



The Nambo of Papua New Guinea

The Nambo people occupy three villages: Arufe, Gubam, and Bebbeben. These villages are located around thirty kilometers east of Morehead.

The Nambo people cultivate gardens on the plains near the Wassi Kussa River. Their diet consists of yam, taro, sweet potato, sago, greens, fruits (such as coconuts), bananas, pineapples, and papayas. They fish and hunt deer and wallaby and raise chickens. They occasionally sell some of their garden produce, meat, and fish in Morehead.

The Nambo people build their houses on poles that are raised about six to ten feet above the ground. The roofs and walls are made of bark.

The Evangelical Church of Papua New Guinea has congregations in Arufe and Gubam (no research done in Bebbeben). Most of the people in each village would call themselves Christians, but there is a fair amount of syncretism. There is a translation in progress in Arufe village, but the people report that they are not using the Scripture portions in Nambo.

Primary Religion:

Christian

Disciples (Matt 28.19):

21%

Churches:

2

Scripture Status (Matt 28.20):

Portions

Population (date):

437 (2000)



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Item Name	Item Note	Profile Summary
Have They Heard The Gospel?		
Call Themselves Christian (%)	67%	
Comment (Call Themselves Christian)	67% in Gubam	
Believe In Jesus As God & Only Savior (%)	21%	
Have Not Heard Who Jesus is (%)	0%	
Number Of Pastors	2	
Number Of Missionaries Working	1	
Comment (Number Of Missionaries)	Graham Martin has been working from Arufe on a translation. He has since donated his home to the church. He was in Australia at the time of our visit. I don't believe he's in the village very much.	
Response To The Gospel	<p>Rapid growth, but largely nominal or syncretistic; Most of the people in each village would call themselves Christian. In the village of Arufe, 90 out of 177 have been baptized. In the village of Gubam, 81 out of 260 have been baptized. That is, 171 out of 437 Nambo have been baptized. The pastors reported that 20 from Arufe and 72 from Gubam are growing Christians.</p> <p>In 1964, Mr. and Mrs. Turaki Teauariki, from the Cook Islands, were the first missionaries to come to the Morehead area. They started work in Rouku, just west of Morehead, in Ko'mnjo language area. The people did respond to the gospel and stopped practicing some customs like burying the sick alive, women giving birth alone in the bush, and polygamy.</p> <p>In the late 1960's missionaries from Australia began the Evangelical Church of Papua New Guinea (ECPNG) in the Suki language area, north of the Nambu language area. Papua New Guinean pastors were trained there and sent south to the Nambu area.</p>	
Number Of Communities	3	
Number Of Churches	2	
Is The Word Of God Translated?	Graham Martin (ECPNG) is currently working on a translation in the Arufe village. He has completed 1&2 John, Timothy, 1&2 Peter, Colossians, and part of Genesis. They also have composed some songs in the vernacular and sing them during worship services.	
Translation Medium	Printed	
Any Hinderance To Scripture Distribution?	The Scriptures have not been well received in the Arufe village. The people report that the writing is too hard to understand. The pastor said that he is interested in helping with a new translation. The elementary coordinator in Arufe reports that there is a literacy problem in the village. Gubam residents say that they use the Scripture portions translated by Graham Martin. Good readers in Gubam reportedly have no trouble reading the translated Scripture portions.	
Forms Of Gospel Presentation Available (Summary)	Recordings	
What Kind Of Missionaries Are Needed?	There is no cross-cultural assistance occurring in the language area. Graham Martin spends only some time in the village; however, he has given them the use of his house.	
Population All Countries		Group Description
Comment (World Population)	The population is about 347, not 2,000 as the Ethnologue suggests.	
Countries Where People Group Lives		Group Description
Country Name	Papua New Guinea	
Geography & Environment		Group Description
Location	Arufe and Bebedeben are part of Pongariki ward in the Morehead Rural Local Level Government area. Gubam is part of the Bimadeben ward. They are situated thirty-three kilometers east of Morehead station.	
Country	Papua New Guinea	
Ecosystem Type	Savannahs	
Ecosystem Type	Tropical Forest	
Geological Type	Riverine	
Geological Type	Plains	
Elevation	55 meters (Arufa)	

