



Butbut Kalinga

THE PEOPLE

The Butbut Kalinga people live in traditional scattered settlements in the northeastern region of Luzon Island in the Philippines. They cluster their homes on mountain ridges, on plateaus and along one of the major rivers in the area. They value their language and despite social pressure to speak Ilocano, the regional language of wider communication, they continue to use Butbut in all their social activities.

The Butbut are a fierce warring tribe. Even today, an ongoing tribal war with a neighboring group has seriously affected their subsistence economy, especially the production of staple crops such as rice and sweet potatoes. Intervention from the army has minimized village attacks, but revenge killings are still common. Many Butbut believers have drawn closer to God because of the crisis situation.

THE BACKGROUND

Among the Butbut, traditional animism is still practiced widely, and the percentage of Christians remains low. One of the first churches in the Butbut area was planted about 13 years ago, and several denominations are now active in the area. Christians are looked down upon in Butbut society, and believers often mix together the religious practices of Christianity and animism.

In church services and for Bible reading, pastors use either the regional language of Ilocano or the language of a larger neighboring group. Many churchgoers are women, most of whom are illiterate and who understand very little of the message.

Community interest in Christianity is gradually growing in response to outreach activities in the area by various church groups and mission institutions. Within the main Butbut settlement, several denominations have organized small groups of believers. While many older people still hold on to their traditional animistic beliefs, the younger generation is responding more positively toward these outreach efforts.

THE NEED

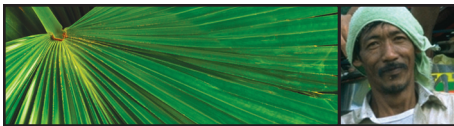
Without the Word of God in their mother tongue, most Butbut don't understand the gospel message. They continue to cling to their animistic religious practices and to a cycle of violence against neighboring groups. By providing Scripture in their language, the Butbut will be able to hear clearly that God loves them, and the Holy Spirit can begin to transform their lives.

THE PERSONNEL

God has called a Filipino couple, Alfred and Racquel Mijares, to translate the Bible for the Butbut Kalinga people. Alfred and Racquel began working among the Butbut in 1990 when they moved to the area to learn and analyze the language and to study the culture. Later they became involved in community development projects in order to



- **Location:** Philippines
- **Number of Speakers:** 8,000
- **Project Goal:** New Testament
- **Year Project Began:** 2004
- **Expected Completion Date:** 2011



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build rapport, and they also produced literacy materials and conducted literacy classes. This foundation of community involvement, combined with advanced translation training for the Mijareses, has created an environment in which Scripture translation is now possible, and they began translating in 1999.

Alfred and Racquel came to the project with support for their personal needs, but they don't have the financial resources to hire local language speakers to help with the translation or to provide for additional project expenses. So translation has moved slowly.

THE PLAN

The Seed Company has agreed to sponsor this project for an initial phase of two years, and we expect to sponsor subsequent phases, depending on the team's ability to meet the projected outcomes for each phase. During the first phase, the Mijareses plan to translate the book of John and the epistles of 1, 2 and 3 John.

Alfred and Racquel are working with a team of Butbut mother-tongue speakers whom they are training in translation skills. They also plan to form a local language committee who will provide community leadership in moving the project forward.

THE RESULT

By the end of 2011, this project will provide the New Testament for the Butbut Kalinga people in the language that speaks to their hearts. Churches will be strengthened and individual believers will be encouraged in their personal spiritual growth. Having understandable Scripture will also empower Butbut Christians to prepare effective evangelism materials to reach out to the non-Christians in their communities. Literacy activities will enable the people to use the translated materials effectively.

With inner transformation, God will be able to stop the cycle of revenge killings and direct the Butbut onto the road to a meaningful life and a bright future.

JOINING THE TEAM

Funding from Seed Company partners will provide part-time salaries, training, travel costs for consultants and translators, and project supplies and materials.

The translation team also needs partners who will faithfully pray for all aspects of this project—for the people, the progress and the reception of God's Word in Butbut. Strong prayer support is vital to the successful completion of the translation so Butbut Christians can hear God speaking directly to them through the Scriptures. Please take time to prayerfully consider your part in meeting this need.

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