

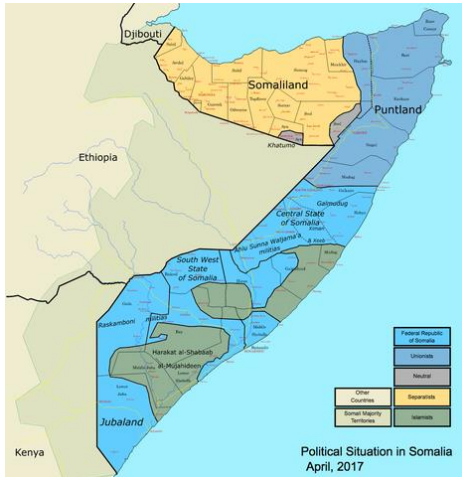
Monday 11th March

Present day Somalia

Pop: 15.5 million

Muslim: 99%

After the overthrow of the military regime of President Siad Barre in 1991, Somalia collapsed into anarchy. Rival warlords tore the country apart into clan-based fiefdoms, so an internationally-backed government was formed in 2000 but it struggled to establish control and the two relatively peaceful



northern regions of Somaliland and Puntland effectively broke away.

The southern part of Somalia has been overrun with civil war, violence, and clan leaders craving power. Somalia is made up of mainly one ethnic group; the Somalis. However, Somalia is divided more by clan than by ethnicity. Somali loyalty is to their clan and not their nation. Even within the clan, there is much distrust. This makes business deals or any economic and social exchange almost impossible.

When this happens, the economy suffers as has been the situation in Somalia for decades.

The unemployment rate is so high that 40% of their population is displaced, either in other parts of the country or outside of Somalia. Many others suffer from the grim 'employment' we call human trafficking.

If a government cannot or will not protect its citizens, then many are vulnerable to being sold into slavery. Poor women and children are the most vulnerable. Somali human traffickers often use deception to get people, even those from their own clans and families, to enter into a life of slavery. Members of the fragile Somali government accept bribes, even at the expense of someone else's freedom and dignity. Somalia's government is more concerned with protecting the capital city of Mogadishu and does not have the resources to protect people in rural parts of the country. In the south-central region there is an abundance of vulnerable poor people who can be sold into prostitution or slavery.

Weak governments allow for Islamic militias to fill the power void. Al-Shabaab, a brutal terrorist group with links to Al-Qaeda, has control over certain parts of Somalia. They regularly use children as soldiers in their ongoing attempts to take over Somalia.

It is difficult to see how hope and peace can come to this nation. Siad Barre, a socialist dictator in the 1970's was unable to unify the country for long, despite his attempts to produce massive infrastructure improvements that would have benefitted everyone.

Unfortunately, a strong dictatorial leader is what often holds contrasting groups together in a country. Countries like Somalia cannot thrive under democratic ideals that the Western world upholds. Somalia is considered a 'collapsed state' due to the inability of clans to work with one another because of distrust. The result has been the collapse of state institutions, civil war, terrorism, and piracy.

This is a nation that needs the hope of Christ to bring national reconciliation and unity.

- Christ is the only one who has the answers for the failed nation of Somalia. Let's cry out to Him, the God of the impossible, to bring peace, order and healing to this land.
- Pray for the people of Somalia to be willing to change and accept God's blessing of a relationship with Jesus.
- Let's pray for a strong leader of godly character to rise up in Somalia, who governs with fairness, honesty and respect and who is accepted by all.
- May God soften Somali hearts to be receptive to the gospel. May Somalis hear the Word, and respond to it by teaching others His ways.

"But Jesus looked at them and said to them, "With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible." Matt 19:26

Source: <http://www.globalprayerdigest.org/issue/day/business-as-mission-bam/>
[Global Prayer Digest Jan-Mar 2019](#)

Tuesday 12th March

Clans

An old Somali proverb sums up the cultural attitude that pervades Somalia: "Me and my clan against the world; me and my family against the clan; me and my brother against my family; me against my brother." Though there are variations of this proverb in the Arab world, no people group on earth is as clannish as the Somalis. The clan is everything to them, and its influence invades every aspect of life—from personal relationships, to corporate life, to politics. The founders of the largest telecommunication service in Somalia were from the same clan, and because of their kinship ties, they were able to trust each other and establish the company.

One of the main obstacles to economic development is a deep-rooted lack of trust for one another. Such a situation kills possible business transactions because everyone must first protect themselves. Somalis will shower benefits on their own clan, often to the detriment of other people groups and think nothing of it. Revenge killings can go on for generations, making peace short-lived. When one clan gets the upper hand, they take what they can at the expense of others until another clan becomes strong enough to take their place. Somali pastoral people steal one another's livestock, which leaves a family or clan without a livelihood.

Anyone who is going to teach the peoples of Somalia how to earn an honest living would need to start with spiritual and character issues. Gospel workers with midwifery and nursing training, IT skills or any other training that will bring economic development and demonstrate a godly business model would be a real blessing to this country.

