

The Buduma of Chad

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Lake Chad is known for its immense clumps of floating grass that block passageways and make travel difficult. The islands of Lake Chad, located at the southern end of the Sahara Desert are home to the Buduma people, whose name means people of the grasses. When the colonizers came promoting western education, the Buduma hid their children to keep them away from the “infidels”. Now many adults see the value of education and wish they had gone to school.

The primary religion is Islam and there are no churches for the Buduma's. In the 1960s and 1970s, there was a medical mission on the lake. People were happy to accept their medical help, but not their message. These missionaries asked SIL to do linguistic work among the Buduma. In 1995 a primer was made and people began to learn to read.

Those who have learned are delighted someone cared enough to put their language into writing. They have begun writing letters to one another and to the radio station in the capital city. Still, they are wary of anything connected with the church. Some have asked for schools to be started in their villages, but it's hard to find teachers willing to come and stay in these isolated villages for a whole school year. Many people can learn to read in their own language in just three months.

Besides the primer, the SIL linguists, Louise McKone and Margareta Karlsson, have been making bilingual books so that those who have learned to read in their own language can learn French, as many have asked for this. They have trained those who learned to read that they can teach others. Primer classes have been held in 55 villages, but there are more than 800 villages in all. Louise and Margareta have made several easy-reading books. They would like to work on Bible translation if they could find people who are interested.

Primary Religion:

Islam

Disciples (Matt 28.19):

0.016%

Churches:

10

Scripture Status (Matt 28.20):

Portions

Population (date):

56,000 in Chad (1993)



Map Unavailable

The Buduma of Chad

Item Name	Item Note	
Have They Heard The Gospel?		Profile Summary
Call Themselves Christian (%)	0.1%	
Believe In Jesus As God & Only Savior (%)	0.016%	
Prophet/Good Man, But Not God's Son (%)	50%	
Believe In The Local Traditional Religion (%)	90%	
Have Not Heard Who Jesus is (%)	90%	
Number Of Pastors	1	
Comment (Pastors)	One in Nigeria.	
Number Of Missionaries Working	14	
Comment (Number Of Missionaries)	4 expatriate missionaries and 10 national pastors from other people groups	
Response To The Gospel	<p>There are no Buduma churches. There are maybe 10 churches in the area. The pastors/evangelists do not speak the language of the Buduma, nor do they necessarily reach out to them.</p> <p>They have responded with some curiosity mixed with fear that they would be criticized or ostracized if others knew they were interested. A few have sought to use the Bible as a standard by which to measure the Christians and find them wanting.</p>	
Number Of Communities	There are more than 800 Buduma villages.	
Number Of Churches	10	
Comment (Churches)	No Buduma churches. Around 10 churches are in the area for other ethnic groups. There is only one pastor for this people group in Nigeria.	
Is The Word Of God Translated?	Part of Genesis and all of Luke are in draft form presently, but none are available to the public.	
Any Hinderance To Scripture Distribution?	The literacy rate is 2% and a government evaluator said that though translation may proceed, scripture may not be distributed like secular materials. Islamic Council.	
Forms Of Gospel Presentation Available (Summary)	Gospel Recordings did a cassette some 20 or 30 years ago. Other forms include about 25 copies of literature, the NT in Kanuri of Nigeria and Jesus film, the NT in Chadian-Algerian Arabic, portions in Chadian Arabic and Jesus film, the Bible in Hausa, portions on cassette in Kanembu. Possibly 70% of the population could understand one or another of these, particularly the Kanembu.	
What Kind Of Missionaries Are Needed?	<p>They would be happy to receive medical and veterinary help from missionaries, but have been told by Muslim leaders not to listen to the gospel or go to church. Many would like help to learn French or English.</p> <p>If churches were to be started, pastor training would be necessary, but this is not a felt need of the people.</p>	
Population All Countries		Group Description
World Population For This People	58,800	
World Population (Date)	1993	
World Population (Urban Percent)	0.1%	
Comment (World Population)	58,800 in all countries, according to Ethnologue. However, the 1993 Census reported 56,000 in Chad. (Ethnologue lists 3,000 in Nigeria and 200 in Cameroon.)	
Countries Where People Group Lives		Group Description
Country Name	Cameroon	
Country Name	Chad	
Country Name	Nigeria	
Geography & Environment		Group Description
Location	Lake Chad, at the southern end of the Sahara Desert.	
Country	Chad	
Ecosystem Type	Desert	
Geological Type	Other	
Longitude	15 E	
Latitude	13 N	

