



## PROJECT PROFILE

# Noon New Testament

### PROJECT SUMMARY:

Noon people place great value on the Scriptures, but the church has traditionally used only the French and Wolof languages in its services. As a result, Christians remain limited in their knowledge of the Bible. But now, clergymen, especially those with a Noon background, encourage translation efforts.

### THE PEOPLE

On the westernmost tip of Africa lies Dakar, the capital city of Senegal. Not far from Dakar is the town of Thiès. In surrounding villages live 25,000 people of the Noon (pronounced 'known') language group. These people are primarily subsistence farmers, growing peanuts, millet, beans, manioc and mangos. But many of the young people have moved to Dakar to find employment.

These people prefer to speak their own heart language. But since they are a minority, few written materials exist in Noon. Schools are conducted in French. And further removed from their mother tongue, most business is carried out in Wolof, the trade language.

### THE CONTEXT

The Noon are predominantly Catholic, unlike 95-percent of the people in Senegal, who practice another major world religion. In 2002 only five Noon were identified as evangelical Christians; the remainder blended traditional animistic practices with their other beliefs.

A 1987 survey of the Noon language group determined that it was a definite translation need. A few years later, an expatriate couple was assigned to the project in 1993. At that time the Catholic church had already begun having laymen translate the weekly gospel reading into Noon. So they were happy to see a translation project begun. And they were eager to use Noon scriptures in their worship services.

### THE TEAM

François Ndione was a university student when he committed his life to Christ. He felt God call him into full-time Christian service. When he heard that people were beginning to translate the Bible into Noon, and they were searching for an educated Noon to work with them as a translator, he was interested.



- **Location:** Senegal, Africa
- **Number of Speakers:** 25,000
- **Project Goal:** New Testament
- **Year Project Began:** 1996
- **Expected Completion Date:** 2011



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François now manages the project himself. Team members Pierre and André work with him as translators, and Louise is part-time team secretary. The Bible Society here works with the team to check the final Scripture drafts and will be responsible to print the finished product.

### THE PLAN

While the team works with the Bible Society to finish the final New Testament draft, the translators are busy pursuing a number of activities to help Noon people use these Scriptures. They're also beginning preparations for the dedication ceremony in early 2011. Plus, they're working on a booklet series, including a Bible reading plan, a collection of key Bible verses, a booklet to encourage reading the New Testament and a booklet entitled, "*The Path that Leads to Life.*"

In addition, each parish will conduct a Bible knowledge and memorization competition, culminating at the dedication. Church leaders are participating in transition literacy classes, to help them read Noon scriptures more fluently and to feel comfortable using them.

And for young, old and those not yet literate, Faith Comes By Hearing (FCBH), a Seed Company partner, is preparing an audio version of the New Testament for the Noon people.

### JOINING THE TEAM

The Noon 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 Noon translation team.

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