

Broadcast 24 – Printing & Recording Logistics

OLIVER:

Hello! This is Oliver. I'm here with Mara. We have spent several months together sharing the progress of our mother-tongue Bible translation. Throughout that time, we discussed many ideas to help you with Bible translation.

MARA:

As we shared last week, our New Testament translation is complete! Yes, we drafted and checked 27 books! Which means this will be our last program with you!

OLIVER:

I know. I have enjoyed our times talking together as we went through the logistics, problems, and joys of translating out New Testament! It has taken us almost a year to complete. Think about it. Not very long ago, we did not even have a single verse in our mother tongue language. We relied on the pastor to teach us what the national language Bible said.

MARA:

It seems like another life! Remember how concerned we were for our own mother and for your mother-in-law because they do not read in the national language. We knew the national language Bible could not communicate to them the great love of God as well as our language could. Many of the people of their generation were missing out on so much of God's precious message.

OLIVER:

It is amazing to think of how much God has done for us this year. As you know, we printed and distributed portions of the translation so that people could use it right away. This has also provided opportunity for us to get feedback.

MARA:

Also, Pastor Fin uses portions of what is already translated for teaching in church. But now we want to get all the books of the New Testament published as one volume so that families can have copies in their home.

OLIVER:

And we are planning a ceremony to celebrate the completion of this great task. Our team has worked hard and remained faithful to this work and we want to honor the team. But most importantly we want to honor God and thank Him for the miracle He has worked to provide us with His word in our language.

MARA:

Today, we want to talk about the process of completing the project, getting it published, and distributing it. We also want to share some of the challenges we faced so that maybe it will help you in preparing for your completion.

OLIVER:

A few months ago, we talked about the technology and resources that are available to help teams translate Scripture into their language. In that broadcast, we also discussed some of the challenges with posting and publishing and we talked about our own plan for publishing our completed Scripture.

MARA:

We shared these plans:

Print the text as a completed New Testament. Request that our New Testament be posted on Bibleineverylanguage.org so that others can access it and print it for their own use. Create an audio file of the whole New Testament that people can listen to on their smart phones.

OLIVER:

These are the goals we worked toward during the past several months as we worked on the translation. We started to raise funds for the printing cost of the New Testament about three months ago.

MARA:

The church in our village has responded enthusiastically and given generously toward the fund. Some also took this fundraiser to other villages and encouraged churches in those villages to give toward the printing costs. Our hope is to raise enough funds to provide free copies of the New Testament to everyone on the translation team and at least 5 for each church in all the villages. We hope that we can raise enough funds to supplement the cost of each book as well. We want to make owning a Bible affordable. The price for each Bible is only to cover the cost to print the Bible. No one will make money on the sales.

OLIVER:

Besides raising funds, we also researched the cost and materials needed for printing our New Testaments. One thing we spent time considering is what format and materials should be used so that people in the community will recognize it as a Bible.

MARA:

I remember the story you told me from another translator in a different location. He said that in their region they were trying to get the covers in black or green because no other cover would be proper and appropriate for a sacred book. In our community the color of the cover does not matter. But then I thought about how important it is to our people that the Scripture is printed in two columns and I realized that each culture probably has unique expectations for what printed Scripture should look like.

OLIVER:

We want to be culturally sensitive and appropriate because we want this Scripture to be accepted and read by the people. The columns, the cover, the weight of the paper is important, not because they affect the meaning of the message, but because they affect the acceptance of the message. None of them make what we translated more sacred, but they can determine if people will receive the Word as sacred.

MARA:

Our translation team has enjoyed discussing and planning for the correct format and presentation of our Scripture.

OLIVER:

We also spent many hours proofreading the manuscript for final grammar and punctuation edits.

MARA:

Since we decided to print it using a local printing company, we had to use the BTT USFM convertor to convert it to a Word file. Then we had help from a translator's brother who owns a computer shop to format it with columns.

Now it is in a format that is ready to print. We even contracted a print shop in town for the initial printing. Right now, we can only afford to print about 50 copies, but we are hoping to raise enough money to print a lot more.

