

# THE WORD FOR THE WORLD BIBLE TRANSLATORS

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT (2013 – End of Year)

The following is a report on some highlights of God's achievements through *The Word for the World (TWFTW)* during the past twelve months. I present this in humble gratitude to the Lord, and to all who have worked hard to accomplish this, and to our ministry partners, donors great and small, and intercessors.

To begin with, I praise God for bringing the *TWFTW* leaders together in August for an international Leaders' Conference in South Africa. This important gathering has only been possible every two years, but the presence of God was felt deeply among the participants as we enjoyed meaningful times of ministry and had our hearts stirred toward a new vision focus. Specifically, ***TWFTW* envisages being instrumental in completing the translation of the complete Bible in 500 languages by 2050.**

Some exciting statistics were reported at the Conference that I would like to celebrate here. They are as follows. Since the inception of *TWFTW* in 1981:

- 590 people (mostly nationals) have participated in a *TWFTW* training event.
- 136 people completed *TWFTW's* four-year Bible translation training program.
- 78% of our graduates are still actively involved in Bible translation today.
- 46 *SIL* and *Bible Society* students were given some complementary training by *TWFTW*.
- 66 translation teams made sizable progress toward a first time translation of the Bible.
- New standards for Bible translation organizations were demonstrated:
  - A 10% average annual Bible translation rate (projects with three trained nationals)
  - An average of 8.6 years to draft an organization's first nine Bible translations
- Bible translation time and cost were reduced, while clarity and acceptability was simultaneously increased, compared to translations done by expatriates.
- The Bible is now available for the 359,000 Sena people and the New Testament for the 8,871,000 speakers of Taabua, Chikunda, Guji, Maale, Dawro, Gamo and Gofa.
- 8 additional first time translations of the Bible and 14 additional first time translations of the New Testament are in various stages of being prepared for publication.
- 26,107,000 people overall are now part of a people group where the Bible is being translated, studied and discussed in their language for the first time in history.
- The Jesus Film is now available for the 10,411,000 speakers of Awngi, Dawro, Gamo, Gofa, Guji, Maale, Sena, Lughuru, Ngindo and Chikunda.
- Audio Scripture recordings are now available for the 8,309,000 speakers of Dawro, Gamo, Gofa, Guji, Maale, Sena and Chikunda.

- The effective promotion of nationals to leadership positions at every level within a Bible translation organization has now been effectively demonstrated.
- Our literacy programs have helped over 20,000 people learn to read and write, and 3,300 people begin a personal relationship with Jesus Christ!
- Individual lives have been positively changed, churches have been strengthened and feelings of inferiority throughout entire people groups have been replaced with pride in their language and culture.

## **VISION AND MISSION**

**The vision of *The Word for the World Bible Translators* is the glory of God through transformed lives by the power of his Word in everyone's heart language.**

**The mission of *The Word for the World Bible Translators* is to empower nationals to translate the entire Bible for their own people and to ensure its availability and accessibility.**

## **ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGES**

This year we've established a new International Board (IB) for *TWFTW* to provide overall governance for *TWFTW Group* (the network of all *TWFTW* agencies worldwide). The following individuals have committed to serving on the new IB with the International President of *TWFTW*: Chris de Wet (International President of *Africa Ministries Network*), Susan Manju George (CPA and wife of the executive director of *New Life Computer Institute-NLCI*-in India), Dr. Tesfaye Yacob (manager of the Comprehensive Plan, a collaborative effort among six ministries to address the remaining needs for Bible translation in Ethiopia), Freddie van Aswegen (a businessman in South Africa) and Steve Woodworth (CEO of *Masterworks* in the United States).

## **BIBLE TRANSLATION**

We are currently involved in Bible translation projects in 59 languages in 8 countries all aimed at publishing the entire Bible. This number is down from 2012 due to the fact that local leadership for overseeing Bible translation projects in the Democratic Republic of Congo did not develop as expected. We have therefore suspended our involvement with six Bible translation projects that are located there, until such time as leadership issues have been addressed.

Our teams of three trained national translators continue to translate approximately ten percent of the Bible per year on average. However, our consultation rate lags behind significantly. Continued attention is being given to increasing the corps of qualified Bible translation consultants, not only within *TWFTW*, but also across Bible translation

agencies (see Bible Translation Consultant Training section below).

