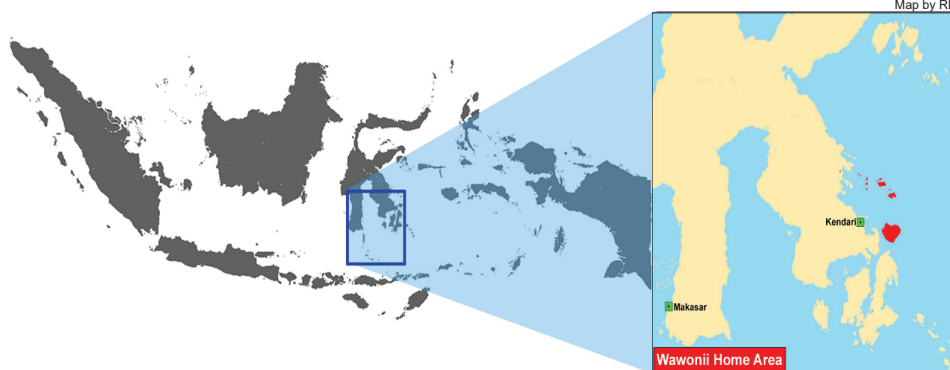


# WAWONII



Photo by CT



Map by RD

Demography	Wawonii Language	Status
Location: Southeast Sulawesi	Bible: No	Believers: <60
Population: 27,500	Jesus Film: No	Engaged: Yes
Major religion: Islam	Online Media: No	Indigenous church: 4 (home)

## Identity and Location

The Wawonii people live on the island of Wawon (the name means “coconut mountain”), which is located off the southeastern coast of the island of Sulawesi. The Wawonii language is closely related to the languages of the Bungku and Kulisusu. Although not much information is currently available about the Wawonii, what is available shows a way of life similar to their neighbors, the Bingkoka, Pancana and Muna peoples.

All these groups once belonged to the sultanate of Butung. The sultanate included Butung, Muna, Kabaena and other small islands. The Sultan of Butung ruled the Wawonii through a hierarchy of advisors and officials.

The Wawonii language is part of a larger linguistic grouping called the Eastern Bungku-Tolaki subfamily, which also includes the Moronene, Kulisusu, Tolaki, Koroni, Bungku, and Mori languages.

Wawonii has two dialects, which correspond to the two islands where it is spoken.

## Society and Culture

The Wawonii’s primary livelihood is growing corn. Crops other than corn include sweet potatoes, sugar cane, tobacco, coffee and various vegetables. New fields are opened by the “slash and burn” technique of cutting down trees and burning the underbrush. The Wawonii are forced to move each time their fields become infertile, because their farming techniques do not include sustainable methods.

Their houses are spread throughout the new areas they clear out of the jungle. Houses are built on stilts with

high roofs made of woven thatch. The Wawonii still identify people based on different social classes in their social system, using the groupings of nobility, middle class and common people. Usually, each respective class has its own customs, in addition to their various traditions and habits. The privilege of owning land is decided by the village council, which has unconditional authority over all the land.

The lineage of descent of the Wawonii is patrilineal (tracing descent from the father). In Wawonii marriages, like the Muna people, the groom pays a bride price to her family. This price is determined by the groom’s social status in the community; the higher his status, the higher the price. Before the marriage, the future husband must undergo a trial period by his future in-laws. However, this requirement is the main cause of many elopements.

## Beliefs

Almost all Wawonii people practice Sunni Islam. Despite this, traditional animistic beliefs are still strong in daily life. They still believe in the power of unseen spirits that inhabit sacred places. The services of a shaman are often sought for many purposes, including healing sicknesses and exorcising evil spirits.

## Needs

The Wawonii need better agricultural education to create sustainable, eco-friendly farming methods

The Wawonii have inadequate employment opportunities and the creation of new jobs is much needed. In order to improve health services for the community, they also need better access to medical services, clinics and medical personnel..<sup>(E-DM)</sup>