

# MISSIONARY ATLAS PROJECT

## Africa

### Democratic Republic of the Congo

(formerly Zaire)

#### Basic Facts

##### Name:

The official name today is *Democratic Republic of Congo* but through its history, the region has gone by the names of *Congo Free State*, *Belgian Congo*, *Congo/Leopoldville*, *Congo/Kinshasa*, and *Zaire*. The country's name is abbreviated D.R.O.C or simply DRC. The country should not be confused with the Republic of Congo (Brazzaville) that lies just across the Congo River.

##### Demographics:

The estimated population of DROC of 51,964,999 2000 and 56 million (2003 est.) Includes as many as 250 ethnic groups that have been distinguished and named. The annual growth rate (2003 est.) is 2.9%. This growth rate was 3.19% in 2000.

The most numerous people groups are the *Mongo*, *Luba*, and *Kongo* of which the majority are *Bantu* and the *Mangbetu-Azande* (that are *Hamitic*). These four groups make up about 45% of the population

Although 700 local languages and dialects are spoken, the linguistic variety is bridged both by the use of French and the intermediary languages *Kikongo*, *Tshiluba*, *Swahili*, and *Lingala*.

The People of DROC are known by the names *Congolese* ((Noun-- singular and plural) and *Congolese* or *Congo* (Adjective).

##### Population Divisions:

Note: estimates for this country explicitly take into account the effects of excess mortality due to AIDS; this disease can result in lower life expectancy, higher infant mortality and death rates, lower population and growth rates, and changes in the distribution of population by age and sex than would otherwise be expected (July 2000 est.)

**Age structure:**

0-14 years: 48% (male 12,597,444; female 12,490,279)  
15-64 years: 49% (male 12,503,440; female 13,037,527)  
65 years and over: 3% (male 567,823; female 768,486) (2000 est.)

**Birth rate:** 46.44 births/1,000 population (2000 est.)

**Sex ratio:**

At birth: 1.03 male(s)/female; under 15 years: 1.01 male(s)/female; 15-64 years: 0.96 male(s)/female; 65 years and over: 0.74 male(s)/female; total population: 0.98 male(s)/female (2000 est.); Infant mortality rate: 101.71 deaths/1,000 live births (2000 est.)

**Life expectancy at birth:**

total population: 48.75 years; male: 46.72 years; female: 50.83 years (2000 est.)

**Total fertility rate:**

6.92 children born/woman (2000 est.)

**Death rate:** 15.38 deaths/1,000 population (2000 est.)

**Net migration rate:** 0.82 migrant(s)/1,000 population (2000 est.)

note: in 1994, about a million refugees fled into *Zaire* (now called the *Democratic Republic of the Congo* or *DROC*), to escape the fighting between the *Hutus* and the *Tutsis* in *Rwanda* and *Burundi*. the outbreak of widespread fighting in the DROC between rebels and government forces in October 1996 spurred about 875,000 refugees to return to Rwanda in late 1996 and early 1997; an additional 173,000 Rwandan refugees disappeared in early 1997 and are assumed to have been killed by DROC forces; fighting renewed in August 1998 and has continued sporadically into 2000 resulting in further internal displacement and refugee movements within the *Great Lakes* region

<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2823.htm>

**Location:**

The Democratic Republic of the Congo (D.R.O.C.) includes the greater part of the *Congo River basin*, which covers an area of almost 1 million square kilometers (400,000 sq. mi.). The country's only outlet to the Atlantic Ocean is a narrow strip of land on the north bank of the Congo River.

The vast, low-lying central area is a basin-shaped plateau sloping toward the west and covered by tropical rainforest. This area is surrounded by mountainous terraces in the west, plateaus merging into savannas in the south and southwest, and dense grasslands extending beyond the Congo River in the north. High mountains are found in the extreme eastern region.

D.R.O.C. lies on the Equator, with one-third of the country to the north and two-thirds to the south. The climate is hot and humid in the river basin and cool and dry in the southern highlands. South of the Equator, the rainy season lasts from October to May and north of the Equator, from April to November. Along the Equator, rainfall is fairly regular throughout the year. During the wet season, thunderstorms often are violent but seldom last more than a few hours. The average rainfall for the entire country is about 107 centimeters (42 in.).

**Literacy:**

definition: age 15 and over can read and write French, Lingala, Kingwana, or Tshiluba

**Education:**

Before independence, education was largely in the hands of religious groups. The primary school system was well-developed at independence; however, the secondary school system was limited, and higher education was almost nonexistent in most regions of the country. The principal objective of this system was to train low-level administrators and clerks. Since independence, efforts have been made to increase access to education, and secondary and higher education have been made available to many more Congolese.

Despite the deterioration of the state-run educational system in recent years, about 80% of the males and 65% of females, ages 6-11, were enrolled in a mixture of state- and church-run primary schools in 1996. At higher levels of education, males greatly outnumber females. The elite continues to send their children abroad to be educated, primarily in Western Europe.

Since independence, efforts have been made to increase access to education, and secondary and higher education have been made available to many more Congolese. According to estimates made in 2000, 41.7% of the population has no schooling, 42.2% has primary schooling, 15.4% has secondary schooling, and 0.7% has university schooling. At all levels of education, males greatly outnumber females. The largest state-run universities are the University of *Kinshasa*, the University of *Lubumbashi*, and the University of *Kisangani*.

**Religions:**

About 80% of the Congolese population is Roman Catholic.

Most of the non-Christians adhere to either traditional religions or sects often characterized by syncretism. Traditional religions embody such concepts as monotheism, animism, vitalism, spirit and ancestor worship, witchcraft, and sorcery and vary widely among ethnic groups; none is formalized. The syncretic sects often merge Christianity with traditional beliefs and rituals.

The most popular of these sects, *Kimbanguism*, was seen as a threat to the colonial regime and was banned by the Belgians. *Kimbanguism*, officially "the church of Christ on Earth by the prophet *Simon Kimbangu*," now has about 3 million members, primarily among the *Bakongo* of Bas-Congo and Kinshasa. In 1969, it was the first independent African church admitted to the World Council of Churches.

[Wikipedia](#)

## Congo History

The nation, known as the Democratic Republic of the Congo, was populated as early as 10,000 years ago, settled in the 7th and 8th centuries A.D. by Bantus from present-day Nigeria. Europeans landed in Congo in 1482 when Portuguese navigator *Diego Cao* arrived. The region was later explored by English journalist *Henry Morton Stanley*. The area was officially colonized in 1885 as a personal possession of Belgian *King Leopold II* as the *Congo Free State* but in 1907, administration shifted to the Belgian Government, which renamed the country the *Belgian Congo*.

Following a series of riots and unrest, the Belgian Congo was granted its independence on June 30, 1960. Parliamentary elections in 1960 placed *Patrice Lumumba* as prime minister and *Joseph Kasavubu* as president of the renamed *Democratic Republic of the Congo*.

Several events destabilized the country within the first year of independence. The army mutinied. The governor of *Katanga* province attempted secession. A UN peacekeeping force was called in to restore order. *Prime Minister Lumumba* died under mysterious circumstances and *Col. Joseph Désiré Mobutu* (later *Mobutu Sese Seko*) took over the government and ceded it again to *President Kasavubu*.

Unrest and rebellion plagued the government until 1965, when Lieutenant General *Mobutu*, by then commander in chief of the national army, again seized control of the country and declared himself president for 5 years. Mobutu quickly centralized power into his own hands and was elected unopposed as president in 1970. Embarking on a campaign of cultural awareness, Mobutu renamed the country the *Republic of Zaire* and required citizens to adopt African names. Unrest and rebellion plagued the government until 1965, when Lieutenant General Mobutu, by then commander in chief of the national army, seized control of the country and declared himself president for 5 years. Mobutu quickly centralized power into his own hands and was elected unopposed as president in 1970. Embarking on a campaign of cultural awareness, Mobutu renamed the country the Republic of Zaire and required citizens to adopt African names. Relative peace and stability prevailed until 1977 and 1978 when Katangan rebels, based in [Angola](#), launched a series of invasions into the Katanga region. The rebels were driven out with the aid of Belgian paratroopers.

During the 1980s, Mobutu continued to enforce his one-party system of rule. Although Mobutu successfully maintained control during this period, opposition parties, most notably the Union pour la Democratie et le Progres Social (UDPS), were active. Mobutu's attempts to quell these groups drew significant international criticism.

<http://encyclopedia.thefreedictionary.com/Belgian%20Congo>

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As the Cold War came to a close, internal and external pressures on Mobutu increased. In late 1989 and early 1990, Mobutu was weakened by a series of domestic protests, by heightened international criticism of his regime's human rights practices, and by a faltering economy. In April 1990 Mobutu agreed to the principle of a multi-party system with elections and a constitution. As details of a reform package were delayed, soldiers in September 1991 began looting *Kinshasa* to protest their unpaid wages. Two thousand French and Belgian troops, some of whom were flown in on U.S. Air Force planes, arrived to evacuate the 20,000 endangered foreign nationals in Kinshasa.

In 1992, after previous similar attempts, the long-promised Sovereign National Conference was staged, encompassing more than 2,000 representatives from various political parties. The conference gave itself a legislative mandate and elected *Archbishop Laurent Monsengwo* as its chairman, along with *Etienne Tshisekedi*, leader of the UDPS, as prime minister.

By the end of the year Mobutu had created a rival government with its own prime minister. The ensuing stalemate produced a compromise merger of the two governments into the *High Council of Republic-Parliament of Transition* (HCR-PT) in 1994, with Mobutu as head of state and *Kengo Wa Dondo* as prime minister. Although presidential and legislative elections were scheduled repeatedly over the next 2 years, they never took place.

By 1996, the war and genocide in neighboring *Rwanda* had spilled over to *Zaire*. Rwandan *Hutu* militia forces (*Interahamwe*), who fled Rwanda following the ascension of a Tutsi-led government, were using Hutu refugees camps in eastern Zaire as bases for incursions against Rwanda.

In October 1996, Rwandan troops (RPA) entered Zaire, simultaneously with the formation of an armed coalition led by *Laurent-Desire Kabila* known as the *Alliance des Forces Democratiques pour la Liberation du Congo-Zaire* (AFDL). With the goal of forcibly ousting Mobutu, the AFDL, supported by Rwanda and Uganda, began a military campaign toward Kinshasa. Following failed peace talks between Mobutu and *Kabila* in May 1997, Mobutu left the country, and *Kabila* marched into *Kinshasa* on May 17, 1997.

*Kabila* declared himself president, consolidated power around himself and the AFDL, and renamed the country the Democratic Republic of Congo (D.R.O.C.). *Kabila's* Army Chief and the Secretary General of the AFDL were Rwandan, and RPA units continued to operate tangentially with the D.R.O.C.'s military, which was renamed the *Forces Armees Congolaises* (FAC).

Over the next year, relations between Kabila and his foreign backers deteriorated. In July 1998, Kabila ordered all foreign troops to leave the D.R.O.C. Most refused to leave. On August 2, fighting erupted throughout the D.R.O.C. as Rwandan troops in the D.R.O.C. “mutinied,” and fresh Rwandan and Ugandan troops entered the country. Two days later, Rwandan troops flew to Bas-Congo, with the intention of marching on Kinshasa, ousting Laurent Kabila, and replacing him with the newly formed Rwandan-backed rebel group called the *Rassemblement Congolais pour la Democratie* (RCD). The Rwandan campaign was thwarted at the last minute when Angolan, Zimbabwean, and Namibian troops intervened on behalf of the D.R.O.C. Government. The Rwandans and the RCD withdrew to eastern D.R.C., where they established de facto control over portions of eastern D.R.C. and continued to fight the Congolese Army and its foreign allies.

In February 1999, Uganda backed the formation of a rebel group called *the Mouvement pour la Liberation du Congo* (MLC), which drew support from among ex-Mobutuists and ex-FAZ soldiers in *Equateur* province (Mobutu’s home province). Together, Uganda and the MLC established control over the northern third of the D.R.C.

At this stage, the D.R.C. was divided de facto into three segments, and the parties controlling each segment had reached military deadlock. In July 1999, a cease-fire was proposed in *Lusaka, Zambia*, which all parties signed by the end of August. The Lusaka Accord called for a cease-fire, the deployment of a UN peacekeeping operation, *MONUC*, the withdrawal of foreign troops, and the launching of an “*Inter-Congolese Dialogue*” to form a transitional government leading to elections. The parties to the Lusaka Accord failed to fully implement its provisions in 1999 and 2000. *Laurent Kabila* drew increasing international criticism for blocking full deployment of UN troops, hindering progress toward an Inter-Congolese Dialogue, and suppressing internal political activity.

On January 16, 2001, *Laurent Kabila* was assassinated and succeeded by his son, *Joseph Kabila*. Joseph Kabila reversed many of his father’s negative policies. Over the next year, *MONUC* deployed throughout the country, and the Inter-Congolese Dialogue proceeded. By the end of 2002, all Angolan, Namibian, and Zimbabwean troops had withdrawn from the D.R.O.C. Following D.R.O.C.-Rwanda talks in South Africa that culminated in the *Pretoria Accord* in July 2002, Rwandan troops officially withdrew from the D.R.O.C. in October 2002, although there were continued, unconfirmed reports that Rwandan soldiers and military advisers remained integrated with RCD/G forces in eastern D.R.O.C. Ugandan troops officially withdrew from the D.R.C. in May 2003.

In October 2001, the *Inter-Congolese Dialogue* began in Addis Ababa under the auspices of Facilitator *Ketumile Masire* (former president of Botswana). The initial meetings made little progress and were adjourned. On February 25, 2002, the dialogue was reconvened in South Africa. It included representatives from the government, rebel groups, political opposition, civil society, and *Mai-Mai* (Congolese local defense militias). The talks ended inconclusively on April 19, 2002, when the government and the MLC

brokered an agreement that was signed by the majority of delegates at the dialogue but left out the RCD/G and opposition UDPS party, among others.

This partial agreement was never implemented, and negotiations resumed in South Africa in October 2002. This time, the talks led to an all-inclusive power sharing agreement, which was signed by delegates in Pretoria on December 17, 2002, and formally ratified by all parties on April 2, 2003. Following nominations by each of the various signatory groups, President Kabila on June 30, 2003 issued a decree that formally announced the transitional government lineup. The four vice presidents took the oath of office on July 17, 2003, and most incoming ministers assumed their new functions within days thereafter. This transitional government is slated to last until elections--the first since 1960--are to be held in 2005 or 2006.

### **Congo Economy**

Sparsely populated in relation to its area, the *Democratic Republic of the Congo* is home to a vast potential of natural resources and mineral wealth. Nevertheless, the D.R.O. C. is one of the poorest countries in the world, with per capita annual income of about \$90 in 2002. This is the result of years of mismanagement, corruption, and war. The powerful elite in the country have impoverished the nation. The neglect of the systems has left the roads almost unusable, trade reduced to a trickle, and the African nation with the highest potential for wealth falling to the situation in which it can no longer feed its own people without foreign aid.

In 2001, the Government of the D.R.O. C. under *Joseph Kabila* undertook a series of economic reforms to reverse this steep decline. Reforms were monitored by the IMF and included liberalization of petroleum prices and exchange rates and adoption of disciplined fiscal and monetary policies. The reformed program reduced inflation from over 500% per year in 2000 to only about 18% at an annual rate in the last quarter of 2002.

In June 2002, the World Bank and IMF approved new credits for the D.R.O.C. for the first time in over a decade. Bilateral donors, whose assistance has been almost entirely dedicated to humanitarian interventions in recent years, also are beginning to fund development projects in the D.R.O.C. In October 2003, the World Bank launched a multi-sector plan for development and reconstruction. The Paris Club also granted the D.R.O.C. Highly Indebted Poor Country status in July 2003. This will help alleviate the D.R.O.C.'s external sovereign debt burden and potentially free funds for economic development.

Agriculture is the mainstay of the Congolese economy, accounting for 56.3% of GDP in 2002. The main cash crops include coffee, palm oil, rubber, cotton, sugar, tea, and cocoa. Food crops include cassava, plantains, maize, groundnuts, and rice. Industry, especially the mining sector, is underdeveloped relative to its potential in the D.R.C. In 2002, industry accounted for only 18.8% of GDP; with only 3.9% attributed to manufacturing. Services reached 24.9% of GDP. The Congo was the world's fourth-

largest producer of industrial diamonds during the 1980s, and diamonds continue to dominate exports, accounting for about half of exports (\$394 million) in 2002. The Congo's main copper and cobalt interests are dominated by *Gecamines*, the state-owned mining giant. Gecamines production has been severely affected by corruption, civil unrest, world market trends, and failure to reinvest. The DROC is an illicit producer of cannabis, mostly for domestic consumption. Rampant corruption and inadequate supervision leaves the banking system vulnerable to money laundering and the lack of a well-developed financial system limits the country's utility as a money-laundering center

For decades, corruption and misguided policy have created a dual economy in the D.R.O.C. Individuals and businesses in the formal sector operated with high costs under arbitrarily enforced laws. As a consequence, the informal sector now dominates the economy. In 2002, with the population of the D.R.O.C. estimated at 56 million, only 230,000 Congolese working in private enterprise in the formal sector were enrolled in the social security system. Approximately 600,000 Congolese were employed by the government.

