

# THE MABA PEOPLE & CHAD'S OUADDAÏ REGION



CENTER FOR  
THE STUDY  
of Global  
Christianity

GORDON  CONWELL  
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY



The Maba People and Chad's Ouaddaï Region

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Cover Photo: Refugees from Darfur in eastern Chad, 2011 | globalnyt.dk: European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations. (CC BY-SA 2.0)

Unless otherwise noted, data is sourced from the *World Christian Database* and the following citation should be used: Todd M. Johnson and Gina A. Zurlo, eds., *World Christian Database* (Leiden/Boston: Brill, accessed December 2019).

## ABOUT THE CSGC

The Center for the Study of Global Christianity is an academic research center that monitors worldwide demographic trends in Christianity, including outreach and mission. We provide a comprehensive collection of information on the past, present, and future of Christianity in every country of the world. Our data and publications help churches, mission agencies, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to be more strategic, thoughtful, and sensitive to local contexts. Please visit our website at [www.globalchristianity.org](http://www.globalchristianity.org).

## DATA AND TERMS

This dossier includes many technical terms related to the presentation of statistics. A complete methodology document is found here: <https://www.gordonconwell.edu/center-for-global-christianity/research/dossiers>. We use a social scientific method for measuring religion around the world; namely, self-identification. If a person calls herself a Christian, then she is a Christian. We measure Christians primarily by denominational affiliation in every country of the world and these data are housed in the World Christian Database. Ethnolinguistic people groups are distinct homogeneous ethnic or racial groups within a single country, speaking its own language (one single mother tongue). These dossiers measure gospel access (also known as "evangelization") by a number of variables, including but not limited to, evangelistic outreach, church planting, personal witnessing, sharing on social media, etc. These dossiers also utilize data from the United Nations related to socio-economic, development, and gender-justice related issues.

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Children on a wall in Chad.

Muslim traders colonized modern-day Chad in the 11th century. Islam spread throughout the northern and eastern regions of the country in successive waves in the 16th and 17th centuries. Catholics in Chad date to the 17th century, while Protestants arrived starting in the early 20th century. Chad was a French colony from 1900 until independence in 1960 and has experienced a series of civil wars: 1965–79; 1979–86; and 2005–10. In 2015, the government imposed a state of emergency in the Lake Chad

region following multiple attacks by Boko Haram. Chad is 58% Muslim and 35% Christian (2020). Catholics are the largest Christian tradition, but Evangelical Protestants represent a substantial minority.

The Ouaddaï region served as a crucial point for intersecting trade routes stretching from the historic Maghreb, Benghazi, and western Africa all the way to Mecca in Saudi Arabia. Islam spread throughout along the major trade routes, trickling into tribal groups more vulnerable to the slave trade.

The Maba people represent a distinct cultural unit primarily found in Chad's Ouaddaï and Sila provinces, but they are also found in the Darfur province of Sudan. The vast majority of the Maba and other peoples in Chad are Sunni Muslims (95%). The Maba's neighbors include the Tama to the northeast and the Daju to the south as well as groups of nomadic Arabs. The Maba language and related dialects are spoken by the Maba people in the Ouaddaï region. Over half of Maba Chadians also speak Chadian Arabic, the second language for many Chadians who speak other indigenous languages.

Simply put, Ouaddaï and Sila are difficult places to live. The region suffers from poor infrastructure, food insecurity, a lack of safe water and education, and severe gender inequality, all of which is compounded by the large and ongoing refugee crisis from neighboring Darfur. Ouaddaï and Sila rank consistently low on most socio-health-economic measures.

Several Protestant mission agencies are working in the region, Africa Inland Mission, Baptist Mid-Missions, Chad for Christ, Golden Hills Church, Grace Brethren International Ministries, TEAM, and Wycliffe Bible Translators.

Despite the presence of different Christian churches and missionary groups, Chad, and the regions of Ouaddaï, and Dar Sila all have very low Gospel access

### CHAD QUICK FACTS

POPULATION (2020): 16,285,000  
CHRISTIANS: 5,676,000  
RELIGION: 58% MUSLIM, 35% CHRISTIAN  
GOSPEL ACCESS: MEDIUM  
PEOPLES: 148 LEAST-ACCESS: 90  
HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INDEX: 40 (AVG: 70)  
GDP PER CAPITA: \$1,800 (AVG:\$15,300)  
GENDER INEQUALITY INDEX: 71 (AVG. 37)

### REGION QUICK FACTS

#### OUADDAÏ

POPULATION: 1,066,000

CHRISTIANS: 107,500

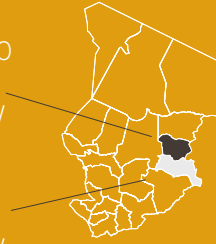
GOSPEL ACCESS: LOW

#### SILA

POPULATION: 422,244

CHRISTIANS: 28,000

GOSPEL ACCESS: LOW



rates (54.6%, 38%, and 38%, respectively). Access here is understood as the extent to which a people or language has resources in their mother tongue (or, to a lesser extent, a trade language) to help them understand and respond to the Christian message. Language is a critical factor in evangelism and is clearly tied to Bible translation efforts. Access rates are likely to remain low for this people group and region with no Bible available in the Maba language. Radio broadcasting, film, and other audio-visual resources are also language specific. Other important factors in access include availability of the Jesus film, audio scriptures, and other kinds of media – coupled with important social factors such as religious freedom, human development, and literacy rates. Ouaddaï remains a challenging region because of both a lack of efforts in Christian presence and human development.

