



Cameroon



2022

ANNUAL REPORT

New Pathways to Language Development!

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Publisher

Fabienne FREELAND,
General Director

Managing editor

Apolinaire AMBASSA,
Director of Development and Cooperation

Design and Coordination

Esther NGONO,
Communication Officer

Contributors

Fabienne FREELAND, Apolinaire AMBASSA, Dr Virginia BEAVON-HAM, Esther NGONO, Elvis YAK, John NDEMBA, Chris SMOES, Lawrence SEGUIN, Alain KAObAISSI, Jonathan ABOUEM

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Design: *Daxe*

(+237) 674 14 60 40

Editing and Administration :
SIL Cameroon

P.O Box : 1299, Yaounde

Phone : 675 47 90 78
672 44 15 08
620 33 75 29

Web site : www.cameroon.sil.org

Email : communications_cameroon@sil.org

EDITORIAL

New pathways to language development!



**... it is necessary
to explore
new pathways
for language
development.**



In recent years, our organisation's awareness and understanding of the reality and implications of language vitality has grown dramatically. It is a fact that language shift is an ongoing process in most language communities. It is also a fact that, if trends continue, some of the languages in Cameroon will die in the next decade. The seriousness of these trends is underscored by the fact that at least nine Cameroonian languages have already gone extinct.

We have also realised that we are increasingly serving in a multilingual environment which requires different approaches.

These realities have made us realise the necessity to explore new pathways for language development.

In this report, you will discover how we have become more intentional in language documentation, finding ways to engage with communities even if a Bible translation project is not possible due to lack of personnel or resources. We also present new strategies involving different partners for greater success.

You will learn more about SURAM (Scripture Use Research and Ministry), a joint project with different partners that will help us see how translated Scriptures are used.

We are thankful for each of you who support our work and make it possible for us to continue to promote the development of national languages. We invite you to engage in conversations that will help us have more impact to preserve the languages of Cameroon.

Fabienne FREELAND
General Director

New Idea to Promote Literacy in National Languages :

A Book-Writing Contest



In thinking about how to make International Literacy Day an advocacy event and a springboard for reading and writing in national languages, the idea of a book-writing contest was born. This idea responds to SIL Cameroon's desire to see more excitement around reading and writing among Cameroonians of all ages, while at the same time valuing those who write and read in national languages.

The idea of the book-writing contest has found receptive hearts among many: SIL Cameroon staff; the Cameroonian government at the Ministry of Basic Education, with whom we celebrate the International Literacy Day; and the public, including students, adults and families.

For SIL Cameroon, this contest was an open door. It allowed us to work more closely with the Ministry of Basic Education and brought innovation to the celebration of the International Literacy Day. We also found an open door of sponsorship from the National Commission of UNESCO, who led us in a discussion on how we could continue to partner in the future to develop literacy amongst communities in Cameroon.

We also started productive partnerships with two publishing houses that promote materials in Cameroonian languages.

Of course, this provided greater visibility to us as an organisation and to national-language literacy on national television and radio. It also gave strong affirmation to the work being done in these languages and the people who are actively developing them.

Forty-eight manuscripts were submitted in 14 different languages. The first three in each category received an award. The winning entries came from four different regions of the country.

One participant testified:

«It was really worthwhile to participate in this contest. And with the ranking, it is recognition in the community of the work we do...»

Impact at a Glance in 2022

1- Bible Translation and Scripture Engagement

Over 24 Bible translation programs have been benefited from the expertise of our consultants and exegetes, from training and support. Over 16 languages received portions of the Bible via audio, song and Oral Bible Storying

There are over 8 local Scripture Engagement teams who are helping other people to engage with the translated Scriptures in their own communities.

2- Bible Translation Progress

1. Ongoing Projects

There were 18 active ongoing translation projects in 2022,

Far North = 7

North-West/West = 8

South = 3

Of these 18, three are Old Testament projects, and the rest are for the New Testament.

2. New Projects

During 2022, significant preparatory work was carried out to start seven new translation projects (four Old Testament, three New Testament). Five of these projects have already begun, and two more are close to being approved:

North-West = 2 (OT)

Centre = 3 (NT)

East = 2 (OT)

3. Consultants-in-Training

There are currently five Cameroonian men in training to become translation consultants, as well as several expatriate men and women. During 2022, one of our consultants-in-training was recognised as a full consultant.

4. Workshop and Training

Over 65 church leaders have taken our Scripture Engagement trainings.



Seizing Opportunities in Language Documentation

The United Nations General Assembly has designated the ten years from 2022 to 2032 as the International Decade of Indigenous Languages. During this time, linguists worldwide will increasingly focus on documenting languages for the current and future generations. SIL Cameroon is excited about the possibilities for encouraging language communities in Cameroon to document their languages.

