

## The Bwamu Laa Laa of Burkina Faso



The Bwamu Laa Laa dialect group is an example of a people ethnically the same as a larger community-the Bwaba- but different enough in speech that they need a separate translation. Speakers of Laa Laa dialect number 60,000. They are found in the country's southwest region, in an area marked by chains of hills.

Most of the Laa Laa speakers are subsistence farmers, growing millet, sorghum, and peanuts as their staple crops. In recent decades, farmers have grown cotton as a cash crop, and have sheep, goats, and chicken as livestock.

The Bwaba in general are known as a proud and independent people, and the speakers of Laa Laa are no exception. Each village governs itself for there is little central authority. Families have strong internal ties, often depending on one another for food, child care, and money. The Bwaba are hospitable to outsiders, yet they avoid close contacts with neighboring groups, clinging tightly to cultural traditions.

The Bwaba are generally highly motivated to attend school and learn French. However, the lack of money prevents many children, especially girls from completing primary school. A further hindrance for girls attending school is the fear that education will erode adherence to traditional culture.

**Primary Religion:**

Animism

**Disciples (Matt 28.19):**

**Churches:**

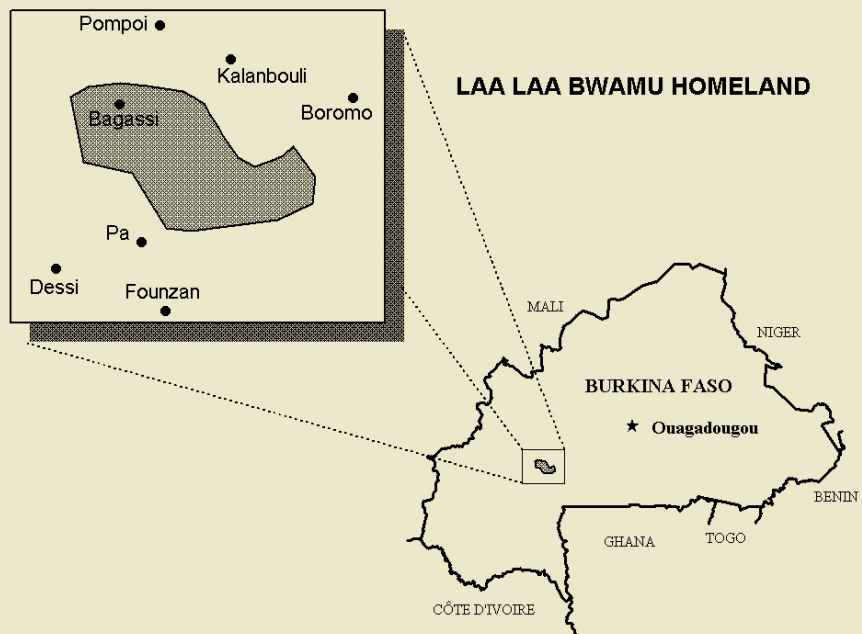
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**Scripture Status (Matt 28.20):**

Only portions available

**Population (date):**

60,000 (1998)



# The Bwamu Laa Laa of Burkina Faso

## Item Name

## Item Note

### Have They Heard The Gospel?

### Profile Summary

Prophet/Good Man, But Not God's Son (%)	2
Believe Jesus Is A Myth (%)	85
Number Of Pastors	1
Number Of Missionaries Working	2
Number Of Churches	6
Is The Word Of God Translated?	No
Any Hinderance To Scripture Distribution?	An extensive literacy program is needed before the Bwaba could effectively use scripture.
What Kind Of Missionaries Are Needed?	In Bible translation and Literacy.

### Population All Countries

### Group Description

World Population For This People	60000
World Population (Date)	1998

### Countries Where People Group Lives

### Group Description

Country Name	Burkina Faso
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### Geography & Environment

### Group Description

Location	They are found in the country's southwest region, in an area marked by chains of hills. In the Mouhoun and Houet provinces, in and around the villages of Bagassi, Pa and Boni.
Country	Burkina Faso
Ecosystem Type	Scrub Forest
Geological Type	Plains
Elevation	250 meters
Longitude	12N
Latitude	5W
Climate	Hot throughout the yea, with a wet season extending from June to mid-September.
Comments (Geography & Environment)	The area contains many geographic "obstructions," such as hills, small rivers, and swamps. This topography accounts for much linguistic diversity.

### Language & Linguistics

### Group Description

Comment (Language)	Christians are especially interested in literacy.
Alternate Language Names	Kadenbe, Yere
Attitude Towards Mother Tongue	Very receptive
Other Mother Tongues Of This Group	JULA
Other Mother Tongues Of This Group	JULA
Linguistically Related Languages	BWAMU, TWI
Linguistically Related Languages	BWAMU, TWI
Comments (Related Languages)	They are also related to the Bwamu Ourakoye.
Neighboring Languages	MARKA

### Literacy

### Group Description

Literacy Attitude	Very receptive
Active Literacy Program	Yes
Comment (Literacy)	The 20% literacy rate reflects those who can read haltingly; fluent readers may be as low as 2%. Government and church organizations carry out literacy programs in the Bwamu Ouarkoye dialect. The Bwamu seem to like the idea of literacy but lack the financial and motivational means to pursue it.