In the past year, the Congolese Government has approved a new investment code and a new mining code and has designed a new commercial court. The goal of these initiatives is to attract investment by promising fair and transparent treatment to private business. The World Bank also is supporting efforts to restructure the D.R.O.C.'s large para statal sector, including Gecamines, and to rehabilitate the D.R.O.C.'s neglected infrastructure, including the *Inga Dam* hydroelectric system.

The outbreak of war in the early days of August 1998 caused a major decline in economic activity. Economic growth, however, resumed in 2002 with a three percent growth rate. The country had been divided de facto into different territories by the war, and commerce between the territories had halted. With the installation of the transitional government in July 2003, the country has been "de jure" reunified, and economic and commercial links have begun to reconnect.

In June 2000, the United Nations established a Panel of Experts on the Illegal Exploitation of Congolese Resources to examine links between the war and economic exploitation. Reports issued by the panel indicate that countries involved in the war in Congo have developed significant economic interests. These interests may complicate efforts by the government to better control its natural resources and to reform the mining sector. A final panel report for 2003 is scheduled for release at the end of October 2003.

<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2823.htm>

## **Congo Government**

Type: Republic--highly centralized with legislative and executive power vested in the president. DROC gained independence from Belgium June 30, 1960. The nation established its Constitution on June 24, 1967. The Constitution was amended August 1974, revised February 15, 1978, and amended again in April 1990. A transitional

constitution was promulgated April 1994. A Constitutional Act was promulgated May 1997 but the draft constitution proposed was not finalized in March 1998. A transitional constitution was adopted on April 2, 2003.

Branches: Executive--President is head of state and head of government, assisted by four vice presidents. Cabinet--35-member executive appointed by signatories to the December 17, 2002 all-inclusive agreement. There is no prime minister. Legislative--A transitional parliament is based in Kinshasa; members are appointed by signatories to the December 17, 2002 all-inclusive agreement. Judicial--Supreme Court .

Administrative subdivisions: Ten provinces and the capital city, Kinshasa. A provincial governor, who is appointed and dismissed by the president, administers each province. Political parties: President Joseph Kabila's party is Parti du Peuple pour la Reconstruction et le Developpement (PPRD) . Main opposition parties include Union pour la Democratie et le Progres Social (UDPS), Forces du Futur (FDF), Forces Novatrices pour l'Union et la Solidarite (FONUS), Parti Democrate Social Chretien (PDSC), Mouvement Social Democratie et Developpement (MSDD), Mouvement Populaire de la Revolution--Fait Prive (MPR-FP), Union des Nationalistes et des Federalistes Congolais (UNAFEC), and Mouvement National Congolais/ Lumumba (MNC/L). Former rebel movements-turned-political parties include the Rassemblement Congolais pour la Democratie (RCD), Mouvement pour la Liberation du Congo (MLC), and independent splinter groups of the RCD (RCD-ML, RCD-N). Suffrage: 18 years of age; universal and compulsory.

Multi-party elections in the D.R.O.C. have not been held since 1960. A transitional constitution was adopted on April 4, 2003. Extensive executive, legislative, and military powers are vested in the president and vice presidents. The legislature does not have the power to overturn the government through a vote of no confidence. The judiciary is independent; the president has the power to dismiss and appoint judges. The president is head of a 35-member cabinet of ministers.

President *Joseph Kabila* has made significant progress in liberalizing domestic political activity, establishing a transitional government, and undertaking economic reforms in cooperation with the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF). However, serious human rights problems remain in the security services and justice system. The eastern part of the country is characterized by ongoing violence and armed conflict, which has created a humanitarian disaster and contributed to civilian deaths (more than 3 million, according to a prominent international NGO).

<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2823.htm>; <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2823.htm>;  
[www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2823.pf.htm](http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2823.pf.htm); <http://www.pcusa.org/pcusa/wmd/ep/country/demreli.htm>

## Religions in Congo

Explorations, slave raids and colonization in the 18th and 19th century have exposed the people in the Congo to beliefs other than the indigenous belief systems, which are inherent to their own traditions and culture. Missionary efforts have laid the basis for both the Catholic and the Christian faith in the large majority of the present day population, although individuals often combine this faith with traditional practices.

### Indigenous Religious Systems

At one point in time, there seem to have been at least as many indigenous religious systems in Congo as there were ethnic groups. Most of these religious expressions have the patterns usually in African Traditional Religion. Among the patterns of belief that were and still are widespread are:

- All ethnic groups believe in a high god, who is rarely worshiped directly.
- Active spiritual entities are ancestral and nature spirits. Ancestral spirits have to be honored by appropriate rituals and proper belief if they are to look with favor on their descendants.
- Nature spirits, who are thought to be present in rocks, trees, and in natural forces, such as wind and lightning, are not generally considered to have led a human existence.
- In some societies, beliefs exist in malevolent persons such as witches or sorcerers who can cause illness or other afflictions to others human beings.

These indigenous belief systems are associated with a view that the world is full of danger and leaves no room for the accidental. Some source is responsible whether events are favorable or adverse. To find out the causal agent of a problem, the afflicted person consults a diviner, a specialist who is thought to be capable of diagnosing evil powers and/or protecting individuals against them. If the diviner finds that the suffering is caused by a disgruntled ancestor or a nature spirit, the inflicted person is held accountable for improper behavior or failure to perform rituals. If on the other hand the infliction is traced back to a sorcerer, the suffering person is innocent of culpable behavior and another is found to be responsible. Much energy therefore goes to preventing suffering or diagnosing and dealing with the causal agents when it occurs. In addition to communal cults for nature and earth spirits, there are personal cults concerned with healing or resolving abnormal events caused by the spiritual world.

The outlines of the traditional Congolese world view, which sociologists refer to as pervasively apprehensive, anxious, suspicious, distrustful and vigilant, remain intact. Individuals or groups may be a member of a specific Christian denomination and also share perceptions of the natural and supernatural order. Therefore they may participate in rituals that are parts of indigenous religious systems. Diviners are still widely employed in urban areas.

### Non-Christian Church-Type Groups

#### **JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES**

According to Operation World, there are 2,618 Jehovah's Witnesses Congregations with 113,245 members and 400,000 affiliates.

According to [http://www.watchtower.org/how\\_to\\_contact\\_us.htm](http://www.watchtower.org/how_to_contact_us.htm) they can be contacted at B.P. 634, Limete, Kinshasa in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

### Roman Catholic and Orthodox

#### **ROMAN CATHOLIC**

Christianity came to the Congo in 1482, with the arrival of Portuguese explorers who made early connections with the Congo king and took Congolese to Portugal for study. The first missionary group arrived in 1491 and consisted of Franciscan and Dominican priests. The Congo king was baptized and a large church was built at the royal capital, which was renamed *San Salvador*. From 1506 until 1543, the Congo kingdom was ruled by *Afonso I*, one of the most remarkable persons of African history. The Portuguese slave trade, however, inhibited increasingly the vitality of the Christian movement. Despite a revival of Catholic activity in the 17th century, little was left of this once flourishing church upon the arrival of *Holy Ghost priests* to *Boma* in 1865, and of Baptist missionaries to San Salvador in 1878.

The Catholic Church enjoyed a privileged status during the colonial period. From the creation of the *Congo Free State* in 1885, the *Belgian King Leopold* controlled placement of missionaries and granted them property, subsidies, the right to fulfill certain state functions and a virtual monopoly over education and medical services. Priests and nuns established a dense network of churches, schools, clinics and hospitals, and other institutions. These Belgian missionaries shared the view of the colonial authorities, that they had a civilizing task and came more prepared to teach than to learn.

Throughout the first half of the 20th century a great discrepancy grew between the privileges of the Catholic and the Protestant missions. Close cooperation between colonial administration, Catholic missions, and businesses (the so-called "trinity of power") reinforced a serious disadvantage for the Protestant missions.

Consistent Protestant criticism resulted eventually in the concession of land to national missions. Subsidies were extended to Protestant schools in 1946 and state schools were opened in 1954. In 1956, the Catholic Church took opposition to the colonial system by her disapproval of the injustices by the colonial regime and her advocacy on behalf of the Congolese. This political reorientation helped the church to retain its significant role after Independence in 1960, when it had almost 700 mission stations and some 6,000 missionaries in educational, medical, philanthropic and social services. Another significant development in the 1970's has been the Africanization of the Archdiocese, giving more responsibility to laymen through systematic training.

The Catholic Church claims 44.53% of the people in D.R.O.C. reporting over 14,858 congregations with 13,372,000 members and over 23 million adherents. The Catholic church in DROC is showing a 0% growth rate.

There are two catholic churches from the Democratic Republic of Congo with information on the internet. They are:

[MISSION APOSTOLIQUE DES DISCIPLES DU CHRIST](http://netministries.org/see/churches.exe/ch26495), Lubumbashi, Katanga, Democratic Republic of Congo  
<http://netministries.org/see/churches.exe/ch26495>

[Eglise Vieille Catholique Romaine](http://netministries.org/see/churches.exe/ch11930), KINSHASA, KN, Democratic Republic of Congo  
<http://netministries.org/see/churches.exe/ch11930>

### ***THE ORTHODOX CHURCH***

The Orthodox Church in DROC has but 0.01 % of the people. The Orthodox Church numbers around 5000 members with a growth rate of -3.6%.

### **Protestant and Evangelical Churches**

The first Protestants to arrive in the Congo were British Baptist missionaries in 1878. They proceeded to build a series of stations along the course of the *River Congo*, which are now administered by the *Baptist Community of the River Congo* (CBFC).

Protestant missions were active in the medical and educational fields. At an early date the Protestant missions affirmed their common ground and formed a committee to maintain contact and national cooperation and to minimize internal competition. The Congo Protestant Council was founded in 1924 and evolved into a Union of Congolese Protestant Churches.

In 1970, under pressure from Mobutu and with the support of the World Council of Churches, those churches and mission agencies which were more open to the ecumenical movement and to new methods of mission work agreed to establish the *Eglise du Christ au Congo* (ECC), later called the *Eglise du Christ au Zaire*. Reformed church leaders played an important role in realizing this union. The risks of the church being controlled by the Mobutist system were not immediately and sufficiently recognized. When the situation became clearer, the same leaders began to question the authoritarian style of the ECZ leadership and the political system. Therefore, in 1988, the *Reformed Conference of Zaire* (COREZA, now ARCK) was founded. It included the *Community of the Disciples of Christ* (CDC), the *Evangelical Community in Congo* (CEC), the *Presbyterian Community in Occidental Kasai* (CPKOC), the *Presbyterian Community in Oriental Kasai* (CPKOR), the *Presbyterian Community of Kinshasa* (CPK), the *Presbyterian Community in Congo* (CPCA), the *Reformed Community of Presbyterian* (CRP), the *Protestant Community of Shaba/Katanga* (CPSHA). The ARCK did not wish to separate itself from the ECC but rather to strengthen its unity though maintaining a separate framework of communion

and Reformed witness within the Protestantism of the country. The ARCK militates for democracy and reconstruction of the country and seeks to promote interethnic relations. In 1997 its name was changed to *Alliance Réformée du Congo-Kinshasa* (ARCK). Many of the groups now serving in DROC are affiliated with the ECC.

[http://www.reformiert-online.net/t/de/land\\_statisch/31.htm](http://www.reformiert-online.net/t/de/land_statisch/31.htm); Johnstone

### *Church and State after Independence*

The 1967 Constitution allowed for freedom of thought, conscience and religion. Further it made the teaching of religion or ethics, based on the parent's choice, obligatory in the national school system. However, this religious freedom was undermined from 1971-1978 because of the Popular Movement of the Revolution led by Mobutu. During this time the following occurred:

- Infants were required to be baptized with only Zairian names
- Religious youth organizations were suppressed. The only authorized youth organization was the YMPR ( Youth Popular Movement of the Revolution)
- Churches were only allowed to meet for worship. No other meetings were allowed.
- There was a tendency towards considering Mobutu a prophet from the ancestors
- Religion classes in the schools were replaced with civic and political training

Since 1978, the religious freedoms offered in the 1967 have been in effect. Currently, the People's Democratic Republic of Congo is governed by a transitional government and there is no constitution in effect. However, "the government generally respects freedom of religion in practice, provided that worshipers neither disturb public order nor contradict commonly held morals; however, individual government soldiers committed some abuses" (<http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2002/13815.htm>).

The government controls the part of the country to the west of the disengagement line. In this area general religious freedom with few abuses exists. "In 2001 President Joseph Kabila issued a decree that allows nonprofit organizations, including religious organizations, to operate without restriction provided they register with the Government by submitting copies of their bylaws and constitution" (<http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2002/13815.htm>). Also, many unregistered religious groups are allowed to operate unhindered. Foreign religious groups are required to obtain approval. With approval they are able to operate without restriction and proselytize. Further, "The Consortium of Traditional Religious Leaders serves as a forum for religious leaders to gather and discuss issues of concern, and it advises and counsels the Government while presenting a common moral and religious front" (<http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2002/13815.htm>). Any abuses that have occurred in this area seem to be the result of the war and were actions of individual soldiers and were not religiously or politically motivated.

Unfortunately, the area to the east of the disengagement line is controlled by rebels backed by Rwanda and Uganda who show very little respect for religious freedom.

Credible reports suggest that Rwandan troops deliberately target churches and religious leaders in areas under their control. "Such actions were believed to be part of an attempt to intimidate the population and retaliate for the growing role of churches as the only safe zones for community discussion and peaceful activism against the presence of Rwandan and RCD/Goma forces in the country. Abuses took the form of arbitrary killings, arrests, and disappearances of pastors, priests, and laymen; public threats against the lives of religious leaders; pillaging and destruction of church property; and the use of armed soldiers to disperse forcibly religious services" (<http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2002/13815.htm>).

### *Church Groups Affiliated with the ECC*

#### **UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

Methodists of both northern and southern churches in the USA began work in 1913 in *Shaba*. According to Operation World, the United Methodist Church in DROC has 3,750 congregations with some 450,000 members and as many as 900,000 adherents. However [http://qbgm-umc.org/country\\_profiles/country\\_mission\\_profile.cfm?id=241](http://qbgm-umc.org/country_profiles/country_mission_profile.cfm?id=241) claims that there are 677,754 members in three conferences (Central Congo, Southern Congo, and North Katanga)

"In 1885, Bishop William Taylor planted the first Methodist mission in Zaire. In 1907, the Rev. and Mrs. John Springer established missions in the southernmost region, *Shaba*. Around 1912, Bishop Walter Lambuth and Dr. John Wesley Gilbert, a black professor from Paine College, set up a mission station in the low-lying forest region of central Zaire. From these ventures emerged three episcopal areas: Central Zaire, North *Shaba*, and Southern Zaire.

The church has some 677,754 members and operates a wide variety of services, including schools, hospitals, health and maternity clinics, printing operations, and sewing centers. The church also runs an air transport service to carry people to and from inaccessible areas, transport persons needing medical care, ship and receive supplies, and deliver mail.

Currently, there are 3 episcopal areas in the Democratic Republic of Congo: Central Congo, Southern Congo, and N. Katanga.

#### **PRESBYTERIAN CHURCHES**

*American Southern Presbyterians* came to *Luebo* in 1891 and focused their ministries in the *Kasai* region with headquarters of the *American Presbyterian Congo Mission* (APCM) at *Kananga*. According to Operation World, now there are 525 Presbyterian Congregations with 1,001,000 members and 1,250,000 affiliates.

"The Presbyterian Partner Churches of the PC (USA) in the Congo are the autonomous Presbyterian Community of Congo (CPC), which serves predominantly in the *Kasai* and *Shaba* provinces, and the Presbyterian Community of Kinshasa (CPK) with ministries in

Kinshasa, and the provinces of Bandundu and Lower-Congo.” (From <http://www.pcusa.org/pcusa/wmd/ep/country/demorgs.htm>) The CPK and the CPC cooperate in a joint Committee for Presbyterian Ministries (CPM).

### *CPC*

“The Presbyterian Community of Congo (CPC) is the most historical and largest Presbyterian Church in the Congo with more than 1,250,000 members as of 1995. Rooted in the ministries of the [American Presbyterian Congo Mission \(APCM\)](#), it is concentrated in the provinces of West- and East-Kasai and also has parishes in Shaba. The church is organized in eight synods, with fifty-three presbyteries, entailing 692 parishes and 269 preaching points with 878 pastors and sixty-one evangelists. The CPC is headed by General Secretary Dr. Mulumba M. Mukundi, Legal Representative for West-Kasai, Rev. Bope Mikobi, and Legal Representative for East-Kasai, Rev. Tshibemba Tshimpaka. The CPC is firmly committed to the ecumenical movement and maintains a good relationship with the World Council of Churches, of which it has been a member since 1972.” (From <http://www.pcusa.org/pcusa/wmd/ep/country/demcpc.htm>)

### *CPK*

“Since 1960, the Presbyterian Community of Kinshasa (CPK) has ministered as an autonomous partner church of the PC (USA) in the metropolitan area of Kinshasa and the western provinces of Lower-Congo and Bandundu. In 1963, the church started the construction of churches and schools with help from the Presbyterian Development Fund. The first churches were built at Yolo, Matete, Lemba and Ndjili and formed the first presbytery in 1970. New churches were developed, and in 1983, the CPK was divided into three presbyteries, which constituted the first synod.

