

**MISSIONS ATLAS PROJECT
AFRICA
REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO**

Snapshots Section

Country Name: Republic of the Congo

Country Founded in: August 15, 1960

Population: 3,903,318

Government Type: (national, regional and local): republic

Geography/location in the world: The Republic of the Congo should not be confused with the Democratic Republic of the Congo which lies directly south and was formerly called Zaire. The Republic of the Congo (sometimes also called Brazzaville or just Congo) is a small country on the Atlantic coast of West Africa. Its geographic coordinates are 1 00 S and 15 00 E.

Number of people groups: 79

Picture of flag:



Religion Snapshot

Fifty percent of the population claims to be Christian adherents; however, many of the Christians actually practice a mixture of traditional ethnic religious rites along with some form of Christianity.

All religions and % for each:

Christian 50%, animist 48%, Muslim 2%

Government interaction with religion:

The Constitution provides for religious freedom, and the current government ensures that freedom to all faiths. Generally, religious classes are not conducted in public schools.

<http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2007/90092.htm>

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/cf.html#Intro>

Country Profile

Basic Facts

Country Name: Republic of the Congo (formerly known as Middle Congo, Congo/Brazzaville, Congo)

Demographics:

The estimated population of the Republic of the Congo is 3,903,318. Children, up to fourteen years of age, account for 46.1% of the population. There are 906,345 male children between the ages of newborn to fourteen years of age. There are 894,568 female children between these same ages. Adults between the ages of fifteen and sixty-four years of age account for 51% of the population. There are 989,126 males in this age category and 1,002,682 females. In the last age category, sixty-five years and above, there are 45,560 males and 65,037 females. This 65 and over group accounts for 2.8% of the population. The median age for males is 16.5 years, and the median age for females is 17 years.

The birth rate is 41.76 births for every 1,000 people. There are an estimated 5.92 children born to every woman. The infant mortality rate is 81.29 deaths for every 1,000 live births. The death rate is 12.28 deaths for every 1,000 people. The life expectancy for the total population is 53.74 years. The life expectancy for males is slightly lower at 52.52 years while the life expectancy for females is slightly higher at 55 years.

There are approximately seventy-nine different people groups living in the Republic of the Congo. Around forty-eight percent of the population are from the Kongo people group while another twenty percent are from the Sangha people. Twelve percent are from the M'Bochi, and seventeen percent are from the Teke people. Europeans and people from other ethnicities account for the remaining three percent.

In addition to the Congolese, there are many refugees that have made their way to the Republic of the Congo from neighboring countries. Approximately, 46,341 refugees have fled from the terrors that have been occurring in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (formerly Zaire) while around 6,564 Rwandese have made their home there as well.

The risk of infectious diseases is very high. Travelers should be aware that bacterial and protozoal diarrhea, hepatitis A, and typhoid fever may all be contracted from polluted water or food. Other risks include: malaria and African trypanosomiasis (sleeping sickness). There were also reported cases of rabies in 2008.

AIDS is a risk. In 2003, the HIV/AIDS adult prevalence rate was 4.9%. In 2003, 90,000 people had contracted AIDS while 9,700 people had died because of AIDS. The number of people and children who actually have been infected by HIV/ AIDS is probably substantially higher. This epidemic may have caused discrepancies among population estimates.

Language:

French is the official language. It is taught in school and used for government functions. When traders are working among different people groups, they will often use Lingala or Monokutuba. Lingala is used primarily in the northern part of the country and is the preferred language of younger generations. In some areas, people also use Kikongo, Sangha, or Bateke. Each ethnic group has its own individual ethnic language as well.

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/cf.html>

<http://www.everyculture.com/Bo-Co/Republic-of-Congo.html>

<http://www.sil.org/silesr/2005/silesr2005-010.pdf>

Society/Culture:

Christians celebrate Christmas, Easter, and All Saints' Day. National Reconciliation Day is on June 10th, and Independence Day is on August 15th. President's Day is celebrated on February 5th while June 10th is the Commemoration of the National Sovereign Conference.

People remember the foundation of the National People's Army while also celebrating the upswing of the Congo Revolution on July 31st. Children have a special day on December 25th, but youth have their own special day on February 8th. Congolese women are honored on March 8th. People plant trees on March 6th to celebrate Tree Day. December 31st is a day of dual significance as the day set aside to remember the founding of the Congolese Labor Party and the founding of the republic. Finally, March 18th honors Marien Ngouabi, who served as president from 1966 – 1977.

Greetings are very important in Congolese life. When meeting, whether in a business or casual setting, the initiator will ask about the other's health and the welfare of the person and his/ her extended family. Usually, people will offer to shake hands with the one another, however, close family members who have not seen each other for some time may wish to embrace one another in a warm hug. When one of the people involved in the exchange has a higher social status or position of authority, the person from the lower social position generally must acquiesce to the demands or requests of the person of higher rank even if the requests are contrary to the personal beliefs of the listener.

Animals often play important roles in the lives of the Congolese people. Usually each family or clan has a special animal that they revere. This animal's meat will not be eaten. Parents or grandparents will tell their children stories about the way that the animal used supernatural powers to protect the clan at some time—usually during the formation of the lineage.

This use of stories as a way of passing on the family heritage is quite important in Congolese life. While the introduction of mass media like the radio and television has influenced the amount of time that people spend together, talking, storytelling, and visiting neighbors are still primary forms of entertainment. People also enjoy dancing and listening to music or singing.

Knowing one's place in society is important. Within a clan, each person will have a specific role. Also, in social settings, some ethnic groups will be considered more highly than others. Knowing the proper social stratum helps visitors as they interrelate with the Congolese.

Families are usually very influential in a person's life. Knowing the actual kinship between two people may be quite difficult because of the importance of the roles of extended family in the life of a person and the custom of referring to cousins as "siblings." The eldest brother of the mother of matrilineal people groups usually exercises his influence on behalf of nephews during important negotiations. Also, grandparents, aunts, and uncles will often help to instruct the children in proper etiquette and ways of decorum.

In the past, parents or extended families arranged marriages for the bride and groom based upon the economic or social advantages that the match would bring to the clan. Men, in the past, might or might not have been able to state their preference in choosing their first wife while girls usually were simply given in marriage by their fathers or elders without any consultation.

Today this practice is changing. In many areas, a man may approach a woman with a gift of money and ask to marry her. Once the woman accepts, the couple will approach both their families for approval. If the families disapprove, the union may not occur. If the families do approve, the groom will provide the family with a brideprice which may be redeemed by the groom if the couple divorces or if the woman is found to not be a virgin. In the latter case, an annulment will also occur. In order for both families to ascertain the state of the couple's marital satisfaction, the newlyweds are usually visited by women from both families the first morning after the wedding. These visiting women make inquiries with the groom and the bride about their wedded bliss. If there is dissatisfaction, the annulment can occur then.

Once married, the woman is usually very busy bearing children and seeing to their needs while also managing the household chores. In rural areas, she will plant and harvest crops.

Women who are married to a man with more than one wife will usually have their own domicile and not be required to live in the same house with other wives. Polygamy, while legal, is not necessarily practiced in urban areas today because of economic constraints. Polyandry, the practice of one woman being married to several men at once, is not legal. In some cases of polygamy, women may be married to a man under traditional law without having an official legal document. In such cases, the wife with the legal marriage certificate has legal rights that other wives might not possess.

Widows or divorced wives may often have great difficulties in providing for themselves and for their children. In areas where traditional cultural practices still prevail, widows may be required to shave their heads and tear their clothes as a sign of their affection for their deceased husband. Furthermore, the widow may be forced to move away from her own home to a secluded area

outside the village where she will survive with food given to her on the whim of her deceased husband's family. While less common today because of the changes in cultural attitudes, such practices may still occur. Even if widows are not required to observe these mourning rituals, they still may find that their in-laws have legal rights to their children or houses. The legal code indicates that the widow should receive at least 30% of the property. However, this code is not strictly enforced. In either case, the widows may find making a living challenging.

After the last round of fighting in the Pool area, there are many households where women have emerged as the leaders of the family. Often these women are widowed or divorced. They may need to provide for their children and for other elderly relatives. Because of the use of physical violence against women as a means of subjugation, many of these women may also have been disowned by their husbands or families of origin. In Congolese life, women who have been subjected to physical violation by a man may be divorced by her husband.

People usually only prepare meat dishes for special occasions because of the great cost of buying meat. Most meat is imported or hunted. On special days, chicken is usually served along with plum wine or beer. Because of the scarcity of meat, people usually eat bananas, pineapples, peanuts, manioc, rice, and bread. People will avoid eating meat of an animal that their ethnic group reveres as a totem of the people.

[http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/\(httpDocuments\)/34D0DC2F4537C026802570B70059FA44/\\$file/Post-conflict+communities+at+risk.pdf](http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/(httpDocuments)/34D0DC2F4537C026802570B70059FA44/$file/Post-conflict+communities+at+risk.pdf)

World Mark Encyclopedia of Cultures and Daily Life Volume 1 Africa

<http://www.everyculture.com/Bo-Co/Republic-of-Congo.html>

Government:

The government operates under the regulations set forth in the 2002 Constitution. This version of the constitution replaced an earlier one written in 1992. The 2002 version calls for a republican form of a government with a president who acts as the chief of state while a prime minister is accorded the privileges of the head of the government.

Denis Sassou-Nguesso ascended to the Presidency in 1997 after ousting elected President Pascal Lissouba. He was formally elected to the Presidency in 2002 in a general election in which he received 89.4% of the vote. His opponent, Joseph Kignoumbi Kia Mboungou only received 2.7% of the vote. As President, Sassou-Nguesso appoints the presidential cabinet of ministers and leads the government. Presidents serve for seven years and can be re-elected for a second stint in office. The next presidential elections will occur in 2009.

The legislative branch consists of two parts—the Senate and the National Assembly. Usually there are 66 senators. Senators, who are elected through an indirect vote, usually hold office for five years at a time. On the other hand, the 137 members of the National Assembly, while being eligible to serve five-year terms, are elected in popular elections.

The last Senate elections occurred in 2002. The United Democratic Forces (FDU) won 56 of the seats. Various representatives from other political parties captured the other ten seats. The next senatorial elections should be held in July 2008.

The last National Assembly elections took place in 2007. The Congolese Labour Party (PCT) won 46 seats while the Congolese Movement for Democracy and Integral Development (MCDDI) gained eleven. The Pan-African Union for Social Development (UPADS) also got eleven while the Action Movement for Renewal (MAR) and the Movement for Solidarity and Development (MSD) each only gained five seats. The remaining 59 seats were occupied by independents or other representatives from smaller political parties.

When the multiparty system was first created in the early 1990's, 100 or more political parties quickly emerged. However, with the advent of the civil war and subsequent restoration of order, not as many parties remain. President Sassou-Nguesso was the presidential candidate for both the Congolese Labor Party and the Union of Democratic Forces. The Pan-African Union for Social Democracy (UPADS) and the Congolese Movement for Democracy and Integral Development (MCDDI) lost some of their power during the civil war years when leaders left as a result of the political situations. Most political leaders who left during the years of conflict have subsequently returned. The Congolese Labor Party remains the most influential.

The judicial system is generally thought to be based upon the French civil system as well as traditional indigenous legal practices. The highest court is the Supreme Court. The Constitutional Court, the Court of Appeals, and the Court of Accounts and Budgetary Discipline are other influential judiciary bodies.

The government subdivides the country into ten departments which are subsequently further divided into districts. Brazzaville is given the status of both a district and a department. The other districts are Bouenza, Cuvette, Cuvette-Ouest, Kouilou, Lekoumou, Likouala, Niari, Plateaux, Pool, and Sangha. Most of the recent political unrest has occurred in the Pool region.

