

# Africa Inland Mission's Prayer Sheets



## Who are the Sakalava people?

The Sakalava live in western and northwest Madagascar. They are a small ethnic group, about 6.2% of the population. Related to the Antakarana, they are semi-nomadic agriculturalists and fishermen, but they keep cattle as a sign of wealth and for sacrifices. Sakalava identity focuses on respecting, honouring and working for the living and dead Sakalava royalty. They have a caste system which includes the descendants of royalty, then nobles, commoners and slaves so that everyone knows their position in society.

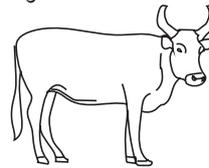
## What do they believe?

They believe in a remote, Creator God, who was the first ancestor. He can be reached through ancestral spirits and human mediums. People seek spirit possession, often amid much drunkenness and sorcery and witchcraft are rampant. Fear is a constant companion: fear of punishment, of displeasing ancestors, of death. Taboos are observed in almost everything to do with their daily life. Everything is geared towards pleasing the ancestors of the royalty.

## What is being done to reach them?

There was a TIMO team to the Sakalava from 2013-2015, during which they saw several people come to Christ. Among these new Christians were 'The Band', a Sakalava group of musicians who have been writing Bible songs in the Sakalava dialect. Rosina Ferdinand, the team leader, has continued to work among the Sakalava together with one family from the TIMO team. Four Sakalava couples who are new believers have received biblical training to equip them to evangelism among the Sakalava communities. This year, more missionaries are planning to go out and join this work.

The Sakalava keep cattle as a sign of wealth.



They are semi-nomadic but they also grow rice.



They believe that the island of Antsiranana is a sacred island where their ancestors live.



Precise hierarchies and histories of relationships with royalty are known in each social class, so everyone knows their position.



## Give thanks:

- \* For new believers among the Sakalava who have committed to Christ and been baptised!
- \* Five young men in a Sakalava music band have become believers and are growing in faith. They are recording songs and scriptures which have been translated into Sakalava.

## Please pray:

- \* Pray for the new Sakalava believers, and their witness to their families and communities. Some of the families do not understand the changes in their lives. Pray that they will continue to ask questions and that they understand and know the truth.
- \* Pray for the ministry of 'The Band' to be effective. They have recorded songs and Scripture in the local dialect which is broadcasted on the radio.
- \* For boldness for the members of the team, that they will each use their talents to share the good news.
- \* Pray that God would provide the team with a boat, so that they can take the gospel to more Sakalava villages along the beach, and with a bigger hut to gather in during the rainy season.
- \* Please pray that God will raise up faithful national missionaries from the Sakalava believers to reach out to the Sakalava in other villages and beyond.

## Who is AIM?

**Africa Inland Mission** is a missionary organisation that helps churches send gospel workers to work among African people. **TIMO (Training In Ministry Outreach)** is a two-year cross-cultural training programme to equip people for a life-time of ministry.

*If you are interested in going yourself, giving to help send gospel workers or want more prayer info, please feel free to contact us.*

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