

Surma, Suri

Alternate names: Dhuri, Kachipo, Tirma
Population: About 38,000
Language: Suri
Location: Only in Ethiopia, in Southwest Kafa region near Sudan border; west of Mizan Teferi
Religion: Ethnic religion
% Christian: .6 % (75% Orthodox; 25% Protestant)
% Evangelical: .4 %
Christian resources: available: Bible portions; Global Recordings; Jesus Film

The Surma people live in the remote southwest corner of Ethiopia. They have a warm climate year-round, warmer during the six-month dry season. Their main source of food is the maize and sorghum they grow, supplemented by blood, milk and some meat. They get water from a stream and springs. They do little outside trading, but when they do trade with the Dizi for salt and cloth, they trade cattle, honey or raw gold. Their wealth is based on the number of cattle they own. They are highly monolingual and a homogenous group. They live beyond most of the influences of the modern world and technology, except for having guns. Their tenuous relationship with the neighboring Dizi, Bume, Nyangatom groups often erupts in fighting and loss of life.

Some typical characteristics for men and women are large earplugs, decorative body painting, and hair shaved in patterns. Women wear leather garments fastened at one shoulder encircling the waist like a skirt. They are known for their large clay lip plates, worn in the lower lip, which are signs of beauty and prestige. Men and boys typically wear no clothing, though sometimes men wear a long cloth. Girls wear a leather skirt around the waist.

Surma homes are simple grass roofed walled shelters resembling loose haystacks. Their mode of transportation is by foot. They have ritualized stick fighting among the young men, the Donga fight, and enjoy dancing. Alcohol is a big problem. Chief elders and ritual priests are the rulers. The government has banned Donga fights, decorative scarification and lip plates.

The Suri language is linguistically related to the Mursi language.

Mission work was initiated among the Surma in the early 1970's. Due to various pressures, however, this outreach only lasted a few years and a church had not yet been established. A new outreach effort to the Surma people has begun.



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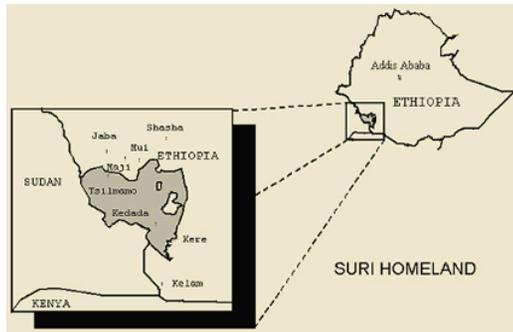
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Prayer Points

- Pray for the Ethiopian churches in the diaspora and in Ethiopia to mobilize their people and resources to reach the Surma for Christ.
- Ask God to provide for their health, education and economic needs.
- **Pray for an acceptable social substitute for raiding and for peaceful relationships with their neighbors and the government.**
- Pray for God to send intercessors and laborers who will find favor with the Surma.
- Ask God to open the hearts of the Surma to hear and receive the gospel.
- Pray for God's kingdom to come powerfully among the Surma.



Information from The Joshua Project at www.joshuaproject.net; <http://vanishingworldphotography.com/surma-tribe.html>

"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



For information on adopting the Surmi

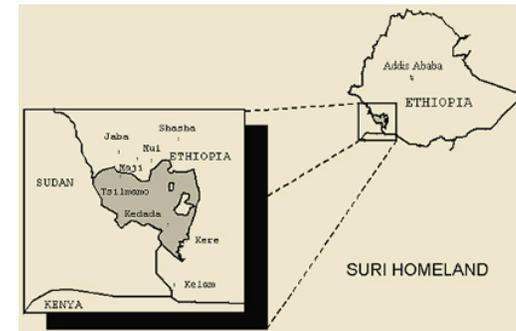
www.hornofafrica.org

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