



# Annual Report 2021

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Annual Report  
**2021**





“  
**Partnering  
requires  
commitment,  
nurturing,  
clear common  
vision, and the  
definition of  
roles and goals.**

Fully aware of the needs around us in terms of language and holistic development, SIL Cameroon believes that partnering is the key that will unlock the flourishing of communities all around Cameroon. It is with that deep conviction that we continue to listen to the needs of the linguistic communities we serve and reach out beyond ourselves to pull in other resources in terms of people, materials or strategies to allow them to be sustainable. A lot of the time those resources can be found through other organizations with which we share a common goal, for example in linguistics, in literacy, in training, and/or in Scripture Engagement.

Throughout this report, you will find clear examples of where together, with other partners, we have been able to do more and serve in a more holistic way.

Partnering is a great endeavor and it does bear great fruits in terms of results. Partnering requires commitment, nurturing, clear common vision, and the definition of roles and goals. Even if it looks like more work at times or if the process seems slower, we have seen over and over again how the impact is so much greater and worth all the efforts that have been put into it. When we partner, we express a commitment to honor God and others in the process of achieving our results and we shift our focus from the result to the people that we intend to serve.

SIL Cameroon desires to see how we can continue to build bridges, set conversations in place and provide opportunities for all stakeholders to coordinate their efforts, so that language development is not just a vision, but a reality for the communities of Cameroon. We are equally happy to share some of the great tools that we continue to develop to help others reach their goals.

Let's continue to build strong ties, so that together we can see the communities flourish. Let's find language solutions for a better life!

I hope that this report will convince you of the need for partnership to be Plan A for greater outcome! Together we can!

Fabienne FREELAND  
*General Director*

# Collaboration with State Universities: the Role of Student Researchers in Language Development



**A**s part of our vision to see people develop using the language that matters most to them, SIL Cameroon continues to find effective ways to have more impact. We therefore collaborate with local communities and other partners in the field of language development to find language solutions that expand the possibilities for a better life.

In this context, the University of Dschang and SIL Cameroon's leadership entered into a partnership that not only created a new vision for research on Cameroonian national languages, but also provided the necessary motivation for students to massively get involved.

**In the last three years, we have awarded 45 scholarships for an average of 15 scholarships each year of 50,000 CFA francs each to deserving students in the Department of African Studies and Globalization.** Three years to encourage female student researchers at the University of Dschang is admittedly a drop in the bucket

of knowledge. However, this opportunity has helped to create a real interest in national language issues at two key levels; firstly, student researchers in the Department of African Studies and Globalisation at the University of Dschang in particular, and secondly, research on Cameroon's national languages in general.

SIL does not intend to stop after this achievement. It will continue to provide support in other areas of national language research, such as language surveys, which will eventually provide information on the exact number of national languages, and allow the most deserving students to benefit from several academic and professional internships. SIL and the Federal University of Yaoundé have taken up this commitment in the past. The aim will be to update all the data on Cameroon's languages in accordance with the standard of data collection in this field applied throughout the world. Therefore, we must work together to honor the value of Cameroonian languages.



# SIL Cameroon's library : Toward greater accessibility

In mid-February 2021, SIL Cameroon's academic library was reopened to the public. A range of strategies have been put in place by the library's management to meet the needs of the public. Our online library catalogue at <https://koha.silcam.org/> and our e-mail address [reception-library\\_cameroon@sil.org](mailto:reception-library_cameroon@sil.org) are now open to the public, allowing them to browse our collections and make book reservations remotely. The cataloging of new books, dissertations, newspapers and journals has led to a significant increase in the collection. The main areas thus enriched are : linguistics, translation, literacy, education, local language research and development, anthropology, ethnomusicology and christian development, students teachers, researchers and professionals interested in these fields will find something of interest.

In addition, this year we have enjoyed the fruits of participatory management of the library via social networks. The WhatsApp group for subscribers, a salutary innovation, has provided a valuable platform for discussion and feedback to help us better satisfy our subscribers and improve the services we offer. In addition, subscribers can also share insights from their reading, research and information on various online information resources.

