



PEOPLE GROUP COMORIANS

Comorians number around 900,000 people and inhabit four islands in the Indian Ocean between Mozambique and Madagascar. They are warm-hearted, welcoming, and enthusiastic. Some make a small income by selling spices for export, such as cloves and vanilla, but many are subsistence farmers or fishermen. Most of them struggle financially with building sturdy houses or buying good medicines.

Getting married is an important milestone in Comorian culture but relationships within marriages are often troubled. Polygamy and divorce are common. Women are expected to have as many children as possible, so birth rates are high, but families often lack the finances to provide well for their children. Child malnutrition is common. At the same time, many adults struggle with diet-related problems like diabetes and high blood pressure. Debilitating conditions such as malaria and typhoid are recurring.

Islam came to the islands as early as a single generation after the life of Mohammed through Arab and Persian

traders travelling the spice route. More than 99 per cent of Comorians are Muslim, and only around 0.7 per cent are evangelical Christian. They have a saying that “to be Comorian is to be Muslim” and leaving Islam is forbidden. Converts risk losing jobs, homes and families and may be arrested and beaten. Those who have the courage to accept Christ need a lot of support to replace the community, identity, and practices they have lost. There is not much trust between believers, the church is scattered, and regular meetings are rare.

Translation of the Bible is underway but faces challenges. Each island has a different dialect, requiring its own targeted translation. The heart languages are not often written and French is used in schools and businesses. Most Comorians can’t read their own heart languages and must overcome this barrier to read the Word. Audio players, YouTube videos, and apps have been a great encouragement to those who struggle to read and offer support for isolated believers.

AT A GLANCE

- Comorians are an unreached people group and there are few Christians.
- Some strictly follow Islam while others practice ‘Folk Islam,’ which is a mix with traditional beliefs about local spirits and witchcraft.
- Better education, healthcare, and economic opportunities would increase day-to-day quality of life for Comorians.

PRAY FOR

- God’s Word to be translated into all languages and made available in forms that all can access, transforming hearts and lives.
- Comorians to see that Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life, and that no one comes to the Father except through him.
- Courage for Comorians to follow Jesus and support each other as a church.

Sources: Joshua Project, Wikipedia, www.peoplegroups.org.



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