### MABA (CHAD) QUICK FACTS

NAME: WADAIAN (MABANGI, MABA)

POPULATION: 505,000

CHRISTIANS: 200

% CHRISTIAN: 0.04%

GOSPEL ACCESS: VERY LOW

MAJORITY RELIGION: ISLAM

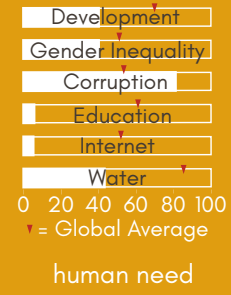
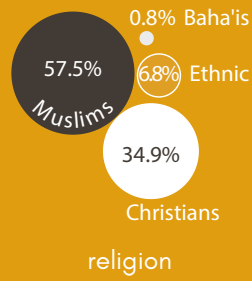
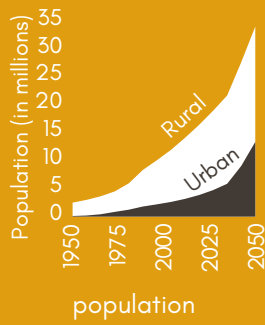
SCRIPTURES: PORTIONS AVAILABLE IN MABA AND IN A SECOND LANGUAGE, MABA TRANSLATION IN PROGRESS



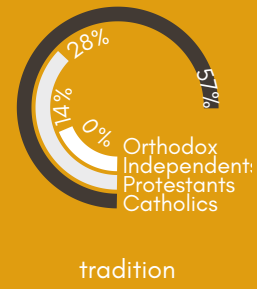
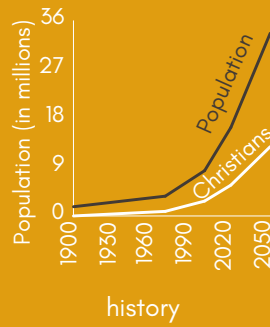
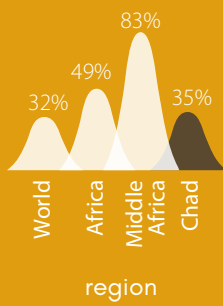
Young children play a refugee camp in Eastern Chad, 2011.

# CHAD IN CONTEXT, 2020

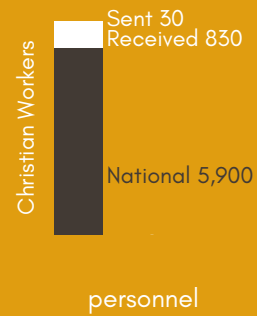
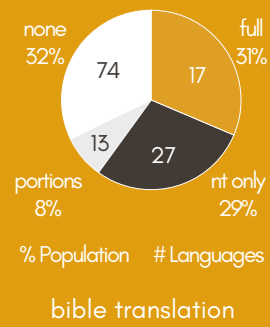
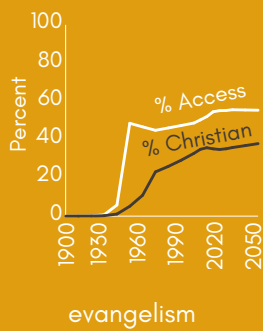
## COUNTRY



## CHRISTIANITY



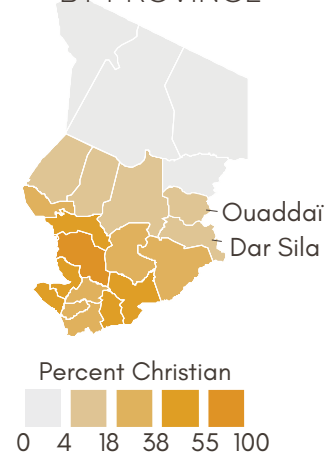
## MISSION



## LOCATION

The Ouaddaï region from which Maba originate, and in which they remain today, corresponds to the historical region and sultanate known as Wadai, which reigned from 1625 to 1909. Wadai served as a crucial point for intersecting trade routes stretching from the historic Maghreb (Northwest Africa, Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria), Benghazi (Libya), and Western Africa all the way to Mecca in Saudi Arabia. Nomads, colonists, slave traders, and a variety of other travelers and agriculturalists migrating or sojourning from any of these regions likely passed through Wadai on their way to most major trade towns from East Africa all the way to the Arabian Peninsula. These trade routes left an indelible mark on travel across Chad. Today's major highway A5 is one of the only highways that passes through the region stretching from N'Djamena (Chad's capital) to Abéché (capital of Ouaddaï). It resembles a portion of the historic path from the west of the country near Lake Chad to Wadai and eastward into Sudan.

CHRISTIANITY IN CHAD  
BY PROVINCE



## HISTORY

### EARLY HISTORY

Chad's prehistory is known only through archeological reconstructions of the movement of people across Africa as a whole and oral histories. There exists little evidence of the country's history prior to the 11th-century arrival of Islam, which spread along the major trade routes, particularly within lesser organized tribal groups in regions more vulnerable to the slave trade. The climate and geography of the region between Lake Chad and the Darfurian highlands has dictated much of the economic practices of both prehistoric and modern Chadians. Ancient Chadians were pastoralists who lived nomadically, moving large families and herds across rough countryside to find water. With water and grassland scattered, herdsman have long traveled across the region to support large flocks while others have been more static in establishing subsistence farming communities that grow a variety of grains such as millet, groundnuts, sorghum, and beans. A theme that continues today is disputes regarding watering sources for herds of cattle, sheep, and goats sought by both nomadic pastoralists and sedentary agriculturalists.

