxwe people live in the Mono Province. They speak a language called Saxwe Gbe and are part of the Guinean people cluster. An alternate name for this people group is Saxwe-Gbe.

Almost 61% of the population is Catholic and some 11% protestant. Others practice ethnic religions. Another twenty-one percent attend independent churches, and the remaining two percent belong to alternative types of Christian groups.

The Bible has not been translated into their language, and the Jesus Film is inaccessible. Gospel recordings exist.

12348

Seto (27,353)

The Seto people live in southwestern Benin. They speak a language called Gun and are part of the Guinean people cluster.

Ninety-five percent of the people practice ethnic religions, and five percent are Christian adherents. 85 percent of the people are Roman Catholics while five percent attend protestant and independent churches.

The complete Bible had been translated by 1972, and tracts are also available. The Jesus Film and other Christian videos are also accessible. Gospel recordings also exist.

12351

Songhai (9,152)

The Songhai people speak a language called Koyraboro Senni Songhay. The Songhai are a very ancient people group. In fact, one of the great Malian empires was built by the Songhai ethnic group.

The Songhai 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. In all, 99.19 % of the population is Muslims. Only .81% of the people are Catholic or Christian adherents. The Bible has not been translated into their language, and the Jesus Film is inaccessible. However, gospel recordings and radio broadcasts can be heard.

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/>

12352

Soruba (11,320)

The Soruba people live in the Atakora Province. They speak a language called Miyobe and are part of the Gur people cluster. Some alternate names for this people group include: Bijobe, Biyobe, Sorouba, Solla, Uyobe, Meyobe, Kayobe, Kuyobe, Sola, and Solamba.

Sixty percent of the population practice ethnic religions. The belief in the influence of spirits over everyday life causes people to be highly superstitious. Another thirty-four percent of the people have converted to Islam. The remaining six percent are Catholic or Christian with .6% of those being evangelicals.

The Soruba value honor above all things. Boys go through initiation ceremonies and must not show fear. Bringing dishonor to the family means great shame and possible excommunication. People who become Christians face persecution and abandonment by their families. The Soruba are farmers. They often find life hard because of the scarcity of water.

<http://www.sim.org/PG.asp?pgID=54&fun=1>

12354

Tofin (108,829)

The Tofin people live in the So-Ava Subprefecture of the Atlantique Province. They speak a language called Tofin Gbe and are part of the Guinean people cluster. Many people speak French, Gun, and Fon. Different literacy groups are teaching the people to read in Gun, Fon, and Tofin. Eighty-eight percent of Gun is lexically similar to Tofin. Some alternate names for this people group include: Tofingbe or Tofi.

Seventy-three percent of the people practice ethnic religions while twenty percent are Catholic adherents. Around 6 percent of the people are evangelicals. Another fourteen percent attend independent churches, and the remaining one percent belongs to alternative types of Christian groups.

The Bible has not been translated into their language, and the Jesus Film is inaccessible. Gospel recordings exist.

12355

Toli (7,722)

The Toli people live in the Weme Province. They speak a language called Gun and are part of the Guinean people cluster.

About 94.90 % of the population practice ethnic religions while three percent are Catholic adherents. The remaining .10% are non-religious. Only two percent of the population is evangelical. Twenty-two percent attend independent churches (this figure shows the numbers of persons who live in syncretism, both 'Christian' and ethnic religion).

The complete Bible had been translated by 1972, and tracts are available. The Jesus Film and other Christian videos are also accessible. Gospel recordings can be found.

12357

Waama (52,191)

The Waama people live in 20 villages in the Atakora Province. The town of Natitingou is their cultural center. Several thousand also reside in Cotonou. They speak a language called Waama and are part of the Gur people cluster. People use Waama in most communication settings including preschools, traditional religion ceremonies and in some church services. It is also used as a trade language by other people groups. About one to ten percent of the population can read and write in Waama. Newspapers, radio and television programs, a dictionary, and a grammar are produced in the Waama language too. Many of the younger people also are familiar with French. Two alternate names for this people group include: Yoabu or Yoabou.

Sixty percent of the Waama practice indigenous religions. They worship many different gods and spirits. Usually the head of the household will offer a sacrifice to the different deities on altars that are found in the family home. When sickness or a poor harvest threatens the well-being of the family, diviners are called to help appease the angry gods or spirits.

Thirty percent of the population are Muslims

Eight percent are Christian adherents and only two percent are evangelicals. Another five percent attend independent churches while the remaining three percent belong to alternative types of Christian groups.

The Bible has been translated. The Jesus Film and other Christian videos can be seen. Gospel recordings can also be found.

The Waama are farmers, herders, and traders. Men take care of the land and animals. They may also travel long distances to trade. Women take care of the home, but may also trade in the local marketplace or help with farming.

The oldest living male of the original settlers of an area is the headman of the village. He settles disputes between families and insures that social customs are followed. Because the shedding of blood defiles the land, the headman is responsible for keeping peace among all of the families in a village.

Girls are often promised at birth in a betrothal arrangement. Prospective grooms don't have to pay a bride price but will probably work for the family of the girl for some time before the wedding. Since men may marry multiple wives, each wife has their own hut.

12358

Wachi (40,597)

The Wachi people live in the Mono Province. They speak a language called Waci Gbe and are part of the Guinean people cluster. Some alternate names for the Wachi include: Wachi, Watyi, Waci, and Waci-Gbe.

The Watchi are animists. They believe in a supreme being named Mawu that created the universe. Several other lesser deities assist Mawu. The Watchi are highly afraid of offending the spirits. They will call on a Fa (witchdoctor) whenever misfortune occurs in order to determine what they must do to appease the angry spirit. Because the Watchi believe in many gods, they may sometimes confess Christian beliefs while still practicing some animistic rituals.

