



## PROJECT PROFILE

# Majang

### THE PEOPLE

The Majang people live in southwestern Ethiopia. Although they were once semi-nomadic, Majang villages today support a more sedentary lifestyle. Many people are farmers, but some work as lumberjacks and others are beekeepers. In recent years, parents increasingly recognize the importance of education, and are sending their children to school. They build their homes with wood held together by mud chinking. Deforestation in their mountainous, rain-forest home has stripped many families of a viable livelihood, leaving the community in economic straits. Many suffer from diseases because of limited access to potable water for drinking and washing.

### BACKGROUND

During the early 1960s, an American missionary couple brought the gospel to the Majang people. Today, about 85% of the language group claims affiliation with Christian churches. Two different SIL teams have worked in the project: the first during the 1990s and the second since 2002. James Kim, part of the second team, will leave for his home country in 2010.

### THE NEED

The Majang church includes most of the population, but leaders recognize a significant dearth of Bible understanding among their membership. Services are held in the national language, Amharic. Mother-tongue Scripture will help them understand the teaching and preaching. The people also need to be able to feed themselves from God's Word to be able to shape their beliefs less by tradition and hearsay and more by the Scripture itself.

Only about 25% of the Majang people are literate in Amharic. Less than 2% can read and write in their mother tongue. A literacy program will play a huge role in this project. Learning to read will improve their quality of life through health education and livelihood booklets. It will also give them access to God's Word in their language, which offers them both peace in the midst of their changing world and hope for eternity.



- **Location:** Ethiopia
- **Number of Speakers:** 30,000 - 50,000
- **Project Goal:** New Testament and part of Genesis
- **Year Project Began:** 2008
- **Expected Completion Date:** 2014



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## THE TEAM

Majang church leaders recommended translator Yosef Kalakun, who has already been working in the project for four years. In spite of having little opportunity for formal education in his youth, Yosef has proven a gifted translator. He took an introductory Bible translation principles course in 2005 and has also honed his skills in a number of training programs, including a workshop on James and one on Genesis, since then.

The SIL translator will be training a project advisor and two more translators over the next two years before he leaves the project. This new advisor will be required to have Bible college training equivalent to two years of university study. He will also need to take a Translation Principles course.

Yosef goes regularly to Addis Ababa for checking on his drafts and for computer training. With his experience in drafting new material, he will help train the new workers. The translators will participate in one-book workshops together with other language teams to work on the translation of a particular passage under the guidance of a translation consultant.

## THE PLAN

The team will complete the New Testament and portions of Genesis that will give the Majang people a foundation to understand the New Testament. They hope that this project will prepare the Majang church for translating the rest of the Old Testament. The four Gospels are already complete; the team will consider printing those soon. With the support of the local church, one Majang project advisor and three translators will be prepared to continue with Old Testament translation when this phase of the work is finished.

## JOINING THE TEAM

The Majang translators 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 Majang team.

3030 Matlock Road, Suite 104  
Arlington, Texas 76015  
Toll Free: (877) 593-7333  
[www.theseedcompany.org](http://www.theseedcompany.org)  
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