Several translation milestones were met this year: *TWFTW*-trained translators in Ethiopia completed a first draft of the Old Testament for the Bench tribe (population 435,000), as well as first drafts of the Konta, (90,846), Melo (35,000), Oyda (55,000) and Yemsa (198,000) New Testaments. Additionally, our translators in Tanzania completed the first draft of the New Testament for the 918,000 speakers of Zaramo.

### **Bible Translation Consultation (the checking of translations for accuracy).**

We continue to make use of a wide variety of Bible translation experts to check our latest translations for accuracy. Additionally, our group consultations continue to save us considerable time and money—*TWFTW* consultants are now averaging three languages simultaneously during their consultations, and we saw group consultations in as many as six languages in Ethiopia, six languages in India and four at once in Tanzania. We are especially excited to report that *TWFTW* consultant, Nel Claassen and the Maale translation team finished checking the entire Maale Bible!

### **Bible Translation Consultant Training**

Our greatest challenge remains the lack of Bible translation consultants. We were happy to provide internship for a candidate consultant from *The Seed Company*. Dr. John Luton, has satisfied all requirements, and has now been accepted as a full-fledged guest consultant. Additionally, Alina Krajewska of Poland is continuing to make progress towards becoming a *TWFTW* consultant. However, as the need for more consultants remains great, we are continuing to invest in nationals so that they can also become Bible translation consultants. We now have seven candidates (five *TWFTW* members and two from other ministries) enrolled in our Master's Degree in Bible Translation Consultation, as well as two more students (one Ethiopian and one Indian) enrolled in doctoral studies. A third doctoral candidate has been approved by *SATS*. We are delaying his formal application pending a request to *The Seed Company* for financial assistance for his studies.

*SATS* recently made the decision to allow persons who have successfully completed *TWFTW's* Diploma in Bible Translation (DBT) directly into postgraduate studies. Thereby *SATS* effectively recognized *TWFTW's* DBT as being the equivalent of their three-year degree.

### **Publication and Distribution**

The Gospel of Luke has now been published in our five newest translation projects in Tanzania—Makonde, Mwera, Ngoni, Yao and Zaramo. These Gospel translations are just starting to be distributed, and are the first Scriptures in their own languages that the 6.5 million people in these five language communities have ever seen!

The text of the Aari and Maale Bible translation were submitted to the *Bible Society of Ethiopia* for manuscript checking and typesetting.

We also have several New Testaments that are being prepared for publication: three translations in Ethiopia (Alaba, Awngi and Borna), one in Malawi (Lambya), one in Slovakia (Eastern Slovak Romani) and six in Tanzania (Kwere, Lughuru, Ndamba, Nguu, Pogoro and Zigua).

*Every Home for Christ's* Slovak affiliate already financed a limited edition of the Romani New Testament as well as a New Testament stories DVD for Romani children. The *Slovak Bible Society* helped with the printing of the limited edition New Testament and is helping to raise funds for a full printing in 2014. A preliminary text of the Eastern Slovak Romani New Testament has already been made available on the Internet at: [www.romanibiblia.org](http://www.romanibiblia.org).

The distribution of the Dawro, Gamo and Gofa New Testaments (published and launched in 2012) continued this year even through the heaviest part of Ethiopia's rainy season.

Our desire is to increase Bible-less peoples' access to the Scriptures by making our translations available in as many forms of media as possible. These include audio recordings, film and digitization. Agreements are in place with other agencies and organizations to facilitate this. *Faith Comes by Hearing*, *DAVAR International*, *The Jesus Film* and *Every Tribe Every Nation* as well as the *American Bible Society* are much-appreciated partners in this endeavor.

## **TRAINING**

In 2013, we had 140 aspiring Bible translators in our training program. They came from 7 countries (Ethiopia, India, Malawi, Myanmar, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe) representing 58 languages—all involved with Bible translation projects already planned or running (not all by *TWFTW*). In total, 11 Bible translator training events, which constituted 34 weeks of training, were conducted at 7 locations in four countries (Ethiopia, Tanzania, Zambia and 4 locations in India). Overall, 130 people pursued *TWFTW's* Diploma in Bible Translation (DBT). Earlier in the year, we awarded a DBT to 21 more students in Morogoro, Tanzania. This last set of graduates raises our total to 136 students who have completed *TWFTW's* four-year training program for Bible translators.

