

Kraol



Population	3,000
Major Religion	Animism
Language	Kraol
Percent Christian	0%
Bible Translation	None



Who are the Kraol?

The Kraol people live on the border of Kracheh and Mondolkiri provinces. They number nearly 3,000, with most living in Kracheh. They live primarily along the banks of the Krieng River. They suffered greatly under the wars of Cambodia. At one time they were forced to adopt Khmer ways, including religion and language in an effort to “civilize” them. They were bombed during the Vietnam-American war and the Vietnamese would force them to help them carry supplies on the infamous Ho Chi Minh trail. Under the Khmer Rouge, they were heavily persecuted and forced to move into another area for growing rice. In the late 1980s the main Kraol village of Srie Chi, was burned down by the Khmer Rouge and many villagers killed. A few Bunong have married into their tribe, but they generally live among their own people and still use their own language, though most can speak Khmer fairly well.

What are their lives like?

Most of the Kraol are rice farmers and they raise cows which are sold to Khmer every year. The cows are left to graze in the jungles during the day and the brought back into the villages at night. Since the main Kraol village was recently destroyed, they have rebuilt the village in a Khmer style complete with a Wat where a few of the young people live as monks. There is basic primary education for only grades one through three, but the teachers are usually young Khmer men from Kratie town who are not used to jungle life so there are only classes for a few days each month.

The closest neighbors to the Kraol are the Mel people. They share much of the language with the T'moan people, but have a distinct dialect. The Mel

and Kraol languages are not mutually intelligible, so they converse using the Khmer language.

What do they believe?

While professing to be Buddhist because of political pressure, all the Kraol are animists and continue their animistic sacrifices. They hold annual sacrifices where they slaughter several water buffalo or cows to appease the spirits they fear. More regularly, for sicknesses or spells, they will offer chickens and pigs for sacrifices.

Celebration of Buddhist holidays is mixed with animistic wine-pot drinking and sacrifices to spirits. The Gospel has only recently come to the Kraol and most have still never heard.

What are their needs?

The Kraol have only one poor dirt road which goes to their village and only a few wells dug by an organization a few years ago, for some three thousand people. Only the main village has access to any well water. Because of their remoteness everything is expensive for them including fuel for plows, canned goods and tools. The Kraol all live along the river Krieng and there are no bridges which cross this river near where they live. There are Kraol people on both sides of the river, so crossing to the other side is difficult at any time of the year. Because of their poverty, there is no market for the food they grow and little access to medical care, education or modern infrastructure.