



The Maba of Chad

The Maba are one of the larger non- Arab peoples in Chad. They live mostly in the Ouaddai (said "Wad-die") region of Eastern Chad around the major market town of Abeche. They have lived in this area for a long time, before known conquerors came.

Historically, the Maba were not weakened by invasions, and domination by strangers often meant they assimilated conquerors into their own group.

Primarily the Maba society is rural, there are over 600 Maba villages around Abeche. The town of Abeche, a major market town, is also a very influential center for Islam in Chad.

The Maba are a particularly key people group in the Ouaddai area, with over 10 unreached Muslim people groups living in the region. Also they are very influential and key in their influence on Chad's Muslim population. The Maba themselves have been Muslim for three centuries. In the Koran they read of Isa (Jesus) who opened the eyes of the blind, healed lepers and raised the dead. They have yet to hear that Jesus was more than a good man, that He is their Savior, who has died for their sins, that He rose again from the dead, and hope for relationship with God is found by trusting in Him.

Primary Religion:

Islam

Disciples (Matt 28.19):

0.005%

Churches:

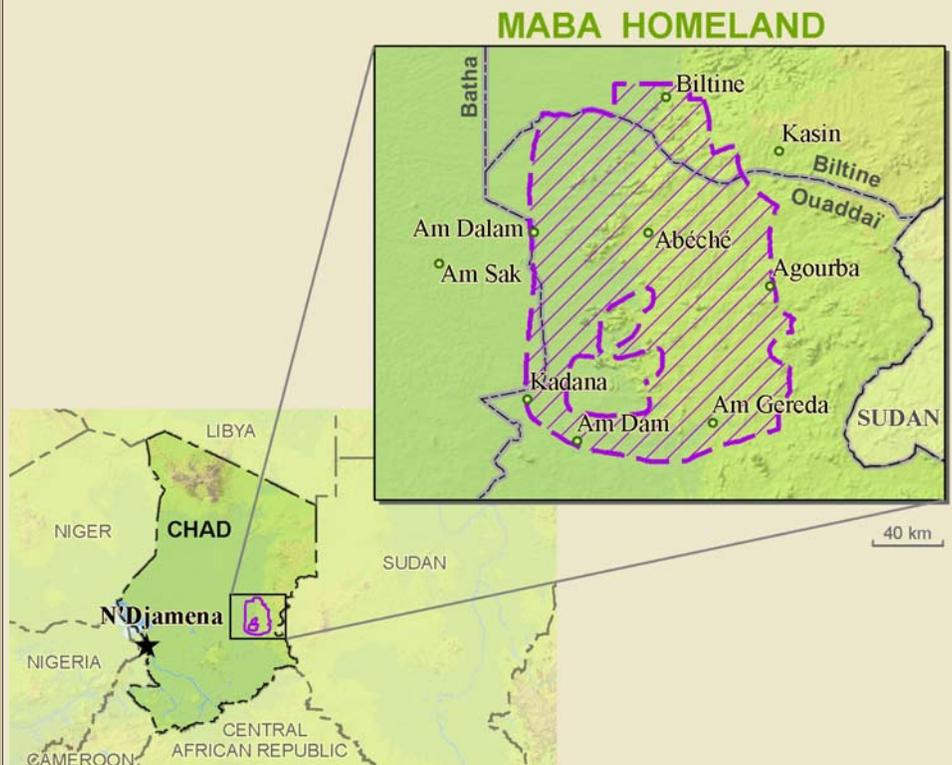
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Scripture Status (Matt 28.20):

None in their language

Population (date):

120,000+ (1993)