At present, the CPK has 152 congregations. The community is organized in three synods, each with about six presbyteries. In 1995, the CPK had an estimated 40,000 communicant members, 10,000 active youth, eighty-six ordained pastors and twenty-one candidates for the ministry. Two pastors have finished doctorate studies, one of whom is a woman. President and Legal Representative of the CPK is Rev. Josué Tshimungu Mayela. (From <http://www.pcusa.org/pcusa/wmd/ep/country/demcpk.htm>)

<http://www.reformiert-online.net> lists a few of the Presbyterian churches in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Each webpage includes a brief history of the church and statistical data.

### *CRP*

“The church split from the Presbyterian Community in Eastern Kasai (cf. no. 2) as a result of both theological and ethical tensions. Its present leader, Moise Kalonji Kaja, originally a minister of the Presbyterian Community in the Congo (cf. no. 1), identifies with the charismatic movement. He first became a member of CPKOR (cf. no. 2) but

then decided to set up his own group within the Reformed Community of Presb. The church combines fundamentalist and Pentecostal features. A literalist reading of the Bible undergirds doctrinal orthodoxy. At the same time, elements of African religion are being reinterpreted in the light of the Bible, especially the Old Testament. New revelations, obtained through dreams and visions, are admitted by the church. In addition to the Apostles' Creed the Church has formulated its own confession of faith, called la "cerpéinne." Though the church remains attached to its Presbyterian origin, it has, in fact, become an Afro-Christian church. Theological education presents a challenge. The church belongs to both ARCK and WARC." (From <http://www.reformiert-online.net/adressen/detail.php?id=12143&lg=eng>).

### ***DISCIPLES OF CHRIST***

According to Operation World, there are 1,506 Disciples of Christ Congregations with 378,947 members and 720,000 affiliates.

The Disciples of Christ church is the product of the Disciples of Christ Congo Mission (DCCM) which first arrived in 1897. The *Disciples of Christ* took over American Baptist work at *Bolenge* near *Mbandaka* in 1899 and quickly became an important denomination and its leaders contributed to the formation of the ECC. However, their reputation has been damaged by rivalries between denomination leaders and the president of the ECC, Mgr. Bokoleale. (From <http://www.reformiert-online.net/adressen/detail.php?id=12146&lg=eng>)

### ***PENTECOSTAL ZEM***

According to Operation World, there are 1,667 ECC-Pentecostal ZEM Congregations with 250,000 members and 500,000 affiliates.

The following is from <http://jireh.org/zem/who.htm>

ZEM stands for Zaire Evangelistic Mission. ZEM is not tied to a single denomination. Instead, it is a "UK Christian charity working with a group of Pentecostal/charismatic missionaries in Central Africa, particularly in the Democratic Republic of Congo, since 1915." (From <http://jireh.org/zem/who.htm>). Most of their work is with the 'Communauté Pentecôtiste au Congo' (CPC). They also work with the 'Communauté Pentecôtiste au Nord-Katanga' (CPNK) and other groups.

### ***BAPTIST RIVER***

According to Operation World, there are 229 ECC-Baptist-River Congregations with 216,538 members and 450,000 affiliates. However, the Baptist World Alliance at <http://www.bwanet.org/Contact%20Us/MemberBodies.htm> claims that the Baptist Community of the Congo River has 1,085 churches with 783,494 members.

"The first Protestants to arrive in the Congo were British Baptist missionaries in 1878. They proceeded to build a series of stations along the course of the River Congo, which

are now administered by the Baptist Community of the River Congo (CBFC).” (From <http://www.pcusa.org/pcusa/wmd/ep/country/demreli.htm>)

There is more information available about programs the Baptist World alliance is funding in the Democratic Republic of Congo at <http://www.bwanet.org/bwaid/CongoProjects10.htm>

#### **BAPTIST WEST**

According to Operation World, there are 600 ECC-Baptist-West Congregations with 252,000 members and 420,000 affiliates. However, the Baptist World Alliance at <http://www.bwanet.org/Contact%20Us/MemberBodies.htm> claims that the Baptist Community of the Congo River has 600 churches with 252,000 members.

“The Baptist Community of West Congo (CBCO) in the Lower Congo province and east of Kinshasa, was initiated by American Baptists” (from <http://www.pcusa.org/pcusa/wmd/ep/country/demreli.htm>)

There is more information available about programs the Baptist World alliance is funding in the Democratic Republic of Congo at <http://www.bwanet.org/bwaid/CongoProjects10.htm>

#### **CECCA (WEC-related)**

According to Operation World, there are 1,800 ECC-CECCA Congregations with 120,000 members and 330,000 affiliates. However, the WEC website (<http://www.wec-int.org/congo/church.htm>) claims that there are around 250,000 people involved in the greater church community.

CECCA (from the French for Evangelical Community of Christ in the Heart of Africa) is the church associated with WEC, or Worldwide Evangelization for Christ. The church began with the work of C.T. Studd and Alfred Buxton in 1913. Today, it is the largest church associated with WEC. Their main centre is in Isiro and they also have churches in Kisangani and Bunia. (From <http://www.wec-int.org/congo/church.htm>)

The WEC website for the Congo is very good. <http://www.wec-int.org/congo/index.html>

#### **ASSEMBLY OF GOD**

*Pentecostals and Assemblies of God* came in 1915 from the UK (northern *Shaba, Kalemie*), the USA (Isiro; spread to other parts, including Kinshasa), and Norway and Sweden (Bukavu).

According to Operation World, there are 1,603 ECC-AoG, USA Congregations with 160,000 members and 290,681 affiliates. However, the Assemblies of God website ([http://worldmissions.ag.org/regions/reg\\_africa.cfm](http://worldmissions.ag.org/regions/reg_africa.cfm)) claims there are nearly 12,000

people who attend LaBorne Assembly in Kinshasa. In addition, they say that several of LaBorne's 22 daughter churches have over 1,000 people in attendance.

### ***CECA(AIM-related)***

According to Operation World, there are 1,950 ECC-CECA Congregations with 100,000 members and 210,000 affiliates. However, the AIM website ([http://www.aim-us.org/about\\_AIM/where\\_we\\_serve/DRCongo.asp](http://www.aim-us.org/about_AIM/where_we_serve/DRCongo.asp)) says that there are over 2,265 congregations with a total membership well over half a million.

AIM(African Inland Mission) began its work in the Congo at Kasengu in 1912, establishing the Communauté Évangélique au Centre de l'Afrique (CECA). There is more information about the churches programs, schools, and hospitals at [http://www.aim-us.org/about\\_AIM/where\\_we\\_serve/DRCongo.asp](http://www.aim-us.org/about_AIM/where_we_serve/DRCongo.asp).

### ***EVANGELICAL COVENANT***

According to Operation World, there are 940 ECC-Evangelical Covenant Congregations with 120,000 members and 200,000 affiliates.

The Evangelical Covenant Church has a website about its work in Africa which includes the Democratic Republic of the Congo. It is [www.covafrika.org](http://www.covafrika.org)

### ***CMA***

According to Operation World, there are 589 ECC-CMA Congregations with 99,557 members and 177,319 affiliates. Similarly, Alliance Life, a Christian and Missionary Alliance publication available online at <http://www.alliancelife.org/current/missions-0411.php>, says they have "a national church of more than 100,000 members in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and sister churches in Angola, Liberia and Nigeria."

### ***BAPTIST KIVU***

According to Operation World, there are 280 ECC-Baptist-Kivu Congregations with 97,250 members and 160,000 affiliates. They are also known as Communauté Baptiste au Kivu or CBK for short.

### ***EVANGELICAL FREE (UBANGI)***

According to Operation World, there are 1,226 ECC-Evangelical Free (Ubangi) Congregations with 114,000 members and 160,000 affiliates. A paper presented at the Philadelphia Consultation on Dependency and Self-Reliance held on November 19-20, 1999 that is available online at <http://www.wmausa.org/paper1-mossai.htm> says "the Evangelical Community in the Ubangi-Mongala (CEUM), located in the northwestern corner of the DRC has over 140,000 members representing fifteen different ethnic groups. The population of the Ubangi-Mongala region is 1,500,000 in which the CEUM itself has 872 Preaching Points. The total number of missionaries working in the CEUM

in 1996 before evacuation was 47 career and 11 Short-term (Covenant World Mission: 1998).”

Also, the Summer 2002 issue of Trinity Magazine available online at <http://www.tiu.edu/trinitymagazine/summer2002/2and222.htm> has an article entitled 2 Doctors for 222 Beds. The article mentions the Evangelical Free mission in the Congo, saying “This December the Evangelical Free Church Mission will celebrate 80 years of ministry in the Democratic Republic of Congo along with the planted national church (C.E.C.U.), which has grown to more than 600 churches and 100,000 members. The first missionary to the area was a medical man named Titus Johnson, a former Trinity Evangelical Divinity School professor. He planted the “gospel seed” and helped initiate a number of dispensaries at mission stations.”

“The church grew out of missionary efforts of the Evangelical Free Church of America, a small denomination of Swedish origin, closely related but distinct from the Evangelical Covenant Church of America (cf. Evangelical Community of Christ in Ubangi-Mongala, above). After exploratory journeys by T. M. Johnson, the mission settled in 1923 in the northwest of the then Belgian Congo. It was first called the Swedish American Mission and later renamed the Evangelical Mission in Ubangi.” (from <http://www.reformiert-online.net/adressen/detail.php?id=12149&lq=eng>)

#### **MENNONITE BRETHREN**

According to Operation World, there are 400 ECC-Mennonite Brethren Congregations with 90,000 members and 160,000 affiliates. <http://domino-18.prominic.com/A5584F/SOLtoWeb.nsf/0/b87410f8e101025885256b82004696c8?OpenDocument> says that the Mennonite Brethren Church of Congo (CEFMC) is based in Kikwit and has approximately 70,000 members. <http://www.mwc-cmm.org/Directory/mbictotal.html> gives a table of the Mennonite and Brethren in Christ World Directory with the latest data from 2002-2003. They say there are 194,119 members in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Further, [http://www.adherents.com/adhloc/Wh\\_365.html](http://www.adherents.com/adhloc/Wh_365.html) gives the following numbers: Communauté des Églises des Frères Mennonites au Congo (71,262), Communauté Évangélique Mennonite (21,000), and Communauté Mennonite au Congo (83,575).

#### **MENNONITE**

According to Operation World, there are 950 ECC-Mennonite Congregations with 100,000 members and 140,000 affiliates. However, <http://domino-18.prominic.com/A5584F/SOLtoWeb.nsf/0/b87410f8e101025885256b82004696c8?OpenDocument> says that “there are three Mennonite denominations (“communities”) in the Congo, with which MCC has historical partnership: the Mennonite Church of Congo (CMCO) based in Tshikapa, with a membership of over 80,000; the Mennonite Brethren Church of Congo (CEFMC) based in Kikwit with a membership of approximately 70,000; and the Evangelical Mennonite Church of Congo (CEM), based in Mbuji-Mayi with a membership of approximately 40,000 members.”

<http://www.mwc-cmm.org/Directory/mbictotal.html> gives a table of the Mennonite and Brethren in Christ World Directory with the latest data from 2002-2003. They say there are 194,119 members in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Further, [http://www.adherents.com/adhloc/Wh\\_365.html](http://www.adherents.com/adhloc/Wh_365.html) gives the following numbers: Communauté des Eglises des Freres Mennonites au Congo (71,262), Communauté Evangélique Mennonite (21,000), and Communauté Mennonite au Congo (83,575).

The Mennonite work in the Democratic Republic of Congo is described at <http://www.mcc.org/areaserv/africa/congo/>

“AIMM began work in Congo in 1912. Two large Mennonite denominations grew out of this holistic ministry, Communauté Evangélique au Congo (Evangelical Mennonite Church of Congo) and Communauté Mennonite au Congo (Mennonite Church of Congo). North American missionaries were invited by and worked under Zairian church leadership.” (from <http://www.aimmintl.org/NR022704.htm>) Because of political insecurity and family considerations, North American workers left the country by 1998.

<http://www.aimmintl.org/NR022704.htm> also says that the Congolese church makes up 15% of the worldwide population.

#### ***FREE METHODIST***

According to Operation World, there are 950 ECC-Free Methodist Congregations with 57,000 members and 130,000 affiliates. However, according to the Free Methodist website

(<http://fmwm.freemethodistchurch.org/areas/africa/democraticrepublicofcongo.html>) there are 381 churches with 139,490 members in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

The church began in 1963, when “7,000 Christians of the Babembe tribe voted to join the Free Methodist Church. The missionary group which had worked among them had withdrawn three years earlier when independence in the country brought upheaval.” (from

<http://fmwm.freemethodistchurch.org/areas/africa/democraticrepublicofcongo.html>).

#### ***EV CHURCH OF LUBONGO***

According to Operation World, there are 1,054 ECC-EV Church of Lubongo Congregations with 74,850 members and 125,000 affiliates.

#### ***Churches not Affiliated with the ECC***

#### ***ANGLICAN***

According to Operation World, there are 1,000 Anglican Congregations with 110,000 members and 370,000 affiliates.

“In 1992 the Anglican Church in the Congo became a Province with its own archbishop, Patrice Njojo Byankya. It is now comprised of six dioceses, with about 500,000 members, and is widely spread throughout the country, particularly the eastern half. Apolo Kivebulaya is remembered as the apostle of this church on the anniversary of his death, 30th May. Following independence, the Church expanded and formed dioceses as part of the Province of Uganda, Burundi, Rwanda, and Boga-Zaire. The new Province was inaugurated in 1992 and changed its name in 1997.” (From <http://www.cmsireland.org/globalvillage.cfm?PageAlias=country&CountryAlias=congo>)

### **SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST**

According to Operation World, there are 1,200 Seventh Day Adventist Congregations with 350,000 members and 550,000 affiliates.

According to the Adventist Organization Directory ([http://www.adventistdirectory.org/view\\_AdField\\_SubEntities.asp?AdmFieldID=ECD&EntityType=E](http://www.adventistdirectory.org/view_AdField_SubEntities.asp?AdmFieldID=ECD&EntityType=E)) there are no seventh day Adventist Churches in the Democratic Republic of Congo. However they do have the following Universities and Schools:

[Adventist University at Lukanga](#) (College or University) Lubero, North-Kivu, Democratic Republic of the Congo

[Lukanga Adventist Institute](#) (Complete Secondary Boarding School) Butembo, Nord-Kivu, Democratic Republic of Congo

[Rwamiko Institute](#) (Complete Secondary School) Goma, Kivu, Democratic Republic of Congo

[Songa Institute](#) (Complete Secondary School )

### **CHURCH OF GOD (CLEVELAND)**

According to Operation World, there are 398 Church of God (Cleveland) Congregations with 54,369 members and 80,000 affiliates. However, the Spring 2004 Report claims that there are 45 new churches; 5 new missions; 1,850 new members; 735m people saved; 813 baptized in water; and 14, 813 baptized in the Holy Spirit.

The Spring 2004 Report was found at <http://www.cogwm.org/pdf/fall2004reports/drc.pdf>: (which was accessed through [http://www.cogwm.org/africa\\_north\\_central/afnorthcentral\\_reports.cfm](http://www.cogwm.org/africa_north_central/afnorthcentral_reports.cfm))

### **African Independent Churches**

The acronym AIC has been said to stand for African Independent Churches, African Initiative Churches, or African Instituted Churches. In 1981 AICs constituted 15 percent of the total Christian population in sub-Saharan Africa. (from [www.wcc-coe.org/wcc/what/ecumenical/aic-e.html](http://www.wcc-coe.org/wcc/what/ecumenical/aic-e.html)).

African Independent Churches are churches that have started at the initiative of Africans and according to African culture, as opposed to the churches started by missionaries that are very western in culture. "They in effect protest the verbal and cerebral mode which puts Western Christianity beyond the reach of people's comprehension and experience. Instead, the AICs offer a celebrative religion, making considerable use of symbols, music and dance. Thus they represent cultural renaissance in reaction to the cultural imperialism of the mission work of the historic churches" (from [www.wcc-coe.org/wcc/what/ecumenical/aic-e.html](http://www.wcc-coe.org/wcc/what/ecumenical/aic-e.html)). "These churches can now claim a total of over twenty million adherents and are probably growing faster than any other churches in Africa. A recent survey has estimated that there are more than 6,000 such groups in Africa... The African Independent Churches constitute one of the most remarkable phenomena of church growth in the twentieth century." (from <http://www.ctlibrary.com/4554>)

There are only two AIC churches that are recognized by the WCC. They are the "Church of the Lord (Aladura) from Nigeria, which claims a membership of over 1 million, and Eglise du Christ sur la terre par le prophète Simon Kimbangu (EJCSK, Church of Christ on Earth by the Prophet Simon Kimbangu), or Kimbanguist Church, from the Democratic Republic of Congo, which claims a membership of 5 million" (from [www.wcc-coe.org/wcc/what/ecumenical/aic-e.html](http://www.wcc-coe.org/wcc/what/ecumenical/aic-e.html)).

In 1968, David Barrett wrote an excellent book on the development of African Independent churches. It is called *Schism and Renewal in Africa*. According to [http://www.adherents.com/adhloc/Wh\\_365.html](http://www.adherents.com/adhloc/Wh_365.html) two different sources have said there are 7,740,000 or 7,650,000 adherents to African Indigenous Churches.

