



## PROJECT PROFILE

# North Malaita Cluster

### THE PEOPLE

The Baegu and Baelelea people of the Solomon Islands live 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 find enough cash for basic supplies. School fees lay a heavy burden on most parents. The communities also need basic health services.

Families who can afford it send their children to boarding school after 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. Fear of spirits, witchcraft and cults is 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 Malaitan thinking. A 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. A church 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.

### THE TEAM

The project is beginning with two experienced translators. Erastus worked on the Solomon Islands Pijin New Testament, and then trained as a translation consultant in Papua New Guinea. Aloysios was the senior translator for the Pijin Old Testament project that the team completed in 2008. He also worked on the Lau New Testament.

The project staff expects to bring one more mother-tongue speaker alongside the translators for each language and provide training for them as the project begins.



- **Location:** Solomon Islands
- **Number of Speakers:** 16,690
- **Project Goal:** New Testaments in Baegu and Baelelea
- **Year Project Began:** 2008
- **Expected Completion Date:** 2010



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### THE PLAN

Erastus is a mother-tongue speaker of Baegu and Aloysios' first language is Baelelea. Erastus has been working on the New Testament in his spare time, and has already drafted more than half of it. Because he also works as a consultant for another organization, he will spend half his time on this project. Aloysios will be working full-time in the Baelelea language. Several local denominations are endorsing the project. 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.

The teams will complete part of the New Testament for this phase of the project, offering churches the Scripture portions in their mother tongue sooner with this initial goal than if they needed to wait for the whole New Testament. Eventually, the team hopes that other phases of the project will finish the New Testament and some of the Old Testament as well. This milestone cluster project will offer Scripture to the last of the Bibleless peoples in the Solomon Islands.

The team hopes to add three additional Bibleless people groups—the Fataleka, the To'abaita, and the Gulaala'a—to the cluster if the community shows interest during this phase. The combined five languages are the last remaining languages on Malaita without the Bible.

### JOINING THE TEAM

The North Malaita 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 teams involved.