

# Country: Ghana

## Language: Dɛg (Mo)

2018 Scripture  
Celebration

Description: Bible 1st edition

Speakers: 55,000

Began: 1981

Published: 2015

Translators: Noah Ampem, Gabriel Chiu, Stephen Kofi Mensah,

Wilfred Opoku, Edward Banchagla, Joshua Osei

Translation Consultant: Marjorie Crouch

Literacy Specialist: Patricia Herbert

Editorial Consultant: Margaret Langdon

Dedication: March 2016



Naa Dr Tebala kala Gyasehene thanking God for the Deg Bible

Most Dega people live in Dega Hare (Dega land) which is located in the Bole district in the Northern Region and the Wenchi and Kintampo districts in the Brong Ahafo Region. Dega Hare consists of about 46 villages in an area roughly 650 square miles (about the size of Union County in North Carolina). Outside Dega Hare, there are a number of Dega people in the Jaman District in Ghana. A group also lives in several villages in Cote d'Ivoire and Dega in Ghana call those people *Lamoolatina* (the people beyond the river).

The people call themselves, Dega, meaning “multiplying”, “spreading quickly”, or “fertility”. One person is called a Deg and the language is also known as Deg. Other ethnic groups in Ghana call the Dega, Mo, “the people who did well”. It’s believed that this name, Mo, acknowledges an event where the Dega came to the aid of another Ghanaian tribe in battle, who would have been defeated without the valiant efforts of the Dega.

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Even before Christianity or Islam came to Dega Hare, Dega acknowledged the existence of God, the Supreme Being. God's name in Deg Nnaa Korowii Jen means something like "the Great Ancestor who is the chief of all spirits" and also depicts the fact that He is greater than even the greatest ancestors and is the one and only King of all the supernatural beings and spirits. Tragically, He was known to be too far away from humankind, not able to be reached directly. It was also known that human beings are finite, weak, and impure or sinful and are in need of a power not his or her own.

For many years, the Dega people heard God's Word not in their own language but in Asante-Twi, which had become the "Latin" of the Church for them. This meant even when the gospel message was revealed: the good news that Korowii came near, that He is not far away and that He has made a way for finite

weak and impure human beings in need of a power not their own to know Him... it seemed, this God, Korowii, didn't speak Deg.

A French missionary recounts a Ghanaian who accepted Christ as savior through the gospel presented in Asante praying a prayer in Asante:

Dear God. I am thankful for everything you have made. But you know that I do not speak Asante well and I know that You don't speak my language. So I am finished. Amen.

Celebrate with the Dega that today God (Korowii) speaks Deg! The entire Bible in Deg was dedicated in March of 2016. Pray that God will indeed "multiply" and "spread quickly" His followers among the Dega both in Dega Hare and among those beyond the river (the Lamoolatina).



### Church leaders dedicate the complete Bible in Deg (Mo)

**Sources:** Thesis: Thomas Atta-Akosah, 2004, Bible translation in Christian mission: a case study of the spiritual and socio-cultural impact of the Bible translation strategy of the Ghana Institute of Linguistics, Literacy and Bible Translation on the Dega people of Ghana.

Schaaf, Ype, On their Way Rejoicing: The History and Role of the Bible in Africa, 2002



# Country: Côte d'Ivoire

## Language: Sénoufo, Djimini

2018 Scripture  
Celebration

Description: Bible 1st edition

Speakers: 100,000

Began: 1978

Published: 2015

Main Translator and Project Leader: Ouattara, Nambalapan Matthieu

Translators: Nambolossé Bamoussa Touré, Ouattara Pétanry Moïse

Literacy specialist and typist: Coulibaly Dianko Justin

Facilitator: Wolfgang & Elfi Stradner

Pronunciation: like in Mary Poppins song: (I type it, how we would spell and pronounce it in German: tschim-tschimini)

Dedication: March 2016



### Djimini Bible Dedication (presenting the Djimini Bible)

North Côte d'Ivoire was under rebel control during 10 years of political crisis. Despite being located there, the Djimini translation team courageously persevered. In February 2014, they passed the milestone of checking the last Old Testament book.

The New Testament was already available in both print and audio forms. The team also recorded the *JESUS* film in Djimini in 2014. The team and especially the project leader, Matthieu, had health scares. Matthieu had typhoid twice. Matthieu's wife was hospitalized with severe anemia and urgently needed a blood transfusion. But blood could only be gotten

from about 80 miles away. The Djimini translation team prayed and three hours later, blood was administered and she recovered.

Matthieu who speaks four languages, Djimini, French, English and Jula (Côte d'Ivoire's main trade language), began working with a Wycliffe team in 1979, serving as the primary translator for the Djimini New Testament and then, primary translator and project lead for the Djimini Complete Bible translation.

The Djimini Bible is also available online (the site is available in French and Djimini: [www.djimini.com](http://www.djimini.com)).

[continued]



Ee, Yawe Yenŋele li yen ma yɔn, li kagbaraga  
ki yen kɔsaga fu. Li yen senre nungba yofɔ  
wagati wi ni fuun ni fɔ tetete.

Psalm 100:5 –

For the LORD is good and his love endures  
forever; his faithfulness continues through  
all generations.



# Country: Ghana

## Language: Gonja

2018 Scripture Celebration

Description: Bible 1st edition

Speakers: 310,000

Began: 1969

Published: 2015

Translators: NT: Janette Zwart, John Kipo Mahama

OT & Revised NT: Ps. Abdul-Rahim Adam, Ps. Francis

Mahama Zakaria and Ps. Joseph Issah Gyane

Pronunciation: gón(H)-jà(L) High/Low tones

Dedication: February 6, 2016



A colorful ceremony to inaugurate the complete Gonja Bible was held at Buipe in the Central Gonja District of northern Ghana on Saturday, February 6th.

Gonja churches were looking forward to this day, to see the Bible in their own Gonja language. More than 800 churches set up reading classes where students listened to Bible stories and learned memory verses. Many people came to know the Lord through attending these classes. This only heightened the anticipation for the whole Bible.

The President of Ghana, John Mahama, is a Christian and a Gonja. He had planned to attend but was prevented due to weather (planes were unable to fly due to thick Hamattan dust from the Sahara Desert). The Regional Minister (who is also a Gonja and living in Tamale) came in the President's place and read the President's speech for him.

The theme of the day was how people's lives would be transformed when the people received the Bible in their own language.

In 1969 Jeanette Zwart of the Worldwide Evangelization for Christ (WEC) mission commenced the New Testament translation in the Gonja language, assisted by John Kipo Mahamah, one of the first Gonja Christians. The New Testament was completed and dedicated in 1983.

In 1997, GILLBT in partnership with other stakeholders assumed responsibility for the Gonja Literacy program and also commenced the Old Testament Translation in 2005. This is the 9th whole Bible completed by GILLBT.

Sources: GILLBT (Ghana Institute of Linguistics, Literacy, and Bible Translation, SIL (Ian and Claire Gray), Wycliffe UK



# Country: Papua New Guinea

## Language: Kuni-Boazi, “Kuni” dialect

2018 Scripture  
Celebration

Description: New Testament 1st edition

Speakers: 2,500

Began: 1990

Published: 2015

Translators: Roland and Irene Fumey (Wycliffe Switzerland),  
with Kozap, Aima, Arnold, Zonombop, Emmanuel, and many others  
who helped at different stages in the translation and revision process  
Pronunciation: [‘kuni] (i.e. ‘coonee’)  
Dedication: January 10, 2016

On Sunday, January 10, the Kuni New Testament was dedicated in the far western part of Papua New Guinea. Roland and Irene Fumey (Wycliffe Switzerland), along with their Kuni co-workers have worked long and hard for 25 years to make this day happen. Hundreds lined up to get the New Testaments (350 sold), the solar powered Audio Bibles for listening to the Scriptures (220 – sold out), and SD cards for listening and reading (130 – sold out). In the evening there was a showing of the *JESUS* film in Kuni. The sports field was filled with more than 2,000 people hanging on to every word.

Please pray that God’s Word would make a difference in the lives of Kuni people, that they would accept God’s salvation and see Him be a part of their culture.

Watch: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hern-0QIbtEo> four and a half minute video

This video depicts one of the many stories surrounding the Kuni New Testament dedication in Papua New Guinea. We celebrate with the many, many people who were involved in making this translation happen.



