

MAY 2025

Tiffany in Tanzania

FAITHFULLY
SERVING THE
DATOGA

"My heart's desire and prayer to God for them is that they may be saved..." | ROMANS 10



Wapendwa katika Kristo,
(Beloved in Christ,)

Happy Easter! Jesus is risen! The work is going well in Tanzania and we have made some significant leaps of progress since my last update.

In the beginning of March we did a week long language survey with the Taturu. *(Picture below)* The survey was short but successful – we visited around 8 villages and collected a lot of data that will continued to be analyzed over the next several months. Our main goal was to learn dialect boundaries - geographically and linguistically - and where the Taturu dialects intersect. We learned that there are three major dialects: Barabayiiga, Buraadiiga, and Tsimajeega. There are other dialects as well, but those appear to be mutually understood by those who speak one of the three major dialects mentioned above. This is great news, because it gives us a better idea of how to move forward in our translation program. We will definitely need to make sure to have representatives from all 3 dialects on our advisory committee so that all voices of the Taturu are heard during decision making. For now, we are just focusing on translating some Bible stories into the Buraadiiga dialect, since it is one of the majority groups of Taturu and spoken widely throughout Shinyanga region.

In late March, we had our first OBS workshop! The first week was for training the facilitators/coaches of the workshop. This was very encouraging since one of our goals is to create sustainability in the projects and to train local men and women to lead trainings so that they are not dependent on missionaries to do it. The next two weeks were the official storytelling workshop with five language groups. **Taturu and two other groups experienced translating Scripture into their language for the first time during this workshop!** Everyone learned four stories: Jesus calms the storm, Jesus heals the demon-possessed man, Jesus heals the sick woman, and Jesus heals Jairus' daughter. All these stories can be found in Mark chapters 4-5. *(More on page 2)*

Finally, in the beginning of April my colleague Mpoki and I traveled to Ethiopia for one week to get further training in our program management tool, Rev79. This is a tool we use for reporting and program planning in LBT. Mpoki is our new



STAY IN TOUCH

EMAIL: TIFFANY.SMITH@LBT.ORG

WHATSAPP: +1 515-493-6566

TEXT: 515-493-4942

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2025 Funding Goal: 45%



Culture Corner: Give and Receive

During our OBS workshop, one of our Tanzanian colleagues led an exercise where you hold out your hands to the person standing next to you. One hand facing up and one facing down. This was an illustration of receiving and giving, an important part of Tanzanian culture. When you receive something, you should generously give back. Even when you are a guest at someone's house or church, it is polite to stand in front and say a word of thanks and blessing. This is because you have received their hospitality, however big or small, so now it is your turn to give something back to them. We learned many things at our OBS workshop, so now it is time to go and give what we learned to others. The best example of this is telling the stories to those who need to hear them! Even Jesus said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." (Acts 20:35)

(Photo is two of the storytellers recreating the give-receive illustration)



Prayers and Praise

Philippians 4:6-7

Pray: For my health. After all the busyness and traveling my body was feeling extra tired.

Praise: For a busy, but successful 1st quarter, especially the Taturu language survey and the OBS workshop!

Pray: For the final details of my vehicle to be finished soon so that it can arrive this month.

Praise: For my missionary cohort here in Shinyanga who are always there for me!

Program manager in Tanzania. He oversees all of the projects in Mwanza region like the Kerewe, Kara, and Sumbwa language projects. He has been an amazing asset to our team here, and has such a passion and drive for getting the work done. It was so much fun going to Ethiopia with him and having some team bonding. It was also his first time on an airplane, so I'm honored that I got to be there for this momentous occasion! I loved that one of the first things he said after looking out the cabin window on our flight to Ethiopia was,

"Thanks be to God, and thanks to LBT for this incredible opportunity!"

We can't wait to see how he grows in this new role!



(L) Me and Mpoki writing out our quarterly program plans at the training in Ethiopia.

(R) Elkanah referring to his Sukuma Bible while learning a new story at the OBS workshop.



Storytelling is an amazing way to translate Scripture! It is not a substitute for translating an actual Bible – the process is similar but the end product is a little different – but it is an amazing way to do evangelism and really helps the translator/storyteller to think deeply about the story and what it means. We had five groups at our workshop: Taturu, Sukuma, Kerewe, Kara, and Sumbwa. Each group sent at least three storytellers, so we had a good sized group to work with.

These stories are meant to touch our lives. Every day we started with a personal story from one of the participants that had the same theme as the Bible story we were going to learn that day. I think this really helped everyone to connect to the stories we learned. We heard some pretty amazing testimonies and stories about demon possession on the day when we learned the story of the Gerasene man from Mark chapter 5!

One of the most memorable moments was when a man from the Sukuma group named Elkanah stood up after hearing the story of the demon-possessed man and said to us, ***"This is my story."*** He then told us that he used to be a witchdoctor in his village. After becoming Christian, he is now studying theology to become a pastor. He said that he wants to use storytelling in his sermons instead of just reading the text. Amazing!

Another highlight was when a Taturu woman named Ester said to us during the training, ***"I thought I knew these stories, but they were just on the paper. Now it's like they are leaping off the page!"*** This was our goal, God be praised!



(L) Ester, one of the Taturu storytellers, telling a vivid story of the demon-possessed man from Mark 5 (R) Pastor Frank Mdingi leading a session at the OBS workshop.

