

THE WORD FOR THE WORLD BIBLE TRANSLATORS

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

December 2011

It is with great gratitude to God that I present this report. In light of the sustained dramatic growth of the organization, it has been impossible to keep the report short. However, I have limited the report to what I would describe as highlights of what has happened in our work over the past year.

Thanks to all who have partnered with us in any way to serve the Word through the ministry of Bible translation.

30TH ANNIVERSARY AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE

January 9, 2011 marked the 30th anniversary of *The Word for the World (TWFTW)*. This momentous occasion was especially celebrated in May when 20 leaders of our decentralized organization were finally able to be together again (after a 5-year hiatus) for the 3-day Leadership Development Conference in South Africa. The conference was not only an excellent opportunity to study our “Leadership Destiny”, it was also a tremendous time of building and strengthening relationships and renewing commitment to *TWFTW's* goal of having the Bible available in every language that needs one by 2050.

OVERALL

This year, we received several exciting reports from the field about the impact of the Bible being translated into the language of various people groups. Numerous translators testify to the transforming power of God's Word in their own language: lives are being positively changed, churches are strengthened, illiterate communities are becoming literate, and general feelings of inferiority among entire people groups are being replaced with pride in one's language and culture.

Several churches in Ethiopia are, for the very first time, using printed portions of Scripture and New Testaments that *TWFTW* has translated. These churches reported being particularly aware of Christ's presence among them.

The Lambya people in Malawi used to say, “God does not love us, because all the other language groups around us have a Bible, but we don't.” Now that they've seen the entire

New Testament and much of the Old Testament translated into their language, they know that God loves them and the church is growing!

In Tanzania, the influence of translated Scripture was felt in numerous people groups. Portions of Scripture are now being read in Vidunda churches, and translators reported, "The Vidunda are now happy and proud seeing that God is speaking in their mother tongue and a gradual change in people's lives is noticed." When the Pogoro people received the Gospel of John, they were very happy and one man shouted loudly, "Now I know that God does not show favoritism!" The Kwere community has now started reading Scripture, which they did not want to do when there were only Swahili translations available. The Makua people have formed groups in the villages, and are reading the translated Scriptures (they have limited copies of John and Luke). Now each member of the Makua tribe wants her or his own copy. People are coming to the translators to ask for more copies, but all the copies are gone. Therefore, *TWFTW* remains passionately unwavering in our vision and mission.

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, I'm happy to report another important step forward in empowering nationals to shoulder the leadership responsibility of Bible translation in Africa. Two Zambian nationals have stepped up to the challenge of taking on significant leadership roles. Reuben Kabwe, the National Director of *TWFTW Tanzania*, has also been appointed as Assistant Regional Director for Southern Africa. We wish Reuben and his wife Doreen God's wisdom and inspiration in the new sphere of responsibility to which they have been called. Additionally, Lazarous ("Kapasa") Kachinda has been appointed as Projects Coordinator for Zambia. We rejoice with and pray for Kapasa and his wife Marjorie as well.

Tesfaye Bekema, who did an excellent job as the Projects and Administration director for *TWFTW Ethiopia*, began two years of study leave this summer. The Lord provided two replacements for Tesfaye: Kassahun Kebede, the leader of the Dawro project (which is in its final stages) was brought to Addis Ababa as the new Projects Coordinator, and Andinet Meaza (already on staff with *TWFTW Ethiopia*) will be taking over Tesfaye's other

responsibilities. We wish Tesfaye and his wife, Mulu Nigusse, well during this time of Tesfaye's studies.

Manie van den Heever, International Director of Translation, and his wife, Lettie, have felt the call to relocate to Tanzania. Without relinquishing any of his responsibilities as an International Director of Translation, Manie will now have more time to devote to working with translation teams as a consultant. He will also be mentoring guest consultants. Manie, Lettie and their five children have already arrived in Tanzania in November, where Manie began working on a group consultation in five languages.

TWFTW USA added three new members. The Board of Directors welcomed new members Paul Nelson (formerly the Executive Director of *The Crowell Trust*) and his wife Karen, as well as Steve Prensner (formerly a Vice President of *Every Home for Christ*) and his wife Melanie to the *TWFTW* family. We thank God for the strengthening of our US Board, and continue to pray for more members to be added. Additionally, the Lord provided a new Office Manager, T.L. Sheffield, who has taken on all bookkeeping as well as administrative functions for *TWFTW USA*.

BIBLE TRANSLATION

We are presently involved in a total of 64 active Bible translation projects and 10 literacy projects (not all of which have been "officially" recognized). All of our Bible translation projects remain "full-scale" in that they are aimed at publishing the entire Bible.

Of all our current projects (including those projects with just one translator), the average amount of the Bible translated per year per project is 6.3%.¹ For projects following *TWFTW's* model (to include the use of at least three trained nationals to translate the Bible), the average amount of the Bible translated per year per project was 7.0%. Of these efforts, our projects in Africa are averaging 9.4%. However, our Asian projects averaged an annual translation rate of 2.6%. *TWFTW's* goal (for the projects following our model) is to average 10% of the Bible translated per year. Analysis to determine the reasons behind the lower rates in Asia is currently underway.

