



## Baelelea

### PROJECT SUMMARY:

On the northern end of Malaita Island, the Baelelea are one of the remaining five Bibleless people groups. Without a translation in their mother tongue, the Baelelea struggle to grow in their faith in God. Local cults and traditional religion easily sway many.

One man has decided to take a stand and translate the New Testament for his people. The local community, The Seed Company, SIL and Pioneer Bible Translators have banded around this man to help him translate New Testament portions in the Baelelea language.

### THE PEOPLE

The Baelelea people of the Solomon Islands number about 8,800. Most live in remote villages on the northern end of Malaita Island. They provide for their families through farming and fishing. Since a political coup in 2000, families struggle to make enough cash for basic supplies. School fees lay a heavy burden on most parents. And communities also need basic health services.

Families who can afford it send their children to boarding school after the sixth grade. This provides a valuable education, but there are few skilled jobs in the tight city job market.

### THE NEED

The first Christian missionaries arrived in the early 1900s. Today, most people consider themselves Christians. However, spirit worship, witchcraft and cults are prevalent in the area. One group teaches circumcision and keeping other Jewish rituals as the way to please God. They also believe they are Jews descended from Abraham.

The churches fight the animistic worldview that lies just below the surface of Malaitian thinking. One church elder has a fetish hanging over his door to protect his family from pink eye. He says it's the same thing Moses did during the Passover in Egypt. Another elder rebukes people if they walk through the churchyard with a heavy load of firewood; they are not treating God as holy. Confused Christians easily fall prey to new teachings that sound religious because they can't understand the English Bible that is commonly read in church.



- **Location:** Solomon Islands
- **Number of Speakers:** 8,800
- **Project Goal:** New Testament portions
- **Year Project Began:** 2008
- **Expected Completion Date:** 2010



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### THE TEAM

The project starts with one highly experienced translator named Aloysius. He served as the senior translator for the Solomon Islands Pijin Old Testament project, which was completed in 2008. He also worked on the New Testament in Lau, a dialect which is closely related to Baelelea.

Now he has the honor of translating the New Testament into Baelelea, his mother tongue. The project staff expects to train one other Baelelea speaker to help Aloysius.

### THE PLAN

Using translation software, the team drafts New Testament portions by adapting a published New Testament in a closely related language to the Baelelea language. The draft undergoes several revisions throughout consultations, workshops and community testing.

Toward the end of two years, the team will publish part of the New Testament, to immediately offer the churches some Scripture portions before the team begins the next phase. Eventually, the team hopes to finish the New Testament and some of the Old Testament as well in future phases.

In addition to The Seed Company, SIL and Pioneer Bible Translators (PBT) will cooperate to provide training in workshop settings, consultant help and administrative services.

### JOINING THE TEAM

The Baelelea translators in this 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 translators involved.