*TWFTW's* International Director of Training, Dr. Regine Koroma, initiated an effort to bring about more effective coordination among agencies that train Bible translators. A workshop was conducted under her leadership at the bi-annual conference of Bible translation agencies in 2011, but this year, a second workshop was held in October, again under her leadership. This event (on Training Bible Translators in Non-Western Contexts) was attended by 50 participants from 18 agencies, including *Home for Bible*

*Translators (Jerusalem), Institute for Bible Translation (Moscow), Lutheran Bible Translators, Pioneer Bible Translators, SIL, The Seed Company, Wycliffe Associates, and Wycliffe Global Alliance.* There is a mailing list of 83 persons interested in further developing this forum. (Note: Regine's paper presented at the 2011 conference was published in *The Bible Translator*, Vol. 64 Issue 3, December 2013).

## **SCRIPTURE ENGAGEMENT**

Continuing our efforts to improve Scripture engagement, we provided two days of training for 57 Guji church leaders from both the Catholic church and evangelical churches on preparing topical Bible studies, reaching out to Muslims, and other related subjects. We developed, published and distributed 800 copies of Bible study materials in the Dawro, Gamo and Gofa languages and 1,000 copies in Guji, and trained leaders to use the materials to help others study the New Testament.

## **LITERACY**

Our literacy programs also excelled this year. In Ethiopia, we certified 2,698 people (1,633 men and 1,065 women) to be able to read and write, and enrolled another 2,227 students (1,249 men and 978 women) into our Maale Literacy Program. Through this Bible-based literacy program this year, 401 students (220 men and 181 women) reported receiving Jesus Christ as their personal Savior for the first time! We have also learned that these commitments to Christ have led to eight new sites being selected for church planting in the Maale community. Also in Ethiopia, we saw great progress in our three newest literacy programs (in partnership with five Ethiopian churches/ministries and Wycliffe USA) in the Dawro, Gofa and Guji languages. The 48 literacy teachers in these programs were trained in a Scripture engagement approach for the 786 male and 709 female students in the three programs (381 of who were children). In Malawi, we certified 53 students to be able to read and write in our Sena and Lambya Literacy Programs. We also trained 25 literacy teachers at 25 new literacy centers, and had 130 total literacy classes (72 in our Primer #1 and 58 more in Primer #2). By year-end, we saw 30 people become Christians and 6 new churches start as a result of our literacy evangelism programs there. Finally, in India, we were involved in providing guidance for eight literacy programs and planning for three new programs in the northeast.

## **PARTNERSHIPS**

We realize that partnerships are key to our renewed vision focus of being instrumental in completing the translation of the complete Bible in 500 languages by 2050. Among our ministry partners we count members of the *Forum of Bible Agencies International* and regional Forums of Bible Agencies. Of particular importance, because of the similarities in ministry focus, have been our partnerships with *NLCI, Northeast Centre for Training*

*And Research, Pioneer Bible Translators, SIL, The Seed Company, United Bible Societies and various national Bible Societies, Faith Comes By Hearing, The Jesus Film Project, The Bible League, DAVAR International, Every Tribe Every Nation, Digital Bible Library, and Literacy and Evangelism International.*

## **PROMOTIONS**

Focusing increasingly on promotions by way of the Internet and social networks, we have been pleasantly surprised by the increase in traffic. The number of “hits” on our website ([www.twftw.org](http://www.twftw.org)) increased by 100% in twelve months. Recently, the number of Facebook “Friends” of our page (<https://www.facebook.com/TWFTW>) increased by 100% in one week. What pleases us even more, is that our website has drawn interest from every continent. Meaningful inquiries and requests for help in developing Bible translation agencies have come from as far as South-Eastern Asia, from countries where *TWFTW* has never worked.

An initiative of *TWFTW USA* to cultivate greater involvement of individual donors, *TWFTW Bible Translation Family* (<https://www.facebook.com/TWFTWTranslationFamily>), is slowly but surely gaining ground.

We realize that technology can be like the donkey on which Jesus traveled into Jerusalem, a real servant of the Good News. It may have little importance of itself, but when it is put to good use in the work of the Kingdom of God, it is invaluable.

## **SUPPORT BASES**

*TWFTW* leaders Dr. Barry and Julia Funnell, and Dr. Regine Koroma, along with their family and friends, led a Sponsored Walk For Bible Translation in Wales in April. They retraced the steps of Mary Jones, who walked barefoot for 26 miles to buy a Bible (reportedly sparking the creation of the first Bible Society) to raise funds to translate the Bible for the over 4,000 people groups who still lack the entire Bible in the language God gave them. Barry hand cycled a 28-mile, paved route at the same time.

