



Language: Sambla

Speakers: 20,000



Dates: 2020-2023

Project Goal: New Testament portions

SAMBLA (SAHM-blah)

AFRICA — BURKINA FASO

THE PEOPLE

The Sambla people live in 16 communities in southwestern Burkina Faso.

Much of their rugged homeland is a uniform plateau crisscrossed by rivers. During the rainy season, travel throughout the region can be difficult.

The Sambla are very hospitable and get along well with neighboring people groups. Known to be excellent musicians, they have a deep cultural connection to the *balafon* — a gourd-resonated xylophone.

To earn a living, most people grow vegetables, cotton or nuts and sell them at local markets. Often, young women will relocate to nearby cities for work, then return home seasonally to help with farming.

Missionaries first introduced Christianity in the mid-1950s, and today more than 30% of Sambla people profess to follow Jesus. However the majority adhere to traditional religion, looking to spiritual guides and amulets for protection.

To fully know God, the Sambla need his Word in a language that speaks to their hearts.

THE PLAN

Sambla church leaders are eager for their people to know Christ.

But without Scripture in their language, they often find it challenging to communicate the details of Jesus' life, death and resurrection to others.

Accordingly, the primary goal of this three-year project is to translate the Gospels into Sambla.

“The Scriptures will serve as a tool of evangelization,” a project coordinator said, “and help combat the stronghold of traditional religious beliefs and practices.”

Once complete, Matthew, Mark and Luke will be published digitally. The latter two books will be produced in print and audio formats as well. In addition, John 1-10 will be drafted.

Experienced staff members will come alongside local translators, providing exegetical guidance along the way. New team members will take part in a number of training workshops to further develop their skills.

The team will also implement a literacy program to help people engage with God's Word.

THE IMPACT

In Sambla communities, some have heard the Good News. But the message of Christ is often shared in French and other languages that most people don't clearly understand.

Recently however, a missionary working among this group recorded a few stories from the Gospel accounts in Sambla. When the audio recordings aired on the radio, many people were moved and wanted to know more about Jesus.

Local pastors and other Christians recognize the power of God's Word and are excited to see Bible translation work beginning. The Gospels in Sambla will provide truths about God to those who don't yet know him, and better equip believers to grow in their faith.

“The churches are trying to meet the challenge,” a project adviser said, “in order to bring the communities out of spiritual darkness.”

Your prayers and gifts will help the Sambla people gain access to Scripture in their own language!