The Buduma of Chad

Item Name	Item Note	
Climate	Hot and dry with rainy season July-Sept.	
Comments (Geography & Environment)	The altitude is quite low and flat and many of the islands are sand dunes.	
Language & Linguistics		Group Description
Primary Language	BUDUMA	
Comment (Language)	They like their language, but they are aware that it is less used than Kanembu and Arabic.	
Comment (Alternate Names)	It is called "Kuri" on the shores of Lake Chad.	
Comments (Dialect)	One called southern is spoken in the southeast part of the lake. Another called northern is spoken in the north and west. In the center, people's speech has some characteristics of the southern and some of the northern.	
Attitude Towards Mother Tongue	Very receptive	
Percent Monolingual (%)	10%	
Second Languages	Kanembu - 70%	
Other Mother Tongues Of This Group	KANEMBU	
Comment (On Other Mother Tongues)	They like their language, but are aware that it is less used than Kanembu and Arabic	
Comments (Related Languages)	The Kanembu and the Buduma have much shared vocabulary, but different grammar, different language families	
Neighboring Languages	DAZA	
Comments (Neighbor Languages)	Kanembu-Kanuri, Shuwa Arabic, Kotoko, Hausa	
Active Language Programs	Yes	
Literacy		Group Description
Comment (Attitude to literacy)	Men and boys like it. Women and girls find it hard.	
Active Literacy Program	Yes	
Comment (Active Literacy Program)	Education is available only a few months per year, as the budget for paying teachers is limited.	
Publications In Vernacular	22 titles	
Comment (Literacy)	Literacy classes started in 1995 and a primer has been taught in 75 villages.	
Economics		Group Description
Subsistence Type	Fishers	
Comment (Subsistence Type)	This people group is reported to be fishers, farmers and pastoralists.	
Average Annual Income	\$250	
Occupation	Farming, cattle raising, and fishing.	
Income Sources	Nigeria, and Mecca.	
Products / Crafts	Weaving raffia mats and baskets.	
Trade Partners	Nigeria, the Kanembu and Daza and Arabs.	
Modernization / Utilities	Very few have a generator, a motor-pump for irrigation, or a motorboat.	
Community Development		Group Description
Health Care (Quality)	Poor	
Comment (Health Care)	Many live far from a doctor, and travel is difficult. Many are ignorant of basic prevention practices.	
Diet (Quality)	Fair	
Comment (Diet)	Fish is available, but people are unaware of the need to have a balanced diet. Very few have planted fruit trees, though it would be possible with the lake water.	
Water (Quality)	Poor	
Comment (Water)	Many drink lake water without boiling it.	
Shelter Description	Mostly reed huts. Those who go fishing or follow their cattle have a mosquito net.	
Electricity	Hardly any Buduma have electricity.	