# Country: Ghana

## Language: Kusaal

2018 Scripture  
Celebration

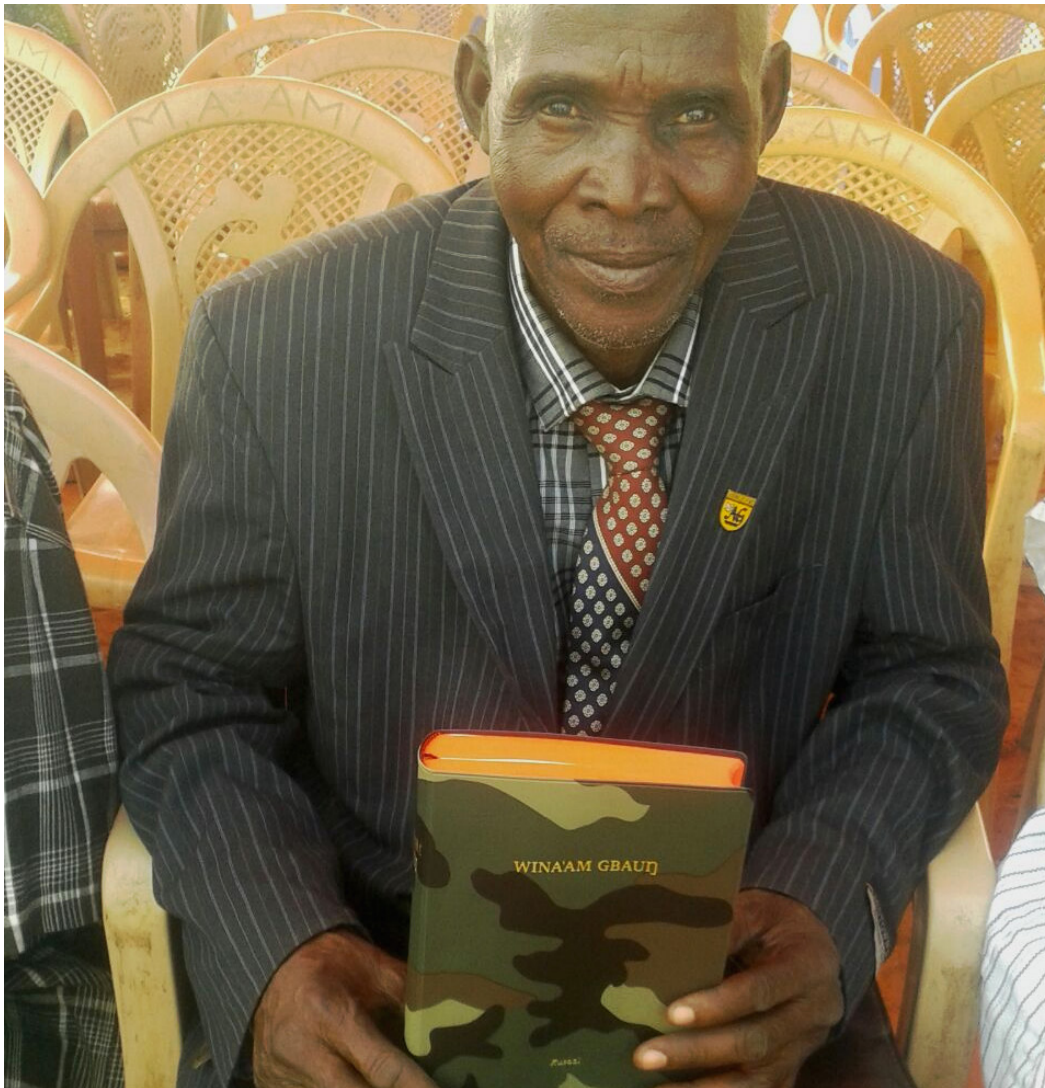
Description: Bible 1st edition

Speakers: 500,000

Began: 1998

Published: 2015

Translators: Dr. Tony Naden (Main Consultant), Rev. Joshua Kelwini,  
Moses Atiiga, Michael Awimbilla



The complete  
Bible in Kusaal!

The theme selected for the dedication of the complete Kusaal Bible was "Gospel Proclamation: Now is the Time".

Isaiah 62:12: They will be called "The Holy People" and "The People Redeemed by the LORD." And Jerusalem will be known as "The Desirable Place" and "The City No Longer Forsaken."

Saturday, February 20th was a memorable day in the history of the Kusaal speaking people in the Upper East region of Ghana when they received the complete Kusaal Bible.

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The occasion was witnessed by the Overlord of Kusaug, (Naaba Asigiri Abugragu Azorka the 11) and his entourage, government officials, ministers of the Gospel, and church members among many others.

In 1962 a British missionary couple, David and Nancy Spratt were assigned to the Kusasi area to carry out linguistic research and subsequently translate the New Testament in Kusaal. After 14 years of hard work and commitment, the Spratts, Rev. Panaad Azong, Rev. Adam Anaba and others completed the New Testament.

In 1998, church leaders from all over the Kusaal area came together and established a committee to oversee the translation of the Old Testament. The committee appointed pastors who were given training to start translation on a part-time basis but work slowed down due to their full-time church commitment. In 2005, Rev. Joshua Soforo and Mr. Moses Atiiga were appointed full-time translators with sponsorship from Wycliffe Netherlands. And 2016 IS the time when the complete Bible has come to the Kusasi people: the complete Bible in Kusaal.



Anglican bishop showing the completed Bible to the Overlord and his entourage



# Country: Thailand Language: Lahu Si

Translators: Duangthip Nakiri

2016 Scripture  
Celebration

Description: New Testament 1st edition

Speakers: 200,000

Began: 2009

Published: 2015

Translators: Duangthip Nakiri

SIL Facilitators: Arthur and Pamela Cooper, Upai and Amber Jasa; Larin & Pam Adams also participated

Pronunciation: “lah who shee” [LA WHO SEE] / [LA HU SI]. The language has 7 tones. The tones on the syllables in the name are high low mid, so using the notes in the “doe a deer” song (drmfsltd) as a target for the pitches, the name would be pronounced with the pitches [la do mi]

Dedication: February 13, 2016



The Lahu Si live throughout Myanmar, Thailand, Laos, China, and Vietnam. Many in Thailand are believers but many Lahu SI in the other closed countries have never heard. Pray that God grows His church among the Lahu Si through His Word.

During our community testing as we were reading through the Lahu Si draft of Acts, a pux (the grandfather) said, “Even though I preach and pray in Lahu Na

(a related language) in church, that doesn’t enter my heart as when I normally pray on my own in my own language. When I read the draft it goes right into my heart, as no other language can do.”

The other checkers present were quick to agree and said, “Yes. Other languages don’t enter my heart, but this does.”

[continued]

Upai Jasa, Wycliffe Thailand, recalls his reluctance to join the team working on this project.

The Lahu Si New Testament translation began in the 1980s and by 2009, it was... well, it was a mess. Relationships among the team working on the project were broken, trust was nonexistent, many viewed the Lahu Si community in Thailand as being riddled with divisiveness. They saw Lahu Si churches split over the smallest disagreement, clans and communities also split.

Upai and Amber were approached to join the team and they wanted more than anything to decline the invitation.

There was a time when the project was in serious danger of being cancelled because it was unclear whether it could be salvaged.

The testimony of the Lahu Si project is that God did what only God can do: rebuilding trust, bringing people together with a sense of excitement, teaching His people about showing kindness when people are unkind and how to show love to those who are unlovable.

The team had the experience of knowing every day that they were wholly dependent on God as they had no idea how this project might move forward.

God did.

Amber wonders, thinking now about the larger picture of God's timing. Why is now the time for the Lahu Si to have God's Word in their hands. God could've done this 15 years ago. Is now the time for revival among the Lahu Si?

God is faithful. God was faithful. God will be faithful.

And the Lahu Si now have God's Word in their language, the language that goes right to their hearts.

Steps to the Translation process: (1) Drafting, (2) Exegetical Checking (check against Greek and other resources verse by verse), (3) Community Checking (read the text to the community and ask questions to make sure it makes sense to them), (4) Back Translation (to send to outside consult for checking for accuracy), (5) Consultant Checking.

After consultant checking had a final read through of the New Testament, they invited church leaders.





# Country: Cameroon

## Language: Lamnso'

2018 Scripture  
Celebration

Description: Bible 1st edition

Speakers: 350,000

Began: 1972

Published: 2014

Translators: Karl Grebe, Alfred Vensu, Samuel Ngeh,  
Emmanuel Ngodzeka, Godbless Lashenghane,  
Emmanuel Keelen, Chistopher M.



13 May 2016 Nso' Notables (Nso' tribal leaders) during the ceremony to present the complete Lamnso' Bible to the traditional ruler, his majesty, the fon.

