

CAMEROON

Connection

MAY 2021

THE KUHN FAMILY



Dear Praying Partners;

Perhaps you have heard the saying it takes a village to raise a child. It means that children benefit greatly when parents are accompanied by loving and attentive neighbours in raising their child.

Lately, I have found myself thinking that child-rearing is not the only endeavor that benefits when a community engages in the exercise. Bible Translation also benefits greatly when the whole "village" (or "language community") gets behind the effort. Volunteers take care of small tasks, people stop by with contributions of funds, resources, or simply ideas, and there is an energy and excitement about projects that are done together that can not be faked when the community is not behind a project. Healthy, successful and vibrant translation projects often have high levels of community engagement.

Dowayo and Nizaa Engagement

In the past couple of months, there have been some very exciting developments in two LBTC projects on the local initiative front!

First, let's talk about the Dowayo Bible Translation project. Since our family arrived in Cameroon in 2013, I have heard about this project and the difficulties that the team has encountered as they have worked. Progress had been slow, the quality of their drafts left consultants unimpressed, and it seemed like personal problems continuously distracted the team from working as expected. Finally, last year, the Cameroonian church decided to suspend the translation work to consult with the community about how best to proceed.

During a visit to the Dowayo town of Poli last November, I was surprised to discover that the Dowayo people were not organized to support the translation project. Many people were excited to see the project completed, but they had not yet come together to decide together what they envisioned for the project and how they could help and support the work locally. So, I left them with homework to try to get organized and to invite us to come after they had done so. My Cameroonian colleague, Pastor Touka, and I were thrilled to meet with leaders of the newly-formed Association for the Translation of the Bible in the Dowayo language near the end of April! In the coming months, we will be working with these leaders to reconstitute a translation team and to communicate about how we can work together to move the work forward.

Please pray for the Dowayo Bible Translation Association, that God will use them to orient, support, and otherwise bless the translation work that should be restarting in the coming months.



Pastor Touka addresses leaders of the newly formed Dowayo Bible Translation Association in Poli, Cameroon.

The second project is the Nizaa New Testament project. This project has been blessed with great national workers and good unity, but progress has been slow and my attempts in the past to get Nizaa speakers to rally behind the work have come up short... until recently!

Also in April, I was thrilled to have a conversation with a Christian Nizaa speaker about the importance of having people who care about the project to get organized to be able to support the work of their team. I was even more overjoyed when she responded by saying, "You're right! It's about time we got better organized. I know a few people who can help us... can we meet on Friday?" So, we set up the meeting and spent three blessed hours together casting a vision for the Nizaa association and talking about next steps. The leaders left the meeting talking about hosting a founding assembly some time this summer!

Please pray for these Nizaa leaders as well, that God will move them to follow through with their plans to organize and that He will use them to tangibly support the work of the team in Galim.

An Opportunity for FURTHER STUDY

ACTS SEMINARIES

Another reason that community initiative has been on my mind recently is due to an opportunity for further study that has become possible for me to pursue. LBTC has agreed to help me pursue a Doctor of Ministry specializing in Bible Translation at ACTS Seminaries right next to the Canada Institute of Linguistics where I studied previously. The program is designed to help the students grow in ways that will directly improve their ability to accomplish the ministry to which they are called. A major component of the program is a major research project of my choosing. After much prayer and consultation, I have decided to work on developing a methodology for maximizing the level of community engagement and initiative in translation projects!

The program of study begins this fall. Normally, the first week would require that I go to the Seminary for a time of orientation and lectures. However, due to COVID, that week has moved online and I will be staying put in Cameroon.

Please pray for my participation in this study program, that God would use it to better equip me to work with language communities of Northern Cameroon in helping them to grow in their capacity to translate and use God's Word in their heart languages.



MICHAELA FEDERWITZ

Meet our new Nanny!

Michaela Federwitz is the oldest child of LBT missionaries Rev David and Valerie Federwitz. She has volunteered to serve with us for one year starting in late-July or early-August. She grew up in west Africa, desires to serve the Lord as a missionary, and – most importantly for this role – loves working with children!

Please consider contributing to her fundraising goal. She has \$5000 USD left to raise as I write this letter and you can make gifts for her effort through the LBTC office or website.

Please also pray for her as she prepares to come; that God will provide for her every need and prepare her in every way for her time of service with us.

One of the best parts of working on a project as part of a group is the celebration at the end when the work is all done. Imagine the joy of those gathered to dedicate the newly built temple in 1 Kings 8. Or the elation of those gathered with Ezra when they returned from exile and rebuilt the temple (Ezra 6) or of those gathered after the completion of the wall under Nehemiah's leadership (Nehemiah 8). We pray that you will experience similar joy and elation *along with Nizaa and Dowayo partners* in the years to come after we have all worked together to complete these translation projects.

Rev. Mike, Kara, Tobias, Gideon, Gloria and Jubilee Kuhn



Pastor Touka explaining the importance of community organization to a handful of Nizaa Christians in Ngaoundéré