

The Bebe of Cameroon

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Primary Religion:

Disciples (Matt 28.19):

Churches:

Scripture Status (Matt 28.20):

None in their language

Population (date):

2,600 (2001)



Map Unavailable

The Bebe of Cameroon

Item Name	Item Note	
Have They Heard The Gospel?		Profile Summary
Call Themselves Christian (%)	20%	
Believe In The Local Traditional Religion (%)	90%	
Number Of Missionaries Working	0	
Number Of Communities	2	
Comment (Number Communities)	Two. Religiously, the two Bebe villages differ in profile. Bebe-Jama claims that the largest religious group in their village consists of followers of traditional religion and that Muslims form the next largest group. They consider the Christians to be	
Comment (Churches)	Baptist, Presbyterian, and Catholic	
Is The Word Of God Translated?	No. Definite translation need.	
Any Hinderance To Scripture Distribution?	Illiteracy, low education, relative isolation. In the survey group interviews, no opposition was expressed to the idea of Bible translation, but neither was it mentioned as the primary motivation for literacy. In Bebe-Jatto the people claim that Christians form the largest religious group among them, but in Bebe-Jama there are few Christians compared to followers of both traditional religion and Islam. Christian denominations present: Roman Catholic, Cameroon Baptist Convention, Presbyterian Church of Cameroon.	
Forms Of Gospel Presentation Available (Summary)	English and Pidgin English recordings. Recordings of the Biblical accounts might be a way to reach this people through Pidgin or through the mother tongue. No forms of Gospel presentations exist in the heart language at present.	
	NOTE: Gospel Recordings (also called Audio Gospel) may reactivate its ministry in Cameroon this year.	
What Kind Of Missionaries Are Needed?	Someone to produce recordings of Biblical accounts for this predominantly oral culture.	
Population All Countries		Group Description
World Population For This People	2,600	
World Population (Date)	2001	
Countries Where People Group Lives		Group Description
Country Name	Cameroon	
Geography & Environment		Group Description
Location	North West Province of Cameroon, near the Nigerian border.	
Country	Cameroon	
Comments (Geography & Environment)	11°E 7°N. Isolated in the hilly North West Province near the Nigerian border. Only Sabongida can be reached by vehicle and then only during the dry season when the river is low, since there is no bridge. All other locations can only be reached by trekking from one to two hours one-way.	
Language & Linguistics		Group Description
Primary Language	BEBE	
Alternate Language Names	NAAMI	
Dialects	Survey results indicate that the language is spoken with slight variation in Bebe-Jama (including Bebe-Kitte and Mayokila) and Bebe-Jatto (including Sabongida).	
Attitude Towards Mother Tongue	Very receptive	
Second Languages	KEMEZUNG	
Comment (Second Language)	The mother tongue is used daily in all principal domains of life. Cameroonian Pidgin English is the language of wider communication for the area. It is also used daily by the Bebe, especially among the youth, mainly to communicate with non-Bebe speakers. Bebe-speakers learn Kemezung and Nsari, the neighboring and most closely related of the Eastern Beboid languages, due to frequent contact with these speakers. The level of comprehension of these other languages, however, is in the marginal range. It varies with the amount of contact.	
Linguistically Related Languages	KEMEZUNG	

The Bebe of Cameroon

Item Name

Comments (Related Languages)

Item Note

Bebe-speakers learn Kemezung and Nsari, the neighboring and most closely related of the Eastern Beboid languages, due to frequent contact with these speakers. But the level of comprehension of these other languages is in the marginal range and varies with the amount of contact.

Neighboring Languages

Kemezung is spoken with slight variation in Bebe-Jama (including Bebe-Kitte and Mayokila) and Bebe-Jatto (including Sabongida).

Neighboring Languages

NSARI

Neighboring Languages

LIMBUM

Active Language Programs

KEMEZUNG

There's the possibility of a combined language development and translation project with the Kemezung language.

Literacy

Group Description

Comment (Attitude to literacy)

When asked, the people expressed a positive interest in learning to read and write their own language. They also want their children to learn it. The people of Bebe-Jama stated that they would like to be able to send a letter to a friend and have it understood. They are also open to becoming literate in Kemezung or Nsari.

Active Literacy Program

Adult literacy percentages are assumed to be low due to the low educational level. 60-75% of children attend primary school, but very few go on to secondary school due to poverty and distance.

Publications In Vernacular

No

None

Economics

Group Description

Subsistence Type

Agriculturalists

Comment (Economy)

Poor and isolated socioeconomic conditions.

Community Development

Group Description

Shelter Description

Mud brick, some thatched roofs especially in the eastern villages

Electricity

None available

Transportation

Must trek to get to the villages.

Comment (Community Development)

Agencies working among this group: unknown.

Society & Culture

Group Description

Neighbor Relations

Excellent with the neighboring language community to the south: Kemezung.

Authority / Rule

Chiefdom over each village.

Social Habits/Groupings

They communicate regularly with speakers of the neighboring language of Kemezung.

Cultural Change Pace

Static

Self Image

Depressed

Comment (Attitude To Outsiders)

The survey team was well received on both visits. Bebe-speakers have a positive attitude also toward the Kemezung language.

Attitude To Change

Somewhat receptive

Comment (Attitude To Change)

Not actively pursuing change

Education

Group Description

Comment (Primary Schools)

60-75% of children attend primary school, but very few go on to secondary school due to poverty and distance.

Comment (Education)

Very few secondary schools are available to them.

Church Growth

Status of Christianity

Bible Schools

0

Christian Clinics/Hospitals

0

Christian Literacy Centers

0

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Item Name

Comment (Church Growth)

Item Note

Religiously, the two Bebe villages differ in profile. Bebe-Jama claims that the largest religious group in their village consists of followers of traditional religion and that Muslims form the next largest group. They consider the Christians to be few. In Bebe-Jatto, however, there are many Christians and only a few Muslims and followers of traditional religion. In both villages there are three Christian denominations: Baptist, Presbyterian, and Catholic. Baptists form the largest group in Bebe-Jatto. With the exception of a Catholic catechist in Sabongida (which is a neighboring of Bebe-Jatto), we interviewed no other religious leaders in either village. So we cannot say what potential for cooperation might exist among the various Christians to translate the Bible into Bebe.

Religion & Response

Status of Christianity

Attitude To Christianity

Somewhat receptive

Current Needs

Health Clinic

Items For Prayer

Pray for spiritual growth in the church and that all Bebe-speakers will have an opportunity to understand and be reached with the Gospel. Pray that those who are Christians would remain strong in the face of African Traditional Religion.

Missions and Churches

Status of Christianity

Organization Name

Presbyterian

Organization Name

Roman Catholic Church

Organization Name

Baptist