- Pray that Somalis will meet Jesus, the one whom they can trust implicitly and that, once reconciled to Him, they can reconcile with one another.

- Pray for believers with relevant skills to go to Somalia and for God to protect them both physically and spiritually.
- Pray for the Holy Spirit to move in the hearts of the people in Somalia so they will be willing to accept change and work with one another in a way that brings transformation to their country.

Source: <http://www.globalprayerdigest.org/issue/day/clannishness-in-somalia/>
<http://www.globalprayerdigest.org/issue/day/business-as-mission-bam/>

Wednesday 13th March

Coast

Somalia has 2,000 miles of coastland, giving opportunities for tourism and a strong fishing industry. Without a coastguard, to protect their coast, Somalia is left to the mercy of whoever is willing to fish



with modern equipment and to those who dump nuclear and non-nuclear waste in to their waters.

With scant government resources, rubbish is a mounting problem in Somalia. A Tsunami surge in 2004 carried hazardous waste containers to Somalia's shores. According to the UN, some firms took advantage of Somalia's lack of a functioning government to dump waste off its coast. Unfortunately, the industrialised countries of the world have used a number of

underdeveloped countries in the world as their dumping ground for toxic waste and Somalia is one of them.

A video from 2016 shows the coastline of Mogadishu littered with all kinds of plastic waste. Desperate Somalis are scavenging the rubbish looking for anything salvageable, while hosts of little boys are playing in the plastic-filled waters. This rubbish brings with it disease, death and economic dysfunction.

Somalia is infamous for its pirates, who, since 1991, have preyed upon merchant vessels traversing the Horn of Africa; holding hostages and demanding ransoms. It was then the government collapsed, and along with it, Somalia's coastguard. Civil war ensued, and there was no one protecting the coastline.

This situation was all that was needed for illegal trawlers from countries all over the world to poach Somalia's fishing banks. Plentiful fish soon disappeared. Along with overfishing, illegal trawlers dumped toxic waste into the waters which soon became so polluted that the remaining fish were killed. Villages that once thrived because of fishing were left starving and destitute. Pirates filled the void left by the government. Some refer to themselves as the 'coastguard', since they controlled part of the coastline for their own use.

Somali fishermen and others found they could make huge profits by capturing ship cargoes and their crew for ransom. Since the Somali coast is a bottleneck for ships, it is relatively easy to capture

unprotected vessels. Pirate attacks peaked between 2008 and 2013, but then crew began to protect their ships and successful pirate attacks have dropped significantly.

More than 1,300 young Somali men have been jailed in prisons abroad for piracy since 2005, most given life sentences. They have no family to visit them; a double tragedy.

- Pray for international agencies to take positive steps in enforcing illegal as well as legal toxic dumping in Somalia.
- Pray for gospel workers to bring and develop alternative trades and work opportunities that can bring life and hope to Somalis.
- Pray for the young Somali men in prison to find hope and joy in a relationship with Jesus.

“The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.” John 10:10

Sources: <http://www.globalprayerdigest.org/issue/day/coastal-dumping-ground/>
<http://www.globalprayerdigest.org/issue/day/piracy-in-somalia/>

Thursday 14th March

Somalis

Pop: 10.7 million

Muslim: 99%

In Somalia, the largest ethnic group are the Somalis, making up 85% of the population. They range from well-to-do, educated urbanites to nomads struggling for the basic necessities such as water. The majority of the population are on the lower end of the economic spectrum and very few children go to school. Since the language did not have a written script until 1972, many adults are illiterate.



The Somalis depend on their camels. There is one camel for every 2.5 humans. The camel is a Somali's 'car,' his 'bank account,' and his 'food pantry.' The more camels a man has, the greater his standing in the community. Camel milk is a major source of nutrition and herdsman may drink up to eleven litres a day. Camel meat is savoured at celebrations and the fatty hump is the most prized portion. Interestingly, the name of the people comes from "so maal," which is an expression of hospitality meaning "Go milk a beast for yourself!"

Somalis are Muslims who believe that their religious leaders have the power to bless and curse. This power lingers around tombs and helps cure illness following a visit to a tomb. Less than one percent of Somalis follow Christ, and these believers are despised by their countrymen. But there are a growing number of believers. Some will now have available the newly translated Old Testament books of Jonah and Ruth which were released in a minority language spoken by 1.75 million Somalis at the end of February. These are audio books with text that highlights phrase by phrase as Scripture is being read. These are being distributed via a smartphone reading/listening app and a website.

- Praise God that a Christian Somali website that normally gets 2,000 visits in a month had over 15,000 visits last May! People responded to a song about Jesus that had been advertised on Facebook. Please pray that many more Somalis will listen to the song and that the Lord will speak to them and they will put their faith in Jesus Christ. (Source: Pray Africa).
- Pray for the peoples of Somalia to come together with the united purpose of building a nation to glorify the King of kings.
- Pray for the Somali Muslim background believers to stay faithful. Last December, Pray Africa reported the following: “Please pray for the new Somali believer who is a language teacher. He became a believer last August. We are praying that he will know how to conduct himself, and when and how to reveal his faith to his family.”

