



The Zan Gula of Chad

On the foot of a hill towering over the otherwise flat horizon live the Zan Gula. Although they call themselves Muslims, the animism is still very much alive, including animal sacrifice, witchcraft, secret societies, idol worship, belief in and appeasement of ancestral spirits, spiritual healing and all the rest of it.

The rough terrain of the Guera region makes it necessary for the Zan Gula to work hard for survival. The soil is hard, and the seeds must be planted with the hot, burning sun overhead, so that when the rains fall in July there will be a harvest of millet for the whole family to eat. The harvest is stored in a granary formed from the clay soil, so there will be enough to eat until the rains fall next year, and the cycle begins all over again.

A small church of Christians from southern people groups exists in Zan village. Their pastor is a Chadian from another people group, supported through churches in the United Kingdom. An evangelist-nurse from yet another Chadian ethnic group is also part of the team. Their desire and vision is to see the Zan Gula come to know the Savior they love. Though the soil of the Zan Gula's hearts has been hard, and their labors toiling, it is encouraging to see interest expressed by some Zan Gula in the Good News they are proclaiming. But still, it is hard for the pastor and the evangelist-nurse not to get discouraged in the face of resistance and a seeming lack of interest in the gospel by many. Please pray for a church to be established among the Zan Gula soon.

Primary Religion:

Islam, Muslim-Animism

Disciples (Matt 28.19):

0%

Churches:

1

Scripture Status (Matt 28.20):

None in their language

Population (date):

5,000



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Item Name	Item Note	
Have They Heard The Gospel?		Profile Summary
Believe In Jesus As God & Only Savior (%)	0%	
Prophet/Good Man, But Not God's Son (%)	100	
Have Not Heard Who Jesus is (%)	20-30%	
Believe Jesus Is A Myth (%)	0	
Number Of Pastors	1	
Number Of Missionaries Working	2	
Response To The Gospel	They respect the Christians. So far three have broken away from Islam/Animism to become Christians. They are all from the same family. A positive attitude towards change can be observed in urban communities, but this doesn't necessarily mean that they are receptive to Christianity.	
Number Of Communities	9	
Comment (Number Communities)	About 4-5 villages and communities in about 4 cities. The only notable community outside of Chad is in Bangui (Central African Republic).	
Number Of Churches	1	
Comment (Churches)	1 Christian dispensary	
Is The Word Of God Translated?	No. There is no Scripture available in any form.	
Any Hinderance To Scripture Distribution?	Most of the people don't know how to read French, much less Chad Arabic. A significant portion of the population has difficulty understanding either profoundly enough to grasp the message of the Scriptures.	
What Kind Of Missionaries Are Needed?	They require medical help, teachers and development workers.	
Population All Countries		Group Description
World Population For This People	5000	
World Population (Urban Percent)	15%	
Countries Where People Group Lives		Group Description
Country Name	Chad	
Country Name	Central African Republic	
Country Name	Sudan	
Geography & Environment		Group Description
Location	Guera Region: Sinaka Department, Melfi Prefecture, Chinguil Sous-prefecture, Bahr-Sinaka Canton. North of Lake Iro, west of Zakouma Park.	
Ecosystem Type	Savannahs	
Geological Type	Plains	
Elevation	300-700 meters above sea level	
Longitude	19.3 degrees East	
Latitude	10.4 degrees North	
Climate	dry, arid	
Language & Linguistics		Group Description
Comment (Language)	The Zan Gula and the Bon Gula actually perceive themselves to be one ethnic group that happens to speak two different languages. The dominant group and language variety however is Zan Gula.	
Percent Monolingual (%)	20%	
Literacy		Group Description
Adult Literacy Percentage	6.9%	
Percent Literate For Men	12.9%	
Percent Literate For Women	1.9%	
Literacy Attitude	Somewhat receptive	

