

## The Mina of Cameroon



Sandwiched between Nigeria and Chad in a region that Cameroonians call the “Far North,” settlements of Mina clan groups dot the countryside. They spend most of their time outside in this dusty sub-Saharan Sahel, storing their limited material goods and sleeping in family huts. Isolated from reliable government services, children usually help in the fields or tend younger siblings rather than attend school. Life revolves around ritual, but few comprehend the beliefs of Islam, relying instead on traditional practices for which they use their own language.

When the short rainy season comes, Mina farmers work hard with hand tools and plows to plant and harvest what their families will eat for the rest of the year. In addition to needed vegetables and staples, some grow cotton as a cash crop. After the rains end, withering heat will scorch whatever is left in the fields.

Over several centuries, the Mina people have gradually conceded to waves of invasion pressing them to accept another world religion. Today, that faith claims a solid majority of devotees among the Mina.

Administrators are working with a local language committee that has been authorized by the government among the Mina to develop their language. The project will produce mother tongue materials, making portions of the Old Testament — also accepted by Muslims — available to Mina speakers

**Primary Religion:**

Ethnic Religion or Islam

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

0%

**Churches:**

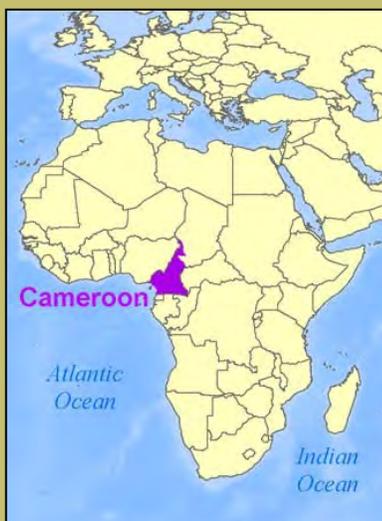
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**Scripture Status (Matt 28:20):**

None

**Population (date):**

11,000 (2000)



### MINA HOMELAND



## The Mina of Cameroon

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### Have They Heard The Gospel?

Call Themselves Christian	0 to 1%
Prophet/Good Man/ Not the Son of God	Greater than 50%
Believe in Local Traditional Religion	Greater then 50%
Response to the Gospel	Indifference. None of the Mina attend the Lutheran or Catholic church meetings in the area.
Is The Word of God Translated?	No
Hindrance to Scripture Distribution	Most Mina speakers prefer oral to written communication; literacy is not a high value.
Cross-Cultural Missionaries Needed	Probably any means to capture the attention of the people in order to build rapport with them. Use of the Mina language may be the key to evangelizing these people.

## The Mina of Cameroon

### Group Description

#### Language/Linguistics

Comment

Everyone speaks at least some Fulfulde (some very well), with the exception of a few older people. Children sometimes obtain their first exposure to Fulfulde when learning their mother tongue, but they do not gain adequate competence until they reach age fifteen. Fulfulde is viewed as a good language to speak outside the home, especially at markets and health clinics, and children are encouraged to learn it. Fulfulde is unlikely to replace the mother tongue. Mina remains a vital language. The people consider Fulfulde to be a "national language" (or, one that is widely used), and it is particularly the language of wider communication in Cameroon northern provinces. Fulfulde is used in the mosques where Arabic is used only for prayers. Mother tongue speakers communicate in Fulfulde with those who do not understand Mina. All Dzumdzum speakers, except some who are elderly, learn to speak Mina, but this does not mean that Dzumdzum speakers are shifting their primary usage from the mother tongue to Mina.

Attitude Towards Mother Tongue  
Comment

Somewhat receptive  
Fulfulde and French. Dzumdzum is learned by a few.

#### Literacy

Literacy Attitude  
Comment

Somewhat receptive  
Open to the idea of having the mother tongue taught in the early years of primary school.

Active Literacy Program  
Comment

No  
At the Catholic Center in Hina Marbak, a Catholic priest and two nuns are teaching adult literacy in French.

Publications in Mother Tongue

None, but a preliminary statement about the linguistic phonemes in Mina was written as an unpublished manuscript in 1992.

#### Society & Culture

Attitude to Outsiders

Somewhat receptive.

#### Education

Primary School Enrollment

It is extremely rare that a student enters secondary school.

Language Of Instruction Early Years

French

Language Of Textbooks Early Years  
Comment

French  
Education level is low, due to the high costs of school fees, and those who do attend rarely finish. Even fewer are able to enter secondary school.

## The Mina of Cameroon

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### Status of Christianity

#### Church Growth

Number of pastors	There is one Dazaga speaking pastor, but he isn't reaching out to his own people.
Lay Leaders	Greater than 1
Christian Literacy Centers	At the Catholic Center at Hina Marbak, two nuns and a priest teach adult literacy in French (1992). A Baptist Catechist reports reading scripture portions in the Daba language in the church service.
Comment	
Number of Missionaries Working	3
Comment	Mina people do not attend the Evangelical Lutheran or Roman Catholic churches that are in the area.

#### Religion / Response

Attitude to Christianity	Somewhat resistant
Comment	Unresponsive to the approach that people come into existing structures where church services are held.
Religious analogies and Bridges	Schools, literacy
Spiritual Climate and Openness	The community is almost entirely Muslim.
Recommended Approaches	This language will also serve as a reference for developing other related languages of the same linguistic sub-family which could have an impact on Buwal, Gavar, Tsvan, and Sharwa.

#### Scripture

Translation Status	Definite
Comment	Nothing in the mother tongue. People cannot read the Daba New Testament. Fulfulde and Daba Scripture are both available but printed in isolated cases. <b>Update 2014:</b> Work with a local language committee has been authorized by the government for the Mina to develop their language. Mother tongue materials of Old Testament portions are to be made available to Mina speakers. This could soften local resistance to the Gospel and open the door to Truth for both the translators themselves and the people group. This project could be decisive for the future of individual Mina speakers and for paradigm shifts in the culture as a whole.

#### Mission/Churches

Organization	Roman Catholic Church
Organization	Union des Eglises Baptistes du Cameround