Finally, the concept of a virtual thematic exhibition published on SIL Cameroon's Facebook page once a month promotes the library's collections and informs the public who may be interested in the featured books. Here are some links to the latest virtual exhibitions also available on the SIL Cameroon Facebook page:

► *Hommage au royaume Bamoun*

[https://sway.office.com/sMka23qtzG9eaFI5?ref=Link,](https://sway.office.com/sMka23qtzG9eaFI5?ref=Link)

► «*La prière fervente : La foi qui transporte les montagnes!* » et «*Face à la mort* »

[https://sway.office.com/OLm6jkPG2a6E1PbZ?ref=Link,](https://sway.office.com/OLm6jkPG2a6E1PbZ?ref=Link)

► *Escapade linguistique*

[https://sway.office.com/ak092oZs7pQmv2G2?ref=Link .](https://sway.office.com/ak092oZs7pQmv2G2?ref=Link)

Several other projects are being studied and tested. We hope that with God's grace, SIL Cameroon's academic library will further contribute to the dissemination of relevant and useful information to the public.







## Dealing with Trauma in Schools : Progress to Build on...

The various crises in the Far North, North West and South West regions have significantly impacted the education of children, in addition to the deaths and thousands of displaced people. Some had to drop out of school prematurely, while others were lucky enough to continue their studies despite many difficulties. These include internally displaced children or children who have been traumatized by atrocities. The program that SIL initiated two years ago in partnership with an association called “Teachers” is beginning to produce encouraging results that should be further consolidated. This pilot program is being carried out in primary schools in the Centre region and focuses on English-speaking schools in and around Yaoundé. It is based on three pillars: building the capacity of teachers to identify and deal with child trauma, defining and implementing strategies for dealing with traumatized children in schools, and advocating with education authorities to define a public policy and strategy for dealing with trauma in schools.

In 2021, efforts to raise awareness and provide training on the reality and handling of trauma in Cameroonian primary schools were intensified. In addition to the two regular training sessions held in Mbalmayo in April and in Kribi in July, each of which was attended by around forty teachers, it is worth noting that some of these participants delivered a presentation during the pedagogical days in the Mfoundi division on trauma issues and how to manage them in schools. Several thousand teachers who could not attend the training sessions were able to share with their peers about trauma in schools and listen to their colleagues’ testimonies on how they are trying to manage and curb this evil that threatens to destroy our youth. At the end of these days, we have doubled or even more the number of teachers and educational authorities that we had planned to reach in 2021. We hope that the seed that was planted during these days will grow and produce fruit for the development of our nation.





By the end of the 2020/2021 school year, there were 29 private and public primary schools actively involved in trauma care. These schools have each defined a strategy for dealing with the problem. This strategy includes sensitizing school staff on trauma, identifying the symptoms of trauma, supporting the traumatized pupil at school and following up outside school involving the parents or legal guardians of the children. This strategy has made it possible to identify and follow up 2,500 internally displaced and traumatized schoolchildren who had serious learning difficulties. More than 80% of these children were able to regain their emotional and psychological stability and continue their studies with peace of mind. While this appears to be extra work for educational staff who already have much on their plate, it is important to recognize that this effort is necessary and timely because proper trauma care defuses the bomb of hatred, bitterness, resentment and revenge that are common to traumatized people.

During our July training held in Kribi we were honored to receive three personalities from the Ministry of Basic Education namely, Mr. Mih Julius - Inspector of Pedagogy in charge of the promotion of bilingualism, Mr. Kwekeu Jules

- Coordinator of the School Success Unit and Mr. Agien Edward - Focal point for education in emergency situations. They saw, heard and touched what we do with teachers to equip them to deal with trauma situations in the classroom. They appreciated the work we are doing and promised to keep in touch with us. We hope that this contact will prove to be of great importance to us, especially at a time when we are focusing on the last pillar of the project, which is advocacy with education authorities. We were pleased to note that one of the papers submitted for the competitive examination for the recruitment of teachers that took place on 13 November was on the topic of managing trauma in the school environment. This tells us that our efforts are not in vain.

Upon completion of the second year of our pilot project, we are now moving into the final year of the project with a feeling that we have made good progress in addressing trauma in schools. Of course, much remains to be done, but we would like to build on what we have achieved so far to make giant steps forward.





## Collaborative work with the Church in the **Misaje Cluster**

**T**he Misaje cluster project is an Adapt-It

New Testament project of six language groups from Nooni. This means that the Nchane, Sari, Kemedzung, Naami, Chung and Mungong communities adapted their New Testaments from the Nooni New Testament that was dedicated on 22 December 2011 in Nkor Nooni.

