



The Konso of Ethiopia

There are almost 200,000 Konso confined to a homeland of considerably less than 1000 square kilometers. The Konso have no memory of where their ancestors originated. They assume they have always lived in the tiny hilly territory in the far southwest of Ethiopia. Their African ancestors, however, probably arrived there around 5,000 years ago, bringing with them the prevalent stone age culture and agricultural techniques that are still evident today.

From these beginnings their remarkable culture developed in virtual isolation. Surrounded by their neighbors, they continue to till their fields. With the exception of trading with the Borena for salt or cowrie shells, outside influence has virtually passed them by. They have always fiercely defended their territory. This is evident in the fact that each village is walled. Much of their land is terraced and planted with trees, and the fertile fields are tended, irrigated and fertilized. There is a passionate love for work in the blood of these people.

Children marry around the age of fifteen. Though the Konso are not a proud people they do not look favorably on intermarriage. Non-Christians can have three or four wives. They do not live together with extended families, and inheritance is passed down to men only.

Primary Religion:

Christianity/Animism

Disciples (Matt 28.19):

1 - 3%

Churches:

92

Scripture Status (Matt 28.20):

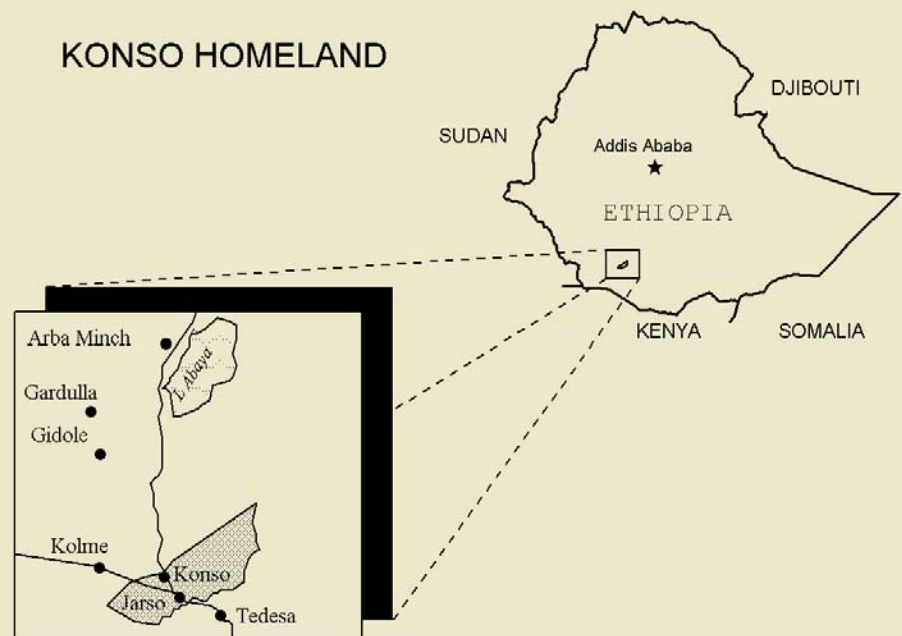
Portions

Population (date):

186,517



KONSO HOMELAND



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Item Name	Item Note	
Have They Heard The Gospel?		Profile Summary
Call Themselves Christian (%)	20%	
Believe In Jesus As God & Only Savior (%)	1 - 3%	
Prophet/Good Man, But Not God's Son (%)	0%	
Believe In The Local Traditional Religion (%)	70%	
Have Not Heard Who Jesus is (%)	0%	
Number Of Pastors	10	
Comment (Pastors)	10 volunteer evangelists	
Number Of Missionaries Working	3	
Number Of Communities	115	
Comment (Number Communities)	There are approximately 115 villages organized into 31 farmers associations including Gomaide.	
Number Of Churches	92	
Is The Word Of God Translated?	No, but the first draft of the New Testament is almost ready. The four Gospels were published at the beginning of 1996.	
Any Hinderance To Scripture Distribution?	Nothing is hindering the distribution of the Scriptures, except lack of money to purchase Bibles if the crops are not good.	
Forms Of Gospel Presentation Available (Summary)	Sound recordings.	
What Kind Of Missionaries Are Needed?	There is already a strong Christian witness, but they continue to need some assistance with translation and perhaps other aspects of discipleship.	
Countries Where People Group Lives		Group Description
Country Name	Ethiopia	
Geography & Environment		Group Description
Location	North from the border of Kenya, Bakawle is the capital city of the Konso area.	
Country	Ethiopia	
Elevation	1,500 - 2000 meters	
Language & Linguistics		Group Description
Other Mother Tongues Of This Group	OROMO, BORANA-ARSI-GUJI	
Other Mother Tongues Of This Group	AMHARIC	
Linguistically Related Languages	OROMO, BORANA-ARSI-GUJI	
Comments (Related Languages)	Only a few speak it, but most understand it.	
Comments (Related Languages)	It is spoken by a few educated people.	
Neighboring Languages	OROMO, BORANA-ARSI-GUJI	
Neighboring Languages	DIRASHA	
Literacy		Group Description
Adult Literacy Percentage	10%	
Literacy Attitude	Very receptive	
Economics		Group Description
Subsistence Type	Pastoralists	
Occupation	Drink brewing (women), trade (men), weaving cotton (all), building (men).	
Income Sources	Business, trading, selling their product (clothes).	
Products / Crafts	Sorghum, maize, wheat, beans, cattle, goats, sheep, eggs, cotton cloth.	
Trade Partners	Neighboring ethnic groups, Addis Ababa.	
Comment (Economy)	Most people are poor.	