## CHAD TIMELINE OF RECENT HISTORY

1883: Rabih al-Zubayr conquers kingdoms in present day Chad.		1913: Chad becomes a French colony.
1960: Chad becomes Independent.		1963: The banning of political parties triggers violent opposition in the Muslim north.
1966: Northern revolt develops into a fully-fledged guerrilla war.		1975: Tombalbaye deposed and killed in coup led by another southern Christian, Felix Malloum.
1982: Habre seizes power. He is later accused of mass political killings during his rule.		2001: Deby declared winner in controversial presidential poll.
1990: Habre toppled by former ally, Idriss Deby.		2004: Thousands of Sudanese refugees flee Darfur for Chad.
2003: Chad becomes an oil exporter.		2018: Parliament approves a new constitution expanding the president's powers.
2014: Chad closes border with CAR		

Source: BBC

The region was first colonized by Muslim traders in the 11th century. These Islamic kingdom-states underwent many stages of dissolution and reconstitution between the 11th and 19th centuries. Indigenous peoples competed with Arab Muslims for agricultural resources, which pushed many people southward. An ethnolinguistic split occurred between the Sudanese and the Chadian Maba peoples at the time of the mid-18th century Darfur-Wadai-Sennar (Sudan) conflict, which contributed to the formation of the contemporary geopolitical boundaries of today's Republic of Chad. Both peoples trace their roots to the kingdom of Wadai. Their dialects diverged over time, given their geographic and cultural separation during the formation of the modern borders of Chad and Sudan.

Historically, Ouaddaï's economy, like much of colonized Africa along major trade routes, depended in part on the enslavement of non-Muslim African peoples. Slave raids mainly occurred at the expense of animist populations in the south. Much of that territory remains a part of Chad today in the region named after this Muslim kingdom-state, Ouaddaï. Some scholars attribute a relatively elevated status to the Maba people because of their connection with the historic Wadai aristocracy, though it is unclear if their socio-economic opportunities are actually that advantaged compared to adjacent peoples and refugees. Such status is still tied to whether or not a particular Maba person belongs to a family that still owns land or cattle



Ouaddaï village.



## FRENCH COLONIALISM

The powerful rule of Rabih az-Zubayr, a Sudanese warlord and slave trader, lasted from 1883 until his overthrow by the French in 1900. French involvement until 1960 catalyzed the modern era of Chad by setting the foundation for conflicts that still exist today. Many of the existing political parties, movements, and ideologies formed during the period of French territorialism in Chad and during its struggle for independence. Chad's internal and external conflicts are the products of three major cultures that have competed for authority throughout its history: indigenous, French, and Islamic. Each of these has attempted to either survive at best or to usurp the others at worst. The fragmentation of the country during its colonial periods (first Islamic and then French) facilitated the emergence of numerous factions that claim to represent the interests of a particular sub-group within the country. The French granted partial autonomy to Chad in 1957 and full independence was achieved on August 11, 1960. An unratified 1935 treaty between Italy and France would have granted the Aouzou Strip - a piece of northern Chad that is claimed to hold uranium - to Libya. This arrangement led to later conflicts between Libya and the newly independent Republic of Chad in the 1970s. The Libyan claim over the Aouzou Strip ceased with a 1994 ruling from the International Court of Justice.

Chad's history is characterized by its complex record of colonization which extends as far back as the pre-medieval, imperial spread of Islam.



Mosque in Abeche, Chad, 2010.

Chad is an oil producing nation but ranks 186th out of 189 countries in the 2017 Human Development Index. However, Chad's HDI score has improved by 35% since measured in 2000.

Source: UNDP Human Development Report, 2019.

## POST-INDEPENDENCE

At independence in 1960, N'Garta (François) Tombalbaye replaced the territorial governor and attempted to merge the two major political parties, the Chad Progressive Party (who helped usher in independence) and the National African Party (PNA). A supposed conspiracy led to the breakdown of this united party and the arrest of former members of the PNA in 1963. This event established a precedent for a one-party state when in the following election supposedly "government candidates" could only run for office. Tombalbaye ruled as a dictator and was assassinated by members of the Chadian military in 1975. Groups emerged in the north and east-central regions with the objective to overthrow the government, reduce the residual French presence in Chad, and form closer relationships with Arab North Africa. This resulted in a civil war that vacillated over the next decade in its major participants but was punctuated by Libyan and French efforts to stifle rebellion on both sides. The Armed Forces of the North (FAN) reorganized in the early and mid-1980s and occupied towns in eastern Chad. France and the United States helped bring Hissene Habre to power against the wishes of Libya. Habre ended up the first former head of state to be convicted of human rights abuses. In 2016 he was sentenced to life in prison for rape, sexual slavery, and the murder of 40,000 people during his reign (1982-1990).

The current president of Chad, Idriss Deby, served as a military adviser to Habre in the late 1980s. Deby escaped after being suspected of plotting to overthrow Habre. In 1990, his Movement for Chadian National Salvation took control of Abéché (in Ouaddaï) and Deby assumed the presidency that same year. He has been re-elected with a majority of votes every five years. The last 25 years have seen a myriad of coup attempts against Deby by a series of rebel groups. Despite establishing the country as a major exporter of oil in 2003, very little progress has been made in terms of infrastructure and economy under during Deby's long presidency. Multiple sources argue that Deby tends to lend support (i.e., weapons or acceptance of refugees) in international conflicts to maintain appearances and construct a façade of diplomacy at the expense of his own country, while doing whatever necessary to maintain control amidst the onslaught of rebel efforts within Chad's borders. The new constitution, ratified in 2018, could extend Deby's presidency to 2033 pending subsequent re-elections.

## OUADDAÏ TODAY

### REFUGEES

The complex refugee crises in Ouaddaï can be outlined what has been called a series of “major shocks” to the region over the last 25 years. In the 1990s, refugees began to arrive in the wake of conflicts between West Sudanese (Darfurian) Arab peoples and the Masalit people. This escalated in 2003 when the largest number of refugees arrived as conflicts intensified. Two years later, more border conflicts displaced approximately 18,000 Chadians from the Kado canton. Many internally displaced people returned in 2010, but not before Chadian refugees from Libya re-entered their homeland. The vast majority of refugees in Ouaddaï are Masalit people from Darfur, though other Sudanese ethnic groups are also affected. Ongoing violence in the region has caused significant population movements over short periods of time. There are an estimated 300,000 refugees in the region, though these estimates vary. The situation is further complicated by the ongoing internal instability of Chad, which results in many internally displaced persons counted in some of the refugee estimates.

