

Advocacy for minority languages

20 14

New strategies for increased impact



Photo EIM Baka

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A Word from the General Director

What impact are you having?



as hoped and expected. Secondly, it is difficult to determine the impact in some domains. Regardless of the challenges, our desire in 2013 was to develop new strategies or modified existing ones in order to have a greater impact in this nation.

We have developed a new strategic plan for SIL Cameroon. We want to invest more on the well-being of our human resources and to train more people in the domains that are needed. Our desire is to build the capacity of local communities and others to be able to provide leadership and

Administration in Cameroon as of December 2013:

General Director:
Bert Visser

Director of Administration and Finance:
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Ria Hedinger

One of our colleagues went on to visit a school in the village in the Far North and he was very impressed by what he observed. In this primary one class, the teacher writes a sum on the blackboard ($8+5=$) and asks a boy to come forward to give the answer. "Explain to everyone what you're doing." The boy says "Eight plus....five equals....equals.... 13," and writes the answer. "Is that correct?" the teacher asks the class. They all say "Yes!" and applaud.

In this particular context, the key to success is the use of the mother tongue. By this mean, the children are involved, they understand and thus are able to grasp more difficult concepts. The impact on the children is visible and relevant and that brings a great satisfaction to the teachers as well.

As we enter our 45th year of serving the people of Cameroon, we continue to ask ourselves if we are having a significant impact in this nation. It is not an easy question to answer. First, it is difficult to be honest with oneself to admit that there are areas where we have not done as well



effective management for language programmes. We plan to maintain and promote high standards in research, in translation, and other domains where we serve. And we want to see the results of our work being well used.

In 2013, we also worked with the Churches and Bible Agencies in Cameroon in the "Platform for the Impact of the Word in Cameroon." The plan developed from this Platform includes both elements of spiritual growth and community development.

*Bert Visser,
General Director*

Entity Committee:
Chair:

Ray Kapteyn

Vice-Chair:
Georges Shultz

2nd Vice-Chair
Katrina Boutwell
Bruce Cox
Philip Burgess



Introduction

Platform for the Impact of the Word in Cameroon



In the chart below, the number of participants is the actual number of people who attended a given category of course or workshop. The number of languages however, includes those who may have been represented in more than one course or workshop.

After more than forty years in Cameroon, SIL still desires to see new methodological and strategic approaches without undermining what has been done in the past. Rather, the focus is to insure that the development of national languages is sustainable and continues to bear good fruit.

The continuous challenge is to associate more and more key players to this advocacy process. It is a high priority to create exchange and work platforms to unify our efforts. It is in this perspective that the Platform for the Impact of the Word was created. We hope that the same kind of movement will be put in place to boost our efforts in multilingual education. The Platform for the Impact of the Word in Cameroon was created to promote development and Scripture Use in the different communities for a radical and lasting transformation in their lives. The members of this platform include the Forum of Bible Agencies in Cameroon (FOBAC), the Council of Protestant Churches of Cameroon, the Roman Catholic Church, and Pentecostal churches. The long-term objective is to work together to put a plan in place to allow the churches and Bible agencies to work together in order to have a lasting impact in the lives of the communities, both in community development and spiritual growth.

Linguistics

The foundation for language development

When building a house, plans are made and then the work begins: the first place to work is on the foundation. This is similar to language development. When developing a language, plans are made with the community, and work needs to start on linguistic research. Once the foundation is laid, the walls go up to support the roof. These parts of language development are pedagogical literacy materials of various sorts, and translation of important works into the language.



If a house's foundation is of good quality, it will be strong to stand against the storms. Similarly, if language development will succeed, the foundation of linguistic research must be adequate. The outcomes of this research are an excellent orthography, a description of the grammar, and a dictionary that presents the standard spelling and definitions of words. Years of research goes into the preparation of these products.

More and more, Cameroonians are on the forefront of linguistic research. SIL Cameroon remains committed to training and mentoring Cameroonians to participate actively in the development of their languages. Maybe you know someone that has a strong interest in your language that could be a language developer!