With the Noni New Testament being the base of the project, Adaptation began in 2012 even though the project was officially launched on 26 May 2011. The last two of the six New Testaments were typesetting June 2021 marking the end of the translation process for the New Testaments. On the dedication day, we plan to lift all six New Testaments in one event and give back to God.

The translation of the six New Testaments that started in May 2011 and were completed in June 2021 has been thanks to the collaborative work between the church, SIL Cameroon and other stakeholders working together. Talking about the church, the seven denominations

(Roman Catholic, the Presbyterian Church in Cameroon, Cameroon Baptist Convention, the Full Gospel Mission, Christian Missionary Fellowship International, Deeper Life Bible Church, and Overcomers Chapel) buried their liturgical and dogmatic practices and came together as one body. Even church leaders who do not speak any of the six languages either spearheaded or promoted the work.

Bible translation in the Misaje cluster has provided a safe platform for inter denomination collaboration. This collaboration has given birth to an inter denominational gathering of the heads of the seven denominations that actively took part in the New Testament translations for prayer and other evangelistic works.

Conclusively, this strong bond produced resilience and motivation such that even in the midst of the double crisis (armed conflict and covid-19) the church marched faithfully and tirelessly towards her goal. May God take this collaboration to higher heights after the dedication of these New Testaments and during the phase of promotion and use of the Scriptures for transformation of lives!



## Pastor's Breakfast : Listening to the Church

One of the key partners we have had in Cameroon for years is the local church. Not one in particular, but the different groups of believers that are found all around Cameroon. The vision that has been uniting us is the belief that the Word of God can bring transformation and development in our hearts and lives when it is well understood. That's why when we start a language development project with a community, we make it a priority to connect with all the churches present in the area and involve them from the beginning. We consider all the resources they have available in terms of people, buildings, land, and other materials to form a strong team that will receive training and guidance to set in place the process of language development and Bible translation. From our partnership with the church, Scriptures in the different local languages are birthed, allowing everyone to understand the message of the Bible in the language they value the most and understand the best.

As we considered our ever-changing context, one thing we realized is that many people are not living in their village of origins any more. This reality produced new needs that require creative solutions. With that in mind, we decided to invite pastors that have influence at the national level (from different denominations) to gather their input. Around the breakfast table, on May 19, 2021, at the SIL headquarters in Yaounde,

we continued a conversation that we had started during the "Mission Conference" in December 2020, on how to build bridges to have a greater impact in Cameroon. This time our desire was to listen to better understand what the needs of the Church are at a wider level and to reflect on potential new avenues for partnership and service. These discussions underlined the necessity for the body of Christ to be united to face the current circumstances that the country is going through. Through table discussions, we explored together different training opportunities that could be provided to strengthen the ties in between different denominations. It also highlighted the unique position that SIL has to be used as a neutral platform. Furthermore, they expressed their satisfaction with the translation work we are doing, and therefore encouraged us to make it more easily and readily accessible. We finished our time together by presenting our Sunday School Teaching materials that are available in many languages and easy to translate into more languages as the need is expressed. Please contact us for more information on the training and curriculum. (Lessons are based on the book of Luke, and on the book of Acts.)

We are so thankful to partner with the Church both at the local and national level. We look forward to new ways to see communities flourish spiritually as a result of a healthy collaboration. Let's continue to gather and be intentional in serving together for greater impact.

## Focus on a Pa Development

**L** On 8 June 2021, SIL signed a formal partnership agreement with Development Associate International (DAI). This agreement provides for the two organizations to work together on skilled vocational training and mentoring of Christian youth, co-facilitation of workshops and co-facilitation of Multilingual Education in faith-based schools. But who actually is DAI? What does this organization do? How can it contribute to SIL's mission in Cameroon?

