

Gujarati of Tanzania



Religions in Tanzania (2010 census)

- Christianity: 45.4%
- Islam: 37.3%
- Ethnic Religions: 15.6%
- Hinduism: 0.9%
- Non-Religious: 0.4%

Population (2010 census)

- Tanzania: 54,881,000
- Gujarati in Tanzania: 414,000
- Gujarati worldwide: 1,638,800

Peoples

- Bantu: 86.3%
- Swahili: 7.8%
- Milotic: 2.2%
- Cushitic: 1.7%
- Khosian: 0.3%
- Other: 1.7% (South Asian, predominantly Gujarati)

Location

Tanzania is an East African country known for its vast wilderness areas. It is the 25th largest country in the world by population. It is bordered by Kenya and Uganda to the north, Rwanda, Burundi, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo to the west, Zambia, Malawi, and Mozambique to the south, and by the Indian Ocean to the east.

About the Gujarati of Tanzania

They are a complex people group, speaking various dialects and having many cultural distinctions. Some of these differences are based on region, while others are based on their "caste" (social class) or community. The Gujarati who have emigrated are usually from the higher, wealthier castes and have maintained many aspects of their own culture. They are often involved in trade or in operating small businesses. Indians have a long history in Tanzania starting with the arrival of Gujarati traders in the 19th century.

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What are their beliefs?

They are both Muslim and Hindu, though to say "Gujarati" to an Indian always denotes Hindu. This creates a cultural identity, and to follow Christ (for a Hindu Gujarati) is to lose a cultural identity entirely. It would kind of be like volunteering to become a refugee. However, a significant number are Muslims. The Gujarati Muslims often despise the Hindus. The Muslims look down upon their worship of millions of gods and are not hesitant to express the prejudices they feel.

Gospel Work

There is a complete Bible translation in Gujarati. ReachGlobal has a five-person missionary team in Dar es Salaam who are living among and actively engaging this group.

Praying for the Gujarati of Tanzania

- Ask the Lord to raise up more missionaries who are willing to share Christ with the Gujarati and display a sense of Christian community.
- Pray for churches to be planted that will not remove them from their culture or "westernize" them.
- Ask God to strengthen, encourage, and protect the small number of Christians living among them.
- Pray for the African believers to have a love for the South Asians among them and share the Gospel with them.
- Ask the Lord to raise up families who desire to study the Word together.

Scripture Verses for Prayer

No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him.

[John 6:44a]

"How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, 'How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!'"

[Romans 10:14-15]

Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

[Matthew 6:10]

And he said to them, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest. [Luke 10:2]

For more information:

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