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/cf.html#Govt>
<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2825.htm>

Economy:

The Republic of the Congo is struggling to re-establish a stable economic future after the devastation caused by civil war. Usually people often make a living by participating in subsistence agricultural pursuits or by participating in the burgeoning oil industry. The national GDP for 2007 was \$13.23 billion. The GDP official exchange rate was \$7.657 billion. The GDP real growth rate was -1.6%. In 2005, the government received \$1.449 billion in external economic aid. In 2000, the external debt amounted to \$5 billion. The World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) allowed the Republic of the Congo to qualify help through the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) program in 2006.

About 57.1% of the GDP comes from industry related revenues. Oil production accounts for much of this revenue. In fact, when oil prices dropped so dramatically in the 1990's, much of the economic problems began to occur. Coupled with the displacement of thousands as a result of the fighting between militia groups, this drop led to the continued distress of the economy. As oil prices began to rise once again in the early part of the 21st century and with the return of a more stable government, oil revenues once again began to help bring money to the economy. Other

industries include: cement, lumber, brewing, sugar, palm oil, soap, flour, and cigarette production.

Approximately 5.6% of the GDP came from agricultural pursuits. Much of the cultivation is still done using hand tools and ancient farming methods. Farmers often simply burn a section of the savanna or forest and then use the land for planting. If the soil becomes depleted which often occurs after several seasons of planting, the farmer may simply clear another area instead of attempting to re-stimulate the area with the depleted resources. Agricultural products include: cassava, sugar, rice, corn, peanuts, vegetables, coffee, cocoa and forest products. While some people raise cattle or other herd animals like goats, these are not usually high money making endeavors. As a whole, agricultural endeavors do not produce enough food to sustain the people.

Exports accounted for \$6.251 billion f.o.b. in 2007. Export commodities included petroleum, lumber, plywood, sugar, cocoa, coffee, and diamonds. The United States accounted for 35.9% of export consumption while China (31.4%), Taiwan (9.9%), and South Korea (8%) purchased the other exports.

Imports cost \$1.762 billion f.o.b. France (23.5%), China (13.2%), the U.S. (7.6%), India (7%), Italy (5.6%), and Belgium (5.3%) were import partners. Imports included: capital equipment, construction materials, and foodstuffs.

<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/132321/Congo-Brazzaville/40713/The-economy#>
<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/cf.html#Econ>

Literacy:

Literacy is determined by the number of people over the age of fifteen who can read and write. Approximately 89.6% of the men can read and write while 78.4% of the women can read and write.

The quality of educational institutions was much higher before the war. During the civil war, many of the schools were burned. As people begin to return to their homes, they hope that teachers will arrive to teach their children and that schools will be re-built.

Children can begin attending primary school when they reach six years of age. When they are twelve, children will take the Certificat d'Etudes Primaires Elémentaires or CEPE to ascertain if they are ready to proceed to secondary school.

Secondary education usually is broken into two separate groupings. At age sixteen, when most teens reach the end of the first set of secondary classes, students are required to pass the Brevet d'Etudes du Premier Cycle or the Brevet d'Etudes Techniques. Students that show sufficient mastery of these tests may proceed to the second level of secondary education. Upon the successful completion of this second level, students will receive their diploma and will possibly be eligible to attend college.

Marien Ngouabi University is the highest educational facility in the country. Other institutions include: Université Libre du Congo, the Paradox Institute, Institut de Gestion d'Entreprises, and Ecole Supérieur de Gestion et Administration des Enterprises.

Fees for Congolese students in 2000 were about \$654. The state and other international/ private organizations try to help defray student expenses somewhat. However, the cost of attending college or another institution of higher education is still nearly impossible for most average Congolese.

<http://www.everyculture.com/Bo-Co/Republic-of-Congo.html>

http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/congo_2686.html

http://www.bc.edu/bc_org/avp/soe/cihe/inhea/profiles/Congo_Brazzaville.htm [http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/\(httpDocuments\)/34D0DC2F4537C026802570B70059FA44/\\$file/Post-conflict+communities+at+risk.pdf](http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/(httpDocuments)/34D0DC2F4537C026802570B70059FA44/$file/Post-conflict+communities+at+risk.pdf)

Land/Geography:

The Republic of the Congo lies along the Atlantic Coast just to the west of Gabon. Its borders also touch Cameroon and the Central African Republic which lie directly north. The Democratic Republic of the Congo (formerly Zaire) is east of the Congo. The Republic of the Congo was formerly part of the French colonial territories in Africa while the Democratic Republic of the Congo was held by the Portuguese and then the Belgians. Many research resources today refer to the Republic of the Congo as Congo-Brazzaville in order to differentiate from the DRC because the capital city of Brazzaville is so large and influential.

The land in the Republic of the Congo varies somewhat from South to North. The south is more inhabited and has larger cities like Pointe Noire and Brazzaville while the North remains somewhat underdeveloped and has sporadic settlements of people.

The land adjacent to the Atlantic Ocean is coastal plain which extends inland about forty miles before meeting with a mountain range known as the Mayombé Massif. While the mountainous area is not extremely high, it is intersected with rivers that have, over centuries, cut deep valleys through the area. The Niari River basin lies east of this range and serves as an important conduit between the coastal settlements and inland peoples. Over all of the mountainous areas and plateaus, a dense rainforest covers the land that has not been cleared to make way for settlement or cultivation.

By far, however, the Congo River and its tributaries are the most important geographic features of the country. The River and its tributaries allow easy access to neighboring countries and thus its waterways provide transportation for travelers and for commerce expeditions.

The climate of the Republic of the Congo stays fairly steady all year round with temperatures ranging during the day between 68 and 81 degrees. At night, the temperature may fall, to as low as 27 or 30 degrees in some areas. Humidity is always constant due to the presence of the numerous rivers and rainforest. Precipitation often reaches 48 inches annually although some years it may be even higher. The wet and dry seasons differ in the north and south because the equator passes through the middle of the county.

<http://www.infoplease.com/ce6/world/A0857523.html>
<http://www.britannica.com/>
http://www.uoguelph.ca/~geology/rocks_for_crops/20congo_rep.PDF

History

The first inhabitants of the area were most likely people from the Pygmy people groups. They settled in small, different family clusters and used the forest to hunt wild game and gather food. Their small bands still exist today in areas, although their lifestyles are changing as larger groups claim power over their forested homes.

The next peoples to arrive were different Bantu speaking groups. These immigrants probably came from areas in present day Angola and the DRC. Out of these peoples, three major kingdoms arose—the Kongo, the Bateke, and the Loango.

The Kingdom of the Kongo was probably one of the more influential kingdoms in this part of West-Central Africa. The kingdom's territory stretched from a point along the Atlantic Ocean along the Congo River and covered parts of the Republic of the Congo, Angola, and the DRC. The ruler, the manikongo, was in charge but had governors who represented him in at least six different provinces.

The Portuguese made early contact with a manikongo called Nzinga Nkuwu who was so intrigued by European culture that he converted to Catholicism and encouraged the Portuguese to send priests and allowed other visitors, too. His son, Afonso I, supported the rise of Catholicism in the kingdom. Unfortunately, many of the visitors who came along with the Catholic priests were opportunists who used the invitation as a means of engaging in profiteering from the slave trade. The efforts of these profiteers helped undermine the infrastructure and power of the Kingdom of the Kongo.

When the manikongo tried to ally himself with the Dutch in 1665 as a means of regaining some of his former power, the Portuguese defeated his forces. Thereafter, the manikongo was usually a puppet ruler for the Portuguese who controlled the areas of the Kingdom of the Kongo that were not controlled by the French.

The Loango kingdom was formed by the Vili people. Its territory included about a 120 mile stretch between the Chiloango River and Banda Point. It was under the control of the Kongo kingdom until the 1400's and then had its own leader, the Ma Loango.

Representatives of this kingdom formed successful trading relationships with both the Dutch and Portuguese and helped them to obtain slaves, ivory, and copper. They also traded salt to interior peoples. Their power had waned by the late 1800's, and they signed a treaty giving control of their area to Brazza, the French representative, in 1883.

The Teke or Bateke kingdom was a system of twelve different clans that comprised one of the major people groups in the Central Congo area. This kingdom arose as the Kingdom of the Kongo waned. Probably, it too, was once part of the Kingdom of the Kongo.

While having a decentralized government with each clan having its own leaders, one man called the Makoko held great prestige among the Teke people. Brazza gained authority in the area controlled by the Teke peoples when he negotiated a treaty with the ruling Makoko. This treaty allowed the French to maintain power over the north bank of the Congo River and the area upon which present-day Brazzaville stands.

Once the French gained authority over the area now known as the Republic of the Congo, they began to solidify their control by allowing private companies to come in to obtain the raw materials that the French desired to fuel their industrial efforts. The French passed legislation that enabled the French colonists to force Africans to work for the companies for no compensation. The practice of forced labor and harsh treatment caused the African ethnic groups to regret their alliance with the French, and some groups tried to revolt by working with other European powers. However, their efforts were quelled, and France remained in control of the area.

France combined its holdings in Africa between 1908-1910 and renamed the entire area French Equatorial Africa or AEF. These holdings included: Gabon, Chad, the modern Central African Republic, and the Republic of the Congo. Brazzaville became the center of the new French domain, and some Congolese received benefits from its status by gaining access to education, power, and economic opportunities. However, many more suffered at the continuing abuse of colonial powers. Many thousands of people died building the Congo-Ocean Railway for the French.

The Congolese again benefited from the status of Brazzaville when the city became important to the Free French forces in the fight against the Nazis between 1940 and 1943. In 1944, at the Brazzaville Conference, abhorrent practices like forced labor were abolished, and Africans were given French citizenship. Locally elected assemblies began to move the Congolese towards independent rule.

In 1960, France officially recognized the Congo Republic as a separate and independent entity. The first Congolese leader was Fulbert Youlou, who barely won the vote by the National Assembly, and then was overthrown three years later in a coup called the “Les Trois Glorieuses.” At that point, the Congolese military took temporary control and installed Alphonse Massamba-Debat as the major political power. Massamba-Debat brought Pascal Lissouba in as his prime minister. This government lost power in 1968 when Capt. Marien Ngouabi seized control of the government.

Ngouabi and his forces were known as the National Revolutionary Movement but this group was later renamed the Congolese Labor Party or PCT. Ngouabi’s time as leader ended with his assassination in 1977, and Joachim Yhomby-Opango served as the next leader for a period of two years before being removed by the PCT Central Committee. Denis Sassou-Nguesso assumed power at this point and retained power until the early 1990’s.

The Congolese government, during the early years and through the 1980’s, favored Marxism. There was a heavy emphasis on a large governmental influence and control of all aspects of

Congolese life. Such policies eventually led to more unrest when economic difficulties caused dissatisfaction.

In 1992, the Congolese government began to move towards a more democratic format. Multiparty elections were allowed and Pascal Lissouba won the presidency. However, dissatisfaction by other political parties and Lissouba's dismissal of the National Assembly in 1994 paved the way to the disastrous civil war which began around 1997.

The allies of Denis Sassou-Nguesso were unhappy with Lissouba, and conflict erupted between the two groups in 1997. After intense fighting (in which much of Brazzaville was destroyed), Angolan troops, who were advocates for Sassou-Nguesso, assisted he and his allies to be successful in quelling the attempts of other political forces. With Sassou-Nguesso and his allies in control of the government, promises were made to hold elections in three years, and plans were made to re-write the constitution once again.

