

ANTIOCH CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

THE KLUET PEOPLE OF INDONESIA

Unreached Peoples Prayer Profile

For August & September



The Kluets (a subgroup of the Batak), live on the Indonesian island of Sumatra, primarily in the remote central highlands of the Aceh province. Their homeland lies across the Bukit Barisan Range, known as the "Parade of Mountains," which runs for more than a thousand miles throughout Sumatra and reaches heights of over 12,000 feet. Like most Sumatran peoples, the Kluets speak a Malayo-Polynesian language.

The Kluets are near neighbors to the Gayo people and have a very similar lifestyle and culture. They are also close neighbors to the radical Islamic Acehese, whose sultans conquered them and forced them into slavery during the first half of the 1600's.

For many years, the area of the Kluets remained unknown and unexplored. The Dutch ultimately gained control of their region, but the Kluets resisted this occupation from 1904 to 1942. Many of their people were killed during this time.

What are their lives like?

The chief occupation of the Kluets is agriculture, especially the growing of rice, which is their staple food. They also eat dried fish and meat. Some cattle and horses are raised.

The Kluets primarily live in extended households in small mountain villages. The most important house in the village is the *umah* ("dwelling house"). This house is built on pillars and is a communal dwelling inhabited by a number of related families. The *umah* has two galleries, one for the men and the other for the women. The individual family sleeping quarters are located in the middle. Each village also has a *meresah* ("men's house"), which is the traditional place that boys over eight years of age, unmarried men, widowers, and strangers spend the night. This house is also used for religious and training purposes.

Kluets marriages are exogamous, which means that they marry outside their own family groups. After marriage, the women keep close ties with their own families. Polygamous marriages (having more than one spouse) are rare, though permitted. First marriages are usually arranged by the families on both sides. The engagement lasts from one to three years, in order to give the man time to acquire the bride price, and the woman, the dowry. Weddings are celebrated according to Islamic customs.

Villages are ruled by chiefs who inherit their positions. The villages are divided according to *mergo*, or family groupings. A *mergo* may either inhabit an entire village or part of a village. The smallest unit of government is a subdivision of a family group, called a *rodjo*. The subjects of a particular chief consider themselves blood brothers, and call each other *sara rodjo* ("one rodjo") or *sara ino* ("from one mother").

The Kluets have no written language, and their folklore consists only of legends and customs, which are often shared through performed poetry.

What are their beliefs?

The Kluets have been Muslims at least since the 1600's, but they have little knowledge or real concern for Islam. The majority of people in the rural areas still believe in friendly and unfriendly spirits and ghosts, and in saints. All of these must be appeased through gifts and cult practices. In the few modern towns, these beliefs are less prevalent, although healing by use of exorcism is common.

Numerous semi-religious rituals are conducted at various stages of life, including a hair cutting ceremony that takes place seven days after birth. Only one lock of hair is left on the baby's head. If the child becomes sick, this lock is removed, in the hope that the bad luck will also be removed. The child is bathed in a nearby river at this time. At eight years of age, both boys and girls have their jaw teeth filed and permanently blackened.

What are their needs?

Because the Kluets live in a somewhat isolated region, they have been very difficult to reach with the Gospel. Today, they are still without a translation of the Bible, Christian radio broadcasts, the *Jesus* film, or missionary efforts. They need to know that Jesus is the One who has the power to set them free.

Prayer Points

- Ask the Lord of the harvest to send forth missionaries to work among the Kluets of Indonesia.
- Pray that the Lord will raise up linguists who can develop a written language for the Kluets.
- Pray that the Jesus film will soon be produced in their language.
- Pray that the Lord will strengthen, protect, and encourage the Kluets.
- Pray over the spiritual principalities and powers that are keeping the Kluets bound.
- Ask God to raise up a mighty army of prayer warriors who will intercede for the Kluets.

Kluet People Group Information:

Country:	Indonesia
State / Province / Island:	Sumatra
Language Spoken:	Kluet
Population of People in this Country:	25,000
Population of Language Speakers in the World:	25,000
Language Code:	BTZ00
% Christians of this People in this Country:	Unknown
# of Evangelicals of this People in this Country:	0
% Evangelicals of this People in this Country:	0%
Latitude, Longitude:	Unknown, Unknown
Affinity Block Name:	Malay Peoples
People Cluster:	Mandailing
Race Code:	MSY44
1995 Beginning Joshua Project List:	No
Active Original Joshua Project List:	Yes

Additional Information: Kluet People Group

Complete Bible:	No
New Testament:	No
Bible Portions:	No
Jesus Film:	No
Christian Radio Broadcast:	None
Audio Recording of Gospel:	No