

## The Mpade of Cameroon, Chad and Nigeria



representative photo by Carsten ten Brink reversed

The Mpade people live in the northernmost part of Cameroon, just south of Lake Chad. Their language area extends into Nigeria to the west and Chad to the northeast.

Traditional rulers in the area are called sultans. Rulers of smaller regions are called blamas. The town of Makary is the hub of the language area with a number of surrounding villages in Cameroon, and a few villages in Nigeria and Chad. A number of Mpade speakers also live in the larger cities of Cameroon, Nigeria, and Chad.

Linguistically, Mpade is one of the eight Kotoko languages, and Mpade speakers refer to themselves ethnically as Kotoko. Mpade has a Latin script writing system but it is not currently widely used.

The Kotoko are traditionally fishermen and farmers, making use of the seasonal rivers that flow in the area to irrigate their fields. It can be very difficult to access the language area during rainy season (June-Sept.).

Islam dominates as the primary religion, with a good deal of syncretism with animism. The few Mpade Christians in the area are poorly educated and isolated. Mission work coming from outside the community will need to be done once it is safe enough to work in the area. At this point, because of the activity of the Boko Haram, all missionaries have been asked to leave the north of Cameroon. There was a Nigerian missionary reaching out to the Kotoko but he was killed by the Boko Haram in 2011.

**Primary Religion:**

Islam

**Disciples (Matt 28:19):**

- 0.8% Chad
- 0.9% Cameroon
- Perhaps 1% Nigeria

**Churches:**

0

**Scripture Status (Matt 28:20):**

None in their language

**Population (date):**

16,000 (2004)



**MPADE HOMELAND**



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### Have They Heard The Gospel?

Call Themselves Christian (%)	2% in Chad; 3% in Cameroon
Believe Jesus is a prophet, but not God's Son (%)	~ 100% are Muslim
Believe in their traditional religion (%)	most
Number of Pastors	0
Number of Missionaries Working	0
Comment	At this point, because of the activity of the Boko Haram, it is believed that all missionaries have left the north of Cameroon.
Response to the Gospel	There is no indigenous church. The few who have become Christians are either isolated or have been forced to leave the area. There is no or almost no evidence of them having heard the gospel at all.
Number of Churches	0
Comment	There are Mpade people living in the city of Maidugeri, Nigeria. It is possible that some of them go to the churches in Maidugeri. The number in attendance is unknown.
Is The Word Of God Translated?	No, but work is ongoing.
Hindrances To Scripture Use	Literacy in French, English in Nigeria, the language of education, is quite low, and literacy in Mpade is almost non-existent. Though Scripture translation is ongoing, this is not currently available to speakers of the language. Islam presents a challenge as does the influence of a radical Islamic group, the Boko Haram, based in north-eastern Nigeria.
Forms Of Gospel Presentation Available (Summary)	Recordings: no Literature: no Films/ video: no Radio: Unknown
Bilingualism	Mpade speakers use Shoa Arabic (a dialect of Chadian Arabic) primarily in the market place. There is a NT available for Chadian Arabic but it is unclear whether Mpade speakers know that language well enough to use the scriptures that are available. French is used in the school system, but literacy rates in French are quite low. Mser speakers who live in the city of Maiduguri, Nigeria would learn a language spoken there.
Cross-cultural Missionaries Needed?	Yes. At this point, no Christian work is being done from within the community. Mission work coming from outside the community will need to be done once it is safe enough to work in the area.