



Language: Zinza

Speakers: 205,000



Dates: 2019-2021

Project Goal: New Testament portions

ZINZA 2 (ZIN-zah)

AFRICA — TANZANIA

THE PEOPLE

Most Zinza people live in Tanzania, along the shore and on the islands of Lake Victoria. Many are fisherman and small-scale farmers, growing rice, cassava, sweet potatoes, bananas and other crops. Some also make and sell banana beer — a traditional Zinza drink.

They take great pride in their language and culture. Traditional dance and percussive music adorn their celebrations, and stories and songs are an important part of their lives.

Although most Zinza identify as Christian, many people adhere to traditional religion. Known to be secretive, this belief system includes three gods — one of which is malevolent. People seek to appease spirits that are believed to bring misfortune such as illness, death or personal ruin by making offerings to their dead ancestors

Currently, only Genesis and portions of the New Testament are available.

To experience transformation in their communities, the Zinza need more of God's Word in a language they clearly understand.

THE PLAN

We're working with a local team to translate Scripture into the Zinza language!

Previous translation efforts produced Genesis and 10 New Testament books. This project will see six more published — the Gospels of Matthew, Mark and John, as well as Romans, 1 Corinthians and Colossians. The team will draft several other New Testament books as well.

The completed Scripture portions will be made available on a mobile Bible app. In addition, printed copies of Matthew will be produced, along with audio recordings of Matthew, Galatians and Ephesians.

To reach those who don't read, the team will offer literacy classes and help form listening groups in Zinza communities. They'll also translate and publish the "Jesus Messiah" picture book — an illustrated narrative based on the Gospels.

The team is looking forward to witnessing the impact of these Scripture materials as they're used in worship services, small group Bible studies and outreach events.

THE IMPACT

Rev. Thomas Bilingi hitched a ride back to his community after attending a service. A worn copy of Genesis on the driver's dash caught his eye.

Rev. Bilingi, a church leader and a strong advocate for Bible translation efforts, was excited to see the book — the first Scripture printed in the Zinza language.

As he conversed with the driver, Rev. Bilingi flipped through the copy of Genesis and observed notes in the margins. "I like to read it," the driver said. "I've learned many things from it."

Now, as the translation work continues, Rev. Bilingi and other Zinza believers are eager for their people to learn more. "They long to see people know God and his Word," a project adviser said. "They're working hard to see churches increase their use of the Zinza Scriptures."

Your prayers and gifts will help the Zinza people access more of the New Testament in a language that speaks to their hearts!