"I think it is so important [being involved in providing God's life-giving Word] because this is something that will be everlasting. To make God's Word in the mother tongue, to make God speak..." – Samuel Ngeh, Lamnso' Bible Translator

In 2001, Samuel Ngeh, then 27, volunteered to help prepare the *JESUS* film's Lamnso' narration. He has since graduated from seminary (see his Master's Thesis on Scripture Use in Nso' Tribe (English)). Samuel, an evangelist and part-time Bible translator, dedicated twelve years laboring with the translation team at the Lamnso Bible translation office near Kumbo, about a 90 minute daily hike from his home in the

high country of northwest Cameroon. By Kingdom standards, Samuel and his wife Brendaline are rich—selflessly serving God and the Ngo people through Bible translation, evangelism, and church planting.

In 2016, the Nso people celebrate the completion of the entire Bible in their language Lamnso'.

The ultimate goal of the Lamnso' Old Testament project was to give Nso' people full access to the Word of God in Lamnso' so that the Holy Spirit can work deeply in the lives of Nso' Christians, transforming churches in Nso' and the Christian community (Lamnso' Project proposal 1999:1).

[continued]

Wycliffe Canada reports that at the beginning of the Old Testament translation project, the Nso people selected to begin the work began by singing this song:

“Oh Father God, it is You who gave us Lamnso  
The language we speak and write now as well!  
We are calling your Voice (reading your Word)  
now in Lamnso...”

This anthem, written by a colleague, goes on to praise the beauty and clarity of God’s Word in Lamnso’.

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It is important for the mother tongue to be taken seriously in the proclamation of the gospel that brings forth conversion. ...Jesus does not need a special language or culture to establish a redemptive relationship with peoples. For gospel communication to penetrate and transform the Nso’ culture, it must be communicated in Lamnso’ so that there is a natural connection between biblical concepts and Nso’ people’s thought pattern.

The statement ‘God is holy’ was initially expressed as ‘Nyù dzə e ránén’ (God is clean). When holiness is used in relation to man using the word ‘ránén’ (clean), the idea of sin is overlooked. This is because the Lamnso’ word for holiness lays emphasis on the outward performance. The literal translation can easily lead people to appear morally good when sin has not been dealt in their lives. However the expression ‘God is holy’ as translated in the Lamnso’ Bible is ‘Nyù dzə là jay’(God is without sin). When this term is used in relation to man, the idea of sin is put into serious consideration.

- Samuel Ngeh, April 2015 Master of Theology Thesis

SIL started basic linguistic research in 1972 after consultations with the church and Nso’ community leaders. A Language Committee was set up to oversee the development of the orthography and literacy work. In 1984, the church leaders officially adopted the project and appointed reviewers who worked with the translation team. The Lamnso New Testament was dedicated on September 16, 1990, having been published by the Cameroon Bible Society (CBS). About nine thousand copies were printed.

In 1992, church leaders in this region expressed their desire to have the entire Bible translated. CABTAL agreed to provide leadership for this and sponsored the coordinator for advanced training in the Old Testament. It was in 2002 that the project went operational and now the Nso have access to the complete Word of God.





# Country: Ghana

## Language: Lelemi

2018 Scripture Celebration

Description: Bible 1st edition

Speakers: 120,000

Began: 1981

Published: 2014

Translators: Andy & Kate Ring, Marcus Pewudie, Daniel Diko,

Emmanuel Boampong, Veronica Akufo, Augustine Agbo

Pronunciation: LEH-leh-mii (English “me”, accent on the first syllable)

Dedication: November 22, 2014



The Lelemi Bible: after 94 years, the people of the Buem Traditional Area in the Volta Region of Ghana now have the complete Bible in their language.

Translation of the Bible into Lelemi began in the 1920s by a Buem, A.O. Dogli, West Africa’s first Catholic priest and a pioneer in education among the communities in the Volta Region. Father Dogli’s work was rejected and his writings burnt after his struggle to translate the Bible for his own people.

When the Lelemi Bible was dedicated in Accra, Ghana, Father Dogli’s original work was acknowledged as pioneering Bible translation in the area.

Work on the Lelemi Bible was revived in the early 1980s with Benard Ofori and Kwame Olawu (both now deceased) and Dr. Andy Ring.

In 1996 the Lelemi New Testament was dedicated at Bodada-Buem in the Volta Region. The Paramount Chief of Buem Traditional Council, Nana Akpanja, asked for the Old Testament to be translated, promising to support the work to get the entire Bible in Buem.

Work on the Old Testament started in 1998 and now, 19 years later, it has been completed.

[continued]

Dr Paul Opoku-Mensah, Executive Director of the Ghana Institute of Linguistics, Literacy, and Bible Translation said, “What Father Dogli began in the 1920s, and was continued by Andy Ring in the 1980s must be completely taken over by you (the Buem) in 2014.”

“Let’s all be happy, because the Bible we receive today is more than food and drink to us.” -Daniel Asiamah, Ghana Member of Parliament from the Buem constituency

Source: Ghana News Agency, SIL (Ed Lauber)

The first copies of the Lelemi Bible were purchased by the Buem Member of Parliament (MP), Mr Daniel Kwesi Ashiamah and by the Buem District Chief Executive, Mr Killian Abrapah.



Buem Chiefs at the Lelemi Bible dedication



# Country: Democratic Republic of the Congo

## Language: Logo

2016 Scripture Celebration

Description: New Testament 1st edition

Speakers: 400,000

Began: 1992

Published: 2015

Project Director, Translator: Aguma Kulinde Adara Ganga

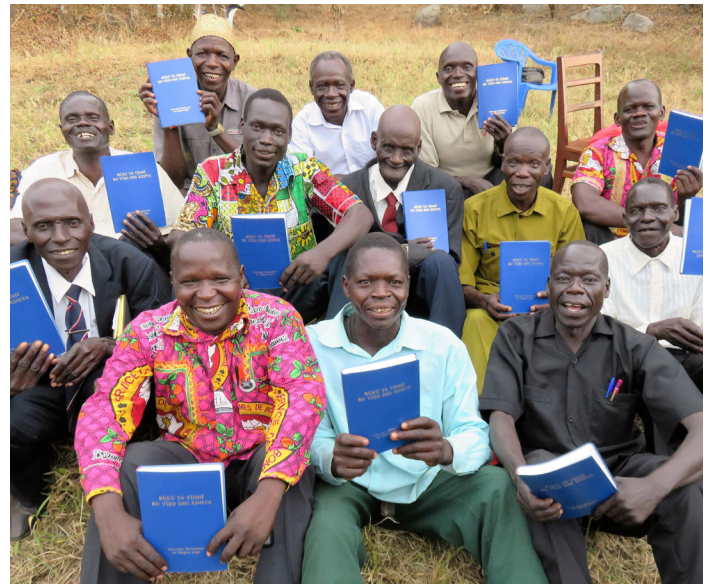
Translators: Madrakele Marungbu, Akudhi Maulo, Atake Vorandabe, Andaty Mawadri

Consultants: Doug & Beth Wright

Project Advisors: Stewart Johnson, Jo Johnson, Rhonda Fraser

Pronunciation: LOH-goh

Dedication: March 6, 2016



Reading the Logo version of the New Testament “flows as easily as reading a newspaper”—Logo speaker

The Logo translation team introduced the newly translated New Testament through Scripture meetings, radio broadcasts, and with supporting materials.

The dedication took place March 6 in Todro, DRC in the northeastern region of Orientale, nearer to South Sudan and Uganda than to DRC’s capital Kinshasa, which is over 1,000 miles away (about the distance from the NC coast to Dallas, TX).

The Logo translation took place over a period of 23 years, including decades of civil war. The Logo people have suffered much and are exhausted after decades

of civil war along their eastern borders. It has been said that it is a miracle that even one verse of translated Scripture is produced in the tumultuous and unstable environment of DRC and yet, praise God! Three language communities celebrated the dedication of the New Testament in their language in DRC this year!

The Logo translation team sacrificed and suffered much to complete the New Testament. Grief over the loss of children, brothers, and colleagues has given way to this statement, “It is all worth it to see these New Testaments entering these communities. Now for transformed lives!”

[continued]

In 2012, Logo translators relocated to the town of Isiro when their home area in northeastern DRC became too dangerous. At the center of the violence is the Lord's Resistance Army, a rebel group formed decades ago that has murdered thousands and traumatized thousands more. The group was formed in Uganda and now makes its home in eastern Central African Republic and northeastern Congo, where the Logo people are found. Many have fled to escape the LRA's indiscriminate burning of villages and kidnapping of children.

Church communities in the Isiro regional area created a center for Bible translation (CITBA) especially for those from rebel-affected areas.

Several team members also experienced in addition to loss, scary illnesses of their children, requiring hospitalization.