In September, SIL trained four university students to go out in teams of two, travelling to the Iton- and Mengisa-speaking areas. There each team collected videos from older speakers of the community. Some

of the videos were cultural stories, others were demonstrations of crafts or trades that the speakers wanted to demonstrate, and yet others were cooking demonstrations. At the end of one of the videos, a maker of traditional clothing invited young people to become apprentices so that his skill can be passed on.

We hope that these language communities will be able to share the videos on media platforms to promote language development. Linguists will also use the texts from the videos to study natural use of the languages in preparation for helping translators to do excellent translation work.



Community-Based Language and Identity Development (CBLID)

Multilingualism is a fact of life in Cameroon's language communities. Besides the traditional language, speakers regularly use other languages such as an official language, a language of wider communication, and even their neighbours' languages. SIL Cameroon recognizes the need to take multilingualism into account when partnering with communities in language development.

To this end, SIL is implementing the Community-Based Language and Identity Development (CBLID) approach. It is based on the Sustainable Use Model, developed by Dr Mr Paul Lewis and Dr Gary F Simons of SIL International.

CBLID aims to increase language community leaders' awareness of issues related to language development in places where multiple languages are used. This is done through a series of two-day community-based seminars called the language and identity journey. During this seminar, participants explore questions such as:

- Which languages does the community regularly use?
- Which language(s) do they use with whom, when, where, and why?
- What is the relationship between their identity and their traditional language?
- Is their traditional language being used by the

younger generation? Is it being passed on to the next generation?

The goal is for language communities to take informed decisions about the best ways to use all the languages they regularly speak, including their traditional language.

In November 2021, an SIL team led a two-day language and identity journey seminar with 20 members of the Iton language development committee, CODELI. In February 2022, a similar seminar was held with around 20 representatives of three languages spoken in the South Region: Iyasa (Campo), Batanga (Kribi), and Kwasio (Lolodorf).

In March 2022, SIL Cameroon introduced the CBLID approach to 23 students at the University of Dschang. The 'Seminar-Workshop on the Integrated Development of Cameroonian Languages' was hosted by the University's Laboratoire des Technologies de Langues et de Linguistique Appliquée. Professor KOUESSO Jean Romain, Head of the Department of African Studies and Globalisation, Faculty of Letters and Human Sciences, served as coordinator, and linguists Dr DJOUMENE KUETE Juvelos and Dr NEMGNE SOPGUI Lauriane assisted as trainers. We are grateful to the University of Dschang for granting us this opportunity to introduce the CBLID model to the broader academic community.

The Maka'a community uses its language to know God and access development opportunities



The Association for the Promotion of the Gospel in the Maka'a Language (APROGMAL) has a two-fold ambition: to implement the Word of God as contained in the book of Philippians 2.11 (NIV), «And every tongue acknowledge that Jesus-Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father» on the one hand, and to save a language that is in the throes of regression, on the other hand.

Hence, the statutory objectives of APROGMAL are the following:

- Promoting the Gospel of Jesus Christ in the Maka'a language through the organisation of writing and reading seminars and workshops;
- Producing artistic works (music, cinema, documentary, theatre) in the Maka'a language;
- Organising cultural events with an evangelical focus in the Maka'a language;
- Supporting the Old Testament translation work in Maka'a, as this portion of the Bible has not been translated yet.

Thus, in 2022, a few actions pertaining thereto were carried out, namely: the organisation of two trainer training seminars on reading and writing the Maka'a language, which took place from August 10 to 14 and on November 12, 2022, in Ngoumou, in the Upper Nyong Division, Eastern Region of Cameroon. These seminars provided an opportunity to train approximately 175 trainers. For the president of this young association, Dr. KOUKOLO KOUKOLO Germain, the ambition is to train at least 500 trainers per year. These trainers serve as a real relay for this literacy process, in the different church communities where they come from; their mission is to set up groups of readers and cultural entertainment. The emulation of these groups will be achieved through their participation in the evangelical festivals that APROGMAL hopes to organise from 2023 onward. The feedback from these seminars, which brought together several church denominations (Catholic, Presbyterian and Pentecostal), indicates that there is enthusiasm among those who were trained, which is a source of encouragement for APROGMAL.



At the artistic level, a ten-track Christian music album (from the Presbyterian Church of Cameroon hymnbook) was produced in November 2022 and a second 10-track album is already in the works.

Other projects are looming on the horizon, namely

- Supporting the organisation of Christmas celebrations in the Maka'a language, for Children's worship services, in the 17 targeted parishes of the Maka'a zone;
- Organising 02 literacy workshops in January and March 2023 respectively, in Doumaintang and Nguélémendouka;
- Organising the first edition of the Maka'a Evangelical Festival in June, in the locality of Ngoumou via Abong-Mbang;
- Supporting the translation of the Old Testament, for which an urgent request was made to SIL Cameroon, APROGMAL's main supporter.