Throughout 1998 and 1999, unhappy political militias continued to cause destruction to many areas. The Gabonese president, Omar Bongo, worked with forces to attempt to bring stability to the beleaguered region. Eventually, some militia groups signed treaties with the new government, but Lissouba's forces and ex-Prime Minister Kolelas did not comply. Both men were convicted of treason and were told not to re-enter the country.

A new constitution was approved in 2002, and in 2003 a new treaty was signed with the Ninja rebel group who had continued to cause massive problems and unrest in the Pool area. Kolelas was allowed to return and was given amnesty.

As of July 2008, Sassou-Nguesso remains in firm control of the government. The Congolese people have a stable situation and are attempting to rebuild their country.

http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/country_profiles/1076836.stm
[http://www.infoplease.com/country/profiles/congo-\(brazzaville\).html](http://www.infoplease.com/country/profiles/congo-(brazzaville).html)
<http://www.infoplease.com/ce6/history/A0828072.html>

Decalo, Samuel, VirginiaThompson, and Richard Adloff. *Historical Dictionary of the Congo: African Historical Dictionaries 69*. Lanham: Scarecrow Press, 1996.

Christian History

Portuguese explorers first brought information about Christianity to the Congo River area in the late 1400's. Catholic priests arrived around 1491 and began to gain converts within the Kingdom of the Kongo. Afonso I, a king of the Congolese kingdom, converted to Roman Catholicism. During the 1500 and 1600's, Roman Catholic influence expanded. In fact, the first African to become a bishop was the son of Afonso I.

Due to the decimation of the population as a result of the slave trade, the Kingdom of the Kongo's power began to wane during the 17th and 18th centuries. The influence of Roman Catholicism also lessened; however, in 1883, new missionary endeavors were launched by the Holy Ghost priests. These new efforts by Roman Catholic priests were rewarded by an increase in interest. Converts grew and in 1955, the Archdiocese of Brazzaville was formally created.

Protestant efforts in the French Congo began with the establishment of a mission by the Swedish Evangelical Mission. Missionaries came from the Belgian Congo in the hopes of reaching more for Christ. Their growth was affected by the rising number of African prophets who formed different sects within the Protestant efforts.

Simon Kimbangu, a self-proclaimed prophet, started one such movement in the DRC but was sentenced to life imprisonment by the Belgian authorities who feared that his followers might decide to rebel against the colonial government. Kimbangu's son, Joseph Diangienda, took leadership of the group in the 1950's. This church encouraged the abolition of witchcraft and sorcery. Also, polygamy, dancing, and the consumption of alcohol were discouraged. Kimbangu's influence quickly spread to the French Congo as well. The influence of this church has grown and waned throughout the years but is still popular with many Congolese today.

Two other groups began work in the French Congo during the early part of the 20th century. The first group, the Salvation Army, arrived around 1935 and were successful in gaining authority in some areas because villagers thought that the flag of the group was helpful in curing illnesses. The second group, the Baptists, worked in conjunction with the efforts of Swedish Pentecostals and began work in the northern sectors of the country after World War I.

During the years of Marxist rule, missionary activity was strongly discouraged. Many indigenous Christians faced hardships and challenges to their faith and sometimes to their lives for the stand they took for Christ.

With the advent of a more liberal form of government, restrictions were lessened; however, the problems caused by the upheaval of the civil war years created new challenges for Christ's followers. Financial burdens and social problems continue to plague the believers and challenge their ability to make a living for themselves and their families while remaining faithful to the call of Christ.

In 2001, there were approximately 150 missionaries sent to the Congo by 24 different missions groups. While about 105 of these missionaries came from Sweden and the United States, 17 other countries sent ambassadors for Christ to work with Congolese believers and to reach non-Christians.

Religion

Information unless otherwise noted is gleaned from Operation World and the World Christian Encyclopedia.

Non Christian

Catholic Church—The archdiocese of Brazzaville was first established in 1866. It was elevated to an archdiocese in 1955. Anatole Milandou currently serves as the archbishop. A total of 104 priests (63 Diocesan and 41 religious) serve the congregants. In 2006, there were 431,225 people attending mass in the archdiocese, which covers 5,581 square miles. There were 41 parishes.

The diocese of Kinkala was first erected in 1987. Louis Portella currently serves as bishop. There are a total of fourteen priests (12 Diocesan and 1 religious). The diocese covers 7,661 square miles. In 2004, there were 84,000 people attending mass.

The diocese in Nkayi was erected in 1983. Daniel Mizonzo currently serves as bishop; however, Bernard Nsayi remains active as the bishop emeritus. The diocese, which covers 22,842 square miles, had 250,000 people attending mass in 2004. There were 41 priests (39 diocesan and 2 religious).

The diocese in Ouessou was erected in 1983. Yves Maria Monot currently serves as bishop while Hervé Itoua is the bishop emeritus. In 2004, 25,000 people attended mass. The diocese, with a total of 28 parishes, covers 21,550 square miles. There were 9 priests (6 diocesan and 3 religious). There were 18 female workers.

The diocese of Owando was first erected in 1950 but was known as Fort-Rousset. The name was changed to Owando in 1977. Ernest Kombo is the current bishop. In 2004, 250,756 people were attending mass. Thirty-eight priests (32 diocesan and 6 religious) presided over the 24 different parishes. The diocese covered 43,742 square miles.

The diocese of Pointe Noire was elevated in 1955. Jean-Claude Makaya Loembe received the bishop appointment for this diocese in 1994. In 2004, 1,000,000 people attended mass. Forty-three priests (31 diocesan and 12 religious) served within the 5,214 square miles of the diocese. Thirty-five different parishes existed.

<http://www.catholic-hierarchy.org/country/dcg2.html>

EdgeJC sur la Terre par le Prophète—This independent African Pentecostal church was founded in 1921. It is a mission of the Kimbanguist Church of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In 1995, there were 200 congregations. In 2001, there were 89,820 congregants and 150,000 affiliates.

http://www.dacb.org/stories/demrepcongo/diangienda_joseph.html

<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/317913/Simon-Kimbangu>

<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/317916/Kimbanguist-Church#ref=ref198635>

<http://www.kimbanguisme.net/> (in French)

Eglise de Noirs en Afrique Centrale (Church of the Black Race)—This group was started in 1941 by Simon Mpadi, a former resident of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In 1995, there were 7 congregants and 7,000 congregants. There were an additional 15,000 affiliates.

Eglise Matsouaniste—This group was formed by Andre Matswa in 1930. In 1995, there were 8 congregations and 400 members. There were an additional 800 affiliates. Matswa was arrested and later died. His followers among the Lari ethnic group gave him an almost messianic status after his death.

Eglise Neo-Apostolique—This group began work around 1980. In 2001, there were 155 congregations and 31,000 members. There were an additional 50,000 affiliates.

Federation des Eglises de Reveil (Federation of Revival Assemblies)—This group started around 1985. Its headquarters are located in Pointe Noire. In 1995, there were 100 congregations and 7,000 members. There were 15,000 affiliates.

Latter Day Saints (Mormons)—In 2001, this denomination had six congregations and 1,111 members. There were an additional 2,000 affiliates.

Mission de Dieu du Bougie (Church of God of the Candle)—This church arose around 1953 as a result of the work of a man called Zepherin Lassy. Lassy was from the Vili ethnic group and fought with the Belgian army during World War II until he decided to desert in 1946. He was influenced by Tchicaya and used magic and prophecy to sway his listeners. He did not antagonize the French colonial authorities but did manage to alienate the Ma Loango which caused his popularity to wane somewhat. He died in 1984, and there was a dispute about who should lead his denomination. His son and his cousin both sought control of the denomination, but his cousin gained more support. In 1995, there were 70 churches and 18,000 members. There were an additional 45,000 affiliates. The church may be in decline.

Decalo, Samuel, Virginia Thompson, and Richard Adloff. *Historical Dictionary of the Congo: African Historical Dictionaries 69*. Lanham: Scarecrow Press, 1996

Mouvement Croix—This church was started around 1964 and is an ex-RCC church. Its members must renounce the practice of witchcraft. In 1995, there were 50 congregations and 5,000 members. There were an additional 16,000 affiliates.

Orthodox Church—Church members are generally Lebanese or Greek immigrants. There is only one parish in Pointe-Noire. The area headquarters are actually located in Burundi. Final authority rests with the leaders in Alexandria, Egypt. In 1995, there were 280 congregants and 400 affiliates.

Témoins de Jéhovah (Jehovah's Witnesses)—This denomination began work around 1945. There was active witnessing through 1948 but severe persecution hampered their attempts. In 2001, there were 96 churches and 3,850 members. There were 15,000 affiliates.

Christian/Evangelical

Armée du Salut (Salvation Army)—This group began work in 1935. There were 154 congregations. There were 14,000 members and 25,000 affiliates.

Assemblees de Dieu de Pentecôte (Assemblies of God of Pentecost)—This group began work around 1990. Its headquarters are in Brazzaville. There were seventy congregations and 8,500 congregants. There were 13,000 affiliates.

Eglise Adventiste du Septième Jour (Seventh Day Adventists)—This denomination started work in 1965. In 1995, there was one congregation with 148 members. There were 296 affiliates. In 2008, there were twelve churches and a total of 596 members.

<http://ast.gc.adventist.org/>

Eglise Apostolique Unie en Afrique (United Apostolic Church EAUA)—This church was started around 1970. In 1995, there were twenty congregations and 2,000 congregants. There were 4,000 affiliates.

Eglise Baptiste du Congo Populaire—This church began work in 1921. The original church planters were missionaries from Sweden. In 1995, there were sixty-nine congregations and 2,500 congregants. There were 8,330 affiliates.

Eglise Charismatique de Brazzaville—This church arose around 1990. It is an indigenous church with a central megachurch in Brazzaville and several satellite congregations in other areas. In 1995, there were 35 congregations and 15,000 members. There were an additional 30,000 affiliates.

Eglises de Dieu du Congo—These Assembly of God congregations were originally started in 1961 by missionaries from France and the United States. In 2001, there were 70 congregations and 8,500 members. There were an additional 13,000 affiliates.

Eglise Evangelique de la Likoula—This church was founded in 1946. In 2001, there were 59 congregations and 6,500 members. There were an additional 14,000 affiliates.

Eglise Evangelique du Congo—This denomination started in 1909. In 1947, an important revival occurred among the Kongo people. In 2001, there were 1,800 churches and 110,000 members. There were 250,000 affiliates.

People Groups

Some reporting groups place Catholics, marginal Christian groups, and evangelicals in a category called Christian Adherents. When this term is used in this report, "Christian Adherents" is placed in quotation marks to indicate this usage. All information unless otherwise noted is gleaned from www.peoplegroups.org, www.joshuaproject.net, and www.ethnologue.com.

12951

Akwa (26,601)

The Akwa people live in the Makoua District of the Cuvette Region. They speak a language called Akwa and are part of the Central-Congo Bantu people cluster.

The people practice a form of syncretistic Christianity. While a reported 95% of the people are "Christian adherents," only about 5.7% are evangelical Christians. Five percent of the people practice ethnic religions.

Sixty-five percent of the Christian adherents are Roman Catholic while 20% belong to some other type of Christian group. Another 5% are Protestant while the remaining 10% attend independent churches.

The Bible has not been translated into their language, and the Jesus film is inaccessible. Gospel recordings exist.

12952

Babole (6,810)

The Babole people live in sixteen villages in the southern half of the Epena District of northeastern Congo. They speak a language called Dibole. They use their language in all areas of socialization. There are three dialects: Northern Dibole (Dzeke), Central Dibole (Kinami), and Southern Dibole (Bouanila). They are part of the Northwest Bantu people cluster. An alternate name for this people group is Southern Bomitaba.

The people predominantly practice some form of syncretistic Christianity. Eighty percent of the population is "Christian adherents," and 20% practice ethnic religions. Roughly 18.4% of the population is evangelical Christians.

