



## The Aighon of Papua New Guinea

The Aighon people live in West New Britain Province on New Britain Island. Their villages are widely scattered among tropical forests, streams, and mountains. Alternately known as the Bao and Apsokok, the Aighon language is part of the Pasismanua group. Traditionally, the Aighon people were semi-nomadic. Living in isolated small groups, they moved every few months for fear of sorcery. A group might consist of three brothers with their wives, children, and parents. Although some Aighon speakers still live this way, most of them now live in permanent villages. Each village has several clans, with a chief for each clan. There is an overall chief for every village, but none over the whole language group.

Every wife has a house where she lives with her children. Her husband may sleep in that house, or in the men's house along with other men and adolescent boys. Most houses are raised on posts with strips of black palm for flooring. Roofs are thatched with leafy vines or sago palm, and walls are made from bamboo or planks. The Aighon people live by raising pigs, gardening, hunting, and fishing. Some sell their garden produce at markets and some work at harvesting oil palm fruit on plantations.

To a certain degree, customs related to death, gardening, hunting, and courtship still remain. The traditional singsing, which involved dancing, singing, and drums, served a spiritual function. The singsing has often been adapted for church celebrations, or for performances in cultural shows. Other celebrations take place during bride price exchanges, funerals, Christmas, Easter, and New Year.

The Aighon people need airstrip improvements and a road through their area. The Christian leaders hope to reach the unevangelized members of their group, and their people have requested a Bible translation in their mother tongue.

**Primary Religion:**

Christian

**Disciples (Matt 28.19):**

67%

**Churches:**

21

**Scripture Status (Matt 28.20):**

None in their language

**Population (date):**

2,000 (2002)



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Item Name	Item Note	
<b>Have They Heard The Gospel?</b>		<b>Profile Summary</b>
Call Themselves Christian (%)	95%	
Believe In Jesus As God & Only Savior (%)	67%	
Believe In The Local Traditional Religion (%)	33%	
Have Not Heard Who Jesus is (%)	2%	
Number Of Pastors	24	
Comment (Pastors)	1:75; 24 SSEC men and their wives had training, 10 currently serve as pastors; 1 Anglican; 1 Catholic; 1 Lutheran	
Number Of Missionaries Working	1	
Response To The Gospel	Rapid church growth, although it is accompanied with some misunderstanding and syncretism. The Catholic and Anglican Churches were established in villages near the south coast between the end of World War II and 1960. In the early 1980's, there was a people movement in which entire Aighon villages in the interior turned to the Lord. The South Seas Evangelical Church (SSEC) taught many to read and write in Tok Pisin and then sent young men to Gavuvu Bible School, which was taught entirely in Tok Pisin. These men quickly assumed leadership in the Aighon churches and helped to spread the gospel and establish churches throughout their language area. These churches continue to send young men and women to Gavuvu Bible School, and the local churches are now led by a second generation of Aighon pastors.	
Number Of Communities	9	
Comment (Number Communities)	19 :Menpa: pop. 163; Anglican Zebu: pop. 327; Anglican; SSEC; Community School Getmata: pop. 168; Anglican; Catholic Wakis: pop. 147; Anglican Aseke: pop. 44; Anglican Ami 1: pop. 60; Anglican Ami 2: pop. 105; SSEC Givereng: pop. 26; SSEC Zekar:	
Number Of Churches	21	
Comment (Churches)	13 SSEC; 6 Anglican; 1 Catholic; 1 Lutheran	
Comment (Churches)	There are nineteen Aighon towns or villages. All but the one smallest village with only ten residents have either a South Seas Evangelical church or an Anglican church. There is also a Lutheran church in one village and a Roman Catholic church in another.	
Is The Word Of God Translated?	No. There is no Bible or even portions of the Bible in the Aighon language.	
Any Hinderance To Scripture Distribution?	There is no education, no standardized alphabet, and no literature in the mother tongue.	
Forms Of Gospel Presentation Available (Summary)	Recordings: No Literature: No Video/Films: No Radio: No	
Forms Of Gospel Presentation Available (Summary)	Christian literature and the Bible are available in Tok Pisin. There is a Tok Pisin version of the Jesus video and equipment for taking it to villages, though it has not been shown in the Aighon language area. Some people, especially women, do not understand Tok Pisin very well.	
What Kind Of Missionaries Are Needed?	Aighon speakers will need assistance from Bible translation experts in order to complete an Aighon translation, which they have requested. A translation team was assigned in 2004.	
<b>Population All Countries</b>		<b>Group Description</b>
World Population For This People	2,000	
World Population (Date)	2002	
World Population (Urban Percent)	0	
Comment (World Population)	2000 National census: 1,934; 2002 Sociolinguistic survey pop. Estimate: 2,100	
<b>Countries Where People Group Lives</b>		<b>Group Description</b>
Country Name	Papua New Guinea	
<b>Geography &amp; Environment</b>		<b>Group Description</b>