## The Bwamu Laa Laa of Burkina Faso

Item Name	Item Note	Group Description
<b>Economics</b>		<b>Group Description</b>
Subsistence Type	Agriculturalists	
Average Annual Income	US\$140	
Occupation	Most Bwaba are subsistence farmers.	
Income Sources	Some sell surplus cotton as a cash crop. Small markets are also in the villages.	
Products / Crafts	Crafts are made only for utilitarian purposes.	
Trade Partners	Jula and Mossi traders often sell products at village markets.	
Modernization / Utilities	There are none.	
Comment (Economy)	Any income is minimal, as most Bwaba can produce only what they need to survive. The figure for the average income does not reflect what is earned by bartering, which is the most common form of trading in rural Burkina Faso.	
<b>Community Development</b>		<b>Group Description</b>
Health Care (Quality)	Poor	
Comment (Health Care)	Small dispensaries exist in a number of villages. Clinics and hospitals are very expensive, and often require at least 2-3 hours journey.	
Diet (Quality)	Poor	
Comment (Diet)	The Bwaba grow the staple grains that are necessary for survival. The diet is lacking in certain vitamins and nutrients.	
Water (Quality)	Poor	
Comment (Water)	Water source is usually a well. Wells are sometimes contaminated and or run dry.	
Shelter Description	The Bwaba live in mud huts.	
Energy/Fuel (Quality)	None	
Clothing	Men wear western style clothing; women wear traditional skirts with a blouse.	
Transportation	Bicycles and walking are the principle forms of transportation.	
Infant Mortality Rate	High	
Leading Cause Of Death	Malaria	
Comment (Community Development)	There is a high child mortality rate for those children between two and five because they are exposed to malaria without the protection of breast milk in their system.	
<b>Society &amp; Culture</b>		<b>Group Description</b>
Family Structures	Families are strongly intertwined, often depending upon another for food, child care, and money.	
Neighbor Relations	The Bwaba have a history of conflict with neighbors, in particular with the Mossis. They remain independent and proud.	
Authority / Rule	There is a firmly established structure within villages, but little hierarchical structure within the ethnic group as a whole.	
Social Habits/Groupings	The Bwaba tend to prefer village life over city living. Villages remain separate and largely independent from one another.	
Cultural Change Pace	Medium	
Identification With National Culture	Integrated	
Self Image	Prestigious	
Judicial / Punishment System	The village chief maintains authority within the village. Large problems are taken to the government authorities.	
Celebrations	Traditional animistic and Muslim ceremonies are celebrated.	
Recreations	Going to the market, visiting relatives, and talking provide recreation.	
Local Language Broadcasting	None	
Attitude To Outsiders	Somewhat receptive	
Attitude To Change	Somewhat receptive	
Comment (Culture)	The Bwaba are open to new ideas, but still fear loss of the traditional culture.	

# The Bwamu Laa Laa of Burkina Faso

Item Name	Item Note	
<b>Youth</b>		<b>Group Description</b>
Labor and tasks (6-12 year olds)	Children help in all necessary work, including field work, domestic duties, and childcare.	
Youth Problems (Teens)	Lack of money prevents many young people from receiving a quality education.	
Youth Greatest Needs (teens)	Better education, health care, and freedom from animistic practices.	
<b>Education</b>		<b>Group Description</b>
Primary Schools	19	
Primary School Enrollment	4447	
Percent Of Eligible Students Enrolled	42	
Language Of Instruction Early Years	French	
Language Of Textbooks Early Years	French	
Comment (Education)	The Bwamu Laa Laa are generally highly motivated to attend school and learn French. However, lack of money prevents many children, especially girls, from receiving a quality education. A second hindrance is a fear among the adult Bwaba that schooling will erode adherence to traditional culture.	
<b>Church Growth</b>		<b>Status of Christianity</b>
Reached Status	Evaluated	
Bible Schools	1	
Christian Literacy Centers	1	
<b>Religion &amp; Response</b>		<b>Status of Christianity</b>
Religious Practices & Ceremonies	Traditional religious practices continue to dominate village life, although many Protestant and Catholic churches conduct weekly services.	
Attitude To Christianity	Somewhat receptive	
Attitude To Religious Change	Somewhat receptive	
Resistance / Receptivity	The Bwaba have been open to reevaluating their beliefs, and accepting the Gospel. However, they cling very tightly to traditional culture and animistic practices.	
Religious Analogies & Bridges	Many now admit that the old ways are not working, and are looking for a more promising alternative.	
Spiritual Climate And Openness	Most Bwaba seem open to the Gospel message, and are willing to reevaluate their traditional beliefs. However, if a family member converts to Christianity he is likely pressured to continue animistic practices.	
Comment (Religion)	Islam has a surprisingly low level of influence among the Bwaba, with only 2% of the population claiming adherence to Muslim beliefs.	
Recommended Approaches	Building bridges with animistic practices and doing literacy work may make the people receptive to the Gospel.	
Current Needs	Literacy work is needed. Also missionaries must develop ways to spread Christianity without threatening traditional culture.	
Items For Prayer	Pray that literacy and translation would move forward and that the Bwamu would be open to the Gospel. Pray also that the people will be motivated to learn to read and write in their own language.	
<b>History Of Christianity In Group</b>		<b>Status of Christianity</b>
Year Began	47	
By Whom	Roman Catholic Church	
Significant Events	The CMA began work in the area around 1955, and the Assemblies of God arrived in 1973.	
Comments (History of Christianity)	There are also two Eglise Pentecote groups in the area.	
<b>Scripture</b>		<b>Status of Christianity</b>
Translation Status	Definite	
Available Scripture	Portions	
Form Of Scripture Available	Printed	

## The Bwamu Laa Laa of Burkina Faso

Item Name	Item Note
Scripture Use	5
Scripture Use	Majority of churches

### Missions and Churches

### Status of Christianity

Organization Name	Christian and Missionary Alliance
Country Of Origin	United States
Main Ministry	Church Planting
Year Started	55

### Christian Literature And Media Status

### Status of Christianity

Literature Available	First, second, and third year Catholic misselettes, along with a few songbooks, constitute the Christian literature for the people.
Audio Recordings Available	None
Films Available	None
Radio Programs Available	None
Videos Available	None
Audio Visual Available	None