### **KIMBANGUIST**

The largest independent church in Congo is the *Church of Jesus Christ on Earth through the Prophet Simon Kimbangu* (EJCSK) and is one of only two AICs to be recognized by the WCC.

In 1921, a Congolese Christian named Simon Kimbangu received a call for a ministry of preaching the Gospel and healing the sick. Having performed some miraculous cures, he gained a large following in *Bas-Congo*. Kimbangu did not baptize people, but would refer them instead to missionaries.

The missions, however, saw in this Christian movement associations with indigenous belief systems and expressed their disapproval. Kimbangu's responded by establishing their own church. Its original doctrine included the strict observance of the Law of Moses, the destruction of fetishes, an end to sorcery, magic, charms, and witches, and the prohibition of polygamy.

The movement, perceived as a center of resistance against European rule and missions, was banned and went underground in 1921. Kimbangu was arrested, convicted and sentenced to death. In 1951, he died in prison, after his sentence was commuted to life imprisonment. The Kimbanguists were bitterly persecuted, but the

legends concerning Kimbangu grew and the sect flourished. A Kimbanguist church council was organized in 1956. Three years later the colonial government lifted the ban and granted the church legal recognition. In 1969, the Kimbanguist Church became the first independent African church to be admitted to the World Council of Churches. It currently has six million members in Congo and is lead by Simon Kimbangu's son, Joseph Diangienda. There is information available about Joseph Diangienda at [http://www.gospelcom.net/dacb/stories/demrepcongo/diangienda\\_joseph.html](http://www.gospelcom.net/dacb/stories/demrepcongo/diangienda_joseph.html)

### **NEW APOSTOLIC**

According to Operation World, there are 1,800 New Apostolic Congregations with 530,000 members and 1,450,000 affiliates.

The New Apostolic Church is one of many of the African Independent churches. The New Apostolic Church has a Chief Apostle who is the highest spiritual authority of the church and resides in Zurich, Switzerland. They claim to have over nine million members in almost every country of the world. The New Apostolic Creed is available at <http://www.nak.org/text/11-gb.html> .

### **Non-Christian Religions**

#### **ISLAM**

Islam has had relatively little impact in Congo. It exists primarily in *Maniema* and in northern *Shaba*. Congolese muslims are descendants of those converted in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, influenced by Afro-Arab traders and raiders. Other Muslim groups are composed of Arabs from Oman and Zanzibar (Sunnis), Pakistani's and Indians (Ismailis), and some West Africans. Muslims number some 570,000 in DROC and are increasing at a rate of +0.8% annually.

#### **BAHA'IS**

In a 1963 mass movement, 20,000 Africans joined this syncretic sect. A very rapid growth followed. By 2000 the Baha'i group in DROC numbered as many as 222,000 but showed a growth rate of -0.4%.

#### **HINDUS**

Around 93,000 Hindus live in DROC and are showing a growth rate of up to +5.1 % annually.

#### **NON-RELIGIOUS**

Those considered non-religious number over 290,000 and are increasing at a rate of + 1.2% annually.

# People Groups of Congo

## Indigenous Peoples

### ALUR

JP (500,000)

The Alur people live in the Orientale Province, from the Mahagi territory and northwest to Djalasiga area. The entire Bible was published in 1936. They also have Gospel audio recordings and the Jesus Film in their language. Primary religion: Christianity.

### AMBA

JP (4,500)

Also known as the KiHumu language. The Amba people live in the Nord-Kivu Province along the DROC-Uganda border between Lake Albert and Lake Edward and in the northern foothills of Ruwenzori. Primary religion: Christianity. No Bible.

### Angba, Hanga

JP (42,000 )

The Angba people hold primarily to Christianity yet they have no copy of the Bible in their language.

### APAKABETI

JP (25,000)

The Apakabeti people speak the Pagibete language. They live along the Equator Province, and in the Businga, Yakoma, and Bumba territories. There are also called the Apakabeti, Apagibete, Apagibeti, Pagabete people. They also live along the road south of Businga and in the area around Ngakpo on the north side of the Dua River, across from Gumba, and in Butu, Yakoma Territory. There is a portion of this language group living to the south of Butu and at Ndundu-Sana in the northern Bumba Territory. They have no known translations of Scripture at this time. About 51% of the people are adherents to Christianity and are considered evangelized.

### ASUA (pygmy)

JP(21,000)

Also known as the Asuati, Aka, and Asuae people, the Asua live in the Haut-Zaire region, Rungu territory, Ituri forest. They live among the Mangbetu groups Maele, Meje, Aberu, and Popoi. The name AKA is pygmy and may be a derogatory word. The Asua, Mbuti, Efe, and other Pygmies, still culturally distinct in some respects, now largely share the languages of their Bantu and Central Sudanic neighbors. There are no known Scripture translations at this time and they practice traditional tribal religions and Christianity.

### AUSHI

JP (105,000)

The Aushi people in the DROC live in the far southeast of the country bordering Zambia. The language group is also called the Avaushi, Vouaousi, Ushi, Usi, and Uzhili in both the DROC and Zambia. They have no known portions of the Bible in their language. The Jesus Film, audio Scriptures, or radio broadcasts in their language. They are considered a reached people group, with over 50% Christianity.

### *Avokaya*

JP (25,000)

The Avokaya people (*ABUKEIA, AVUKAYA*) live in the far northeast portion of the *Orientale Province, Faradje Territory* of the DROC, close to the Sudan border. Around 25,000 live in DROC while over 40,000 reside in all countries. The Avokaya have portions of the Bible (1996) and Gospel audio recordings available to them in their language.. They primarily practice traditional religions and are considered *unevangelized*.

### *Azande*

JP (730,000)

The Azande, as they exist today, are an agglomeration of indigenous and invading Sudanic peoples, whose different origins, languages, and cultures over a period of two centuries have become homogenized into a more or less common social pattern. The name "Azande" is spelled with many variations, such as Asande, Assandeh, Asandeh, Badjande, Bazende, Basingi, Sande, and Sandeh.

The area occupied by the Azande roughly straddles the present-day boundaries of the Sudan, the Central African Republic, and The Democratic Republic of Congo. Population estimates of the Azande vary considerably, since it is difficult to tell exactly what boundaries the estimators have used or whether they have included related ethnic groups in their estimates. Such estimates have run from two million in 1870 to three to four million around 1920 but these figures seem excessively high. A more recent estimate, made in 1949, gives a figure of about 725,000 to 730,000 people, of whom 500,000 live in DROC, 200,000 in the Sudan, and from 25,000 to 30,000 in the Central African Republic. Throughout the regions occupied by the Azande, the birth rate is steadily declining.

The Azande language belongs to the Eastern branch of the Niger-Congo stock, and is spoken throughout the region as either a first or a second language. The language is subdivided into several different but mutually intelligible dialects.

The Azande lived typically in neighborhoods of polygynous family homesteads scattered at intervals of 100-300 yards. The provincial governors, however, generally occupied concentrated hamlets, and paramount chiefs lived in villages of several hundred people.

The Azande magico-religious system is well-known through the writings of anthropologist Evans-Pritchard and his study of their witchcraft beliefs (1937). This study shows how witchcraft beliefs sustained Azande moral values and their institutions, while also revealing how these beliefs were restricted so as never to apply in contexts in which conflicting parties might have found an interest in denying them. In regions of the Azande there exists a plant that when fed to chickens, for reasons unknown, results in death for about one-half the chickens. The Azande are famous for their ritual of feeding a plant to a chicken (which are not eaten by the Azande) to ascertain guilt or innocence. This trial by ordeal pronounces one innocent if the chicken lives and guilty if it dies.

The Azande are among those peoples called non-Muslim. The primary religion is Christianity and a whole Bible was last published in 1978.

[http://lucy.ukc.ac.uk/EthnoAtlas/Hmar/Cult\\_dir/Culture.7829](http://lucy.ukc.ac.uk/EthnoAtlas/Hmar/Cult_dir/Culture.7829); <http://countrystudies.us/sudan/39.htm>;

#### Baali

42,000 (PG)

The Bali people in the DROC live in the Orientale Province, Tshopo District, Bafwasende Territory, between the Tshopo River to the south and the Ituri River to the north, and on the north bank of the Ituri River. The Bali have some Gospel audio recordings available to them.

#### Bamassa Pygmy

JP (8,400)

The Bamassa Pygmies adhere to a traditional ethnic religion and do not have a translation of the Bible in their language.

#### BAMWE

JP (20,000)

The Bamwe people in the DRC live in the Equateur Province, Sud Ubangi, Kungu Territory, in Mwanda Collectivité, upper reaches of Ngiri River between the villages of Limpoko and Sombe, including villages of Moniongo, Libobi, Likata, Mondongo, Lifunga, Bomole, Lokutu, and Botunia. All village dialects are highly intelligible to each other. Dzando and Ndolo are the most closely related languages. Nearly everyone speaks Lingala except the oldest women. Many other women speak only market Lingala. There are no known Bible portions, no Gospel audio recordings, no radio broadcasts in this language; the Jesus Film is not available in this language.

#### Bongo

JP (2,000)

The Bongo people's primary religion is Christianity and they have no copy of the Bible in their language.

#### BANDA {mid-south}

JP (2,000)

Banda, Togbo-Vara

JP (12,000)

Banda {west-central}

JP (73,800)

The Banda people live in several different locations spread across the country of DROC. There are three main dialects of the Banda language group: the mid-southern, south central, and the Togbo-Vara (west central). They live in the Equateur Province, Bosobolo Territory in a few villages north of Dubulu, and Mobaye Territory; the Equateur Province, Nord Ubangi, Bosobolo Territory mainly, around towns of Badja and Baya, between villages of Vongba II and Bandema, on the road as far as Gwara II, and scattered villages in the area. Many of the men are fishermen. Most Banda practice Roman Catholicism, yet they have no copies of the Bible in their language.

BANGBA

JP (11,000)

The Bangba people of the DROC primarily live in the Orientale Province, Kopa Collectivité of the Niangara Territory, and the area around Tora in the Watsa Territory. They are also known as the Abangba people. The Bangba have Gospel audio recordings available in their language, but no Bible.

BANGI

JP (70,000)

The Bangi people of the DROC live in the Equateur Province, east of Congo River from Bolobo to Mbandaka. The Bangi last received a copy of the New Testament in their language and other “portions” of Scripture in their language in the 1920s. The Bangi primarily practice Roman Catholicism.

Bangobango

JP (171,000)

These people are a sub-group of the Luba people of Congo and live east of the Lualaba River in southeastern Zaire.<sup>1</sup> 90% are Muslim.<sup>2</sup> The Bangobango people have no translation of the Bible in their language.

Barambu

JP (25,600)

The Barambu people’s primary religion is Roman Catholic Christianity, yet they have no Bible translation in their language.

Bari Kakwa

JP (20,000)

The people of Bari Kakwa are primarily Roman Catholic. The Bible in their language was published in 1983.

Bayaka Pygmy

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<sup>1</sup> Olson, 69.

<sup>2</sup> Barrett.

JP (26,000)

The Bayaka Pygmy hold to a traditional ethnic religion and do not have a copy of the Bible in their language.

Beeke

JP (1,000)

The Beeke primarily hold to Roman Catholicism, and have no copy of the Bible in their language.

Bemba

JP (120,000)

Language Name: Bemba. Autonym: iciBemba. Alternate spellings: ciBemba, ChiBemba, ichiBemba.

Location: Principally spoken in Zambia, in the Northern, Copperbelt, and Luapula Provinces; also spoken in southern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and southern Tanzania.

Family: Bemba is a Central Bantu language. The Bantu language family is a branch of the Benue-Congo family, which is a branch of the Niger-Congo family, which is a branch of Niger-Kordofanian.

Related Languages: Most closely related to the Bantu languages Kaonde (in Zambia and DRC), Luba (in DRC), Nsenga and Tonga (in Zambia), and Nyanja/Chewa (in Zambia and Malawi).

Dialects: Principal dialects are: Aushi, Bemba, Bisa, Chishinga, Kunda, Lala, Lamba, Luunda, Ng'umbo, Swaka, Tabwa, and Unga.

Each of these dialects is distinguished by its association with a distinct ethnic group, culture, and territory of the same name. Each dialect exhibits minor differences of pronunciation and phonology, and very minor differences in morphology and vocabulary. Because Bemba is such a widely used *lingua franca*, varieties of the language exist in urban areas. Urban varieties exhibit large lexical input from English and have several names, including: chiKopabeeluti [chiCopperbelt], chiTauni [chiTown], and Town Bemba.

Number of Speakers: 5 - 6 million. An estimated 3.7 million people speak Bemba and related dialects as a first language; other speakers speak Bemba as a second language.

### Origin and History

The Bemba people in Zambia originated from the Kola region in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC, formerly Zaire), and are an offshoot of the ancient Luba empire. Oral historical accounts differ slightly, but there is general agreement that the

Luba immigrants arrived in the high plateau area of north-eastern Zambia (extending from Lake Bangweulu to the Malawi border) sometime during the mid 17th century. This area was already settled by agriculturalists, but by the end of the 18th century the Bemba people had established a powerful kingdom under the central authority of Chitimukulu, the paramount chief. Bemba rule continued to expand widely throughout north-eastern Zambia up until the end of the 19th century, when the first European missionaries and entrepreneurs began to vie for power in the area. In 1898-89, the British South Africa Company's army wrested control of the Bemba territory, and in 1924 the British colony of Northern Rhodesia was established across the entire region of what is now present-day Zambia. Zambia gained independence from British domination in 1964.

In contemporary Zambia, the word "Bemba" actually has several meanings. It may designate people of Bemba origin, regardless of where they live, e.g. whether they live in urban areas or in the original rural Bemba area. Alternatively, it may encompass a much larger population which includes some eighteen different ethnic groups, who together with the Bemba form a closely related ethnolinguistic cluster of matrilineal-matrifocal agriculturalists known as the Bemba-speaking peoples of Zambia (see Dialects).

Because of the political importance of the Bemba kingdom and the extensive reach of the Bemba language, Bemba was targeted as a major language for the production of religious and educational materials in the early 1900s. The White Fathers missionaries published the earliest written texts on and in Bemba, including the first Bemba grammar in 1907 and the first Bemba translation of the New Testament in 1923. Bemba was also selected by the colonial administration as one of the four main indigenous languages (along with Lozi, Nyanja, and Tonga) to be used in education and mass media. With the extensive migration of Bemba-speaking peoples to the mining areas of the Copperbelt from late 1920s onward, the language's range expanded further. By the late 1940s, Bemba -- and specifically an urban variety known as Town Bemba -- had become well-established as the lingua franca of the Copperbelt region. Extensive urban-urban migration, interethnic marriage, and the high degree of multilingualism in the country have yielded a situation where over half of the national population currently speaks Bemba. While Nyanja is still the primary lingua franca of the capital city of Lusaka, Bemba is spoken widely there as well.

The Bemba primarily hold to Roman Catholicism, and have no copy of the Bible in their language.

Bembe

JP (252,000)

The Bembe of the DRC live in the eastern highlands, many on the northwestern shore of Lake Tanganyika, just south of the Furiiru near the Burundi border. The high altitude of their location allows the Bembe to raise cattle for meat and milk. The Bembe also

fish in the lake and maintain small farms. Most Bembe hold to a traditional ethnic religion. A whole Bible publication occurred in 1991.

#### Bendi

JP (32,000)

The Bendi hold to a traditional ethnic religion and do not have a copy of the Bible in their language.

#### Beri

JP (14,800)

The Beri people hold primarily to Roman Catholicism and received a publication of the Bible in 1979.

#### Binji

JP (64,000)

The Binji people are a subgroup of the Luba people. Divided into distinct northern and southern groups, the Binjis live along the Lualaba River. The Binjis are politically decentralized. Primarily holding to Roman Catholicism, the Binjis received a publication of the NT in their language in 1962.

#### Binza

JP (10,000)

This people of this small ethnic group called Binza live primarily north of the Lualaba River in north-central DRC, south of the Uele River. The Binza live in a heavily forested region of the country and make their living raising cassava, bananas, and kolanuts. Recently, many Binza have left the forests for employment in towns and cities like Yakoma and Bondo.<sup>3</sup> The Binza hold primarily to Christianity, but have no Bible published in their language.

#### Boba

JP (23,000)

The Boba hold primarily to Roman Catholicism, yet have no Bible published in their language.

#### Boko

JP (21,000)

The Boko hold primarily to Roman Catholicism, yet have no Bible published in their language.

#### Bokoto

JP (98,400)

The Bokoto people hold primarily to Christianity, yet do not have a copy of the Bible in their language.

#### Boloki

JP (4,200)

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<sup>3</sup> Olson, 98.

Most Boloki hold to Roman Catholicism. They last had Bible portions published in their language 100 years ago (A.D. 1904).

Bolondo  
JP (3,000)

The Bolondo are primarily Roman Catholic, yet they have no copy of the Bible in their language.

Boma Kasai  
JP (8,000)

The Bomas of the DRC speak Bantu. The Bomas find their ethnic origin in the Tio Kingdom of the pre-colonial era. Today, the Bomas concentrate in the Mai-Ndombe region along the Zaire River, especially north of the Kwa/Kasai River.<sup>4</sup> The Boma Kasai adhere primarily to Roman Catholicism, yet have no Bible translation in their language.

