



## Project Profile

# Xamtanga 3

[KAHM – TAHNG’ – AH]

## Project Summary

The truth of 1 Timothy 2:5 is now apparent to the Xamtanga community: Christ Jesus is the only mediator between God and humankind. No longer do they need a priest to tell them what God’s Word says. Now they have Scripture in their heart language so they can read and listen to it themselves. Scripture is considered holy and precious, so having it in Xamtanga makes it even more valuable.

The people group is known as the Wag Himra [WAHG HIHM’ – RAH], and they already have a New Testament in their language. This project provides for the translation and distribution of 13 Old Testament books for use in discipleship and evangelism.

In the previous project, nothing was published in any form, partly because of civil unrest that prevented the translators from leaving the area. So in the new phase, the team is focusing on completing some previously translated Scripture products so the community can use them. A combination of Scripture apps, audio, and print versions of the texts will soon be available.

In the context of ongoing conflict, Scripture products are useful to affect the communities in positive ways. Wag Himra speakers have suffered greatly; as a result, they benefit from trauma healing workshops for the communities, peace-building efforts of the local churches, and a reconciliation process between the cross-border communities.

## Key Term

**Trauma healing programs** use modern-day stories alongside Bible stories to lead people from grief to hope.



## Quick Facts

**Start Year:** 2023

**End Year:** 2026

**Population:** 300,000

**Location:** Ethiopia

**Summary of Goals:** Translate Exodus, Deuteronomy, 1-2 Samuel, 1-2 Chronicles, Nehemiah, Esther, Psalms, and Proverbs. Distribute Exodus, Deuteronomy, and 1-2 Samuel on an app; Ruth, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, and Psalms in audio and on an app; Proverbs in print, audio, and on an app; and Jonah in print and on an app.

## Background

The Xamtanga language community is in the northern part of Ethiopia in the mountainous Amhara Region. Living conditions are difficult for the Wag Himra people because they totally depend on subsistence farming, which relies on natural rain. Government intervention helps, but it is not enough, and locals refer to the area as a “forgotten zone.”

The main town is Sokota, where the translation project is based. People living in the town are dependent on small businesses and employment by the local government. There is no industrial activity, and most young people look for better jobs in larger cities.

Literacy levels are low among the Wag Himra people, and they lack basic educational formation. They don't have health centers or infrastructural access to clean water. This community is totally dependent on nature, and they believe that God is their only solution to ongoing problems.

Because a traditional approach to Christian practices prevails, community members must work hard to understand Scripture. Their situation is made worse by poor Bible reading systems that have never been strongly developed in their Christian lives. Having God's Word in their heart language will pave the way to greater discipleship and evangelism.

The area is one of the ancient communities where Christianity has been in practice since the fifth century, and 98 percent of the people follow this faith. Yet, due to the lack of a complete Bible in their language, the community uses other languages that they understand less. The lay people want a complete Bible, and the Old Testament will help them grow in their Christian faith and impact their day-to-day lives.

## Strategy and Partners

The Bible Society of Ethiopia is the managing partner for this project. Its members submit progress and financial reports. SIL AIM Ethiopia assists in organizing training as needed. A part-time team leader, who is a linguist from the area, is joined by three full-time translators and several others serving in supportive roles. Church leaders assist with the review process.

When the full Bible is published eventually, it will be for sale with subsidized prices. People will have direct access to Scripture and be able to buy their own copies. Local churches and other partners will mobilize the community, create awareness, and provide workshops and training on how to use the Scriptures. Scripture-engagement programs will be available, and Bible Study programs will be designed to bring about changes in community life.

While the need for a complete Bible is a high priority, the translated Scriptures will specifically address the need of peace-building among the communities, trauma healing, and reconciliation since community members have been greatly affected by regional conflicts for the last three years.

## Project Goals

### *Translation Plan:*

- Exodus
- Deuteronomy
- 1-2 Samuel
- 1-2 Chronicles
- Nehemiah
- Esther
- Psalms
- Proverbs

### *Distribution Plan:*

- Exodus, Deuteronomy, and 1-2 Samuel on an app
- Ruth, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, and Psalms in audio and on an app
- Proverbs in print and audio and on an app
- Jonah in print and on an app

# 9,803

Verses in Project

Book	Verses in Book	Verses in This Project
Exodus	1,213	1,213
Deuteronomy	959	959
Ruth	85	85
1-2 Samuel	1,505	1,505
1-2 Chronicles	1,764	1,764
Ezra	280	280
Nehemiah	406	406
Esther	167	167
Psalms	2,461	2,461
Proverbs	915	915
Jonah	48	48

# 2023-2026

Project Years

Book	Exegesis & First Draft	Team Check	Comprehension Testing	Back Translation	Consultant Check	Publish
Exodus					x	x
Deuteronomy	x	x	x	x	x	x
Ruth						x
1-2 Samuel	x	x	x	x	x	x
1-2 Chronicles	x	x	x			
Ezra						x
Nehemiah				x	x	x
Esther				x	x	x
Psalms					x	x
Proverbs	x	x	x	x	x	x
Jonah						x

## Risks and Strengths

Bible translation is a highly technical process that often takes place in some of the world's most difficult environments. Therefore, Seed Company strives to mitigate risks while maximizing the strengths of our partners so that clear, accurate translations are completed on time.

The risks and strengths of the Xamtanga 3 are as follows:

### *Risks*

- If civil unrest breaks out in the area again, it could be difficult for the team.
- There has been some underspending by the Bible Society of Ethiopia, but the regional director and the team have recently addressed and sought to change this issue.
- The plan is a bit more ambitious than in the previous project phase, but the team has demonstrated excellent progress in the past.

### *Strengths*

- The Xamtanga area is accessible by road and air.
- SIL AIM provides valuable training and computer support.
- The team leader/advisor is a Xamtanga speaker who has a background in linguistics.
- The Bible Society of Ethiopia is a long-standing, funded partner that is highly motivated to see this project succeed.



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