Thirty-eight percent of the "Christian adherents" are Roman Catholic while 20% attend independent churches. Another 27% are Protestants while the remaining 15% belong to some alternative types of Christian groups.

There are no ministry tools available in Babole language. Surveys done by personnel from the Summer Institute of Linguistics indicate that the Babole people would benefit from literacy development programs. Churches usually attempt to use materials that have been produced in Lingala, one of the national trade languages in the north. People who have attended primary school may also have some knowledge of French and thus be able to use French literacy materials.

<http://www.sil.org/silesr/2006/silesr2006-005.pdf>

12953

Bakwele (12,527)

The Bakwele people live in the Sangha Region which is close to the border of Cameroon. They speak a language called Bekwel which is eighty-five percent lexically similar to Koonzime. Some alternate names for this people group include: Bakwil or Bekwel. They are part of the Central-Congo Bantu people cluster.

The people are predominantly Roman Catholic. Only 7.2% of the entire population is evangelical Christian. Ten percent of the population practice ethnic religions.

Sixty-three percent of the "Christian adherents" are Roman Catholic while 20% attend independent churches. Another 10% belong to alternative types of Christian groups while the remaining 7% are Protestants.

The Bible has not been translated into their language, and the Jesus film is inaccessible. Gospel recordings exist.

12954

Bangi (68,405)

The Bangi people live along the Congo River in the Mossaka District of the Cuvette Region. They speak a language called Bobangi and are part of the Central-Congo Bantu people cluster. Some alternate names for this people group include: Bubangi, Lobobangi, Rebu, Dzamba, or Bungi.

The people predominantly practice some form of syncretistic Christianity. Approximately 90% of the people are "Christian adherents" while only 6.3% of the population are evangelical Christians. Five percent of the people practice ethnic religions while another five percent consider themselves to be non-religious.

Among the "Christian adherents" 60% are Roman Catholics while 18% attend independent churches. Another 17% belong to some alternative type of Christian group while the remaining five percent are Protestant.

Bible translators began work as early as 1892. The New Testament was translated by 1922. The Jesus film is inaccessible, but gospel recordings do exist.

12955

Bangom (89,120) (listed as Ngom at Joshua Projects)

The Bangom people live northwest of Mbomo in the Cuvette-West Region. They speak a language called Ngom and are part of the Northwest Bantu people cluster. Some alternate names for this people cluster include: Ungom, Angom, Bangomo, or Ongom.

The people predominantly practice some form of syncretistic Christianity. Seventy-five percent of the people are "Christian adherents," but only about 4.5% of the population are evangelical Christians. Twenty-five percent continue to practice ethnic religions.

Sixty-eight percent of the "Christian adherents" are Roman Catholic while 20% attend independent churches. Another 7% are Protestant while the remaining 5% belong to alternative types of Christian groups.

Bible translators began working as early as 1914, and some portions of the scriptures do exist in their language. The Jesus film is inaccessible. Gospel recordings do not exist.

12956

Bayaka (35,228)

The Bayaka people live in the northeastern corner. They speak a language called Aka (known as Yaka in the Central African Republic). There are two dialects: Basese and Bambenzele. The language is not the same as the Baka language of Cameroon and Gabon. Some alternate names for this people group include: Babinga, Binga, Beka, Mòáka, and Yaka. The people do not like to be called Babinga or Bembenga.

The people predominantly practice ethnic religions. Their religious beliefs include a belief in a supreme creator who made the forests especially for them as their hunting grounds. They also have ancestral spirits that they venerate. Traditional healers called *ngangas* are important leaders in society. These healers are asked to foretell the future and to help when someone becomes sick.

The Bayaka people are part of the Pygmy people cluster. Ethnic groups belonging to this people cluster are denigrated by other African people groups. They are often subject to exploitation by other people groups because their own way of life is being destroyed as their natural hunting lands are being made into national parks or are being destroyed by loggers.

Fifty percent of the population is "Christian adherents." Approximately 12.5% of the population is evangelical Christians.

The Bible has not been translated into their language, and the Jesus film is inaccessible. Gospel recordings exist.

<http://www.worldmissioncentre.com/AKA.html>

<http://www.joshuaproject.net/peopctry.php?rop3=101171&rog3=CF>

12957

Bemba (3,523)

The Bemba people live in the district of Mouyondzi in the Bouenza Region. They speak a language called Beembe. The two dialects of their language are Keenge and Yari. They are part of the Central-Congo Bantu people cluster. An alternate name for this people group is Kibeembe. This people group is distinct from the Bembe people of the DRC.

The people predominantly practice some form of syncretistic Christianity. About 74.8% of the population are "Christian adherents" but only 2.24% are evangelical Christians.

Eighty percent of the "Christian adherents" are Roman Catholic while 10% attend independent churches. Another 5% are Protestants, and the remaining 5% belong to alternative types of Christian groups.

The Bible has not been translated into their language, but the Jesus film and other Christian videos exist. People also have access to gospel recordings.

12958

Bomitaba (11,915)

The Bomitaba people live along the Likouala-aux-Herbes River in the Epena District of the Likouala Region. They speak a language called Bomitaba. Some also speak French and Lingala. Some alternate names for this people group include Mbomitaba, Mbomotaba, or Bamitaba.

Seventy-eight percent of the people are “Christian adherents,” with 23.4% of the population evangelical Christians. Twenty-two percent of the population continues to practice ethnic religions.

Among the “Christian adherents,” 32% are Protestants while 30% attend independent churches. Another 28% are Roman Catholics, and the remaining 10% belong to alternative types of Christian groups.

The Bible has not been translated into their language, and the Jesus film is inaccessible. Gospel recordings do not exist. Church services may be conducted in Lingala, and there are a few literacy materials available in this language. Some people may also be able to read materials provided in French, although literacy rates are not high. Personnel from the Summer Institute of Linguistics have indicated that this people group would be interested in having a language development program established in their area.

<http://www.sil.org/silesr/2006/silesr2006-005.pdf>

12959

Bomwali (3,167)

The Bomwali people live around Ouessou in the Sangha Region. They speak a language called Bomwali and are part of the Central-Congo Bantu people cluster. Some alternate names for this people group include Bomali, Boumoali, Bumali, Lino, or Sangasanga.

The people predominantly practice some form of syncretistic Christianity. Ninety-five percent of the population are "Christian adherents" while only 6.65% of the people are evangelical Christians. The remaining 5% of the people practice indigenous religions.

Among the "Christian adherents," 50% are Roman Catholic while 25% belong to alternative types of Christian groups. Another 22% attend some type of independent church while the remaining 3% are Protestants.

There are no ministry tools available in their language. People who have converted to Christianity may have learned about Christ through materials printed in Lingala or through radio ministries.

12960

Bongili (6,810)

The Bongili people live on and near the Sangha River in the Sangha Region. They speak a language called Bongili and are part of the Central Congo people cluster. Some alternate names for this people group include: Bongiri, Bungiri, or Bokiba.

The people predominantly practice some form of syncretistic Christianity. Seventy-eight percent of the people are "Christian adherents" while 15.6% of the population are evangelical Christians. The remaining 22% practice some form of indigenous religions.

Among the "Christian adherents," 52% are Roman Catholic while 18% are Protestant. Another 15% attend independent churches while the remaining 15% belong to alternative types of Christian groups.

The New Testament had been translated by 1947, but the Jesus film is inaccessible. Gospel recordings exist.

12961

Bonjo (4,598)

The Bonjo people live in the Dongou and Impfondo districts of the Likouala Region. Most of their settlements lie near the river. They speak a language called Bonjo, although many speakers are beginning to use Lingala. They are part of the Adamawa-Ubangi people cluster.

The people predominantly practice syncretistic Christianity. In fact, 75% of the population are "Christian adherents" while only 25% continue to practice indigenous religions. However, only 24% of the population is evangelical Christians.

Among the "Christian adherents," 40% are Roman Catholic while 40% are Protestants. Another 10% attend independent churches, and the remaining 10% belong to alternative types of Christian groups.

There are no ministry tools available in their language. People who have converted to Christianity may have access to materials in Lingala. Ethnologue reports indicate that many speakers are beginning to use Lingala more often in daily activities.

http://www.ethnologue.com/show_language.asp?code=bok

12962

Buraka-Gbanziri (2,041)

The Buraka-Gbanziri people group belong to the Pygmy people cluster. They speak a language called Gbanziri. Some speakers may also be familiar with Lingala, Mono, or Sango. Some alternate names for this people group include: Gbanzili, Banziri, or Gbandere.

Eighty percent of the people continue to practice ethnic religions while 20% practice some form of syncretistic Christianity. Only 1.2% of the population is evangelical Christian.

Fifty-three percent of the "Christian adherents" are Roman Catholic while 32% are Protestants. The remaining 15% belong to some other type of Christian group.

The Bible has not been translated into their language. The Jesus film is not accessible. Gospel recordings do exist.

12963

Bwaka (10,134)

The Bwaka people speak a language called Ngbaka Ma'bo but many may also be familiar with Lingala. They are part of the Adamawa-Ubangi people cluster. Some alternate names for this people group include: Ngbaka Limba, Mbaka, Mbacca, Bwaka, Bouaka, Nbwaka, Gbala, and Ma'bo.

The people predominantly practice some form of syncretistic Christianity. In fact, 99% of the people are "Christian adherents." Only 1% continue to practice pure forms of the traditional ethnic religion. However, only 13.86% of the entire population are evangelical Christian.

Among the "Christian adherents," 58% are Roman Catholics while 15% attend independent churches. Another 12% are Protestants while the remaining 15% belong to alternative types of Christian groups.

Translators began to publish portions of the Bible in their language around 1936. The Jesus film has not been reproduced in Ngbaka Ma'bo. Gospel recordings exist.

12965

Dondo (3,850)

The Dondo live in the Nkayi, Madingou, Mfouati, and Boko-Songho districts of the Bouenza Region. They speak a language called Doondo and are part of the Central South Bantu people cluster. Some alternate names for this people group include: Kidoondo and Doondo.

The people practice two different religions. Forty percent of the people continue to follow the traditional religious practices of their ancestors while 60% follow some form of Christianity. These "Christian adherents" may mix some traditional ethnic religious practices with basic Christian beliefs while others are more conservative. The number of evangelical Christians is unknown.

The Bible has not been translated into their language and the Jesus film is accessible. Gospel recordings exist.

12967

Fang (7,045)

The Fang people live in the extreme northwest. They speak a language called Fang and are part of the Central-Congo people cluster. Some alternate names for this people group include: Pamue and Pahouin.

The people predominantly practice some form of syncretistic Christian religion; however, 5% continue to practice traditional ethnic beliefs. Another 5% consider themselves to be non-religious. Only 5.4% of the population is evangelical Christians.

Among the "Christian segments," 60% of the people are Roman Catholic, and 20% attend independent churches. Another 5% belong to alternative types of Christian groups. The remaining 15% of the people are Protestants.

Portions of the Bible were translated between 1894 and 1938. The complete Bible was translated in 1951. The Jesus film and other Christian videos are available. Gospel recordings exist.

The Fang were known as very fierce and courageous fighters who knew how to use their jungle home to their advantage. Today they are farmers and merchants. Polygamy is still an acceptable cultural practice, and many people continue to live in small villages led by a single leader.

<http://www.joshuaproject.net/profiles/text/t102997.pdf>

12968

Ganzi (3,525)

The Ganzi people are part of the Pygmy people cluster. They speak a language called Ganzi. An alternate name for this people is Banziri Pygmy. Their primary religion is Christianity. Although there are no ministry tools available in their language, people may be able to hear scriptures in Baka, another Pygmy language, or in Lingala.

