

Argobba of Ethiopia

Population: 174,000
Language: Argobba; primary dialect is Shonke-T'allaha
Location: Northeast, Amhara, Oromiya and Afar regions; Rift Valley in Yimlawo, Gusa, Shonke, Berehet, Khayr Amba, Melkajillo, Metehara, Shewa Robit, villages area
People Cluster: Ethno-Semitic
Religion: Islam
% Christian: 4.60%
% Evangelical: 1.5%
Christian resources available: No Bible or Jesus film



The people: The Argobba claim to be descendants from the Muslim Arab followers of Mohammad who sought refuge from the King of Abyssinia. Their name means "the Arabs have come" or "the Arabs have entered."

The Argobba are a Muslim people group that is spread out through isolated village networks and towns in the northeast and east of Ethiopia. Historically, they have been an oppressed people group, suffering from land incursions and economic pressures from neighboring people groups on one hand, and natural famine pressures on the other.

The Argobba have their own language, but also speak the languages of the larger and more influential tribes who they live among. Some of the children do not speak their own language and there is an effort to preserve their language. The literacy rate in any language is low for the Argobba. In language and culture they have close connections to the Tigray, Amhara, Harari and Guragie.

The Argobba have typically been astute traders and merchants. Commerce is important to them and they will move from place to place for trade. They are farmers, growing sorghum, cotton, red pepper, coffee, qat, beans, peas and peanuts. They make their own implements except for iron and clay ones.

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A girl can marry at age 15 and boys marry at 18 or older. They can marry first cousins. The women wear traditional Argobba jewelry but dress like the other ethnic groups in their region.

The Argobba villages are all located on hills. Their rectangular houses are made of stone; the roofs are wood with gravel and earth.

The Argobba people are Muslims and are ruled by Sharia law. A qadi and the elders are the community administrators. There is a political party that is struggling to preserve the Argobba language, culture



and communities and make sure they have representation in government.

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Prayer Points

- For the Ethiopian churches in the diaspora & in Ethiopia to mobilize their people & resources to reach the Argobba for Christ.
- God to raise up believers from similar cultures to reach out to them.
- For the availability of Christian resources - gospel recordings, the Jesus film and the Bible in their language.
- Successful discipling movement among the Argobba.

- Information from The Joshua Project at www.joshuaproject.net

"How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed?
And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard?
And how are they to hear without someone preaching?
And how are they to preach unless they are sent?
As it is written 'How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!'"
Romans 10: 14 - 15

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For information on adopting the Argobba of Ethiopia

www.hornofafrica.org

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