



# PEOPLE GROUPS:

## NORTH AFRICAN ARABS

Africa has been home to Arab people since the A.D. 600s. Many live in the Maghreb region of western North Africa, which includes the countries of Mauritania, Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia and Libya. These countries also have significant populations of Berber, or Imazighen, people and in some ways the two cultures have blended over centuries of living alongside one another.

Maghreb Arabs speak various dialects of Arabic, Berber/Amazigh, and some Spanish and French. Although they have Arab ancestry, they also have African ancestry and identify with both cultures on this continent where they have lived for centuries.

The Maghreb region is predominantly Muslim, with very small populations of Jews and Christians. The Islam practiced here is not generally as conservative as in Saudi Arabia, and people range from being very devout and conservative to practicing a more nominal Islam, as well as Folk Islam.

In parts of North Africa, some people have begun to question or reject their Muslim upbringing, identifying instead as atheist or agnostic. Others are genuinely seeking for the truth, and many turn to the internet in their search for answers about God and faith. It is no exaggeration to say that many North African Arabs don't know anyone who can explain to them how to know Jesus Christ.

Some Christian ministries seeking to reach North African Arabs with the gospel of peace have set up websites and social media platforms to engage with those who are searching for information about the truth. Through this work, genuine seekers are able to learn more about the Bible and the Christian faith, and eventually connect with other Christians who live in their area of North Africa. These seekers have a chance to hear the gospel message, place their faith in Christ, and join a healthy North African church.

### At a Glance

- Many parts of North Africa are fewer than one percent Christian.
- People in North Africa will likely face opposition from their family and community for becoming Christians.
- Although many have little or no access to a physical copy of the Bible, most own a smartphone and have some access to the Internet. Technology is a key way to reach them with the Gospel.

### Pray

- Increase the spiritual hunger for truth among North Africans.
- Give wisdom and discernment to Christians who are using technology to reach them with the Gospel.
- Help the few local churches to be faithful and healthy.
- Help the believers to become bolder witnesses and not to give in to fear.



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