

God Speaks Every Language

Let Them Know



Transforming Lives Through Bible Translation

2025 ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT





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*Reaching every language with at least a portion of Scripture will happen **only once in history.***

Our generation has the opportunity to witness it and to help carry it forward.

REV. DR. RICH RUDOWSKE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR | CEO

Dear Partner in the Gospel,

We are living in a moment the Church has prayed for across generations. For centuries, faithful believers have longed for the day when every language community could finally hear God speak through His Word in the language they understand best. By God's grace, that day is now within reach.

A global movement is forming around an audacious goal: by **2033**, the Christian Church aims to see some portion of Scripture available in **every language on earth**. This will happen only once in history. Our generation has the opportunity to witness it and to help carry it forward.

Lutheran Bible Translators exists to remove barriers so people can access and engage with Scripture in the language of the heart. When God's Word becomes accessible, lives change, families are strengthened, and communities transform. This work is foundational. No ministry can take deep root without access to God's Word.

In 2025, we focused on strengthening systems and clarifying direction so we are prepared for what comes next. Now we are entering a pivotal year of implementation—maintaining excellence in first-time Bible translation, building global Lutheran church capacity, supporting multilingual ministry here in the United States, and cultivating sustainable generosity that fuels long-term mission impact.

Prayer remains our strategy, because this work belongs to God. In a moment like this, prayer is not passive - it is how we take our seat at the table of what God is doing among the nations.

Your partnership made a tangible difference this year. Because you answered the call, our Field Programs supported **78 active programs, providing additional support through education and partnerships to reach 130 language communities**. Two milestone publications were supported as they crossed the finish line: the **Komba Full Bible** in Ghana and the **Khwedam Panoramic** in Botswana. God be praised - communities are receiving Scripture for the very first time.

The opportunity before us is immense. Language communities are still waiting. Leaders are ready to be equipped. Translations are nearing completion. If not now, then when? If not us, then who?

I invite you—your congregation, your school, your family—to take part. When you pray, give, or advocate, you are not simply supporting an organization. You are helping a child of God hear Him say, through His Word, in their own language: I see you. I love you. I speak your language.

Thank you for joining us at the table.



In Christ,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Rich Rudowske".

Rich Rudowske
Executive Director | CEO

Regional Directors Reflect

THE IMPACT MAP EXPANDS AS SCRIPTURE TAKES ROOT

Together, these reflections point to a clear pattern emerging across our work.



SARAH ESALA

Regional Director | East Africa and Pacific

“God is opening doors in Southeast Asia! Through invested time and resources, a strong foundation in national co-workers is yielding fruit in places we never planned or imagined.”



CARL GRULKE

Regional Director | Southern Africa and Ethiopia

“A year ago, communication between partners was disjointed and inconsistent. Now, thanks to a variety of local Bible translation summits, we are on the same page, working together and pooling our resources for the common good. We are exploring new partnerships and organizing ourselves to maximize the impact of the work we are doing in the language communities we serve.”