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Item Name	Item Note
Longitude	E141 54 48.1 (Arufa)
Longitude	E141 54 35.8 (Gubam)
Latitude	S8 36 49.1 (Gubam)
Latitude	S8 45 37.8 (Arufa)
Comments (Geography & Environment)	Arufa is riverine.
Comments (Geography & Environment)	Western Province

Language & Linguistics

Group Description

Primary Language	NAMBU
Comment (Language)	Gubam reported: "Nambo is the most popular language around here. Everybody can understand it." Some of the very young children may be monolingual if both parents have come from the village.
Comment (Language)	Arufe is an alternate name for the language.
Alternate Language Names	NAMBO
Comments (Dialect)	Reported that Namna is a dialect of Nambo.
Attitude Towards Mother Tongue	Very receptive
Second Languages	Idi
Second Languages	Nama
Second Languages	Neme
Second Languages	Suki
Second Languages	Nen
Second Languages	Namna
Second Languages	Motu
Second Languages	English
Comment (Second Language)	Everyone school age or older is familiar with English and/or Motu, and/or other neighboring languages. Most of the older generation speaks Motu, most of the younger generations at least understand English, some also speak Idi and Suki. They are also familiar with Namna, Nen, Neme and Nama.
Comments (Related Languages)	Namna is 80% lexically cognate with Nambo.
Neighboring Languages	BINAHARI
Neighboring Languages	NEN
Comments (Neighbor Languages)	NAMNA is a neighboring language to the west of the Nambu area.
Corrections To Ethnologue Entry	Should be Nambo, not Nambu. The population is 347, not 2,000. It is likely that Namna (NCM1) is a dialect of Nambo.

Literacy

Group Description

Adult Literacy Percentage	72%
Percent Literate For Men	Arufe: 84.1%; Gubam: 91%; Bebbeben: 73%
Percent Literate For Women	Arufe: 64.8%; Gubam: 69%; Bebbeben: 47%
Literacy Attitude	Very receptive
Active Literacy Program	No
Publications In Vernacular	1 & 2 John, Timothy, 1 & 2 Peter, Colossians, part of Genesis, song book, literacy book
Comment (Literacy)	Adult literacy, village by village: Arufe: 75%, Gubam: 79%, Bebbeben: 60%. The Arufe elementary teacher reported that there is a "literacy problem" there. The primary school teacher in Arufe reported that "few" men are literate in Nambu, Motu and English. The elementary teacher reported that "most" men are literate. Both reported that "few" women are literate in English, very few in Nambu, Tok Pisin and Motu.

Economics

Group Description

Subsistence Type	Fishers
Subsistence Type	Agriculturalists

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Item Name	Item Note
Average Annual Income	Very minimal. They reported that they do sometimes sell meat, fish, baskets, and mats in Morehead. They eat what they fish, hunt, and grow in their gardens, and their homes are made entirely of bush materials.
Occupation	Gardening, fishing, hunting
Income Sources	They sometimes sell meat, fish, baskets and mats.
Products / Crafts	Baskets and mats
Trade Partners	Neighboring villages: Suki, Idi, Derideri, Pongariki. Marriage exchange with Tais, Bimadeben, Gubam, Derideri, Pongariki, Bebdoben, Arufe, Keru, sometimes Mata and Ngaraita.
Modernization / Utilities	A few tin roofs, radios, generator, tools, lamps, saw, nails
Comment (Economy)	Arufa residents are fishers.
Comment (Economy)	They have very little access to or money for outside things (western goods).