The Maba of Chad

Item Name	Item Note	
Have They Heard The Gospel?		Profile Summary
Call Themselves Christian (%)	0%	
Believe In Jesus As God & Only Savior (%)	0.005%	
Prophet/Good Man, But Not God's Son (%)	99.995%	
Believe Jesus Is A Myth (%)	0%	
Number Of Pastors	0	
Number Of Missionaries Working	0	
Comment (Number Of Missionaries)	Several in Abeche, but none specifically to the Maba	
Response To The Gospel	Few have accepted Christ. Being a Muslim people group, there would be some apprehension regarding accepting teaching different to that in Islam. The Maba are known as an influential people group in the Ouaddai region of Eastern Chad. They have been Muslim for almost four centuries. The Maba are described as displaying a unity in their habitat, way of life and institutions.	
Number Of Communities	>600	
Comment (Number Communities)	Over 200 villages with over 500 inhabitants and about 400 smaller villages, mostly within 75-150 km of Abeche.	
Number Of Churches	0	
Is The Word Of God Translated?	No	
Any Hinderance To Scripture Distribution?	For translation to be effective, Literacy projects would be important. The literacy rate is at 7.5%; thus, a copy of Scripture would be illegible and intimidating to most Maba.	
Forms Of Gospel Presentation Available (Summary)	None	
Population All Countries		Group Description
World Population For This People	135,000	
World Population (Date)	1993	
World Population (Urban Percent)	21%	
Comment (World Population)	There may be as many as 10,000 living in Sudan.	
Countries Where People Group Lives		Group Description
Country Name	Chad	
Country Name	Sudan	
Geography & Environment		Group Description
Location	East Chad, Ouaddai prefecture, Abeche subprefecture, around to SW of Abeche.	
Country	Chad	
Ecosystem Type	Other	
Geological Type	Plains	
Longitude	12-15 N	
Latitude	20-22.3 E	
Climate	Dry seasons - Oct-March, Dry and very hot and dry April - May, Wet season - June-September	
Language & Linguistics		Group Description
Primary Language	MABA	
Comment (Alternate Names)	Kana Mabang, Ouaddai (outsiders name), Ouarai (Salamat Arab term), Bargo (Sudani and Massalit term).	
Comments (Dialect)	A survey showed that there is one type of Maba language spoken throughout the Maba population, and no dialects exist.	
Second Languages	ARABIC, CHADIAN	
Comment (On Other Mother Tongues)	Positive but lack confidence in the value of their own language, which many feel is inferior to Arabic.	
Comments (Related Languages)	Marfa, Karanga, Kashmere, Massalit	

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Item Name

Comments (Neighbor Languages)

Item Note

Marfa, Massalit, Assongori, Mararit, Beri (Zaghawa and Bideyat), Daza, AbCharib

Literacy

Group Description

Comment (Attitude to literacy)	average figures Ouaddai Prefecture, 1993
Percent Literate For Men	14.5%
Percent Literate For Women	2.6%
Active Literacy Program	Yes
Comment (Active Literacy Program)	Open for literacy in Arabic script but fairly unmotivated.
Publications In Vernacular	Around 15 booklets on health and one on the history of the Ouaddai.
Comment (Literacy)	The literacy percentage is based on the regional average (1996) and is expected to be lower in the villages and among women.

Economics

Group Description

Subsistence Type	Agriculturalists
Average Annual Income	less than \$450 per year (a Chadian average)
Occupation	Agriculture, animal husbandry, merchants. Kabartu clan are butchers and blacksmiths (haddads).
Income Sources	Millet, Maize, Sorghum, Sesame, Beans, Peanuts, Okra, Cucumbers, Calabashes, Vegetables for condiments, Onion, Garlic, Chili, Tomato, Dried Tomato, Cotton (dying out)
Products / Crafts	Mats, baskets
Trade Partners	Kajakse, Massalat, AbSharib, Mimi, Arabs, Beri, Daza, Kanembu, Kouka, Tama, Massalit, Asongori, Marfa

