

BEDERIA OF SUDAN

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QUICK FACTS

People Name: Bederia
People Cluster: Arab, Sudan
Language: Sudanese Arabic
Trade Language: Arabic
Population: 851,000

PRAYER POINTS

Ask God to raise up prayer teams to intercede for the Bederia.

Pray that the Bible will get into the hands of the Muslims in this area and that they will read it and follow Jesus.

Ask God to move powerfully to allow the Gospel message to reach many ears through the radio broadcasts among the Bederia.

Pray that the Christians living in northern Sudan will be stirred with vision for outreach and a genuine burden to reach out to the Baggara tribes.

Ask God to reveal Himself to the Bederia through dreams and visions.

ABOUT THE PEOPLE

The Bederia belong to a group of tribes in northern Sudan known as the Baggara tribes. The tribes are all culturally similar and share a common ancestry.



They primarily live in three main provinces of Sudan: Darfur, North Kordofan, and South Kordofan.

The terrain in these provinces ranges from sparse desert, to arid and semi-arid wilderness, to meadows scattered with trees. The land is very dry, receiving rain only in the wet season, which is generally from June to September.

The Bederia have a long history, their origin tracing back several centuries to the days before Mohammed. Over time, they have dispersed across North and Central Africa, with different groups populating different regions. However, there are no purely Baggara areas.

Most of the Baggara are herdsmen (mainly cattle, although some sheep and goats). Because of their need to move with the herds, the Baggara live in homes that can be easily transported. Their camp units are known as *furgan*, and each is made up of members of the same family line. The structures are simple, dome-shaped tents made of branches, thatch, and canvas mats that can be easily taken down, packed up, and moved. The tents are arranged in a circle, and the herds are brought to the middle at night.

Although most Baggara tribes are nomadic, some live in farming communities or in towns and villages, in which case the houses are built with mud bricks and are more permanent.



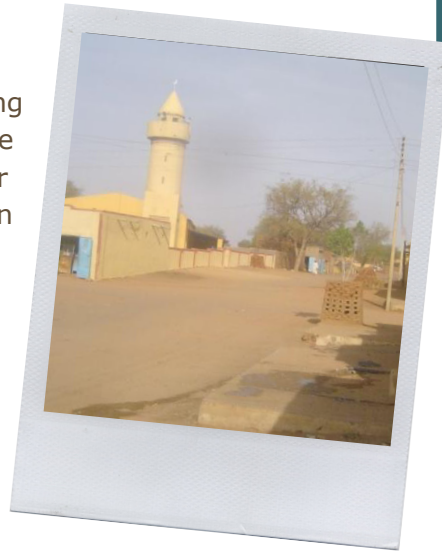
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Baggara culture is distinct in that the women are the ones who work to provide the family income. They often earn this income by selling the milk and milk products of their herds. The money is then theirs to either keep or use for household expenses. Married Baggara women own their tents as well as all housekeeping items. The men in Baggara society mainly care for the herds and do the farming.

Cross-cousin marriages are preferred in Bederia society, and polygamy is common. A "bride price" is paid by the future husband and his close relatives. Part of this money is used to purchase items for the home, and part is used to buy food for the marriage celebration that takes place in the bride's camp. Couples may live where the husband chooses, but only after living near the bride's parents for a time immediately following the wedding.

Bederia camps are headed by a male leader known as a *shaykh*. The position of shaykh is generally inherited; however, consent must be given by all adult males in the camp before the new leader may assume his role. Depending on the shaykh's wisdom and economic status, he may have a great deal of influence. However, he does not have ultimate authority within the camp, but is rather the spokesman.



WAYS TO HELP

Because the Bederia tend to reside around Darfur, they have been affected by the recent humanitarian crisis there. Those with experience in disaster relief, humanitarian aid, or administration could help to organize and provide much-needed help to these individuals.

Teachers could be very helpful to the war-torn regions around Darfur where the Bederia people live. Educators and English teachers would be able to provide valuable service for these Muslims.

Would you be willing to be among the FIRST to engage these people with the hope of the Gospel? Would you be willing to lead a team? Contact us today to find out more - we need people to visit the Bederia of Sudan and find other great ways to bring new teams to live among them for the sake of the Kingdom.

CONTACT

FRONTIERS

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