12969

Gbaya (2,612)

The Gbaya people live in the Sangha Region. They speak a language called Gbaya. They are part of the Adamawa-Ubangi people cluster. An alternate name for this people group is Baya.

People usually practice two main religions—Christianity and their traditional ethnic religion. Many people may actually combine tenets of both religions. Ninety-five percent of the people are "Christian adherents;" however, only 7.6% of these people are evangelical Christians. The remaining overall five percent continue to completely adhere to the religion of their ancestors.

There are several important figures in the Gbaya traditional religion. The predominant character in the Gbaya ethnic religion is called *So*. He is considered to be the creator god. *Ghaso* is the evil force that devours women and children. *So-kaos* are spirits that caused large mountains or trees to appear. *So-daa* are the departed ancestors of previous generations.

The Gbaya people have a very individualistic religion. Each person may decide for him or herself about which religious path to follow. Witches are seen as evil forces in the community, and ancestral spirits are appealed to in order to ward off evil. Usually the departed's eldest son would be responsible for caring for and contacting the dead.

Among those who profess to be "Christian adherents," 53% are Roman Catholic while 20% belong to alternative types of Christian groups. Another 20% attend independent churches. The remaining 7% are Protestants.

Portions of the Bible were translated between 1933 and 1975. The complete Bible was completed in 1995. The Jesus film is not available in their language, but other Christian videos exist. People also have access to gospel recordings.

From *Culture and Customs of Cameroon* by John Mukum Mbaku

12970

Gundi Pygmy (3,966)

The Gundi Pygmy people live in both the Republic of the Congo and the Central African Republic. They speak a language called Gundi and are part of the Pygmy people cluster.

The people tend to practice ethnic religions, Christianity, or a mixture of the two. Seventy-eight percent of the people have professed to be "Christian adherents," but only 6.2% are evangelical Christians. Twenty-two percent of the people continue to practice the religion of their ancestors.

Among those who profess to be "Christian adherents," eighty percent are Roman Catholic. Ten percent belong to other types of Christian groups, and the remaining 10% are Protestants. Although the people have no access to Christian materials in their own language, they may have learned about Christ through hearing recordings in Baka, another Pygmy language, or in Lingala.

12971

Hausa (5,400)

The Hausa people live in several countries throughout West Africa. They usually settle in larger towns and market villages. The Hausa are originally from Nigeria. They speak a language called Hausa. The Hausa language is a major trade language in West Africa, and many different people groups have adopted not only the Hausa language, but many of the Hausa customs and beliefs. Some alternate names for this people group include: Adarawa, Arawa, Arewa, Fellata, Hausa Fulani, Hausa Ajami, Maguzawa, Hausawa, Soudie, Kurfei, or Tazarawa.

The Hausa are 99.9% Muslim. About 150 years ago, Muslim missionaries came to Hausaland and succeeded in converting the Hausa to Islam.

They are considered one of the least reached people groups. Only .09% of the population is "Christian adherents," and an even smaller number (.000036%) are evangelical Christians. Hausas that do convert to Christianity face severe persecution in the form of shunning and betrayal by non-Christian family members. Since a Hausa's identity is tied to his family and clan, the emotional and physical persecution is extremely hard on new believers.

The Bible has been translated into the Hausa language, and the Jesus film is accessible. Gospel recordings and radio broadcasts can also be found.

Oral legends among the Hausa state that the people are descended from a man called Bayajida who killed a snake that threatened the village thereby winning the hand of the queen. The sons of Bayajida founded Hausaland. The Hausa once ruled themselves but were later conquered by many different ethnic groups, the last being the Fulani.

The Hausa may be involved in many different types of work. Many in rural areas are farmers who grow traditional crops like millet or rice while others are traders or professionals. Markets

are very important gathering places for men to come and discuss issues facing the village. Women will be expected to make different types of items to be sold at the market.

Men may marry more than one wife, and girls are promised in marriage by age 12 to 15. Women are expected to care for the children and attend to household duties. Divorce is a societal problem, but many women will remarry because society expects them to do so. Extended families are usually very influential in rural areas. Males and females will both be expected to listen to their elders.

<http://www.global12project.com/2004/profiles/clusters/8035.html>
<http://www.sim.org/pg.asp?pgID=2&fun=1>
<http://www.joshuaproject.net/peopctry.php?rop3=103733&rog3=UV>
<http://www.gowestafrica.org/peoplegroups/hausa/>

12972

Kaka (11,185)

The Kaka people live on the Ibenga and Motaba rivers in the northern part of the Likouala Region. They speak a language called Kako and are part of the Central-Congo people cluster. Some alternate names for this people group are Yaka, Nkoxo, or Kako.

The people practice ethnic religions, Christianity, or a mixture of both. Seventy-five percent of the people are "Christian adherents," but only 3.75% are evangelical Christians. Twenty-five percent follow traditional ancestral beliefs.

Among the "Christian adherents," 75% are Roman Catholic while ten percent belong to alternative types of Christian group. Another 10% attend independent churches, and the remaining 5% are Protestants.

Portions of the Bible were translated between 1990 and 1993. The New Testament had been translated by 1999. The Jesus film is available. Gospel recordings also exist.

12973

Kele (31,669)

The Kele people speak a language called Kele. Some alternate names for this people group include: Akele, Dikele, and Western Kele. They predominantly practice some form of Christian religion. Portions of the Bible have been translated into their language, but the Jesus film is inaccessible. Gospel recordings exist.

12974

Kongo (1,674,265)

The Kongo people live between Brazzaville and Pointe-Noire. The people belong to the Kongo Bantu people cluster. Two alternate names for this people group include Munukutuba and Kikoongo.

They speak a language called Kituba, which is one of the main languages used by people in the southern portions of the Congo. About 5 to 10% of the people can read and write in Kituba while about 15 to 25% can read and write in another language.

The Kongo people were historically related to the powerful Kingdom of the Kongo. This African kingdom had contact with the Portuguese in the fifteenth century. Over the next several hundred years, different internal and external forces weakened the power of the Kongo kings. Many of the Kongo people were stolen and sold as slaves to Europeans.

One of their most famous kings, King Afonso, accepted the tenets of the Catholic faith and converted in the sixteenth century. From that time forth people began to accept portions of the beliefs of the Catholic Church while still being influenced by their traditional religious beliefs. Approximately 92% of the people today profess to follow some form of Christian belief. However, only 14.7% of the people are evangelical Christians.

Among these "Christian adherents," 54.2% of the people attend Roman Catholic mass while 19% belong to alternative types of Christian groups. Another 14% attend independent churches while the remaining 12.8% are Protestants.

Bible translation began as early as 1885 with some efforts being completed around 1931. Tracts have also been published. The Jesus film and gospel recordings also exist.

<http://cesa.imb.org/peoplegroups/Kongo.htm>

<http://www.everyculture.com/Africa-Middle-East/Kongo.html>

http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/pwmn_4/hd_pwmn_4.htm

12975

Kota (10,438)

The Kota people live to the west of Mbomo in the Cuvette Region. They also have settlements in the Liouesso area of the Sangha Region. They speak a language called Kota and are part of the Central-Congo Bantu people cluster. Two alternate names for this people group include Ikota or Ikuta.

The people practice a mixture of ethnic religions and Christianity. Missionaries began arriving among the people in the early 1900's. Eighty percent of the people today claim to be "Christian adherents," but only 16% are evangelical Christians.

Among the "Christian adherents," 53% are Roman Catholics, while 20% attend independent churches. Another 10% belong to alternative types of Christian groups while the remaining 17% are Protestants.

Portions of the Bible were translated between 1938 and 1948. Wycliffe translators and the International Bible Society may have copies of the manuscripts. There are no other Christian resources available in their language.

Twenty percent continue to practice the religious rites of their forefathers. In traditional religious practices, ancestors are venerated. Usually the leader of the village is in charge of maintaining the reliquaries that hold the bones of the ancestors. Their reliquaries are covered with copper.

<http://www.uiowa.edu/~africart/toc/people/Kota.html>

12976

Koyo (24,000)

The Koyo people live around Owando in the Owando District of the Cuvette Region. They speak a language called Koya and are part of the Central Congo Bantu people cluster. Some alternate names for this people group include Ekoyo or Kouyou.

Ninety-five percent of the people are "Christian adherents," but only 2.85% of the people are evangelical Christians. The remaining 5% of the people continue to practice ethnic religions.

Among the "Christian adherents," 60% are Roman Catholic, and thirty percent belong to alternative types of Christian groups. Another 8% attend independent churches, and the remaining 2% are Protestants.

The Bible has not been translated into their language, and the Jesus film is inaccessible. Gospel recordings exist.

12977

Kuba (27,000)

The Kuba people live on the Congo River just above the mouth of the Sangha River in the Cuvette Region. They speak the language Likuba, and are part of the Central Congo Bantu people cluster. People who speak this language may have mutual intelligibility with people who speak Likwala.

The Kuba people have several subgroups that have traditionally been considered part of their kingdom and ethnicity. The Bushoong, Ngeende, Kel, Pyaang, Bulaang, Bieeng, Ilebo, Idiing, Kaam, Ngoombe Kayuweeng, Shoowa, Bokila, Maluk, and Ngongo peoples are all inter-related. The Bushoong, though, have emerged as the leaders of the Kuba conglomerate of peoples.

Today the people are either practicing some form of Christianity or continue to practice ethnic religions. In fact, 95% of the people are "Christian adherents," but only about 10.4% are evangelical Christians.

Among the "Christian adherents," 62% of the claimants are Roman Catholic, and 16% belong to some alternative type of Christian group. Another 15% attend independent churches while the remaining 7% are Protestants.

The Bible has not been translated into their language, and the Jesus film is unavailable. Gospel recordings exist.

Five percent of the people continue to practice their traditional ethnic religion. In this religion, the people believe in a supreme creator called *Bumba*, but they usually do not worship him specifically. Rather they venerate their ancestors and use divination as a way of avoiding evil. In this religion, dogs are seen as some type of special messenger from the supernatural world.

Between the 15th and 17th centuries, the Kuba people had a thriving kingdom just east of the Sankuru and Kasai rivers. They produced a variety of different crops and, although further inland, were able to conduct successful trading operations with Europeans on the coast. They became known as producers of raffia cloth, which they continue to produce today.

Their rulers were strong enough to impose a system of taxation upon the people as well as help the people develop a higher standard of living due to their successful trading operations. At one point, when the rulers wished to encourage the production efforts of farmers, they actually effected great cultural change by insisting that younger men be allowed to marry and also by changing the way labor tasks were divided between the sexes. Allowing the younger men to marry increased their interest in agricultural pursuits. The kingdom lasted until another people group, the Nsapo, invaded and caused the kingdom to be subdivided.

<http://www.uiowa.edu/~africart/toc/people/Kuba.html>

<http://www.uiowa.edu/~africart/toc/history/giblinstate.html#luba>

<http://cti.itc.virginia.edu/~bcr/Bayly/Bayly5.html#Kuba> (Pictures of Traditional Masks)

<http://cti.itc.virginia.edu/~bcr/studentwork/jones/royalty.html> (Information about additional religious figures)

http://www.williamsiegalgalleries.com/textiles_african.html (Pictures of Raffia cloth)

http://www.cte.ku.edu/teachingInnovations/gallery/visibleknowledge/salami/f06/a/35/G4_description.htm

Vansina, Jan. *The Children of the Woot*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1978.

12978

Kunyi (52,000)

The Kunyi people live in the Bouenza and Niari regions. Towns can be found around Kimongo and also south and southeast from Makabana to the border of the DRC. They speak a language called Suundi and are part of the Central South Bantu people cluster. Some alternate names for this people group include Kisuundi and Suundi de Kimongo.