- APROGMAL also plans to develop applications for learning the Maka'a language and, by 2023, the creation of a television in the Maka'a language.

Faced with such an ambitious and exalting forecast, a few major needs have to be addressed in order to achieve the expected result. They include:

- The supply of materials (Bibles, hymnbooks and transition manuals);
- Financial and logistical support for the organisation of seminars;

APROGMAL therefore calls on the entire Maka'a community, its important elite, as well as all organisations that promote literacy, to express acting solidarity in order to transform its dreams into reality.

Trauma Healing Program for internally displaced students :

Successes to Celebrate



The IDSC (Internally Displaced Students Trauma Healing) project started three years ago and aims to equip primary and nursery school teachers of the Anglophone sub-system in the city of Yaoundé and its surroundings, so that they can deal with the trauma of internally displaced students (especially those coming from the conflict-ridden English-speaking zone). The project was conducted in collaboration with the Association Teachers and will come to an official end in February 2023. As assess our results, we invite you to celebrate with us the successes achieved and the prospects for the future.

The first reason for satisfaction is the very commendable involvement of the Association Teachers members in the project. More than 50 of them faithfully participated in the training and equipping sessions organised by SIL Cameroon in the cities of Yaoundé, Obala, Mbalmayo, Kribi and Bafia.

The regular attendance and commitment of these teachers demonstrated their desire to learn in order to be more effective in their schools. In a context where we observe a certain demotivation of the teaching body evidenced by corporate claims, the commitment and professional conscience of these teachers are to be rightfully appreciated. Congratulations, Teachers!

This commitment was reflected in the restitution of the skills they acquired, both in their classrooms and to review their colleagues.

Indeed, as the workshops were organised, these teachers immediately went back to their classrooms to implement the skills they had learned. As a result, IDPs were identified in the various schools for appropriate follow-up. Qualitatively, not only was there a positive change in behaviour, but there was also a clear improvement of academic performances. Quantitatively, in 2021, 2,408 displaced pupils were



registered in 29 primary and nursery schools (being 2,283 from primary schools and 125 from nursery schools), while in 2022, 5,529 pupils were identified by name and telephone contact in 149 schools (being 4,863 from 98 primary schools and 666 from 51 nursery schools). Of these, 306 cases of trauma were reported and taken care of in 22 primary schools, from all four districts (Yaoundé 4, Yaoundé 6, Yaoundé 7 and Okola).

The months of October and November 2021 were devoted to pedagogical days in the Centre Region. 27 trained teachers travelled throughout the 10 divisions of the region to talk to their peers about trauma in schools and how they can address it. This initiative was a real success and a great encouragement. Out of

a total of 5,500 targeted teachers, they managed to reach 4,936. It should also be noted that the advocacy efforts of our partner «Teachers» resulted in the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between this association and the Ministry of Basic Education on January 5, 2022. Henceforth, «Teachers» has the authorization from the ministry to move throughout the republic in order to talk about trauma with primary school teachers.

It is now strongly hoped that this vision will be perpetuated and that more teachers will take ownership of it so that special attention will be paid to the very significant number of internally displaced students throughout the country.



Working alongside Local Communities

Discovering the Reality of Missions

Bible translation, community mobilisation and language development have increased over the years. Many new methods and strategies are being used every day in order to things better. People and organizations (sacrifice every day financially and otherwise to make sure every community can have Scriptures (hard copies, audiovisual and other forms) in their own languages.

In all these efforts, it is important to pause from time to time and ask some questions, like; “Are we doing things the right way?” Or “what is working?” “Why is it working?” “Why is it not working?” “How can we do this better?” etc.

SURAM Cameroon (Scripture Use Research And Ministry), is a sort of pause by some Bible agencies and organizations. The specific objective here is to surveying language communities in Cameroon, in a attempt to measure their level of Scripture engagement with mother tongue Scriptures,

Identify and analyze the factors that influence this use, or factors which work against the use of these Scriptures in these communities.

SURAM Cameroon will also bolster Scripture Engagement in these language communities and finally, give recommendations based on findings to stakeholders.

After the first Suram project that held in Papua New Guinea, SIL began contacting other partners like Cameroon Association for Bible translation and Literacy (CABTAL), and later Bible Society and the Lutheran Bible translators to partner for what is today known as SURAM Cameroon.

The choice of Cameroon was aimed to test almost similar hypothesis as in Papua New Guinea in a bigger language and cultural setting. Twenty eight language communities altogether were chosen by the partners.

Up until now, the SURAM Cameroon team has been able to survey and do ministry work in six communities, from September 2022 – December 2022:

- Maka'a in the East Region.
- Nomaande, Nugunu and Yambetta in the Center Region.
- Hdi and Mbuko in the Far North Region.