Bombongo  
JP (2,500)

The Bombongo people of the DRC hold to a traditional ethnic religion and have no copy of the Bible in their own language.

Bomitaba  
JP (21,000)

Most Bomitaba hold to Christianity, yet they have no copy of the Bible in their language.

British  
JP (13,000)

Most of the DRC British are protestant Christians and have copies of the Bible in their language.

Budu  
JP (180,000)

The Budu people speak Bantu and live in the former Haut-Zaire region of the DRC. Many Budus still live as farmers, raising cassava as a staple. Recently, however, many Budus have moved to the city of Kisangani to obtain wage labor. The Budus hold to a traditional ethnic religion and do not have the Bible in their language.

Buela  
JP (8,400)

The Buela are primarily Roman Catholic, yet they have no copy of the Bible in their own language.

Buja  
JP (226,000)

The Buja people hold primarily to a traditional ethnic animistic religion. They have no copy of the Bible in their language.

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<sup>4</sup> Olson, 106.

Bulia

JP (45,000)

The Bulia are primarily Roman Catholic. They received portions of the Bible translated into their language in 1936.

Buraka

JP (1,300)

The Buraka hold to a traditional ethnic religion and do not have a copy of the Bible in their language.

Bushoong

JP (50,000)

The Bushongs are a subgroup of the Kuba people in the DRC. They live in the Kasai region near Dekese and north of Ilebo. Today, most Boshongos are small farmers. Prior to the 18<sup>th</sup> century, most Boshongos were fishermen. In the 1700s, however, the Boshongos began making a transition to farming, learning how to raise maize, manioc, and tobacco. The wealth from these agricultural endeavors aided them as they conquered their neighbors, the Lulus and the Mongos.<sup>5</sup> The Bushoong are primarily Roman Catholic and received a copy of the Bible in their language in 1927.

Buya

JP (13,000)

The Buya are primarily Roman Catholic, yet they have no copy of the Bible in their language.

Buyi

JP (10,000)

The Buyi are primarily Roman Catholic, yet they have no copy of the Bible in their language.

Buzaba

JP (5,500)

The Buzaba hold to a traditional ethnic religion and have no copy of the Bible in their language.

Bwa

JP (200,000)

The Bwa people hold primarily to Roman Catholicism. They received portions of the Bible in their language in 1938.

Bwile

JP (32,000)

The Bwile people hold primarily to Roman Catholicism, yet have no copy of the Bible in their own language.

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<sup>5</sup> Olson, 110.

### Bwisi

JP (20,000)

The Bwisi people hold primarily to Roman Catholicism, yet they have no copy of the Bible in their own language.

### Chokwe

JP (504,000)

In the DRC, most Chokwe people live in the upper Kwango and Kasai river regions. Until the mid-1800s, the Chokwes were a matrilineal society of semi-nomadic hunters living in northeastern Angola. Through marriage and conquest in the nineteenth century, the Chokwes absorbed most of the other ethnic groups between the Kwango River and the Kubango and Kunene rivers. Today, most Chokwes are farmers, but some have moved to industrial and mining jobs in the Shaba copper belts.<sup>6</sup> The Chokwes hold primarily to Roman Catholic Christianity. They last received a publication of the Bible in their language in 1990.

### Congolese, French Speaking

JP (no population data)

The French speaking Congolese are primarily Christian and have had a copy of the Bible in their language for a number of centuries.

### Dongo

JP (5,000)

The Dongo people practice a traditional ethnic religion and have no copy of the Bible in their language.

### Dzando

JP (6,000)

Most of the Dzando people are protestant Christians, yet they have no copy of the Bible in their own language.

### Dzing

JP (155,000)

The Dzing people adhere primarily to Roman Catholicism, yet they have no copy of the Bible in their own language.

### Efe

JP (20,000)

The Efe people are a subgroup of the Mbuti people, themselves a subgroup of the Pygmies. The Efe live in the northeastern portion of the Ituri forest in the DRC.<sup>7</sup> The Efe practice a traditional ethnic animistic religion and have no copy of the Bible in their own language.

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<sup>6</sup> Olson, 130.

<sup>7</sup> Olson, 162.

Ekonda

JP (1,033,000)

The Ekonda people are primarily Christian and last had portions of the Bible translated into their language in 1967.

Eurafrican

JP (98,400)

The Eurafrican people hold primarily to Christianity and last had the Bible translated into their language in 1986.

Fleming

JP (84,000)

The Fleming people hold primarily to Roman Catholicism but have no Bible in their own language.

Foma

JP (13,000)

The Foma people hold primarily to Roman Catholicism but have no Bible in their own language.

Forest Bira

JP (40,000)

The Biras are a small ethnic group living on the Ugandan-DRC border. Most make their living as small farmers.<sup>8</sup> The Forest Bira people practice a traditional ethnic religion and have no copy of the Bible in their language.

French

JP (226,300)

The vast majority of the DRC French people live in the former colonies of the French Empire. By the early 1900s, the French had colonized a number of African territories, including French West Africa, French Equatorial Africa, and Madagascar. During the twentieth century, all of these colonies gained their independence, but a small residue of highly influential ethnic French settlers and their descendants remained there.<sup>9</sup> The French primarily claim Christianity and copies of the Bible are available.

Fuliro

JP (300,000)

The Fuliro people hold primarily to Roman Catholicism and in 1998 received a copy of the New Testament translated into their language.

Furu

JP (12,000)

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<sup>8</sup> Olson, 99.

<sup>9</sup> Olson, 180-181.

The majority of the Furu live in the neighboring countries so what should we say about these 12,000?<sup>10</sup> The Furu follow a traditional ethnic religion and have no Bible in their language.

Gbanziri  
JP (3,000)

The Gbanziri are a Ubangian group who live in the Ubangi River valley of the Central African Republic and across the river in the DRC. The Gbanziri, as a riverine people, are known for their canoe and fishing skills. Prior to the arrival of the French in the late nineteenth century, the Gbanziris were commercial traders moving up and down the tributaries of the Ubangi River system. Their language gradually became the lingua franca of the entire Ubangi-Shari region, including contiguous areas of Chad and Middle Congo.<sup>11</sup> The Gbanziri follow a traditional ethnic religion and have no Bible in their language.

Gbati-Ri  
JP (21,000)

The Gbati-Ri people primarily hold to Roman Catholicism, yet they have no Bible in their language.

Gbendere  
JP (3,000)

The Gbendere people hold to a traditional ethnic religion and have no copy of the Bible in their language.

Gbi  
JP (9,800)

The Gbi people follow a traditional ethnic religion and do not have a Bible in their language.

Genja  
JP (43,000)

The Genja people hold primarily to Roman Catholicism, yet they have no Bible in their language.

Genya  
P (7,000)

J

The Genya people hold primarily to Roman Catholicism, yet they have no Bible in their language.

Gilima  
JP (12,000)

The Gilima people hold primarily to Roman Catholicism, yet they have no Bible in their language.

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<sup>10</sup> Olson, 183.

<sup>11</sup> Olson, 192.

Gobu

JP (12,000)

The Gobu people hold primarily to Roman Catholicism, yet they have no Bible in their language.

Gundi Pygmy

JP (2,100)

The Gundi Pygmy people follow a traditional ethnic religion and have no Bible in their language.

Hamba

JP (13,000)

The Hamba hold primarily to Roman Catholicism, yet they have no copy of the Bible in their language.

Havu

JP (506,000)

The Havu people primarily hold to Christianity, yet they have no copy of the Bible in their language.

Hema, South

JP (160,000)

The Hema people hold primarily to Roman Catholicism, yet they have no copy of the Bible in their language.

Hima

JP (4,000)

The Hima people hold primarily to Roman Catholicism and they last received a copy of the Bible in their language in 1989.

Holoholo

JP (4,500)

The Holoholo people follow a traditional ethnic animistic religion. They received portions of the Bible published in 1948.

Holu

JP (14,000)

The Holu people hold primarily to Roman Catholicism and last received portions of the Bible in their language in 1956. They have no complete NT or OT.

Hunde

JP (200,000)

The Hundes are a subgroup of the Kivu people of the DRC. The Hundes live primarily in the highlands of east-central DRC, near Lake Kivu and the Rwandan border. Some

Hundes, however, may also be found in Rwanda and southwestern Uganda. Speaking a Bantu language, the Hundes live as farmers, raising cattle for milk and meat.<sup>12</sup> Most Hunde people are Roman Catholic. They received a complete NT in their language in 1987.

Joba

JP (10,000)

The Joba people hold primarily to Roman Catholicism, yet they have no Bible in their own language.

Kabwari

JP (8,400)

The Kabwari people hold primarily to Roman Catholicism, yet they have no Bible in their own language.

Kaiku

JP (13,000)

The Kaiku people hold primarily to Roman Catholicism, yet they have no Bible in their own language.

Kalebwe, Eastern Kalebwe

JP (170,500)

The Kalebwe people hold primarily to Christianity. They last received a copy of the NT in 1978. They have no OT. Portions of the Bible were published as late as 1981.

Kaliko

JP (7,500)

The Kaliko people hold primarily to Roman Catholicism, yet they have no copy of the Bible in their language.

Kango

JP (5,900)

The Kango people hold primarily to Christianity, yet they have no copy of they Bible in their language.

Kango, Likango

JP (7,200)

The Likango people hold primarily to a traditional ethnic religion and they have no copy of the Bible in their own language.

Kanu

JP (3,500)

The Kanu people hold primarily to Christianity, yet they have no copy of they Bible in their language.

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<sup>12</sup> Olson, 227.

Kanyok

JP (200,000)

The Kanyok people hold primarily to Roman Catholicism. They received a copy of the NT in 1997.

Kaonde

JP (36,000)

The Kaonde (Bakahonde, Bakaonde, Kaundi, Kunda) are a major ethnic group in the Haut-Shaba region of northeastern DRC. They also reside in North-West Province of Zambia. The Kaonde speak a Bantu language. During the years of African slave trading, the Lunda people frequently victimized the Kaonde people, raiding them regularly for slaves. Today, most Kaonde are farmers who raise sorghum and maize. The Kaonde farmers burn shrubs and branches before the rainy season and plant their crops in the ashes; they also plant near rivers and streams after burning reeds and grass. Many Kaondes in recent decades, however, have sought work in urban areas.<sup>13</sup> The Kaonde people hold primarily to Roman Catholicism. They last received a copy of the Bible in their language in 1975.

Kari

JP (1,000)

The Kari people hold primarily to Roman Catholicism, yet they have no copy of the Bible in their language.

Kela, Lemba

JP (180,000)

The Kela/Lemba people hold primarily to Roman Catholicism, yet they have no complete Bible in their language. Portions of the Bible were published in 1940.

Kele

JP (160,000)

The Kele people hold primarily to Christianity. They received a copy of the NT in 1958, but have not OT.

Kete

JP (8,400)

The Kete are a subgroup of the Luba peoples of the DRC, a part of the Luba-Kasai subcluster of the Lubas.<sup>14</sup> The Kete hold primarily to Roman Catholicism, yet they have no copy of the Bible in their language.

Kinya-Mituku

JP (42,000)

The Kinya-Mituku people hold primarily to Roman Catholicism, yet they have no Bible in their language.

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<sup>13</sup> Olson, 273.

<sup>14</sup> Olson, 282.

Koguru

JP (4,200)

The Koguru people follow a traditional ethnic religion and have no copy of the Bible in their language.

Kongo, Lower

JP (670,000)

Kongo, San Salvador

JP (550,000)

Kongo, Tuba

JP (3,800,000)

The Kongo peoples represent the largest ethnic group in the DROC. The Kongo language, part of the Bantu family, is spoken in eastern DROC, northern Angola, as well as parts of the Republic of Congo and the Central African Republic.

During the late Middle Ages, the Kongo established a powerful kingdom in central Africa. The state of Kongo existed south of the Zaire River in 1300. By 1500, the other Kongo states of *Loango*, *Ngoyo*, and *Kakongo* appeared north of the river. Kongo kings were known as *manicongo*.

During the sixteenth century, Portuguese missionaries reached the Kongo, and in the 1530s, the *manicongo Mbembe-a-Nzinga* converted to Catholicism. The Kongo states destabilized and went into decline due to the presence of the Portuguese Kingdom. In the late nineteenth century, the Kimbanguism movement, a mix of Christian and animistic rituals, emerged and led the resistance to the Belgian empire. It wasn't until the early 1900s that the Europe brought the Kongos under their control. In the twentieth century, the Association des Bankongo continued resistance against Europe until Zaire finally achieved its independence.

Today the Kongo population exceeds five million. Most Kongos are farmers, raising cassava, bananas, palm oil, sweet potatoes, maize, coffee, and cocoa. Many Kongos also work in the towns and cities of the DRC. Because of their long contact with European educational systems, the Kongos tend to be influential in professional, commercial, and administrative life.<sup>15</sup>

Most Kongos adhere to some form of Christianity; Roman Catholicism prevails among the Lower Kongo. The Tuba Kongo received a copy of the Bible in their language in 1990; the San Salvador people received a copy of the New Testament in their language in 1995; the Lower Kongo received a New Testament most recently in 1993.

Konjo

JP (157,000)

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<sup>15</sup> Olson, 295.

The Konjo people hold primarily to Roman Catholicism, yet they do not have a copy of the Bible in their language. Portions of the Bible were published in their language in 1914.

Kpala  
JP (3,000)

The Kpala people follow a traditional ethnic religion and do not have a copy of the Bible in their language.

Kuba  
JP (50,000)

The Kuba people practice a traditional ethnic religion and last had the Bible published in their language in 1932. The Kuba immortalized each of their kings with a fine portrait figure carved in wood. Figures of 19 out of 124 known kings have survived.

Kumu  
JP (400,000)

The Kumu people hold primarily to Christianity, yet they have no complete Bible in their language. They received “portions” of Scripture translated in 1991.

Kunda, Seba  
JP (167,000)

The Kunda people hold primarily to Roman Catholicism, yet they have no copy of the Bible in their language.

Kusu  
JP (26,000)

The Kusus are a Bantu-speaking people who live along the Lomami River in the western Kivu Region of the DRC, concentrated between Kimombo and Lubao. Some have classified them as a part of the Mongo cluster of DRC people. At one point in time the Kusus were identical with the Tetelas, when they came under the influence of Arab traders. The Tetelas, however, resisted Arab cultural domination. As a result, today most Kusus wear Arab dress, speak Swahili, and pledge allegiance to Islam.<sup>16</sup> The Kusu have no copy of the Bible in their language.

Kwami, Kwame  
JP (8,400)

The Kwami people hold primarily to Roman Catholicism, yet they have no copy of the Bible in their language.

Kwese  
JP (60,000)

The Kweses are a small ethnic group of the Pande cluster of peoples living between the Kwilu and Kasai rivers in the Bandundu region of the DRC and are mainly farmers.

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<sup>16</sup> Olson, 317.

Some Kweses can be found in the Kasai Occidental region.<sup>17</sup> Most Kweses hold to Roman Catholicism, yet they have no complete Bible in their language. “Portions” of Scripture were translated into the Kwese language in 1929.

Lala-Bisa  
JP (467,000)

The Lala-Bisa people primarily practice Roman Catholicism. They received a NT in their language in 1977, and had “portions” of Scripture published in their language in 1995.

Lalia  
JP (55,000)

The Lalia people practice primarily Roman Catholicism, yet they have no copy of the Bible in their language.

Lamba  
JP (17,000)

The Lambas are an ethnic group that lives in the southeasternmost tip of the DRC, and across the border into Zambia. In Zambia, the Lamba population exceeds 125,000 people.<sup>18</sup> In the DRC, the Lambas are concentrated around the towns of Sakania. Most Lambas are farmers and laborers, with a patrilineal and matrilineal social system.<sup>19</sup> The Lamba people practice primarily Roman Catholicism and last had a complete copy of the Bible published in their language in 1959.

Langba  
JP (3,000)

The Langba people hold primarily to Christianity, yet they have no copy of the Bible in their language.

Langbashe  
JP (3,000)

The Langbashe people hold primarily to protestant Christianity, yet they have no copy of the Bible in their language.

Lega  
JP (400,000)

The Lega, a Bantu-speaking people, live east of the Lualaba River in east-central DRC, up to points near the borders of Rwanda and Burundi. Most Legas are farmers with a strong sense of ethnic identity that was forged even more deeply during the ethnic battles in eastern Zaire during the 1960s. The Lega people are known for their skill at carving ivory, wood, and bone.<sup>20</sup> Most Lega people practice a traditional ethnic religion. They received a copy of the NT in their language in 1957.

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<sup>17</sup> Olson, 323.

<sup>18</sup> Olson, 327.

<sup>19</sup> Olson, 327.

<sup>20</sup> Olson, 331.

### Leku

JP (4,900)

The Leku people hold primarily to Christianity and last had “portions” of the Bible published in their language in 1920.

### Lele

JP (26,000)

The Leles, not to be confused with the Leles of Chad or of Burkina-Faso, are a small and very independent ethnic group in the DRC. They are one of the Kuba peoples and live in the lower Kasai region. During the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the Leles offered fierce resistance to the imposition of the Belgian colonial empire in the Belgian Congo. Today, most Leles are small farmers.<sup>21</sup> Most hold to Roman Catholicism, yet they have no copy of the Bible in their language.

