

The Songo people of Angola



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The Songo people’s homeland is a region with a fertile savanna on a high plateau and a mild climate. They live on a semi-arid coastal plain and work in agriculture and fishing. Though they’re a church going people, few are grounded in biblical truths that develop genuine, Christ-like witnessing believers.

Professing Songo Christians tend to be nominal and ritualistic and have little understanding of Scripture. Consequently, most are unacquainted with the great truths of the Bible, such as the necessity of the new birth, salvation by faith apart from legalistic works, and the all-sufficiency of Jesus. Without mother tongue Scripture, their faith has become largely formalistic in the 100-plus years since missionaries first introduced Christianity.

Songo believers seek to address the social issues of witchcraft and drug addiction in the local communities. The first of these is a carryover from the traditional culture and religion. When something bad happens, such as natural events and illnesses, people generally blame a human for using sorcery. The drug problem has arisen from the availability of addictive substances to a segment of the population that seeks temporary relief from life’s problems.

Polygamy has also been a long-held practice in the Songo group and is a disturbing element in the largely church society. This practice is dying out, however, and is less of a concern than in the past. The high importance Jesus and the apostles attached to marriage runs counter to this aspect of Songo culture and testifies to its need of transformation.

Primary Religion:

Christian

Disciples (Matt 28:19):

Unknown

Churches:

Unknown

Scripture Status (Matt 28:20):

Portions

Population (date):

50,000 (1978)



SONGO HOMELAND



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Have They Heard The Gospel?

Response to the Gospel	Many Nsongo speakers profess to be Christians but are nominal believers and ritualistic.
Estimated Number of Christian Congregations	Unknown
Is the Word of God Translated?	Not yet
Other Forms of Gospel Presentations	
Recordings:	None
Literature:	
Films/videos:	
Radio:	
Bible Stories:	
Hindrances to Scripture Use	Lack of Scriptures in their mother tongue; witchcraft and drugs
Language of Wider Communication or Trade Language	Portuguese

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Group Description

Population all countries

World Population	50,000
World Population (Date)	1978 (UBS)

Geography & Environment

Location	North central Angola, southeast of Luanda, Malanje, Cuanza Sul, Bié, and Lunda Norte provinces.
Climate	Fertile savanna on a high plateau with a mild, semi-arid climate

Language

Alternate Names	Nsongo, Sungu
Dialects	Mbundu [mck], Sama [smd], Bolo [blv]
Other Mother Tongues	Portuguese
Linguistically Related	Kimbundu [kmb]
Neighboring Languages	Bolo [blv], Umbundu [umb], Luimbi [lum], Chokwe [cjk], Mbangala [mxg], Mbundu [mck]

Community Development

Health Care (Quality)	Despite Angola's vast mineral and petroleum reserves, and its fast growing economy, the standard of living remains low for the majority of the population. Life expectancy and infant mortality rates are among the worst in the world.
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Economics

Subsistence Type	Agricultural, fishermen
Products/Crafts	Vegetables, fish
Transportation	In Angola: 3 railway systems, highways, inland waterways, seaport, airports

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Status of Christianity

History of Christianity

Year Began 100 years ago

By Whom Missionaries

Religion and Response

Translation status Plans are underway to translate the New Testament and record the JESUS film in Songo. They want the Scriptures in easily understood format such as print and audio.

Attitude toward Christianity Although they are a churchgoing people, few are grounded in biblical truths that develop genuine, Christ-like, witnessing believers. Professing Songo Christians tend to be nominal and ritualistic and have little understanding of Scripture.