



Language: Kunama

Speakers: 464,000



Dates: 2019-2022

Project Goal: Old and New Testaments

KUNAMA (koo-NAH-mah)

AFRICA — ERITREA AND ETHIOPIA

THE PEOPLE

The word *kunama* means “good” — a fitting name for this Eritrean people group that places communal harmony above individual prosperity.

In Kunama culture, when a family needs help with their harvest, they often call on their neighbors for assistance. And their friends gladly come, even though their only payment will be food provided by the family. This happens so often that they have a name for it — “*kowa*.”

But this peaceful way of life was shaken for the Kunama in the late 1990s, as civil unrest broke out in Eritrea. When the conflict ended, some people fled to nearby Ethiopia, where they have lived in a refugee camp ever since. Others have scattered across the globe. For most, returning home isn't an option.

Scripture in a clear and accurate form will share a message of hope that many Kunama people are longing to hear.

THE PLAN

Although the Bible has been translated into Kunama, the translation has several issues that have kept many Kunama from reading. The Scripture has missing verses and inaccuracies, and it's in a dialect that's not widely used.

Now, two teams of Kunama speakers will be adapting the existing translation to produce a complete Bible that's accurate and understandable.

In this three-year project, a five-member, Ethiopia-based team will begin with Genesis and continue working through the Old Testament.

Located in various places throughout the U.S. and Canada, a second team will translate the New Testament. Once their work is completed, they will join the Ethiopia team in finishing the remaining portions of the Old Testament.

To ensure a high-quality translation, team members will participate in a linguistics workshop and focus on resolving the issues of the earlier version. The full Bible will be typeset and published at the end of this project.

THE IMPACT

“This work is the Lord's work.”

This sentiment is often expressed by the Kunama translation team members based in the U.S. and Canada. But their actions speak even louder — the nine translators are volunteering their time to produce Scripture in their language.

Their churches are also passionate about reaching Kunama people with the message of the Bible. They often provide the translators with food and lodging. One congregation even sends evangelists to remote Ethiopian communities to share the “JESUS” film in Kunama.

The believers in Ethiopia are just as enthusiastic. Recently churches and partners began training local people to produce oral Bible stories.

All of the Kunama speakers involved in this project are eager for the next generation to have a clear and accurate version of God's Word. Will you partner with them in this important work?

Your prayers and gifts will help the Kunama gain access to the entire Bible in their language!

Amended 2/2021