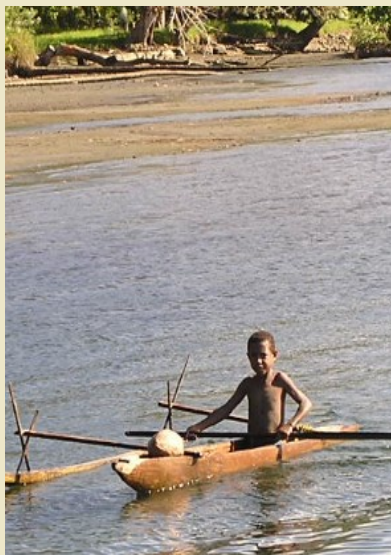


## The Wagawaga of Papua New Guinea



The Wagawaga people of Papua New Guinea live on the shoreline across the bay from Alotau in Milne Bay Province. Their staple foods include sweet potatoes and yams from their gardens, supplemented with leafy greens from the gardens and fish from the bay. The Wagawaga people also occasionally hunt for animals such as pig and cuscus in the bush. They cook most of their food in coconut milk, which is made by squeezing shredded coconut in water.

Due to the presence of a nearby timber company, many people build their houses of lumber off-cuts that they buy inexpensively from the company. Those that do not use lumber build their houses with wood and palm tree materials. Some people have running water as well. Houses are organized into small family blocks called hamlets, each consisting of only a few houses. Most of the hamlets are located on or near the shore and some are also located further inland. The hamlets together form four different communities: Wagawaga, Gatupa'ana, Bwadabwada and Dawadawa.

The Wagawaga people primarily speak their own vernacular language, also called Wagawaga. Most people speak some English as well, which they learn in school, and many are able to understand neighboring languages to a degree.

Circa 1918 the Kwato church, the largest denomination in the area, was brought to various points on the mainland, including Wagawaga. The churches were non-operational during WWII, at which time people were forced to move out of Wagawaga. After the end of the war, the people moved back and the church reopened.

Many Wagawaga people profess Christianity and some attend church. However, there appears to be a lack of understanding of the gospel among those professing Christianity. There is a need for God's word to be translated into Wagawaga.

**Primary Religion:**

Christianity

**Disciples (Matt 28:19):**

75%

**Churches:**

4

**Scripture Status (Matt 28:20):**

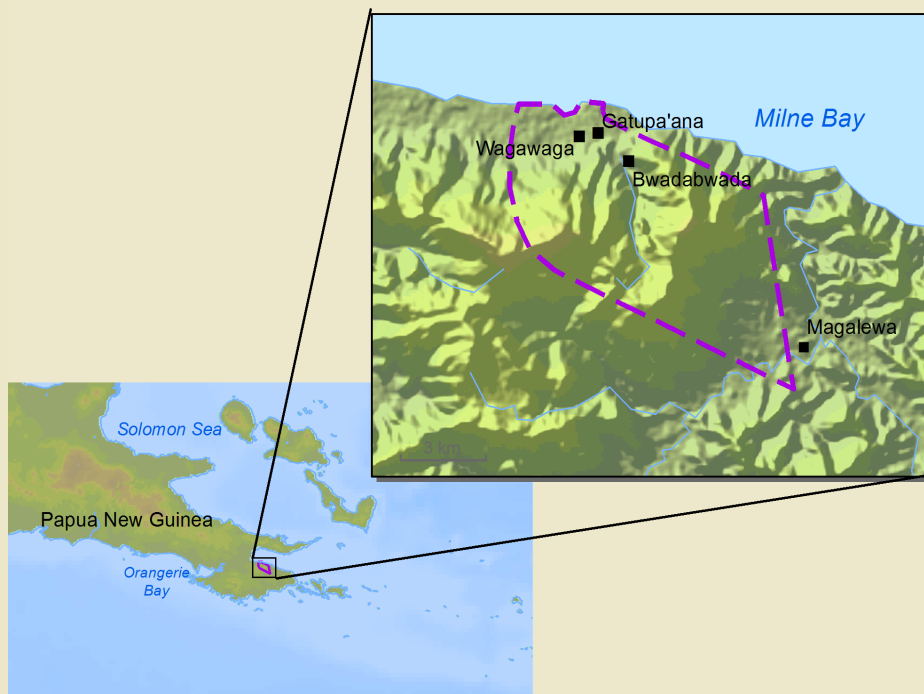
None

**Population (date):**

605 (2000)