DAVID FEDERWITZ

Regional Director | Cameroon and Ghana

Director of Partnerships and Scripture Engagement

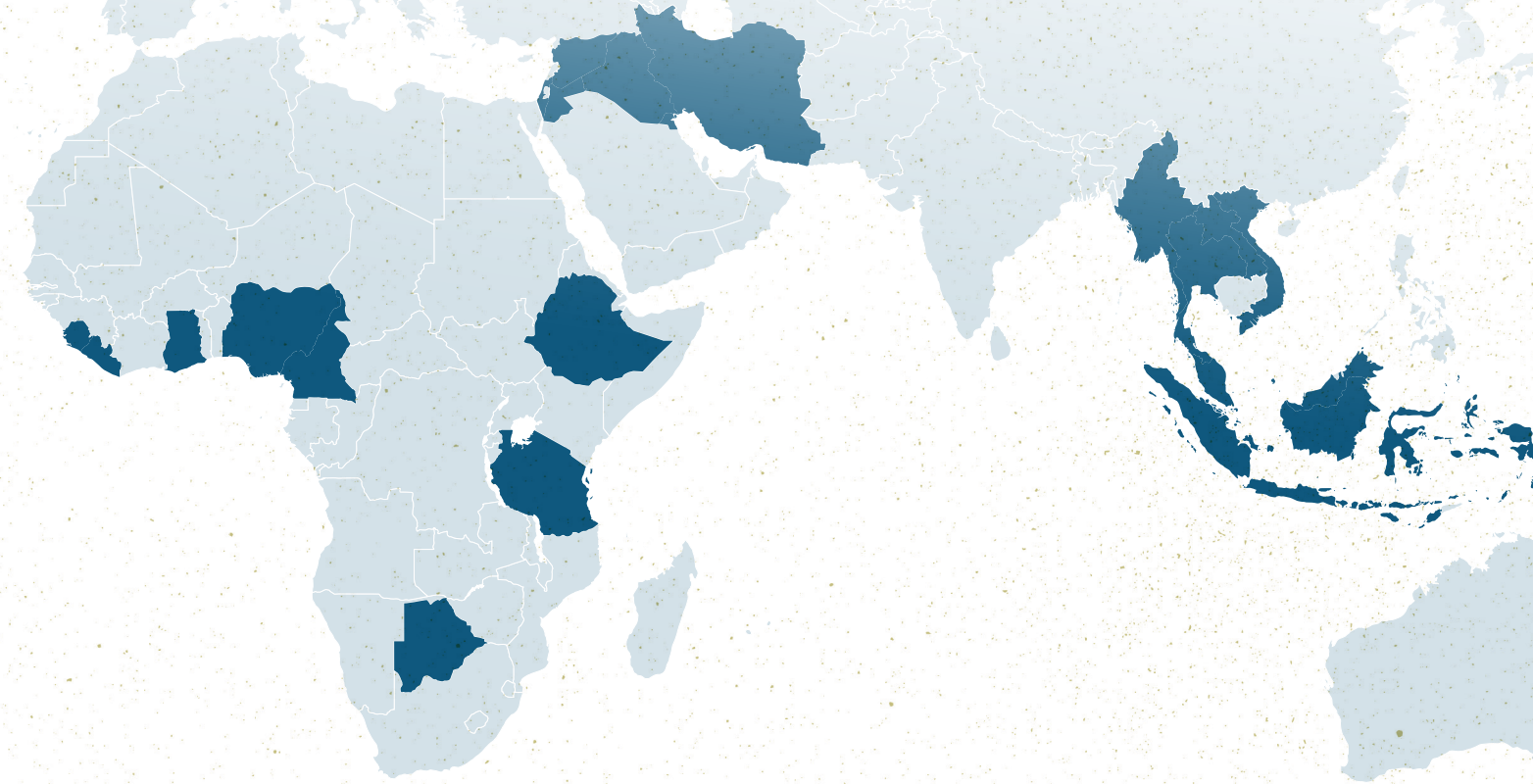
“It’s encouraging to see all the churches in the area using the Komba Bible in Ghana. Pastors tell their people, ‘Don’t bring your phones or your English Bibles to church – bring your Komba Bibles because that’s what you understand.’ This milestone represents 22 years of community investment.”



LINUS OTRONYI

Regional Director | West Africa

“With the project management training we had last year, teams now do a better job planning goals, tracking progress, and reporting on the impact of their work to their local communities – giving us hope for future impact.”



2025 Translation Progress

3,680

CHAPTERS OF SCRIPTURE
COMPLETED - ACROSS ALL
TRANSLATION PROGRAMS

2

MILESTONE PUBLICATIONS
KOMBA FULL BIBLE (GHANA)
KHWEDAM PANORAMIC (BOTSWANA)

2025 Field Programs Overview

78 PROGRAMS, 130 LANGUAGES

30+

TRANSLATION PROGRAMS

9

MISSION FUND INITIATIVES

15

SCRIPTURE ENGAGEMENT PROGRAMS

1

DOMESTIC / PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

11

CAPACITY BUILDING & COORDINATION PROGRAMS

Projects Nearing Completion:

MAAN OLD TESTAMENT (LIBERIA): 98.4%

DAN FULL BIBLE (LIBERIA): 98.5%

BANDI OLD TESTAMENT (LIBERIA): 82.4%

Projects like Dan and Maan are where focused generosity can help move Scripture from “almost there” into people’s hands.

