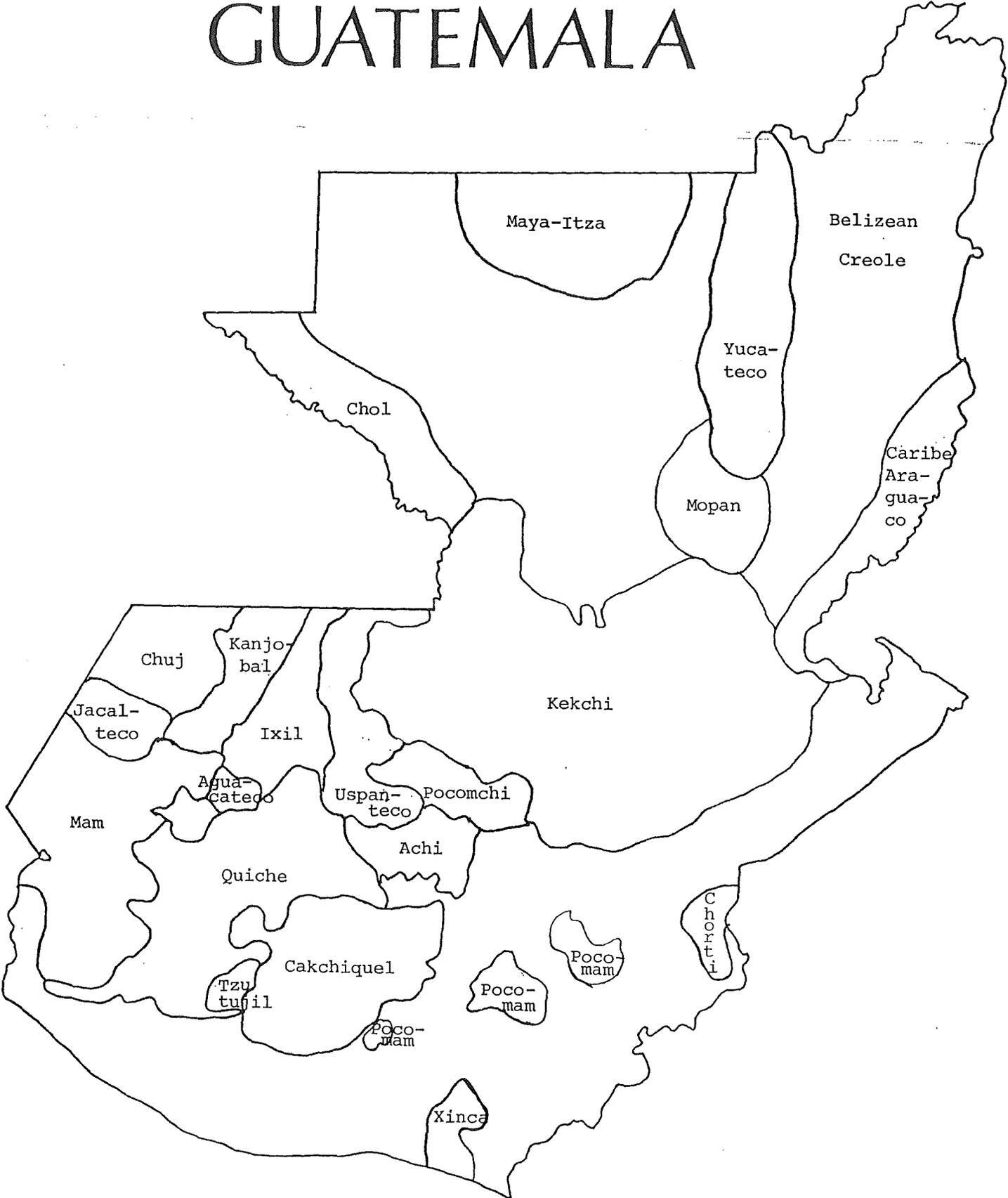


# GUATEMALA



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Guatemala is an agricultural country located in Central America, just south of Mexico. Geographically, it is the size of Tennessee, and the estimated population for 1981 was 7.47 million. Spanish is the only official language of the country, and is spoken in the major cities (30% of the population) and among the Latin people who live in the towns. There are also 23 Indian languages, which are mostly from the Mayan language family.