DAI is a non-profit Christian organization based in Colorado, USA, that works in leadership training. Its mission is to improve the integrity and effectiveness of Christian leaders around the world so that the church can fulfill its role in extending the kingdom of God. DAI does this through continuing education, which enables Christian leaders to build their capacity through conferences and seminars or enrollment in a master's program in leadership; mentoring and consulting in which Christian leaders engage in long-term mentoring with DAI staff. DAI started working in Cameroon on 6 February 2014. It has achieved the following to date:

In terms of training, DAI has trained nearly 1,500 leaders from churches, civil society organizations and government





# Partner : Associate International (DAI)

bodies during its seven years of ministry. The crisis in the English-speaking regions led the organization into the field to provide material assistance to more than 1,000 families in the cities of Kumba, Buea, Limbe, Bamenda, Foumban, Bafoussam and Douala. DAI has launched a pilot community development training project at the Assemblies of God Theological Institute in Kotto Mbanga. Still in the field of training, DAI runs a Master's degree program in Leadership and Organizational Management in partnership with the Protestant University of Central Africa (UPAC) for Francophones, and the University of Buea through the Christian University of Cameroon for Anglophones. 13 students have been enrolled in the Francophone program while the recruitment process for the Anglophone program is underway. DAI has signed other partnership agreements to better serve Cameroon. These include the agreement with SIL Cameroon mentioned above and the agreement with Ambush University Canada through DAI Canada. The latter agreement will allow DAI Cameroon to offer a 9-12 month certification course in entrepreneurial leadership.

In keeping with its achievements in Cameroon and its desire to do more, SIL's partnership with DAI will add value to SIL's work in Cameroon on at least two levels. At the staff level, SIL can count on DAI's expertise to train its staff in leadership. For some time, SIL has sought to incorporate a community development component into its translation

projects. This will benefit the language communities that work with SIL. The incorporation of community development into translation projects will provide an answer to the problems that SIL faces on the ground and for which it has no expertise. This will boost the work of Bible translation and the development of Cameroonian languages.



# Webinars : a New Approach to Communicating and Sharing

This initiative began in October 2020, with the aim of successfully engaging with our audiences and partners amidst an increasingly challenging environment since the outbreak of the health crisis. As we want to maintain strong links with our partners and become better known to Cameroonians both at home and abroad, it was necessary for us to become more creative. The monthly webinar program was born out of this process.

A team has been set up with a clear scope of work and tools. This project proved to

be a channel for transmitting our expertise through PowerPoint presentations, videos and various multimedia contents to different target audiences regardless of their location. As communication platforms, we used a video conferencing tool (Zoom Meeting) and social networks (Facebook and Youtube), thus making broadcasting possible on computers and mobile phones. It is worth mentioning that there was a lot of communication about this event from partners who relayed information in their surroundings.

## ► List of sessions



**Virginia Ham**

Oct/29/2020

New trends in language documentation



**Larry Seguin**

Nov/27/2020

Elements of Community Based Language and Identity Development (CBLID)



**Heline Kimbung**

Jan/7/2021

Formal Mentoring : what a formal mentoring relationship is and why you should be in one





**Matthew Lee**

Jan/28/2021

Basic Tools for Promoting Cameroon's Language Vitality in Today's Digital World



**Andreas Ernst**

Feb/18/2021

Le théâtre radiophonique: un outil qui permet aux communautés d'exprimer les réalités du quotidien et de concrétiser la Parole de Dieu dans leur vie



**Heline Kimbung**

Mar/11/2021

Thinking Anthropologically: benefits to language development and other disciplines



**Kathy Cummins**

Apr/8/2021

1000 books between the alphabet and the Bible



**Esther Ngono**

May/13/2021

La gestion des partenariats dans un projet de développement linguistique et de traduction de la Bible



**Alain Kaobaissi**

Jun/10/2021

Trauma informed Teaching strategies for managing stress in the classroom



**Annukka Kinnaird**

Jul/8/2021

Reading methodologies for the future



**Olga Nka**

Aug/12/2021

Approches participatives



**Fabienne Freeland**

Sep/9/2021

Prayer as a work tool



**Josh Ham**

Oct/14/2021

Translating key terms in the Bible: challenges, strategies and opportunities for collaboration



**Apolinaire Ambassa**

Nov/11/2021

Radios communautaires et développement des langues  
Africaines : enjeux et défis

**NB :** You can access each of these webinars on our Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/silcameroon>) or on our Youtube chain (SIL Cameroon)

During the first year of implementation, we have noticed an increasing engagement of

the users and constructive interactions on various topics. Based on this experience, we intend to consolidate our efforts to develop this service to an international standard in order to extend the possibilities of collaboration within our environment.