Community Development

Group Description

Health Care (Quality)	Fair
Comment (Health Care)	108,373 patients per doctor. One hospital in Abeche serves a large number of people. Many villages are far away from any sort of medical facilities or supplies.
Diet (Quality)	Fair
Comment (Diet)	Millet, Leaf sauces with dried meat - 'Kawal' leaf sauce is a specialty of the Maba. Will eat produce from fields and gardens.
Water (Quality)	Fair
Comment (Water)	Little irrigation except for gardens in the wadi, valleys irrigated by wadi in rainy season and by hand in dry season. Domestic water supply - there are some wells, some wadis by villages. Very few villages have pumps. In Abeche there are community taps, and some piped water to houses - Abeche water is of good quality.
Shelter Description	In towns: Rectangular mud brick housing with mud roof. In villages: Round straw huts, Mud walls not common.
Electricity	Electricity in some areas of Abeche. Not available in villages.
Energy/Fuel (Quality)	Fair
Comment (Energy)	No electricity is available in most villages. Wood/Charcoal - is the main source for domestic fuel - for cooking and heat.
Clothing	The men wear long robes called 'jalabiyas', and occasionally a white turban. Women wear dresses covered by a light colored full body veil (laffay) when they leave the house.
Transportation	Donkeys, camels (occasionally), Market trucks, horses (ridden by men), occasionally horse carts, and on foot.
Infant Mortality Rate	11%
Life Expectancy	63.4 years old
Comment (Community Development)	The area is open to development, though for community development will need motivation for their engagement.
Comment (Community Development)	Mortality, Life Expectancy, information is based on the regional average (1993).

Society & Culture

Group Description

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Item Name

Item Note

Family Structures

Extended family, patriarchal. Polygamy widely practiced - up to 4 wives are permitted. In villages 2 wives is more common. Women and men have separate living quarters.
The mother has major responsibility to bring up the children and determining what tasks they are involved in.
Traditional families divide into three groups in the dry/cold season.
- The very old stay in the village with children of 4-10 years.
- 16-25's - unmarried men and youth work with animals
- 25-50's - work with young women and children 10-15 years of age in gardens.

Neighbor Relations

Good. Haddads (Blacksmiths) are not highly regarded. Won't marry Haddads or southern Chadians.

Authority / Rule

The Maba sultan is the chief sultan for the entire Ouaddai Prefecture. (Inherited position) He is an 'Amir' (Great King). Other non-Maba cantons have Sultans too, who obviously work in co-operation with the Maba Sultan. Seven Meliks (canton chiefs) work on behalf of the Sultan in the Maba villages (inherited position) - collecting taxes, judging cases. Imams are selected for character and ability. Villages have two imams: one is a political role for the Chadian government. The other is a religious leader, who can be a different person to the 'faki' who is a Koran teacher.

Social Habits/Groupings

Market days are a special occasion.

Comment (Cultural Change Pace)

Urban - Rapid; Villages - slow

Identification With National Culture

Similar

Comment (Identification with National Culture)

Near for Northern Chadian society.

Self Image

Prestigious

Comment (Self Image)

For the Maba, their language is a major feature distinguishing them from other people groups. The Maba are looked down on by Arabs, but looked up to by minority groups.

Judicial / Punishment System

Big cases are brought to the attention of the Sultan for his judgement. Payment of money is the main form of justice - families take the responsibility for payment. Other cases go to Maliks. Some form of payment settles a wrong. Depending on the offense, the shame or family honor are at stake.

Celebrations

Muslim festivals, Fete Nationale, Muslim feasts (Ramadan, Dahiye, circumcision, etc.) Threshing Millet - a few neighbors will get together to thresh the millet and make a feast of it with food and dancing.

Recreations

Dancing, drinking tea, chatting

Media

15 minutes of Maba news each day from the Abeche radio station.

History Of People Group

In epochs a long time ago there were conflicts with sultanates of Darfour and Baguirmi, that are long resolved. After years of resistance the French conquered the area in 1911. Though there has been a long civil war in Chad, since 1990 things have been relatively peaceful. On the local front there are the usual conflicts with Arabs when their herds encroach on agricultural land.

