

Dagomba

The Dagomba of northern Ghana, who live mainly around Tamale and Yendi, claim to originate from northern Nigeria. The earliest known states in what is now Ghana were the Dagomba and Mamprusi kingdoms in the north which flourished in the twelfth and fourteenth centuries. They were warriors on horseback, and most chiefs today still own a horse. The Dagomba are a proud people who sense they're being left behind in an advancing world.



Location

Most Dagomba live in northeast Ghana near the towns of Tamale and Yendi. Ghana is located on the Gulf of Guinea just five degrees north of the equator. Ghana is surrounded by Burkina Faso, Togo and Côte d'Ivoire. Lake Volta, the largest man-made lake in the world (in area), is in Ghana.

Climate

The months of December to May are dry as the Harmattan dust blows in off the desert. June to November are the rainy months.

Culture

The Dagomba speak Dagbani and live in Dagbon territory. They celebrate five traditional festivals in addition to national holidays. Beginning in December, after the harvest, many funerals are performed. Because of the cost, people may have been buried for months or even years before their loved ones can afford a funeral. The Dagomba practice polygamy, and commonly raise children of relatives. Diviners, traditional medicine men, and land priests carry a great deal of authority in health and moral matters.

Government

Two systems of rule coexist in Dagomba communities. One is government police and military; the other is the line of tribal chiefs who control the land and solve many disputes and crimes. Chiefs are mostly Muslim. The Paramount Chief sits in Yendi.



SIM Involvement

A SIM couple lived among the Dagomba in Tamale starting in 1987 doing evangelism. Another SIM family started church planting there around 1991. Today two families and one single nurse work in Dagbon. SIM relief efforts after the 1994 war with the Konkomba brought much goodwill and openness. Since 1997 the *JESUS* film has been widely shown in the Dagbani language in open-air meetings.

The Bible Church of Africa, the church with whom SIM relates in Ghana, has 29 churches. However, they have just three pastors! A great need for teaching remains. In 1998, three church districts were created with one Dagomba pastor assigned to each district. Part of the pastor's job is to lead and disciple church elders in each village. Churches vary in size from ten to 50 members.

Scripture Availability

The New Testament in Dagbani was translated and printed by the Assemblies of God in 1974. The Old Testament is in its final stages of completion. This Old Testament translation project has taken careful and meticulous work by a team of gifted people. The center for Ghana Institute of Linguistics and Literacy (GILLBT), where the Bible is used substantially in Dagbani literacy programs, is based in the city of Tamale. Pray that Dagomba hearts will be prepared for the printing and hearing of the whole Bible in Dagbani. Pray that the arrival of the Scriptures in their heart language will bring revival.

Urgent Prayer Need

Bingham Academy in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, urgently needs a [French teacher](#) to join their staff team in August. Pray that God will provide the right person to meet this need.