Courses/ Workshops	6 in Linguistics	8 in Literacy	7 in Translation	4 in Scripture Use	5 in Training
Language groups represented	33	58	43	24	17
Participants	83	133	110	71	105

Training

Orality, a new training approach for national language development!



The SIL training department, in its desire to have a greater impact in language development, realises that orality was an approach that would boost men and women in the different communities to better master their mother tongues. What exactly do we mean? The word orality has Latin roots: orare, which means to listen or to hear. Orality is a pedagogical and andragogical approach which enables one to convey different teachings by audio means. In the specific case of language development, we wanted to give the opportunity to many Cameroonians to wrestle with a new literacy method better suited to their skill set. This method involves listening to different Bible stories or other texts of general interest translated into the mother tongue.

This experience is very successful, especially for the adults who don't know how to read and write. By listening to the different Bible characters in their mother tongue, for example, they were convinced that these people belonged to their culture.

As far as the future translators are concerned, orality is a pedagogical approach which enables them to simply know the exact pronunciation of the words. This method is a great tool to help develop phonology. It also helps preserve the true nature of the language from a style and accent standpoint.

Language technology development

SIL has been at the forefront of the development of new technologies for Bible translation and literacy. SIL develops and makes freely available the fonts and keyboards which allow the creation and viewing of Scripture and literacy materials in languages with non-roman scripts and characters (including the official orthography of Cameroon). We are working hand-in-hand with Cameroonian Language Committees to regularly provide training and consulting in these technologies to both Cameroonian and expatriate linguists and translators at our Cameroon training centres. SIL has developed software that allows linguists to collaborate and work together using the internet to share and synchronise information and data, even when located on different continents. In support of that collaboration, we have worked with partners to enable linguists in remote villages to utilize the internet by installing state of the art technologies, including satellite communication and solar power.

With the support of the different development partners, private promoters and the civil society, the efforts of the government show a real politic will to develop strategies adapted to the challenges of quality universal education, to the real needs of national economy and to the requirements of globalisation. The strategies to capitalise on are access to educational material, restructuration of



In addition to providing training for Cameroonian linguists and translators to create dictionaries in local languages, SIL has created freely available software that can be used to publish dictionaries and Scripture to cell phones, tablets, E-book readers and the internet. This has been done in collaboration with partners for solutions like Every Tribe Every Nation ® (everytribeeverynation.org) and YouVersion ® (www.bible.com), which currently has 35 million users. Webonary.org, a new web resource provided by SIL, allows language groups to access dictionaries in local languages on the internet without requiring deep technical expertise or funding.

the institutional framework, the growth of the organizational infrastructures, the updating of the management methods and the pedagogical supervision.

(Article UNESCO Cameroon Tribune)



Literacy

A boost in our literacy efforts!



“Not all readers are leaders, but all leaders are readers.”
Harry S. Truman
 (33rd President of the United States 1945-1953)

“Literacy arouses hopes, not only in society as a whole but also in the individual who is striving for fulfilment, happiness and personal benefit by learning how to read and write. Literacy... means far more than learning how to read and write... The aim is to transmit... knowledge and promote social participation.”

- UNESCO Institute for Education, Hamburg, Germany

The year 2013 comes to an end and we can see that our literacy efforts were boosted. First of all, we are able to see fruits from our advocacy efforts on behalf of multilingual education, one of them being a partnership agreement signed with Plan Cameroun. It was in December 2012 that the two organisations decided to implement a multilingual education project for the Baka in the East Region of Cameroon. The main focus was to facilitate access to education for the children of this minority community.

Human and material resources have been deployed to implement teaching programmes in the Baka language in different pilot schools. And at the end of this year, we can say that the results are conclusive. First of all, the number of children involved in the programme is far beyond our expectations. In fact, more than 300 children are being taught in the Baka language. An alphabet, a primer, a pre-primer, a math book and other brochures in Baka were conceived and published. The government deployed some teachers to help in the project and they were

trained to perpetuate the teaching of this language in the schools. The school year being well underway, we can affirm that the Baka child has started his journey on the path of his own development.

