

RAWAS

OF INDONESIA

1

QUICK FACTS

People Name: Rawas

People Cluster: Musi of Sumatra

Language: Rawas

Trade Language: Indonesian

Primary Religion: Islam

Population: 173,000

PRAYER POINTS

Pray that God will raise up laborers who understand the Muslim culture and who can effectively take the Gospel to them.

Pray that the Lord will reveal Himself to these precious people through dreams and visions.

Pray for the linguists who are translating the Bible into Rawas.

Pray that the Holy Spirit will encourage and protect the small number of Rawas Christians.

Take authority over the spiritual principalities and powers that are keeping the Rawas bound.

Pray that the Lord will call forth teams of intercessors who will faithfully pray for the Rawas.

Ask God to raise up strong local churches among the Rawas.

GEOGRAPHY

The Rawas people live in the districts of Rawas Ulu and Rawas Ilir in Musi Rawas Regency in South Sumatra Province. Most Rawas live either in small cities, such as Surulangun and Binginteluk, or villages like Lubuk Kemang, Lesung Batu, Sungaibaung, Pangkalan, Pulaukida, Muarakuwis, and Talangberingin.

The Rawas villages are spread along the Rawas and Rupit Rivers. On the west, Rawas territory ascends up the peaks of 2,068 meter high Mount Hijau. To the south is the Rawas Regency capital, Lubuklinggau, through which runs the trans-Sumatra highway. The Rawas language is a branch of the Melayu (Malay) language cluster.



LIFE

The most prominent production of the Rawas people comes from rubber plantations. They are self-sufficient in producing their food supply. The Rawas area also produces many fruits such as oranges, mangoes, pineapples, duku (small white fruit), langsung (small yellow fruit), jackfruit, papaya, rambutan (hairy fruit), and durian ("stinky" fruit with a spiky shell).

They also raise livestock such as ducks, chicken, goats, and water buffaloes. For catching fish, the Rawas still use traditional boats without motors.

Their houses are built close together, which shows unity and the close relationships among them. The Rawas houses are made from wood and raised on stilts. They typically have three large rooms, including two bedrooms and a kitchen in the back part of the house. Usually, these houses face the road and have an overhanging porch in the front.



RAWAS OF INDONESIA

2

Depending on the agreement before the wedding, the Rawas can practice either a patrilineal (tracing descent from the father) or a matrilineal (tracing descent from the mother) system. There is a clear job division between men and women among the Rawas people. The men work in the rice fields, plantations, rivers (as pebble gatherers), and in making bricks.

The women cook and care for the children at home or open small stores. The Rawas people have interesting art forms. Their art consists of singing and traditional dancing with tambourine accompaniment. Examples of traditional Rawas dancing are the Tari Piring (Plate Dance) and Tari Pisau (Knife Dance).

Among young people, forming art groups encourages this dancing and singing. In addition, they are also active in developing pencak silat (an Indonesian martial art).

BELIEFS

The Rawas people embrace Sunni Islam. They obediently perform the religious fast and implement merry celebrations on Muslim holidays. Their traditional weddings and marriages are in alignment with the teachings of Islam.



They carry out circumcision ceremonies for 6 to 7 year old boys. The Rawas also hold religious meals for remembering the deceased 7 days, 40 days, and 1000 days after a death. They often use a carved object with an Islamic motif or design as a charm.



WAYS TO HELP

Those with medical skills and agricultural training will likely have the greatest opportunities to work among the Rawas, since there are many needs in these areas.

The rich flora in this area, especially various kinds of trees, has great potential to become a highly valuable economic commodity.

Would you be willing to be among the FIRST to engage these people with the hope of the Gospel? Would you be willing to lead a team? Contact us today to find out more - we need people to visit the Rawas and find other great ways to bring new teams to live among them for the sake of the Kingdom.

CONTACT

FRONTIERS

(800) 462-8436
www.frontiers.org