### WAGAWAGA HOMELAND



## The Wagawaga of Papua New Guinea

### Have They Heard The Gospel?

Call Themselves Christian Comment	95% It was reported that almost everyone calls him or herself a Christian.
Believe In Jesus As God And Only Savior	75%
Have Not Heard Who Jesus is	0%
Believe in Their Local Traditional Religion	It was reported that some people in the area practice witchcraft or sorcery. It was also reported that some people are afraid of spirits, especially after someone has died. Obtaining a count for the amount of people that believe in the local traditional religion is difficult since most people do not talk about the subject.
How Have They Responded To The Gospel?	Many call themselves Christians and also attend church. It was reported that there are some that continue to hold onto their traditional local religion as well.
Attitude to Christianity Comment	Somewhat receptive There are midweek Bible studies at the Kwato church, which are well attended. It was observed that the Bible study is based on the message of the gospel.
Attitude to Religious Change	Somewhat receptive
Number Of Pastors Comment	5 There are two pastors in the Kwato church in Wagawaga, one pastor at the Revival church and one pastor at the Revival Centers International (RCI) church. There is also one Catholic priest in Daio. Each of the churches has at least three lay workers.
Number of Missionaries Comment	2 The Revival Centers International has a missionary that travels to the different churches in the area, and the priest at Daio is also a missionary.
Number Of Churches Comment	4 There is one Kwato, one Revival Centres International (RCI) and one Revival Church inside the Wagawaga language area. There is also a Roman Catholic church in Daio that some people from Wagawaga attend.
Number Of Communities Comment	4 Wagawaga, Gatupa'ana, Bwadabwada and Dawadawa

## The Wagawaga of Papua New Guinea

---

### History of Christianity

Year began

1918

By Whom

Kwato Church

Significant Events

The Kwato Church was established in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century by Charles William Abel. Abel arrived in New Guinea as part of the London Missionary Society (LMS), but due to disagreements between himself and LMS, they parted ways and Abel founded the Kwato Church. The Kwato Mission's headquarters were on Kwato Island, near Samarai. From there, the message of the church was spread to the surrounding areas. The Roman Catholic Church arrived in the 1950s followed by the Revival Centres International and the Revival Church in 1999 and 2002, respectively.

Is The Word Of God Translated?

No

Other Forms of Gospel Presentations Available

People have access to a Christian radio program and the Bible in English.

Hindrances to Scripture Distribution

The Wagawaga people do not have the Scriptures in their first language. There is a Bible in Suau, which is in the same family of languages, but it is reported to be a poor translation and most Wagawaga people do not understand Suau. Otherwise, people use the Bible in English, but bilingualism is such that a Bible in English does not serve the general Wagawaga population well.

Are Cross-Cultural Missionaries Needed?

Bible translation, Bible teaching

## The Wagawaga of Papua New Guinea

---

### Group Description

#### Geography & Environment

Coastal rainforest

#### Language/Linguistics

Percent Monolingual . 2

#### Literacy

Literacy Attitude

Somewhat receptive

Comment

People in Wagawaga village are highly receptive to literacy and education. However, people in Bwadabwada are much less receptive to literacy and education, as seen in the lower school attendance as compared to Wagawaga village.

Adult Literacy Percentage

91%

Percent Literate for Men

89%

Percent Literate for Women

94%

Active Literacy Program

Yes

Comment

Elementary school with instruction in Wagawaga and English. Children learn to read in Wagawaga first and then English.

#### Economics

Subsistence Type

Hunter-gatherers

Comment

Also fishermen but primarily farmers

Income Sources

Copra, betelnut, fish .