Despite civil war and its fallout, the Logo Church is strong and growing

Audio recordings of the Logo NT are also available and the *JESUS* film was produced in Logo in 2007.

Phil Leckrone and Doug Wright worked together to complete the typesetting at the JAARS Center in Waxhaw.

The translation team was especially encouraged by the results of one particular meeting. The translation team gathered leaders of local denominations and a consultant to work together to finalize key biblical terms. The translation team had been praying and had asked their partners to pray fervently over these meetings. It was incredible. All the participants were struck by the spirit of both unity and humility in the meetings: evidence of the power of prayer and of God's spirit over them.

There is indeed reasons for hope. Now for transformed lives!

Source: Doug and Beth Wright, Don Buhler, Joshua Project, Wycliffe Global Alliance, Seed Company

And as to prayer:

Thirty-three years ago, Tom and Anne Hopkins began praying for the Logo people as part of the Bibleless People Prayer Project. Two years after they began praying, in 1985, Tom and Anne joined Wycliffe. And then 10 years after they began praying, a translator couple was assigned to begin working\* on the Logo New Testament translation. Tom and Anne began supporting that couple and continued to pray. Today, 33 years later, the Logo New Testament is complete! Tom still has their original Bibleless people prayer card from 33 years ago.

Want to join the Bibleless People Prayer project?  
<https://www.wycliffe.org/prayer/bppp>

\*We believe the true beginning of a Bible translation project is when someone starts praying for it to happen.



# Country: Democratic Republic of the Congo

Language: Mayogo

2018 Scripture Celebration

Description: New Testament 1st edition

Speakers: 100,000

Began: 1986

Published: 2015

Translators: Mike & Julia Anne McCord, Mapuma, Moway Adho David, Badanebua Agwala Daniel, Adabuane Ndegue Seth Stefane  
Pronunciation: mai-oh'-goh

Dedication: March 12-13 2016 (Saturday/Sunday) in Isiro NE DRC (preceded the weekend before by the LOGO NT dedication.)

At 1:30am on a Sunday morning, the truck carrying some precious cargo: 10,000 Mayogo New Testaments rolled into Isiro in the northeastern part of Democratic Republic of Congo. It was a long and difficult four day journey on roads that have obstacles like 12 foot deep large pits, stuck vehicles that must be dug out before being able to pass... Praise God for protecting the drivers on dangerous roads over four long and difficult days.

When they arrived in Isiro in the middle of the night, it was a very quiet, unnoticed event. Someone com-

mented that perhaps it was like that when Jesus was born too. People didn't realize the great riches of hope that had just been delivered.

Not only was that journey of bringing the New Testaments into the country a difficult one, but the work itself of translating their New Testament has also been a long and difficult journey. Work started in 1986 and persevered through war and difficulty and loss.



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The Mayogo people first heard the Gospel from missionaries in 1913. Today some 90 percent affiliate with Christian churches. The other 10 percent still openly practice African traditional religion. Despite church connections, many believers still hold traditional beliefs and combine rituals from their African heritage with those from their churches. There is much confusion about what Scripture actually teaches because it wasn't available in the language they know best.

Note that the plan is to continue translation by providing significant portions of the Old Testament for the Mayogo people.

Most Mayogo people live in the northeast of the Democratic Republic of Congo. For more than a generation, the Mayogo homelands have been torn apart by civil war. Gardens have been uprooted, villages burned and local people brutalized and displaced.

Ongoing literacy efforts have fueled fervor among Mayogo pastors for using the mother tongue Scriptures in their churches as they become available. In addition to literacy related to Scripture use, a mother tongue story about an AIDS victim is making significant impact on Mayogo society. Literacy is a powerful tool to improve the life situation of the Mayogo people. As literacy takes hold among the Mayogo communities, people gain greater confidence in facing outsiders and standing up for themselves.

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"Now the Bible is the blueprint for Christians, so how are these people without the Bible in their own language able to practice Christianity?"

What a great leading question the Memphis television reporter asked during a five minute interview broadcast on Memphis News Channel 3. The guests being interviewed were a missionary couple from a Memphis church who had been invited to participate in the Mayogo New Testament

dedication in DRC. A FIVE minute interview on a morning news show about God's Word translated. Watch the interview here: <http://wreg.com/tag/mayogo/>

The second interviewer asks, "How transformative was this [dedication] not only for them, but for yourselves?"

The couple responded: "When they came down for this celebration, carrying the Scripture like the ark of the covenant. As they walked down that aisle slowly, in this huge church, bigger than First Baptist Memphis. It took about 30 minutes. The closer they got, the more excitement, the louder it got. And when they finally unveiled the Bible and held it up, the place just erupted with joy. And this was joy because God has not forgotten us and we have something in our own language that's speaking to who we are. They were singing 'God is in the House. God is in the House. Because He is in our language now.'"

The interviewer's response as they held up the Mayogo New Testament so the camera could zoom in? "That's awesome".

Sources: (photos and text): Wycliffe Global Alliance, Seed Company, Paul and Laurel Morgan, SIL, WREG-Memphis



# Country: Ghana

## Language: Nafaanra

2018 Scripture  
Celebration

Description: Bible 1st edition

Speakers: 81,000

Began: 1972

Published: 2015

Translators: Old Testament: Sampson Attah Kwasi,  
Job K. Ababio, James Anane, Kwasi Dwira, Doayah Kuma,  
Mensah Listowel, Dean & Carol Jordan

New Testament: Sampson Attah Kwasi, Samuel Tsito, Emmanuel  
Kwasi Jura, George Ababio, Pastor Kofi Yeboah, Dean & Carol Jordan  
Pronunciation: Nafana is the name often used for the people and it is  
pronounced na-fan-a and the a in the fan is pronounced in the back  
of the mouth more like u in run. Nafaanra is the name often used for  
the language and the double a's in the middle make the vowel long  
and the n at the end of the double a's nasalizes them. Na-aan-ra.

Dedication: March 5, 2016



Nafaanra Complete  
Bible Launched at  
Banda Ahenkro

Saturday, March 5th was a great occasion in the life and history of the people in Banda Traditional area as they celebrated the dedication of the complete Bible in their mother tongue.

Speakers of the Nafaanra language are located primarily in northwest Ghana in the Jaman North, Jaman South, and Tain districts of the Brong Ahafo Region along the border with Ivory Coast, east of Bondoukou.

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In 1972, Dean and Carol Jordan, an American couple, were assigned as missionaries to study the Nafaanra language and possibly translate the Bible into the mother tongue. The family met the paramount Chief Tolee Kofi Dwuru who believed this was a good thing and gave them permission. Others around the Chief thought this was only a guise of the foreigners to do something far more sinister. Time proved the chief's wisdom.

Some of the Ghanaian counterparts who worked with the couple included Mr. Sampson Attah, the son of the chief's linguist of Banda Ahenkro, Mr. James Anane, Job Ababio and the late Listowel Mensah who worked with the translation team for more than 15 years before his sudden demise in 2008.

In 1985, one thousand copies of the New Testament were printed and have all been sold out. Though the Jordans moved back to America, the Translation Team continued to work on the Old Testament. The Nafaanra wanted the whole Bible. Hundreds of copies of scriptural booklets of, Genesis, Psalms, Proverbs, Esther, Mark, John, the Acts of the Apostles etc have also been published and sold to the Nafana populace.

The Jordans rejoined the team in the early 2000s to see the project to completion.

After years of hard work, the whole Bible was completed, typeset, and printed in 2015.

God is faithful. He strengthened the translation team through years of rigorous work. Ask Almighty God to "...accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think" (Ephesians 3:20, NLT) through His Word in the heart language of the Nafaanra people. May the body of Christ grow in their faith as they now have the full account of God's story, from creation to a new heaven and new earth.

Sources: GILLBT (Ghana Institute of Linguistics, Literacy, and Bible Translation), Wycliffe Global Alliance





# Country: Democratic Republic of the Congo

## Language: Ngiti (Ndrüna)

2018 Scripture Celebration

Description: New Testament 1st edition

Speakers: 200,000

Began: 1988

Published: 2016

Translators: Atdirodhu Mazinga Jean de Dieu, Bahura Maguru Cheleph, Dubatso Nyamutale Richard, Munganga Mataba Simon, Avuta Mboudhu Mangili, Sambu Avetsu, Nyamutale,

Consultant: Connie Kutsch Lojenga

Pronunciation: inDROOna

Dedication: March 20, 2016. They have already started work on the Old Testament, and one of their translators and a consultant (both Congolese) are currently in Israel studying Hebrew to help with that.



This spring, the Ngiti people received the New Testament in their language – Ndrüna. The dedication ceremony took place in the town of Gety, Democratic Republic of Congo, near the Ugandan border.