The vast majority of refugees in Ouaddaï are Masalit from Darfur, though other Sudanese ethnic groups are also affected.

There are an estimated 300,000 refugees in Ouaddaï and Sila



People at a coronation in Chad standing on Red Cross vehicles, 2005.

Maba is spoken by 296,000 Chadians primarily in pockets of the Ouaddaï, Sila, and Wadi Fira.

Over half of Maba Chadians also speak Chadian Arabic.

A 2017 agreement between Chad, Sudan, and the UN-HCR initiated a period of voluntary return for Sudanese refugees. However, one source suggests that this has had little effect due to the continued instability of the Darfur region. Relationships between refugees and their Chadian hosts are generally positive, as indicated by intermarriages between refugees and Ouaddaïens. At the same time, the governor of Ouaddaï has stated that refugees actually live better than their Chadian counterparts. One of the most important factors in this relative amiability is the openness of refugee camps (like Farchana) to local and refugee populations, but issues of limited agricultural, land, and water resources remain the greatest ignitor for Chadian refugee conflict in Ouaddaï.

#### PEOPLES & LANGUAGES

The Maba live in the eastern region of Ouaddaï, where the Kado once formed an aristocracy. The Maba are neighbors to the Tama to the north and the Daju to the south, each of which had previously formed their own sultanates. Nomadic Arabs also live in the region as well as in southcentral Chad. Libran Arabs also live in Kanem.

The designation of the people group “Maba” derives from their usage of the language of the same name; that is, the Maba are people who speak Maba. Maba is spoken by 296,000 Chadians primarily in pockets of the Ouaddaï and Wadi Fira regions. Over half of Maba (180,000) Chadians also speak Chadian Arabic, which is also the second language for

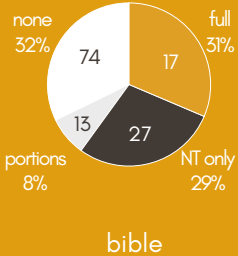
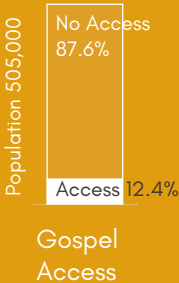


Chadian tribal delegation, 2005.

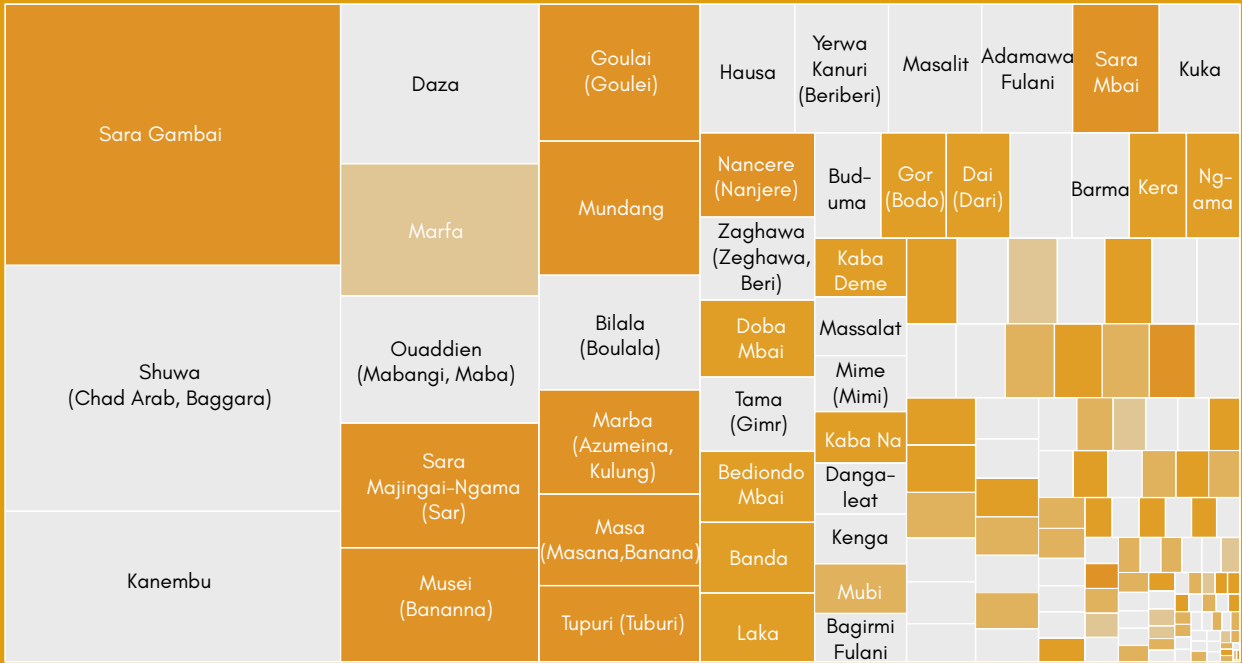
# MABA PEOPLE IN CONTEXT

The Maba, among whom the Kado once formed an aristocracy, live in the eastern region of Chad in the province Ouaddaï and Sila. They constitute a nucleus surrounded by a host of other groups who, while possessing their own languages, nevertheless constitute a distinct cultural unit. The Tama to the north and the Daju to the south have formed their own separate sultanates. Throughout the Ouaddaï region one finds groups of nomadic Arabs, who are also found in other parts of central Chad. The designation of the people group "Maba" derives from their usage of the language of the same name "Maba." The name "Ouaddaï" is interchangeable with "Maba" for describing the language and people. Over half of Maba Chadians also speak Chadian Arabic which is also the second language for many who speak other indigenous languages. Maba people can also be found in smaller numbers in the Darfur region of Sudan.