In another area, adult literacy was intensified by the increased commitment of the church and the language committees. More teaching programmes have been conceived, in order to promote the development of the mother tongue.



In the year to come, we will continue to find new strategies to enable our literacy efforts to bear more fruit. We would really like to see the creation of a platform dedicated to multilingual education, to federate the efforts of the different partners and elaborate a global strategy. A first step was taken in this direction by putting all of SIL shell-books at the disposal of our partners. This will enable the different language projects to have more impact for the good of their communities. We truly believe that the involvement of the elites in literacy will be a real asset. All of this will help literacy have more impact in the communities.

Nationalities of SIL Cameroon Personnel

- Australia
- Bahamas
- Cameroon
- Canada
- Chile
- Costa Rica
- Finland
- Hungary
- Ireland
- Peru
- Sweden
- Switzerland
- The Netherlands
- The United Kingdom
- The United States of America

SIL International Administration:

President:
 John Watters

Executive Director:
 Freddy Boswell

Area Director for Francophone Africa:
 Nelis van den Berg



Translation For a sustainable translation movement



God is doing many good things at CBTS (Cameroon Baptist Theological Seminary in Ndu) in the Bible Translation Degree Program.

The first photo is of four students who graduated from CBTS in December 2012 after studying in the Bible Translation Degree Program: Rev. Nchindo Innocent, Ngo Bikai Rita, George Shultz, Fotso Ervais, and Pastor Ihimbru David. The second photo is of two students who successfully defended their thesis, the final linguistics project, before graduation in December 2013: Pastor Nweshie Novester and Pastor Lanka Henry. With them are Phonology teacher Mathaus Njeck and George Shultz. George Shultz and Mathaus were the two readers for their theses.

The Misaje project is one of the translation programs that has the potential to be an example in the sustainable development of mother-tongues in general and more specifically in the translation of the Bible. This project is a cluster of six language communities spread out in two administrative units: Misaje and Bum Sub Divisions in Donga and Mantung and Boyo Divisions respectively.

The factors enabling an effective implementation of this language projects are:

- The fast mobilization and appropriation by the churches in creating six Interchurch committees and by the communities in forming six language committees.
- The engagement and the availability of the Nooni translators to combine their efforts with the Misaje translators thus enabling a shorter implementation time period.
- The capacity for all people involved coming from 13 different ethnic groups (Chung, Kemedzung, Mungong, Naami, Nchane, Sari, Noni, Limbum, Yamba, Nso, America, Netherlands, Costa Rica), to work in unity despite their diversity. We believe that all this potential is helping set a good foundation for a more sustainable Bible Translation movement in Cameroon, which would bring forth spiritual, social, and economical transformation of the communities involved and will call for the leadership of the movement by these communities in the long-term.

Bamenda Regional Office From BRO to BRTC

Visitors looking for the SIL Bamenda Regional Office along the street of Mile 3 in Nkwen will look in vain. The office, fondly known as the BRO, has ceased to exist. But the work of training, consulting and IT service for language communities goes on unabated!

Our partner, the Cameroon Association for Bible Translation and Literacy (CABTAL), has built a regional training centre, called the Bamenda Regional Training Centre (BRTC) in the village of



Mbesi in Mile 4, Nkwen. The SIL Cameroon language and translation workers were invited to join them in these beautiful new facilities.

The new offices and training facilities will allow the two organisations to serve the communities of the North West, South West and West Regions more efficiently. The old office was overcrowded and the classroom deteriorating, while the new Centre has ample office space for specialists and consultants in the domain of linguistics, literacy and translation, as well as a classroom and library. There is also space for administrative and IT services. It also has comfortable dormitory style rooms for overnight stays. The Centre can also be used for local language community meetings, church occasions and retreats.