The government interferes little with the religious beliefs of the people. There are two missions in the country: one based in Guatemala City which works in the Spanish-speaking cities, and the other in Quetzaltenango which covers the Indian towns. The economy of the country is low, with a national income per person of \$490. The adult literacy rate is 46% (3% in Indian areas).

## LANGUAGES OF GUATEMALA

### Achi

This Mayan language is spoken in the central area of Guatemala. There are two dialects of Achi: Rabinal (21,000 speakers) and Cubulco (15,000 speakers). The New Testament is currently being translated in both dialects. No missionary work has been done in Achi.

### Aguacateco

This Mayan language is spoken by 7,000 to 8,000 people who live in western Huehuetenango. The New Testament was published in 1972. No missionary work has been done in Aguacateco.

### Belizean Creole

This English-based creole is spoken by 140,000 to 150,000 people in the country of Belize. It is very close to Jamaican and Nicaraguan creoles. Consideration is being given to translate the Bible.

### Cakchiquel

Cakchiquel is spoken by 400,000 people in southern Guatemala from Lake Atitlan to Guatemala City, and south to the Pacific. It is a Mayan language, closely related linguistically to Quiche. The four basic dialects are Central (New Testament published in 1954, later revised), Eastern (New Testament in translation), Southern (Bible translation planned), and Western (Bible translation planned). Church translation was authorized in 1976, and Phase I and most of Phase II has been completed in the Central dialect. Church units have been established in San Juan Sacatepequez, Sumpango, San Andres Itzapa, Comalapa, Patzicia, Patzun, Tecpan, and Solola.

### Caribe Araguaco

This Arawakan language (also known as Carifuna) is spoken by 30,000 people in Guatemala, Belize, and Honduras. It was brought from St. Vincent Island in 1797, and has Spanish, English, and French borrowings. The New Testament is being translated. No missionary work has been done in this language.

### Chol

This Mayan language is spoken by 70,000 to 80,000 people in Chiapas, Mexico and in north-western Guatemala. The New Testament was published in 1976. No missionary work has been done in this language.

### Chorti

This Mayan language is spoken by 25,000 people in the south-eastern area of Guatemala. The New Testament is being translated. No missionary work has been done in this language.

### Chuj

This Mayan language is spoken in Mexico and in central Guatemala near the western border with Mexico, and has two main dialects: 6,000 to 7,000 people speak the San Mateo Ixtatan dialect (New Testament published in 1970) and 8,000 speak the San Sebastian Coatlan dialect (New Testament published in 1969). No missionary work has been done in this language.

### **Ixil**

This Mayan language is spoken in central Guatemala, and is subdivided into three major dialects: 15,000 people speak the Chajul dialect (New Testament in translation), 12,000 speak the Cotzal dialect (New Testament in translation), and 20,000 speak the Nebaj dialect (New Testament published in 1976). No missionary work has been done in this language.

### **Jacalteco**

This Mayan language is spoken by 20,000 people in Mexico and in central Guatemala near the western border with Mexico. The New Testament is being translated. No missionary work has been done in this language.

### **Kanjobal**

This Mayan language is spoken in central Guatemala, and is subdivided into two major dialects: 18,000 people speak the San Miguel Acatan/Conob dialect (New Testament in translation), and 32,000 speak the Santa Eulalia/Conob dialect (New Testament published in 1960, later revised). No missionary work has been done in this language.