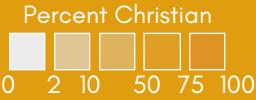
NAME: OUADDIEN (MABANGI, MABA)  
 POPULATION: 505,000  
 CHRISTIANS: 0.04%  
 GOSPEL ACCESS: VERY LOW  
 MAJORITY RELIGION: ISLAM 99.1%  
 SCRIPTURES: TRANSLATION IN PROGRESS, AVAILABLE TO SOME IN A SECONDARY LANGUAGE.



## PEOPLES OF CHAD



The treemap depicts all 148 people groups in Chad. The rectangles are proportional to the population of each people group, while the color intensity reflects the percent Christian of the people group.



many who speak other indigenous languages. There are no Bibles in the Maba language, either in print or audio, though some Bible portions exist. Nationally, French remains an official language (with Arabic). Neighboring languages in the Ouaddaï and Dar Sila regions are unevenly distributed and are also overlapping in usage within the regions including Amdang, Tama, Mararit, Assangori, and Masalit.

#### CITIES AND TRANSPORTATION

The only major city in Ouaddaï is Abéché, the capital of the region. Farchana along with Treguine, Hadjer Hadid, and Bredjing constitute the largest cluster of refugee camps in the region. Hadjer Hadid is a Massalit village with a huge refugee camp attached to it. It is also one of the historically important Massalit villages.

Transportation between Abéché and the surrounding villages, whether refugee camps run by organizations or villages with indigenous peoples, is very difficult. The A5 highway runs from N'djamena to Abéché to Adré into Sudan (Darfur). For residents of villages in Ouaddaï it is uncommon to own a vehicle, though it is common to own a motorcycle, cart and horse, or a donkey for transportation. Many refugees walk from their camps to major towns to find work, food, or other resources – often walking for a few hours at a time.

Adré and Abdi each have one unpaved airport and Abeche has a paved runway. There are four airstrips in Dar Sila (all clay and/or gravel) and three in Wadi Fira to the north of Ouaddaï. Mission Aviation Fellowship presently works in Chad. UNHAS also provides services to humanitarian workers in Ouaddai and Sila.



Ouaddaï area near Abéché.

Extremely poor infrastructure in Ouaddaï, coupled with limited water supplies, make the region an extremely difficult place to live. The region is vast, and roads are almost nonexistent.

## CHALLENGES FOR OUADDAÏ

### ENVIRONMENT

Ouaddaï is frequently referred to as a highland region and it forms the western half of what is often called the Darfurian highlands, the eastern half of which remains in western Sudan today. The whole highland region is split by this the modern geo-political boundary that likely took its current shape when the Wadai sultanate established itself as independent from Darfur in the 1790s. Extremely poor infrastructure in Ouaddaï, coupled with limited water supplies, make the region an extremely difficult place to live. The region is vast, and roads are almost nonexistent. Humanitarian workers face monumental challenges in developing strategies for safe water access to refugee camps. A common water resource in the region around Farchana and Hadjer Hadid is the Moura Wadi. Wadis run fast and strong during the rainy season, June through September. People dig shallow wells in the wadi in the absence of rain during the dry season and use pumps to access groundwater that is often contaminated and of high turbidity.

### DEVELOPMENT

Ouaddaï is one of the world's regions most affected by severe food insecurity, which is a consequence of limited rainfall, lack of sufficient fertile arable land, and overpopulation due to the refugee crisis and rapid population



Ouaddaï area.

COUNTRY RANK	LIFE EXPECTANCY	PHYSICIANS PER 1K	INFANT MORTALITY	MALARIA PER 1K	HIV PER 1K	GDP PC	NET WORTH PC	INTERNET USERS %	RELIGIOUS LIBERTY	GENDER INEQUALITY
<b>CHAD</b>	55	0	72	168	13	1,768	1,728	5.0%	7	71
<b>WORLD (OF 234)</b>	233	226	2	24	36	214	228	227	142	3
<b>AFRICA (OF 58)</b>	57	50	2	23	30	40	53	52	34	1
<b>REGION (OF 9)</b>	9	9	2	7	7	7	8	8	7	1

Chad’s troubled social and economic realities are evident in several UN measures of social and physical wellbeing. Ranking Chad on these measures against other countries in the region, in Africa and the world highlights the major challenges that Chad faces relative to others.

growth and other internal migration. As of March 2017, Dar Sila, Ouaddaï, Wadi Fira, and Ennedi-Est had over 300,000 refugees as a result of the ongoing Darfur crisis, which began in 2003. International Medical Corp is also active within the Ouaddaï and Wadi Fira regions where Maba are known to live, though there are substantially fewer Maba in Wadi Fira. In 2017, the average educational attainment for all of Chad was 2.8 years of schooling, although Qur’anic schooling is common so very basic literacy in Arabic is widespread. This is lower in villages and refugee camps in Ouaddaï, where Maba live, especially for girls and women. The top three causes of death in Chad are diarrheal diseases, lower respiratory infections, and neonatal disorders. Health risks and causes of death vary depending on socio-economic conditions within a region. Health issues are exacerbated by other environmental challenges faced by those living throughout the Ouaddaï region as indicated by its low ranking on socio-development measures.

