



## Bokoto

### PROJECT SUMMARY:

Although most people in the Banda-related groups attend church, use of other languages in churches has created misunderstanding and rendered much teaching irrelevant. For example, in Matthew 5:17 Jesus says He did not come to abolish the Law of Moses. Because the pastor read and explained it in Sango, the national language, people understood it to mean that Jesus did not come to condemn or destroy traditions they'd inherited from ancestors, even evil practices. About 80% consider themselves Christians, but many mix their faith with ancestral rites.

Four of nine Central African Republic translation programs are currently in progress: Banda-Linda, Bokoto, Mpyemo and Nzakara. The other five (Gbaya South-west, Yaka, Kaba, Ngbugu and Lutos) will join in 2011, to produce the "JESUS" film. At the end of this combined project, all of the language groups will have Luke and the film. These successes may spur some or all of the language teams to continue, to translate the entire New Testament, beyond the scope of this initial phase.



- **Location:** Central African Republic
- **Number of Speakers:** 130,000
- **Project Goal:** Luke and the "JESUS" film
- **Year Project Began:** 2008
- **Expected Completion Date:** 2012

### THE PEOPLE

Most people in these language groups live in villages along roads passing through their areas. They provide for their families through small farm harvests. Some also work in diamond or gold mines. Although the mines offer a lucrative product, local workers seldom reap much benefit from their labor.

The people of this region in the CAR struggle with inadequate health facilities and poor hygiene. Only about 30% can read; the average percentage among those in rural areas is much lower, like those of the Banda groups.

### BACKGROUND

CAR is described in *Operation World* as one of the most evangelized countries in the world. Protestant mission work started after WWI. Currently, about 80% consider themselves Christians, but many mix faith with ancestral rites. Catholic, Apostolic, Brethren and several Baptist groups are active in the area.



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### THE NEED

Translator, Pastor Etienne said, *“I used to preach sometimes in Sango, sometimes in French. But one day I preached in my mother tongue. When I saw the people’s reaction—that they really understood—I finally realized it is through the mother tongue that God touches the heart.”*

### THE TEAM

Translators Edouard and Celestin were chosen from Bokoto speakers. Celestin had already gained valuable experience in the Sango Old Testament translation project. He returned to participate in this project—his mother tongue. Eventually, three team members will do translation, literacy and related activities. They will receive training through the workshop series and personal mentoring. The training will include computer usage and orientation to various kinds of translation software.

### THE PLAN

The goals for each language in the cluster are publication of Luke and production of the “JESUS” film. Four of the nine translation programs are currently in progress: Banda-Linda, Bokoto, Mpyemo and Nzakara. The other five will join in 2011, to produce the “JESUS” film.

Both Banda-Linda and Bakoto started by establishing a written form of their spoken languages. As they began translating Luke, Mpyemo and Nzakara translators also joined the project, since they already had a written language. These four groups will work together, in cluster workshops.

The teams plan to complete the work in three years, at which point five additional language groups, Gbaya Southwest, Yaka, Kaba, Ngbugu and Lutos (for whom the Book of Luke is already available), will be included in the process. The “JESUS” Film Project will spearhead workshops to produce the film in each language, working closely with actors and the script, based on Luke.

This project lays the foundation for future efforts to translate the entire New Testament!

### JOINING THE TEAM

The translators in this CAR cluster project cannot complete their goals without your financial investment and prayer. Your financial investment makes translation possible, providing training, adequate computer equipment, translation supplies and living expenses for the translators’ families. Your prayer helps translators and their families face problems like sickness, conflict and spiritual opposition that can threaten their work.

Call The Seed Company toll-free at 1-877-593-7333 or visit [www.theseedcompany.org/projects](http://www.theseedcompany.org/projects) to commit to invest and pray for the teams involved.

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