

03 Release Early, Revise Often – Walkthrough

(White board; slide deck – 15 to 30 min.)

Intro: In this session we are going to talk about a Wycliffe Associates philosophy called **Release Early, Revise Often**. This philosophy helps determine when a translation is ready to be shared with the language community. **While we do not want to share a translation that does not meet the quality standards agreed to by the translators, we also realize that no translation is perfect. So, when should a translation be shared with the language community waiting for it?** This session is about answering that question.

Explain: Martin Luther was one of the first people to translate the Bible from Hebrew and Greek into a common language: his language was German. He published portions of his German translation and looked for the feedback of the community to be able to improve his next publication of it. Today, modern translations have committees who receive and review feedback for updates to their translation. These committees decide when to release revised editions.

The philosophy of releasing the translation early and revising it often means:

- Translators release their translation when they believe they have made it the best they can at the time. This means that they do not have to wait to finish a particular amount.
- **Read** Ecclesiastes 11:1–4. These verses talk both about being generous and about doing things now, because we do not know what the future holds. If the sower waits for perfect weather, he will never sow. In the same way, if translators wait to release their work until it's perfect, a translation will never be achieved.

Ask: Why might translators be hesitant to do this? What are some concerns you have? How might you address these concerns?

- As the translation is used, the translators will get feedback for corrections, improvements, and updates. The local church will need to determine when and how to make those changes and release the work again. They should keep in mind that language changes over time, making revisions necessary.

Ask: What kinds of changes might need to be made? How might the translation team and the Church encourage the language community to give feedback?

- The translation team and local church may want to choose a group of people from different denominations to receive the feedback and determine how often to make updates. By planning ahead, they will not be surprised and overwhelmed when changes need to be made.

Ask: What could happen to the translation if the team does not release early?

- Share that, in the past, translations have taken so long to reach the people who need them that changes in language mean that the translation already needs to be revised.

Confirm: The idea of releasing early can be daunting because translators often want their work to be perfect before it is released. Knowing ahead of time that past translators released their work early so that they could get feedback will help these translators to overcome their hesitancy and reassure them that letting people read their translation is a positive step for the local church.