## CONFLICT

Conflict within Chad is multifaceted and ongoing. To describe adequately the collective state of conflict within Chad, it is helpful to distinguish between Chad’s international conflicts and the localized conflicts within the Ouaddaï-Darfur (Sudan) borderlands, as they are inextricable from one another but do not always occur to the same scale. Conflict in Chad is a complex interplay between federal responses to rebel groups and militias from within and outside its borders and the violence perpetrated by these groups at the regional level. In international disputes Chad, at times, remains passive and other times provides military support. All of this contributes to an over-

Ouaddaï is one of the world’s regions most affected by severe food insecurity, which is a consequence of limited rainfall, lack of sufficient arable land, and overpopulation due to the refugee crisis.



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Médecins Sans Frontières (Doctors Without Borders) front door at a Darfur refugee camp in Chad, 2009.

all state of instability and insecurity at the regional level, and specifically in Ouaddai.

On August 11, 2018 some 100 armed vehicles attacked two Chadian military garrisons at Kouri Bougoudi – a gold-mining area where many immigrants and Chadians are engaged in mining activities – in the Tibesti desert, near the border with Libya, resulting in the death of at least three Chadian soldiers and the theft of approximately 20 military vehicles. The Chadian armed group, Conseil de commandement militaire pour le salut de la République, claimed responsibility for the attack. In response, the Chadian government requested all mine workers to leave the area prior to the initiation of air and ground operations by the armed forces. The Chadian Air Force bombarded two mining operations in the area of Kouri Bougoudi on September 13, killing two miners and seriously injuring two others. More than 8,000 people of multiple nationalities left the area and requested assistance. On October 24 another attack against the Chadian defense and security forces was reported in Miski department, near the border with Libya. The spokesperson of the Chadian armed forces announced that the attackers had been neutralized and the situation was under control.

According to multiple reports from August 2019, President Deby announced that some farmers had been killed

within the Ouaddaï region. Articles in Al-Jazeera, Voice of America, Radio France Internationale (RFI) as well as the Council on Foreign Relations reported violence occurring between farmers and herders that resulted in the deaths of at least 25 (perhaps up to 44) people. Different news sources emphasize different dimensions of these conflicts depending on their ideological disposition. Some prefer to cast the conflict as a racial struggle between Arab Chadians and Black African Chadians. In doing so, they place the conflict within the context of the continuous war since 2003 along the Chad-Sudan border, which has caused an influx of hundreds of thousands of Sudanese people into Chad. Yet, others suggest that the relationship between ethnicity, land-ownership, and traditional power dynamics is often obscured to a degree that renders the conflict irreducible to any one particular lens, and emphasis is instead placed on how all of these potential sources of tension relate to issues of property, land usage, and access to vital resources.

## GENDER

The economic challenges of Ouaddaïen peoples living in or near refugee camps place a heavy burden on all capable members of the family to work toward their collective survival. Women perform “double duty” from a very young age. They are often in the fields working alongside men but are also expected to maintain their household by cooking and caring for children. Water is an essential household resource, so both potable and non-potable water needs are regarded as a woman’s burden. In addition to working alongside their husbands in a variety of sedentary agricul-



Women at a refugee camp in Chad, 2005.

Conflict in Chad is a complex interplay between federal responses to rebel groups and militias from within and outside its borders and the violence perpetuated by these groups at the regional level.

## GENDER IN CHAD

	% FEMALE	GENDER GAP	GENDER INEQUALITY
<b>CHAD</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>71</b>
<b>WORLD</b>	50	8	37
<b>AFRICA</b>	50	12	55
<b>MIDDLE AFRICA</b>	50	15	64

The table above compares key measures of gender equality against global, continental and regional averages.

Sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) is tragically common among both refugees and indigenous villagers in Ouaddaï.

Most sources reinforce the idea that women more or less do “double duty” from a very young age, they are often in the fields working alongside men but also expected to maintain their household by cooking and caring for children.

tural roles, they are also expected to obtain water, which is a very time-consuming and arduous task. Limited educational resources and assumptions concerning a woman’s role in the community often means that young girls do not attend school. The emphasis and expectation are placed upon boys (in particular, urban boys) to excel in education. Yet, at the same time, many women become the de facto head of household due to low life-expectancies and other socio-cultural factors related to divorce and men’s abandonment of families.

Sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) against women is common among indigenous villagers in Ouaddaï. Men within the rural areas of Ouaddaï and Sila become abusers for a variety of reasons, not the least of which include the immense pressure to survive, and many traumatic experiences. Many so-called awareness-raising campaigns or strategies employed by various humanitarian organizations to educate and create environments to foster openness about SGBV are said to be effective; however, they suffer from being short-term programs, only running for roughly six months at a time. Additionally, given the relative and absolute poverty of the region and the lack of education afforded to women, few women are able to seek justice for the violence enacted against them.

Violence against women and girls (VAWG) is well-documented by humanitarian/development organiza-



Women waiting for medical care, 2005.

tions whose efforts are directed toward ameliorating the effects of VAWG during times of disaster. However, VAWG endures in the absence of relief groups. Violence against women and girls is arbitrated during conflict at the hands of militants and rebels within Chad but is also enacted upon them by their own community members and husbands. Women in eastern Chad are unlikely to pursue justice for their domestic abuse because it renders their children vulnerable to fatherlessness and, in turn, deeper poverty.

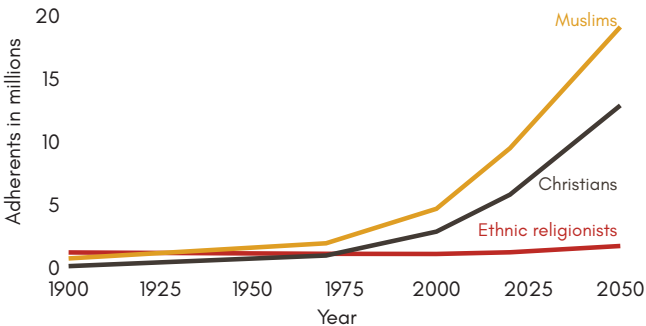
RELIGION & MISSION

RELIGION

A new constitution in mid-2018 re-affirmed Chad to be a secular state with the separation of religion and state. President Deby, a Muslim, has fired ministers who refused to take such an oath. Groups representing a variety of interests have expressed concern about the oath of office, arguing that this contradicts the decidedly secular nature of the country established by the new constitution. At the same time, the government has a standing burqa ban.