## The Aighon of Papua New Guinea

Item Name	Item Note
Location	West New Britain Province, New Britain Island
Country	Papua New Guinea
Ecosystem Type	Tropical Forest
Geological Type	Mountain Slopes
Elevation	0-1194 meters
Longitude	E 150 22.135
Latitude	S 6 00.607
Climate	Tropical; northwest monsoon-rainy season on the north side of New Britain is November through April and May to October on the south side; slight seasonal temperature variation; 26 degrees Celsius average

### Language & Linguistics

### Group Description

Primary Language	Aighon
Alternate Language Names	PSOHOH
Alternate Language Names	BAO'AN
Dialects	BAO
Dialects	Aighon
Comments (Dialect)	Apsokok is also an alternate name for Aighon
Attitude Towards Mother Tongue	Somewhat receptive
Percent Monolingual (%)	20
Second Languages	Tok Pisin (80%)
Comment (On Other Mother Tongues)	Some women and some people with less outside contact reportedly do not know Tok Pisin
Comment (On Other Mother Tongues)	A few women that have married in from other language groups speak their language and teach it to their children, but there are no significant other mother tongues spoken across the language group.
Linguistically Related Languages	KAULONG
Linguistically Related Languages	MIU
Linguistically Related Languages	SENSENG
Comments (Related Languages)	Aighon is part of the Pasismanua chain of languages.
Neighboring Languages	MANGSING
Neighboring Languages	BEBELI
Neighboring Languages	AVAU
Neighboring Languages	SENSENG
Neighboring Languages	AKOLET
Comments (Neighbor Languages)	Lesing-Gelimi (not in list) is to the southeast.
Active Language Programs	no

### Literacy

### Group Description

Adult Literacy Percentage	45%
Percent Literate For Men	51%
Percent Literate For Women	38%
Literacy Attitude	Somewhat receptive
Publications In Vernacular	None
Comment (Literacy)	People have a positive attitude toward literacy, but it is not an urgently felt need.

### Economics

### Group Description

Subsistence Type	Agriculturalists
Average Annual Income	Less than the national average of \$760 per year U.S. (according to UNICEF)

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Item Name	Item Note
Occupation	Gardening, house building
Income Sources	Selling some garden produce at markets, harvesting oil palm fruit on plantations, making axe handles, limited cash cropping.
Trade Partners	There are local markets and markets on the coasts in which Aighon speakers with surrounding groups are involved.
Modernization / Utilities	No plumbing or power. A few church congregations have fluorescent lights and two-way radios powered by 12 volt batteries recharged by solar panels.
Comment (Economy)	Foreign logging and mining companies have worked in the area and employed Aighon speakers, but no logging or mining is presently being done. Gold can be found there, so the mining companies said that they would return. Reportedly, employees were paid five Kina per day (1.25\$US). Some of the pastors that have had training used this income to pay for Bible school.
Comment (Economy)	Subsistence type: also hunting, pig raising

