

*If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples,  
and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.*  
John 8.31-32

Prévelanges, April 2016

## *To the ends of the earth...*

Dear friends, dear partners,

After Oceania, Africa, Latin America and Europe, we are pleased to present our first partnership project in Asia.

This project is about a New Testament for the Bunong ethnic group, a minority group in Southeast Asia. They are also called Phnong, the equivalent of "savage" in Cambodian. Some 100,000 of them live in Vietnam and 35,000 in the Monduliri province of Cambodia. The latter is called the "Switzerland of Cambodia" because of its two lakes and its spruce hills.

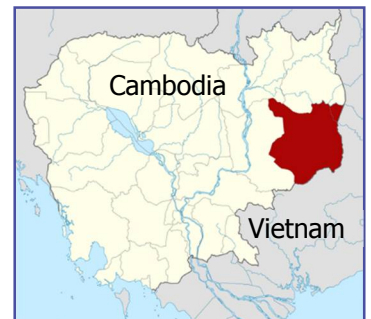
The Bunong reside on highlands in the east of the country. They live off their own farming and eat rice three times a day. They are known to be good elephant trainers. Their ancestral lands are coveted and often monopolized by multinational companies, especially for the cultivation of the hevea, the rubber tree.

The life of the Bunong is marked by animist rituals that are supposed to appease the spirits in order to obtain peace and health. Ironically, it is these very beliefs that hinder health education. There are 2,800 Christians among the Bunong in Cambodia and 40,000 in Vietnam. The release of the New Testament in their own language will undoubtedly be an event, all the more since it is the first publication of Scripture for a Cambodian minority.

The New Testament needs to be a twofold edition to be accessible to all because the Bunong language has the peculiarity of being written in two very different alphabets. The Latin script is read by older people while the Khmer script, officially recognized since 2003, is read by the young. Compared to the 56 letters of the Khmer, the new Bunong alphabet only has 25 consonants and 17 vowels.



*Traditional homes*



*The Monduliri province*

lě nau khlay Pă  
Yêsu mâu ôh i  
nuih n'hâm dâ

*Bunong in Latin script*

កោរពញ្ញាស្រាសនើ  
មើសស្រាសហ្វេង

*Bunong in Khmer script*

MiDi Bible is responsible for the layout of the edition in Latin characters. Thanks to your generosity, we are privileged to offer this service for free! God willing, the copies will be printed in April, just in time for the celebration planned next May in Cambodia. The Bunong Church is delighted at the thought of soon receiving its very own New Testament.

While waiting for the celebration, the literacy program continues with the NGO International Cooperation Cambodia (ICC). More than five thousand men, women and children have already learned to read and write in Bunong. For them, ICC has produced a hundred booklets in the fields of health, agriculture, general knowledge and folklore tales. New works continue to be published in order to maintain their capacities and interest in reading.

### *Latest news*

The celebration of the dedication of the New Testament in **Tamajaq** took place in Niger on January 2. Dedication of the Bible in **Gonja** took place in Ghana on February 6. We thank God for all this and pray that many lives will be transformed among the Gonjas and the Tamajaq Tuaregs. We will provide more details in a future newsletter.

The New Testaments in **Daba** finally arrived in Dawoun Kirving, Cameroon, where their dedication will take place on April 16. Pray for this day of rejoicing, that many Dabas will find the way to God by reading the New Testament.

The 10,000 **Gospels of John** in the Arabic dialect of a country in northern Africa are currently on the way to their final destination. Pray for the good progress of their transportation in this country that is very closed to the Gospel and also for the protection of the people who will distribute them on site.

With our best greetings in Christ,



Paul-André Eicher, President

et the MiDi Bible team: J. Eicher, P.+L. Eicher, L. Jouve, F. Wenger, D. Ardellier, E.+J. Bussard, A. Rüegger, P. Toscan, J.-M. Ratte, R. Pecora



*Didi and Lonh, the translators*



*A literacy class*



*A Bunong elephant trainer*



*The Bunong before their church*



*Dedication of the Bible in Gonja*

---

Supporting literacy, publication, and distribution of the Bible in minority languages

Account UBS Bank in US\$ – Association MiDi Bible – IBAN CH65 0024 3243 3350 2860 Z - BIC UBSWCHZH80A  
Account UBS Bank in € – Association MiDi Bible – IBAN CH96 0024 3243 3350 2840 M - BIC UBSWCHZH80A