

Daasanach

The Daasanach are semi-nomadic people whose cultural identity is thought to result mostly from a common place of residence than from heredity. Exiles from many groups around the area of Lake Turkana have united in support of one another in this hostile, arid environment. They have developed a unique tradition and culture, and are open to the inclusion of other immigrants who are willing to abide by Daasanach customs and values.



Location

At the time formal borders were created for many African countries, the Daasanach found their traditional land divided among Sudan, Ethiopia, and northeastern Kenya. Kenyan Daasanach live around Lake Turkana along the Kenya-Ethiopia border.

Topography

Located on the east coast of Africa, Kenya straddles the equator and is transected from north to south by the Great Rift Valley. It's bounded on the north by Ethiopia and Sudan, the east by the Indian Ocean and Somalia, the south by Tanzania, and the west by Uganda and Lake Victoria. Mount Kenya, with its snow-capped summit, lies on the equator.

Climate

The region where the Daasanach live is arid, semi-desert to desert.

Culture

The Daasanach are a well-integrated society with eight clans and rules which govern their lives. When a man marries, he begins by paying a dowry to his in-laws. The bulk of these payments, however, are paid after the wife has begun to bear children.



Government

Although ceremonial offices exist, most of the governance of communities appears to be decentralized into ad hoc committees of elders.

SIM Involvement

Bob and Morrie Swart, missionaries with the Reformed Church of America, began mission work among the Daasanach in the mid-1960s. Currently, SIM and Wycliffe work with the Daasanach. SIM is working with the Daasanach in Kenya sharing the news of Christ's death and resurrection with the goal of bringing new believers into churches. SIM also serves the medical needs of the Daasanach.

The Daasanach are open in the practice of their religion and, for the most part, welcome other tribes to their festivals and prayers. They reciprocate by observing other forms of worship. However, this does not mean they are open to conversion, especially when repentance from sin is presented as part of conversion.

However, a few Daasanach believers have been trained in the use of a series of evangelistic audiotapes called *Firm Foundations*. As a result of these audiotapes, combined with the witness of the few national believers, a growing tide of people is coming to the Lord in genuine repentance, and a new church has been born on the Omo River.

Scripture Availability

Work is in progress to translate the Scriptures into the language of the Daasanach people. Completed books include the Gospel of Mark, Genesis, Exodus, and Acts. Since fewer than five percent of the adult population are literate, other means of sharing the gospel are essential. Presently, the gospel presentation is available in the form of audio recordings in the Daasanach language.

Urgent Prayer Need

Bingham Academy in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, urgently needs a [French teacher](#) to join their staff team in August. Pray that God will provide the right person to meet this need.