

Ho



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Population: 1,500,000 (15 lakhs)

Literacy: 5%

Scripture Status: New Testament translation is nearing completion

Ho language speakers live in the forests in the Singhbhum district of Jharkhand state, and in Mayurbhanj, Keonjhar and a few other districts of Orissa. They are also reported to be in a few districts of West Bengal and



Assam. They originally inhabited only the Singhbhum district of Jharkhand state, but they moved to the Mayurbhanj district of Orissa due to forest clearance.

The meaning of the word "Ho" in their language is "man." They prefer to live in the forest because they exist mainly on forest products. They also do agricultural work, but when their field work is over, the men go to the forests to hunt. They earn money by selling forest goods, such as oil seeds and gum from trees. They also collect the leaves of the Sal tree; they sew them together and make plates and bowls which are in great demand in North India. Development has not had any impact on their lives; for example, none of the Ho villages have electricity. Most Ho live in mud houses with straw-thatched roofs. They are animists by faith, and worship the spirits of their ancestors. They are zealous about their cultural identity and have a very positive attitude towards their language.

The Ho people are very receptive to the Gospel, and, as a result, many churches and worship groups have been established among them. Several Christian organizations work among them.

The Bible is being translated into the Ho language. Five books of the Old Testament have been translated, and the New Testament translation is nearing completion. The fast growing Ho church will soon have God's Word in its mother tongue. Having the Bible in Ho will help the Christians to study the Scripture and to bear much fruit.

Pray for:

1. The Ho community to be educated, developed and to have all the basic amenities needed for life.
2. Their economic prosperity and for them to attain equality with other neighbouring communities.
3. The translation of the New Testament to be completed soon and made available to Ho Christians.
4. The Ho Church to catch the vision of reaching their own people with the Gospel of the Lord Jesus.