### Lendu

JP (750,000)

The Lendu people of northeastern DRC live on the western shore of Lake Albert, where they farm and fish. The region is characterized by excellent soil, which makes their farming activities profitable and allows for a relatively dense population. Some Lendus can also be found across the border in Uganda. The Lendus are considered to be part of the Lugbara cluster of peoples. They are divided into three subgroups of their own: the Pitsi, the Djatsi, and the Tatsis. Their language is part of the Sudanic group.<sup>22</sup> The Lendu practice a traditional ethnic religion and they last received a copy of the NT published in their language in 1989.

### Lengola

JP (42,000)

The Longolas are a Bantu-speaking people who live today on both sides of the Iulala River in east-central DRC. The Lengolas have traditionally been a riverine people whose livelihood came from fishing, trading, and riverbank farming. Most Lengolas still pursue this traditional lifestyle, although more and more are seeking work in cities and towns.<sup>23</sup> The Lengola people hold primarily to Roman Catholicism, yet they have no copy of the Bible in their language.

### Lese

JP (50,000)

The Lese people are an ethnic group living today in the Ituri Forest of the DRC, where they support themselves as subsistence farmers and as foragers.<sup>24</sup> The Lese people hold primarily to Christianity, yet they have no copy of the Bible in their language.

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<sup>21</sup> Olson, 332.

<sup>22</sup> Olson, 334. See also Constance Lojenga, “The Secret Behind Vowelless Syllables in Lendu,” Journal of African Languages and Linguistics 11 (October 1989): 115-26.

<sup>23</sup> Olson, 334.

<sup>24</sup> Olson, 334. See also Roy Richard Grinker, “Images of Denigration: Structuring Inequality Between Foragers and Farmers in the Ituri Forest of Zaire,” American Ethnology 17 (February 1990): 111-30.

#### Likila

JP (8,400)

The Likila people hold primarily to Roman Catholicism, yet they have no copy of the Bible in their language.

#### Liko

JP (5,000,000)

The Liko people practice primarily Roman Catholicism, yet they have no copy of the Bible in their language.

#### Lingala

JP (5,000,000)

Lingala, a Bantu language, is spoken today by millions of people in the DRC. Lingala is the country's primary language. Originally, the language was spoken only in the middle Zaire River Valley, but, during the colonial era, large numbers of Lingalas joined the Belgian army and carried the language all over the country.<sup>25</sup> The Lingala people hold primarily to protestant Christianity; they last received a copy of the NT in their language in 1992, and the whole Bible in 1970.

#### Lobala

JP (40,000)

The Lobalas are an ethnic group who live in the DRC and the Republic of Congo. They live on both sides of the Ubangi River in northwestern DRC and northeastern Republic of Congo. The Lobalas are a riverine people who have traditionally supported themselves by planting small gardens on the river banks, fishing, and trading up and down the Zaire and Ubangui rivers.<sup>26</sup> Most Lobala practice a traditional ethnic religion; no copy of the Bible exists in their language.

#### Logo

JP (210,000)

The Logos, an ethnic group, live in northeastern DRC, with some also scattered in western Uganda. The Logos speak an eastern Sudanic language, although they are of Nilotic origin. Most Logos are subsistence farmers and live in a very remote, isolated part of the country.<sup>27</sup> The Logo people hold primarily to protestant Christianity; they received "portions" of the Bible published in their language in 1927.

#### Loi

JP (20,000)

The Lois are a subgroup of the Mbochi people of eastern Gabon, central Republic of Congo, and western DRC. Although they are increasingly turning to commercial agriculture, the Loi economy has traditionally revolved around trading and fishing, at

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<sup>25</sup> Olson, 338.

<sup>26</sup> Olson, 339.

<sup>27</sup> Olson, 340.

which they are highly adept.<sup>28</sup> Most Loi hold to Roman Catholicism, yet they have no copy of the Bible in their language.

#### Lombi

JP (12,000)

The Lombis are a Bantu-speaking people living today in the Haut-Zaire region of the DRC. Although most Lombis still make their living as farmers, raising cassava as a staple, they have become increasingly integrated into the regional commercial economy in recent decades. Large numbers of Lombis have moved to the city of Kisangani in search of wage labor.<sup>29</sup> Most Lombis hold to Roman Catholicism, yet they have no copy of the Bible in their language.

#### Lombo

JP (10,000)

Most Lombos hold to Roman Catholicism, yet they have no copy of the Bible in their language.

#### Lonzo

JP (1,900)

The Lonzo practice primarily Roman Catholicism and they have no copy of the Bible in their language.

#### Luba, Luba-Bambo

JP (1,505,000)

#### Luba-Hemba, Eastern Luba

JP (85,000)

#### Luba-Lulua, Western Luba

JP (6,300,000)

The Lubas (Balubas) comprise a major ethnic group of the DRC. Approximately 12% of the Lubas are Muslim. The remaining Lubas are either Christians or faithful to traditional Luba beliefs and rituals. With a patrilineal social system, the Lubas extend from the Kasai River and Mbuji-Mayi in the west to the Lualaba and Luffira rivers near the towns of Bukavu and Bulundi in the southeast. Most Lubas still work as fishermen and farmers, raising maize and millet, but Lubas also dominate the mining and industrial economy of Katanga Province. Luba states emerged as early as the eighth century; in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the Luba state grew rich from the trade in ivory and slaves. Traditionally, the Lubas have dominated their neighbors, the culturally and religiously related Lundas. Lubas helped to crush the Lunda rebellion in Zaire in 1961-1962

The Luba Kingdom first appeared in the fifteenth century. It began to decline in the late nineteenth century because of the expansion of the Chokwe empire. When Belgian colonial authority extended into what is today southern and eastern DRC, the Lubas resisted ferociously, acquiring a reputation as a violent, dissenting group. They are

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<sup>28</sup> Olson, 340.

<sup>29</sup> Olson, 342.

highly independent, ethnocentric people. Ethnologists divide the Lubas into a variety of subgroups. The Luba-Shaba cluster includes the Kaniokas, Kalundwes, and Lomotwas, while the Luba-Kasai cluster is composed of the Luluas, Lundas, Binjis, Mputus, and North Ketes. The Songwe cluster includes the Bangu-Bangus and Hembas.<sup>30</sup>

The Luba-Bambo people primarily practice Roman Catholicism, and last received a copy of the Bible in 1951. The Eastern Luba people primarily practice Roman Catholicism, yet they have no copy of the Bible in their language. The Western Luba people primarily practice Roman Catholicism and last received a copy of the Bible in their language in 1996.

Lugbara, High  
JP (288,000)

In the DRC, the Lugbaras are an ethnic group living in the northeastern part, where they occupy treeless plateau highlands between the Congo River and the Nile. Many Lugbaras also live in the city of Arua on the Uganda-DRC border. Their most immediate neighbors are the Madis, Alurs, and Kakwas. The Lugbaras speak a language that is part of the Central Sudanic cluster of languages. Within the Lugbara language are such dialects as Terego and Aringa. Their economy revolves around agriculture because of the excellent soil in the region; they raise millet, corn, cassava, sorghum, legumes, and a variety of root crops. The Lugbaras are also known for their skill in animal husbandry. Included in the Lugbara cluster of peoples are the Lugbaras proper, the Madis and the Lendus.<sup>31</sup> Lugbara people primarily practice Roman Catholicism, yet they have no copy of the Bible in their language.

Lunda, Mbundu  
JP (13,000)  
Lunda  
JP (73,800)

The Lunda people in the DRC live in the southern Shaba region. Culturally and linguistically related to the Luba people, the Lundas enjoyed one of the most powerful states in Central Africa during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. During the eighteenth century, salt, ivory, copper, and slave trading caused for the expansion of the Lunda people; however, decline set in during the nineteenth century. Following World War II, the Lundas formed CONAKAT, a powerful political organization headed by Moise Tshombe in (then) Zaire. The purpose of this organization sought to oppose the ascendancy of Luba and Chokwe politicians. The Lundas opposed colonial rule, and, once independence came, they opposed the central government. In 1961-62, after (then) Zaire achieved its independence from Belgium, the Lundas played a key role in the unsuccessful rebellion to secede from (then) Zaire; the rebellion was crushed. During the 1970s and early 1980s, Lunda guerrillas operating out of Angola frequently attacked Zaire. The Lundas are sometimes considered part of the Mawika cluster of

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<sup>30</sup> Olson, 345-46.

<sup>31</sup> Olson, 346-347.

peoples.<sup>32</sup> Most Lundas hold to Roman Catholicism and last received a copy of the Bible in their language in 1980.

Lusengo; Poto

JP (42,000)

The Lusengo practice primarily Roman Catholicism and had portions of the Bible published in their language in 1920.

Lwalwa

JP (21,000)

The Lwalwa people primarily practice Roman Catholicism and have no copy of the Bible in their language.

Lwena

JP (125,000)

The Lwena people primarily practice Roman Catholicism. They had a Bible published in their language most recently in 1961.

Ma

JP (4,700)

The Ma people practice a traditional ethnic religion and do not have any portions of the Bible in their language.

Ma'adi

JP (49,200)

The Ma'adi people practice Christianity primarily and had a copy of the New Testament published in their language in 1977.

Mabaale

JP (42,000)

The Mabaale primarily practice Roman Catholicism, yet they have no copy of the Bible in their language.

Mamvu

JP (67,000)

The Mamvu are a major ethnic group in the DRC. Most of the DRC Mamvus live in the Haut-Zaire region between Isiro and the border with Sudan and Uganda. Most are small farmers and urban laborers.<sup>33</sup> The Mamvu practice a traditional ethnic religion (animism). They had "portions" of the Bible published in their language in 1931.

Mangbele

JP (8,400)

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<sup>32</sup> Olson, 349.

<sup>33</sup> Olson, 364.

The Mangbele primarily practice Roman Catholicism, yet they have no copy of the Bible in their language.

Mangbetu, Amangbetu JP (650,000)

The Mangbetus (Manbetu) are a Sudanic people, straddling the border zone of forests and savannas in northwestern DRC. The Mangbetu migrated from Sudan to the northern and northeastern Congo Basin in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Today, the Mangbetu live between the Ituri and the Uelé rivers. The Mangbetus have absorbed a number of surrounding ethnic groups during the past century. Historically, the Mangbetus established centralized states and had a social structure clearly divided between aristocrats and commoners. They are closely related to the Mamvus.<sup>34</sup> The Mangbetu people of the northeast gain attention for their famous terra-cotta pottery with geometric designs and long, elegantly sculpted heads. These pottery styles have existed since the 1890s. Mangbetu harps made of polished wood and hide are topped by beautifully-carved human figures. The Mangbetus primarily practice Roman Catholicism, yet they have no copy of the Bible in their language.

Mangbutu  
JP (15,000)

The Mangbutu people practice primarily a traditional ethnic religion and they have no copy of the Bible in their language.

Mayeka  
JP (21,000)

The Mayeka people practice primarily Christianity, yet they have no copy of the Bible in their language.

Mayogo  
JP (100,000)

The Mayogo primarily practice Roman Catholicism, yet they have no copy of the Bible in their language.

Mba  
JP (14,000)

The Mbas are a Bantu-speaking people living today in the Haut-Zaire region of northeastern DRC. Although most Mbas still make their living as farmers, they have become increasingly integrated into the regional commercial economy in recent decades. Large numbers of Mbas have moved to the city of Kisangani in search of wage labor.<sup>35</sup> Of the religious Mbas, most are Protestant Christian, yet they have no copy of the Bible in their language.

Mbacca Pygmy  
JP (2,500)

We have no information on the religion or Bible translation status for this people group.

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<sup>34</sup> Olson, 368.

<sup>35</sup> Olson, 379.

## Mbala

JP (200,000)

The Mbalas are a Bantu speaking ethnic group living between the Kwango and Kasai rivers in the western part of southern DRC. Their language is related to that spoken by the Kongo People. Most Mbalas can be found near the town of Kikwit along the Kwilu River, where they are small farmers and urban laborers. Although the Mbalas have frequently opposed the dictates of the central government in DRC, they are also suspicious of political initiatives by neighboring groups, especially the Pandes and the Mbuns. Their political structure is highly decentralized.<sup>36</sup> The Mbala practice primarily Roman Catholicism. In 1968, the Mbala had “portions” of the Bible published in their language.

## Mbanza

JP (200,000)

The Mbanzas, also known as the Mbanjas (Mbandja), are a relatively large ethnic group in the DRC. The Mbanzas speak Banda, which is classified as an Adamawa-Eastern language. Most Mbanzas are small farmers, living between the DRC and Ubangi rivers in the Equateur Region of the DRC. Like other ethnic groups in the region, they do not have well-defined geographic boundaries. Mbanza communities are dispersed throughout far northwestern DRC.<sup>37</sup> The Mbanza people practice primarily Roman Catholicism and had a New Testament published in their language in 1998.

## Mbesa

JP (8400)

The Mbesas are a relatively small ethnic group living in DRC. Most Mbesas are concentrated on the west bank of the Lualaba River, up river from the city of Bumba. As a riverine people, they have traditionally supported themselves by fishing, planting gardens on the river banks, and trading. Today, more and more Mbesas are seeking wage labor in towns and cities of north-central DRC.<sup>38</sup> The Mbesas primarily practice Roman Catholicism, yet they have no copy of the Bible in their language.

## Mbo

JP (11,000)

The Mbos, not to be confused with the Mbos of Cameroon, are an ethnic group living today in the forests of northeastern DRC. The Mbos can be found especially in the vicinity of Bafwasende. Most Mbos are small farmers.<sup>39</sup> The Mbos practice primarily Roman Catholicism, yet they have no copy of the Bible in their language.

## Mbole

JP (100,000)

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<sup>36</sup> Olson, 380.

<sup>37</sup> Olson, 381.

<sup>38</sup> Olson, 382-383.

<sup>39</sup> Olson, 383-384.

The Mbole people live south of the Middle Zaire River and west of the Lokmani River in DRC. They are fishermen and farmers, raising cassava, bananas, and kola nuts. The Mboles speak a Mongo language, which is part of the larger Bantu linguistic family. The Mbole are considered to be part of the forest culture.<sup>40</sup> The Mbole primarily practice Roman Catholicism, yet they have no copy of the Bible in their language.

Mbuti Pygmy, Twa  
JP (76,000)

The Mbutis make their homeland in the Ituri forest of northeastern Congo. The Mbutis divide into three subgroups: the Aka to the northwest, the Efe to the east and north, and the Sua to the south. The Twa Mbuti Pygmies are a part of the southeastern cluster, and along with the Gesera and Zigaba, live also in Rwanda and Burundi. A small group of the people live on the Uganda-Congo border.<sup>41</sup> The Mbuti Pygmy people practice a traditional ethnic religion (animism) and they have no copy of the Bible in their language.

Mfinu (Mfunu<sup>42</sup>)  
JP (8,400)

The Mfunus are an ethnic group located on both sides of the Zaire River in southwestern Zaire and in southeastern Congo. The Mfunus are a riverine people who have traditionally supported themselves by planting small gardens on the river banks, fishing, and trading up and down the Zaire River.<sup>43</sup> The Mfinu primarily practice Roman Catholicism, yet they have no copy of the Bible in their language.

Moingi  
JP (4,200)

The Moingi people primarily practice Roman Catholicism, yet they have no copy of the Bible in their language.

Mongo  
JP (400,000)

The Mongos, or Mongo-Nkundos, are a cluster of peoples living south of the Middle Congo River in the DRC. They are concentrated in the forests of the Congo Basin and the southern uplands, bordered by the Lulonga River in the north, the Sankuru River in the south, the meeting of the Zaire and Momboyo rivers to the west, and the confluence of the Lualaba and Lukuga rivers to the east. The Mongos include such groups as the Mongos and Nkundos proper, as well as such smaller groups as the Kasai Lubas, Tetela, Mboles, Lias, Sengeles, Iyembis, and Ntombas. Their language is the lingua franca of northwestern DRC. Since the nineteenth century, considerable mixing has occurred between the Mongo peoples and the Pygmies, since the Pygmoid peoples live in close association with the Mongos. They practice shifting forms of agriculture to

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<sup>40</sup> Olson, 384. See also Daniel Biebuyck, "Sculpture from the Eastern Zaire Forest Region," *African Arts* 9 (January 1976): 8-15.

<sup>41</sup> Olson, 488-489.

<sup>42</sup> Olson, 394.

<sup>43</sup> Olson, 394-395.

produce cassava, bananas, kola nuts, and other food crops. Farm work is done primarily by women, while men spend their time hunting and fishing. More than 2.5 million people speak one of the the Mongo languages, which all belong to the larger Bantu group.<sup>44</sup> The Mongos primarily practice Roman Catholicism. In 1930, they had a copy of the Bible published in their language. In 1967, “portions” of Scripture were translated into their language.

#### Monjombo

JP (5,000)

The Monjombo practice a traditional ethnic religion, yet they have no copy of the Bible in their language.

#### Mono

JP (65,000)

The Mono people primarily practice protestant Christianity, yet they have no copy of the Bible in their language.

#### Moru

JP (8,400)

The Moru people primarily practice Roman Catholicism. In 1998, they received a copy of the Bible in their language.

