



Language: Balangao

Speakers: More than 15,000



Dates: 2019-2022

Project Goal: Old Testament portions

BALANGAO (bah-LANG-aw)

ASIA — PHILIPPINES

THE PEOPLE

A Balangao man surveys the green expanse. Like giant steps carved into the mountain slopes, rice terraces cascade down to the river basin below.

The man's life revolves around planting and harvesting. Advancements such as access to electricity and rice mills have made some chores easier. Still, his family barely manages to eke out a living.

Wanting better job and education opportunities, his adult children have relocated to urban areas. One daughter even left to work overseas, leaving her son in her parents' care.

A Christian, the man is grateful to have the New Testament in his language so he can teach his grandchild about God. But he longs for the rest of the Bible to be translated. "Will it happen in my lifetime?" he wonders.

This story is based on everyday realities that many Balangao families face.

Having the Old Testament will enable people to learn from the whole counsel of God's Word.

THE PLAN

We're partnering with a local team to translate more Scripture into the Balangao language!

A translation committee is providing direction for this three-year project. Comprised of pastors and leaders from several area churches, the committee is eager to have Old Testament portions available for use in worship services.

"When I am teaching, everything flows easily when using the Balangao New Testament," one pastor said. "But momentum is lost when I switch to the Old Testament in English."

Four books have been selected by the committee as high priorities. In this project, team members will complete Genesis, Exodus and Leviticus, publishing them in print and audio formats. They'll also draft the book of Numbers.

These selections will teach people about God's instructions to Israel regarding worship and help them apply those principles today.

Also in this project, the team will update and reprint an existing hymnal, and translate the "JESUS" film script into Balangao.

THE IMPACT

When the Balangao gained access to God's Word in their language in the 1960s, many people clearly understood the gospel message for the first time.

For those who had already been attending church, translated Scripture helped them to better grasp what it means to follow Christ. Others stopped looking to traditional religion in times of need.

"They began to know the Creator God who is more powerful than the spirits," a project adviser said.

Today, the New Testament continues to impact the Balangao community. However further translation work is needed.

As one translator put it: "The New Testament without the Old Testament is like a *bolo* (machete) without a handle. Even if the *bolo* is sharp, if it has no handle it cannot be used to its full potential."

Your prayers and gifts will help make more of God's Word available to the Balangao people in a language that speaks to their hearts.