Every village in eastern Chad has a mosque, and Abeche itself is home to hundreds. The most notable buildings in the region are the ruins of Sultan Ibn Abdel-Kerim Djame’s palace from the 16th century, the former sultanate capital Ouara/Wara. Other remnants of the Wadai Empire are found northwest of capital and largest city, Abéché. The ruins are a tentative UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization) World Heritage Site.

MAJOR RELIGIONS IN CHAD, 1900-2050



Islam and Christianity have grown substantially in Chad, keeping pace with general population growth. These two monotheistic religions have largely replaced traditional ethnic religions.

## CHRISTIANITY & MISSION

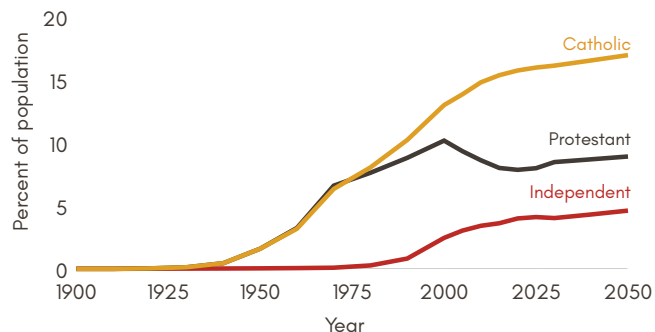
There are no Bibles in the Maba language, either in print or audio, though some Bible portions exist.

The Catholic Mongo Diocese includes Ouaddaï and Dar Sila and has a number of what the Catholic Church describes as “parishes of dispersion.” The region as a whole is 95% Muslim. The remainder of the region in the Mongo Diocese, which extends slightly beyond Ouaddaï, is approximately 4% traditional religions and less than 1% Christian.

In 1932 Otman, Hassan, Ndom, Lamko, and other Mbai together with Brethren missionaries first translated the Gospel According to Luke, into a language of Chad. Ten other languages followed in 30 years before Chadian Arabic, a national language, received its first book in 1964. An early Chadian Arabic translation of the Bible has been replaced by a new, higher quality version. Today one third of the country has access to a full Bible and because translations were done in languages with Christians, two thirds of Christians have access to a full Bible.

WEC International has a presence in Abéché. AIM has a known presence in Chad, working among the Maba in Ouaddai and Dar Sila. Missionary Aviation Fellowship has been present in Chad since 1966 and is based out of N’Djamena. Its main partners in Chad are Africa Inland Mission, Baptist Mid-Missions, Chad for Christ, Grace Brethren International Ministries, Red Cross, TEAM, and Wycliffe Bible Translators. Wycliffe, WEC, and AIM work among the Maba in Ouaddai. TEAM and AIM work among the Maba in Dar Sila.

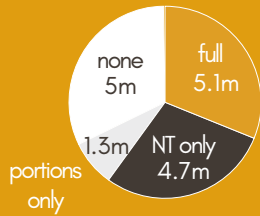
### CHRISTIAN TRADITIONS IN CHAD, 1900–2050



Catholics are the largest Christian tradition in Chad today. Both Protestants and Independents are expected to increase in the coming years, keeping pace with the growth of Catholics.

# BIBLE TRANSLATION AND ACCESS IN CHAD

## TRANSLATION AVAILABILITY



Availability of translation in mother tongue

Today 1/3 of the country (5.1 million Chadians) has access to a full Bible Translation. Because existing translations were completed in languages with large Christian populations, two thirds of all Chadian Christians have access to a full Bible. However, this leaves nearly half of all Chadian non Christians without any scripture in their mother tongue.

## TRANSLATION NEED

Of the 5 million people in Chad without scriptures in their mother tongue, over 3 million speak one of just 8 very large languages. There is also ongoing need for translation work among languages which have only a partial translation available.

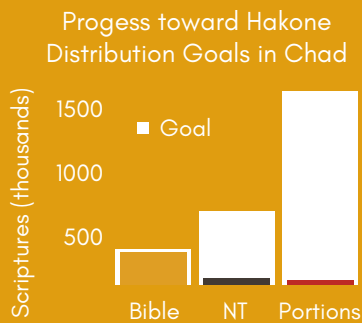
Mother tongue speakers (mts) with no bible translation by mts size



Large languages in Chad with no Bible translation (>500K speakers globally)

Language	Speakers	Language	Speakers
1 Kanembu	1,012,000	5 Masalit	240,000
2 Naba	588,000	6 Zaghawa	201,000
3 Maba	546,000	7 Algerian Saharan Spoken Arabic	96,600
4 Marfa	527,000	8 Fur	8,700

## BIBLE DISTRIBUTION AND ACCESS



Adult Literacy: 22% Internet Users: 5%

The Hakone bible distribution goals (1963) recommend a minimum standard of a Bible for every Christian home, a New Testament for every Christian and a scripture portion for every literate person. Technology is rapidly changing the dynamics of these paper copy distribution goals, though they continue to highlight the shortfall of Bible access. Social factors such as literacy, internet access, and religious freedom will increasingly have a larger effect on bible access.