### **Kekchi**

This Mayan language is spoken, with only slight dialectal variations by 350,000 people in a large part of north central and eastern Guatemala, extending to the border of Belize in the northeast. The New Testament was published in 1961, and a revision is in progress. Church translation was authorized in 1978, and Phase I and most of Phase II have been completed. Church units have been established in Coban, Tactic, Carcha, La Tinta, Senahu, Cahabon, and Val Paraiso.

### **Mam**

This Mayan language is spoken by 400,000 people in southwestern Guatemala. The six major dialects are: (1) Northern dialect, near San Sebastian (New Testament published in 1968; Old Testament in translation); (2) San Marcos dialect (Bible translation planned); (3) Southern dialect, near San Juan Ostuncalco (New Testament published 1939, later revised; Old Testament in translation); (4) Tacana, which is spoken by older people who are also bi-lingual in Spanish; (5) Tectitan dialect, also known as Teco, is spoken in the town of Tectitan which is geographically isolated and often inaccessible (New Testament in translation); and (6) Todos Santos (New Testament in translation). Church translation was authorized in 1978, and Phase I is complete. Church units have been established in Huehuetenango, San Marcos, and other towns.

### **Maya-Itza**

### **Mopan**

This Mayan language is spoken by 4,000 to 5,000 people in the northeastern area of Guatemala and also in Belize. The New Testament was published in 1976. No missionary work has been done in this language.

### **Pocomam**

This Mayan language is spoken by 10,000 to 15,000 people in central Guatemala, and is subdivided into two dialects. The Central dialect is spoken to the north and west of Guatemala City (New Testament in translation), and the Oriental dialect is spoken in the southeastern Jalapa area (Bible translation need not established). Limited missionary work has been done in Pocomam.

### **Pocomchi**

This Mayan language is spoken in the north central area of Guatemala, and is subdivided into two dialects. The Eastern dialect is spoken by 15,000 to 20,000 people who live in the north central Alta Verapaz area near Tamahu and Tactic (New Testament in translation), and the Western dialect is spoken by 20,000 to 25,000 people who live around San Cristobal (New Testament in translation). Limited missionary work has been done in Pocomchi.

### **Quiche**

Quiche is spoken by 450,000 people in southern Guatemala. It is a Mayan language, and has seven basic dialects: (1) the Chichicastenango dialect (New Testament published in 1947); (2) the Costal dialect (Bible translation being considered); (3) the Cunen dialect (Bible translation planned); (4) the Joyabaj dialect (New Testament in translation); (5) the Sacapulas dialect (New Testament in translation); (6) the Sipacapa dialect (New Testament in translation); and (7) the Southwestern dialect (New Testament published). Church translation was authorized in 1977, and Phase I and most of Phase II have been completed in the Southwestern dialect. Church units have been established in Quetzaltenango, Totonicapan, Nimasac, Juchanep, Olinstepeque, Momostenango, Santa Ana, Nimsituj, Canquixaja, Panca, Santa Maria Chicimula, Cunen, and El Quiche.

### **Spanish**

This Romance family language is spoken by 3 to 4.5 million people throughout the country of Guatemala. It is spoken in the major cities, and by Latin people who live in the smaller towns. It is the official language of the country. The full Church program is available in Spanish.

### **Tzutujil**

This Mayan language is spoken by 40,000 to 50,000 people in the southern Solola area. The New Testament is in translation. Limited missionary work has been done in Tzutujil, and a Church unit has been established in Santiago Atitlan.

### **Uspanteco**

This Mayan language is spoken by 10,000 to 15,000 people in central Guatemala. The New Testament is in translation. No missionary work has been done in Uspanteco.

### **Xinca**

This language may be related to Lenca. It is spoken by approximately 100 people in southeastern Guatemala. All speakers are bi-lingual in Spanish.

### **Yucateco**

This Mayan language is spoken by 3,000 in two villages in Guatemala, and also in Mexico and Belize. The New Testament was published in 1961. No missionary work has been done in Yucateco in Guatemala.