MAY 2018

TRANSLATION *Matters*



Hambukushu village in Namibia

Photo Credit: Jennifer Sophie

TWO QUESTIONS, ONE ANSWER

Time and again, I am asked the question: 'Why is Bible translation still necessary? In today's global era, I can understand how difficult it is to imagine the stark reality that not everyone has access to a Bible in a language they understand well. At least we're all agreed that communicating the profound truth of God's Word is not a nice-to-have in building the kingdom of God. It's what the gospel is all about – gossiping the truth!

How do we do that, when more than 700 languages in Africa are without any Scripture whatsoever? Back to your question, 'Does Bible translation really matter?'

I've just learned that Nelson Mandela's name 'Madiba' means 'the one who brings reconciliation' - literally translated, 'ditch-filler.' Madiba 'filled ditches' so that people could walk across great divides towards each other. He understood that "If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. If you talk to him in his own language, that goes to his heart." He understood the difference between surface communication and communication that goes to the heart of the matter.

The process of community-engaged Bible translation addresses the need for heart-to-heart communication. It reflects the incarnational ministry of Jesus, as God's Word comes alive in the language of the people. Translating God's Word into the language of the Hambukushu people, for example, addresses the issue of their identity. Saying this is not that important, is to fuel the lack of language recognition, which has as a profoundly oppressive effect on any community's sense of identity.

By God's grace, we are seeing the restoration of community identity among the Hambukukshu, Himba, Tonga and others. In this edition of 'Translation Matters', we invite you to join us in thanking God for signs of their new identity in Christ. Jesus came to seek and to save the lost. As followers of Christ, we at Wycliffe are about seeking out the 'hidden' language communities. They are asking a different question to the one we started with. They're asking, 'Doesn't God speak my language?'

Karen Floor, CEO

CONNECTING HEARTS THROUGH TRANSLATION

"Wouldn't it be good if we, as Board members, could get a close-up glimpse of what Bible translation looks like? How it is done, by whom, under what conditions?" This vision came from the Chairman of the Board, Prof. Piet Meiring. From that day, the search for such an opportunity began. Almost three years later, we were on our way to visit the Hambukushu people, where they live on both sides of the border between Botswana and Namibia.

In the shade of a tree in Shakawe, up in northern Botswana, Board members sat in amazement at the complexity of checking one translated verse. The team was checking the translation of Genesis 2, in preparation for a public reading in church the next day. The decision on whether Eden was a garden, or a jungle, was not a simple one!

The next day, we drove across the border into Namibia. The Okavango River of Botswana becomes the Kavango River in Namibia. The same river, flowing freely from one country to another, unhindered by authorities at the border post. In the same way, the Hambukushu people live as one cultural community, on both sides of the border. These people are proud of their language, and have worked tirelessly to see their language recognised as the language of school instruction for their children. They see other groups who have the full Bible in their languages, and they long to have that privilege too. Imagine the joy and the pride, then, when three men stood up in church to read Genesis 1 and 2: 1-4. The first public reading of Scripture in Hambukushu, aaahh!

Does translation matter?

After witnessing the process and effect of translation, Board members reflected on why Bible translation matters.

Beryl Donkin: "Translation enables people to hear God calling them by name, because their language has been validated in their own eyes, as well as in the eyes of other language groups around them."

Deputy Chairman, Sean Mooney: "Bible translation matters because it enables all nations to hear the Word of God in their own language. God's Word is alive, and restores humanity to forgotten and marginalized peoples."

> "So then faith comes by hearing,
> and hearing by the word of God."
> Romans 10:17



Piet Meiring & Sean Mooney engage Hambukushu community

Photo Credit: Jennifer Sophie



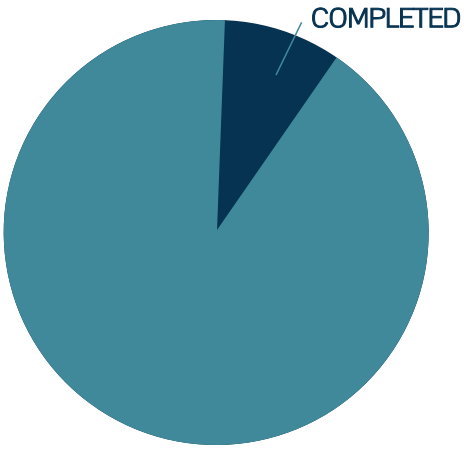




2018 PROJECT UPDATE | HAMBUKUSHU

There are an estimated 60,000 Hambukushu living in northern Botswana and Namibia. Their oral translation workshops began in September 2017 and will continue until September 2019.

PROGRESS



- Production on oral Bible stories started recently (original goal of 30 stories). ✓
- The team completed Ps 23. They also translated Gen 1,2:1-4 (Creation) and this was publicly tested (and accepted) in front of a large Hambukushu community. ✓
- There is a high degree of community ownership that includes government, local churches and traditional leaders. ✓
- The bulk of the translation work remain.