Community Development

Group Description

Comment (Health Care)	The village of Gubam has an aid post, but no orderly is there. An aid post is also in Arufe. It has not been staffed for the last 4 years, and the closest health center is in Morehead, a one day walk or three hour bike ride.
Diet (Quality)	Fair
Comment (Diet)	Cassava, yam, taro, sego, papaya, pineapple, some venison, and fish
Water (Quality)	Fair
Comment (Water)	There was a shallow, fairly muddy creek for bathing and wells used for drinking water; however, they did mention that water was a bit low. We had trouble filling our water bottles.
Shelter Description	Homes are made of bark. They usually have one or two bedrooms and a main room.
Electricity	No electricity
Clothing	They buy secondhand clothing in town. A few people wear shoes. Some wear sandals.
Transportation	Walking and biking

Society & Culture

Group Description

Family Structures	A family unit typically consists of mother, father and several children.
Neighbor Relations	Amiable. They have marriage exchange with neighboring language groups, and it is reported that when disputes arise they come together and talk things through.
Authority / Rule	Clan leaders
Social Habits/Groupings	Clans
Cultural Change Pace	Slow
Judicial / Punishment System	When there is some kind of dispute, the village comes together for village court. They talk things out and come to a decision.
Celebrations	Weddings, funerals, pig exchanges, harvest, church openings, Christmas, New Year, namesakes, Independence, sister exchange
Art Forms	Woven baskets and mats
Media	None
Local Language Broadcasting	None
Attitude To Outsiders	Somewhat receptive

Education

Group Description

Primary Schools	3
Primary School Enrollment	144
Secondary School Enrollment	3
Percent Of Eligible Students Enrolled	100% (Arufe elementary school)
Teacher To Pupil Ratio	1:23 elementary (Gubam elementary)
Teacher To Pupil Ratio	1:24 (Arufe primary)
Teacher To Pupil Ratio	1:12 (Arufe elementary)

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Item Name	Item Note
Language Of Instruction Early Years	Nambo
Language Of Instruction Early Years	English
Language Of Textbooks Early Years	Nambo
Language Of Textbooks Early Years	English
Comment (Education)	English and Nambo are the languages of instruction in the Arufe elementary school. English is the language of instruction in the Arufe primary school. Nambo is the language of instruction in the Gubam elementary school.
Comment (Education)	There is an elementary school (EP, E2) and a primary school in Arufe. The elementary school has 12 students. The elementary school (EP, E1, E2) in Gubam has 23 students. The Gubam primary school closed because there was no teacher. Three students from Gubam are currently enrolled in high school.
Comment (Education)	Many families find it difficult to pay school fees. Some students have problems keeping their grades up. Some students are prone to fight.
Comment (Education)	There are Nambo language textbooks in the Arufe elementary school and English language textbooks in the Arufe primary school.

Church Growth

Status of Christianity

Reached Classification	Evangelized
Total Baptized	92
Lay Leaders	1
Comment (Church Growth)	There is one pastor in Arufe, and one other pastor works in Gubam. There is also a helping pastor in Gubam.
Comment (Church Growth)	20 from the Arufe village and 72 from the village of Gubam are growing Christians.

History Of Christianity In Group

Status of Christianity

Year Began	1969
By Whom	Mr. Lindsey came from Suki. Later Graham Martin came from Australia.
Significant Events	1985-1986 revival

Scripture

Status of Christianity

Translation Status	In Progress
Available Scripture	Portions
Form Of Scripture Available	Printed
Scripture Use	Individuals & some churches
Comment (Scripture)	Residents of Gubam report Scripture use in church services. Residents of Arufe report no Scripture use. Arufe residents feel that the writing is too hard to understand. The elementary coordinator says that this is a literacy problem.
Other Forms Of Gospel Available: Literature	No
Other Forms Of Gospel Available: Recordings	Yes. Global Recordings (Gospel Recordings?) recorded several songs and short messages in Nambo. The recording is titled "Words of Life".
Other Forms Of Gospel Available: Film/Videos	No
Other Forms Of Gospel Available: Radio	No

Missions and Churches

Status of Christianity

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Item Name	Item Note
Organization Name	Evangelical Church of Papua New Guinea (see APCM)
Year Started	1969
Mission Agency Type Of Organization?	No
Denominational Type Of Organization?	Yes
Number Of Adherents	171
Number Of Congregations	2
Number Of Expatriate Workers	0
Number Of National Workers	unknown
Number Of Local Workers	3
Number Of Workers Using Local Language	3