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Item Name	Item Note	
Active Literacy Program	Yes	
Publications In Vernacular	two shellbooks and a transition primer from French to Zan Gula	
Comment (Literacy)	100% of those interviewed were eager for a literacy program for all ages to be set up in their village, and for primary education to begin in Zan Gula. literacy statistics from 1993 Regional statistics	
Economics		Group Description
Subsistence Type	Agriculturalists	
Average Annual Income	less than \$100 US	
Occupation	All are farmers. The primary subsistence crop is millet.	
Income Sources	Selling or trading their millet, etc. at the Zan village market.	
Products / Crafts	Millet only, no crafts beyond what is used within their own homes: grass mats, fans, baskets.	
Trade Partners	Arabs: sell milk and meat to the Zan Gula.	
Modernization / Utilities	Several "Groupments de Developpement" have sprung up, but with no notable results so far.	
Comment (Economy)	The Zan Gula villages feel the need for more development in the region.	
Community Development		Group Description
Health Care (Quality)	Poor	
Comment (Health Care)	Church dispensary in Zan, state dispensary in Chinguil. Nearest hospital is 88 miles (147 km) away over badly maintained roads, virtually impassable during the rainy season.	
Diet (Quality)	Good	
Comment (Diet)	Millet with a sauce made from green vegetables, dried fish, and on occasion meat (chicken, beef).	
Water (Quality)	Poor	
Comment (Water)	The people in Zan identify water as their main problem. Water is contaminated during rainy season and remains a main health risk, especially to infants. Chinguil has a drilled well; Zan has some concrete wells. In all villages water runs low during hot season and people have to go to the nomads' watering holes for water.	
Shelter Description	A round hut made of mud bricks, with a cone shaped straw roof.	
Electricity	None	
Comment (Energy)	The Zan Gula are 108 miles (180 km) from Sarh, the nearest town with electricity. The nearest town with car fuel is Am Timan, 88 miles (147 km) away. The people cook over open wood fires.	
Clothing	Woven fabrics, imported from outside Chad. Men wear long robes with long sleeves, and women wear wrap around skirts with flowing robe-like covering.	
Transportation	Most travel is still done on foot. Some people have donkeys and donkey carts. There are no regular market trucks, but during dry season a market trucks comes from Am Timan every few weeks. There are a few bicycles and motorbikes in Zan. The situation in Chinguil is not known to the informant, but since it is now a Sous-Prefecture there should be some improvement in transportation. There is no transport at all during rainy season, not even by foot. Some travel by boat.	
Infant Mortality Rate	13.7%	
Life Expectancy	59.6 years	
Leading Cause Of Death	Intestinal infections	
Comment (Community Development)	Mortality and Life Expectancy Rates based on Regional average (1993 The current lack of transportation has contributed to the cohesiveness of the group.	
Society & Culture		Group Description
Family Structures	extended family	
Neighbor Relations	cohesive, interdependent	

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Item Name	Item Note
Authority / Rule	Village chiefs, subservient to the canton chief, who currently happens to be a Zan Gula himself. The Sous-préfect is now also a Zan Gula
Social Habits/Groupings	Some ancient clan residues.
Cultural Change Pace	Slow
Identification With National Culture	Distinct
Self Image	There is some pride in their culture and language, but at the same time there is heavy culture loss and assimilation to the predominant Islam-oriented culture.
Judicial / Punishment System	Chief and village elders
Celebrations	Islamic (Ramadan, Eid Al-Ahda...) Traditional (harvest celebrations, leading the ancestor spirits out of the village, etc...)
Recreations	Socializing, listening to the radio, evening dances.
Art Forms	None observed
Media	Radio National du Tchad, broadcast in Sara, Shuwa Arabic and French. Most of the Zan Gula who CAN understand the radio only understand the Shuwa Arabic broadcasts.
Local Language Broadcasting	None
Attitude To Outsiders	Somewhat receptive
Comment (Attitude To Outsiders)	Somewhat receptive, but there is heavy resistance as well. The home of the missionaries was plundered twice and burned down.
Attitude To Change	Somewhat receptive
Comment (Attitude To Change)	They talk about change but once change is going to be introduced there is very little receptiveness.