*TWFTW USA* was accepted as a member of the *Evangelical Counsel for Financial Accountability (ECFA)*. *ECFA* provides accountability for member's governance, finances and stewardship. The US support base has also been approved by *Intelligent Philanthropy*, which helps potential supporters to determine which organizations operate efficiently and effectively in pursuit of their mission. We believe that displaying the logos of *ECFA* and *Intelligent Philanthropy* (along with a link back to [IntelligentPhilanthropy.com](http://IntelligentPhilanthropy.com) for more information about *TWFTW*) will help to substantiate our US organization's integrity, and bolster the confidence of current and potential *TWFTW* supporters.

## FINANCES

Percentages of our income and expenditure (based on financial reports of *TWFTW* in all the countries where we work) give a good picture of priorities within the organization.

### Percentages of Total Income for *TWFTW* (amounts are in US Dollars):

SOURCE	ACTUAL 2010	ACTUAL 2011	ACTUAL 2012	ACTUAL 2013
Individuals and Businesses	44%	45%	36%	50%
Grants	27%	32%	44%	35%
Churches	16%	14%	12%	10%
Other Organizations	7%	5%	4%	2%
Volunteer Services and Donations in Kind	6%	4%	4%	3%
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	1,753,964	1,856,730	2,087,900	2,447,645

### Percentages of Total Expenditure:

EXPENDITURE	ACTUAL 2010	ACTUAL 2011	ACTUAL 2012	ACTUAL 2013
Ministry	77%	81%	86%	83%
Operational Costs	23%	19%	14%	17%

### Comparison of Capital Expenditure to Total Expenditure:

	1%	5%	5%	5%
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## TESTIMONIES

The Gospel of Luke in the Mwera language of Tanzania was dedicated on June 9, 2013. The Tanzanian Minister of Foreign Affairs attended and recognized the translation of the Mwera Scriptures as a great achievement for the Mwera people and the entire nation of Tanzania. All eleven local churches were present, and people celebrated joyfully with Mwera songs and dances to commemorate the first time that the Mwera people could read Scripture in the language that God gave them!

We printed the Gospel of Mark in the Soli language (Zambia), which the Soli Bible Translation Committee is selling for \$1 per copy. The Soli people have been buying these copies and using them in their homes and churches. We presented one copy to her Royal Highness Senior Chieftainess Mukamambo II of the Soli people and the first ever, female Chairperson of Zambia's House of Chiefs. She is a strong Catholic, who has pledged to help the translators and encourage other Catholics to be using this translation during their devotional times and Bible studies. She wants to see the whole Bible

translated into Soli before she dies.

Mrs. Veronica Gulupia, an elderly woman and a student in *TWFTW's* Sena literacy program in Malawi went to receive some free maize. Everyone in line had to sign for the maize they received, and many people were using their fingerprints because they did not know how to sign their names. Mrs. Gulupia refused to use her fingerprint. Instead, she asked the officials to give her a pen, and people were shocked when they saw this amazing elderly woman sign for herself—for the first time in her life!

The Chikunda Bible translation project in Zimbabwe has opened the eyes of the Achikunda people to the need for the tribe to develop its language and preserve its culture. The newly formed Achikunda Language and Culture Association (with lecturers from the University of Zimbabwe) held its first of many workshops on standardizing the Chikunda language, and for the first time in history, the Achikunda are recording their songs in their own language for future generations.

## CONCLUDING REMARKS

... the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord  
as the waters cover the sea.  
(Habakkuk (2.14))

“This is God’s will, and it does not end with evangelism. We are to bring the life and wisdom of God to bear in *all* of life, not just ... in a privatized ‘religious’ sphere. This means our goal must be nothing short of transformational development, which impacts both man’s spirit and body. God intends for cultures to be redeemed. Discipling nations means ‘laying’ kingdom principles and a biblical worldview as the founding order or ethos of a people. This is our historic Christian heritage ...” (Miller, D.L. 2001. *Discipling Nations*. Seattle: YWAM Publishing, 2001, p73)

We believe Bible translation is indispensable in this venture, and we are grateful to play a small part in fulfilling this mission of God, along with all our partners.

Soli Deo Gloria!

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