

DARGIN

Quick Facts

- Population: 589,000+(Russia)
- Progress: 40+ Believers
- Language: Dargin
- Scripture: Matthew, Mark, and Luke completed. John, Acts, and Revelation almost completed.
- Location: Dagestan, Stavropol Krai, Kalmykia



FOR THE LAW WAS GIVEN
THROUGH MOSES; GRACE
AND TRUTH CAME THROUGH
JESUS CHRIST.
JOHN 1:17

The Dargin People of Dagestan are the second largest linguistic group of Dagestan. However, more than any other people group of Dagestan, the Dargin are really not just one group—but rather a collection of closely-related distinct language circles in south central Dagestan, which collectively are known as the Dargin (or Dargwa).

Language experts count 17 to 19 nearly mutually unintelligible languages in the Dargin sphere, and at least 40 additional named dialects within those language circles.

As a matter of fact, the very word 'Dargwa' means 'free distinct societies/communities.' In the early 20th Century, the collection of all these 'free societies (Dargwas)' became known as the greater Dargin region.



Dargin communities have maintained their ancient family structures, village assemblies and councils of elders. Though their economy is predominantly agricultural, the Dargins have developed rudimentary production and crafts such as carving, stone-working, tanning, and metal-working for weapons and tools. Many Dargin have migrated down from the more than 110 Dargin villages/towns in the mountains to lowland urban regions in Dagestan near the Caspian Sea, including to Makhachkala, the capital of Dagestan. The Dargin (along with the Avar) are considered one of the two most powerful ethnic groups of Dagestan.



Sunni Islam first arrived in the Dargwa region of Dagestan by the 8th Century, and became firmly established as the official religion by the 14th Century. The Islam of the Dargins, though, has a strongly syncretistic nature, with a substantial heritage of pre-Islamic beliefs given folk Islamic form. Pre-Islamic traditions are reflected in the rite of the first furrow--the most important and ceremonially richest Dargwa rite--also in the rites for causing and stopping rain, calling out the sun, veneration of sacred trees, and shrines of deceased holy men.

The Dargin come from a powerful ethnic tradition—indeed the very name 'Dargwa' means 'strong, free communities.'

However, bondage to superstition, violent power struggles, pervasive male drunkenness, and other endemic forms of human sin, leave this proud collection of peoples far from free. Islam brings a form of law, but not regenerative grace. Jesus' promise is, "If you continue in My word, you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free!"

(Profile Information from Joshua Project & North Caucasus Regional Partnership)

Engagement Opportunities

- Get informed - [DarginLink](#)
- Explore access strategies to serve long term in Russia
- The University language study program (Russian) remains the most effective way for foreigners to get visas and become immersed in the culture.
- Very closed to Westerners, but more open to workers from Ibero-America and Asia.

Pray

- for the Lord of the Harvest to send out workers to the Dargin.
- for God to strengthen, encourage, and protect the very small number of Dargin believers.
- for the Lord to raise up strong indigenous churches among the Dargin for the glory of His name.
- for a completed Bible translation in the Dargin language.

**Is God calling you to serve in the Caucasus?
Let us help you respond. Contact us.**