



## PROJECT PROFILE

# New Ireland NT Cluster\*

### PROJECT SUMMARY:

The people of New Ireland are at a crossroads. For generations there was no Christian witness on the remote island off the coast of Papua New Guinea and 800 miles northwest of Australia's northern tip. In the last hundred years, all that has changed and today the local church has an opportunity to help many see a clearer picture of who Jesus and God really are.

The completion of the Patpatar New Testament has sparked an interest among a growing number of relatively well-educated followers of Christ to translate scriptures for thousands of people across 15 language groups and to provide the first glimpse many have seen of God's love in their own written language.

Why pursue such small groups though? First, because God is an extravagant God that values both the large and the small. The Seed Company is also passionate about the work in New Ireland because it comes at a time when people clearly have the skills to pursue translation with oversight, because it comes with strong support from the local church and because it seems that God is clearly bringing all the pieces for the project together.



- **Location:** Papua New Guinea
- **Number of Speakers:** 31,850 in 15 language groups
- **Project Goal:** Old Testament portions for one language, New Testament portions for 2-3 others and the entire New Testament for 11-12 others
- **Year Project Began:** 2006
- **Expected Completion Date:** 2014

### THE PEOPLE

New Ireland is a place of great beauty and great difficulty. This Pacific island is fringed with white-sand beaches and coral reefs that teem with life. Soaring mountains are cloaked in rainforest, and coconut fronds rattle gently in the sea breeze. Life isn't hurried just below the equator. No one lives too far from family, and gardens are usually full of food: sweet potatoes, bananas, papayas and taro, a starchy root vegetable. Breadfruit, a spongy and vaguely sweet staple of their diet, is abundant throughout the forest. Some families harvest and sell cocoa beans used in chocolate. The versatile coconut palm yields kulau to drink, rich "milk" for cooking, oil for lamps, dried meat for a bit of income, dried husks for fires, sturdy fibers for brooms, and strong weaving material for baskets, mats and decorations. Education, while hard to get at higher levels, is good for this part of the world.

But the beauty comes with a cost. Medical care is extremely limited in a region where major infectious diseases, malaria and other parasites are rampant. Supplies can be hard to obtain, and if a growing season is poor, food may become scarce for these isolated peoples. And despite more than a century of Christian influence, many people do not understand who God is or what it means to live as His children.



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### THE NEED

The local believers are especially eager to understand God's truths and read His words for themselves. Without a true knowledge of God, many New Ireland people fall back on traditional animistic rituals when life is hard. If a child gets sick, or if the rains do not come, people may seek to appease the spirits with magic rather than trusting in God. Even godly people are vulnerable to unhealthy teaching when there is almost no well-understood book of God's words.

Though the area is relatively small, the people of New Ireland and the surrounding islands speak languages that are very different from one another. While a few of the languages have a degree of understandability with each other, there are often important cultural and linguistic factors that prevent wide acceptance of one group's language by the other.

### THE PREPARATION

SIL translators, Ed and Debi Condra, completed a New Testament for the Patpatar people in 1998 after 15 years of hard work. Now dozens of these Christians want to help translate the Old Testament. The Condras and the Patpatar people are eager to do this, but they also have a broader vision.

Patpatar believers have built a training site, the New Ireland Translation Institute, from land, lumber, sand and gravel they donated. Leaders from language groups in the region are volunteering their time to serve as a board of directors for the institute. This institute will help the Patpatar people extend the benefits of their work to other groups in the area.

### THE PLAN

The team's goal is to bring some portion of Scripture to 15 languages of the 25 language groups in New Ireland. These are some of the last languages in this area still needing translation work! To do this, they'll translate Old Testament portions in the Patpatar language, New Testament portions for 2-3 of the other 14 languages, but the entire New Testament for all the rest.

The New Ireland Translation Institute will provide a central place to study translation principles, work through difficult Scripture, learn about helpful tools and share ideas. It is also possible that Papua New Guinean translators from existing projects will attend and benefit from the institute's courses.

### JOINING THE TEAM

The New Ireland translators cannot complete their goals alone. They need you. Your financial gift will support these Bible translators by providing quality linguistic training, equipment, supplies and travel expenses. Prayerfully consider how God might use your financial gift to speed the translation of His Word.

The teams also need faithful prayer partners who will commit to praying regularly for every aspect of their work. Translators and their families will depend on your prayer support as they sacrifice to see the Scriptures in their language. Commit today to pray for the translation projects in New Ireland Province and for the Papua New Guineans who are waiting to hear about the love of Christ. Call The Seed Company toll-free at 1-877-593-7333 to express your commitment.

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