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Item Name	Item Note	
Community Development		Group Description
Comment (Health Care)	Nurses, clinics. Mothers do not have time to take care of their children.	
Comment (Diet)	They rarely eat meat. Their diet consists mainly of sorghum or other grains and leaves (which are sometimes seasonal and inadequate).	
Comment (Water)	From streams, digging from the ground, wells. In some places, water makes one's teeth red. It is hard water.	
Shelter Description	Wood and grass houses, stone fences for 2,000-3,000 people, separate houses for different purposes.	
Comment (Energy)	Electricity is only available on the mission compound and Anba Minch.	
Clothing	There are strong, warm wrap-around clothes for ladies. Men increasingly wear Western style clothing.	
Transportation	On foot, cars doing "matatu" business, a few donkeys.	
Society & Culture		Group Description
Family Structures	No extended families; inheritance to men only. Traditionally monogamous, now three or four wives. (Christians have only one.)	
Neighbor Relations	They help each other, but generally, they don't like to intermarry with others.	
Authority / Rule	Elders (all old men, age sets over 45). Older advisors.	
Social Habits/Groupings	Farmers' Associations (traditional, regional, 2-4 villages)	
Cultural Change Pace	Medium	
Identification With National Culture	Similar	
Self Image	Neutral	
Judicial / Punishment System	Punishment according to the crime e.g. whipping for stealing.	
Celebrations	Sacrifices on mountains; special holidays, e.g. Easter (even for non-Christians), Harvesttime dances.	
Recreations	Jokes, eating, singing, dancing together, evening sports.	
Art Forms	Woodwork, weaving, face/body painting (white and red), hand wind recorders in Church only.	
Media	Very few have radios.	
Local Language Broadcasting	None	
Attitude To Change	Very receptive	
Youth		Group Description
Youth Problems (Teens)	Early marriages. Quarrels, revenge (mostly against outsiders).	
Youth Greatest Needs (teens)	Attention of mother, food, later marriage, education.	
Education		Group Description
Language Of Instruction Later Years	Amharic	
Language Of Textbooks Later Years	Amharic	
Comment (Education)	Many schools up to 10th or 11th grade exist, but few Konso go to school. (Maybe 10% attend, with fewer girls going than boys. They drop out at marriage age, 15-16 years old.)	
Religion & Response		Status of Christianity
Religious Practices & Ceremonies	Prayers for rain; sacrifices to God on mountains; asking advice from old men.	
Attitude To Christianity	Very receptive	
Resistance / Receptivity	Most Konso belong to the Mekane Yesus churches. There are many strong churches.	
Religious Analogies & Bridges	Their beliefs have many things in common with Christianity e.g. ethical rules (self-righteousness a problem).	
Spiritual Climate And Openness	Open to Gospel	
Comment (Religion)	They are also steeped in traditional religion.	

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Item Name

Items For Prayer

Item Note

Pray that work will move forward in translation, literacy, and health care. (Concerning health, the Konso, even the children, drink too much tradition beer.) Ask the Lord to give health and grace for translators in the office. Pray that He gives them wisdom to lead in the development of the spiritual life of Konso people.

Scripture

Status of Christianity

Translation Status

In Progress

Available Scripture

Portions

Comment (Scripture)

There are some sound recordings, with hand-wound players. Songs and drama are also used.

Other Forms Of Gospel Available: Literature

No

Other Forms Of Gospel Available: Recordings

Yes

Other Forms Of Gospel Available: Film/Videos

No

Other Forms Of Gospel Available: Radio

No