



Language: Toposa

Speakers: 211,000



Dates: 2016-2018

Project Goals: Matthew, “JESUS” film, “Magdalena” film

TOPOSA (toh-POH-sah)

AFRICA — SOUTH SUDAN

THE PEOPLE

In the Toposa culture, a man’s social status and wealth are determined by the number of cattle he owns.

A semi-nomadic people, the Toposa live in settlements in South Sudan. They grow some crops, but most of life revolves around their livestock. Many people roam with their herds during dry seasons and live in temporary camps.

They compete with neighboring groups for water and pastures, and engage in cattle raids to increase their herds.

Multiple wives are another symbol of wealth. Parents marry off daughters at a young age, receiving cattle as a bride price.

Even though many identify as Christian, the vast majority of Toposa follow traditional beliefs, trusting spirit doctors to cure diseases and fix problems. They know about God as Creator, but to them, he is remote and uninterested in everyday life.

More of God’s Word is needed in the Toposa language to transform lives and set people free from fear.

THE PLAN

James, a highly trained, local Bible translator is drafting the Gospel of Matthew!

With the Gospel of Luke and Acts already published, a translation of Matthew is the next step to provide the Toposa community with more access to the Gospels.

“Matthew is a good choice because of the long speeches by Jesus, like the Sermon on the Mount,” says James, who also works as a pastor. “These are foundational for any church to have.”

The translation of Matthew will give partners and local churches new material to use in Bible studies and Sunday school resources. And the Scripture will be made available for audio recording.

The Toposa team is eager to help a partner record and produce the “JESUS” and “Magdalena” films, and see the impact on a culture that enjoys audio-visual communication.

THE IMPACT

“The translation of the Gospels is the best way to begin,” says a project adviser, “because narrative is easier to translate than letters. And it’s also easier for beginning readers — and beginners in the faith — to understand.”

For the first time, Toposa people will hear the Gospel of Matthew in a language they can understand. Church leaders will use the translation to clearly communicate the teachings of Jesus and help believers to grow.

By showing the “JESUS” film in various Toposa communities, audiences will encounter the message in a meaningful form.

James, the lead Toposa translator, also plans to serve as a consultant to a translation team working in a closely-related dialect. That team can adapt completed Toposa Scripture into their dialect, greatly accelerating their work.

Your prayers and investment will help the Toposa people access more of God’s Word in their heart language!