



## The Dagomba of Ghana

Dagbani is the language of the Dagomba people who have a very positive attitude towards the use of their language. The Dagomba inhabit an area that covers most of Tolon, Savelugu, Tamale, Yendi, and the western half of Gushiegu-Chereponi districts. This area covers about 11,900 square kilometers. Illiteracy is very high and few children attend school as motivation for education is very low.

Islam has influenced the people since the 1750's through traders passing through the region. An important sign of the growing Muslim influence was the appointment of an Imam; for the Imam is not just a religious leader belonging to one part of the community, but an official of the chief, called to pray at festivals and other ceremonies. However most ordinary people are pagan rather than Muslim; but who is to say that they are not Muslims?

The longest continuous Christian work in the area is by the Assemblies of God which was started in 1931. More denominations have started work in the area recently but still the number of churches is relatively low.

**Primary Religion:**

Muslim

**Disciples (Matt 28.19):**

1%

**Churches:**

200

**Scripture Status (Matt 28.20):**

NT available. OT almost

**Population (date):**

600,000 (1992)



Map Unavailable

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Item Name	Item Note	
<b>Have They Heard The Gospel?</b>		<b>Profile Summary</b>
Call Themselves Christian (%)	1	
Believe In Jesus As God & Only Savior (%)	1%	
Prophet/Good Man, But Not God's Son (%)	50	
Have Not Heard Who Jesus is (%)	50	
Number Of Pastors	90	
Number Of Missionaries Working	16	
Number Of Communities	About 1,000 Dagomba communities	
Number Of Churches	200	
Is The Word Of God Translated?	NT available. OT nearly completed (1996)	
Translation Medium	Printed (since 1983) and on cassette (1994)	
Any Hinderance To Scripture Distribution?	Road and transportation facilities are limited and the Dagomba area is very large. Manpower to distribute and to follow up work.	
Forms Of Gospel Presentation Available (Summary)	A number of songs. The creation story drummed and traditional song and recorded on cassette. Sunday school books in Dagbani.	
What Kind Of Missionaries Are Needed?	They need assistance in training in Bible knowledge, leadership and financially. There is a growing understanding, especially among the young people, of the value of literacy and education in a rural agriculture-based society.	
<b>Population All Countries</b>		<b>Group Description</b>
World Population For This People	600000	
World Population (Date)	1992	
Comment (World Population)	Came into existence in the 13th century by their ancestor Nae Gbewa. Farming communities, live in small villages, ruled by traditional leadership. Some population figures: Tamale: 135,952 Yendi: 31,633 Savelugu: 16,955 Gushiegu: 8,945 Nyankpala: 6,797 Karaga: 6,310	
<b>Countries Where People Group Lives</b>		<b>Group Description</b>
Country Name	Ghana	
Country Name	Ghana	
<b>Geography &amp; Environment</b>		<b>Group Description</b>
Location	Savannah of Northern Ghana.	
Country	Ghana	
Ecosystem Type	Savannahs	
Geological Type	Interfluvial	
Elevation	200-500m	
Longitude	W0.8	
Latitude	N9.5	
Climate	Two Seasons. Dry season with Cold and Hot months. Rainy season.	
<b>Language &amp; Linguistics</b>		<b>Group Description</b>
Alternate Language Names	Dagbane, Dagomba and Dagbamba	
Attitude Towards Mother Tongue	Very receptive	
Percent Monolingual (%)	85	
Second Languages	10	
Other Mother Tongues Of This Group	ENGLISH	

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Item Name	Item Note	
Other Mother Tongues Of This Group	ENGLISH	
Comment (On Other Mother Tongues)	Urban communities are bi-lingual.	
Linguistically Related Languages	GURENNE	
Linguistically Related Languages	KUSAAL, EASTERN	
Linguistically Related Languages	MAMPRULI	
Linguistically Related Languages	GURENNE	
Linguistically Related Languages	MAMPRULI	
Linguistically Related Languages	KUSAAL, EASTERN	
Comments (Related Languages)	89% lexical similarity	
Comments (Related Languages)	90% lexical similarity	
Neighboring Languages	MAMPRULI	
Neighboring Languages	GONJA	
Neighboring Languages	KONKOMBA	
<b>Literacy</b>		<b>Group Description</b>
Adult Literacy Percentage	2	
Literacy Attitude	Somewhat resistant	
Active Literacy Program	Yes	
Publications In Vernacular	40	
Comment (Literacy)	Active Literacy Program in 10% of the area. Those that are involved are determined, but they are insulted a lot by the larger group that resists literacy. Literacy and Christianity are often mentioned in the one breath.	
<b>Economics</b>		<b>Group Description</b>
Subsistence Type	Agriculturalists	
Average Annual Income	\$100	
Occupation	Agriculture	
Income Sources	Farming, small (very small) scale industries like oil production, mat weaving, rice processing etc.	
Products / Crafts	Mats, roofs, baskets, soap, oil, dried vegetables, soy beans, cashews, ropes, woven cloths, smocks (local dress), drums.	
Trade Partners	Hausa, Southerners.	
Modernization / Utilities	Cotton farming	
<b>Community Development</b>		<b>Group Description</b>
Health Care (Quality)	Poor	
Comment (Health Care)	Hospitals in cities, lack of sufficient clinics in rural areas.	
Diet (Quality)	Poor	
Comment (Diet)	Corn, Yams, Plantain, Rice, Beans and Cassava.	
Water (Quality)	Poor	
Comment (Water)	No good drinking water for many communities.	
Shelter Description	The mud huts with grass roofs in which village people live is ideal for the hot climate but gives poor shelter and needs constant repairs due to rains. Towns have always an accommodation problem.	
Energy/Fuel (Quality)	Poor	
Comment (Energy)	Electricity is improving, but absent in most of the country (available in Tamale, Savelugu, Yendi). Cooking on Fire Wood, Charcoal, Cow-dung, Corncobs, etc.	
Clothing	Traditional dress and second hand clothing.	
Transportation	Pick ups and bush lorries. Taxis in the cities. Bicycles in the north and walking everywhere.	
Infant Mortality Rate	28% die under 4	

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Item Name	Item Note
Life Expectancy	55 years
Leading Cause Of Death	malaria
Comment (Community Development)	Rural people depend on natural resources. There is a lack of more modern technological knowledge- farming, fishing, oil production, soap production, spinning of cotton and weaving.