Trade Partners

Produce is sold at the market in the Yaleba language area.

Modernization / Utilities

Modern-style permanent houses, running water (only in Wagawaga village), hurricane lamps, Coleman lamps, stereos, and tools for building and carving canoes such as planes, hammers and saws. A few people also have privately owned dinghies with outboard engines. There are also a few generators in the area.

Comment Economy

Self-sustaining economy. They grow most of their food and they purchase items and pay for school from the income that they make from copra, betelnut and fish.

#### Community Development

Health Care

Good

Comment

People go to the local Catholic health centre at Daio, a Tawala speaking area. The health centre has a maternity ward and outpatient ward. Nurses from Daio Health Center regularly visit the villages and hold baby clinics there.

## The Wagawaga of Papua New Guinea

---

Diet	Good
Comment	They eat sweet potatoes, yams and vegetable greens from their gardens as well as fish from the bay.
Water	Good
Comment	Some people in Wagawaga village have running water, but others in Wagawaga and people in Magalewa (Dawadawa inland), Gatupa'ana and Bwadabwada get their water from streams.
Shelter Description	Many people use off-cuts of wood from the local sawmill, fibro walls, and sheets of iron to build their houses. Others use traditional materials including wood for the infrastructure, sago bark for the walls, sago leaves for the roof and split black palm for the floors. The average household size is 7 people. .
Electricity	Only a few people have generators or solar panels. .
Energy/Fuel	Fair
Comment	They use kerosene for hurricane and Coleman lamps, wood for cooking, and petrol for generators and dinghies.
Clothing	Clothing from second-hand stores in Alotau
Transportation	People use locally owned diesel boats or dinghies to get across the bay to Alotau or to Samarai. There is also a public motor vehicle (PMV) that runs locally. People typically walk from village to village.
Infant Mortality Rate	5%
Life Expectancy	66
Leading Cause of Death	Malaria
<b><u>Society &amp; Culture</u></b>	
Family Structures	People belong to a nuclear family. A family lives together in a small hamlet on their own plot of land, which is given to them by the larger clan. Land can only be passed down to children belonging to the larger clan. Various hamlets together make up the larger village. Families are matrilineal; when a man gets married he moves to his wife's area.
Neighbor Relations	Amiable with some tension between Wagawaga and Yaleba, but apparently little tension if any with Tawala-speaking neighbors.
Authority / Rule	The male is the head of the household. Councilors and church leaders are the recognized leaders of the community.

## The Wagawaga of Papua New Guinea

---

Social Habits/Groupings	Clans composed of small families living separate in hamlets.
Cultural Change Pace Comment	Medium Most people have accepted various cultural changes. However, some traditions that were lost in the 1960s and 70s are now being revived, including war canoe races and traditional dancing
Identification With National Culture	Similar
Self Image	Neutral
Judicial/Punishment System	People are tried before the village court. Large offenses are taken to the court in Alotau.
Recreations	Bible study, chewing betelnut, and soccer.
Art Forms	Constructing, carving and painting canoes
Attitude to Change	Somewhat receptive
Attitude to Outsiders.	Somewhat receptive
History of Group People	Although the Wagawaga people are presently living on the coast, it has not always been so. They used to live in the mountains inland from the coast where they are presently living. The mountains served as a safeguard from enemies. When the government came through in the late 1800s, the Wagawaga people were forced to move out to the coast, where they now reside. During WWII the Wagawaga people were forced to move to other various areas because their land was being used by the allied forces as a military base. Following the end of the war, they were able to move back to their land on the coast, where they now reside.

### Youth

Labor and tasks (6-12 year olds)	Haul water, wash dishes and take care of siblings.
Youth Problems	Teen pregnancy, marijuana, and alcohol.

### Education

Primary Schools Comment	2 There is one elementary school, which includes elementary prep and grades 1 and 2, and there is one primary school that has grades 3 to 8. However, during the 2005 school year grade 4 was not offered. Some children that live in Bwadabwada attend primary school in Daio, where instruction is in Tawala and English. A few children from Magalewa attend a Tawala speaking school.
Primary School Enrollment Comment	130 41 in the elementary school and 89 (Wagawaga speakers) in the primary school.

