The Chuka people are small-scale farmers. Using the favorable soil and climate of the eastern slopes of Mount Kenya, they grow maize, beans and bananas. Some sell crops of coffee or tea.

The Chuka are peaceful people and have always welcomed neighboring communities. But other people groups have frequently dominated the economic activities in Chuka towns. As a result, the Chuka often feel inferior to these larger, more prosperous communities.

About 40 percent of Chuka people identify themselves as Christians. But traditional religion is still widely practiced. Fear of witchcraft and curses has even influenced some believers to seek protection from shamans.

Immorality in Chuka communities, especially among the youth, is a real problem, leading to high rates of HIV and AIDS in the region. Drug and alcohol abuse are also prevalent.

Churches want to address these issues, but they struggle to reach out effectively without access to God’s Word in their language.

We’re working with local churches and field partners to help produce the first Scripture in the Chuka language!

First, leaders from the Chuka community and three other language groups gathered to evaluate the needs of their communities.

“It was an amazing and inspiring experience to witness how the Holy Spirit moved them to work as a team, helping each other to design a plan unique to their community that would provide the greatest impact on life transformation,” said a project adviser.

For example, to address the problems of alcohol abuse, drugs and immorality, the leaders chose 2 Corinthians and Galatians in which Paul teaches against immoral behavior and promotes self-control.

This initial project will provide the Chuka community with six New Testament books — Luke, 1-2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians and 2 Thessalonians.

The team will also produce the “JESUS” film, Chuka hymns, Scripture stories to share orally and Bible study materials.

Although church leaders desire a full New Testament one day, an adviser says, “They are quite eager to receive these portions to begin impacting lives as quickly as possible for total community change!”

There is one experienced Chuka translator on the team, and two more are being recruited.

Meanwhile, the Chuka community is eager to receive God’s Word.

“Give us some Bibles!” the merchant women shouted at Justus, when they realized he was a translator for the Chuka New Testament. Others in the open-air market drew closer, ready to carry home a Bible in their language.

“I was encouraged to see they were expectant,” he said. “At the same time, it was pitiable to tell the curious people that the work of translating the Bible had only started. ... Who will help [them] get their Bibles?”

Your prayers and investment will help all Chuka people have access to God’s Word in their heart language!