Thousands of local people came and stood for hours in the sun, to see the presentation of the New Testaments, to hear speeches, and to watch choirs sing and dance.

The New Testaments were carried onto the stage by the Ndrüna language committee using a “tipoi,” a traditional way of carrying a king.

Dr. Constance Kutsch Lojenga, the linguist who started language work with the Ngiti 30 years ago, addressed the crowd in Ndruna and read a passage to them. Ndrüna is a very complex, tonal language, and her reading was met with much delight by the crowd.

Two Eastern Congo Group staff, Maryanne Augustin and Dr Bagamba Araali, addressed the crowd and urged them to see the ongoing translation work as “their” project, and to support it spiritually and financially.

[continued]

Dr Bagamba showed them that, if each Ngiti gave just 50 cents a year, they could completely finance the project on their own. Several people stepped forward with donations for the Old Testament work.

There was special singing and preaching and then the first box of Ndrūna New Testaments was brought up to be dedicated. All the pastors prayed over them and then the first box was opened with great ceremony. People groups were called forward to receive a copy; a representative of the women, the youth, the police, politicians and so on, and they went away celebrating. After these presentations different people would read a portion of scripture and, with great excitement, hear the words in their heart language.

The Ndrūna project has been based in Bunia for many years, because much of their home area is in the “red zone”, where there have been ongoing militia attacks. So visitors from the translation office in Bunia traveled to Gety by bus, with a United Nations escort.

Some of the office staff come from an ethnic group that has been an enemy of the Ngiti. One had been kidnapped twice by Ngiti militia; others lost family members in a massacre 13 years ago. Despite their apprehensions, they were excited to see the ceremony and God’s Word in a new language.

The bus trip went smoothly, with no problems. But two translators from another language, coming by motorcycle from the opposite direction, were not so fortunate. They were stopped by militia and told they would be hacked to death. But the bandits got distracted by the men’s baggage – they had all their clothes and shoes for a 2-week trip, plus their translation computer and a digital camera lent to them by their church. While the bandits were poring over these items, the translators hopped back on their motorcycle and took off. The attack was very traumatic for them, but God preserved their lives. It’s a reminder to us of the dangers many language project workers face when they travel by road, even in their home areas.

So far, hundreds of copies of the Ndrūna New Testament have been sold. Getting them to villages has been a challenge, due to the dangers of road travel. The Ndrūna team are well into translation of their Old Testament now.

Sources (text and images): Jennings Boone, SIL (Church at Charlotte), MAF





# Country: Vanuatu

## Language: Paama

2016 Scripture  
Celebration

**Description:** New Testament 1st edition (ethnologue says NT 1944) There was a previous translation of the NT completed in 1944 which had been started in 1903. The Presbyterian missionary who oversaw the translation was Maurice Frater from Scotland. He died in 1939 and it was someone in the Presbyterian office in Australia who then undertook to complete the printing of the translation. A crate came to Paama but, before the dedication could take place, a flood swept through the place it was being stored and wrecked most of the copies. A few copies exist. However, when I tried to use it, I found so many grammatical and translation errors that we recommended to the translation committee that we start afresh.

**Speakers:** 7,000

**Began:** 2001

**Published:** 2015

**Translators:** Leigh and Barbara Labrecque, Elgem Timothy, Ian Vanosivi, Joseph Toka, Edna Wilson

**Pronunciation:** Paamese (PA-meez)

**Dedication:** May 15, 2016

The story of the Paama New Testament described by Leigh and Barbara Labrecque, how translation started in 1903, the original translator died, the translation was printed but most of the copies

were destroyed in a flood... What kingdom plans does God have for this people group that had the enemy so intent to make sure they wouldn't have access to God's powerful Word?



[continued]

Pray for God's purposes for the people of Paama. Praise God that His Word so long awaited has come in Paamese.

"Today we are celebrating the most excellent, the most important and most enduring development that Paama has ever witnessed or will witness. Every past and future development in our island must come under this development" – challenge from one of the speakers at the Paama Bible dedication, May 2016

About Paamese:

Paamese or Paama is the language of the island of Paama in Northern Vanuatu. The people themselves have no indigenous term for the language so linguists adopted the term Paamese to refer to it. Paamese is most closely related to the language of Southeastern Ambrym. The two languages share much of the same root words (cognates) but they're not mutually intelligible (speakers of Paamese can't readily understand Southeastern Ambrym and vice versa).

Paama itself is quite small: 3 miles wide and less than 6 miles long. There is no running water on the island... except after heavy storms. 2000 Paamese speakers live on the island itself and others live in various urban hubs of Vanuatu, especially its capital, Port Vila.

There are different varieties of Paamese spoken in different parts of the island (and on other islands) but all speakers are still able to communicate fully.

Linguistic Note:

Paamese, like Hopi, Serbo-Croatian languages and many Oceanic languages has something linguists call "paucal" pronouns. English has singular and plural. Some languages have singular, dual, and plural. Paamese has singular, dual, paucal, and plural. Paucal being something like "a few": more than two and less than around ten.

So where English has one word, "you". Paamese has four:

kaiko (you singular),  
kamilu (the two of you),  
kamiltelu (the three – ten of you),  
and kami (the ten or more of you all).

And SEVEN words where English has two:

inau ("I"),  
ialue ("We" – you and I only),  
komalu ("We" – two of us not including you),  
iatelu ("We three – ten of us including you"),  
komaitelu ("We three – ten of us not including you),  
iire ("We ten or more of us including you"),  
and komai ("We ten or more of us not including you).

Praise God for the wisdom He gives to those tasked with translating His Word!



# Country: Mexico

## Language: Tepehua, Pisaflores

2018 Scripture Celebration

Description: New Testament 1st edition

Speakers: 4,000

Began: 2000

Published: 2015

Main Translator: Gulmaro Ríos López

Consultants: Jim & Juanita Watters

Pronunciation: TEH - PAY - WA

Dedication: May 28, 2016

Pisaflores Tepehua speakers live primarily in Veracruz and Hidalgo state in Western Central Mexico. Because the priest who worked in the area after the land wars of the 1930s was not Roman Catholic, but Eastern Orthodox, the result is unique among rural Mexican towns. The church in the town square is Orthodox and not Roman Catholic.

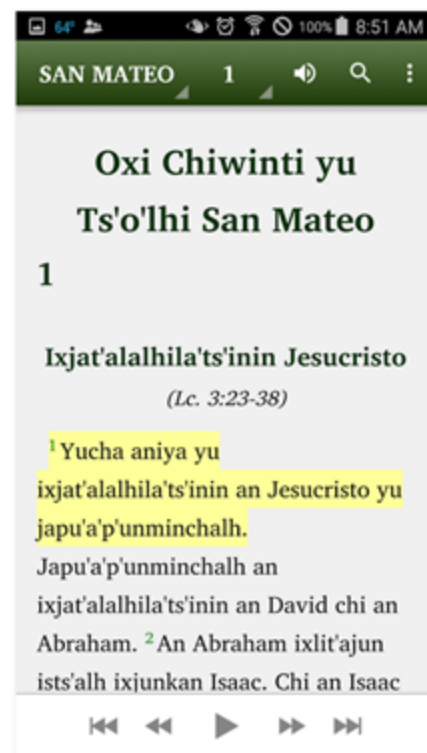
Most Pisaflores Tepehua people identify themselves as Catholic, but they actually practice something anthropologists call “Cristo-paganism”. Church saints are considered gods or mini-gods with special powers. People acknowledge God, but also practice traditional medicine, turning to the local shaman to deal with the spirits.

The Old Testament Book of Jonah was the first book in the language.

The New Testament was recorded in a dramatized audio version and listening groups have been meeting weekly to hear God’s Word. In addition to the printed scripture, the New Testament and the book of Jonah are available in digital and as a dramatized audio recording. The Tepehua New Testament App is available on the Google Play Store. The app comes with audio and automatic text highlighting as the audio is played (see screen shot).

Churches and Christians in the community are enthusiastic about God’s Word available in their language in many formats.

“Mu yucha an Diosi yu kinta’ilhtutan, yucha an Cristojo kintapu’ilhtun, para li yu laj’oxi tanlhuni ka’ilhtuw, tacha yu an Dios chunchacha o’sliyan ixla’apula’ts’ilhkaata li chuncha katsukuw.”— Ephesians 2:10 (Tepehua Pisaflores)



“For we are God’s masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.” — Ephesians 2:10 (NLT)

Praise God for the things he planned to do through His Pisaflores Tepehua people, good things he planned for them, His masterpiece, created anew in Christ Jesus.

