

The Lokaa of Nigeria



representative photo

The YakaꝎ people speak the LokaaꝎ language. Traditionally, YakaꝎ people settled in southern Nigeria more than five centuries ago. Eight large independent communities exist — unlike neighboring ethnic groups that live in multiple smaller villages. Some YakaꝎ are highly educated and hold important positions in major towns throughout Nigeria’s 36 states; many have key government roles.

Most LokaaꝎ speakers live off rainforests and fertile land, tending yam and cassava farms. Families also hunt and fish for food. Rubber trees, palm trees and pineapple plantations produce valuable cash crops. Seasonal fruits include mangoes, oranges, bananas and guavas.

However, many younger people move to towns, eager for well-paid civil service jobs. The society divides along generational lines; age is the primary factor of YakaꝎ prestige. Religious festivals for planting and harvesting are highly celebrated

Christianity came to the YakaꝎ area in 1911, through the witness of Christians traveling up the Cross River from Calabar. Presbyterians have celebrated 100 years of service here! But despite a long spiritual history, there remains a great need for understandable biblical teaching in the LokaaꝎ mother tongue, especially in rural areas.

Primary Religion:

Christianity

Disciples (Matt 28:19):

Unknown

Churches:

Yes

Scripture Status (Matt 28:20):

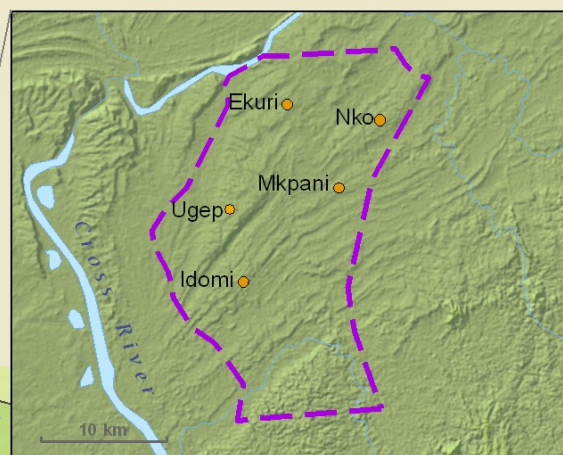
Old Testament/NT finished

Population (date):

350,000



LOKAA HOMELAND



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Have They Heard The Gospel?

Is the Word of God Translated?

A team of translators plans to publish Old Testament book drafts as soon as each is translated. Churches and family Bible studies will use them immediately. When future digital Scripture recordings are made, people will eagerly form listening groups to test comprehension. Project leaders pray for deeper discipleship, as Yaka Christians read, hear and discuss God's Word. Translators are encouraged that believers are extremely eager to receive their entire heart language Lokaa Bible. Some already say they want to share it with family and friends, offering the salvation and hope they have found in Jesus Christ.

Other Forms of Presentation

Christian leaders want to expand the literacy program, teaching Lokaa reading and writing in schools and adult classes, connecting it to Scripture use. The team also plans to use the oral Lokaa Bible for radio ministries, TV and other electronic media.

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Status of Christianity

Religion and Response

Need for Translation

Believers pray for Yaka people involved in witchcraft, and for polygamous villagers, who live immoral lives. Without heart language Scripture, people are ignorant of God's plan.

Christians know that when they can read and listen to God's Word in the language of their hearts, it will clearly reveal that these practices are wrong, as illustrated by believers who have changed. People will recognize it is time to repent and obey. Many Lokaa speakers continue to mix Christian faith with local African traditions, including ancestor worship, fear of spirits, witchcraft and idolatry. This team wants their culture changed. A complete Lokaa mother tongue Bible will help that. Translators also know that audio formats will make Scripture available to many people, who do not yet read.

Religion

Many Lokaa-speaking people are nominal Christians, having schools and churches of many denominations in the area. Yet too often, Christianity is identified only with education. Church leaders are confident that having a complete mother tongue Bible will reveal a deeper understanding of God's character, and help the Lokaa believers learn how to live for Christ daily.