



East Africa Gujarati Coordinator

Global Teams

POPULATION: 1,000,000+

PROGRESS: 0.01% Christian

BIBLE TRANSLATION: Complete

LOCATION

Gujaratis live throughout East Africa, but more than one million of them between the countries of Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania. The ministry position could be based almost anywhere, but would probably be most strategic close to a potential sending population. In Africa, Nairobi or Kampala could be strategic bases.

PEOPLE GROUP

Originating from the state of Gujarat in western India, most African Gujaratis arrived in the late 19th century as part of British colonialization. However, after independence many others arrived to for commerce and stayed in East African countries to open businesses. Gujaratis are considered entrepreneurs and come mostly from the upper and middle class. Most Gujaratis are strong Hindus who have rigorously maintained their cultural and religious identities, though there is a significant number of them who are Muslim, especially in Madagascar. The need for Gospel workers is desperate: Joshua Project records that there is less than one hundredth of one percent evangelicals, making them among one of the most desperately unreached populations in the world



WHAT ARE THEIR LIVES LIKE?

The Gujarati are divided into a number of social groups. In Gujarat, villages generally lie in clusters and sub-clusters based on the “caste” system. The castes are actually culture groups, based not only on occupations, but also on such things as customs, manners, and habits.



The Hindus, who make up the largest group, are divided into a number of castes or jatis. The structure of their society is based on the principles of “purity and pollution.” The priestly class, known as the Brahmin, is in the highest position, while servants and laborers are in the lowest caste. Despite various degrees of acculturation, most Hindus retain their strong cultural ties.

WHAT ARE THEIR BELIEFS?

The majority of the Gujarati are Hindus, regardless of their location in the world. However, a significant number of them have maintained their Muslim ties. The Hindu clergy are drawn from the highest caste, the Brahmins. Therefore, becoming a priest is essentially a matter of birthright, although not all Brahmins practice as priests.

Hindus worship many gods, some of which are animals. Cows are sacred, but they revere monkeys, snakes, and other animals as well. They teach such things as yoga and reincarnation (a continual cycle of death and rebirth). They believe that the soul may be reincarnated as an animal or as a human. The law of karma states that every action influences how the soul will be born in the next life. If a person lives a good life, his soul will be born into a higher state. Whereas, if he leads an evil life, his soul will be born into a lower state, perhaps even as a worm! The cycle continues until spiritual perfection is achieved. Then the soul enters moksha, a new level of existence, from which it never returns.

MINISTRY DESCRIPTION & PLATFORM

The strategy coordinator’s job is to become an expert on who the Gujaratis are in East Africa, where they are most accessible, the best opportunities to engage them with the Good News as a disciple making movement and to mobilize field partners to work among them. While living among Gujaratis may be helpful at certain stages along the journey, it is not required. The strategy coordinator becomes an advocate for reaching the Gujaratis of East Africa, mobilizing prayer, resources and field partners in cooperation with others who share this vision.

SKILL SETS NEEDED:

- Language: High level of English proficiency, Swahili preferred.
- Mobilization: Must be able to cast a compelling vision for work among African Gujaratis
- Strategic Thinking: Must develop multiple access points of engagement
- Partnership Development: Ability to coordinate with others for the task

If you are a follower of Christ, have a heart for those who have not yet been reached, are ready and willing to relocate and learn a second language, are excited to build a team in the field with people from other cultures and if you are ready to respond to God’s call to go, we are ready to send you.

Email Jenny at mobilization@global-teams.org or visit <https://www.global-teams.org/letsgo>