Source: Seed Company, Joshua Project, SIL (Jim & Juanita Watters)

# Country: Colombia

## Language: San Andrés Islander Creole

2018 Scripture  
Celebration

Description: New Testament 1st edition

Speakers: 25,000

Began: 2000

Published: 2015

Translators: Emil Boden, Shalinda Martinez, Eran McGowan,  
Ronald and Lois Metzger, Dulph Mitchell, Willard Pomare,  
Alvina Smith, and others

“Yu si, God lov aal di pipl iina disya worl so moch ihn gi ihn ongl Son; so enybady weh chros iina him no gwain ded; dehn gwain liv wid im fareva.”—John 3:16, San Andrés Islander Creole

Do people in your church jump for joy when the Scriptures are read?

That’s exactly what happened at First Baptist Church on the island community of San Andrés, which lies off the coast of Nicaragua. More than 12,000 islanders had waited their whole life to hear God speak to them in Creole, their heart language.

So when the pastor began to read in Creole for the very first time the congregation was amazed. People began to nod in agreement as these fresh words from God found a welcome home in hearts that were eager to hear them. Soon the entire congregation was on its feet, clapping one another on the back and laughing aloud in joy!

Pastor Howard on San Andrés: “The Scripture in San Andrés Creole has begun to speak to my soul in more intimate ways than English ever has,” he says. “I’ve begun to pray in Creole...and the interesting thing is: God answers me in Creole!”—Wycliffe Bible Translators



Pst. Ricardo Gordon, head of translation committee

[continued]



On February 7th the people of San Andres and Providence, Colombia, received their NT in Islander Creole in print, audio, and in an audio/text app.

“Language is identity. Language is the house in which we live. Recognition of language is recognition of the person of the people and their place in human history and the plans of God.”



NTs ready to be distributed. Dr. Marlon Winedt from Curacao (member of the United Bible Society)

Country: Mexico

Language: Zapotec,  
San Vicente Coatlán

2018 Scripture  
Celebration

Description: New Testament 1st edition

Speakers: 4,500

Began: 1999

Published: 2015

Translators: Bonifacio Santiago Osorio, Mario Canseco Antonio, Tolentino Canseco Antonio, Yucundo Canseco Hernández, Gabino Martínez Antonio, Domingo Canseco Antonio, Jorge Canseco Antonio, Maximino Martínez Ruíz, W. John and Linda Wagner  
Dedication: January 9, 2016

John and Linda report that around 150 people came to celebrate the dedication of the San Vicente Coatlán Zapotec New Testament in the town square. It was a smaller turnout than they had hoped, and they remain confident that God has a plan for His San Vicente Coatlán people.

They plan to distribute more New Testaments in the villages.

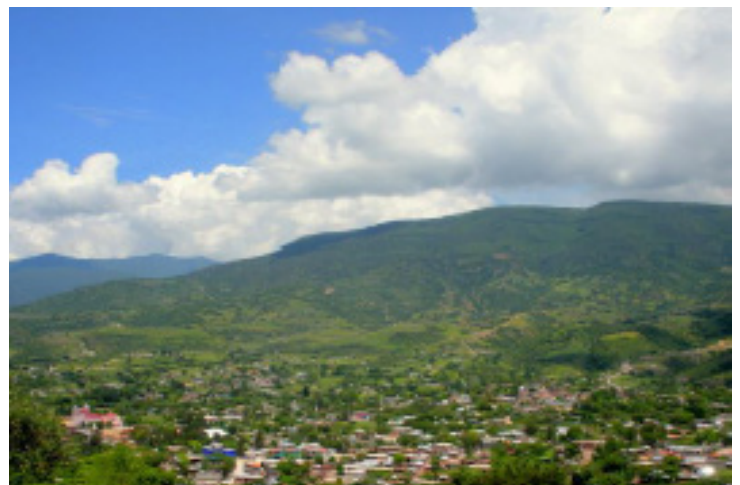
Pray that God's Word will transform the lives of His precious people.

The language spoken in San Vicente Coatlán is a member of the Zapotec language family. The language area is located in southern Mexico, in the state of Oaxaca, Ejutla District, 90 km. south of Oaxaca city. San

Vicente Coatlán is the principal town of the municipality of the same name (see map); most of the rest of the municipality is Spanish speaking.

This variety has sometimes been referred to as Coatlán Zapotec, but there is another, mutually-unintelligible variety of Zapotec (ISO code zps), spoken in and near Santo Domingo Coatlán, to the south of the San Vicente Coatlán area. This variety has also been called Coatlán Zapotec, and in fact is so listed in the Ethnologue and the ISO catalogue.

The local economy is based primarily on subsistence agriculture, with the primary products being corn, black beans, and squash.



[continued]



The women of San Vicente Coatlán are noted for their production of the “blusa chenteña”, a heavily embroidered blouse with 3/4 length sleeves. These blouses are made of cotton muslin with repeating patterns featuring animals, flowers and people, and cross-stitched across the shoulders and the upper body. The woman in the pictures below is wearing this kind of blouse with the traditional skirt that goes with it.



Weaving a petate (palm mat)

Linguistic note:

Like many Zapotec languages San Vicente Coatlán Zapotec has different pronoun forms for first person: inclusive: “we” (including you) and exclusive: “we” (not including you). San Vicente Coatlán Zapotec is unusual, however, in that it also has two first person dual inclusive pronouns, a familiar form and a respect form. The familiar form *wa* means ‘we (you and I, the two of us)’ (or ‘tú y yo’ in Spanish). The respect form *una* means ‘we (you and I, the two of us)’ (or ‘usted y yo’ in Spanish).

Sources: SIL Mexico (John Wagner, Andy & Cheri Black)



Making tortillas on the comal (clay griddle)

Country: Mexico

Language: Mixtec,

Santa María Zacatepec

2018 Scripture  
Celebration

Description: New Testament 1st edition

Speakers: 6,000

Began: 1990

Published: 2015

Translators: Doug and Linda Towne, Lencho Cruz Salvador,

Antonia Cruz Salvador, Domingo Gazpar Garci, and others

Pronunciation: Santa Maria Zacatepec (sac a te pec) Mixtec mees tec

Dedication: January 9, 2016

The Mixtec people of Santa Maria Zacatepec, Mexico, now have the New Testament in their language and in their hands. ~250 people gathered in the town square for the dedication program in January. ~110 New Testaments and mega-voice units (audio New Testaments) were sold or given to those who proved they could read some of these life-giving words.

The same day, the San Vicente Coatlán Zapotec New Testament was dedicated. ~150 people came, many of whom expressed appreciation for having the Word in their language.

Pray that the Lord will use His Word mightily to reach many more for Him and to help His church grow.

The Santa Maria Zacatepec village where the dedication ceremony was held is near the coast. From Oaxaca it is a long, windy road up and over several mountain passes. Guests spent two nights in the village. Thank God for His provision of safety for those who travelled to be a part of this celebration.

A 2014 short term team distributed MegaVoice players containing the recorded New Testament and held a workshop promoting the use of Santa Maria Zacatepec Mixtec. One of the team members was able to return for the dedication, very excited to see this language community receive God's Word in their language.

It took many years of diligent translation work for Doug and Linda Towne along with local Mixtec speakers to complete this work. Please pray for God's Word to be received.

Sources: SIL Mexico: Andy & Cheri Black



# Country: Vanuatu

## Language: Ambrym, Southeast

2018 Scripture Celebration

Description: New Testament 1st edition

Speakers: 3,700

Began: 2001

Published: 2015

Translators: Leigh and Barbara Labrecque, Jack Hopa,  
Epson Jimmy, Simeon Ben, James Daniel, Timothy Tavina,  
Lina Timothy, Mary Allen, Paul George, Kalvat Masing  
Dedication: May 16, 2016

Christianity came to the island of Ambrym and the neighboring island of Paama in the 20th century. Paama and Ambrym are two of the 80 islands that make up the nation of Vanuatu.

Churches in Paama and Ambrym joined together to form a project to complete a New Testament translation for both languages: Paamese and Ambrym, Southeast. Church leaders enthusiastically planned to

make the Bible available in both print and media to make it accessible as quickly as possible to as many people as possible.

This year, after many delays and hardships, those church leaders and the Ambrym people saw the completion of that vision: the Ambrym Southeast New Testament was dedicated on May 16, 2016.



[continued]

Pray:

- That Scripture in Southeast Ambrym will help clarify for believers the power, authority and uniqueness of the God they serve.
- Praise God for the tenacity He gave to the translation team, His protection and that He allowed for the completion of both the printed New Testament and the recording of the audio version.
- Pray as God uses audio Bibles and the printed Word to bring Southeast Ambrym people to salvation and spiritual maturity.