The Buduma of Chad

Item Name	Item Note
Energy/Fuel (Quality)	Fair
Comment (Energy)	Wood fires, flashlights, some have a Chinese tempest lamp.
Clothing	Well-covered, including veil for women.
Transportation	Walk, swim, canoe, rent a seat in a motorboat, and donkey. Rarer some have a horse or camel and rent a place on a truck.
Leading Cause Of Death	Hygiene related illnesses.
Society & Culture	Group Description
Family Structures	Men may have up to four wives in different villages. Thus there are many households where women have full responsibility for the family. Often, even if a man has only one wife, he is absent much of the time. The divorce rate is high, and marital fidelity is rare.
Neighbor Relations	Solidarity is important at times of baby naming ceremonies, marriages, deaths, and religious rites. People will work together for awhile for a common goal.
Authority / Rule	Under the traditional hierarchy The Chef de Canton (sultan) has zone chiefs, village chiefs, and land managers under him. They hear civil cases and fine wrong doers. The official hierarchy is the Governor, Department Secretary (Prefet), Sous-Prefet, Mayor, with gendarmes. They hear criminal cases. Many of these people don't stay long in one locality. There are religious leaders also who influence people.
Social Habits/Groupings	The Buduma are divided into some large clans which are then divided into smaller clans. People of different groups live side-by-side and interact daily.
Cultural Change Pace	Slow
Identification With National Culture	Distinct
Self Image	Depressed
Comment (Self Image)	They may feel a bit inferior, but most don't realize how far behind they are
Judicial / Punishment System	If anyone is ever put in prison, it's not for very long. Fines are common.
Celebrations	Religious holidays are observed as well as baby naming ceremonies, marriages, funerals, and visits of important people.
Recreations	Wrestling and playing cards.
Art Forms	Crafts: weaving baskets, fans, and mats.
Local Language Broadcasting	< 20 minutes daily
Comment (Local Language Broadcasting)	The news is on the radio 20 min. per day, but it's often not easy to hear.
Comment (Attitude To Outsiders)	They want outsiders to become one of them
Attitude To Change	Somewhat resistant
Comment (Attitude To Change)	If it brings in easy money, it's welcome. Otherwise, they would be somewhat resistant.
Youth	Group Description
Labor and tasks (6-12 year olds)	Fetching water, minding the baby, pounding corn, learning to cook, gardening, and watching the flock.
Youth Problems (Teens)	Not enough parental guidance or good role models.
Youth Greatest Needs (teens)	Vocational and relational guidance, to learn responsibility and empowerment.
Education	Group Description
Primary Schools	44
Comment (Primary Schools)	In the Sous-prefecture of Bol.
Comment (Primary School Enrollment)	There are 1,965 girls, 3,919 boys, which includes all the ethnic groups. The Kanembu and children of government workers in Bol make up more than half of this total. Of these, 884 girls and 1,577 boys are in first year.
Secondary Schools	6
Secondary School Enrollment	In Bol : 993, in the others combined : 303.
Percent Of Eligible Students Enrolled	Estimated 'scolarisable' 27,000. This makes .5%, but this includes all ethnic groups in the area, so if one considered just the Buduma, the figure would be less than half of that.
Teacher To Pupil Ratio	1:70