We rejoice in this great accomplishment for CABTAL. An encouraging dedication of the Centre was held on October 13, 2013.

Acronyms

CABTAL:
Cameroon Association for Bible Translation and Literacy

FOBAC:
Forum of Bible Agencies-Cameroun

NACALCO:
National Association of Cameroonian Language Committees

MINEDUB:
Ministry of Basic Education

MINJEC:
Ministry of Youth Affairs and Civic Education

MINRESI:
Ministry of Scientific Research and Innovation

MINREX:
Ministry of External Relations

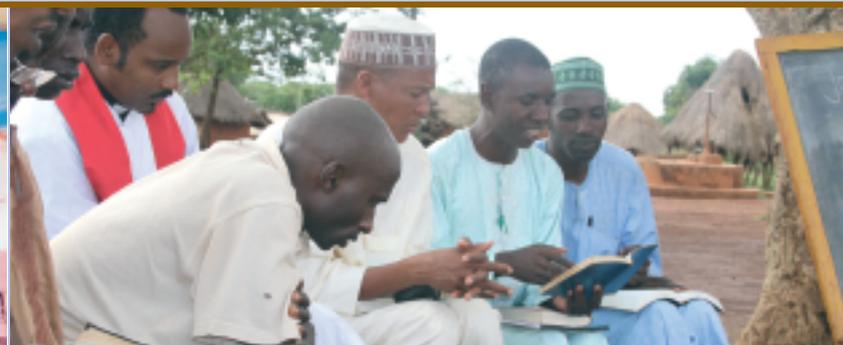
SIL Cameroon Bibliography in 2013 Technical Manuscripts



SIL Cameroon publications are primarily written for national language speakers. In 2013, SIL members worked together with Cameroonians to produce publications in the mother tongue covering a wide range of topics, including lexicons, Grammar books, folktales, HIV-AIDS booklets, educational booklets and primers. See our website for more details: www.silcam.org.



SIL Cameroon Bibliography in 2013 Publications in National Languages



Gemzek (Zulgo)

SCHERRER, Elaine Marie. 2012. An Overview of Gemzek Narrative Discourse Features. 45 pp.

Bafanji

HAMM, Cameron; Clifford Africa TIEMIDENG; and Moses Tiefon LIWO. 2013. The Bafanji Noun Phrase. 27 pp.

Bamuka

INGLE, Jane. 2013. The Bamuka Noun Phrase. 102 pp.

Bamukumbit

DeVISSER, Christine: Yaoundé, 2013, Tone of the Bamukumbit Noun, 20pp.

DeVISSER, Christine : Yaoundé, 2013, Reading and Writing Mankong, 48 pp.

DeVISSER, Christine and SORSAMO Hezel : Yaoundé, 2013, Bamukumbit (Mankong) Orthography Guide (Revised 2013), 25pp.

Iceve-Maci

COX, Bruce. 2013. A phonological Overview of Iceve-Maci. 75 pp.

Ipulo

GALLANT, Anna Grace. 2012. The establishment of a Homeland : an oral history from the Ipulo People in the South West Region of Cameroon. 34 pp.

Isu

ANDERSON, Stephen C. 2013. Isu Orthography Guide. 18 pp.

Kom

WALTER, Stephen L. 2012. Assessment Results for the Government Teacher Training College (GTTC) in Fundong. 14 pp.

WALTER, Stephen L.; Kain Godfrey CHUO. 2012. The Kom Experimental Mother Tongue Education Pilot Project Report for 2012. 33pp.

Mfumte

MICHAEL, Nathan. 2013. Conflict Resolution in Wulii' Culture Donga-Mantung Division, NorthWest Region. 42 pp.

Tuki

DE GOOIJER, Helma. 2012. Une collection de contes, proverbes, devinettes et chansons en Tuki. 87 pp.