Did you know? As a country, Somalia has the largest population of camels!

Source: <http://www.globalprayerdigest.org/issue/day/somalis-in-somalia/>

Friday 15th March

Mushunguli People Pop: 41,000 Muslim: 99%

To say that the Mushungulis of Somalia have a difficult life would be an understatement.

The Mushunguli are said to have descended from fugitive slaves who escaped from their Somali masters in northeast Tanzania around 1840. Many migrated to Somalia in search of security from the slave-trade. Mainstream Somalis look down upon them because of their slave origins.

In recent years their homeland has been ruled by the terrorist organisation Al-Shabaab. While some Mushunguli support al-Shabaab, many men have been forced against their will to work or fight for them, and many women are forced to ‘marry’ terrorist fighters. Others attempt to grow crops so they can survive. They are often treated like slaves by the other Somalis.

Food and other essential supplies worth millions of pounds have been donated to Somalia by the United Nations and Christian agencies. But, unfortunately, much of it ends up in the hands of terrorists or clan militias. Conditions have been so bad for the Mushungulis that many have fled to refugee camps in Kenya. Several thousand Mushunguli refugees have made it to American cities.

Over 99% of the Mushungulis are Muslims. But there are some believers and in Somalia, these believers face terrible persecution from Al-Shabaab. Even as refugees they are still cast out from their communities.

- Pray these people will be able to care for their families and live in safety and peace.
- Pray that the few believers become the leaders of Mushunguli churches in Somalia, who draw in others from their communities.
- Pray for the few Christians among the Mushunguli tribe, that they will find each other, fellowship together and grow in their faith.

Source: <http://www.globalprayerdigest.org/issue/day/mushunguli-people/>

Saturday 16th March

Milk and Honey – an article from a Frontiers worker in Northeast Africa

“Recently I sat in my teammate’s home, sharing a breakfast of spiced coffee and fried dough as we chatted about new friends, neighbourhood happenings and things we’ve been learning.

Our conversation turned toward the hard things that local Muslim women, our friends, face here: abuse, rape, war, hunger, poverty, corruption, lies, deceit and being only one of several wives. These are normal things women in this country experience.



I remember crying after hearing Aiseta, my language helper, telling me about the traumas in her own life. She was raped by her teacher at the age of 13 and became pregnant. Aiseta was shamed and blamed for the incident; the teacher was never punished, and he denied even knowing her. No one helped her when her baby girl was born. Since she had no clothes for her baby, Aiseta kept her wrapped in an old headscarf until she could buy clothes.

She’s experienced so much sorrow. Perhaps that’s why she recognised the treasure of the Gospel when I shared it with her. She listened eagerly and quickly embraced the promise of eternal life in Jesus Christ.

Sadly, I’ve grown accustomed to hearing my friends share their tragedies. Sometimes I’m shocked when I hear a woman say that nothing bad has ever happened to her.

It’s easy to become calloused. I’d be too emotional to get through my days if I didn’t harden my heart every time I heard about another sorrow. But have I become too hardened? Too calloused? How do I find a balance?

As I left my teammate’s home that morning, I decided to stop and visit Rabia, one of my Muslim friends. Rabia was happy to see me and stopped her washing to chat with me. We sat under the shade of a tree, and she laid her sleeping 4-month-old son between us. A few minutes later, Rabia’s mother arrived. She’d been busy in the fields and hadn’t visited in several weeks.

Even though her little grandson was sound asleep, Grandma scooped him up and lavished him with kisses. Over and over again, she kissed him: cheek, cheek, forehead, lips... cheek, cheek, forehead, lips.

The little boy opened one eye. And instead of crying, he smiled and looked right into his sweet grandmother’s grinning face. They looked smitten, full of love for one another.

Pay attention, I felt the Lord say to me as I blinked back tears over this precious sight. This is how you don’t get too hardened here, I felt Him say. Pay attention to the little glimpses of sweetness I show you here.

Rabia poured us small glasses of warm milk, handed out some bread, and placed a plate full of honey for us to dip our bread into—a mini feast to accompany the love between grandmother and grandchild.

What a privilege to partake in our Muslim friends' lives, so full of pain and hardship. My teammates and I are here to invite them into Jesus' Kingdom. We are honoured to present to them the hope of the gospel and to share in their joy.

And sometimes, God reminds us of His sweet love when a friend like Rabia serves us milk and honey.”

- Let's call out for the women of Somalia who face hardship and rejection, to find the One who can heal the broken-hearted and bind up all their wounds. (Ps 147:3).
- Pray for more workers to go to this region and introduce women and men who face such hardship to the One who understands their suffering and offers new life in Christ.
- Pray for Somalis to find joy and purpose in serving the Lord.