### Community Development

### Group Description

Health Care (Quality)	Fair
Comment (Health Care)	Fair. There is a health center on the south coast at Gasmata, a hospital in Kimbe on the north coast, and one Aid Post in the Aighon language area at Asirim. Most of the villages can get to one of these locations in one or two days walking. There were some supplies, medicines at the Aid Post in Asirim. People also use traditional medicines.
Diet (Quality)	Fair
Comment (Diet)	They eat taro, sweet potato, cassava, and leafy greens. There are wild pigs, fowl, small mammals, small river fish and shrimp that can be hunted, as well as some domesticated pigs and chickens. They do not consume protein regularly.
Water (Quality)	Very good
Comment (Water)	There are numerous clear streams
Shelter Description	Hand split plank or woven bamboo walls, thatched roofs of either leafy vines or sago palm leaves. Most houses are raised on posts and have strips of black palm for a floor. Some are on the ground with a dirt floor.
Energy/Fuel (Quality)	Poor
Comment (Energy)	Electricity: Some churches have solar panels with which they charge a 12-volt battery to run 2-way radios and fluorescent lights.
Clothing	Western style, second-hand clothes are used. Traditionally, bark cloth, leaves, and grass were used.
Transportation	The Aighon do not live close to any roads, but they can walk to where there is a road, or to the coast to take a boat to a road. A seat in boats and Public Motor Vehicles on the roads can be bought, though some people prefer to walk all the way to town (two to five days) and avoid the expense.
Infant Mortality Rate	56.53 per 1,000 live births (national average according to <a href="http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/pp.html#People">http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/pp.html#People</a> )
Life Expectancy	63.83 years (national average according to <a href="http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/pp.html#People">http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/pp.html#People</a> )
Leading Cause Of Death	Untreated illness

### Society & Culture

### Group Description

Family Structures	Each wife has a house where she lives with her children. The husband may sleep in that house or in the men's house. Adolescent boys sleep in the men's house. Father, mother, brother, and sister relationships are extended within the clan beyond the immediate family.
Neighbor Relations	Each Aighon village relates with the other language groups that border that village and that are on the way to town. There is some intermarriage, and relations are peaceful, though sometimes there are land disputes that are taken to the magistrate.
Authority / Rule	There are several clans in each village. Each Aighon clan has a chief, and each village has an overall chief, who is one of the clan chiefs. No village exists, however, that has authority over another village, and no chief over the whole language group

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Item Name	Item Note
Social Habits/Groupings	Traditionally, the Aighon speakers are semi-nomadic, living in small groups of perhaps two or three brothers with their wives and children and parents, and moving from place to place every few months. Some Aighon speakers are still living this way, though most of them are grouped now into larger permanent villages. In the Aighon language area, groups of villages can generally be defined along church denomination lines.
Cultural Change Pace	Medium
Identification With National Culture	Similar
Self Image	Prestigious
Judicial / Punishment System	Village court (chiefs preside), district magistrates
Celebrations	There are particular dances (singsing) with drums and singing that have a traditional spiritual function, though their form is sometimes adapted for church celebrations, or for performances in regional cultural shows. Events for which people contribute food to be cooked and eaten as a group include bride price exchanges, funerals, welcoming visitors, or other big events. Christmas, Easter, and the new year are also celebrated.
Recreations	talking, soccer
Media	There are some short wave broadcasts in Tok Pisin, though there may not be any radios in the language area.
Local Language Broadcasting	None
Attitude To Outsiders	Very receptive
Attitude To Change	Somewhat receptive
Comment (Culture)	Open to development and opportunities for income.

### Youth

### Group Description

Labor and tasks (6-12 year olds)	Children help in family responsibilities, especially girls in gardening, washing, and food preparation.
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### Education

### Group Description

Primary Schools	3
Primary School Enrollment	191
Secondary Schools	0
Secondary School Enrollment	Less than 10 students attending grade 7 or above.
Teacher To Pupil Ratio	6 primary school teachers: 1/32 students
Language Of Instruction Early Years	English
Language Of Instruction Early Years	Tok Pisin
Language Of Instruction Early Years	Aighon
Language Of Textbooks Early Years	English
Number Of Schools > 90% Homogeneous	The 3 primary schools are unmixed