The people predominantly profess to follow some type of Christian belief system. In fact, 99.5% of the people are “Christian adherents,” but only 6.9% are evangelical Christians.

Among those professing to be “Christian adherents,” 63% are Roman Catholic, and 13% belong to some alternative type of Christian group. Another 19% attend independent churches. The remaining 5% are Protestants.

The Bible has not been translated into their language, and the Jesus film is inaccessible. Gospel recordings exist.

12979

Kwala (21,000)

The Kwala people live on the lower reaches of the Likouala-Mossaka, Sangha, and Likouala-aux-Herbes rivers in the Cuvette Region. They speak a language called Likwala and are part of the Central Congo Bantu people cluster. Some alternate names for this people group include Likouala or Ekwala.

The people predominantly practice some form of Christianity. Eighty-five percent of the people claim to be “Christian adherents,” but only 5.1% of the population is evangelical Christian. The remaining 15% of the people practice indigenous religions.

Among the “Christian adherents,” 56% of the people are Roman Catholic while 22% belong to some alternative type of Christian group. Another 15% attend independent churches while the remaining 7% are Protestants.

The Bible has not been translated into their language, and the Jesus film is inaccessible. Gospel recordings exist.

12980

Lebanese Arab (500)

The Lebanese Arabs speak standard Arabic. They have migrated to the Republic of the Congo over many generations. The Lebanese Arabs usually are traders or businessmen that have connections with many different people groups.

The Lebanese Arabs predominantly practice Islam. Only .15% of the people are evangelical Christians.

The Bible has been translated into their language, and the Jesus film is accessible. Gospel recordings exist.

12981

Lingala (300,000)

The Lingala people live in Brazzaville and in the northern part of the Republic of the Congo. They also live in the DRC. The Lingala people belong to the Central Congo Bantu people cluster. An alternate name for this people is Ngala.

They speak a language called Lingala, which is actually one of the national languages. Approximately 10 to 30% of the people can read and write in their first language while 25 to 75% of the people can read and write in a second language.

The creation of the Lingala language actually came about as a result of the European desire to use an African language called Bobangi; using European words as well. The result was Lingala. Today there are four dialects of Lingala: Standard, Spoken, Kinshasa, and Brazzaville.

The Lingala people predominantly practice some form of Christianity. In fact 93% of the people are “Christian adherents” while 13% are evangelical Christians. Another 2% continue to practice ethnic religions while the remaining 5% are non-religious.

Among the “Christian adherents,” 48% are Roman Catholic while 22% attend an independent church. Another 18% belong to some alternative type of Christian group, and the remaining 12% are Protestant.

Between 1908 and 1948, portions of the Bible were translated into Lingala. By 2000, a full translation of the Bible had been completed. Christian tracts have also been produced. The Jesus film is accessible, and other Christian videos can be seen. Gospel recordings also exist.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lingala_language
<http://www.sil.org/silesr/2005/silesr2005-010.pdf>

12982

Lobala (27,000)

The Lobala people live in the DRC and the Republic of the Congo. They speak a language called Lobala and are part of the Central Congo Bantu people cluster.

They predominantly practice some form of syncretistic Christianity. In fact, 90% of the people are “Christian adherents” while only 9% are evangelical Christians. The remaining 10% of the people practice ethnic religions.

Among the “Christian adherents,” 35% are Roman Catholics while 30% belong to alternative types of Christian groups. Another 25% attend independent churches, and the remaining 10% are Protestants.

The Bible has not been translated into their language, and the Jesus film is inaccessible. Gospel recordings exist.

12983

Lumbu (2,700)

The Lumba people live between Kibangou and Gabon border in the Kibangou District of the Niari Region. They speak a language called Lumba and are part of the Northwest Bantu people cluster. Some alternate names for this people group include Ilumbu and Baloumbou.

The people predominantly practice some form of Christianity. Seventy-five percent of the people are “Christian adherents” while only 3% are evangelical Christians. The remaining 25% continue to adhere to traditional ethnic religions.

Among the “Christian adherents,” 82% are Roman Catholic while 10% attend independent churches. Another 5% belong to alternative types of Christian groups while the remaining 3% are Protestants.

Portions of the Bible had been translated by 1966, but the Jesus film is inaccessible. Gospel recordings exist.

12986

Mbamba (12,000)

The Mbamba people live in the Bambama District of the Lekoumou Region. They speak a language called Ombamba, which has an 81% lexical similarity with Teghe. Some alternate names for this people group include Lembaamba, Mbama, or Mbaama. The people are part of the Northwest Bantu people cluster.

The people predominantly practice some form of Christianity. In fact, 85% of the people are “Christian adherents” with 12.75% evangelical Christian. Fifteen percent of the people continue to practice traditional indigenous religious rites.

Among the “Christian adherents,” 29% attend Roman Catholic mass while 24% belong to some alternative type of Christian group. Another 25% attend independent churches, and the remaining 22% are Protestants.

The Bible has not been translated into their language, and the Jesus film is inaccessible. Gospel recordings exist.

12987

Mbangwe (1,300)

The Mbangwe people live in the Lekoumou Region. They speak a language called Mbangwe and are part of the Northwest Bantu people cluster. Some alternate names for this people group include Mbahouin or M'bahouin.

The people generally ascribe to some form of syncretistic Christian group. In fact, 67% of the people are “Christian adherents,” but only 1.072% of the people are evangelical Christians. The remaining 33% continue to practice ethnic religions.

Among the “Christian adherents,” 80% are Roman Catholic while 14% attend independent churches. Another 4% belong to some alternative type of Christian group, and the remaining 2% are Protestants.

The Bible has not been translated into their language, and the Jesus film is not accessible. Gospel recordings do not exist. The people possibly have access to Christian resources in Lingala or Kituba.

12988

Mbanza (8,000)

The Mbanza people live close to the Oubangui River in the Likouala Region. They speak a language called Mbandja and are part of the Sudanic people cluster. Some alternate names for this people group include Mbanja or Banja.

The people predominantly practice some form of Christianity. Eighty percent of the people are “Christian adherents,” but only 13.6% are evangelical Christians. The remaining 20% continue to follow the traditional beliefs of their ancestors.

Among the Christian segments,” 55% are Roman Catholic while 20% attend independent churches. Another 15% are Protestants, and the remaining 10% belong to some alternative type of Christian group.

Portions of the Bible had been translated by 1986, and the New Testament was translated by 1998. The Jesus film is unavailable, but gospel recordings exist.

12989

Mbede (54,000)

The Mbede people live in the Kelle and Ewo districts of the Cuvette-West Region. They speak a language called Mbere and are part of the Central Congo Bantu people cluster. Some alternate names for this people group: Mbédé, Mbété, Limbede, or Ambede.

Ninety-five percent of the people are “Christian adherents” while only 5.7% of the people are evangelical Christians. Two percent follow ethnic religions and 3% are non-religious.

Among the “Christian adherents,” 63% are Roman Catholic while 25% belong to alternative types of Christian groups. Another 8% attend independent churches, and the remaining 4% are Protestants.

The Bible has not been translated into their language, and the Jesus film is inaccessible. Gospel recordings exist.

12990

Mbosi (100,000)

The Mbosi people live in the Cuvette and the Plateaux regions. They speak a language called Mbosi and are part of the Central Congo Bantu people cluster. Some alternate names for this people group include: Mboshi, Mbochi, Mboshe, or Embosi.

The people predominantly practice some form of Christianity. In fact, 94.5% of the people are “Christian adherents,” with 11.34% evangelical Christians. Five percent are non-religious, and the remaining .5% practice ethnic religions.

Among the “Christian adherents,” 50% are Roman Catholic while 21% belong to alternative types of Christian groups. Another 19% attend independent churches, and the remaining 10% are Protestants.

The Bible has not been translated into their language. The Jesus film and other Christian videos have been produced in their language. Gospel recordings exist.

12991

Mbuku (24,000)

The Mbuku people live in the western part of Makoua District of the Cuvette Region. They speak a language called Mboko and are part of the Adamawa-Ubangi people cluster. An alternate name for this people group is Mboxo.

The people predominantly practice some form of Christianity. In fact, 85% of the people are "Christian adherents" with 17% being evangelical Christians. Fifteen percent of the people continue to follow the traditional religion of their ancestors.'

Among the "Christian adherents," 38% are Roman Catholic while 22% are Protestants. Another 20% attend independent churches, and the remaining 20% belong to some alternative type of Christian group.

Neither the Bible nor the Jesus film has been produced in their language. Gospel recordings do exist.

12992

Mbwisi (2,700)

The Mbwisi people live in the Niari Region. They speak a language called Bwisi and are part of the Northwest Bantu people cluster. This group is ethnically distinct from the Talinga-Bwisi of the DRC and Uganda. This group also resides in Gabon. Two alternate names for this people group are Ibwisi or Mbwisi.

The people predominantly practice some form of Christianity. Seventy-five percent of the population is "Christian adherents," but only 6% are evangelical Christians. Twenty-five percent of the people continue to practice traditional ethnic religions.

Among the "Christian adherents," 70% are Roman Catholic while 15% attend independent churches. Another 10% are Protestants, and the remaining 5% belong to alternative types of Christian groups.

The Bible has not been translated into their language, and the Jesus film is inaccessible. Gospel recordings do not exist. The people possibly have access to Christian resources in Lingala or Kituba.

12993

Minduumo (4,000)

The Minduumo people speak a language called Ndumu and are part of the Northwest Bantu people cluster. They live in the Republic of the Congo and Gabon. Some alternate names for this people group include: Mindoumou, Lendumu, Ndumbu, Nduumo, Ndumbo, Ondoumbo, Ondumbo, Mindumbu, Doumbou, Dumbu, or Bandoumou.

The people continue to practice ethnic religions. There are no ministry tools available in their language. No other information is available about this people group.

12994

Moi (2,700)

The Moi people live along the West bank of Oubangui River, at mouth of Alima River, south of Mossaka. They speak a language called Moi and are part of the Central Congo Bantu people cluster. An alternate name for this people group is Lemoi.

The people predominantly practice some form of Christianity. In fact, 80% of the people are "Christian adherents," but only 6.4% of the people are evangelical Christians. Twenty percent of the people continue to practice ethnic religions.

Among the "Christian adherents," 70% are Roman Catholic while 15% attend independent churches. Another 10% are Protestants, and the remaining 5% belong to some alternative type of Christian group.

The Bible has not been translated into their language, and the Jesus film is inaccessible. Gospel recordings exist.

12995

Monjombo (6,000)

The Monjombo people live along the Oubangui River in the extreme northeastern part of the Congo. They also have settlements in the DRC and the Central African Republic. They speak a language called Monzombo and are part of the Pygmy people cluster. Some alternate names for this people include Monzombo, Mondjembo, or Munzombo.

The people predominantly practice different forms of Christianity. About 65% of the people are "Christian adherents," but only 6.5% of the people are evangelical Christians. Thirty-five percent of the people continue to solely adhere to the traditional religious rites of their ancestors.

Among the "Christian adherents," 65% of the people are Roman Catholics while 20% of the people attend independent churches. Another 10% belong to alternative types of Christian groups, and the remaining 5% are Protestants.

The Bible has not been translated into their language, and the Jesus film is not available. Gospel recordings exist.

12997

Nchinchege (2,700)

There is very little information about the Nchinchege people. People Groups does not list their language. Their predominant religion is some form of Christianity. They are a Bantu group. They do not have access to the Jesus film, a Bible translation, or gospel recordings. The people possibly have access to Christian resources in Lingala or Kituba.