The average amount of the Bible consultant checked per year has decreased from 5.0% (see President's Report 2010) to 3.7%. This was largely due to the increase in the number of translation projects (about a 25% increase over each of the last five years) without a corresponding increase in the pool of consultants available.

¹In order to keep the figures from being skewed, newer projects for which insufficient data are currently available have not been taken into consideration when calculating the average amount of the Bible translated and consultant checked per year.

A summary of the latest statistics (16 January 2012) reveals the following:¹

Translation		
	Projects translating at less than 5% a year	25
	Projects translating at 5-10% a year	16
	Projects translating at more than 10% a year	11
Consultation		
	Projects consultant checked at less than 5% a year	28
	Projects consultant checked at 5-10% a year	10
	Projects consultant checked at more than 10% a year	1

In terms of actual translations being produced, *TWFTW* Bible translators have now completed (at least first drafts of) 6 entire Bible translations, as well as 2 additional Old Testament and 18 additional New Testament translations! Others are close behind.

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

Despite the low rate of consultation last year, much productive consultation work was completed in Ethiopia, Slovakia, southeast Asia, and Tanzania, including several successful group consultations (a time-saving practice) of anywhere from two to ten languages at a time. Nevertheless, the lack of Bible translation consultants remains the single largest hurdle to accelerating our Bible translation efforts. We continue to try to recruit short-term consultants from three sources: 1) fulltime consultants, who can dedicate a few weeks on one of our translations, 2) suitably skilled individuals from outside the world of Bible translation, such as from the academic arena, and 3) retired consultants. However, as the need increases (with the increase in the number of Bible translation projects), we are investing more time and finances into empowering nationals to be Bible translation consultants (see next section).

Bible Translation Consultant Training

The three-year long consultant development program (with the objective of enabling suitable candidates to develop to where they will be able to function as consultants) is continuing on schedule in southeast Asia. Candidates began their training in November of 2010, and many are now experiencing on-the-job training in actual Bible translation projects.

We are currently finalizing the Master's Degree program description for our consultant training program. An agreement between *South African Theological Seminary* and *TWFTW* is expected next year, thus allowing our consultant training program to be accredited for Master's and Doctoral Studies.

Publication and Distribution

We have now published Scripture portions in 36 languages, in which we have projects, (including 7 New Testaments and 1 complete Bible). We are very excited that a group of projects that began a few years ago in Tanzania are nearing the end of their work on the New Testament. The goal is to have six of these languages ready for publication next year, and four more languages ready for publication in 2013. The Project Coordinator for the Lambya project in Malawi reports that the New Testament is also nearly ready for type setting.

TRAINING

Our training events in Ethiopia, southeast Asia, and Tanzania this year were very successful. A total of 126 students came from these countries (plus Sudan and Zambia). Students came from our own recruiting efforts along with local churches, as well as *SIL*, *Pioneer Bible Translators*, *New Life Computer Institute*, *North East Center for Training And Research (NECTAR)*, and the Bible Societies.

In Ethiopia, there were 38 students from 19 different languages as well as 6 more students from prospective projects, *SIL* and churches. Five courses were offered and, for the first time, all of our lecturers were Ethiopians! In addition, these students also received over two weeks of training on basic computer skills and Paratext Bible translation software. Apart from *TWFTW* lecturers, there were also lecturers from the *University of Addis Ababa*, as well as experienced Bible translators from other organizations.

In southeast Asia, the focus of our 4-week course in July-August was on training the teachers for the regional training events (being conducted in commonly spoken trade languages). Two weeks were allocated for content delivery and two more weeks for training in how to teach and present material, where specialists from *Wycliffe* advised the lecturers how to apply "Learning that lasts" principles to the materials. During this time each participant also had a chance to practice preparing lesson modules for their respective subjects.

Also in southeast Asia, 18 students representing seven ongoing and prospective translation projects attended (from late September to late October) the third year of training for their Diploma in Bible Translation. Many of the trainees live in remote locations, and had a rare opportunity to share their experiences and concerns with people outside their own community. Several participants stayed to work on a spelling system for their previously unwritten languages.

The five-week 2011 formal training session in Tanzania was attended by a total of 48 students (including 18 first-year, 6 from *SIL*, and 4 from Zambia) representing 22 languages. For the first time, students enjoyed both a lecturer and assistant lecturer in most subjects--an

approach which students and lecturers agreed had greatly benefitted the flow of the entire training event.

Other Developments in Training

A draft *TWFTW* training policy has been prepared, and will now be circulated to all concerned for their input. The innovative program of training nationals to train other nationals, combined with the contextualization of training material, is being successfully applied.

Our International Director of Training, Dr. Regine Koroma, participated in this year's *FOBAI* Bible translation conference in Dallas. She presented a paper on current training programs for indigenous translators and it was well received.

