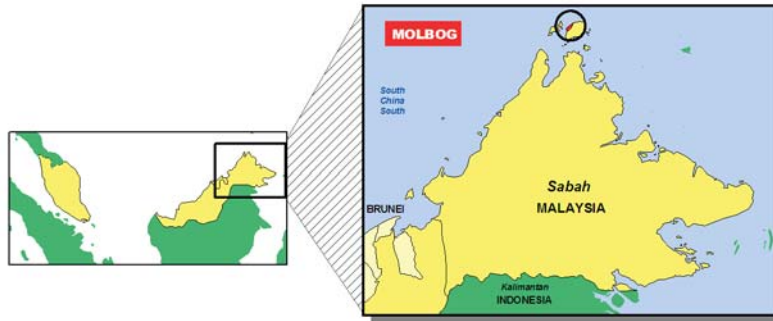


MOLBOG



Population	Major Religion	Language
7000	Islam	Molbog

Who are the Molbog?

The Molbog are found on Banggi Island in Sabah, Malaysia. The Banggi South Channel separates Banggi Island from the mainland of Sabah. The Molbog are sometimes called Balabak in Sabah, a name that describes their place of origin - Balabac Island, located at the southern tip of Palawan in the Philippines. The greater population of Molbog people still resides on Balabac Island. Balabac Island is visible from Damaran and Maliyu, the two Molbog villages on the west coast of Banggi Island.

In terms of dialect and cultural practices, some have said the Molbog are somewhat related to the Tidung, an indigenous local group located on the northeast coast of Sabah. However, some Sama, Bonggi, and Tausug words are also found in the Molbog language.

What are their lives like?

The Molbog livelihood includes subsistence farming and fishing. They farm commercial coconut, tapioca, and fruit trees. Some people make their living by raising livestock and occasionally perform barter trading with the people on nearby islands of the Philippines and at market centers in Sabah.

The Molbog people highly value their relationships with relatives and friends through mutual sharing and giving. Intermarriage between the Tausug and the Molbog has influenced the Molbog toward Islam. Currently, Molbog young people are free to choose their own marriage partners as long as both share the same religion.

What do they believe?

The majority of the Molbog people practise Islam. Islam for them is a way of life just as it is for all of the Muslim groups. The Tausug traders in the past brought the Islamic faith that the Molbog people adopted as their own. They follow the Islamic prayers and celebrate the Islamic religious festivals such as *Hari Raya Aidiladha* (which marks the end of the period during which Muslims make the journey to Mecca to perform the haj, and also commemorates the willingness of the prophet Abraham to sacrifice his son Ishmael for Allah) and *Hari Raya Aidilfitri* (the end of fasting month).

Despite being strong followers of the Islamic faith, their faith is also associated with many indigenous interpretations and practices. The Molbog have a reputation among the Bonggi of being *pugai* specialists where *pugai* means "to put a love charm/spell on someone."

What are their needs?

The Molbog people need developing infrastructure such as modern sea transportation to help facilitate the selling of farm and fish products to neighboring places and markets. Those living in villages typically don't earn enough income for medical and educational supplies. Illnesses such as malaria are a concern to the people. Pray that God will meet the Molbog people's needs through believers who are able to provide the skills and resources that they need. Pray that these acts will demonstrate the love of God.