

THE GAMBIA



CHURCH PLANTER

Ebrima Bah

PEOPLE GROUP

Pulaar Fulani of the Gambia

TESTIMONY


“Before the year 2005, I had no significant contact with Christians or Christianity. In 2005, I came in touch with a Christian couple Sam and Vicki from the Marcy SWP at my school back in the village when they helped to pay my school fees. That was the gateway for me to come to Christ as this couple gave me my first ever Bible which I started reading. Finally in 2007 I moved to Sukuta, to the House of Wisdom Church where I stayed with pastor Modou Camara. This pastor offered to host me, feed me and even gave me some pocket money for my lunch at school. In short, I saw an extraordinary kind of love in the pastor that really amazed me. He was so loving and caring. I thought to myself « If this man is a Christian, and can be so kind to someone like me who didn't know God, I want to know why ». As a result, I started reading my Bible more often again. I particularly enjoyed the Book of Proverbs. Finally in 2009, I experienced a dream in which Jesus approached me in the form of a very bright light, talking with me. -

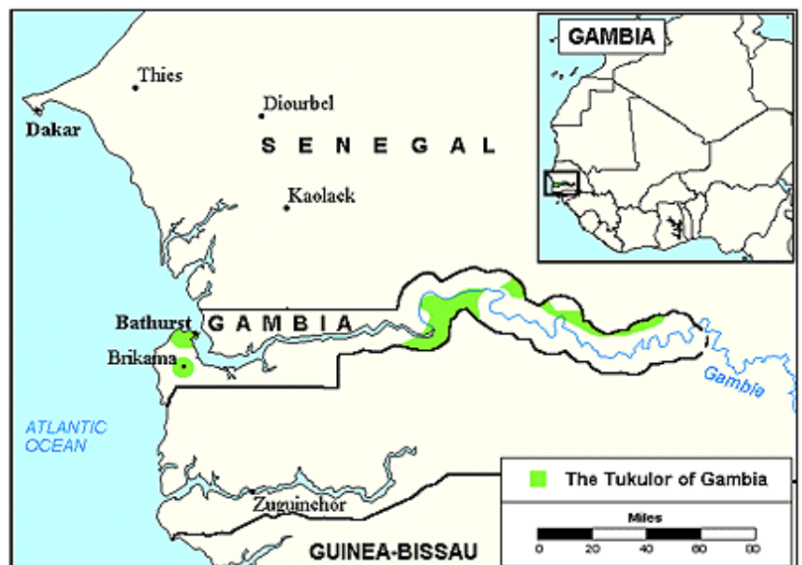
- I had to share this unusual happening with pastor Modou the following morning. That same day I made a commitment to follow Jesus for the rest of my life. I was baptized towards the end of the year in 2009. Today I continue to serve the Lord with my wife and two kids. We give God the glory for our lives.”

EXPERIENCE

Ebrima Bah from the Fula people group was born on April 2nd, 1988. He obtained a BSC degree in Political Science at the University of the Gambia. Previously he served as a local church youth president, worked with EHC Gambia and currently serves as the Bible storytelling facilitator for the Seed company. Ebrima wants to reach the Fulani people in Dimbaya, Busura, Pemyem, and Manduar in the Gambia.

PULAAR FULANI IN GAMBIA

Population 7,900	Main Language Pulaar
Largest Religion Islam (99.80%)	Christian 0.20%
Evangelical 0.10%	Progress 



https://joshuaproject.net/people_groups/15622/GA

While most of the Pulaar (or Tukolor) live in the nation of Senegal, another group can be found in The Gambia. The Pulaar are thought to have descended from the Fulani and the Wolof or Serer tribes. Most of the Gambian Pulaar live a rural lifestyle, raising livestock, farming, and fishing. Sadly, a steadily rising population and an unequal distribution of land have resulted in the emigration of large numbers of Pulaar (particularly youth) to the cities in search of better job opportunities.

What Are Their Lives Like?

Traditional Pulaar society is divided into four main social classes, each having twelve “castes.” Their social life is a mixture of native customs and Islamic traditions. Neither Islam, the effects of colonization, nor the goals of various national leaders have been able to erase the old social divisions.

The torobe are the aristocratic class. The middle class, or rimbe, is made up of fishermen, farmers, tradesmen, and administrators. The middle class also includes the craftsmen, and the lower class includes the freed slaves and the slaves. Social status rarely changes; however, slaves are freed at every third generation. The Pulaar marry within their class divisions, women usually between the ages of 16 and 18, and men between the ages of 25 and 30. Although it is uncommon, a man may have up to four wives. Families are generally large, with an average of six children per family. Traditional, rural Pulaar villages are small. They have round huts made of clay or rough bricks, with straw roofs. Villages are governed by a group of elders from the aristocratic caste. Dietary staples include rice, millet, sorghum, fish, nuts, and fruit. The average per capita income is only \$150 to \$200 per year.

What Are Their Beliefs?

The Pulaar first accepted Islam in the eleventh century. Traditional Muslim beliefs, such as the nature of man and his destiny after death, play a significant role in the people’s outlook on life. Muslim brotherhoods teach a mystical approach to Islam: the people seek closer relationships to God through rituals, prayer, and other techniques. However, Islam has not brought any major changes to Pulaar attitudes toward spiritism and magic. The people still use charms, amulets, and witchcraft. The Pulaar attribute supernatural powers to various Muslim clerics who practice divination, the use of supernatural powers.

What Are Their Needs?

Decreasing income from the sale of agricultural products, encroachment by the Sahara Desert on farm land, deforestation, and increasing population are resulting in extreme financial concerns for the Pulaar. Nearly all village water sources are polluted. Malaria and other infectious diseases inflict a heavy toll each year. Although there is some literacy among the aristocracy, most of the Pulaar are illiterate.

Islam has enormous penetration into every aspect of Pulaar life. A somewhat isolated people with minimal exposure to other religious ideas, the Pulaar view the world and gain their personal identities from their rigid beliefs in the Islamic family and community. They are extremely reluctant to leave the world they know.