Ma muha ve moletin xil te kantri xil vus e mupol ni xil mun mei lihe moletin navan xil. E melele xa mei lihusil nou, xamim mubaptaes ni xil e his Hi Tamer, e his Hi Natneli, e his Hi Ninin Eo.

Matthew 28:19, Southeast Ambrym

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.



# Country: Nepal

## Language: Sherpa

2018 Scripture  
Celebration

Description: New Testament 1st edition (Devanagari script)

Speakers: 300,000

Began: 1967

Published: 2014

Translators: Luke & Marie Zylstra (AUS), Kent & Sandy Gordon (US),  
Heiderose & Burkhard Schöttelndreyer (GERMANY),  
Dag & Åsa Wendel (NORWAY), Sang-Yong & Hae-Lyun Lee (KOREA)  
NEPAL: Mingmar Sherpa, Kale Sherpa, Chiring Sherpa  
Dedication: April 29, 2014

On 29 April 2014, those attending the dedication of the Sherpa New Testament in Kathmandu, Nepal, heard and saw the results of tremendous perseverance. The Sherpa New Testament was 47 years in the making, from the very first language survey undertaken in 1967 by two Wycliffe Australia members to the completed translation by a Korean team and local Sherpa Bible translators.

In 1967 there was no alphabet, no church and no known believers. For most of the 47 years it was illegal for local citizens to 'lean on Jesus' and any who openly chose to do so were persecuted and jailed. They suffered severely. The expatriates also struggled with illness, suffered life-threatening accidents, and experienced depression often associated with spiritual attacks. Add to this, logistical challenges, visa restrictions, and civil war and one can see that the work was never going to be easy. At times the translators barely held out hope.

Ten years ago things started to turn when a Sherpa man who had been crippled by polio at a young age, believed in Jesus. He immediately wanted to share this good news among the other villages but was unable to traverse the massive mountain trails. He asked God what he could do for Him and his mind turned to the courage and dedication of one of the earlier translators. Dag Wendel and his family from Norway, had been making good progress on translation through the 1980s when a 'freak' wind, on a perfectly calm and sunny day, blew him off the roof of his house. The fall broke his back. He was evacuated to undergo rehabilitation and then amazingly returned to continue on with translation, only this time in a wheelchair. Not long after, he died of cancer. The memory of Dag Wendel's commitment inspired the young Sherpa man. While he could not move around from village to village because of his disability, he decided that God wanted him to help translate the Jesus story



Story and Photo Source: Barry Borneman, CEO, Wycliffe Australia: Wycliffe Today, 2014, Kangaroo Ground, VIC

[continued]

so it could be sent to every village. The young Sherpa man joined the translation team now led by another translator. He proved to be a quick learner and in a short time became a crucial member of the translation team. The perseverance of one man inspired another to complete the task.

It is stories like this that reflect the Apostle Paul's observation that suffering in the cause of the gospel produces perseverance, and perseverance produces

amazing character, resulting in a beautiful hope (Romans 5:3-4). That hope was shining in the eyes and in the worship of the Sherpa Christians in the Himalayan mountains that dedication day in April. They had persevered and now a 'new day' has dawned for them because they have the New Testament in their own Sherpa language.

# Country: Mozambique

## Language: Takwane

2018 Scripture Celebration

**Description:** New Hybrid Bible 1st edition: Genesis, Exodus and New Testament in Takwane, Leviticus through Malachi are in Portuguese (Linguagen de Hoje, with permission of Bible Society of Brazil.)

**Speakers:** 230,000

**Began:** 2005

**Published:** 2015

**Translators:** Jeff & Peg Shrum, Manuel Nihoro, José Cabiço, Ezequiel Mbobo, Bizoque Pissamorima

**Consultants:** Benjie Leach, Hessel Visser, Jim Vinton, Mary Breeze, Ronnie Simm, Sebastian Floor, Stuart Foster

**Pronunciation:** Taakwani

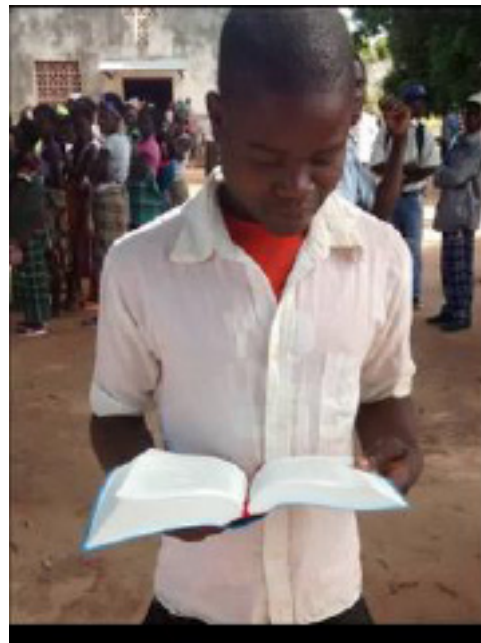
**Dedication:** The main dedication was on July 1, 2016 in Mocuba, Zambezia Province, and Mozambique with smaller celebrations in Milange and Lugela districts.

Many Takwane in Mozambique live in the Mocuba district, near the Malawian border. Many Takwane first heard the gospel when they were refugees during the war in Mozambique (1980s).

Peg & Jeff had a strong desire for the Takwane to be able to read the Bible in their own everyday language. However, Takwane was only a spoken language—it had never been written; it didn't even have an alphabet.

So the Shrums started by creating an alphabet, reducing the spoken language to written symbols. They listened to people everywhere they could: in the marketplace, at the community well, along the footpaths and at church. They found that the purest form of the language was way out in the countryside, where the trade languages used in the marketplace had not altered it. Out to the countryside they went.

The Shrums hired and trained local people to help them. They had struggles with cars, campers, housing, food, communications with home, healthcare, educating their daughter and many other everyday items of life. And the work itself was quite painstaking. It was a long, tedious process, but God granted strength for the Shrums and the team to work joyfully. They found strength in knowing that what they were doing would have eternal significance.



[continued]



Nearly 20 years after they began their work, after many revisions, after numerous checks by linguistic consultants and after being assured that what they had put together was the best possible product, they pressed a button on their computer and sent the finished file to the printer to have it made into a book. Not just “a” book, but THE Book—the Takwane Bible.

July 1 marked a day of celebration when the Takwane people celebrated God’s Word in Takwane. The Scriptures are available in print, digital and audio recording.

Sources: (photos and text): MAF, SIL (Shrums), Joshua Project



Reading from the Takwane Bible at the Dedication service in Mocuba



Ladies Choir holding Takwane Bibles

# Country: Niger

## Language: Tamajaq, Tawallammat

2018 Scripture  
Celebration

Description: New Testament 1st edition, Latin script and New Testament 1st edition, Tifinagh (Berber) script [Tfng], called Shifinagh in Niger

Speakers: 1,000,000

Began: 1985

Published: 2015

Translators: Chris & Louise Grandouiller and local translation team

Pronunciation: təmajəq

Dedication: January 2, 2016

"It was a large task, but in each moment of weakness we entrusted ourselves once again into God's hands," said a translation team member. "The Word of God is life for us. How can people understand His word if it is not in their heart language? It is a miracle that testifies to the greatness of Christ who loves every language and desires to be praised in each of these languages."

Multiple Tamajaq believers shared their joy with the team and gave glory to God during the celebration of two versions of the Tamajaq Tawallamat New Testament, one in Latin script and one in Shifinagh (an ancient alphabet still used with regional variations by Berber people and is a symbol of their culture and history).

Pray for the translation team typesetting the New Testament in a third script, Tamaja Ajami which is used by many Tamajaq people who have some reading proficiency in Arabic. Scripture is also being recorded.

"The whole world benefits every time the Word of God is translated into a new language," said a local believer as he stood to read from the new translation. "It is through God's Word that we learn how to have a relationship with Him. We rejoice because we have His Word in our hands, and today it is now even in our language."

"It is a great day for the Nigerien Church," said another local believer. "We congratulate the translation team, but the translation is not the end, now we must read the Word! Every believer, no matter their job, can use this Word to bring our nation towards Christ so that salvation can be found. God will use this translation to reach others through us."

Numerous other peoples and languages of Niger came to mark this celebration with their Tamajaq brothers and sisters. To close, many joined together at the front in prayer. They prayed, thanking God in many languages, a moving sign of unification for the believers of Niger.

But the work is not done. Join in praying and fasting for the Tamajaq people, that God would use His Word to break through the darkness and touch their hearts with His light!