Fulfulde-Bororro

WILSON, Cameron. 2012. Jahaangal Yaaya bee Daaso. (The Adventure of Yaaya and Daaso). Yaounde, Cameroon: SIL.

Thesis

Buwal

VILJOEN, Melanie Helen. 2013. A Grammatical Description of the Buwal Language. Ph.D., La Trobe University, Bundoora, Victoria, Australia. 716 pp.

Mpade

ALISSON, Sean David. 2012. Aspects of a Grammar of Makary Kotoko (Chadic, Cameroon). Ph.D., University of Colorado. 606 pp.

SHULTZ, George Frederick. 2013. Factors in Cameroonian Christian Leadership for Bible Translation. Ph.D. Fuller Theological Seminary, School of Intercultural Studies. Pasadena, California. 424 pp.



Equatorial Guinea

INCREASED IMPACT THROUGH LINGUISTIC TRAINING

SIL personnel in partnership with the Council of Scientific and Technological Research offered twelve training courses and production workshops in Equatorial Guinea, with participants from the following cross-border languages with Cameroon: Basek (related to Bakoko), Fang, Kwasio, Ndowne, and Pidgin.



CURSO O TALLER	Participantes
Principios de traducción, módulo 1	14
Sesiones de traducción en Basek	4
Sesiones de revisión de textos antiguos en Benga	3
Taller de escritores Ndowne	23
Principios de traducción, módulo 2	5
Taller de gramática	15
Taller de alfabetización	15
Taller de lexicografía	15
Principios de traducción, módulo 3	1
Principios de informática	4
Análisis discursivo, módulo 1	22
Taller de materiales digitales para la alfabetización	10

COLABORACIÓN EN LA FORMACIÓN LINGÜÍSTICA EN GUINEA ECUATORIAL

Personal de la SIL en colaboración con el Consejo de Investigaciones Científicas y Tecnológicas ofrecieron doce cursos de formación y talleres de producción en Guinea Ecuatorial, con participantes de las siguientes lenguas tras-fronterizas con Camerún: Basek (relacionado con Bakoko), Fang, Kwasio, Ndowne y Pidgin. El Centro Cultural Español auspició varios de los cursos.



Languages SIL served in 2013

During 2013, SIL gave consultation, training and/or logistic support to language development in many languages throughout Cameroon, including the following:

1. Far North Region

Bana Mbuko
 Buwal Merey
 Fulfulde Moloko
 Gavar Mpade
 Gemzek *[Markary Kotoko]*
(Guemzek) Muyang
 Hdi Tupuri
 Lagwan Vame
 Mada Wandala
Mambai (Mandara)
(Mambay) Wuzlam
 Matal *(Ouldeme)*
 Mazagway-Hidi Zulgo
 Mbudum

2. North Region

Daba Gude
 Fali Karang

3. Adamawa Region

Mambila Tikar

4. Centre Region

Basaa Nubaca
 Elip (Nulibie) *(Baca)*
 Lefa Nugunu
 Mbule Yambeta
 Mengisa Yangben
 Mmaala *(Nuasue)*
(Numaala)

5. South West Region

Iceve-Maci Ipulo
[Oliti] Iyive

6. South Region

Gyele Kwasio
 Batanga Yasa

7. West Region

Bangwa Ghomálá'

8. East Region

Baka *[Nzime]*
 Kako Makaa
 Koonzime *(Mekaa)*
[Badwe'e] Njyem
 Koonzime

9. North West Region

Baba Limbum
 Bafanji Naami
 Bafut Nchane
 Bamali *[Mungong]*
 Bambalang Ncane
 Bamukumbit *[Nchane]*
 Bamunka Noone *(Noni)*
 Bangolan Sari *(Nsari)*
 Cung *(Chung)* Ugare
 Fulfulde Vengo
 Kemedzung *(Babungo)*
 Kenswei Nsei Wushi
(Bamessing) *(Babessi)*
 Kom Yamba

10. Littoral Region



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

(Name)= Other common name

[Name]= Dialect name

