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"Helping ignite culturally relevant heart worship, especially in places where Christ-followers are restricted, persecuted or unknown."

HeartBeats

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A Mountain Top Event

On the highest peak in the Philippines is a small village about two thirds of the way up Mount Apo. HSI Asia Area Coordinator Erica Logan recently led a recording team there to record a group of about 20 Obo Manobo musicians.

The young Obo Manobo musicians are a blend of two worlds--the deep heritage of their own people and the new horizons of modernity. These Christian artists are seeking to be modern and educated while not forgetting their past as a mountain tribe. Our team committed to teach, mentor, and record this group as they were already actively fusing their faith, their music, and their tribal identity.



Vital to the success of the endeavor was a unique partnership. Six organizations combined their strengths to accomplish the task: SIL (Summer Institute of Linguistics/Wycliffe) graciously hosted all of the participants, Heart Sounds International (HSI) provided the ethnomusicology consultant and coordinated the project, Youth With A Mission (YWAM) contributed the contemporary music mentor and engineer, OMALRACDI (Obo Manobo Active Language Resource and Community Development, Inc.) provided their recording studio and distribution support through radio, Ambassadors for Christ provided the concert sound system, and Sayaban Alliance Church opened their doors as the venue of the workshop. With this team, we were able to accurately address a variety of needs including logistics, biblical studies, ethnic music research and mentoring, contemporary music mentoring, recording, a community concert, and distribution of the resulting music album.



The workshop took place over five days in two tracks—song writing and recording. What was proposed had never been done before: To blend styles of music that younger generations enjoy with Obo Manobo lyrics and other Manobo cultural traits. By the end of the week the basic tracks of 24 original Christian songs were recorded, 18 of which were new songs written that week! The project culminated with a community concert showcasing the new Obo Manobo songs.

As we were preparing to leave, two people came up with tears to say thank you. They shared that the new song concert held the night before had been the very first time in history that a concert was held in their own language. For the first time they had songs in words that they completely understood.

We rejoice that a mountain top tribal group is having a "mountain top" experience with some of the very first worship songs in the Obo Manobo language.



Warmly yours,

Erica Logan

Heart Sounds Asia Area Coordinator

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