OLIVER:

We are planning a celebration in our village for the dedication of the New Testament. This will be the biggest celebration! We had a few smaller celebrations for individual books, but this is for the entire New Testament! We set a date for that and we plan to have as many copies as possible printed for distribution.

MARA:

We hope other language communities who are also working on their own translations will join our New Testament dedication. We think it will be an encouragement to everyone.

OLIVER:

That's right. We invited members from three churches of different language communities. Pastor Fin and two of the elders are planning the preaching. We also have a singing group that will do special music and lead us in worship.

MARA:

We are planning a big meal for all who attend. It is going to be a real festival! We want it to be very special because we want everyone to know how important this book is. We invited non-believers to join us because we hope this will be a testimony to them of who God is.

OLIVER:

Several of our church members are planning to bring their non-believing relatives. One lady I talked to says she feels certain that when her brother and his family hear the message of God's love in their own language, they will want to believe in Jesus.

MARA:

I know that has happened in other villages! I hope we see the same thing happen here. Our translation team has taken a lot of the responsibility for planning and many of us have unbelieving relatives. We all are praying for this to bring revival to our community.

OLIVER:

Let's talk about the process of getting our New Testament posted on bibleineverylanguage.org.

MARA:

That has probably been the easiest of the three ways we chose to make our Scripture accessible. Since our typist had put all our translations into BTTWriter, they were already in the correct format to request a posting. We sent a request for posting to the manager of the site.

OLIVER:

Our request was processed in about a week and it is already available on the site. Anyone with access to the internet can easily read it online, download it, and print it on their own.

MARA:

The final goal our team set was to create an audio recording of the completed New Testament. We have not finished yet, but we hope to have it complete before the dedication in a few weeks.

OLIVER:

Our team had to find someone with a good recording voice and who could read the passages smoothly. We wanted one person to read the whole thing, but it is a lot of work and we were not sure we could find someone with the time to do the whole New Testament. We have realized that it would be fine if several people do the recordings.

MARA:

We waited until we completed the New Testament to start the recording. It would have been smart to create audio files as soon as we had a book completed. That way we would not have so many hours of recording left to do now!

OLIVER:

Yes, we realized it probably would have worked better to do them right along with the translation. Since we did not do it that way and could not find a person who could do the entire New Testament, we agreed to find three male voices to read the whole thing. One voice will do all the gospels. One will do the epistles. And the third will do Revelation and Acts.

MARA:

We had several people come to an audition that we held after church one Sunday. We explained the process and showed them how BTTRecorder works. Then we had each person read a portion of Scripture while one of our team members recorded him. From that we chose the three men whose voices recorded well and could read the best. All are young men who work during the day, so they come together in the evenings to work on recording.

OLIVER:

In this way we completed the recording of almost two thirds of the New Testament. We created mp3 files of each book and will combine it in one folder that can be loaded onto a smart phone. We hope this will be useful for those who do not read well or who prefer the convenience of listening.

MARA:

So far, everyone in the village is very eager about the publishing of our New Testament. Even those who are not believers commented how significant it is for us to have an important book in our own language.

One important issue for us is getting the Scripture to the people as soon as possible. We have worked for almost a year and we are so excited for our community to have access to all the New Testament at once, instead of only the small portions we were printing and sharing.

OLIVER:

Yes. We heard stories of completed translations that take years to get printed and distributed because the high cost of publishing. We are so thankful for the simple ways our Scripture can be accessed and used right away. And even though it does cost money to get printed copies, it is far less than the standard costs of publishing houses. And it won't take nearly so much time.

OLIVER:

We hope you were encouraged to hear our plans and how we worked to solve some of the challenges for publishing. We know others will have different challenges and choose different pathways for publishing. Remember that the primary goal is to make it accessible to the people of your language as soon as you can!

Thank you to all of you who have listened to us as we have worked through the joys, discouraging times, logistics, and questions as we have journeyed through this process. We know the Lord has been with us as we faced each question and celebrated with us as we accomplished this amazing task. God bless each of you as you continue or even start your Bible project. We are praying for each of you!!

If you have questions about your current project or want to start a project in your own mother-tongue language, please call or text (local country partner info) or send an email to reachingalldialects@gmail.com or radio@wycliffeassociates.org.