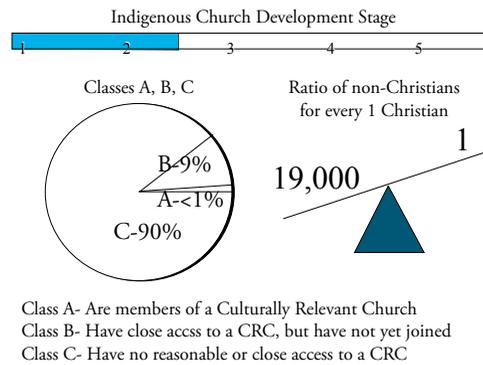




Quick Facts

Population: 9,500,000
 India: 9,200,000
 UAE: 40,000
 Kuwait: 35,000
 Oman: 10,000
Religion: Sunni Islam
Believers: 0.005%
Scriptures: Portions
Ministry Tools: JRGT
C Status: 2
M Status: 2
MS Subgroups: 20+



Identity: The Mappila are the descendants of Arab traders which intermarried with Malayalam speaking Dravidian women along the Malabar coast. There are also a significant number of Mapilla that descend from conversions to Islam, such as the slave castes in Malabar which converted in mass. They are the earliest known Muslim community in South Asia.

Lifestyle: The Mapilla were once a prosperous coastal trading community. The coming of the Portuguese changed their fortunes, and forced many to go inland in search for new economic opportunities. Many became tenant farmers and were harshly treated by their Hindu landlords. Their relative poverty has forced tens of thousands to migrate to the Middle East as contract workers, who then send remittances back to their families.

Customs: Most Mapilla follow the Islamic rule of inheritance in which the

sons inherit three fifths of the father's estate and the daughters two-fifths. However, among some, if the widowed mother is still alive she will inherit a sixth. The eldest son assumes the father's authority after his death.

Religion: The Mapilla are mostly Sunni Muslims of the Shafi school. A group of families known as the Thangals, claim direct descent from the prophet and are highly respected. Many serve as *qadi (kazi)*, or congregational leaders. The Kazi of Calicut is regarded as the supreme religious leader of the Mapilla. The Kazi also oversee the traditional councils for each community, which conduct their affairs in the mosque. Beyond teaching and performing the standard religious rites, such as for marriage and divorce, the Kazi may also be called upon to cure diseases.

Christian Outreach: Despite living in Kerala, which is the most Christianized state in India, little effort has been

made by local believers to reach out to their Mapilla neighbors. However, in the last decade, three indigenous Indian mission agencies have commenced work among the Mapilla and a few fellowships have been formed with hundreds coming to faith in Christ.

How to Pray:

✞ Historical persecution by the "Christian" Portuguese has made leaving Islam synonymous with treachery against one's people. Pray for reconciliation and forgiveness between the Christian and Muslim communities in Kerala.

✞ The Mapilla have the lowest literacy rate of any people group in Kerala (less than 25%). Pray for specialized outreach by local believers to meet this need.

✞ Intercede for the influential Thangal clan that many might come to faith and would use their influence and leadership ability to build the Kingdom of God among the Mapilla.

✞ Pray for the 200,000 Mapilla who are working overseas that they might hear the gospel from Christian co-workers, and become witnesses throughout the Middle East and amongst their own families.

Every year 85,000 Mapilla die without Christ.