Scripture Taking Root

OVERVIEW OF TRANSLATION & ENGAGEMENT WORK IN 2025

In 2025, teams across regions confirmed: when translation is paired with engagement, training, and local leadership, God’s Word doesn’t simply arrive — it takes root.

CAPACITY IN LIBERIA

In 2025, the Liberia Translation & Literacy Organization (LIBTRALO) assisted 16 language communities. LIBTRALO teams local leaders have coordinated literacy, and engagement efforts for over 30 years.

SOUTHEAST ASIA

In one district in Southeast Asia alone, 18 churches used video-based Sunday School curriculum with 421 children attending regularly—and teachers reported visible spiritual growth in children.

In *Shi communities, about 25 new MP3 players/SD cards were distributed, and YouTube videos received 200–300 views, with views coming from multiple countries.



ASSYRIAN

Printing for Assyrian Bibles is fully funded by domestic Assyrian churches, with 6 churches donating. Bible studies have begun accessing new translations.

CAMEROON

*Subula (Cameroon): A translator shared that when access to translation software was lost, Scripture (Romans 8:38–39) sustained him until work was restored and progress could continue.



“So shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it.”

ISAIAH 55:11 (ESV)

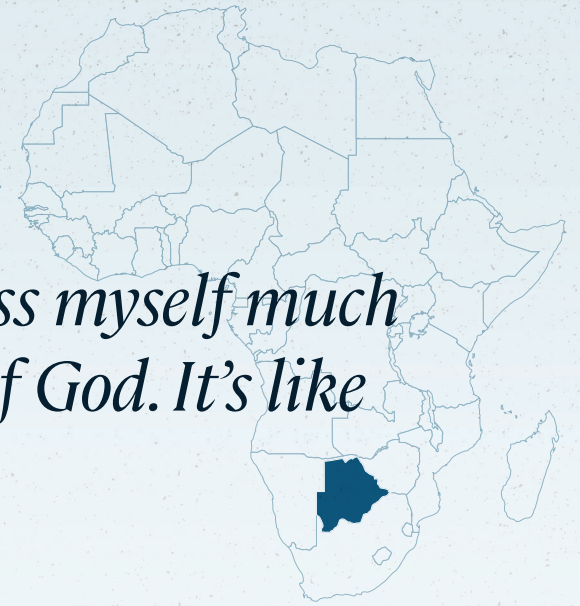
Crowds gathered in Northern Ghana to celebrate the dedication of the Komba Bible in November 2025.

A STORY OF TRANSLATION IMPACT FROM BOTSWANA

When God Speaks My Language



“*When I pray in Shekgalagari, I feel closer to God. I can express myself much better, and I feel the presence of God. It’s like speaking to Him face to face.*”



For years, Stella prayed using words that were not her own. She understood them, but not deeply. As a deaconess in her congregation in Maun, Botswana, she longed to speak to God with the same clarity and intimacy she experienced in everyday life.

That changed when the Shekgalagari New Testament, dedicated on March 9, 2024, was placed into the hands of her community.

“I thank God that our language is now written,” Stella says. “Before, people said Shekgalagari was too difficult. But now I can read, and I can pray.”

This story comes one year after the New Testament became available. For Stella, prayer in Shekgalagari is about knowing that God both hears and knows her language. It has given her the freedom to pray fully, about all things, in the words that come most naturally to her heart.

Shekgalagari Translation Progress: Full Bible project tracked at **25.6% complete**, with Old Testament drafting now underway. In December 2025, the team began accuracy checking their first draft of Jonah, a draft they had begun earlier in the year.

