



Nepal - 101409

## First Sonaha New Testament - *Bible Translation in Nepal*

### Overview

Sonaha is one of the marginalised ethnic groups living close to the Nepali/Indian border in south western Nepal. The first-ever Sonaha New Testament is close to

completion, and the goal of this project is to finish the translation and distribute this precious book to each community member through churches and Christian organisations.

### The Need

Nepali is the national language of Nepal but very few local Sonaha people speak Nepali. Their Sonaha language was officially recognised as a separate language in the 2011 census and it is believed that there are up to 20,000 Sonaha speakers in Nepal. Sonaha is taught at school but many of the children do not attend school due to their poverty and nomadic way of life.

This project is specifically addressing the needs of people living within an ethnic population of 14,700 near the town of Rajapur in this south western region. Nepal Bible Society (NBS) undertook a formal field visit and informal research on the Sonaha language use several years ago, discovering that the Sonaha people did not have any printed Scripture materials.

Four churches have been established among the Sonaha community with more people attending worship every week. Local pastors and leaders requested a New Testament translation in their mother tongue and they committed to send local translators to assist NBS complete this exciting project.

The New Testament has been undergoing a rigorous translation process by NBS with the support of the UBS Translation Consultants over the last few years, the project is ahead of schedule and now the first Sonaha New Testament is almost ready for printing.



## Project Goal

This project will see the translation, publication and distribution of Scripture in the Sonaha language. The goal of this project is to make the New Testament available for the Sonaha speaking people, and equip them with the living word of God.

This will also mean that Sonaha people who are not yet Christians can encounter the true God and accept Christ as their personal saviour.

## Impact

In total, this project aims to impact 20 000 people, the total estimated number of people who speak the Sonaha language.

In 2021, the project will produce 2 000 copies of the Sonaha NT which will be distributed to the Sonaha people living among an ethnic population in southern Nepal. NBS's prayer is that receiving the New Testament in their heart language will expose them to the true and living God.

There will be a measurable increase in Sonaha people attending church and gaining a greater Bible knowledge. Ultimately, through engagement with God's word, the Sonaha people's lives will be transformed as they accept that God loves them and has chosen them.

## Prayer Needs

- Thank God that despite COVID-19, the translating team has been able to complete the final checks across all books in the New Testament.
- Thank God for the good health of translators and staff of NBS. Continue to uphold them in your prayers as COVID continues to impact our world.
- Pray for the Sonaha people who will receive the Sonaha NT. May this precious book encourage this community and help them engage with the word of God so they can broaden their biblical knowledge and strengthen their personal relationship with Jesus.
- Pray also for the ongoing unstable political situation in Nepal. Pray too that God will open windows of safe passage (no strikes, earthquakes, landslides or floods) enabling the Sonaha NT to be distributed safely.