#### Mpuon

JP (165,000)

The Mpuon people primarily practice Roman Catholicism. The Mpuon people had portions of the Bible translated into their language in 1951.

#### Mundu

JP (25,000)

People from the ethnic group, Mundu, live in the northeastern part of the DRC. Their most immediate neighbors are the Logos, Alurs, and Kakwas. The Mundus language is part of the Central Sudanic cluster of languages. Many Mundus also live in the city of Arua on the Uganda-DRC border. They are of Nilotic origins. The Mundu economy revolves around agriculture because of the excellent soil in the region. The Mundus are also known for their skill in animal husbandry.<sup>45</sup> Many Mundu people practice Christianity. In 1995, the Mundu people had “portions” of the Bible translated into their language.

#### Mvuba

JP (5,000)

Ethnographers believe that The Mvubas are an ethnic group that originated in Sudan. The Mvubas concentrate in the Haut-Zaire region, north of the Uelé River. Historically, the Mvubas were highly decentralized politically and often under the domination of the Mamvus and Mangbetus. The Mvubas were unique among the peoples of the region

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<sup>44</sup> Olson, 403.

<sup>45</sup> Olson, 410.

because their political structure lacked chiefs.<sup>46</sup> The Mvuba people practice a traditional ethnic religion and have no copy of the Bible in their language.

Mwenga Lega

JP (35,000)

The Mwenga Lega people practice a traditional ethnic religion and have no copy of the Bible in their language.

Nande – Sanza

JP (33,900)

The Nande – Sanza people practice primarily Christianity. They received a copy of the Bible in their language in 1996.

Nande – Swaga

JP (275,100)

The Nande – Swanga people practice primarily Christianity. They received a copy of the Bible in their language in 1996.

Nande – Yira

JP (49,200)

The nande – Yira people practice primarily Christianity. They received a copy of the Bible in their language in 1996.

Nande

JP (903,000)

The Nande people practice primarily Christianity. They received a copy of the Bible in their language in 1996.

Ndaka

JP (25,000)

The Ndakas are a Bantu-speaking people who live in northeastern DRC. Some of them can also be found in western Uganda. The most immediate neighbors of the Ndakas in DRC are the Mbos, Baleses, Budus, and Mangbetus. Like the others, the Ndakas work small cassava and banana farms in the heavily forested region.<sup>47</sup> The Ndaka people are primarily Christian, yet they have no copy of the Bible in their language.

Ndembu Lunda

JP (34,500)

The Ndembus (Ndembos, Mdembus, Dembos) are an ethnic group living in the western Shaba Region of the DRC and in the wooded hill country northeast of Luanda in Angola. They can also be found near the Lundas and Luvalas in northwestern Zambia. Although they speak a Mbundu language, they have been heavily influenced by Kongo culture as well. Many ethnologists consider them to be a subgroup of the Kongos. The Ndembu social structure is matrilineal. Because their homeland has been known for its

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<sup>46</sup> Olson, 412-13.

<sup>47</sup> Olson, 420.

forested hilltops and escarpments, the Ndembus have been able to maintain very independent attitudes. They had a long history of resistance to Portuguese authority in Angola, violently rebelling from 1907 to 1909 and from 1917 to 1919. During the wars of liberation against Portugal in the 1960s, the Ndembu homeland became a stronghold for the Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola (MPLA). Ndembu country is a productive coffee region. In DRC, the Ndembus are closely related to the Lundas, culturally and linguistically. In recent years, however, they have adopted anti-Lunda political attitudes, often aligning themselves with the Chokwes in Zaire/DRC politics. Most Ndembos are small farmers.<sup>48</sup> The Ndembu Lunda people are primarily Roman Catholic and last received a Bible published in their language in 1962.

Ndengese  
JP (4,000)

The Ndengesese are a Bantu-speaking people who live in the forests of the Kasai Orientale region of central DRC. Most of them are small farmers who raise cassava, bananas, and kola nuts. In recent years, the Ndengesese have been increasingly affected by DRC's commercial economy, with the result that more and more Ndengesese are growing cash crops or leaving the farms for work in towns and cities.<sup>49</sup> Most Ndengese practice Roman Catholicism, yet they have no copy of the Bible in their own language.

Ndobo  
JP (8,400)

Most Ndobo practice Roman Catholicism, yet they have no copy of the Bible in their language.

Ndogo  
JP (4,200)

The Ndogo people practice a traditional ethnic religion. They received portions of the Bible translated into their language during 1985-1990.

Ndolo  
JP (8,000)

The Ndolo practice Roman Catholicism, yet they have no copy of the Bible in their language.

Ndunga  
JP (2,500)

The Ndunga people practice a traditional ethnic religion and have no copy of the Bible in their language.

Ngala  
JP (775,000)

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<sup>48</sup> Olson, 422.

<sup>49</sup> Olson, 423.

The Ngalas are a highly influential ethnic group in northwestern DROC. Most Ngalas live between the Zaire and the Ubangi rivers. They can also be found in Angola. The Ngala language is the lingua franca of the region and one of the four national languages of DROC. It appears to be primarily a Bantu language, with many adopted words from various Sudanic languages as well. The Ngalas were once a relatively small group in terms of population, but linguistic factors gave them great influence. The Ngala language became the commercial language of the lower Zaire River region, the lingua franca of the military in DRC, and the language spoken most commonly in Leopoldville during the colonial era. During his long tenure as president of Zaire, Joseph Mobutu used the Ngala language to speak to the people of Zaire.<sup>50</sup> The Ngalas adhere primarily to Christianity, and received a copy of the Bible in their language in 1995.

Ngando (Ngandu<sup>51</sup>)  
JP (220,000)

The Ngandus are a relatively small group of Bantu-speaking people who live in the forests of the Kasai Oriental region of north-central DRC. Most of them are small farmers who raise cassava, bananas, and kola nuts. In recent years, the Ngandus have been increasingly affected by Zaire/DRC's commercial economy, with the result that more and more of them are growing cash crops or leaving the farms for work in towns and cities.<sup>52</sup> The Ngando primarily practice Roman Catholicism. They received a New Testament in their language in 1941.

Ngbaka (Mbaka<sup>53</sup>)  
JP (750,000)  
Ngbaka Mabo  
JP (11,000)

The Mbakas, also known as the Bwakas and Ngbakas, are an ethnic group living near Lobaye in the Central African Republic and DRC. In DRC, they are concentrated in the northwest corner of the country along the Ubangi River near the town of Zongo. Most Mbakas still residing along the river make their living as fishermen. They have played a key role in the history of the Central African Republic. In 1890, the Mbakas entered into a long-term political relationship with the French that placed them in powerful positions in the colonial administrative structure.<sup>54</sup> The Mbakas practice primarily Roman Catholicism and received a whole Bible published in their language in 1995.

Ngbandi  
JP (210,000)  
Ngbandi, Southern  
JP (105,000)

Most anthropologists classify the Ngbandi people as cultural relatives of the Ngala people of DRC. They have Sudanic origins and live in northwestern DRC. They can be

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<sup>50</sup> Olson, 428.

<sup>51</sup> Olson, 429.

<sup>52</sup> Olson, 429.

<sup>53</sup> Olson, 380.

<sup>54</sup> Olson, 380.

found particularly east of the town of Busingu, between the Zaire River and the Ubangi River. They tend to be widely dispersed in the region. They can also be found in north-central DRC at the border of the Central African Republic. Traditionally, the Ngbandis have made their living as fishermen. The most famous Ngbandi in DRC history is Joseph Mobutu, longtime president of the country. The Ngbandis can also be found in the Central African Republic. Most Ngbandis are small farmers.<sup>55</sup> Most Ngbandi adhere to Roman Catholicism. The Ngbandi received a New Testament published in their language in 1988.

Ngbinda

JP (105,000)

The Ngbinda adhere primarily to Roman Catholicism, yet they have no copy of the Bible in their language.

Ngbundu

JP (16,000)

The Ngbundu adhere primarily to Roman Catholicism, yet they have no copy of the Bible in their language.

Ngeti

JP (100,000)

The Ngeti adhere primarily to protestant Christianity, yet they have no copy of the Bible in their language.

Ngoli

JP (8,400)

The Ngoli adhere primarily to Roman Catholicism, yet they have no copy of the Bible in their language.

Ngombe

JP (150,000)

The Ngombe hold primarily to Roman Catholicism; they last received a copy of the New Testament in 1956.

Ngongo

JP (125,000)

The Ngongos are a Bantu-speaking people who live today in south-central DRC. They are closely related to the Bakubas (Kubas) Leeles, Sakatas, and Njembes.<sup>56</sup> The Ngongo hold primarily to Christianity, yet they have no copy of the Bible in their language.

Ngubu

JP (8,400)

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<sup>55</sup> Olson, 430.

<sup>56</sup> Olson, 433.

The Ngubu hold primarily to Christianity, yet they have no copy of the Bible in their language.

Ngundu

JP (4,200)

The Ngundu practice primarily Roman Catholicism, yet they have no copy of the Bible in their language.

Ngwili

JP (6,000)

The Ngwili practice a traditional ethnic religion and have no copy of the Bible in their language.

Nkutu, Nkutushu

JP (40,000)

The Nkutshus are a Bantu-speaking group of people who live today primarily in the Kasai Orientale region of DRC. Their most immediate neighbors are the Ndengses, Yelas, and Oolis. The region is heavily forested, and most Nkutshus make their living there as small farmers, raising cassava, bananas, and kola nuts.<sup>57</sup> The Nkutu hold primarily to Christianity; they received portions of the Bible in their language in 1940.

Ntomba

JP (100,000)

The Ntomba (Ntombe) people live south of the Middle Zaire River, along the maringa River, in DRC. They are fishermen and farmers, raising cassava, bananas, and kola nuts. The Ntombas speak Mongo language, which is part of the larger Bantu linguistic family.<sup>58</sup> The Ntombas primarily practice Roman Catholicism; they last received portions of the Bible in their language in 1947.

Nyali

JP (43,000)

The Nyali primarily practice Roman Catholicism, yet they have no copy of the Bible in their language.

Nyanga

JP (25,000)

The Nyangas are a subgroup of the Kivu peoples of DRC. They live in the highlands of the east-central DRC, near the Rwandan and Ugandan borders, where they farm and raise cattle for milk and meat. The Nyanga's homeland is a mountainous rain forest and they speak a Bantu language. The Nyanga economy revolves around hunting, trapping, and food gathering, as well as banana growing.<sup>59</sup> Most Nyanga people practice a traditional ethnic religion, and they have no copy of the Bible in their language.

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<sup>57</sup> Olson, 444.

<sup>58</sup> Olson, 446.

<sup>59</sup> Olson, 454.

Nyanga-Li  
JP (48,000)

Nyanga-Li people hold primarily to Christianity, yet they have no copy of the Bible in their language.

Nyindu  
JP (84,000)

The Nyindus are an ethnic group living today in the eastern zone of the DRC, primarily in what is known as the Mwenga region. The region is heavily forested. The Nyindus make their living fishing and working small cassava and yam farms.<sup>60</sup> Nyindu people practice primarily Roman Catholicism, yet they have no copy of the Bible in their language.

Nzarka  
JP (1,300)

The Nzarka people primarily practice Roman Catholicism, yet they have no copy of the Bible in their language.

Okebu  
JP (100,000)

The Okebus are an ethnic group living in southern Sudan, northwestern Uganda, and northeastern DRC. Their most immediate neighbors are the Lugbaras, Alurs, and Kakwas. The Okebus speak a language that is part of the Central Sudanic cluster of languages. Many Okebus also live in the city of Arua on the Uganda-DRC border. They are of Nilotic origin. Their economy revolves around agriculture because of the excellent soil in the region. The Okebus are also known for their skills in animal husbandry.<sup>61</sup> Okebu people practice primarily Roman Catholicism, and they received a copy of the New Testament in 1994.

Ombo  
JP (8,400)

Most Ombo people practice Roman Catholicism, yet they have no copy of the Bible in their language.

Omi  
JP (39,500)

Omi people practice a traditional ethnic religion and have no copy of the Bible in their language.

Pambia  
JP (21,000)

Most Pambia people practice Roman Catholicism, yet they have no copy of the Bible in their language.

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<sup>60</sup> Olson, 457.

<sup>61</sup> Olson, 464.

Pelende

JP (8,400)

Pelende people practice primarily Roman Catholicism, yet they have no copy of the Bible in their language.

Pende/Phende (Pande<sup>62</sup>)

JP (420,000)

The Pandes were once a large ethnic group living in southwestern Central African Republic, northern Congo, eastern Cameroon, and west-central Zaire. They are a Bantu-speaking people. They should not be confused with the Pandes of Mozambique. They entered a long period of decline beginning in the mid-nineteenth century, and, today, the only remnants of the Pandes live in several villages in the Lobaye basin and the upper Sangha basin in the Central African Republic. In the DRC, they can be found between the Kwilu and Kasai rivers south of Gungu. The Kweses are a Pande subgroup. Most Pende people hold to Christianity; they received a copy of the Bible in their language in 1997.

Peri

JP (15,000)

The Peri people hold primarily to Roman Catholicism; they received portions of the Bible translated into their language as recently as 1986.

Plains Bira

JP (120,000)

The Plains Bira people primarily practice Roman Catholicism; they received "portions" of the Bible published in their language in 1930.

Poke

JP (118,000)

The Poke people hold primarily to protestant Christianity; they received "portions" of the Bible published in their language in 1923.

Ruund

JP (238,000)

See Lunda.

The Ruund people primarily practice Roman Catholicism; they received a copy of the New Testament published in their language in 1996.

Rwanda

JP (250,000)

The Rwandas (Rwamba) are one of the Bantu highland peoples of east-central DRC, living near Lake Kivu and the Rwandan border, as well as in southwestern Uganda and Tanzania. Thw Rwandas speak a Bantu language and make their living as farmers who also raise cattle for milk and meat. During the genocidal civil war in Rwanda in 1994,

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<sup>62</sup> Olson, 478.

the Rwandas were overrun by refugees fleeing the violence.<sup>63</sup> Rwanda people practice a traditional ethnic religion; they received a copy of the Bible in their language as recently as 1993.

#### Saka

JP (137,000)

The Sakas are a Bantu-speaking people who live in the forests of the Kasai Orientale region of central DRC. Most of them are small farmers who raise cassava, bananas, and kola nuts. In recent years, the Sakas have been increasingly touched by the DRC's commercial economy, with the result that more and more Sakas are growing cash crops or leaving the farms for work in the towns and cities.<sup>64</sup> The Sakas practice primarily Roman Catholicism; they received "portions" of the Bible translated in 1951.

#### Salampasu (Salampaso<sup>65</sup>)

JP (60,000)

The Salampaso people live in DRC, primarily around the conjunction of the Kasai River with the northern frontier of Angola. Thousands of Salampasos also live across the border in Angola. The Salampasos are small farmers and fishermen.<sup>66</sup> The Salampaso people practice primarily Roman Catholicism; they last received "portions" of the Bible translated into their language in 1938.

#### Samba

JP (4,200)

Samba people primarily practice Roman Catholicism, yet they have no copy of the Bible in their language.

#### Sanga/Luba Garenganze

JP (680,000)

The Sangas (Sangos, Sanghas, Bosangos) are a Ubangian group who live in the Ubangi River Valley of the Central African Republic. Some can also be found across the river in the DRC and the Republic of Congo, as well as in the Guéra, Salamat, and Moyen-Chari prefectures of Chad. There are Sangas in southeastern DRC as well. During the colonial era, the Sanga language was used as a trade language. They are a riverine people known for their skill as canoemen and fishermen. Before the arrival of the French in the late nineteenth century, the Sangas were commercial traders, moving up and down the tributaries of the Ubangi River system. Their language gradually became the lingua franca of the entire Ubangi-Shari region, including contiguous areas of Chad and Middle Congo.<sup>67</sup> Sanga people primarily practice Roman Catholicism; they last received a copy of the Bible published in their in 1994.

#### Sango

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<sup>63</sup> Olson, 500.

<sup>64</sup> Olson, 505.

<sup>65</sup> Olson, 506.

<sup>66</sup> Olson, 506.

<sup>67</sup> Olson, 509. Not totally sure about if this is the right people group or not.

JP (4,200)

Sango people primarily practice Roman Catholicism; they last received a copy of the Bible published in their language in 1966. In 1993, the Sango people received “portions” of the Bible published in their language.

Sengele

JP (17,000)

The Sengeles are an ethnic group who live west of Lake Mai-Ndombe in the Bandundu region of DRC. Ethnologists classify them as part of the Mongo language family, but they are quite distinct from the Mongo people, primarily because of their complex, hierarchical social structure.<sup>68</sup> Sengele people primarily practice Roman Catholicism; they last received “portions” of Scripture translated into their language in 1917.

Sere

JP (2,500)

Sere people practice a traditional ethnic religion and have no copy of the Bible in their language.

Shi

JP (654,000)

The Shis are a native DROC people, living in the highlands of the Kivu Region, between Lake Tanganyika and Lake Kivu. They speak a Bantu language. A large concentration of the Shis can be found near Bukavu. Ethnologists consider them to be part of the Kivu cluster of peoples. In the highlands, where they live more than 4,000 feet above sea level, the Shi people farm and raise cattle for milk and meat. During the last thirty years, the Shis have often engaged in violent struggles for power with the Kusu people, who live to the west.<sup>69</sup> Shi people hold primarily to protestant Christianity; they last received a copy of the Bible in their language in 1997.