The Buduma of Chad

Item Name	Item Note	
Language Of Instruction Early Years	French	
Language Of Textbooks Early Years	French	
Comment (Language Of Instruction)	ARABIC is another language of instruction.	
Comment (Language Of Textbook)	ARABIC is another language of textbooks.	
Number Of Schools > 90% Homogeneous	5	
Comment (Education)	One complete secondary school (in Bol) and 5 junior high schools in the area.	
Church Growth		Status of Christianity
Reached Classification	Unevangelized	
Total Baptized	Less than 1%	
Lay Leaders	0	
Bible Schools	0	
Comment (Christian Clinics/Hospitals)	There used to be 5 in the 1970s. Now there is only one.	
Comment (Christian Literacy Center)	SIL conducts secular literacy classes at a center in Bol and in villages	
Religion & Response		Status of Christianity
Religious Practices & Ceremonies	5 pillars. Some boys go to study in Nigeria and also learn some ways of earning some money, so this is valued. Girls are taught to pray in the home. Very few can read the Koran with understanding, or if they understand some parts, they don't understand others. They also hear stories about Mahamat which are not in the Koran.	
Attitude To Christianity	Very resistant	
Attitude To Religious Change	Very resistant	
Resistance / Receptivity	Some young people who go to school are beginning to recognize prejudice in their elders. Some older people are aware that they missed out on some things by not going to school.	
Religious Analogies & Bridges	'Diya': If someone from one ethnic group kills someone from another ethnic group, all the members of the first group contribute to pay for the death in order to avoid war. The bridges that people cite for Islam are also useful.	
Spiritual Climate And Openness	In some cases, people have asked the church to pray for sick relatives.	
Comment (Religion)	Before colonization, the Buduma sometimes took southern Chadians as slaves, so these southerners who have become Christians are still looked down upon. This could change in the next generation, as quite a few school teachers are southerners. However, if Arabophone teachers become available, they may abandon the French-speaking schools in favor of the Arabic ones. It is reported there are 4 expatriate missionaries, perhaps 5 national workers, and 0 local workers. Some non-Buduma government workers posted in the area are Christians.	
Recommended Approaches	Dedicated Chadian Christian teachers, preferably from the Guera (central region of Chad), who would be a model for the young people.	
Current Needs	Many will probably die in the next few years of AIDS, but at this point, people are not too concerned about it, as people often die of cholera, tuberculosis, meningitis, malaria, typhoid, and other illnesses.	
Items For Prayer	Pray that young people who are going to school now would catch the vision to choose teaching as a career. Pray that they develop a sense of responsibility for helping their own people. Pray that God would break down the resistance to Christianity and awaken in them a desire to know Him. Pray that they would then have the opportunity to learn what they need to know. Pray for Christians who are posted to work in the area to have a good attitude and lifestyle that would attract others to Christ.	
History Of Christianity In Group		Status of Christianity
Year Began	1970's	
By Whom	Swiss missionaries connected with what are now TEAM and EEMET.	
Significant Events	They had a medical mission, but had to leave in 1979. TEAM people returned to Bol in 1989.	
Comments (History of Christianity)	There were a few converts resulting from missions in the 1970s.	

The Buduma of Chad

Item Name	Item Note	Status of Christianity
Scripture		Status of Christianity
Available Scripture	Portions	
Form Of Scripture Available	Printed	
Comment (Form of Scripture Available)	The printed Scripture is for private use only.	
Scripture Use	Private use only	
Other Forms Of Gospel Available: Literature	Part of Genesis, all of Luke soon to be available.	
Other Forms Of Gospel Available: Recordings	One Gospel Recordings cassette in Buduma, and a cassette series in Kanembu.	
Other Forms Of Gospel Available: Film/Videos	No, not in Buduma.	
Other Forms Of Gospel Available: Radio	No	
Missions and Churches		Status of Christianity
Organization Name	Roman Catholic Church	
Main Ministry	Church Planting	
Year Started	1960	
Number Of Adherents	200	
Number Of Workers Using Local Language	0	
Organization Name	Église Évangélique du Togo, Tchad	
Main Ministry	Church Planting	
Year Started	1960's, perhaps	
Number Of Adherents	200	
Number Of Congregations	Maybe 5	
Number Of Workers Using Local Language	0	
Organization Name	The Evangelical Alliance Mission	
Main Ministry	Church Planting	
Year Started	1989	
Number Of Adherents	3	
Language Used By Workers	Kanembu	
Organization Name	Seventh-day Adventists	
Main Ministry	Church Planting	
Year Started	2002	
Number Of Workers Using Local Language	0	
Organization Name	> UNLISTED Organization #1	
UNLISTED Organization Name	Deeper Life Church	
Main Ministry	Church Planting	
Year Started	1998	
Number Of Workers Using Local Language	0	
Organization Name	Assemblées Chrétiennes du Tchad	
Main Ministry	Church Planting	
Year Started	1999	
Number Of Workers Using Local Language	0	