



**Language:** Marakwet

**Speakers:** 187,100



**Dates:** 2013-2020

**Project Goal:** Old Testament

# MARAKWET 2 (MAH-rah-kwayt)

AFRICA — KENYA

## THE PEOPLE

Most Marakwet people are small-scale farmers, keeping small herds of animals and growing what they hope will meet their basic needs. Some also practice beekeeping, as honey is highly valued.

The Marakwet live in Kenya's Rift Valley, a picturesque geographic fault line that bisects the country. Their territory is bounded to the east by the Kerio River and to the west by high hills.

While they are surrounded by natural beauty, the people are also surrounded by fear and suspicion fueled by traditional beliefs and practices, including ceremonies meant to appease ancestral spirits. Given the prevalence of this animistic religion — even among those who claim Christianity — the local church was encouraged by the completion of the Marakwet New Testament in 2009.

Now Marakwet believers want the Old Testament in their language, so they can continue to grow in their faith and reach out to others.

## THE PLAN

In partnership with local churches and the Kenyan organization Bible Translation & Literacy, a team is now translating the Old Testament into the Marakwet language!

They're building on the foundation established by the New Testament translation, as well as the impact of the "JESUS" film, which was introduced in 2012.

Since theirs is primarily an oral society, key elements of Marakwet culture are passed down through stories, and many people don't read.

So along with the printed word, the team will produce audio recordings. Pastors and leaders will use these recordings to create radio programs that reach a wider audience.

In addition to their work on the Old Testament, the team is also revising the existing New Testament so the Marakwet can have access to the complete Bible for the first time!

## THE IMPACT

*How sweet your words taste to me;  
they are sweeter than honey.*  
— Psalm 119:103 (NLT)

When the Old Testament project was announced, there was a great celebration in the community. A team member said:

"I was mesmerized at the symbolic expression. ... The Marakwet love honey, and ... beehives are just about everywhere. ... In a well-attended and colorful event, Marakwet community members came in dancing with half a beehive. They then put the Marakwet New Testament into the open half and summoned for the other beehive half to be brought in.

"They then explained that half of the beehive signified the New Testament. ... The Old Testament would now complete the beehive into a container that would ... produce something sweeter than honey."

**Your prayers and gifts** will help the Marakwet gain access to all of God's Word — in a language they clearly understand!

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