OCT/NOV 2021

TRANSLATION *Matters*



YOU'RE ENGAGED!

Around the world, there are different traditions when it comes to a couple getting married. How families are approached and the negotiation process that ensues are varied:

- In a Western setting, the groom may ask a girl's father for his blessing.
- In many African traditions in South Africa, the maternal uncles of the couple may enter into negotiations to reach agreement and set the bride price.
- In Kenya, a Rendille groom may send the woman he wants to marry a set of beads. If the beads are accepted, the nuptials will proceed.
- In Fiji, the groom often presents his father-to-be a whale's tooth when he asks for permission to marry his daughter.
- In Japan, there is a ceremony called Yuinou, where the families of the couple meet and exchange nine gifts wrapped in rice paper.

In this edition of Translation Matters you will read about how the involvement of partners to begin a translation is a complex process of negotiation until all agree on the terms of engagement. A key aspect of Bible translation, known as Scripture Engagement , will be highlighted by some stories from our team.

Wycliffe South Africa is more fruitful in our work when we are engaged with the Church. Through intercession, financial investment, partnership in sending and caring for our members, and communication, we take hands in translating the Scriptures into the heart languages of southern Africa.

In this edition we are excited to announce new ways you can engage with Wycliffe South Africa: through Foundation 5000 and our 2022 Calendar Competition. We look forward to new relationships and possibilities born out of these.

Our team continues to be passionately engaged in Bible translation and we value all our special relationships.

"I thank my God every time I remember you. In every prayer for all of you, I always pray with joy, because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now."
(Philippians 1:3-5)

Happy to be engaged...

Alan Webster

SCRIPTURE ENGAGEMENT: STORIES OF CHANGED LIVES

By Bonifacio & Busie Paulo



The school-boy performing the story at the workshop.

An important part of Bible translation is Scripture Engagement. This is where people interact with the Biblical text, allowing the Word of God to speak to them personally. The Holy Spirit helps them to hear the voice of God and discover the unique claim made by Jesus upon their lives. In many African contexts, this happens best by listening rather than reading.

Recently, we were in a workshop in Mozambique where we witnessed the impact of Oral Bible Translation. Each day started with a devotion where a Bible passage is told. One day, a school-boy arrived and volunteered to tell the story of the ten bridesmaids (Matthew 25:1-13). He did it perfectly and with great passion. How did he know the story? He heard it playing from the project coordinator's radio, as he was on his way to town the previous day. One experience of listening to the story was enough for the boy to capture the story and store it in his heart.

Not all translation teams are composed of Christians. This is when we see the power of the spoken Word. In another translation workshop, two translators gave their lives to the Lord after comprehending God as a loving Father. In the following workshop, we heard from one of them how he was rejected by his whole family and kicked out of the house after he became a believer. He decided to go to the river to fish and sell his catch until he got enough money to buy a small house. He said, **"My life is better than before, so I am not turning back to my previous belief and lifestyle, no matter the cost".**

As we were engaging with Matthew 18:21-35, a passage about forgiveness, he mentioned that before he gave his life to Jesus, he would immediately attack anyone who offended him. Now he has learnt to forgive. Recently, when a lady short-changed him at her shop, he heard a voice telling him to involve an elder instead of taking the matter into his own hands.

The Word of God is living and active. As people engage with Scripture it changes their lives.

HIMBA TESTIMONY

When Mukaa Mbengera Tjivaro received an MP3 player loaded with Bible passages in Himba, she listened to it day and night, driven by a deep thirst she didn't understand. One day, she approached a visiting pastor to talk about it. The pastor told her about Jesus and she immediately gave her life to Christ. "Since then", she said, "I have joy in my heart that has never departed from me. I feel that I am one of the luckiest people to have this tool, because it has changed my life." She has a special box where she has kept the MP3 player safe for the last three years. Whenever she listens to it, she uses what she's heard to encourage others around her.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: A JOURNEY IN LISTENING AND TRUSTING GOD

By Mpho wa ha Tsekwa



Bible translation is a collaborative effort, with the recipient community at the center. This makes community engagement one of the pivotal steps in the Bible translation process. Furthermore, it is God who leads and guides.

Every language community is unique, and therefore needs to be approached with sensitivity and an open mind. God works and talks to each step of the engagement process. So, we should listen. He will even speak on whether or not we should proceed with a Bible translation project. We listen and we trust.

The main objective in the initial stages is to identify and find a suitable church or parachurch partner from the local community, and to get confirmation (and an invitation) from them to partner with us. This often requires multiple meetings which involve getting to know and understand each other, and sharing what's in our hearts pertaining to what the Bible needs of the community are. The length of time it takes to find one another and to finally agree to partner is undefinable. This depends on what God is doing and saying to each of the partners.

In one community where we have engaged, we do not see much progress, despite two face-to-face partner meetings and multiple follow-up conversations. So, we wait in prayer for a breakthrough.



We are reminded that it is out of our control when and how a community will embrace and see the importance of Bible translation. Our job is to listen to God and trust that He is working alongside us as we engage these communities. It is wonderful when everything comes together and the Bible begins to be translated and a community receives the Bible in their unique language.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Bonifacio & Busie Paulo Relocating to Mozambique



Boni and Busie Paulo, who are part of our translation services team, will be moving back to their home country, Mozambique, in October.

Once there, they will continue working with Wycliffe South Africa in similar roles as those they currently serve in. They will be missed, but we pray for God's blessing as they enter this new chapter of their life.

Foundation 5000 - Launching in October!

Foundation 5000 is a campaign which will offer a new and exciting platform to engage with and support Bible translation. See wycliffe.org.za/foundation-5000 to find out more.

2022 Calendar: Photo Competition

We are producing a set of 2022 calendars and inviting you to submit photos for use in the calendar. The winner will have their photo featured on the front, and receive five copies. Runners up will feature inside.

Theme: The Bible is like...(fill in the blank with a photo that illustrates what you think the Bible is like, e.g. light, food, rain, a sword, etc.).

Submission deadline: 31st October 2021. Maximum submission is 5 photos per person.

For more information and to submit, go to wycliffe.org.za/photo-contest.



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BIBLE TRANSLATION

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1 Syringa Place, 29 Smith Avenue, Edenglen, 1609, Johannesburg, South Africa • PostNet Suite 30, Private Bag X1, Edenglen, 1613
+27 11 452 2714/5 • wycliffe@wycliffe.org.za • www.wycliffe.org.za