Sources: SIM, Schmidt



Tamajaq New Testament celebration:  
2 Jan 2016 in Niamey, Niger

# Country: Nigeria

## Language: Tula

2018 Scripture  
Celebration

Description: New Testament 1st edition

Speakers: 108,000

Began: 2004

Published: 2015

Translators: Rev Lamech Alkanwya, Rev Adamu Kutwang,  
Rev Obasoya Buba, Rev John C. Tula, Bishop Musa Mwin  
Dedication: November 7, 2015

The Tula New Testaments arrived safely from the printing firm at Tin Can Port in Lagos last summer. On November 7, 2015, a joyous celebration was held in Tula in Gombe State. Hallelujah!

The Tula people are now enjoying God's truths in their own language. God speaks Tula.

- Pray for church leaders to engage with the Word.
- Thank the Lord that in 2014 Christians AND members of the majority religion participated in a day of celebrating the Tula Language.
- Pray that many Tula will acquire copies of the New Testament and come to know and love the one true God.

As the Tula New Testament was nearing completion, the Tula team encountered several difficulties: lack of electrical power, a broken printer and photocopier, and having only a single working computer remaining. The team pressed forward despite setbacks.

Chief Translator, Reverend Lamech explains: "The (Tula) people are eager and thirsty for the New Testament". The team understands the need and the urgency: that the Tula have access to God's Word in their own language: Tula believers and those Tula who have not yet come to know Christ.



Chief translator Lamech works on final check of the Tula New Testament



# Country: Nigeria

## Language: Tyap

2018 Scripture  
Celebration

Description: New Testament 1st edition

Speakers: 130,000

Began: 1987

Published: 2015

Translators: Carl & Joy Follingstad, Rev. Magaji Markus Cheye,

Rev. Waje Bargo, Bitrus Yashim, James Madaki

Dedication: December 31, 2015



God is clearly at work in Nigeria. Almost half of the population profess to follow Jesus Christ. For each foreign missionary who arrives here, five Nigerian missionaries travel to other countries for mission work. Yet, millions of Nigerians still lack a deep knowledge of God, because Scripture is not available in the mother tongue they understand best.

More than 130,000 Atyap (Kataf) people speak Tyap, in the southern Saminaka, Jema'a and Kachia government regions of Nigeria's Kaduna State.

After a website building workshop\* in Nigeria, ten language groups representing 3,609,600 people can access God's Word in their mother tongue via the Internet.

Among them were members of the Tyap translation team. The Tyap team celebrated with their community the arrival of their New Testament, and their new Scripture website, on December 31, 2015. The celebration took place at Agwatyap palace in the district of Zangon Kataf in Kaduna State. An audio version of the New Testament is also available.

\*The students learn how to make Scripture websites and linguistic websites. In two weeks, a Scripture website can be up and running, giving people access to God's Word in their heart language. Students learn how to upload pictures, audio, and video, and use those pieces to make web pages. They also learn about search engine optimization, receiving copyright approvals, and obtaining domain names.

[continued]

Greetings are very important in Atyap custom... and very complicated. You need to be aware of a person's age, gender, family connection and social status. Greetings change with the time of day and every life situation has its own form of greeting.

In Luke 1:28 Gabriel says to Mary, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you" and Mary "wondered what kind of greeting this might be". To Tyap speakers, Mary's puzzlement is highly understandable. Why would a stranger, apparently a male stranger, greet her, a young unmarried woman, as if she were an important person of high social status?

Praise God for the variety of languages and cultures He created.

The Tyap team is not done.

The New Testament in Tyap is the result of 28 years of labor. And the team longs for the entire Bible, the whole counsel of God, to be available. They look forward to launching an Old Testament project so that one day, speakers of Tyap may have God's Word, the whole Bible, in their own language.

Pray:

- For perseverance to start and to complete the Tyap Old Testament.
- For many to come to know Christ more deeply as they encounter Him in His word.
- For peace in Kaduna State, long standing rivalries, land disputes, and vengeance for past offenses between the Atyap and the majority Hausa people have erupted in violent periods. One of the most violent being February 1992. Praise God for times of peace and for those among both the Atyap and Hausa who are working for peace.

# Country: Mexico

## Language: Zapotec, Yareni

2018 Scripture  
Celebration

Description: New Testament 1st edition

Speakers: 2,900

Began: 1979

Published: 2015

Translators: Wycliffe: Grace Thiessen, Joan Smith,

National Team: Odilon Chavez

Dedication: March 6, 2016

### ZAPOTEC, YARENI: Bible NT

San Juan 3:16 Kumu de yalhá ukani Tata Do Yebáha ge ka benne se'e yiesi lo yu-ni, de nuha nna udhelhe neti benne ankaa Xi'in ttu túbiru geeha, kini anáchu iyába ka benne tsia leke neti nna abittu tsia nnittike, sinuki satiaba aka benke arloe.

The variety of Zapotec spoken in Santa Ana Yareni is sometimes referred to as Etlá Zapotec and Western Ixtlán Zapotec. People in three nearby towns speak closely related variants of Zapotec. People from these towns are able to communicate well with each other although there are significant speech differences.

"Wonderful! Awesome!" people exclaimed as the Yareni Zapotec in Mexico received their New

Testaments. A Yareni Zapotec speaker living in California heard about the New Testament and called one of the translators to request a copy. He, too, wanted to read the Scriptures in his own language!

An audio recording of the Yareni Zapotec New Testament is also available. It was during one of the recording sessions for the audio NT that translator Grace Thiessen felt some pain... which turned out to be advanced pancreatic cancer. Grace passed away in April 2014 before the printing of the Yareni Zapotec New Testaments. Grace's life was one marked by God's faithfulness: "an adventure of a lifetime", 35 years devoted to the translation of the New Testament in Yareni Zapotec. Grace's fellow translator, co-worker and friend, Joan (pictured distributing New Testaments at the dedication), a trained nurse, provided hospice care for Grace.



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### The town of Santa Ana Yareni

The town of Santa Ana Yareni is located in the Eastern (and northern) Sierra Madre mountain range, at an altitude of 7500 feet.

As you can see in the photo, Santa Ana Yareni is nestled at the base of a mountain, which is called P'ya Reni "blood mountain" because of the red color of its soil. The ya of Yareni is a shortened form of i'ya, which means 'mountain', and reni means 'blood'.

About 1,000 Yareni Zapotec live in the town of Santa Ana Yareni (and it seemed the entire town was at the celebration to dedicate and distribute the Yareni Zapotec New Testament). Many have immigrated to Oaxaca City, to Mexico City, and to various parts of the U.S.A.

Pray for all Yareni Zapotec to come to know Christ through His Word, now in Yareni Zapotec!

Sources (text, photos, map): SIL Mexico (Grace Thiesen and Joan Smith), Wycliffe USA, Evangelical Mennonite Conference (Gary Koop, Lead Pastor at Steinbach EMC)



# Country: Ethiopia

## Language: Basketo

2018 Scripture Celebration

Description: New Testament 1st edition, Ethiopic script

Speakers: 92,600

Began: 1994

Published: 2014

Translators: Getachew Yohannes, Geresu Kassa, Abraham

SIL: Simon & Lynn Caudwell

Pronunciation: bas-'keh-tow (with stress on the second syllable)



The Basketo New Testament suffered numerous setbacks during the printing stage. Some miscommunication caused a delay in the printing. When the books finally arrived in Ethiopia, they had to wait six months to transport them to the remote, difficult-to-reach Basketo area until the roads dried after rainy season. The precious shipment of 10,000 books was finally driven there in cargo trucks.

Using the four Gospels in the local Basketo churches resulted in increased anticipation for the full New Testament.

During the dedication service, as box after box of New Testaments was torn open, and as large numbers of the New Testaments were sold on that very first day, people's hunger for God's Word was clear.

Getachew Yohannes and Geresu Kassa (Basketo Bible translators, pictured above) are planning and ready to begin a Basketo translation of the Old Testament!

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“One day we took the Gospel of Mark to a church conference [where] I was the speaker. I read one chapter in Amharic, and I read the same chapter from the Basketo translation. I saw the response of the people. For the first time my heart was greatly touched. Then I said to myself, ‘These people really need the Bible in their own language. For this has God called me to the work of Bible translation.’ I became so convinced and so happy translating the Bible. I was willing to sacrifice everything I had: my time, my energy, and so on, joyfully.” -Getachew Yohannes, Basketo Bible Translator on being a Bible translator after originally stating that he would **not** do translation work at all.

Getachew Yohannes planned the dedication while finishing his master’s degree.

You can hear Basketo (the Jesus film in Basketo) here: [youtube.com/watch?v=DIPA-j8NM8](https://youtube.com/watch?v=DIPA-j8NM8)