



NEW COVENANT
MISSIONS
newcovenantmissions.org



Church Planter: Johnson Muthama

Education details: Trained and approved by Missions Outreach Church. Trained by Dynamic Church Planting International.

Experience in ministry:

Trained by local Missions Outreach Church seminars to become a Pastor.

Wife: Purity. Employed as a teacher in a pre-school.

Children: Gloria

I have lived in a very difficult area before I was saved. Because of this hard situation when my Mother passed away, I lived in mourning. I met a man of God who testified to me about Jesus and he told me that even if you are a son deserted by your parents, and your friends have left you, there is a God that will never leave you alone.

Later, I had reached a point of committing suicide so I went and visited this man of God. This is when I gave my life to Jesus Christ, and since then I have seen God be so faithful! The man of God, Pastor Francis Madeka, continued to disciple me for many

years. He has trained me in many ways. Today I have a family, at one time I didn't believe I would ever have a family. God has been so good to me.

I have just recently planted a church in a very Islamic village dominated by Digo Muslims. But a man of peace that is still a Muslim gave us land to place this church on. Now we are planting many home churches in the region. The last church that was planted here was burned down, but somehow I have been given favor.



The man with the white hat is the "Man of Peace" named Mohammed. We are praying for his salvation!



Population
372,000
Main Language
Chidigo
Largest Religion
Islam (79.90%)
Christian
0.10%
Evangelical
0.05%
Progress



Information sourced from Joshua Project.

The Digo People of Kenya

The Digo are an East African tribe, concentrated on the southern coastal strip of Kenya between Mombasa and the border of Tanzania. It is rather surprising to find that in a country that is overwhelmingly Christian, the Digo are nearly all Muslim.

The Digo are a Bantu tribe and are actually grouped together with eight other tribes. Together these tribes make up the Mijikenda, or "nine towns." Tradition tells us that the nine Mijikenda tribes originated farther north, but were driven south as a result of war.

During the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the Digo experienced a time of great famine. It became a common practice for them to give either themselves or their children as kore, or "blood money," to serve as temporary collateral for a loan of food. Sadly, there were many times when the debt could not be redeemed, thus leaving them to live as slaves. Many of the Digo who were brought to Mombasa as slaves later obtained their freedom by converting to Islam.



What Are Their Lives Like?

For many years the Digo have been involved in trade with Muslim Arabs. As a result, they have enjoyed a higher standard of living than most of their neighboring tribes. In addition to trading, farming and fishing are two other sources of income for the Digo. Their principal crop is "manioc,"

a small shrub with thick roots that are eaten like potatoes. They also grow sesame, corn, rice, and beans. "Palm wine" is a popular drink produced from the palm tree.

The Digo tribe formerly lived in large, fortified villages but today their villages only consist of about 40 huts each. The shape of each hut clearly indicates to the villagers who live inside. The huts of elders are round, while those of other people are rectangular.

When a young Digo man marries, he must pay the normal bride-price of four heads of cattle, two goats or sheep, and palm wine. He is then incorporated into the bride's family. Eventually, as he demonstrates leadership qualities, he will be accepted into the body of tribal elders.

What Are Their Beliefs?

Islam is more widely accepted among the Digo than among any of the other Mijikenda tribes. Nevertheless, ties with traditional practices (such as animism and ancestor worship) still have more influence on the Digo community than does Islam. (Animism is the belief that non-human objects have spirits. Ancestor worship is the practice of praying to deceased ancestors for help and guidance.) One example of spiritism is their use of blood sacrifices. Such sacrifices are very significant to the Digo, especially in the exorcism of evil spirits. Witchdoctors are also consulted regularly.

Most of the Digo people over forty years of age have no real understanding of the Koran. Only a few of them have studied Islam in any depth, and most of them have only a superficial knowledge of its principles and doctrines. However, its presence among the Digo over the past eighty years has not gone entirely unnoticed. Its existence has altered both religious and political structures. For example, the people have adopted new attire and diets from their Muslim Arab neighbors. Although they know no religious significance for wearing the black veil, Digo women wear it to show respect for their husbands. This nominal identification with the Muslim religion is referred to as "folk Islam."

What Are Their Needs?

Even though the nation of Kenya is predominantly Christian, the Digo have never been successfully reached with the Gospel. There are currently no Christian broadcasts in their area.

The entire New Testament has successfully been translated into Chidigo, the language of the Digo people, around 2005, and now there is a need for literacy training to put the gospel in their heart language to use. The Old Testament translation into Chidigo has also begun.

Since the Digo are economically self-sufficient, they have no real need to reach out to the nearby Christian-sponsored relief agencies. Materialism is becoming increasingly widespread among them.

Also, the religious practices of the Digo are deeply rooted in spiritism and folk Islam. This makes reaching them a very difficult task.

Prayer Points

- * The raising up of Digo pastors who take their words and actions from the Word of God in their own language is necessary for true church growth amongst the Digo.
- * Pray that God will cause the Digo people to become dissatisfied with their traditional religions and begin searching for the Truth.
- * Pray that God will empower the Kenyan church with the ability and the strategy to reach the Digo tribe with the Gospel.
- * Ask God to soften the hearts and open the ears of the Digo people to the Gospel as it is presented to them.
- * Pray that Christian broadcasts will be made available in the area of Kenya where the Digo tribe is located.
- * Pray for the Christians working nearby the Digo settlements.