

The Bilma Kanuri of Niger

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The Bilma Kanuri inhabit the oasis town of Bilma and some of the other oases in the Djado plateau of the Sahara Desert. They cultivate date palms in the oases, and also use a method of evaporation to produce salt from saline fields in the area that they mold into oblong “loaves” for easy transport. The town of Bilma finds its greatest importance because of its location which is important as a crossroads for two major trans-Saharan trade routes which have been used by merchants, pilgrims and bandits for centuries. Tuareg traders crossing the Sahara in a west-east direction come from the city of Agadez with large camel caravans to trade dried meat, cloth and other goods for the dates and salt of Bilma. Each Bilma Kanuri family “adopts” a specific trader, cultivating a friendly relationship with him, and even placing orders for goods from year to year. The north-south trade route still connects the metropolis of Maïduguri, Nigeria, with the Libyan and Tunisian coast.

Though the Bilma Kanuri are the majority in the oasis towns, they have regular dealings with the Teda nomads in the area, as well as with the Tuareg, Hausa and Arab traders. Formal education is not very important to the Bilma Kanuri; few children attend school. Those students who desire higher learning, must travel across the desert to unfamiliar surroundings in order to attend grades 7 through 12.

The identity of the Kanuri is firmly intertwined with Islamic beliefs and practices. Authority is first of all with God, then with the father of the family. Supreme loyalty and respect is given to the father of the family at all times. The harsh environment surrounding the Bilma Kanuri has made the families into tightly knit units who have close dealings with each other, but limit their contacts with strangers. As far as it is possible to know, the Bilma Kanuri have never heard the Good News of Jesus Christ from any source.

Primary Religion:

Islam

Disciples (Matt 28.19):

0%

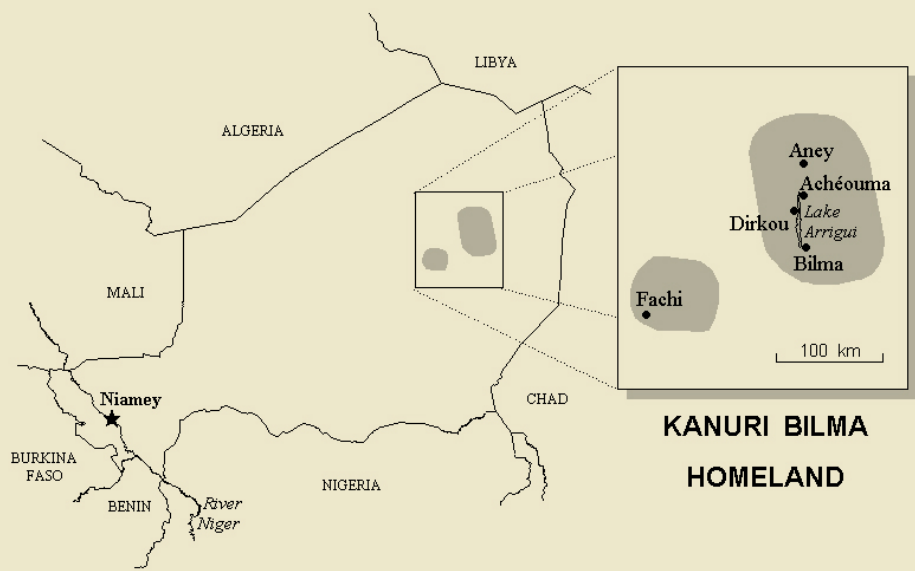
Churches:

0

Scripture Status (Matt 28.20):

Population (date):

20,000 (2003)



**KANURI BILMA
 HOMELAND**

The Bilma Kanuri of Niger

Item Name	Item Note	
Have They Heard The Gospel?		Profile Summary
Believe In Jesus As God & Only Savior (%)	0%	
Number Of Pastors	0	
Number Of Missionaries Working	0	
Response To The Gospel	They are reticent to change. Christianity has yet to be presented to them as an option.	
Number Of Communities	2	
Comment (Number Communities)	2 towns in desert oasis.	
Number Of Churches	0	
Is The Word Of God Translated?	No	
Any Hinderance To Scripture Distribution?	No scripture, no workers, few readers.	
What Kind Of Missionaries Are Needed?	Without cross-cultural missionaries, the Bilma Kanuri will not hear the Gospel.	
Countries Where People Group Lives		Group Description
Country Name	Niger	
Geography & Environment		Group Description
Location	the Kawar region and Djado plateau of the Sahara Desert.	
Economics		Group Description
Trade Partners	<p>Bilma Kanuri have regular dealings with the Teda nomads in the area, as well as with the Tuareg, Hausa and Arab traders plying their goods at regular intervals throughout the year.</p> <p>Goods traveling in this direction tend to be camels. In other centuries gold and slaves were other commodities traveling through the Bilma oasis.</p>	