



Language: Aja

Speakers: 800,000



Dates: 2017-2020

Project Goals: New Testament; Old Testament portions; audio recordings

AJA (AH-jah)

AFRICA — BENIN

THE PEOPLE

The Aja people occupy a large area that spans two West African countries — Benin and Togo.

Their home area is roughly the size of greater Los Angeles, yet there are only about 50 miles of paved road. During rainy seasons, communities can become difficult to access due to muddy roads.

In rural areas, most Aja people have land that they use to grow two crops a year — one to sell, and the other to live off. For those in urban centers, livelihoods are based on small businesses.

The majority of the Aja follow a traditional religion called *voju*. They believe everything has a spiritual cause, so illnesses and death, for example, are seen as curses sent by an enemy. The beliefs in this region are the source of Voodoo religions that are practiced in other parts of the world.

To illuminate the truth of the gospel and to free people from fear, God's Word is needed in the Aja language.

THE PLAN

We're partnering with local translators to produce more Scripture in the Aja language!

Translations of Ruth and Jonah were previously published and distributed in 2010. Now the experienced Aja translation team is finishing the New Testament! In this three-year project, they will also complete 11 Old Testament books and draft about 13 more.

With a significant amount of Scripture already drafted, the team has dedicated 10 days each month for testing the drafts with Aja speakers. Many people are interested in the project and participating in the review process. This will help ensure the translation is clear and natural.

Once the New Testament and the book of Genesis are completed, they will be published in both print and audio form. Audio Scripture will engage many more Aja people.

In addition, the team plans to produce Bible-based literacy materials to aid local literacy programs. They're also testing ways to share Scripture on cellphones.

THE IMPACT

"The Word of God in the Aja language is crucial to relating the gospel's message of hope," a project adviser said.

About 25% of the Aja people are Christians. Having God's Word in their own language will help them reach out to those following the traditional religion. With translated Scripture in hand, they can present the truth of the gospel and proclaim God's power to free people from spiritual bondage.

Before, local churches had to read God's Word in related languages, which were ineffective at touching the hearts of the people. But now, printed Aja Scripture will be featured in sermons, teachings and Bible studies.

In addition, audio Scripture can be easily shared through Bible listening groups, radio programs and perhaps even cellphones.

Your prayers and gifts will help the Aja people access more of God's Word in a language and form that speaks to their hearts!

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