

Mamprusi

The earliest known states in what is now Ghana were the Mamprusi and Dagomba kingdoms in the north which flourished in the twelfth and fourteenth centuries. The Mamprusi are part of the Na Gwebra people originally from what is now Togo. Of the four people groups descended from Na Gwebra, the Mamprusi are the leaders. The Dagomba, Nanumba, and even the Mossi recognize them as the final authority among themselves.



Location

Most Mamprusi live in their homeland, Mamprugu, an area of northeast Ghana between the Dagbani in the south and Frafra in the north. There are also small communities of Mamprusi in towns in southern Ghana.

Topography

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.

History

In the eighteenth century, the Mamprusi people organized forces to protect the trade in slaves and goods with mercenaries from the Ivory Coast (now Côte d'Ivoire). The Frafra, Nabdem, Talensi, and Kusai are subject to them. The Mamprusi have five chiefs under their king.

Culture

Two-thirds of marriages are polygamous. Children are given both Mamprusi and Muslim names, and are circumcised. When a person dies, Mamprusis dig a temporary grave near the compound. At the next dry season they hold a special funeral, with food, dancing, and the determination of the cause of death, to honor the person. At this time the dead person's spirit is finally released.

Education: There are secondary middle schools in the main towns and a secondary school in Nalerigu, and many villages have primary schools. Many Mamprusi children don't get the opportunity to attend school because their parents need them to help with herding the animals and with the chores at home. The literacy rate among the Mamprusi is less than 15%.

Religion

Eighty-two percent of Mamprusis practice traditional religion. Naa-wuni is the supreme god, whose name is used by Muslims. In the traditional religion he is not worshiped or referred to except in exclamations. Ancestors are believed to help in a crisis through various diviners who live in each village. The Mamprusi communicate with their ancestors through sacrifices and offerings. Fourteen percent of Mamprusis are Muslims, and four percent are Christians. Great social pressure is put on any who want to change.

SIM Involvement

SIM works alongside the Bible Church of Africa (BCA) in Ghana. The BCA has about 180 organized churches as well as Bible Schools. Outreach to the Mamprusi began in 1940 by the Assemblies of God. Today there are 46 Protestant churches, seven Roman Catholic churches, and one Seventh-day Adventist church with about 40 members.

Scripture Availability

Since 1943, portions of the Bible have been translated into Mamprui, including the book of Genesis and Luke. The translation of the entire Bible into the language of the Mamprusi is still in progress.

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.