

Som*ali

The population of Som*alis is estimated to be 10,000,000. The consensus among ethnographers is that Som*alis are closely related to other Eastern Cushitic ethnic groups in the Horn of Africa such as the Afar and Oromo. Membership in clans is of profound importance for all Som*alis and transcends all social and religious obligations.

Location

Due to colonial border demarcations that did not correspond with ethnic boundaries, Som*alis are also the majority populations of northeastern Kenya, the Som*ali National Regional State in eastern Ethiopia, and southern Djibouti. Nearly 50,000 Som*alis have also emigrated to Toronto, Canada and more still to the United States, United Kingdom, and other western European countries. Today Som*alis may be found on six continents.



Culture

Poetry plays an important part in Som*ali culture. Poets both propagandize ideas and transmit Som*ali culture. Poems may be expressions of love, recitations of wrongs perpetrated, stimulants to battle, or statements of moral laws. Poems were traditionally passed down orally, but many of them are preserved in written or audio form today.

Language: The primary language is Som*ali with several regional dialects and five closely related languages. Some Som*alis also speak Ki-swahili, Amharic or Arabic as a second language.

Livelihood: In the past, the majority of the Som*alis made their living as pastoral nomads with a minority working as sedentary farmers. However, in the past fifty years, many have become merchants and long-distance truck drivers. Others work in the oil fields of the Arabian Peninsula. The Som*alis of the Diaspora must often work in low-paid jobs. But those with English (or the language of their host nation) and higher education become successful professionals and businessmen and women.



Religion: Over 99% of Somalis practice Sunni Islam. The total population of both Roman Catholic and Protestant Christians represents less than .01% of the population.

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.