Today, Scripture in Shekgalagari is woven into the life of her church. Youth are using the New Testament. God’s Word is spoken and sung in worship and at funerals - in the language of the people. And the work continues: the Shekgalagari translation team is now actively translating the Old Testament, so future generations can engage the whole of Scripture in their heart language.

“When I pray in Shekgalagari,” Stella shares, “I feel closer to God. I can express myself much better, and I feel the presence of God. It’s like speaking to Him face to face.”



These verses are part of everyday life and live in prayers like Stella’s, spoken fully and freely to God.



[LBT.org/stella](https://lbt.org/stella)



A STORY OF STRATEGIC IMPACT FROM TANZANIA

Coordinating the Work Together

Bishop Oscar Lema and Church-Led Bible Translation in Tanzania

Bible translation in Tanzania is being shaped by a clear conviction: the work belongs to the church.

For Bishop Oscar Lema, leader of the East of Lake Victoria Diocese of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania, Scripture in heart languages is essential for faithful ministry. Having grown up hearing God’s Word in his own mother tongue, he understands how deeply language shapes faith and understanding.

Since 2016, the church has worked alongside Lutheran Bible Translators to support Bible translation in Kerewe and neighboring language communities. What began as one translation has grown into church-led coordination across multiple programs and is expanding throughout the country.

Pastors, translators, and church leaders plan and work collaboratively, so Scripture is not only translated, but actively used in worship, teaching, and family life. As translation expands into additional languages, this integrated approach is strengthening local leadership and building long-term capacity. By coordinating the work, leaders in Tanzania help ensure Scripture continues to be used in worship, teaching, and family life for generations.

Tanzania: Coordinated Bible Ministry Programs are coordinated through local church leadership, **using our integrated approach** to support long-term impact.

KEREWE FULL BIBLE TRANSLATION

26.2%

COMPLETE



A STORY OF CAPACITY BUILDING FROM PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Powering the Work Where the Road Ends

In Papua New Guinea, Bible translation often takes place far from roads, power grids, or reliable infrastructure. In the remote Waria River region, translators from the Suena, Zia, and Yekora language communities rely on essential tools like Paratext—but until recently, powering those tools was a daily challenge.

Progress was limited not by commitment or skill, but by access to power.

That changed on November 6, 2025, when solar panels and laptops were installed and dedicated for translation work. These systems, designed by engineers who understand the village’s needs, now provide reliable electricity - powering laptops, lights, and phones wherever translators are working.

With consistent power, teams can work regularly, share drafts, and move Scripture through

the translation process more efficiently. By strengthening infrastructure and technology, translation in Papua New Guinea can remain consistent and continue without interruption.

PNG TRANSLATION PROGRESS

(selected Waria cluster projects)

44.8%

YEKORA

19.7%

SUENA

17.8%

ZIA



Solar-powered systems installed and dedicated on November 6, 2025, enable consistent work by local translation teams in remote communities.

More from 2025

SEMINARIES AND COLLEGES AS MULTIPLIERS

In 2025, theological education remained one of the most powerful multipliers of Bible translation. Through Mekane Yesus Seminary (MYS) in Ethiopia and the Theological College of Northern Nigeria (TCNN), leaders in training for ministry are connected to 100 distinct languages across Africa - 28 through MYS and 72 through TCNN.

At TCNN, this work is strengthened by leaders like Rev. Kierien Ekpong Ayugha, an ordained Lutheran pastor, Bible Translation Consultant-in-training, and lecturer in linguistics and Bible translation. At MYS, instructors such as Dr. Chris Pluger equip students with translation tools, linguistic training, and theological grounding - then send them back to serve their own language communities.

Rather than advancing one project at a time, these seminaries equip people who expand the reach of Bible translation across regions, building church-led capacity that endures.



RESOURCES FOR OUR CHURCH AND SCHOOL PARTNERS

In 2025, Lutheran Bible Translators expanded resources designed for churches and Lutheran schools, helping students and congregations engage the mission of Bible translation in age-appropriate ways. Through Bible Translation Chapels, schools received ready-to-use chapel plans, classroom activities, and videos that introduce students to global Bible translation through real stories and people.

