

The Bissa of Burkina Faso



The Bissa are a large ethnic group, numbering around 600,000 speakers, centered in Burkina Faso. Their homeland is Burkina Faso's southeast region, with some settlements in northern Togo and Ghana. While details of their history are unclear, they may have entered their present location as early as the 14th century. The Bissa live by subsistence farming, raising millet, maize, rice and peanuts. They sell cotton and some vegetables for cash. Since 1980, primary education has advanced, roughly two thirds of the schools in the region have been built since then. Still, however, less than one third of the boys, and one fourth of the girls, are enrolled in school.

Primary Religion:

Tribal Religion

Disciples (Matt 28.19):

0.3%

Churches:

Scripture Status (Matt 28.20):

In progress

Population (date):

288,000 (1998)



Map Unavailable

The Bissa of Burkina Faso

Item Name	Item Note	
Have They Heard The Gospel?		Profile Summary
Call Themselves Christian (%)	16%	
Believe In Jesus As God & Only Savior (%)	0.3%	
Prophet/Good Man, But Not God's Son (%)	68%	
Believe In The Local Traditional Religion (%)	30%	
Have Not Heard Who Jesus is (%)	16%	
Number Of Pastors	41	
Comment (Pastors)	There are at least 41 pastors per 288,000 people in Burkina Faso	
Number Of Missionaries Working	7	
Number Of Communities	about 173	
Comment (Churches)	41 Protestants and 30 Roman Catholic per 288,000 people in Burkina Faso	
Is The Word Of God Translated?	Work is in progress	
Translation Medium	Printed.	
Any Hinderance To Scripture Distribution?	<p>a. A lack of money: most speakers are poor and do not have enough money for such needs as medicines and education. As a result, many are not willing to spend on such things as books;</p> <p>b. A low literacy rate;</p> <p>c. The concept of reading is not a part of their traditional culture;</p> <p>d. A social pressure to retain the current religion and to resist the spread of the Christian Gospel;</p> <p>e. An over-reliance on the Christian pastor, priest, or catechist to provide spiritual nourishment. Most do not feel the need to read the Scriptures for themselves.</p>	
What Kind Of Missionaries Are Needed?	As a great item of praise, missions involved among the Bissa have emphasized equipping the Bissa to carry out the respective tasks. Outside assistance is basically limited to certain specialized functions, such as exegesis and consultant work (in Bible translation) and in supervising some church planting and community development projects. As a final comment, financial help is always appreciated, both in funding and in training for local income generation.	
Population All Countries		Group Description
World Population For This People	600000	
World Population (Date)	1998	
Comment (World Population)	They are 400,000 in Burkina Faso, 119,000 in Ghana, 63,000 emigrants in Cote d'Ivoire and 3,000 in Togo.	
Countries Where People Group Lives		Group Description
Country Name	Burkina Faso	
Geography & Environment		Group Description
Location	The live in Burkina Faso southeastern central region, Boulgou and Zoundweogo provinces, in the cities of Garango, Zabre, Gomboussougou, Tenkodogo and Bitou.	
Country	Burkina Faso	
Language & Linguistics		Group Description
Alternate Language Names	Bisa	
Other Mother Tongues Of This Group	MOORE	
Other Mother Tongues Of This Group	MOORE	
Linguistically Related Languages	SAMO	
Linguistically Related Languages	SAMO	
Literacy		Group Description
Literacy Attitude	Somewhat receptive	
Active Literacy Program	Yes	

The Bissa of Burkina Faso

Item Name

Comment (Literacy)

Item Note

A program to put the Bissa into writing began in 1979. The teaching Bissa to read and write in their language has been an important facet of the work since the late 1980's.

Economics

Subsistence Type

Agriculturalists

Occupation

They are subsistence farmers who grow millet, maize, rice, and peanuts.

Income Sources

They sell cotton and some vegetables for cash.

Group Description

Education

Comment (Education)

Since 1980 primary education has advanced, roughly two thirds of the schools in the region have been built . Less than one third of the boys, and one fourth of the girls, are enrolled in school.

Group Description

Church Growth

Comment (Church Growth)

There are at least three protestant denominations working in the region. These are the Assemblies of God, the Apostolic Church and the Baptists. There are also Roman Catholics.

Status of Christianity

Religion & Response

Religious Practices & Ceremonies

The Bissa follow the traditional religion. In this worldview, man must sacrifice to spirits and gods who control events and situations.

Attitude To Religious Change

Somewhat resistant

Spiritual Climate And Openness

The Muslim faith is more widely practiced. More than two thirds of the Bissa are Muslim; Ghana's Bissa population appears to have a great majority of Muslims.

Comment (Religion)

Concerning Christianity, Roman Catholics number around 12% of the population and Protestants 3%. At least three Protestant denominations work in the region.

Items For Prayer

Pray that education advances continue, both in the realm of primary schools, and in practical areas such as hygiene. Pray as well for the evangelistic efforts among the Bissa.

Status of Christianity

Scripture

Translation Status

In Progress

Available Scripture

Portions

Form Of Scripture Available

Printed

Comment (Scripture)

Some literacy materials.

Comment (Scripture)

There is a Scripture translation program and 80% of the New Testament it translated.

Other Forms Of Gospel Available: Literature

Yes

Other Forms Of Gospel Available: Recordings

No

Other Forms Of Gospel Available: Film/Videos

No

Other Forms Of Gospel Available: Radio

No

Status of Christianity

Missions and Churches

Organization Name

(Burkina Faso)

Main Ministry

Bible Translation

Year Started

79

Status of Christianity

Christian Literature And Media Status

Literature Available

Yes.

Status of Christianity