## The Wagawaga of Papua New Guinea

---

Total Number of Teachers	8
Comment	Not all the teachers speak Wagawage.
Language of Instruction Early Years	Wagawaga, English
Language of Textbook Early Years	English
Language of Instruction Later Years	English and some Wagawaga
Language of Textbook Later Years	English
Comment	Children begin learning in Wagawaga in elementary school with English being introduced later. In primary school, teachers use mostly English and those that speak Wagawaga may also use it in class. Not all teachers are Wagawaga speakers.
Number of Schools Greater Than 90 % Homogeneous	1
Comment	Wagawaga Elementary School is linguistically homogeneous but the primary school has 30 students from other languages. Although no secondary education is offered in Wagawaga, students may attend one of various high schools in Alotau or one or the other high schools in Milne Bay.



## The Wagawaga of Papua New Guinea

### Status of Christianity

#### Religion Population Percent

Religion

Comment

Doubly professing

Most people call themselves Christians. It was reported that some have also retained their traditional beliefs with some continuing to practice witchcraft or sorcery even though they profess to be Christian. It was also reported that because of their continued belief in traditional religion, some people fear spirits, especially after someone has died.

#### Church Growth

Total Baptized

Comment

95%

The number given above reflects the three churches within the Wagawaga area, but not the catholic church in Daio, where some people from Bwadabwada attend.

Lay Leaders

0

Bible Schools

Comment

0

There are no Bible schools inside Wagawaga. It is not a requirement for leaders in the Kwato Church to receive training to become a leader in the local church.

Christian Clinics/Hospitals

There is a Catholic health centre in Daio, the neighboring Tawala speaking village.

Comment Church Growth

There is a Bible study that takes place in the Kwato church that seems to be vibrant and is focused on the message of the gospel.

#### Religion and Response

Spiritual Climate and Openness

Most people have accepted Christianity. It was reported that some continue to practice their traditional religion and that some people fear spirits, especially after someone has died.

#### Scripture

Scripture Use

Comment

Individuals and some churches

Individuals and churches use Scripture in English and Suau, but the Suau translation, which was translated by the Kwato missionaries when they first came to the area, is considered a poor translation. Many people who use Scripture in English are not able to understand it well.

Reason for Urgent Need of

Translation

Most Wagawaga speakers do not understand Scripture well in English.



## The Wagawaga of Papua New Guinea

---

### Missions and Churches

Organization 1	Kwato Church
Country of Origin	Papua New Guinea
Main Ministry	Evangelism
Year Started	1918
Number of Adherents	50
Number of Congregations	1
Number of Local Workers	3
Number of Workers Using Local Language	3
Language Used by Local Workers	Wagawaga and English
Organization 2	Revival Church
Country of Origin	Papua New Guinea
Main Ministry	Evangelism
Year Started	2002
Number of Adherents	55
Number of Congregations	1
Number of Local Workers	3
Number of Workers Using Local Language	3
Language Used by Local Workers	Wagawaga and English
Organization 3	Revival Centers International
Country of Origin	Australia
Main Ministry	Evangelism
Year Started	1999
Number of Adherents	30
Comment	12 members attend church and some non-members also come to church.
Number of Congregations	1
Number of Expiates	1
Comment	A group of missionaries come around 3 to 4 times per year but they are not stationed in Wagawaga.
Number of Local Workers	3

## The Wagawaga of Papua New Guinea

---

Number of Local Workers	3
Number of Workers Using Local Language	3
Language Used by Local Workers	Wagawaga and English
Organization 4	Roman Catholic
Country of Origin	Australian
Main Ministry Comment	Medical Also a church
Year Started	1950s
Number of Adherents Comment	10 The number given above reflects the number of Wagawaga speakers that attend the Catholic church. The church is located in another language area and many people from this language attend the church.
Number of Congregations	1
Number of Expiates Comment	1 From Australia
Language Used by Workers	Tawala