12998

Ndasa (4,000)

The Ndasa people live west of Zanaga in the Lekoumou Region. They speak a language called Ndasa and are part of the Northwest Bantu people cluster. Some alternate names for this people group: Andasa, Ndash, Ndassa, or Bandassa.

The people predominantly practice some form of Christianity. In fact, 78% of the people are “Christian adherents,” but only 3.9% are evangelical Christians. Twenty-two percent of the people continue to adhere solely to traditional ethnic beliefs.

Among the “Christian adherents,” 74% are Roman Catholics while 15% belong to alternative types of Christian groups. Another 6% attend independent churches, and the remaining 5% are Protestants.

The Bible has not been translated into their language, and the Jesus film is inaccessible. Gospel recordings exist.

12999

Ngala (27,000)

The Ngala people speak a language called Bangala, which is becoming increasingly similar to Lingala. While there are some people of this ethnic group living in the Republic of the Congo, they are much more influential in the DRC. They are part of the Central Congo Bantu people cluster.

Some of the Ngala people engage in fishing. When a man goes fishing and returns with a catch, neighbors must refrain from calling him by name. In traditional ethnic religious rites, the presence of water spirits endangered the fisherman. By calling the man *mwele*, people are protecting his ability to catch fish successfully. A person who calls the fisherman by name could be required to buy his catch at a reasonable price in order to cover this offense.

The people predominantly practice Christianity. In fact, 94% of the people are “Christian adherents” while only 5.64% are evangelical Christians. Five percent of the people are non-religious, and the remaining 1% practice ethnic religions.

Portions of the Bible had been translated between 1916 and 1932. The complete Bible was translated by 1995. Tracts and other printed material are also accessible. The Jesus film was not re-produced in the Bangala language but does exist in Lingala. Gospel recordings exist.

http://www.congocookbook.com/fish_and_seafood_recipes/fish_and_greens.html

13000

Ngala Boloki (5,400)

The Ngala Boloki people live in the Republic of the Congo and the DRC. They speak a language called Boloki and are part of the Northwest Bantu people cluster. Some people are beginning to use Lingala instead of their own native tongue. Some alternate names for this people group: Baloki, Buluki, Boleki, or River Ruki.

The people predominantly practice some form of Christianity. Portions of the Bible have been translated, but the Jesus film is inaccessible. Gospel recordings exist. No other information is available about this people group.

13001

Ngando (2,700)

The Ngando people live along the Cameroon border in the Sangha Region. They speak a language called Bangandu. This language has two dialects: Baagato and North Bangato. The people belong to the Central Congo Bantu people cluster. Some alternate names for this people group include Bagando and Bangando.

The people predominantly practice some form of Christianity. In fact, 70% of the people are “Christian adherents,” but only 15.4% of the population is evangelical Christians. Thirty percent of the people practice traditional religions.

Among the “Christian adherents,” 53% are Roman Catholics while 22% are Protestants. Another 15% attend independent churches, and the remaining 10% belong to alternative types of Christian groups.

The Bible has not been translated into their language, and the Jesus film is not available. Gospel recordings do not exist. The people possibly have access to Christian resources in Lingala or Kituba.

13003

Ngbaka (2,000)

The Ngbaka people live in the Likouala Region. They speak a language called Ngbaka and are part of the Adamawa-Ubangi people cluster. Some alternate names for this people group include Ngbaka Minangende or Ngbaka Gbaya. This group is not the same as the Ngbaka Ma'bo.

The Ngbaka people are agriculturalists who mainly produce only enough food for their own consumption. They cannot hunt wild game as they once did because the wild game has largely been moved to other areas or been exterminated by over hunting. Women help to supply their families with additional food by fishing.

The blacksmith helps the entire community by making farm tools and other needed items. While the families gain prestige and social position by their father's lineage, the oldest living matriarch of a lineage is also greatly honored. There is a headman, but major decisions are made by each senior member of the lineage

The predominant religion is Christianity. Eighty percent of the people are "Christian adherents," with 11.2% of the population indicated as evangelical Christians. Twenty percent of the people practice ethnic religions.

Among the "Christian adherents," 63% of the people are Roman Catholics while 15% attend independent churches. Another 12% are Protestants, and the remaining 10% belong to some alternative type of Christian group.

Portions of the Bible were translated between 1935 and 1989. The complete Bible had been translated by 1995. SIL volunteers started a literacy program in 1983 which has proven to be highly successful. The children in the area are now taught in their ethnic language.

The main figure in the traditional religion is called *Gale* or *Gbonboso*. His assistants are named *Seto* and *Nabo*, and they were supposedly the very first Ngbaka. All lineages have their own individual ancestral shrines that are daily tended. Because of the interest in communicating with the supernatural world, divination and sorcery are practiced. A secret society, *Wi-Lim*, has a powerful effect on the local society. Circumcision is practiced on all males. Female circumcision is a problem in some areas.

<http://www.uiowa.edu/~africart/toc/people/Ngbaka.html>
<http://www.sil.org/literacy/ngbaka.htm>

13004

Ngiri (1,300)

The Ngiri people live in the Republic of the Congo and the DRC. They speak a language called Southern Ngbandi and are part of the Central Congo Bantu people cluster. Some alternate names for this people group: Mongbandi, Mbatu, Ngbandi-Sud, Ngbandi-Ngiri, Ngwandi, Mongwandi, and Ngwili.

The predominant religion is Christianity. Seventy-five percent of the people are "Christian adherents" with 16.5% identified evangelical Christians. Twenty-five percent of the people continue to practice ethnic religions.

Among the "Christian adherents," 60% of the people are Roman Catholics while 14% attend independent churches. Another 21% are Protestants, and the remaining 5% belong to alternative types of Christian groups.

Portions of the Bible were translated by 1984. The Jesus film is inaccessible. Gospel recordings exist.

13005

Ngondi (2,700)

The Ngondi people live east of Ouessou in the Sangha Region. They speak a language called Ngundi and are part of the Pygmy people cluster. Some alternate names for this people include Ingundi and Ngundi.

The people predominantly practice some form of Christianity. Seventy-six percent of the people are “Christian adherents,” but only 4.56% of the people are evangelical Christians. The remaining 24% of the population practice ethnic religions.

Among the “Christian adherents,” 73% of the people are Roman Catholics while 15% attend independent churches. Another 7% are Protestants, and the remaining 5% belong to alternative types of Christian groups.

The Bible has not been translated into their language, and the Jesus film is inaccessible. Gospel recordings do not exist. The people possibly have access to Christian resources in Lingala or Kituba.

13006

Ngungwoni (5,400)

There is very little information about the Ngungwoni people. They predominantly practice Christianity. No ministry tools are available in their language. The people possibly have access to Christian resources in Lingala or Kituba.

13010

Nzebi (5,400)

The Nzebi people live in the Mayoko District of the Niari Province. They speak a language called Njebi and are part of the Northwest Bantu people cluster. Some alternate names for this people group include: Injebi, Ndjabi, Njevi, Binzabi, Njabi, Yinzebi, or Yinjebi.

The Nzebis are active in the cultivation and production of tobacco, rubber, and groundnuts. In the past, they participated in the slave trade. During World War I, they rebelled against the French presence in Gabon.

The people predominantly practice some form of Christianity. Seventy-five percent of the people are “Christian adherents,” while only 10.5% of the population are evangelical Christians. Twenty-five percent of the people still adhere to traditional ethnic religions.

Among the “Christian adherents,” 58% of the people are Roman Catholics while 15% attend independent churches. Another 17% are Protestants, and the remaining 10% of the people belong to alternative types of Christian groups.

Portions of the Bible had been translated by 1958, and the New Testament was completed by 1979. Tracts have also been printed. The Jesus film and other Christian videos are available. Gospel recordings exist.

From *The Peoples of Africa* by James S. Olson

13011

Nzime (29,000)

The Nzime people live south of Djaposten. They speak a language called Koonzime and are part of the Northwest Bantu people cluster. Some alternate names for this people group include: Djimu, Zimu, Koozime, Koozhime, Kooncimo, or Dzimou.

The people predominantly practice some form of syncretistic Christianity. In fact, 90% of the people are “Christian adherents,” while only 18% of the population are evangelical Christians. The remaining 10% of the population continue to adhere to traditional ethnic religions.

Among the “Christian adherents,” 50% of the people are Roman Catholics while 20% belong to some alternative types of Christian groups. Another 15% attend independent churches, and the remaining 15% are Protestants.

Portions of the Bible had been translated by 1986, and the New Testament was translated by 2002. The Jesus film is inaccessible. Gospel recordings exist.

13013

Pol (27,000)

The Pol people live north of Ouessou in the Sangha Region. They speak a language called Pomo and are part of the Central Congo people cluster. Some alternate names for this people group include Pori, Pul, or Congo Pol.

The people predominantly practice some form of Christianity. In fact, 60% of the people are “Christian adherents,” but only 2.4% of the population is evangelical Christian. Forty percent of the people practice indigenous ethnic religions.

The Bible has not been translated into their language, and the Jesus film is inaccessible. Gospel recordings exist.

13014

Portuguese (800)

The Portuguese people live in Brazzaville and speak Portuguese. The people are predominantly “Christian adherents (Roman Catholic).” No other information is available about this people group for the country of the Republic of the Congo.

13015

Punu (8,000)

The Punu people live in the Nyari Region toward the Gabonese border. They speak a language called Punu and are part of the Northwest Bantu people cluster. Some alternate names for this people group include Ipunu, Yipunu, Puno, Pouno, or Ipounou.

The people predominantly practice some form of Christianity. In fact, 80% of the people are “Christian adherents,” while only 20% of the population are evangelical Christians. Twenty percent continue to practice the religions of their ancestors.

Among the “Christian adherents,” 43% are Roman Catholics while 20% belong to alternative types of Christian groups. Another 27% are Protestants, and the remaining 10% attend independent churches.

Portions of the Bible had been translated by 1955. The New Testament had been completed by 1977. Christian tracts are accessible. The Jesus film and other Christian videos have been reproduced. Gospel recordings exist.

13016

Sango (1,300)

The Sango people live in the Republic of the Congo, the Central African Republic, Chad, and the DRC. They speak a language called Sango and are part of the Adamawa-Ubangi people cluster. An alternate name for this people group is Sangho.

The people predominantly practice some form of Christianity. In fact, 75% of the people are “Christian adherents,” with 17.25% of the population indicating evangelical Christians. Twenty-five percent of the people practice ethnic religions.

Among the “Christian adherents,” 38% are Roman Catholic while 20% belong to some alternative type of Christian group. Another 22% are Protestant while the remaining 20% attend independent churches.

Portions of the Bible had been translated as early as 1923, but the complete Bible was not printed until 1993. Tracts and other printed material have also been produced. The Jesus film and other Christian videos are accessible. Gospel recordings exist.

Teke

There are several Teke groups throughout the Republic of the Congo. When combined, they are one of the largest ethnic groups.

The French who colonized this part of the Congo River first gained authority in the area when the *Makoko* signed a treaty with them. While the *Makoko* had some prestige among the Teke people, he did not possess complete authority. Sub-groups had their own leaders who, although supposedly served at the appointment and pleasure of the *Makoko*, functioned somewhat

autonomously. When the last *Makoko* passed away in 1918, the French took control and appointed leaders who pledged loyalty to them.

Following are brief reviews of the major Teke people groups.

Decalo, Samuel, VirginiaThompson, and Richard Adloff. *Historical Dictionary of the Congo: African Historical Dictionaries 69*. Lanham: Scarecrow Press, 1996.

13008

Angungwel, Northeast Teke (45,000)

The Angungwel people live in the Gamboma District of the Plateaux Province. They speak a language called Northeast Teke and wish to be seen as a completely separate and distinct ethnic group. They demonstrated no interest in literacy languages in the Teke-Eboo or Teke-Kukuya languages. They are part of the Northwest Bantu people cluster. Some alternate names for this people group: Ngungulu, Ngangoulou, Engungwel, and Northeastern Teke.