Youth

Group Description

Labor and tasks (6-12 year olds)	Helping in the family field, Girls: helping with the housework and younger children.
Youth Greatest Needs (teens)	Lack of suitable education, lack of mother tongue education, little value given to education which leads to very few children attending school, no adequate jobs for those who had schooling.

Education

Group Description

Primary Schools	2
Primary School Enrollment	300
Percent Of Eligible Students Enrolled	25%
Teacher To Pupil Ratio	1:150
Language Of Instruction Early Years	French
Language Of Textbooks Early Years	French
Language Of Instruction Later Years	French
Language Of Textbooks Later Years	French
Comment (Education)	Primary and secondary school in Chinguil, full cycle school in Zan village. The Zan school is mostly made up of Zan Gula students. The secondary in Zan is not really functioning, since there are not enough teachers.

Church Growth

Status of Christianity

Reached Status	Evaluated
Total Baptized	3
Lay Leaders	1
Christian Clinics/Hospitals	1
Comment (Church Growth)	There was a local Zan Gula Evangelist for an year or so, who now had to leave the village for reasons unknown to the informant.

Religion & Response

Status of Christianity

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Item Name	Item Note
Religious Practices & Ceremonies	Islamic (Ramadan, Eid Al-Ahda...) Most observe Ramadan and high Muslim celebrations, but only a minority prays regularly or goes to the Mosque. Traditional religion (harvest celebrations, leading the ancestor spirits out of the village, many sacrifice, wide spread use of spirit healers ..) Almost everybody participates in important animist ceremonies, many sacrifice, wide spread use of spirit healers. There are several practising witches in Zan.
Attitude To Christianity	Somewhat receptive
Attitude To Religious Change	Somewhat resistant
Resistance / Receptivity	They respect the Christians. So far three have broken away from Islam/Animism to become Christians. They are all from the same family. A positive attitude towards change can be observed only in urban communities, but this doesn't necessarily mean that they are receptive to Christianity.
Religious Analogies & Bridges	Jesus as direct mediator between God and man. Jesus sacrifice, as seen in the sacrifice of Abraham's son celebrated during Eid Al-Ahda.
Spiritual Climate And Openness	The Zan Gula are not radical Muslims, but, in many ways, Muslims in name only. They have had a powerful, practicing Shaib who has died since, but animism is still very much alive.
Comment (Religion)	Margai= The traditional religion. Shaib= traditional religion priest.
Recommended Approaches	Work with the pastor/doctor already there with the Assemblées Chrésiennes du Tchad. (ACT)
Current Needs	Schools and adult education is the greatest felt need. Medical work: the region seriously needs a well-supplied dispensary. Well digging and agricultural development also possibilities.
Items For Prayer	Pray that God would draw the Zan Gula people to Himself, and establish a church of Zan Gula believers. Pray for the (military base) doctor/pastor EVANGELIST-NURSE and the PASTOR, for opportunities to share the Lord with the Zan Gula people.

History Of Christianity In Group

Status of Christianity

Year Began	1991
By Whom	ACT (Assemblées Chrésiennes du Tchad)
Significant Events	Christian soldiers sent to Zan village set up a church there, and built a simple building next to one of the village wells.
Comments (History of Christianity)	No non-Christian Zan Gula people come to church, not even for a funeral or a Christmas Celebration.

Scripture

Status of Christianity

Translation Status	Probable
Available Scripture	None
Form Of Scripture Available	None
Reason For Urgent Need Of Translation	there exists a group of the population who are practically monolingual. (i.e. FSI 1+ in Chad Arabic).
Other Forms Of Gospel Available: Literature	Yes, Two shellbooks and a transition primer from French to Zan Gula.
Other Forms Of Gospel Available: Recordings	No
Other Forms Of Gospel Available: Film/Videos	No
Other Forms Of Gospel Available: Radio	No

Missions and Churches

Status of Christianity

Organization Name	Assemblées Chrésiennes du Tchad
Main Ministry	Medical
Year Started	1991
Number Of National Workers	2