Only 1.5% of the people are evangelicals.

The Bible has not been translated, and the Jesus Film is not available. Gospel recordings can be found.

The Watchi are primarily farmers. All of the family must work together because the crops usually are used for sustenance. Any extra money is used quickly on home improvements or for other daily necessities. Families will loan a boy or girl out to another family to work if they don't have enough money to raise the child.

Visiting is a form of showing respect. The more visitors a family has, the more respect the family has. Saving face is also very important. Fathers are very strict and look for instant obedience from their wives and children. Outward behavior is more important than intrinsic motivations.

<http://www.watchiharvest.com/>

12359

Weme (178,115)

The Weme people live in the Weme and Atlantic provinces. They speak a language called Weme Gbe and are part of the Guinean people cluster. Most people are also familiar with French or Fon. An alternate name for this people group is Weme-Gbe. The Weme people are predominantly subsistence farmers. Polygamy is acceptable so families are usually fairly large.

Eighty-one percent of the population practice ethnic religions. Ancestor worship and Vodun are common parts of life. People also like to wear sacred amulets to ward off evil. 14% percent of the people are Catholic. Five percent of the population is evangelicals. Twenty-eight percent attend independent churches. Another fifteen percent are Protestants while the remaining two percent belong to alternative types of Christian groups.

The Bible has not been translated into their language, and the Jesus Film is unavailable. Gospel recordings exist.

<http://weme.couts.net/>

12361

Xwela (78,455)

The Xwela people live near Lake Aheme in the Come Subprefecture of the Mono Province. They also live in the southernmost part of Bopa Subprefecture. They even have villages in the Kpomasse and Ouidah subprefectures of the Atlantic Province. They speak a language called Xwela Gbe and are part of the Guinean people cluster. Many people are also familiar with

French as it is used in public schools. Fon, Waci-Gen, or Saxwe are also used by some churches and in literacy efforts. Some alternate names for this people group include: Phera, Xwela-Gba, Houeda, or Peda.

Some discrepancy pertaining to the research about the predominant religion is obvious. People Groups states that the predominant religion is Christianity. However, Joshua Project states that ninety-four percent of the people practice ethnic religions while only six percent of the people are Christian adherents.

The Bible has not been translated into their language, and the Jesus Film is inaccessible. Gospel recordings and radio broadcasts can be heard.

12353

Xwla (99,569)

The Xwla people live along the western coast in the Mono Province, the Atlantique Province, and the Littoral Province. They speak a language called Western Xwla Gbe and are part of the Guinean people cluster. Gen and Fon are used by many people too.

Christianity is the predominant religion. Other people also practice ethnic religions.

The Bible has not been translated into their language, and the Jesus Film is inaccessible. Gospel recordings do not exist.

12364

Yoruba (715,014)

The Yoruba people live in Porto-Novo and throughout the country in towns and major villages. They speak a language called Yoruba and are part of the Yoruba people cluster. About one to thirty percent of the people can read and write in their own language. 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 lived 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. In Benin, 45.30 % of the people are Christian adherents while forty-eight percent are Muslims. Approximately four percent practice ethnic religions, but many Christian adherents and Muslims are syncretic. 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.

The complete Bible has been translated into their language, and tracts are available. The Jesus Film is also accessible. Gospel recordings and radio broadcasts can be heard.

From *Muslim Peoples* by Weekes

12370

Zerma (6,840)

The Zerma people speak a language called Zarma. 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.

Eighty percent of the people are Muslims. Eighteen percent practice traditional religions. Only 1.2 percent of the population are Christian adherents, and 0.8% of the people are evangelicals. Another eight percent attend independent churches while the remaining two percent belong to alternative types of Christian groups.

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 emphasize evangelism and church starting among the multitudes of followers of ethnic religion in Benin. Many people of Benin are also caught in the web of deceit surrounding the practices of vodun. Even people who attend a local church may still practice certain tenets of their traditional religions. Benin is the home to Vodun. Spirit possession and witchcraft are a part of everyday life. While the government once shunned and banned Vodun practices, it now acknowledges Vodun as a legal religion. Evangelicals should develop methods of sharing the Good News with followers of ethnic religions and teach these methods to the peoples of Benin.
2. Evangelical Christians and churches should pray for the protection of missionaries who are serving among the peoples of Benin. Prayer is also needed for the protection of the missionaries who seek to serve in Benin. Local leaders that are strongly involved in Vodun may not be welcoming and may try to make life difficult for missionaries as they seek to work in rural areas. One missionary family went without meat for a month because the local Vodun priest told the people in the market to refuse to sell them meat. Other types of social pressure are also exerted against the missionary families where possible. Pray for the strength of the missionaries.
3. Evangelical Christians and churches should pray that new converts will be strengthened to live out their new Faith in Christ. Pray for strength of Christian believers who are also shunned after coming to Christ. Pray for husbands or wives who are married to

unbelievers who may still attempt to adhere to the traditional beliefs and thus bring dissension and strife into their homes.

4. Evangelical Christians and churches should seek to alleviate the poverty in Benin. Many people in Benin are extremely poor. The return to a democratic form of government has caused some alleviation of the previous economic stresses experienced under Kerekou's socialist regime; however, many people barely sustain their families. This extreme poverty causes internal social problems like abuses of child labor and forced marriages. This also keeps many children from attending school. Teachers and medical personnel are desperately needed.
5. Evangelical Christians and churches should seek to contribute to the churches in Benin in ways of discipleship training.
6. Evangelical Christians and churches should seek to provide Bible translations and other evangelistic materials for use in the churches of Benin

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