These month-long mission focuses were designed for K-8 settings, allowing teachers and chapel leaders to integrate Scripture, Geography, and mission awareness across subjects. Without adding another program, these resources fit naturally into existing school rhythms and invite students to see how God's Word reaches people in every language.

By equipping schools with practical, theologically grounded tools, Bible translation became tangible and relational, shaping how the next generation understands Scripture, mission, and the global church.

DIGNITY AND IDENTITY THROUGH LANGUAGE

Some of the most powerful moments in 2025 were quiet ones. In Tanzania, a pastor received Scripture in his heart language and kissed the text. In Ethiopia, women asked when additional books, like Esther, would be translated. Youth gathered excitedly around newly available Scripture portions.

When Scripture is translated into a community's own language, it declares that their voice matters and their culture is worth preserving.

Through translation, communities hear God speak in the language of their homes, their prayers, and their hearts.

COLLABORATION THAT SOLVES REAL PROBLEMS

In remote regions, access, not willingness, was the limiting factor. Partnerships addressed that reality directly.

Through collaboration with JAARS, pilot training reduced days of travel to hours, enabling staff and supplies to reach isolated communities more efficiently. Work alongside Faith Comes By Hearing supported audio Scripture distribution where print alone could not reach people. Technical collaboration with SIL strengthened infrastructure and training systems that local teams rely on daily.

Each partnership brought distinct expertise in aviation, audio technology, and linguistic support. Shared goals allowed each partner to remove barriers the others could not.

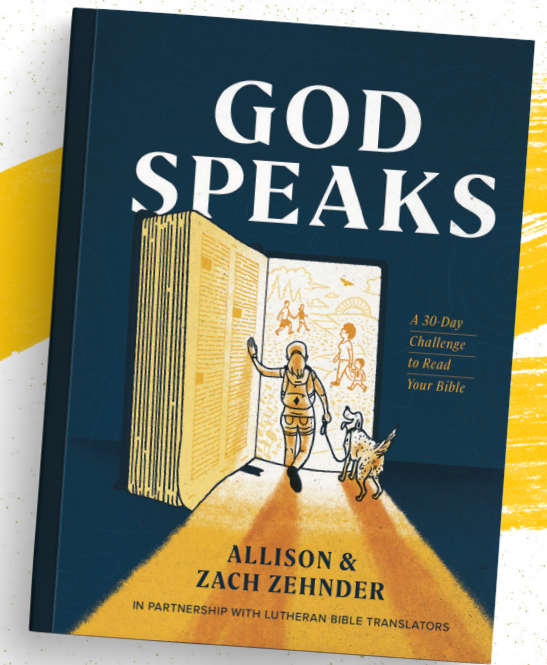
The result was translation work that moved faster, reached farther, and remained rooted in local leadership.

SCRIPTURE ENGAGEMENT BEYOND THE PAGE

In Tanzania, pastors preached from newly translated portions. In Ethiopia, Talking Bibles were distributed to the Zayse language community, reaching listeners where literacy is limited. In Liberia, teams developed supplementary materials—introductions, footnotes, and glossaries—to help readers engage Scripture accurately.

These efforts reflect a shared conviction: translation is a beginning, not a finish line. Scripture was heard aloud in worship, discussed in Bible studies, sung in choirs, and shared within families.

Using this integrated approach, communities moved from access to understanding, allowing God's Word to shape faith, identity, and daily life.



GOD SPEAKS: A 30-DAY CHALLENGE

In 2025, Lutheran Bible Translators introduced God Speaks: A 30-Day Challenge to Read Your Bible, a church-wide devotional experience rooted in 2 Timothy 3:16-17. Developed with pastors, teachers, and small-group leaders in mind, the challenge invites individuals, families, and congregations to engage Scripture daily—together.

The resource includes a 30-day devotional book, sermon outlines, small-group discussion guides, children and youth materials, and video teaching series—making it easy for churches to participate regardless of size. More than a devotional, God Speaks connects local Scripture engagement with the global mission of Bible translation, helping churches see how God's Word is living and active around the world.