### Society & Culture

### Group Description

Family Structures	Extended Families. Women marry into the man's house. Polygamy. Like in other places in Africa, biological children as well as nieces/nephews may be considered as a person's children.
Neighbor Relations	There is a tension with the Konkomba people group. In churches, wherever the southern people dominate, Dagomba people disappear from church.
Authority / Rule	The Role of the leader or spokesman is very strong, often you relate through a mediator rather than direct.
Social Habits/Groupings	Farming together. Men have a tree as a meeting place, women meet inside a room or compound. Literacy brings unity. Dances are group affairs.
Cultural Change Pace	Medium
Identification With National Culture	Distinct
Self Image	Prestigious
Judicial / Punishment System	Major matters judged by paramount chief, minor affairs by village chiefs.
Celebrations	Birth, marriage death. Five festivals, lasting 1 or 2 days.
Recreations	Dancing, listening to songs, sleeping, sitting, talking.
Art Forms	Music, dance, functional crafts.
Media	Radio and talking at Market days.
Local Language Broadcasting	> 1 hour daily
Attitude To Outsiders	Very receptive
Attitude To Change	Somewhat resistant

### Youth

### Group Description

Labor and tasks (6-12 year olds)	Farming.
Youth Problems (Teens)	Drugs, teenage pregnancy, boredom.
Youth Greatest Needs (teens)	Light, Christ, work, farmland, education, income.

### Education

### Group Description

Primary Schools	500
Primary School Enrollment	25000
Percent Of Eligible Students Enrolled	10
Teacher To Pupil Ratio	33
Language Of Instruction Early Years	Dagbani
Language Of Textbooks Early Years	English
Language Of Instruction Later Years	English
Language Of Textbooks Later Years	English
Number Of Schools > 90% Homogeneous	500
Comment (Education)	Many drop outs. Educated people migrate to the towns.

### Church Growth

### Status of Christianity

Reached Status	Engaged
Lay Leaders	90
Bible Schools	2
Christian Clinics/Hospitals	20
Christian Literacy Centers	2

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Item Name	Item Note	
<b>Religion &amp; Response</b>		<b>Status of Christianity</b>
Religious Practices & Ceremonies	Sacrifices (animals, eggs, grains, etc). Name giving ceremonies. Burial. Funeral. Islamic practices.	
Attitude To Christianity	Somewhat resistant	
Attitude To Religious Change	Indifferent	
Resistance / Receptivity	Christians in towns tend to be over-awed by Muslims, but in villages there is some openness to the Christian message, though Dagombas are slow to accept Christianity.	
Spiritual Climate And Openness	The NT is the most desired book. Small, but growing openness for Christianity. Islam is on the increase.	
Recommended Approaches	Literacy, non-print, sharing lives - like eating their food, speaking their language, meeting at their houses.	
Current Needs	Survival, subsistence farming.	
Items For Prayer	That they look to the GOD of Love and Redemption for help. That evangelists and pastors and missionaries might persevere even when the going gets tough.	
<b>History Of Christianity In Group</b>		<b>Status of Christianity</b>
Year Began	1912	
By Whom	Basel Mission	
Significant Events	Literacy has brought a slight change, but only small impact.	
Comments (History of Christianity)	Since 1994 the NT on cassette had impact on church growth and start of new groups. Since 1994 the Dagomba-Konkomba conflict made churches spring up in East Dabani area. Men learnt to read the Bible but women were neglected. There is a change for the second generation, girls are sent to school.	
<b>Scripture</b>		<b>Status of Christianity</b>
Translation Status	In Progress	
Available Scripture	New Testament	
Form Of Scripture Available	Printed, Audio and Visual	
Scripture Use	5	
Scripture Use	Majority of churches	
Comment (Scripture)	Several acknowledge the power the power of God, but don't repent out of bondage to local gods and Islam culture. As soon as the gospel gains ground, Muslims give opposition.	
<b>Missions and Churches</b>		<b>Status of Christianity</b>
Organization Name	Presbyterian	
Main Ministry	Church Planting	
Year Started	1950	
Number Of Adherents	1	
Number Of Expatriate Workers	4	
Organization Name	WEC International	
Number Of Expatriate Workers	4	
Organization Name	SIM International	
Country Of Origin	United States	
Number Of Expatriate Workers	6	
Organization Name	Baptist	
Country Of Origin	United States	
Main Ministry	Church Planting	
Main Ministry	Church Planting	
Year Started	1952	

## The Dagomba of Ghana

### Item Name

### Item Note

Organization Name	Assemblies of God
Main Ministry	Church Planting
Main Ministry	Church Planting
Year Started	1950

### Christian Literature And Media Status

### Status of Christianity

Literature Available	NT and a few Bible Stories. Very little really.
Audio Recordings Available	NT and some songs.
Films Available	Luke
Radio Programs Available	no entry
Videos Available	no entry
Audio Visual Available	no entry