

# KERINCI OF INDONESIA

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## QUICK FACTS

People Name: Kerinci

People Cluster: Minangkabau-Rejang of Sumatra

Language: Kerinci

Trade Language: Indonesian

Population: 365,000

## PRAYER POINTS

Ask the Lord for laborers to work among the Kerinci of Indonesia.

Ask the Holy Spirit to grant wisdom and favor to the agencies looking to work among them.

Pray that Christian radio broadcasts, evangelical literature, and the Jesus film will be made available to the Kerinci.

Pray that God will reveal Himself to the Kerinci through dreams and visions.

Take authority over the spiritual principalities and powers that have kept the Kerinci bound for many generations.

## HISTORY

Today, the Kerinci live on the Indonesian island of Sumatra, high in the Bukit Barisan mountains. They are originally from the eastern coast of the island but moved to the mountains when fleeing from Muslim sultanates during a time of war. Their current homeland presents the people with somewhat harsh living conditions, but they have found ways to sustain themselves through farming and fishing.

The Kerinci have, throughout the years, managed to retain their unique cultural and ethnic identity. They have not assimilated with other groups but have instead taken elements from other cultures and adapted them in a way that is unique to their own way of life.

They have been isolated for some time, but the government is now relocating many groups in order to make use of the rich farming soil. A national park is also being created in an effort to preserve the rainforest, which will bring many foreigners into the area.

## LIFE

Most of the Kerinci earn their livelihood from farming, the main crop being rice. They also grow vegetables, potatoes, and tobacco. Crops such as coffee, cinnamon, and cloves are also grown around the base of the Bukit Barisan mountains, and the farmers who grow them are generally nomadic. Some Kerinci are also fishermen, and others harvest products from the jungle, such as resin and rattan.

A Kerinci village is called a *dusun* and is made up of a single clan that shares a common female ancestor. The houses are generally long and built very close together along the road.



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## FAMILY

Kerinci society is matrilineal, which means that lineage is passed down through the mother's side. Once a man marries, he leaves his family's home and moves in with the bride's family. When a daughter gets married, she is usually given a small house which is attached to that of her parents. She will then do the same for her own daughters. A woman's clan is the most important family unit among the Kerinci and is known as a *kelbu*.

Though lineage among the Kerinci is traced through the females, the family is led by a male. In many matrilineal societies, the woman's brother is this male leader; however, among the Kerinci, the family's male leader is the woman's husband. Inheritance also goes to the daughters of a family instead of the sons.

## BELIEFS

Like many Southeast Asian peoples, the Kerinci practice a mixture of Islam and animism. They use spiritual healers and magic to bless their crops, and they talk often of meeting ghosts, being hit by ghosts, and being stepped on by ghosts.



## WAYS TO HELP

This group is actually quite fortunate to live in a fertile area, but they need to increase their use of appropriate technology to improve their farming and rain-forest productivity.

The area surrounding Lake Kerinci has underdeveloped potential for tourism. Tourism businesses could bring much revenue to the people.

## CONTACT

### FRONTIERS

800.462.8436  
[www.frontiers.org](http://www.frontiers.org)