

The Bozo of Mali

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The Bozo people were originally hunters and came into the area from the east. They settled in the Niger Delta and from then on have been fishermen. Some live in boats and migrate along the river. The climate in this region is very hot and dry, but during the rainy season, which lasts about three months, the rivers flood, and some areas where the Bozos live are inaccessible except by boat.

The term "Bozo" is generally used to refer to a complex of four separate languages: Tièma Cièwè, Tiéyaxo, Hainyaxo and Sorogama (which has six dialects). In each linguistic group there are three groups: the Bozo or Suruge-fishermen, the Somono- fish traders, and the Marka-farmers. These groups intermarry, unlike castes. Literally the term "Bozo" means "straw hut" in Bambara.

The Bozos were originally a part of the ancient Empire of Ghana, but emigrated to Mali to escape the decadence of that empire. They have generally lived independently of other groups, but have strong ties with the Dogon people, this arising out of their history passed down by oral tradition.

The main religion of the Bozo is Islam, but on taking a closer look, one finds traditional beliefs intertwined with the Islamic. There are only a handful of Bozo believers, and resistance to the Gospel is strong because of the Muslim influence as well as that of traditional beliefs.

Primary Religion:

Muslim

Disciples (Matt 28.19):

0%

Churches:

Scripture Status (Matt 28.20):

None in their language

Population (date):

302,500 (1992)



Map Unavailable

The Bozo of Mali

Item Name

Item Note

Have They Heard The Gospel?

Profile Summary

Believe In Jesus As God & Only Savior (%)	0%
Is The Word Of God Translated?	No. Translation would help in outreach and church planting.
Any Hinderance To Scripture Distribution?	Literacy rate is very low.
Forms Of Gospel Presentation Available (Summary)	There are no other forms available.
What Kind Of Missionaries Are Needed?	Yes, a large number of missionaries could be used effectively. Several agencies have missionaries working with the Bozo people. They would be interested in a school in their mother tongue and there is some interest in funding for various projects.

Population All Countries

Group Description

World Population For This People	302500
World Population (Date)	1992
Comment (World Population)	Population is said to be over 100000 in three of the major dialects but only 2500 in the Tiéma dialect.

Countries Where People Group Lives

Group Description

Country Name	Mali
Country Name	Mali

Geography & Environment

Group Description

Location	Along the deltas of the Niger and Bani Rivers northeast of Ségou and south of Youvarouo. Some in Burkina Faso and Côte d'Ivoire along rivers.
Country	Mali
Geological Type	Riverine
Climate	Hot and dry with rain only 3 months per year.

Language & Linguistics

Group Description

Comment (Language)	These language names are listed as separate languages in the Ethnologue.
Alternate Language Names	Hainyaxo, Sorogama, Tiéma Cièwè, Tiéyaxo
Other Mother Tongues Of This Group	FULFULDE, MAASINA
Other Mother Tongues Of This Group	FULFULDE, MAASINA
Other Mother Tongues Of This Group	BAMBARA
Other Mother Tongues Of This Group	BAMBARA
Linguistically Related Languages	BOSO, TIEMA CIEWE
Linguistically Related Languages	BOSO, SOROGAMA
Linguistically Related Languages	BOSO, TIEMA CIEWE
Linguistically Related Languages	BOSO, SOROGAMA
Linguistically Related Languages	BOSO, TIEYAXO
Linguistically Related Languages	BOSO, TIEYAXO
Comments (Related Languages)	Bozo is also spoken as mother tongue in Burkina Faso and Côte d' Ivoire.
Neighboring Languages	DOGON
Neighboring Languages	BAMBARA
Neighboring Languages	FULFULDE, MAASINA

Literacy

Group Description

Literacy Attitude	Very resistant
Active Literacy Program	No
Comment (Literacy)	Adult literacy rate is very low.

Economics

Group Description

The Bozo of Mali

Item Name	Item Note	
Subsistence Type	Fishers	
Average Annual Income	Not known	
Occupation	Traditionally fishermen, although a few are now subsistence farmers.	
Income Sources	Fish	
Products / Crafts	Things related to fishing. e.g. nets, harpoons.	
Community Development		Group Description
Health Care (Quality)	Poor	
Comment (Health Care)	A small maternity clinic and a pharmacy in one of the larger villages.	
Diet (Quality)	Fair	
Comment (Diet)	Fish, rice, millet, corn	
Water (Quality)	Poor	
Comment (Water)	Wells that exist are often dirty	
Shelter Description	Those on the rivers live on their boats with one end partitioned off as a shelter using straw mats (looking similar to the sampans of the Orient). Those on land live in huts made of straw or of mud bricks.	
Energy/Fuel (Quality)	None	
Comment (Energy)	Wood, charcoal, some bottled gas	
Clothing	Long blouse tunics called boubous. Sometimes head covering made of long pieces of fabric wrapped around the head.	
Society & Culture		Group Description
Family Structures	The immediate family and the extended family, which is based on the father's line. The authority in the extended family comes from the chief of the family who is responsible to feed, clothe, and lodge his family. Decisions come from him, and the family owes him respect and obedience.	
Neighbor Relations	Strong ties with the Dogon. Bozo are the lowest in status in the region. First in status are the Bambara, then Fulani, then Dogon, and finally the Bozo.	
Authority / Rule	The clan is the main social structure beyond the family. The chief of the clan, usually the chief of the village, makes judgements in civil affairs of the clan.	
Social Habits/Groupings	Grouping by families and clans; castes are almost non-existent among the Bozo.	
Celebrations	Muslim festivals of Ramadan, Tabaski, and Mawloud and celebrations related to fishing.	
Art Forms	Dancing, music, some tattoos for facial markings.	
Youth		Group Description
Youth Problems (Teens)	Immorality and promiscuity	
Education		Group Description
Comment (Education)	Education is only in French or Bambara and the Bozo do not see the value of this; they would prefer schools in Bozo.	
Church Growth		Status of Christianity
Comment (Church Growth)	There are only a few believers and no pastors. Alliance Mission, C & MA and the Evangelical Church of Mali are working among the group.	
Religion & Response		Status of Christianity
Religious Practices & Ceremonies	Five pillars of Islam and other Islamic practices.	
Attitude To Christianity	Somewhat resistant	
Attitude To Religious Change	Somewhat resistant	
Resistance / Receptivity	They are quite resistant to change and to Christianity.	
Religious Analogies & Bridges	Sacrifices	
Comment (Religion)	The Toucouleur people conquered them and converted them to Islam.	

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Item Name	Item Note	
History Of Christianity In Group		Status of Christianity
Year Began	1992	
By Whom	Christian and Missionary Alliance	
Scripture		Status of Christianity
Translation Status	In Progress	
Available Scripture	None	
Comment (Scripture)	It is not certain how many of the dialects use their own translation.	
Christian Literature And Media Status		Status of Christianity
Literature Available	None	
Audio Recordings Available	None	
Films Available	None	
Radio Programs Available	None	
Videos Available	None	
Audio Visual Available	None	