

SEAGULL* PROJECT

NOVEMBER 2023

Fast Facts:

- **Languages:** Seagull*
- **No. of speakers:** 25,000
- **Christians:** <2%
- **Location:** Southeast Asia**
- **Project period:** 2011–2026

Goal:

- Translate the NT and selected OT books into the Seagull language.

Su bénaaré nikaguwélang naung u Maʷumbatangeng manusiya, kidò Anàe Tunggé nipadaʷenge su duniya ini. Ménjadi, maning isay mamaʷatiya su Anàe ene tayawé makapégà bò u Maʷumbatangeng, gaydé mébiyaré isiyé dingang u Maʷumbatangeng ta apa tétabée.

Su bunari nikaguwélang naung u Mawumbatangeng manusiya, kido Anae Tunggi nipadarengé su dunya ini. Minjadi, maning isay mamaratiya su Anae ene tayawe makapuga bo u Mawumbatangeng, gaydi mubiyari isiyé dingang u Mawumbatangeng ta apa titabie.

John 3:16 in two Seagull orthographies (spelling systems) that are being tested.

Seagull language speakers are found along the coastal areas of a Southeast Asian country. Formerly migrants from another country, their culture and religious beliefs have remained largely unchanged through the centuries.

Christians constitute 1.5% of the Seagull population, while the rest belong to a majority religion. The community has been historically wary of Christianity due to its colonial association. Although house churches have been established among the Seagull people since 2001, they are struggling to survive as there have been many attacks by the enemy, especially on the leaders.

Stories and testimonies | Jul–Sep 2023

From the project facilitator, P:*

One of our MTTs left us in 2017. He is now telling his community to avoid us. For example, "Do you know P or G* or A* or J*? Never accept any books from them because they are trying to convert us!" Our ministry partners have a water project in this community and heard him say this. They strongly advise us not to go to the community, even for orthography testing. When the MTTs heard about this, they were hurt, shocked and scared since this former MTT was

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once part of our team, like a brother to us. What he said ruined our reputation in his community, a very difficult thing in this culture.

But one of our MTTs said, "He ruined our reputation, but it's okay. Our reputation is safe with God." Pray that the former MTT will experience the abundant love of Christ.

Project Progress | Jul–Sep 2023

- **Finalising Mark:** The manuscript was submitted to the consultant in June 2023. The consultant will look through and schedule a checking session with the team.
- **Checking of Matthew draft:** This is in progress. The team are doing partner checking of the draft, and comparing it with parallel passages in other gospels.
- **Approval of spelling system:** The linguistics approval was given in June. Community testing in two of the four dialects of Seagull has been finished. But testing in the remaining two dialects has been delayed. For security reasons, it has to be done by others, and these partners have experienced deaths in their family and major surgery for their three-year-old son.
- **Gift for MTTs:** They hope to complete the NT by 2026, at which time the team will give the three MTTs a well-deserved financial gift of appreciation. This will be based on the current monthly love gift and the number of years they have served. They will start saving for it at this time.

Mid-term Goals (next six months)

- Consultant approval of Mark (by February 2024)
- Sociolinguistics survey and orthography testing in four dialects (when the partners' son has recovered from surgery)
- Team check of Matthew (by February 2024)
- Back translation of Matthew (by June 2024)

Longer-term Goals (2024–2026)

- Translation of Matthew (to complete by 2025)
- Revision of the NT (2024–2025)

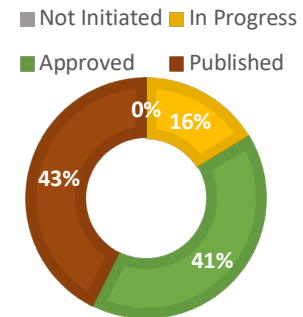
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- Recording and typesetting of NT (2026)
- Orthography consensus and approval by all four dialect communities (December 2024)

Progress to Date

- Exodus and Isaiah 53 have been approved by consultants.
- Genesis, Luke, John and Acts have been published.
- Most of the NT has been approved by consultants, except Mark and Matthew.
- Mark: submitted for consultant approval.
- Matthew: drafted and now being checked.

OT portions* & full NT (verses)



*Genesis, Exodus, Isaiah 53.

Prayer Items

Project-related:

- **Praise God** that the sale of the team office compound did not go through, so they will be able to continue living and working there.
- **Pray** for provision of voice actors for recording Scripture, especially men.
- **Pray** for the consultant check of Mark and for the translation of Matthew, including parallel passages.
- **Pray** that the four Seagull dialect communities will come to an agreement on spelling (orthography) and for favour, discernment and protection as the team interact with the community.

Team:

- L* and J* have served for many years among the Seagull. Recently, J's mother died and L's father died. Their three-year-old son became ill and needed to have major surgery. **Pray** for full recovery and for provision for payment of medical bills.
- **Pray** for God's provision for the gift for the MTTs when work on the New Testament is completed.

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- The MTTs often suffer from eye strain and headaches in their daily computer work. **Pray** that the Lord will provide help (eye exams and glasses) and ease their eyestrain and headaches.
- **Pray** for good health, protection, unity in the Spirit, endurance, discernment and provision for all God desires the team to do.
- **Pray** for peace and discernment from the Lord for P* regarding her elderly parents in the USA and for God's sustaining care.

People group:

- TT* and his wife T* are expecting their first child in February. They are very devout followers of their religion. **Pray** that they will experience Jesus and be passionate about sharing Him with their own people.
- **Pray** that God will prepare hearts that are hungry for God's Word, for more Seagull harvest workers and for God's transforming work in the Seagull communities.

Funding needs (FY2024)

Total Project Costs: S\$25,900

Wycliffe Singapore's Commitment: S\$10,000

(Note: The balance is to be met by other donors and project reserves)

If you would like to support this project, go to

<https://wycliffe.sg/giving-to-a-project>

To find out more about this project and other ways you can be involved, please contact:

**Simon Wan at R200_Funding@wycliffe.sg
or (65) 6225 7477.**

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