

## The Ayi of Papua New Guinea

This group is located just west of the Yawu dialect of the Yessan-Mayo. The Ayi people live in 3 villages deep in the rain forest of Papua New Guinea about half way between the Sepik River and the government post of Nuku in the Sandaun Province, about 4 degrees south of the Equator. They are quite isolated with no roads in the area. It is a 12-hour walk to Nuku and a 2-hour walk to an airstrip in a neighboring language group.

Each village is an entity in itself with occasional disagreements and fights between them, but also intermarriage. The first outside contact made with the Ayi people was sometime after World War II. Their ancestors were probably pushed south from the coast as other tribes came and gained control of more desirable land. They have had a hard life of gardening, hunting and fishing; a lack of medical help and education until recent times has kept their population low. The Ayi people came from an animistic tradition. They have been requesting God's Word to be written in their language since 1996.

**Image**  
**Unavailable**

**Primary Religion:**

Christian

**Disciples (Matt 28.19):**

**Churches:**

**Scripture Status (Matt 28.20):**

None translated

**Population (date):**

430



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Item Name	Item Note	
<b>Have They Heard The Gospel?</b>		<b>Profile Summary</b>
Is The Word Of God Translated?	Neither the Old Testament or New Testament is translated; there are a few portions of the Gospel of Mark available.	
What Kind Of Missionaries Are Needed?	Bible Translators	
<b>Population All Countries</b>		<b>Group Description</b>
World Population For This People	430	
World Population (Urban Percent)	0	
Comment (World Population)	Another 350 speak a dialect called Pasi	
<b>Countries Where People Group Lives</b>		<b>Group Description</b>
Country Name	Papua New Guinea	
<b>Geography &amp; Environment</b>		<b>Group Description</b>
Location	The Ayi people live in 3 villages deep in the rain forest of Papua New Guinea about half way between the Sepik River and the government post of Nuku in the Sandaun Province, about 4 degrees south of the Equator. They are quite isolated with no roads in the area. It is a 12-hour walk to Nuku and a 2-hour walk to an airstrip in a neighboring language group.	
Country	Papua New Guinea	
Ecosystem Type	Tropical Forest	
Climate	Tropical Rain Forest	
<b>Language &amp; Linguistics</b>		<b>Group Description</b>
Comment (Language)	Formerly the language was called Pasi. However, the 430 Ayi speakers have a different dialect from the western dialect of Pasi.	
Dialects	PASI	
Second Languages	Adult men speak Tok Pisin	
Comments (Related Languages)	Ayi, Pasi, and four other languages (not listed) belong to the Tama language family.	
Comments (Neighbor Languages)	This group is located just west of the Yawu dialect of the Yessan-Mayo.	
<b>Economics</b>		<b>Group Description</b>
Subsistence Type	Hunter-gatherers	
Subsistence Type	Agriculturalists	
Subsistence Type	Fishers	
Income Sources	They earn some money by selling food crops and wild game at the Nuku market or more local occasional markets.	
Comment (Economy)	Economically, the people are subsistence farmers who are self-sufficient in regards to food supplies and housing.	
<b>Community Development</b>		<b>Group Description</b>
Health Care (Quality)	Poor	
Comment (Health Care)	A lack of medical help and education until recent times has kept their population low.	
<b>Society &amp; Culture</b>		<b>Group Description</b>
Neighbor Relations	Each village is an entity in itself with occasional disagreements and fights between them, but also intermarriage.	
History Of People Group	The first outside contact made with the Ayi people was sometime after World War II. Their ancestors were probably pushed south from the coast as other tribes came and gained control of more desirable land.	
<b>Education</b>		<b>Group Description</b>
Primary Schools	1	

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## Item Name

Comment (Education)

## Item Note

A government primary school was started at Nawalu village in 1978. Children from several villages attend there and are learning some English, the national language of PNG.

## Religion & Response

## Status of Christianity

Current Needs

The Ayi people have been requesting God's Word to be written in their language since 1996.

Items For Prayer

Syncretism. The Ayi need a clear understanding of the Gospel.

## History Of Christianity In Group

## Status of Christianity

Comments (History of Christianity)

The Ayi people came from an animistic tradition. There was frequent warfare with neighboring tribes until the Australian government brought the area under its control in the late 1940's. The Roman Catholic Mission sent priests and national workers to visit the Ayi-Pasi area some years later.

## Scripture

## Status of Christianity

Available Scripture

Portions

Comment (Scripture)

The churches use Pidgin English, a trade language, to teach the Christian message. This often results in confusion, lack of understanding and inattention. Many do attend church services faithfully, but it is hard to know how much they understand.

Comment (Scripture)

They now have one Scripture portion in their language. Yawu Bible translators and a group from the Ayi villages translated the booklet "Jesus Has the Power to Save Us" (selections from Mark's Gospel). This booklet was distributed in July, 2002.