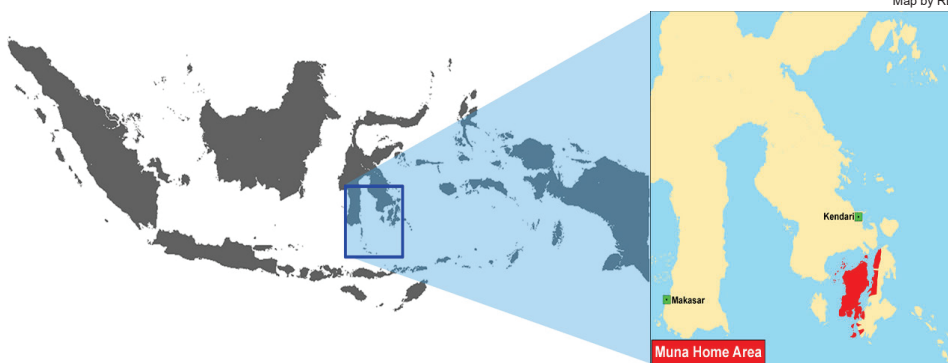


MUNA



Photo by CC



Demography	Muna Language	Status
Location: Southeast Sulawesi	Bible: NT	Believers: <200
Population: 330.000	Jesus Film: Yes	Engaged: Yes
Major religion: Islam	Online Media: No	Indigenous church: 7 (home)

Identity and Location

The Muna people (also called the Mendo-Wuna) live in the province of Southeast Sulawesi on the larger islands of Muna and Buton, and the smaller islands of Kadatua, Siompu, Bangkomalape and Tiworo. Muna Island is separated from Buton Island by a strait stretching from north to south. The word wuna means “flower” in the Muna language. According to tradition, the word muna came from a rocky hill covered with flowers, called Bahutara. Today this location has become a tourist attraction.

The Muna people are grouped into several sub-groups, the Ghoera, Siompu, Kaobengke, Lakudo, and Kadatua. Each group uses Muna language, but with different dialects. The Muna dialect is used in the north, the Gumas dialect in the south and the Tiworo dialect is used in the eastern region. The northern variety of the language contains markers that register different social levels depending on the person being addressed. The Muna language is very similar to that of Buton.

Society and Culture

The Muna make their living as farmers, with their primary crops being corn and rice. Other crops include sweet potatoes, sugar cane and various kinds of spices. A large portion of their commerce has come from marketing the products of the jungle such as teak wood and rattan. The custom of pokadulu (mutual assistance) influences various activities in the Muna community, as groups of people will gather together to do large projects such as clearing, planting and harvesting fields.

The higher the status of the groom, the more he must pay for his bride

The Muna usually live in the interior of the island, though there are some coastal communities. They live together in kinship groups called tombu. These kinship groups shape the larger society. Their locations are distant from one another and facilities limited due to many natural obstacles such as valleys, mountains and rivers.

Lineage is patrilineal (father’s side). In marriage, the groom pays for the bride. Price is determined by the groom’s social status. The higher the status of the groom, the more he must pay for his bride. Before the marriage, the prospective groom is in a trial period by the prospective bride’s family. Due to these strict traditions, many young people choose to elope. In the past, slaves were not allowed to marry, but were permitted to live together. Women of the nobility were not permitted to marry a man from a lower class. Polygamy used to be common among the nobility, but is rarely practiced nowadays.

Beliefs

The majority of Muna people follow Sunni Islam. They believe they will be judged on their knowledge of the Qur’an (Islamic holy book) and their deeds done during this lifetime. However, traditional animistic beliefs still influence many aspects of Muna life.

Needs

The Muna people have high mobility and they have spread into other areas. They need training and assistance to better manage their natural resources. They need formal education as well as practical training in order to take advantage of employment opportunities. The Muna also need better access to reliable and affordable health care.