



The Jains of Kenya

The Kachchi Jains speak the Cutchi dialect of Gujarati. Jainism is an ascetic faith emphasizing salvation through self-denial, rejecting materialism and personal pleasure. It preceded Buddhism in its rejection of Brahmin domination, the caste system and Hindu monism (oneness of things), and unlike Hinduism, Jainism affirms the objective reality of the physical world. Jains believe strongly that they gain positive karma by denying the pleasures of the 5 senses.

Kenyan Jains have a more moderate view, accepting a high standard of living, travelling by motorcar, rather than walking, and sometimes eat meat. The first Jains came to Kenya in the 1880s as business employees, but moved into their own business enterprises. Jains are prominent in education and medicine, with strong social service in health, notably eye care.

Jains have a strong extended family and community identity. They hater for community meetings and low-ritual worship at their own temples.

Jains claim that theirs is the oldest religion in India, with the founder, Nataputta Vardhamana, the "24th Savior", (known as Mahavira, meaning 'great man'), being born in 599 B.C.

Primary Religion:

Jain

Disciples (Matt 28.19):

Churches:

Scripture Status (Matt 28.20):

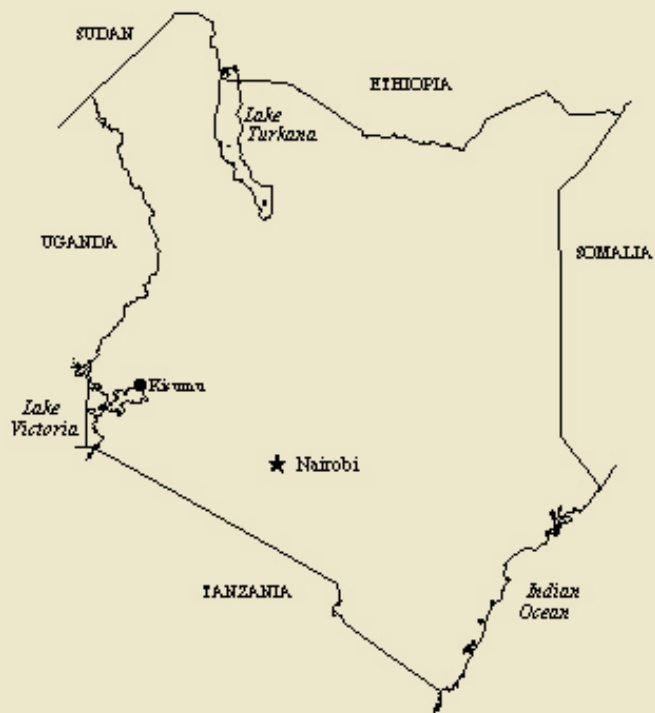
None; bilingual in Kenya

Population (date):

6,000,000



GUJARAT HOMELAND



The Jains of Kenya

Item Name

Item Note

Have They Heard The Gospel?

Prophet/Good Man, But Not God's Son (%)	75
Is The Word Of God Translated?	Tracts in Gujarati and English.
Forms Of Gospel Presentation Available (Summary)	15 min weekly Gospel radio program in Gujarati, KBC.
What Kind Of Missionaries Are Needed?	Yes.

Profile Summary

Population All Countries

World Population For This People	6000000
World Population (Date)	1994

Group Description

Countries Where People Group Lives

Country Name	Kenya
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Group Description

Geography & Environment

Location	Cities - mostly Nairobi, Mombasa
Country	Kenya

Group Description

Language & Linguistics

Comment (Language)	English growing as a community language.
Alternate Language Names	Oshwal
Other Mother Tongues Of This Group	SWAHILI
Other Mother Tongues Of This Group	ENGLISH
Comments (Related Languages)	English is growing as a community language.
Neighboring Languages	ENGLISH

Group Description

Literacy

Literacy Attitude	Very receptive
Active Literacy Program	No
Comment (Literacy)	100% literate. No local publications in Mother tongue, but Indian newspapers and magazines are available. Shah is a common Jain name, as are Dodhia, Haria, Gudka, Seth. Corrections to Ethnologue entry: Gujarati needs to be listed as the language spoken by the majority of Asian Kenyans.

Group Description

Economics

Occupation	Business (real estate, groceries and clothing, small shops); professions: medical, education, transport.
Income Sources	Trading, professional.
Trade Partners	Kenyans
Modernization / Utilities	On a par with the Western World.

Group Description

Community Development

Health Care (Quality)	Very good
Comment (Health Care)	Operate hospitals.
Diet (Quality)	Very good
Comment (Diet)	Rice & curry, vegetables, some Kenyans Jains now eat meat.
Water (Quality)	Very good
Comment (Water)	City water.

Group Description

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Item Name	Item Note
Shelter Description	Concrete and brick homes, very modern.
Energy/Fuel (Quality)	Very good
Comment (Energy)	Electricity.
Clothing	Western style, women sometimes wear traditional sari.
Transportation	Motor cars.
Infant Mortality Rate	very low
Life Expectancy	65

Society & Culture

Group Description

Family Structures	Nuclear family with perhaps elder parents or grandparents under one roof.
Neighbor Relations	Good.
Authority / Rule	Elected leaders of community.
Social Habits/Groupings	Community life centers around the Jain temples, community centers and business contacts.
Cultural Change Pace	Medium
Identification With National Culture	Similar
Attitude To Outsiders	Somewhat receptive
Attitude To Change	Somewhat receptive
Comment (Culture)	They are socially open and hospitable, but attitude to change is cautious, but intellectually open. They have a separate identity from Hindus; Jainism resists caste restrictions.

Education

Group Description

Percent Of Eligible Students Enrolled	100
Language Of Textbooks Later Years	English
Comment (Education)	Oshwal communities maintain primary and secondary schools in Nairobi. Some attend Hindu, Muslim or International schools. Their schools have strong religious education, and resist materialism and instill Jain religious values.

Religion & Response

Status of Christianity

Religious Practices & Ceremonies	Radical asceticism has been modified. Education and social relief work are high values. Jains are known for high moral values.
Attitude To Christianity	Very resistant
Attitude To Religious Change	Very resistant
Resistance / Receptivity	Non-assimilating; satisfied in communal faith and identity. They are mildly to strongly resistant personally, but affirm the value of Christianity for Christians.
Religious Analogies & Bridges	Mahavira considered to be virgin born and diving - can be presented as 25th and final Jirthankara (Savior).
Spiritual Climate And Openness	Strong social identity and family ties. Jainist logic considers all knowledge relative and transient.
Comment (Religion)	80% of Kenyan Jains are from the Svetambaras religious group, the others belonging to the Digambaras. Jains are also distinguished by communities, the arweh. The Visa Oshwal are the largest, comprising of 70% of all Kenyan Jains. 10% of Visa Oshwals are Hindu, rather than Jains. The next major community are the Dasa Oshwals.
Current Needs	The Jain temple near Old Town Mombasa is an elaborate temple providing guides and an introduction to Jainism.
Items For Prayer	Conviction of the Holy Spirit in lives of convert seekers. Need more workers.

History Of Christianity In Group

Status of Christianity

Comments (History of Christianity)	No known direct targeting of Jains in Kenya.
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Scripture

Status of Christianity

Comment (Scripture)	there are tracts in Gujarati and English.
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Item Name

Item Note

Christian Literature And Media Status

Status of Christianity

Literature Available

Tracts exist in Gujarati and English.

Radio Programs Available

15 minute gospel program in Gujarati, Thursdays 12pm, KBC.

Videos Available

Jesus film in English. Jesus of Nazareth in English.

Audio Visual Available

As for "video"