<b>COUNTRY RANK: MISSIONS</b>	% CHRISTIAN	CHRISTIAN GAIN P.A.	CHRISTIAN GROWTH %	GOSPEL ACCESS	BAPTISMS PER ANNUM	MISSIONARIES RECEIVED	CHRISTIAN BROADCAST %	PERSONAL EV (ALL)	PRIORITY PEOPLES
<b>CHAD (VALUE)</b>	35%	320K	3.5%	55%	185K	830	9.5%	2.1M	38
<b>WORLD (OF 234)</b>	165	44	12	188	51	88	180	67	8
<b>AFRICA (OF 58)</b>	36	20	6	41	23	27	39	23	2
<b>MID. AFRICA (OF 9)</b>	9	4	2	9	4	6	7	3	1

Christian presence and evangelistic efforts in Chad are average when ranked in the world and Africa. Though compared with other countries in Middle Africa, Chad is notably under served. By all standards Chad ranks high on the number of priority people.

## ANALYSIS

Effective mission strategy that results in a sustained, transformative Christian presence in Ouaddaï among the Maba people should take seriously the identity of the Maba people and their communities. Christian workers must navigate the interplay of historic French and Islamic imperialisms with traditional African worldviews as well as the perennial competition for sparse resources and the displacement economies among refugees distributed throughout Ouaddaï. Sustained engagement with the tensions that undergird Maba communities will position a team to effectively serve their tangible and felt needs. In addressing these needs, teams would be wise to also engage non-Maba neighbors in refugee villages throughout eastern Chad. The displacement economy of refugee and indigenous villages in Ouaddaï forms the basis of these villages, and it is within this micro-economic structure that Maba and other peoples are interdependent. Only through beginning to help meet their needs along these economic-community pathways can the scars of colonialism begin to be addressed. Only then might Christian workers introduce a contextualized Christian message into Maba communities.

Meeting the needs of Maba people in the context of their limited environmental resources can create sustainable change and reinforce the inter-ethnic pathways along which Gospel transformation might occur. As history has shown, economic lines facilitate communication between diverse peoples. It is within the displacement economy of the Maba that they interact with many other least-reached peoples from Darfur; perhaps here they too might be reached via Christian efforts. Abandoning the existing displacement economic structures and isolating the Maba people within the mission strategy might also isolate the Maba from the most vital resources they have in their relationships with refugee

At 13.5%, Chad had the fastest church growth of any African nation between 1900 and 2000.

Chad has 38 Priority People Groups, the 2nd highest amount in Africa and 8th highest amount of any country in the world.

populations in the region. Though refugees may be perceived as the source of their socio-economic plight, in reality, the Maba people, their Chadian indigenous neighbors, and the Darfurian refugees who have become their neighbors are entangled in conflicts within which all are victims. Practicing cross-cultural work that reinforces the opportunity for healing from this shared trans-national trauma presents a potential opportunity for reconciliation rather than economic competition within the region.

Christian workers in Ouaddai should seek to develop indigenous campaigns that help liberate women and girls from often severe and deeply ingrained patterns of violence against them exacerbated by their struggle to survive and the collective trauma of refugee situations. The strategies employed by secular humanitarian organizations are self-reportedly short-lived and are grounded in Western, instead of contextualized, education. Christian workers can show their authentic and culturally sensitive care for communities by allowing Maba women to articulate their own needs and to enact strategies to end the violence enacted upon them.

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# APPENDIX

## RELIGIONS OF CHAD

Religion	1900		1970		2000		2020		Avg. Annual Growth Rate 2000-2020	2050	
	Population	%	Population	%	Population	%	Population	%		Population	%
Religious	1,700,000	100.0	3,643,000	100.0	8,334,000	99.9	16,269,000	99.9	3.40	33,612,000	99.9
Muslims	612,000	36.0	1,815,000	49.8	4,554,000	54.6	9,361,000	57.5	3.67	18,989,000	56.5
Christians	0	0.0	843,000	23.1	2,740,000	32.8	5,676,000	34.9	3.71	12,757,000	37.9
Catholics	0	0.0	231,000	6.3	1,085,000	13.0	2,564,000	15.7	4.40	5,707,000	17.0
Protestants	0	0.0	241,000	6.6	849,000	10.2	1,280,000	7.9	2.07	3,000,000	8.9
Independents	0	0.0	3,300	0.1	205,000	2.5	652,000	4.0	5.95	1,555,000	4.6
doubly-affiliated	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0.00	-80,000	-0.2
unaffiliated Christians	0	0.0	368,000	10.1	601,000	7.2	1,180,000	7.2	3.43	2,575,000	7.7
*Evangelicals	0	0.0	263,000	7.2	953,000	11.4	1,500,000	9.2	2.29	2,500,000	7.4
*Pentecostals/Charismatics	0	0.0	8,000	0.2	229,000	2.7	440,000	2.7	3.32	1,000,000	3.0
Ethnic religionists	1,088,000	64.0	980,000	26.9	967,000	11.6	1,100,000	6.8	0.65	1,600,000	4.8
Baha'is	0	0.0	5,000	0.1	70,300	0.8	125,000	0.8	2.92	250,000	0.7
Chinese folk-religionists	0	0.0	0	0.0	2,100	0.0	4,500	0.0	3.80	10,000	0.0
Buddhists	0	0.0	0	0.0	1,000	0.0	2,300	0.0	4.25	6,000	0.0
Nonreligious	0	0.0	1,000	0.0	8,300	0.1	16,400	0.1	3.44	24,000	0.1
Agnostics	0	0.0	1,000	0.0	7,200	0.1	14,300	0.1	3.47	20,000	0.1
Atheists	0	0.0	0	0.0	1,100	0.0	2,100	0.0	3.27	4,000	0.0
Total population	1,700,000	100.0	3,644,000	100.0	8,343,000	100.0	16,285,000	100.0	3.40	33,636,000	100.0

Source: World Christian Database

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For additional information including the definition of terms and research methodology used in this document, please visit:

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