HIGHLIGHTS & PRAYER

- On Sunday 06 May 2018, the local community with the Wycliffe SA Board together rejoiced as they heard the narration of Gen 1,2:1-4 for the first time ever in Hambukushu.
- Pray for Paulus Chapi and the translation team as they work at a steady pace to progress this important work.
- Pray for grace as the team regularly travels across the Northern Botswana border into Namibia and back.

INVESTMENT

Funds Raised & Allocated:	Remainder of Funds Needed
R810 000,00	R372 000,00

2018 PROJECT UPDATE | RESEARCH & READINESS FUND







Each new project first requires a season of sociolinguistic research to determine needs & resources for Bible Translation to begin within a language group. Highly trained language survey teams visit the area to conduct readiness testing for each potential project and to assess the level of language vitality and local ownership already present in the community.

THE COMMON FRAMEWORK



VISION 2025

Starting Bible Translation in all the remaining languages that need it in Southern & Lusophone Africa by 2025.



Allocated
R 479 000,00

Amount Still Needed
R 531 000,00

HELP SAVE TREES

We are constantly updating our database, so if any of your details are going to change, please let us know. If you would prefer to receive this newsletter via email (and save some trees in the process), please send a request to wycliffe@wycliffe.org.za.

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BIBLE TRANSLATION

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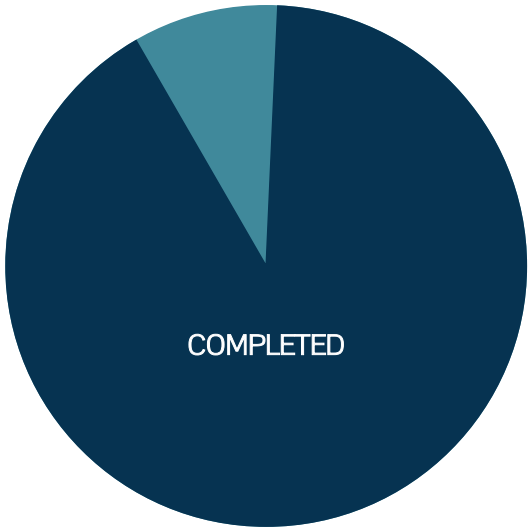




2018 PROJECT UPDATE | TONGA

There are an estimated 137,000 Tonga living in northern Zimbabwe and southern Zambia. Their oral translation workshops began in October 2015 and the first phase will be completed by September 2018.

PROGRESS



- 64 oral stories from the Bible already translated (original goal of 40 stories exceeded). ✓
- Mark translated in written form (original goal of Mark). ✓
- All of these have also been community checked. ✓
- The final translation consultant checks including the audio recordings to be done soon.

HIGHLIGHTS & PRAYER

- A possible phase II to translate more Scriptures is being investigated.
- Good health. Especially pray for protection against malaria. Pray also for the translators as they put finishing touches on the book of Mark.

INVESTMENT

Funds Raised & Allocated:
R1 961 000,00

Remainder of Funds Needed Phase I is
R0,00

Estimated Funds needed Phase II is
R1 765 000,00





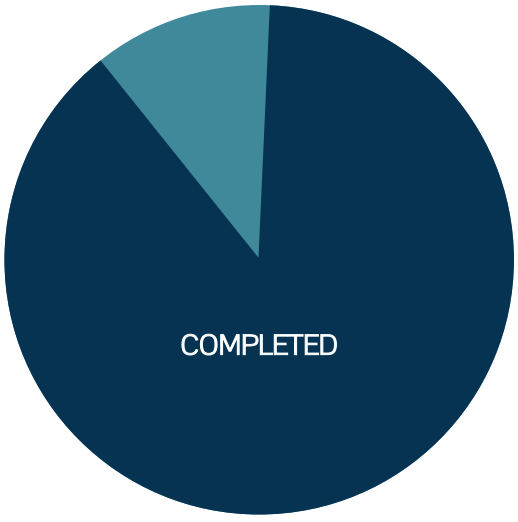




2018 PROJECT UPDATE | HIMBA

There are an estimated 50,000 Himba living in northern Namibia and southern Angola. Their oral translation workshops began in October 2015 and the first phase will be completed by September 2018.

PROGRESS



- 64 oral stories from the Bible already translated (original goal of 40 stories exceeded). ✓
- Mark translated in written form (original goal of Mark). ✓
- All of these have also been community checked. ✓
- The final translation consultant checks including the audio recordings to be done soon.

HIGHLIGHTS & PRAYER

- A possible phase II to translate more Scriptures is being investigated.
- "The Greatest Gift" discipleship evangelism booklet in Himba was distributed recently. This was a further direct benefit from the completed Himba Bible translation work.
- Protection, good health, and well-being of the translation team.

INVESTMENT

Funds Raised & Allocated:
R1 350 000,00

Remainder of Funds Needed Phase I is R0,00

Estimated Funds needed Phase II is R1 215 000,00