By inviting congregations to listen together, God Speaks strengthened habits of Scripture reading while renewing confidence that God still speaks—clearly and faithfully—through His Word.

www.LBT.org/GodSpeaks

What 2025 Taught Us

As we reviewed field reports and reflected on impact stories, three themes emerged.

1

WHAT ACCELERATES SCRIPTURE ACCESS

Scripture shared in formats people already use catalyzes accessibility.

- Audio and digital Scripture consistently reached non-literate and first-access communities faster than print alone.

2

WHAT MULTIPLIES SCRIPTURE USE

Churches equipped with practical, ready-to-use engagement tools immediately influence individuals and families.

- Training that provided tangible resources (curriculum, audio, discussion guides) led to immediate adoption.

3

WHAT MAKES THE WORK ENDURE

Local community ownership increased - spiritually, organizationally, and financially.

- In the Assyrian community, for example, six churches fully funded Scripture printing, and congregations are already using new translations in Bible studies.



Generosity Report

Dear faithful partners,

Thank you for the trust you place in Lutheran Bible Translators. Your generosity is not only a gift, but also a calling lived out. The trust you place in our organization is a responsibility we take seriously.

As Chief Financial Officer, my role is one of stewardship: ensuring that the resources entrusted to this ministry are managed with care, integrity, and transparency. In 2025, more than 80% of giving directly supported ministry programs, supporting translation work, Scripture use, and local leadership. The remaining portion sustains the people, systems, and accountability required to carry out this global work faithfully and for the long term.

Our ECFA standing and external audits provide accountability and transparency, so LBT's ministry may remain worthy of your confidence. These disciplines allow us to serve both wisely and boldly, supporting the work God has placed before us today, while preparing for what lies ahead.

Thank you for walking alongside us on this shared mission. It is an honor to steward this mission together, trusting that God will continue to accomplish His purposes through His Word.



In Christ,

Angela Tayloe

Angela Tayloe
Chief Financial Officer
Lutheran Bible Translators

*Financials shared are preliminary and unaudited.

\$8.1M

GOD PROVIDED

DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS

81%

FIELD PROGRAMS

19%

ADMINISTRATON

“Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found faithful.”

1 CORINTHIANS 4:2

Leadership

LEAD TEAM



Rich Rudowkse
Executive Director | CEO



Paul Federwitz
Chief Programs Officer



Seth Hinz
Chief Marketing Officer



Alyssa Petty
Chief Development Officer



Melissa Schweigert
Chief Administration Officer



Matt Kistler
Chief Strategy Officer

FIELD LEADERSHIP

Sarah Esala
Regional Director
East Africa and Pacific

Linus Otronyi
Regional Director
West Africa

Carl Grulke
Regional Director
Southern Africa and Ethiopia

David Federwitz
Director of Partnerships and
Scripture Engagement

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We're living in a once-in-history moment for the Church.

Thank you for taking a seat at the table.

Throughout this report, you've seen what happens when God's Word is placed into the hands - and hearts - of people in their own language. For generations, this was the prayer of the Church. Today, by God's grace, it is becoming a lived reality.

The story doesn't end here, and it isn't one we finish alone.



JOIN US IN PRAYER FOR 2026

Prayer remains the foundation of this work. In this moment, prayer is not a passive response, it is how we take our seat at the table of what God is doing among the nations.



INVEST IN TRANSLATION PROGRAMS

Several Bible translation projects are nearing completion. At this stage, your generosity moves Scripture from drafts and reviews into printed, shared, and celebrated texts.



INVEST IN LONG-TERM CAPACITY

In many places, translation has grown into something more, not just for one community, but for the global Church. By investing in training, literacy, and leadership development, you help ensure Scripture continues to be read, taught, and shared long after a single project is complete.

As you prayerfully consider your next step, we'd be glad to visit with you and talk through any questions you may have. Reach out to advancement@lbt.org or call **660-371-1027** to set up a conversation—online or in person.

