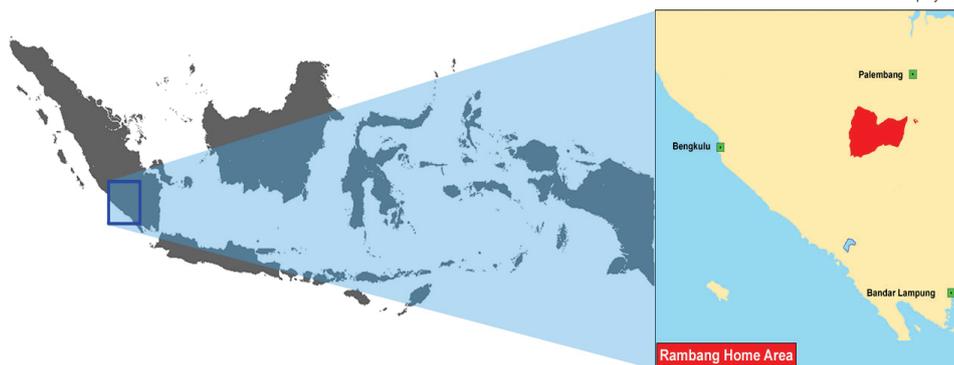


# RAMBANG



Photo by RD

Wash and bath in the river



Map by RD

Demography	Rambang Language	Status
Location: South Sumatera Population: 155.000 Major Religion: Islam	Bible: No Jesus Film: No Online Media: No	Believers: 0 Engaged: Yes Indigenous Church: 0

## Identity and Location

The Rambang people live in an area spread across the regencies of Muara Enim, Ogan Ilir, Ogan Koemerling Ilir, and also in Pabumulih City. In Muara Enim Regency, they live in Tebat Agung District. In Ogan Ilir Regency, they live in several villages in Muara Kuang District. In Ogan Komering Ilir Regency they live in Tanjung Lubuk District in the villages of Penyandingan, Ulak Ketapang, Kuripan and a few others. In Prabumulih City, they live scattered throughout several districts in which they are the dominant group. The Rambang people are also sometimes called Rambang Dangku, Rambang Lubai, Rambang Kapak Tengah Dua, Rambang Senuling, and Anak Rambang.

## Society and Culture

Rambang society is rich in various rituals oriented towards the natural environment, such as the life cycle, with birth and death rituals, and Buang Juang, a farewell ceremony when anyone leaves the village to find work. Other rituals relate to special natural phenomena such as lunar and solar eclipses, requests for rain, earthquakes, and others. The Rambang also highly value competitions in reading the Qur'an (Islamic holy book), and the Islamic Hajj (pilgrimage to Mecca).

The Rambang people are inclined to live simply. Agriculture is the principal economic activity in the area and rice is the main crop. Wet rice plots are still worked mostly using water buffalo. In addition, corn, peanuts, fruits and vegetables are also grown. The Rambang are sometimes referred to as orang selengek, a term referring to their unique method of preserving fish. They also make various traditional items from bamboo, rattan, wood, roots, and palm leaves.

Rambang villages usually consist of closely packed houses – generally single-family dwellings of three or

four rooms raised on stilts. The area below the house is used for storage, or in some cases, trade.

The Rambang practice a bilateral inheritance system, which means that one's descent is traced through both the mother and father. Two types of marriage arrangements are practiced: 1) payment of bridewealth, which establishes a couple's residence with the groom's family and primarily affiliates any children with the father's line; 2) no payment of bridewealth, placing the groom in the bride's household and any children in their mother's line. Marriage is a strong factor in unifying family, clan and even inter-ethnic relationships. This can be seen throughout South Sumatra Province. Marriage is not just a matter of a couple getting married; it involves the whole family, clan and wider community.

## Beliefs

The Rambang believe that their first leader to follow Islam was Lord Bintang Ruano, who condemned animistic practices. Since that time, the people have ceased animistic sacrifice offerings, but they still believe in the existence of supernatural forces in certain objects. The teachings of the Sunni Shafi'i branch of Islam became the guidebook for their lives. Every village has a mosque. Yet ancestral burial grounds are still maintained and an annual ritual is held in which Rambang people honor their ancestors and clean their graves. At the same time, the majority of Rambang men go to the mosque every week for Friday prayers.

## Needs

The river is used for bathing, washing, and toilet facilities, which is considered practical. The well water typically used for drinking and cooking is yellow in color. Thus, assistance in obtaining a supply of clean water would very much benefit the Rambang people.<sup>(E-RD)</sup>