



# Cameroon

# The Oroko

## 'You are Welcome'

Ten dialect groups in the hilly rainforest of SW Cameroon share the greeting "**Oroko!**", meaning *(you are) Welcome!*

Hospitality comes easily to the Oroko, but maintaining social harmony is a constant struggle. Jealousy, hatred, and the fear of witchcraft tear families and communities apart.

Most seek answers in African traditional religion, education and development, but poverty and disintegration of the family continue.

Committed Christian leaders are emerging at a critical time. The Oroko New Testament and Jesus Film have recently been completed, providing the Oroko with the opportunity to finally hear and understand God's welcome in their heart language.

## World Team

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### Daily Life

Almost everyone depends on subsistence farming to provide for their families, even those who are employed. With hard work, most families can provide food for their families, but it is difficult to earn enough to cover education and health needs.

Saving is difficult because of obligations to help extended family members. The tropical climate also leads to high occurrences of malaria, parasites and infections.

Rampant immorality is giving HIV/AIDS a foothold and alcoholism is widespread. Most hope for a better future for their children, but wonder if it will happen.

### Song, Dance and Drums

No Oroko celebration would be complete without song, dance and drums. As the bare-chested drummer rhythmically slaps his tall drum, brightly clothed women dance forward, clapping, shuffling their feet to the beat and rapidly vibrating their shoulders forward and back.

Meanwhile, guests are served palm wine and bitter cola nuts dipped in a spicy peanut sauce.

Before the program begins, a prayer is said and then the **juju** (traditional religion) leader pours some wine out as an offering to the ancestors. Now, the party may begin!

### 'Baptized Pagans'

Despite Christianity's influence for over 100 years, animism is still the predominant belief system. Traditional religious groups still govern many village affairs.

The church admits that it is full of "baptized pagans" who turn to animistic rituals when problems arise. Without local Scriptures or trained leaders, the gospel has made little impact. Many want to live as Christians but lack the power or understanding needed.

# Bible Translation and Literacy

## World Team among the Oroko

World Team Cameroon began ministry among the Oroko in 1998. Since then, an alphabet has been established, basic linguistic analysis completed, and literacy materials have been developed.

After more than 10 years of translation work, the Jesus Film was completed in 2017, and the New Testament (with Genesis) was published and dedicated in 2018.

Following the dedication of the New Testament, the plan was to begin teaching Oroko in primary schools, hold Scripture Reading seminars for adults, and encourage the church to use the new Scriptures. However, in early 2018, armed conflict broke out in the NW and SW regions of Cameroon, forcing WT missionaries to relocate outside of the Oroko area and advise from afar. This has fast-tracked the handover of discipleship, leadership training, and Scripture-in-Use to Oroko believers.



One activity that can still be carried on outside of the Oroko area is to complete the Oroko dictionary. In the future, the need remains to research whether all 10 Oroko dialects will be able to use the current translation or if dialect adaptations will be needed.

We praise God for the progress that has been made in translation and literacy work among the Oroko! Pray that the recently published New Testament will be distributed widely, people will learn to read it, and that God's Word will transform lives even in the midst of the current conflict.

## Ministry Overview

People	The Oroko
Language	10 Oroko dialects and Pidgin English
Location	Cameroon, Africa
Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Linguistics —assist in the completion and publication of an Oroko dictionary (1 or more years) [work with displaced Oroko outside of SW region]</li><li>Linguistics —analyze dialect variations and manage dialect adaptations of the New Testament (1 or more years) [Suspended until armed conflict ends]</li></ul>

*Approximately 140,000 Oroko people live scattered throughout 220 remote villages.*

*They are beginning to hear and understand God's Word in their own language! Join us in bringing in the harvest the Lord is preparing!*

*Is God leading you to go or to support this ministry through your prayers and gifts?*

**Join the Team!**

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