OVERVIEW OF LITERACY PROGRAMS

The Maale Literacy Program in Ethiopia continues to impact thousands of lives. The number of literacy students we had over the last year was 4,170. This year, 2,822 people successfully completed the literacy program. Additionally, 276 people have come to know Christ as their personal Savior through the Maale literacy campaign during 2011. Praise the Lord!

In Malawi, 1,653 Sena speakers were enrolled in the literacy program in 2011. Of these students, 980 are due to receive their Sena literacy certificates. Another 250 students began the Sena literacy program for the first time in Mozambique last year. Also in Malawi, the Lambya Literacy Program trained 320 people in 2011, and 48 of those received their literacy certificates. *Literacy & Evangelism International* continues to be a faithful partner with the Sena and Lambya literacy programs.

New this year, we saw the beginning of literacy work in southeast Asia. We praise God for the initial training of coordinators for literacy programs in seven languages, as well as the development of literacy materials to teach reading and writing in each mother tongue. Twenty-five mother tongue speakers and facilitators attended our workshops. Additionally, a course was designed for training church leaders in how the church can support and benefit from the literacy program. The work is being implemented as a secular endeavor in order to involve all members of the community.

FINANCES

Percentages of income and expenditure in *TWFTW* as a whole give a good picture of priorities within the organization. The following percentages are from financial reports of *TWFTW* in all the countries where we work.

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

SOURCE	ACTUAL 2007	ACTUAL 2008	ACTUAL 2009	ACTUAL 2010	PROPOSED 2011
Individuals and Businesses	43%	43%	39%	44%	40%
Grants	30%	31%	33%	27%	32%
Churches	16%	16%	16%	16%	14%
Other Organizations	7%	6%	6%	7%	9%
Volunteer Services and Donations in Kind	4%	4%	6%	6%	5%
TOTAL INCOME	1,294,510	1,441,994	1,272,787	1,753,964	2,341,042

Percentages of Total Expenditure:

EXPENDITURE	ACTUAL 2007	ACTUAL 2008	ACTUAL 2009	ACTUAL 2010	PROPOSED 2011
Ministry	83%	87%	77%	81%	82%
Operational Costs	17%	13%	23%	19%	18%

Comparison of Capital Expenditure to Total Expenditure:

	0%	0%	1%	5%	24%
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PROMOTIONS

We continued to produce the ministry newsletter, Vis-à-Vis (literally “face-to-face”), this year in both hardcopy and electronic versions. We also relied heavily on our website (www.twftw.org) and even Facebook, as promotional tools. The interactive nature of the website seems to be very popular, judging from the number of hits. The website contains videos of our work, helpful links and information about the ministry. The website also continues to serve as a place to manage our electronic newsletter (E-Vis-a-Vis) as well as our regular intercessors' letters.

On August 8, Barry Funnell set out on a historic hand cycle journey from Land's End in the south of the UK, to John O'Groats in the north. His wife, Julia, and their son, Timothy, accompanied him on bicycles. The distance they covered was about 1,000 miles! Their trip raised awareness of the Bible and the need for Bible translation. They reported having wonderful meetings at every venue--churches, church halls and homes, sharing about the work and vision of *TWFTW*. Barry was interviewed on Christian TV before and after the event. Additionally, his promotional work included several interviews with BBC 3 Counties

and BBC Radio Cornwall, a press conference, and articles in local newspapers. He raised over £18,000 for the work of Bible translation and made over 500 new contacts in the UK. More details of their amazing journey are available on *TWFTW's* website at www.twftw.org.

PARTNERSHIPS

As is hopefully seen throughout this report, collaboration with our ministry partners remains a key part of our stewardship and effective ministry.

We appreciate the opportunity of working alongside many partners in the great work of bringing God's Word to all peoples, particularly in *FOBAI* and regional Forums of Bible Agencies. Of particular importance, because of the similarities in ministry focus, have been expanding partnerships with *The Seed Company (TSC)*, *Pioneer Bible Translators*, *SIL*, *United Bible Societies* and various national Bible Societies, *New Life Computer Institute*, *NECTAR*, *Faith Comes by Hearing*, *The Jesus Film Project*, and *The Bible League*.

This year, we are especially grateful for the recognition of the importance of our work given to us by *FOBAI*. *FOBAI* accepted the practice--pioneered by *TWFTW*--of group consultations (simultaneously checking translations of the same passage of Scripture in multiple languages), reaffirmed the goal (which *TWFTW* helped champion) of completing the task of first time Bible translations by 2050, and acknowledged that empowering nationals was essential to meeting that goal.

One additional item that we're especially happy to report is that *TSC*, who had previously funded twelve of fifteen projects in Tanzania, has now approved funding for the remaining three projects. Praise God for this partnership!

CONCLUDING REMARKS

As always, we thank God for his indescribable grace to allow us--including you, the recipients of this report--to play an important role in the ministry of Bible translation, particularly for the sake of those who do not yet have God's Word in their heart language.

Soli Deo Gloria!

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