So far, seeing what the lord is doing on the mission field has been a significant experience, both negative and positive. However, SURAM Cameroon cannot draw any conclusions given that we still have twenty-two communities to survey.

But one thing is very clear; people understand Scriptures in their language even better. But in most cases there is this literacy barrier between the community and their Mother tongue Scriptures. There seems to be a socio-cultural and political barrier as well.

At the end of the pause the different funding partners (OneBook, Wycliffe USA, Wycliffe Canada, Wycliffe UK and Ireland, Wycliffe Netherlands, SIL) and partners (SIL, CABTAL, ABC and LBTC) may have just the right answers to their questions.



Public Relation

Milestones of 2022

During the year 2022, SIL Cameroon organised public relations events to consolidate trust with its various partners.

We started with the celebration of International Mother Tongue Day along with the formal presentation of SIL Cameroon's 2021 Annual Report. These two activities gave us the opportunity to present the outcomes of the work we carried out throughout the year to our partners. We also wanted to join the international community in commemorating the International Mother Tongue Day in our own way. We intend to perpetuate this initiative in order to enhance the value of our languages. The appointment is thus made for next year and the date saved.

During the year, we also organised a capacity building workshop for clergymen and Christians in order to equip them to better serve in domains such as: conflict management, treasury, «Sunday school» teaching methods, praise and servant leadership.

Our events included SIL's Open House & Worship Night during which we gave our guests a presentation of our know-how in our different areas of work.

To end the year 2022, we organised the fourth edition of FOMAR (Fair of Missions and Artisans), an event which aims at gathering the body of Christ in an environment centred on three core values : unity, community and holistic development. Take note of the dates for FOMAR 2023. It will take place from December 15th - 19th 2023.



International Mother Tongue Day



Open House



Missions and Handicrafts Fair (FOMAR)

Our Services and Products

SIL is known for its expertise in language development and Bible translation. However, SIL Cameroon provides language communities, churches, organisations and NGOs with products and services that are not always well known to the general public. These products and services include:

Translation Services



Get world-class translation services from our agency. We offer a full range of languages, from Cameroonian languages to African and international languages, in the most efficient time frame. Find out more by contacting us through

project-development_cameroon@sil.org
+237 694-848-055

Recording studio



A modern recording studio, available to churches, choirs and language communities for the production of various contents in video and audio formats. The studio manager can be reached at the following address:

media-services_cameroon@sil.org
652-607-972

Nda Afidi - Conference and retreat Center



We desire to provide safe and comfortable lodging, varied and well-prepared food to enhance the success of conferences, events, workshops and retreats for all SIL projects and SIL's partners. Our vision is to be a house where people can find renewed hope, renewed vision and feel valued and cared for. You can get more information by contacting the Centre Manager at the following addresses:

operations_cameroon@sil.org
672-441-508

Academic library



Access thousands of linguistics and theology books and journals! Our library is open to teachers, pastors, researchers, students and lovers of linguistic and theological knowledge. The contacts below will allow you to know more about it:

library_cameroon@sil.org
675-592-042

Language development

During 2022, SIL Cameroon gave consultation, training and/or logistic support to language development in many languages throughout Cameroon especially those opposite.

Language name are according to the 17th edition of the Ethnologue published by SIL International

(Name)= other common name

[Name]= Dialect name



♦ Far North
Bana
Gemzek
Gude
Jimi
Hdi
Mada
Mafa
Mbuko
Merey
Mpade (Makary Kotoko)
Muyang
Tupuri
Vame
Wuzlam (Ouldeme)
Wandala (Mandara)
Zulgo
♦ North
Daba
Mambai (Mambay)
Mazagway-Hidi
♦ Adamawa
Karang
Mambila, Cameroon
Nizaa (Suga)

♦ North West
Baba
Bafanji
Bafut
Bamali
Bambalang
Bamukumbit
Bamunka
Bangolan
Chung
Fulfulde
Kemedzung
Kenswei Nsei (Bamessing)
Kom
Limum
Naami
Ncane (Mungong)
Ncane (Nchane)
Noone (Noni)
Sari
Vengo (Babungo)
Wushi (Babessi)
Yamba

♦ South-West
Iceve-Maci (Oliti)
Ipulo
Iyive
Mesaka (Ugare)
♦ West
Ghomálá
♦ Centre
Eton (Iton)
Lefa
Mengisa
Swo (Sso)
Vute
♦ South
Batanga
Gyele
Kwasio
Yasa (Iyasa)
♦ East
Badwe'e
Baka
Bikele
Kako
Kwakum
Makaa (Mekaa)

www.scriptureearth.org



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Scripture Resources in Thousands of Languages

Is there a Bible in my language?

La Bible existe-t-elle dans ma langue ?

Language (or code)

Country

List by Country

Woodi Deftere Allah be wolde am na?

God ei Book dey for my kontri tok?

About this site

English

Feedback

