



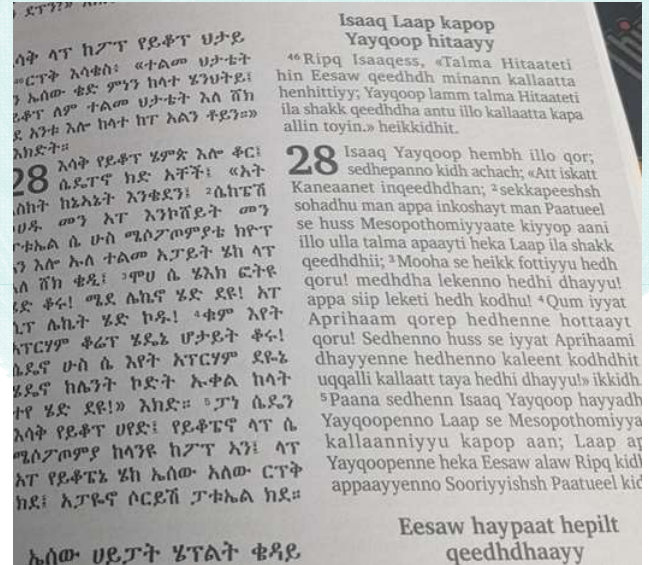
Scripture Engagement

What is the ultimate goal of Bible translation work? We say that our goal is to “put God’s Word in their hands” — but after that comes the even more important step of getting the Word into people’s hearts, to change hearts and lives by the Gospel of Jesus through the power of the Holy Spirit. We call this process “Scripture Engagement.”

In one sense, “Scripture Engagement” is the work of every pastor in every church. But this work takes on special meaning in a context where people have not had the Bible in their language before.

Pastors may need help figuring out the best way to prepare sermons and Bible classes in a different language. People who have been using someone else’s Bible for their entire lives — a Bible written in another language — may need time to adjust to hearing God speak in the same language their parents speak. Change is never easy.

And there may just be practical considerations, like how to physically distribute the new Bibles across a wide language area, or which alphabet to use, or how to teach people to read, or whether it’s better to print the Gospel of Luke or record it on a phone app (or both!).



Genesis 28 in the Zayse language, written in Ethiopic and Latin script

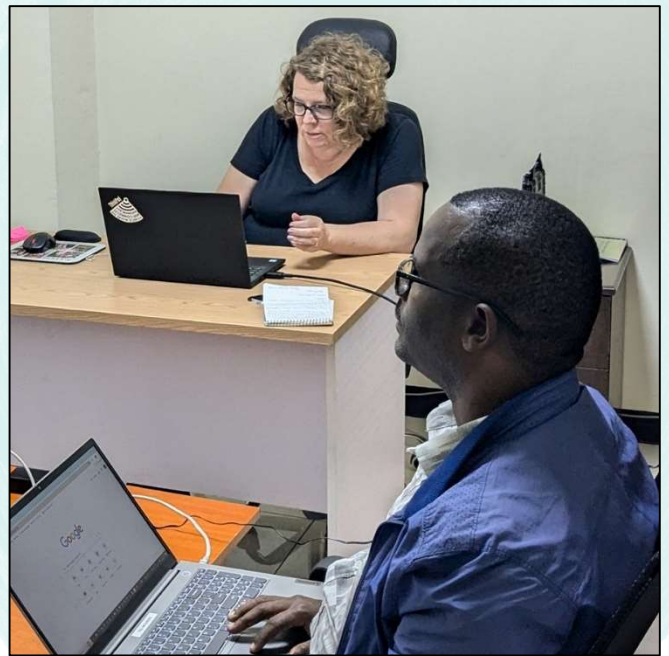
There is no one right answer, no silver bullet, that will work for every project everywhere. We have been visiting language groups to listen to the community, ask questions, and help plan how Scripture Engagement can be increased.



Asking questions and listening to the Dirasha translators and community leaders

The questions that arise from this work are fascinating. Here are some examples:

- A project is having trouble getting books to remote villages. There is a broken-down truck parked by their office. Could that be repaired and used to transport Bibles?
- A community really likes to sing, but all their church music uses the language and style of a different group. Can local musicians be empowered to write and record songs using local-language Scripture?
- The community was excited when the translation started three years ago, but so far they haven't seen any progress and are starting to lose hope. Can the translation team re-ignite excitement by publishing a single Gospel book and helping churches include it in their Sunday services?



Qes (Pastor) Alemu is the National Coordinator for Scripture Engagement in Mekane Yesus church.



Hilina (right), a 2024 graduate from the Bible Translation program, learning about Scripture Engagement work in Asosa from Sudi, one of the South Gumuz translators

- Older people in the community read Ethiopic script well, but younger people can only read Latin script. Can books of the Bible be printed with both scripts side-by-side?
- People want to listen to audio Bibles, but most don't have access to a smartphone or reliable internet. What other ways are there to distribute Scripture recordings?
- The project recently published Genesis. Would a program of community reading and Bible study groups be a good idea?
- The project isn't sure how best to get the Word into people's homes. Would people enjoy a wall calendar with a Bible verse in the local language for each month? What about a "verse of the day" from the translation project's Facebook page?

PRAYER REQUESTS

- That the South Gumuz, Zayse, and Dirasha communities would deeply engage with mother-tongue Scripture in a meaningful way
- For the fall cohort of BT students taking Semantics from Chris
- For our family, especially Sean

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*Then I saw another angel flying in midair, and he had the eternal gospel to **proclaim** to those who live on the earth—to **every nation, tribe, language and people.***

—Revelation 14:6