Youth

Group Description

Labor and tasks (6-12 year olds)

Children help with shepherding animals, and domestic work.

Youth Greatest Needs (teens)

Health and medicines for small children

Education

Group Description

Comment (Primary Schools)

Most children go to Koran schools in the villages, instruction is in Classical Arabic, with explanation in Chadian Arabic.

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.

Comment (Education)

French school system not liked and traditionally rejected. Arabic Lycée in Abeche, offers opportunity for bi-lingual education.

Comment (Education)

The average number of those Maba who have received education is 6.7% in Ouaddai prefecture. (Chadian average 31%)

Church Growth

Status of Christianity

Reached Status

Verified

Reached Classification

World A

The Maba of Chad

Item Name	Item Note	Status of Christianity
Total Baptized	2-3	
Bible Schools	0	
Christian Clinics/Hospitals	0	
Christian Literacy Centers	0	
Religion & Response		Status of Christianity
Religious Practices & Ceremonies	Muslim feasts.	
Attitude To Christianity	Very resistant	
Comment (Attitude To Christianity)	Fewer than 5 Maba are followers of Jesus.	
Attitude To Religious Change	Very resistant	
Comment (Attitude Religious Change)	In towns like Abeche - people are more closed - due to Islamic teaching. In the villages people are sometimes more open.	
Resistance / Receptivity	Indifferent	
Religious Analogies & Bridges	Islam along with their traditional religious world view may give ideas for analogies and bridges.	
Comment (Religion)	<p>Have been Muslim since the seventeenth century. Mosques are important places in the Maba communities. 'Gris Gris' are used a lot. These are charms and amulets, believed to ward off evil, sickness and generally protect those who wear them. The Sultanate of the Ouaddai has embodied pre-Islamic beliefs, though these may appear to be vanishing with Islam. The rites of enthroning the Sultan have included a tradition of the Sultan being recognized by the appearance of a snake, on a sojourn of several days on a particular mountain top, and the rites performed as well as the appearance of the snake transform this ordinary person into what is believed to be a divine person. The snake represents an ancient ancestor believed to be an immortal being.</p> <p>Some pre-Islamic beliefs are still part of the Maba culture, such as respect for the spirit of a mountain or tree, certain songs and dances. The last human sacrifice during the rituals of enthronement of the sultan took place in 1878 (According to Chappelle:151). Today animals are sacrificed and Islamic rituals observed.</p>	
Recommended Approaches	<p>They are responsive to community and language development. - Living amongst them and being a positive witness for God's Kingdom.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Community Development - Health work may be an appropriate way to build rapport. - Bible translation - Learning Maba and Chadian Arabic would be essential. 	
Current Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Evangelism and church planting team with specific emphasis on working with the Maba people. - Many opportunities in medical work. 	
Items For Prayer	<p>For workers sent and for more to be sent out to work with the Maba.</p> <p>For translation of the Bible to take place. Pray for the enabling and protection of the health of those committed to this task.</p> <p>For Maba people to be ready to hear about Jesus as their Savior and that they would be prepared to open up their lives to Him.</p> <p>For the protection of those who are open and wanting to grow in the Lord and see others come to know Him too.</p> <p>For the growth of a strong fellowship amongst the Maba, celebrating and growing in their faith in Jesus.</p>	
Scripture		Status of Christianity
Translation Status	Definite	
Available Scripture	None	
Scripture Use	Unknown	
Comment (Scripture Use)	For translation to be effective, literacy projects would be important.	
Other Forms Of Gospel Available: Literature	No	
Other Forms Of Gospel Available: Recordings	Yes, one cassette recording of the Gospel was made - 30 years ago.	
Other Forms Of Gospel Available: Film/Videos	No	
Other Forms Of Gospel Available: Radio	No	