Soko/So

JP (6,000)

The So are a relatively small ethnic group living in DRC. Most of them are concentrated on the east bank of the Lualaba River, downriver from the city of Bumba. As a riverine people, they have traditionally supported themselves by fishing, planting gardens on river banks, and trading. Today, more and more Sokos are seeking wage labor in the towns and cities of north-central DRC.<sup>70</sup> Soko people primarily practice Roman Catholicism; they last received a copy of the New Testament in their language in 1920.

Sonde

JP (96,000)

The Sonde people primarily practice Roman Catholicism, yet they have no copy of the Bible in their language.

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<sup>68</sup> Olson, 514.

<sup>69</sup> Olson, 521.

<sup>70</sup> Olson, 527.

### Songo

JP (13,000)

Songo people primarily Roman Catholicism, yet they have no copy of the Bible in their language.

### Songomeno

JP (50,000)

Songomeno people practice a traditional ethnic religion and they have no copy of the Bible in their language.

### Songora/Songola

JP (1300)

The Songolas are an ethnic group living today in eastern DRC, primarily in what is recognized as the Kindu zone. It is a heavily forested region, and the Songolas make their living fishing and working small farms, where they raise cassava, yams, and a variety of other crops.<sup>71</sup> The Songora people practice primarily Roman Catholicism, yet they have no copy of the Bible in their language.

### Songye

JP (1,000,000)

The Songyes are a subcluster of the Luba peoples of DRC. Included in the Songye cluster are the Bangu-Bangus. They are concentrated near Kabinda in the southern Oriental Region, especially between the Lubufu and Lomami rivers.<sup>72</sup> Songye people make heavy wooden face masks, grooved and painted black and white. Historically, chiefs used these masks in official ceremonies, but today are often valued as souvenirs. The Songye practice a traditional ethnic animism; they last received a copy of the New Testament in 1978, and other portions of the Bible in 1981.

### Suku

JP (50,000)

The Sukus are a subgroup of the Yaka people of DRC. Most Sukus live in southwestern DRC, between the Inzia and Kwilu rivers north of Feshi.<sup>73</sup> The Suku people primarily practice Roman Catholicism, and they last received a portions of the Bible in 1973.

### Sundi

JP (360,000)

The Sundis (Basundi), sometimes known as the Kongo-Sundi, are the largest subgroup of the Kongo peoples of the Republic of Congo, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Angola. Their contemporary population exceeds 200,000 people.<sup>74</sup> The Sundi people practice primarily Roman Catholicism; they received a copy of the New Testament in their language in 1993.

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<sup>71</sup> Olson, 532.

<sup>72</sup> Olson, 532.

<sup>73</sup> Olson, 536. Arthur P. Bourgeois, "Suku Drinking Cups." *African Arts* 12 (November 1978): 76-77.

<sup>74</sup> Olson, 536.

### Swahili

JP (12,000)

Swahili people practice Islam; they received a copy of the Bible in their language in 1996.

### Tabwa

JP (250,000)

The Tabwas are a relatively small ethnic group living today in southeastern DRC, northwest Zambia, and southwestern Tanzania. Most of the Tabwas, however, are located between Lake Mweru and Lake Tanganyika in DRC. They live in a highland region that permits them to farm as well as to raise cattle for meat and milk. The Tabwas speak a Bemba language and maintain a matrilineal descent system.<sup>75</sup> Tabwa people practice a traditional ethnic religion and have no copy of the Bible in their language.

### Tagbo

JP (17,000)

Tagbo people practice a traditional ethnic religion and have no copy of the Bible in their language.

### Tara Baaka

JP (1,300)

Tara Baaka people hold primarily to protestant Christianity; in 1993 they received “portions” of the Bible in their language, but they do not have a copy of the whole Bible in their language.

### Téké, Central

JP (35,000)

### Téké, Eastern

JP (71,000)

### Téké, South Central{Wuumu}

JP (13,000)

The Tékés can be found living on both sides of the Zaire River between Kinshasa and the confluence of the Kasai and Zaire rivers. In the Congo Republic, they are known as the Téké and are very closely related to the Tyo. The Tékés are closely related to the Mbanbas, Ndoumous, and Kaniguis. Ethnologists believe that the Tékés originated to the northwest and began their migration to their contemporary homeland in the fifteenth century. They planted palm trees after arriving in the region and made their living trading palm oil and raphia fabrics. They also engaged in the slave trade during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Although most Tékés are settled farmers today, raising manioc and bananas, they still enjoy hunting antelopes, gazelles, and other

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<sup>75</sup> Olson, 542. Allen F. Roberts, “‘Comets Importing Change of Times and States’: Ephemerae and Process Among the Tabwe of Zaire.” *American Ethnology* 9 (November 1982): 712-29.

animals.<sup>76</sup> Téké people primarily practice Roman Catholicism, yet they have no copy of the Bible in their language.

#### Tembo

JP (150,000)

Tembo people primarily practice Roman Catholicism, yet they have no copy of the Bible in their language.

#### Tetela

JP (750,000)

The Tetela people live between Lusambo and the Upper Zaire River in Sankuru and Maniema in the Kasai Oriental and Kivu regions of DRC. They are fishermen and farmers who raise cassava, bananas, and kola nuts. The Tetelas speak a Mongo language, which is part of the larger Bantu linguistic family. The Tetelas are closely related to the Kusus and did not really separate from them until the late 1800s when Afro-Arabs and Belgian colonial authorities arrived in the region. They had extensive contacts with the Afro-Arabs, and in the process many of them adopted Islam. The most famous Tetela in DRC/Zairean history was Patrice Lumumba.<sup>77</sup> Tetela people practice primarily Roman Catholicism; they last received a copy of the Bible in their language in 1966 and the New Testament in 1993.

#### Tiene

JP (24,500)

Tiene people practice primarily Roman Catholicism, yet they have no copy of the Bible in their language.

#### Tutsi

JP (147,600)

The Tutsi are most well known as the historically dominant ethnic group of Rwanda. These tall people have traditionally made their living as cattle herders. The Tutsi speak Kinyarwanda, a Bantu language. Religiously, the Tutsis are divided almost equally between Roman Catholicism and traditional beliefs. The tutsis conquered other groups in the region beginning in the fifteenth century. The final conquest of the Hutus and Twas was completed by King Kigeri Rwabugiri in the late nineteenth century. Throughout much of the twentieth century, the Tutsis controlled the Hutus, even though the Hutus outnumbered them by twenty to one.

But, in 1956, the Hutus rebelled against what they believed to be intolerable Tutsi oppression, demanding equal rights and political control of the country. The rebellion turned violent in 1959, forcing more than 200,000 Tutsis to flee Rwanda. Belgian colonial officials supported the Hutu majority, and, when independence came to Rwanda in 1962, the Hutus were thoroughly in control. In Burundi, the Tutsis remained in control. In 1965, a Hutu rebellion in Burundi failed, and, in the process, thousands of Hutus, especially intellectuals, were slaughtered. The failed rebellion left Burundi under

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<sup>76</sup> Olson, 551; David E. Gardilnier, *Historical Dictionary of Gabon*. 1995.

<sup>77</sup> Olson, 555.

complete Tutsi control. In the early 1970s, another Tutsi-Hutu civil conflict erupted in Burundi. In the fighting, more than 200,000 people were killed and another 100,000 fled. The Hutu-Tutsi rivalry festered during the 1970s and 1980s, periodically erupting into violence, but, during the early 1990s, the power struggle began to devastate Burundi. The violence forced more than 700,000 people – Hutus and Tutsis – to flee Burundi for Rwanda, Tanzania, and Zaire (DRC). In 1994, more than 500,000 Tutsis and Hutus died in the Rwanda civil war.<sup>78</sup>

Tutsi people hold primarily to Christianity and last received a copy of the Bible in their language in 1993.

#### Twa Pygmies

JP (29,000)

The Central cluster of Pygmies consists of the Twa or Cwa people. The Twa live north of the Lake Leopold in DRC and in Rwanda. They live in dense forests and make their living by hunting and gathering. Over the years, they associated closely with the Tutsis in Rwanda. Those Twa who live near the Tutsis and Hutus in Rwanda work as potters and artisans. The civil war in Rwanda in 1994 imposed severe hardships on the Twas, many of whom fled to remote jungle areas for safety.<sup>79</sup>

Twa people practice a traditional ethnic animism; they last received a copy of the Bible in their language in 1993.

#### Vanuma

JP (6,700)

Vanuma people primarily practice Roman Catholicism, yet they have no copy of the Bible in their language.

#### Vili, Fioti

JP (49,200)

Vili people hold primarily to Christianity and last received a copy of the Bible in their language in 1933. The Vili people, like the Yombe and Kongo people of the far west, make small statues called fetishes in an attempt to ward off the forces of evil. Fetishes take the form of a human or animal; some of the larger fetishes are pierced with iron nails. The nail driven into the fetish supposedly activates a spell requested by a member of the tribe.<sup>80</sup>

#### Walloon

JP (98,400)

Walloon people primarily practice Roman Catholicism and last received a copy of the Bible in their language in 1986.

#### Wongo

JP (2,000)

Wongo people practice primarily Roman Catholicism, yet they do not have a copy of

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<sup>78</sup> Olson, 573.

<sup>79</sup> Olson, 573-574.

<sup>80</sup> Peoples of Africa, 118.

whole Bible. In 1940, the Wongo people received “portions” of the Bible in their language.

#### Woyo

JP (100,000)

The Woyo people are one of the major subgroups of the Kongo people of DRC and Angola.<sup>81</sup> Woyo people practice a traditional ethnic animism and have no copy of the Bible in their language.

#### Yaka

JP (200,000)

The Yakas are a Bantu-speaking people whose original homeland was between the Kwango and Wamba rivers in southwestern DRC and northern Angola. They are considered by many ethnologists to be a subgroup of the Kongos. Known widely for their powerful sense of independence, the Yakas first tried to avoid and then resisted the arrival of Belgian colonial administration. Since Zairean independence, the Yakas have frequently clashed with the Kongos and resisted the authority of the central government. The Sukus are a subgroup of the Yakas.<sup>82</sup> Most Yaka people practice a traditional ethnic animism, and have no copy of the whole Bible in their language. Between 1938 and 1957, Yaka people received “portions” of the Bible in their own language.

#### Yakoma

JP (10,000)

The Yakomas are part of what some ethnologists call the Ubanguian people of the Central African Republic. Some can also be found across the river in DRC. Most of them have lived historically near the confluence of the Kotto and Ubangi rivers. They fiercely resisted the inroads of King Leopold and the Belgians in the region and eventually sided with the French against the Belgians. The Yakomas are a riverine people and they practice a traditional ethnic animism.<sup>83</sup> The Yakoma people have no copy of the Bible in their language.

#### Yamongeri

JP (13,000)

Yamongeri people primarily practice Roman Catholicism, yet they have no copy of the Bible in their language.

#### Yansi (Yanzi<sup>84</sup>)

JP (193,000)

The Yanzis (Yans) are a Bantu-speaking people whom many ethnologists consider to be a subgroup of the Kongos. Known widely for their powerful sense of independence, the Yanzis first tried to avoid and then resisted the arrival of Belgian colonial

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<sup>81</sup> Olson, 596.

<sup>82</sup> Olson, 600.

<sup>83</sup> Olson, 600.

<sup>84</sup> Olson, 602.

administration. Since Zairean independence, the Yanzis have frequently clashed with the Kongos and resisted the authority of the central government. Many of them live south of the Kasai River and east of the Kwango River, in the triangle where those two rivers meet southwestern DRC.<sup>85</sup> The Yansi people primarily practice Roman Catholicism, yet they have no copy of the Bible in their language.

#### Yeke

JP (2,000)

The Yekes are a Bantu-speaking people who live in the southern Shaba region of DRC, especially between Kolwezi and Kazanga near the border with Zambia. Some Yekes also live across the border in Zambia. IN the 1800s, Nyamwezi traders established their own kingdom in the region, and the Yekes are descended from them. The Yeke Kingdom began to disintegrate in the late 1800s. IN the late 1950s, the Yekes joined with the Lundas in forming the CONAKAT political party and demanding independence.<sup>86</sup> Most Yeke people hold to Christianity; they last received a copy of the Bible published in their language in 1962.

#### Yela

JP (33,000)

The Yelas are a Bantu-speaking people who live in the forests of the Kasai Orientale region of eastern DRC. Most of them are small farmers who raise cassava, bananas, and kola nuts. In recent years, the Yelas have been increasingly touched by DRC's commercial economy, with the result that more and more Yelas are growing cash crops or leaving their farms for work in towns and cities. Most Yelas can be found near the Tshuapa River.<sup>87</sup> Yela people practice primarily Roman Catholicism, yet they have no copy of the Bible in their language.

#### Yombe

JP (669,000)

The Yombe are a subgroup of the Kongo people of the Republic of Congo, DRC, Zambia, and Angola.<sup>88</sup> Most Yombe people practice Roman Catholicism; they last received a copy of the Bible in their language in 1980. The Yombe people, like the Vili and Kongo people of the far west, make small statues called fetishes in an attempt to ward off the forces of evil. Fetishes take the form of a human or animal; some of the larger fetishes are pierced with iron nails. The nail driven into the fetish supposedly activates a spell requested by a member of the tribe.

#### Yulu

JP (6,100)

The Yulu practice a traditional ethnic religion and have no copy of the Bible in their language.

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<sup>85</sup> Olson, 602.

<sup>86</sup> Olson, 604-05.

<sup>87</sup> Olson, 605.

<sup>88</sup> Olson, 606.

Zaire Swahili  
JP (9,100,000)

Zaire Swahili hold primarily to Christianity and last received a copy of the Bible in their language in 1933.

Zimba  
JP (120,000)

The Zimbabwes are a major subgroup of the Maravi people of Mozambique and DRC.<sup>89</sup> Most Zimbabwes hold to protestant Christianity, yet they have no copy of the Bible in their language.

### **Ex-Patriot Peoples**

Hungana  
JP (4,200)

The Hungana hold primarily to Roman Catholicism. They do not have a complete NT or OT, but they received portions of the Bible published in 1935.

Indo-Pakistani  
JP (125,000)

The Indo-Pakistani people hold primarily to Hinduism. They last received a translation of the complete Bible in 1987, and they received a NT translation last in 1998.

Jew  
JP (1,100)

The Jews of the DRC hold primarily to Judaism. They last received a copy of the whole Bible in 1986.

Portugese  
JP (4,200)

The Portugese in the DRC practice primarily Roman Catholicism; the Bible was published in their language as recently as 1993.

Greek  
JP (49,200)

The Greek people hold primarily to Christianity, and received a copy of the Bible in their language as recently as 1994.

ARAB  
JP (13,000)

The Standard Arab people are still to be considered unevangelized at this point. Less than 2% of the population of Standard Arabic speakers in the DROC are adherents to Christianity. They have the full Bible translated into their language; the Jesus Film is

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<sup>89</sup> Olson, 613.

available for them; Christian radio broadcasts are available to them; and Gospel audio recordings are available in their language as well.

### **Missiological Implications**

1. Evangelical Christians should pray that the political and economic situation will eventuate in a period of peace and a higher standard of life for the people who have suffered so much oppression and hardship over the years. This prayer should include any possible efforts to lead to the establishment of an effective government, an economic recovery, and a state of safety through the reduction of violence and lawlessness.
2. Evangelical Christians should seek to influence the ECC by cooperating in the many goals this group has developed. The member churches of the ECC also need to be influenced in the direction of biblical doctrine.
3. Evangelical Christians should seek to aid Christians in the DROC to evangelize the peoples and help further biblical Christian movements. Less than 15% of the rural communities have a resident Protestant Pastor—a figure that has declined by 35% since 1960.
4. Evangelical Christians should seek ways to alleviate the suffering of the peoples of DROC. The AIDS problem finds at least 1.1 million infected and 680,000 orphaned in recent years. Actually these figures are probably far low. Evangelicals should seek ways to alleviate the tragic results of the wars.
5. Evangelical Christians should seek ways to aid the people in the DROC to engage and defeat the demonic powers that cause such problems and fears in the lives of the people.
6. Evangelical Christians should seek ways to help the Christians in DROC develop leadership training on every level. This help most likely will demand Christians actually living in DROC to aid this development. The needed training programs can build on the partial success of the “Portable Bible School Movement.” Leadership training that honors the Bible as the Word of God and maintains the authority of Scripture represents one of the largest needs in DROC.
7. Evangelical Christians should work with and through the ECC to overcome the problems of rigid comity agreements that prohibit some groups from evangelizing some sections of the country.
8. Evangelical Christians should find ways to overcome the paralyzing nominalism that pervades so much of the Christian movement in DROC.

9. Evangelical Christians should seek ways to share with and contribute to the African Indigenous Churches in DROC and help them reach their own people with a biblically based Christian message.
10. Evangelical Christians should seek ways to help the existing churches and missionary groups reach out to the people groups who are under evangelized. These groups include some of the “Pigmy Peoples,” the peoples in swamplands northeast of Kinshasa, the Muslim peoples, and other minorities that have been less responsive.