The people predominantly practice some form of syncretistic Christianity. Four percent of the people are non-religious and .50% of the people continue to practice ethnic religions. Approximately 95.5% of the people are "Christian adherents." However, only 5.7% of the population is evangelical Christians.

Sixty-five percent of the Christian adherents are Roman Catholic while 15% attend independent churches. Another 5% are Protestant while the remaining 15% belong to some other type of Christian group.

The Bible has not been translated into their language, and the Jesus film is inaccessible. Gospel recordings exist.

12964

Central Teke (44,337)

The Central Teke people speak a language called Central Teke. They live in the Pool Region and the Plateaux Region. The people are part of the Northwest Bantu people cluster.

The people predominantly practice some form of Christianity. Ninety-four percent of the people are "Christian adherents," but only 6.58% of the population is considered evangelical Christian. One percent of the population practice ethnic religions and 5% are noted as non-religious.

Among the "Christian adherents" 61% are Roman Catholics and 17% attend independent churches. Another 15% belong to alternative types of Christian groups and the remaining 7% are Protestants.

The Jesus film is unavailable. The Bible has not been translated into their language, and gospel recordings do not exist. The people possibly have access to Christian resources in Lingala or Kituba. They may also have some access to gospel recordings in other Teke dialects.

12966

Eastern Teke (122,649)

The Eastern Teke people live along the Congo River close to Brazzaville in the Pool Region. They speak a language called Teke-Ibali. One dialect of this language is Ngee. They belong to the Northwest Bantu people cluster. Some alternate names for this people group include Kiteke, Ibali, and Eastern Teke.

The people participate in two main religious groups. Two percent of the people retain their ancestral beliefs. Ninety-eight percent of the people claim to be "Christian adherents," with only 5.8% of the population indicated as evangelical Christian.

Among the segments of the population that claim to follow Christian beliefs, 60% of the people are Roman Catholics. Another 25% belong to alternative types of Christian groups while 10% attend independent churches. The remaining 5% are Protestants.

Portions of the Bible were translated between 1889 and 1905. The Jesus film is inaccessible. Gospel recordings exist.

13009

Northern Teke (30,000)

The Northern Teke people live in the Ewo and Okoyo districts of the Cuvette Region. Some also live west of the Mpama River in the Abala District of the Plateaux Region. They speak a language called Northern Teke.

About 99% of the people claim to adhere to some type of religious belief system based upon exposure to Christian ideology. Among this group, 50% are Roman Catholics while 15% are Protestants. Another 15% belong to some type of independent church. The remaining 20% belong to alternative types of semi-Christian groups. Of these adherents, 16.83% are evangelical Christians.

The people do not have access to any Christian materials in their own language, but may have been able to hear God's word through gospel recordings in other Teke dialects.

13017

South Central Teke (5,000)

The South Central Teke live in the Pool Region. They speak a language called Teke-Fuumu and are part of the Northwest Bantu people cluster. Some alternate names for this people group include Kiteke or Teke du Pool.

The people predominantly practice some form of Christianity. In fact, 60% of the people are “Christian adherents,” but only 3% of the people are indicated as evangelical Christian. Forty percent of the people practice ethnic religions.

Among the “Christian adherents” 60% of the people are Roman Catholics while 25% of the people attend independent churches. Ten percent of the people belong to alternative types of Christian groups and the remaining 5% are Protestants.

The Bible has not been translated into their language, and the Jesus film is inaccessible. Gospel recordings exist.

13019

Southern Teke (21,800)

The Southern Teke people live east of Leketi River in the Lekana District of the Plateaux Province. They speak a language called Teke-Kukuya and are part of the Northwest Bantu people cluster. Some alternate names for this people group: Kukwa, Kikuwa, Chikuya, or Koukouya.

The people predominantly practice some form of Christianity. Ninety-five percent of the people are “Christian adherents,” but only 4.75% of the population is said to be evangelical Christian. Five percent of the people practice indigenous religions.

Among the “Christian adherents” 50% are Roman Catholics while 30% belong to alternative types of Christian groups. Another 15% attend independent churches and the remaining 5% are Protestants.

The Bible has not been translated into their language and the Jesus film is inaccessible. Gospel recordings exist. There is some literature available in the Ngungwel language, but they would prefer materials in their own language.

13022

Western Teke (60,000)

The Western Teke people live in and around Sibiti in the Lekoumou Region. They speak a language called Yaka and are part of the Northwest Bantu people cluster. Some alternate names for this people group include West Teke, Yaa, Iyaka, or Yaka.

The people predominantly practice some form of Christianity. Ninety-five percent of the people are “Christian adherents.” The number of evangelical Christians is unknown. Five percent of the people practice ethnic religions.

The Bible has not been translated into their language, and the Jesus film is unavailable. Gospel recordings exist.

13020

Tsaangi (12,000)

The Tsaangi people live north and northwest of Mossendjo in the Niari Region. They speak a language called Tsaangi and are part of the Central Congo Bantu people cluster. Some alternate names for this people group include Itsangi, Tcengui, Tchangui, or Icaangi.

The people predominantly practice some form of Christianity. Eighty percent of the people are “Christian adherents,” with 17.6% of the population noted as evangelical Christian. Twenty percent of the people continue to practice ethnic religions.

The Bible has not been translated into their language, and the Jesus film is not available. Gospel recordings exist.

13021

Vili (5,000)

The Vili people live along the coast in the Kouilou Province. They also have settlements on Yoombe Island. They speak a language called Vili and are part of the Kongo Bantu people cluster. Some alternate names for this people group include Tsivili, Civili, Fiote, or Fiot.

The Vili people predominantly practice some form of Christianity. Seventy-eight percent of the people are “Christian adherents,” but only 4.68% of the population is noted as evangelical Christian. Twenty-two percent of the people practice ethnic religions.

Among the “Christian adherents” 60% are Roman Catholics and 25% attend independent churches. Another 10% belong to alternative types of Christian groups and the remaining 5% are Protestants.

The Bible has not been translated into their language, but the Jesus film is available. Other Christian videos can also be purchased. Gospel recordings exist.

The Vili people migrated to their present location sometime during the end of the 1200's and the beginning of the 1300's. They engaged in hunting, fishing, and farming, but also traded salt and palm cloth with other neighboring peoples. With the advent of the Europeans, they expanded their trade efforts to include ivory.

Women often supplement their incomes by weaving and selling mats in the marketplace. This provides them with funds to buy other essential products like soap. Mats are used during the traditional courtship rituals.

From *The Peoples of Africa* by James S. Olson
<http://www.mayumbanationalpark.com/mats.html>

13023

Wumbvu (5,400)

The Wumbvu people live northward to the Gabonese border in the Niari Region. They speak a language called Wumbvu and are part of the Central Congo people cluster. An alternate name for this people group is Wumvu.

The people predominantly practice some form of Christianity. Seventy-eight percent of the people are “Christian adherents,” but only 9.36% of the population is noted as evangelical Christian. Twenty-two % of the people continue to practice indigenous religions.

Among the “Christian adherents” 60% of the people are Roman Catholics while 15% belong to alternative types of Christian groups. Another 14% are Protestants and the remaining 11% attend independent churches.

The Bible has not been translated into their language, and the Jesus film is inaccessible. Gospel recordings exist.

13025

Yombe (308,000)

The Yombe people live in the Republic of the Congo, Angola, and the DRC. They speak a language called Yombe. Two separate dialects exist: Mbala and Vungunya. They are part of the Central South Bantu people cluster. Some alternate names for this people group include Kiyombe, Kiombi, or Bayombe.

The people predominantly practice some form of Christianity. Ninety-seven percent of the people are “Christian adherents,” while 10.67% of the population is evangelical Christian.

Among the “Christian adherents” 53% are Roman Catholics while 21% belong to alternative types of Christian groups. Another 16% attend independent churches and the remaining 10% are Protestants.

The New Testament was translated by 2005. The Jesus film and other Christian videos have been reproduced in their language. Gospel recordings and radio broadcasts can be heard.

Missiological Implications

1. Evangelical Christians and churches should seek an answer to the African Independent Church movement in the Republic and other African regions. Evangelicals must accept that some African Independent Congregations may well be expressions of biblical Christianity while others may demonstrate problems of syncretism with traditional religions and traditional teachings.

Syncretism is a great problem among the Congolese. While many people have nominally accepted Roman Catholic beliefs or some form of Christian doctrine, they often still continue to practice certain rites from their traditional ethnic beliefs—including witchcraft or sorcery. The mixing of religious beliefs leads to great misunderstanding among the Congolese as to what Christianity is really all about. A Congolese may have great difficulty accepting that he needs an encounter with Jesus as both Savior and Lord because he feels that his observance of religious rites will assure him a place in heaven in eternity.

Further complications occurred as a result of the years that the Communist regime held power and the following years of civil war. The communists made expatriate missionaries leave and Congolese Christians endured great hardships. Many church leaders and members fled in the wave of persecution and upheaval caused by the civil war years. Some question God's plan while others just feel discouraged and abandoned. Yet, with the lifting of the burdens placed by the Communist regime and the times of peace in between the years of fighting, Christians have continued to persevere and begin to build again.

2. Evangelical Christians and churches should develop methods for sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ among persons who remain immersed in Traditional Religions and practices. Believers living in the Republic should be trained in methods of witness to followers of Traditional Religions. Believers should join in prayer to break down the strongholds of superstition and fear that hold people captive to ancient religious rituals that are steeped in the occult and sorcery.
3. Evangelical Christians and churches should pray for openness for outsiders who bear the Message of Christ to the peoples of the Republic of Congo. While the country promises freedom of religion, the possibility of pressure from some religious groups remains.
4. Evangelical Christians and churches should seek to help believers in the Republic of Congo to develop ministries among the children and youth. Because the children and youth were often prevented from participating in church activities during the Communist regime, they need educational opportunities to learn the truths about Jesus as Savior and about basic church doctrines and disciplines of the Christian life. Sports programs or camps might be one way to interest young people in Christian activities. Also, Christian teachers could provide academic and spiritual educational chances.

5. Evangelical Christians and churches should seek to provide literacy workers who will aid in translation efforts. While the Bible is available in French and Lingala, most people never learn to read these languages and show more interest in learning to read in their own mother tongues. SIL International and Wycliffe Bible translators have translation efforts and literacy programs. These organizations often need volunteers to aid in literacy efforts in either teaching or translating. Furthermore, once Congolese literacy teachers/workers have been trained, these workers need help getting from village to village as they attempt to teach others what they have learned. They often need bicycles or motorcycles to help them travel between the villages which could be as far as thirty to fifty miles apart.
6. Evangelical Christians and churches should seek to contribute to better health care and economic aid in this country where years of instability have often left people without proper housing, adequate access to potable water, and suitable electricity. Eye clinics, dental assistance, and other basic health care clinics offered by visiting doctors could provide not only for physical needs, but also give the Congolese a chance to hear about the truths of scripture.
7. Evangelical Christians and churches should introduce teachings about church starting and small group evangelistic methods to the believers in the Republic of Congo. Discipling others to disciple helps to model for the national believers the importance of training believers.

<http://www.covchurch.org/companion/articles/2005-june-the-waters-parted-before-us>

http://www.jaars.org/aviapubs/aviaf6_02.shtml

Johnston, Patrick and Jason Mandryk. *Operation World*. Waynesboro: WEC International, 2001.

Pictures



Links

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/cf.html>

<http://www.everyculture.com/Bo-Co/Republic-of-Congo.html>