### Church Growth

### Status of Christianity

Reached Status	Evaluated
Reached Classification	Evangelized
Lay Leaders	30
Bible Schools	None in the language area, though the SSEC leaders go the SSEC Bible school at Gavuvu, West New Britain. Anglican leaders trained at other schools in PNG.
Christian Clinics/Hospitals	There is a clinic at the Anglican Mission at Au, on the south coast, not in the language area, that serves Aighon villages.
Comment (Church Growth)	Total expatriate missionaries: 1; total local workers: 30
Comment (Church Growth)	Some SSEC Christians feel that some of the Anglican villages are still following traditional spiritual practices and are not Christian. There are some Aighon speakers that have never had a church as they live in small migratory groups rather than villages and have less outside contact. Reportedly, they do not speak Tok Pisin and still live the way all of the Aighon speakers used to live.

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Item Name	Item Note	
Comment (Church Growth)	Current Missionary is at Gavuvu Bible School, training SSEC leaders and sometimes visiting Aighon churches. Other missionaries have worked in the past, both expatriates and other nationals from outside the group.	
<b>Religion &amp; Response</b>		<b>Status of Christianity</b>
Religious Practices & Ceremonies	Sunday services, youth meetings, women's meetings, weekday morning and evening worship services, outreach, classes/conferences.	
Attitude To Christianity	Somewhat receptive	
Attitude To Religious Change	Somewhat receptive	
Resistance / Receptivity	Very receptive to expatriate workers coming, though some may be indifferent to Christian message.	
Spiritual Climate And Openness	Open climate of brotherhood with Christian leaders; apparent hold of traditional spiritual element on others.	
Comment (Religion)	Aighon speakers have made requests for translators to come and work in their language.	
Comment (Religion)	Denominations: South Seas Evangelical Church, Anglican, Catholic, Lutheran	
Recommended Approaches	Local leaders can use the Aighon language to reach others that have not been evangelized.	
Current Needs	Recommended that a Bible translation team allocate to the Aighon area. Local leaders can use the Aighon language to reach others that have not been evangelized. A translation team was allocated in 2004.	
Items For Prayer	For the Aighon Christians, that God would strengthen their witness and use them to reach the others in the language area. Pray that God would send translators to the Aighon area soon. (Answered in 2004) Pray that God would prepare Aighon speakers to be committed to translation work as He calls them. Pray that the Holy Spirit would convict people of sin and bring them to an understanding of the Truth.	
<b>History Of Christianity In Group</b>		<b>Status of Christianity</b>
Year Began	After WWII	
By Whom	Roman Catholic Church	
Significant Events	Anglican church began at Menpa, Au, and Givereng between 1954 and 1960. Around 1980, SSEC missionaries began evangelization in the north of the language group at Leim, Aparas, and Asirim. SSEC missionary Helen Held worked in the Aighon language area from that time for about twenty years, evangelizing and establishing churches. Jehovah's Witness, Seventh Day Adventist, and Assemblies of God have made unsuccessful attempts to work in the Aighon area.	
<b>Scripture</b>		<b>Status of Christianity</b>
Translation Status	In Progress	
Available Scripture	None	
Other Forms Of Gospel Available: Literature	no	
Other Forms Of Gospel Available: Recordings	NP	
Other Forms Of Gospel Available: Film/Videos	no	
Other Forms Of Gospel Available: Radio	no	
<b>Missions and Churches</b>		<b>Status of Christianity</b>
Organization Name	South Seas Evangelical Church	
Year Started	1980-2000	
Number Of Adherents	1200	
Number Of Congregations	13	
Number Of Expatriate Workers	24	

## The Aighon of Papua New Guinea

<b>Item Name</b>	<b>Item Note</b>
Organization Name	Roman Catholic Church
Year Started	1940s or 1950s
Number Of Adherents	60
Number Of Congregations	1
Organization Name	Anglican
Year Started	1950s
Number Of Adherents	600
Number Of Congregations	6
Number Of National Workers	4 workers of all kinds
Organization Name	Lutheran
Number Of Adherents	30
Number Of Congregations	1