

Call Of **KENYA**



Bible Translation and Literacy (E.A.) Newsletter

2022 HIGHLIGHTS

The entrance of God's Word...

*Sotua ng'ejuk
te nkutuk oo-lichamus*



Bible Translation & Literacy (BTL)

Ilchamus New Testament

A NEW BEGINNING FOR THE ILCHAMUS PEOPLE



AFTER 16 YEARS OF TRANSLATION

It was the morning of Saturday, 8th October 2022 at Loitip Primary School in Marigat, Baringo County; the dedication venue of the Ilchamus New Testament. As is the custom in any African setting when people are preparing to receive important guests; a beehive of activities could be seen all around. Smoke billowed from one corner of the venue, where food was being prepared. The Ilchamus old men were seen slaughtering a goat that would later be used as the crowning “cake” to be cut as part of the ceremony. One of the old men chopped sticks, which I was made to understand are the special forks that would be used to serve the “cake” after the cake cutting ceremony. The roads leading to the venue were busy as guests made their entrance to the event. The young children also arrived, dressed in the Ilchamus regalia fit for their age, the women were seen assembling and adorning their neck chains and the men moving around with their signature walking stick at hand.

This quickly phased out and there was a shift in the atmosphere, as shouts of praise and joy filled the air. The choirs and children came in, dancing from different directions and soon the first

procession got into the venue. This was the day that the Lord had made, a day that we had all been eagerly waiting for.

The different aspects of the journey of the translation of the Ilchamus New Testament were narrated in various speeches. BTL’s National Director, Rev. Peter Munguti took time to highlight the long journey of 16 years that this translation had taken, having been dotted with various challenges of insecurity in the region and incidences of drought and displacement that the community was at times faced with. In spite of all this, he appreciated and commended the community for making it possible to have the Bible translated into their language. In addition, he acknowledged the tireless efforts of

the translation team who had weathered through the long and winding road of translation. Rev. Dr. Robert Lang'at, Bishop of Africa Gospel Church of Kenya and who was the presiding Bishop at the dedication ceremony also took time to appreciate BTL for a work well done in providing the Scriptures. He later reminisced about a journey that he had made to the community 8 years before, saying, "In 2014, on this hill, I prayed over stones but today here stands a great school for girls on top of this Ilchamus ground overlooking Lake Baringo. As the community receives the word of God in their language today, may it become a light to their feet for a great spiritual, social and economic transformation." He stated.

At the point of the first public reading of the Ilchamus Scriptures, shouts of 'amen,' rend the air; an affirmation of the sense of belonging, setting and a new dawn for the community. The New Testament copies were also received with so much joy; some community members holding them on their chests and one key highlight was one of an Ilchamus lady who kissed her copy upon receiving it.

Professionals from the community led by Dr. Solomon Letangule appreciated the impact that the Scriptures would bring to the community. "The launch of these Scriptures is historic. The word of God

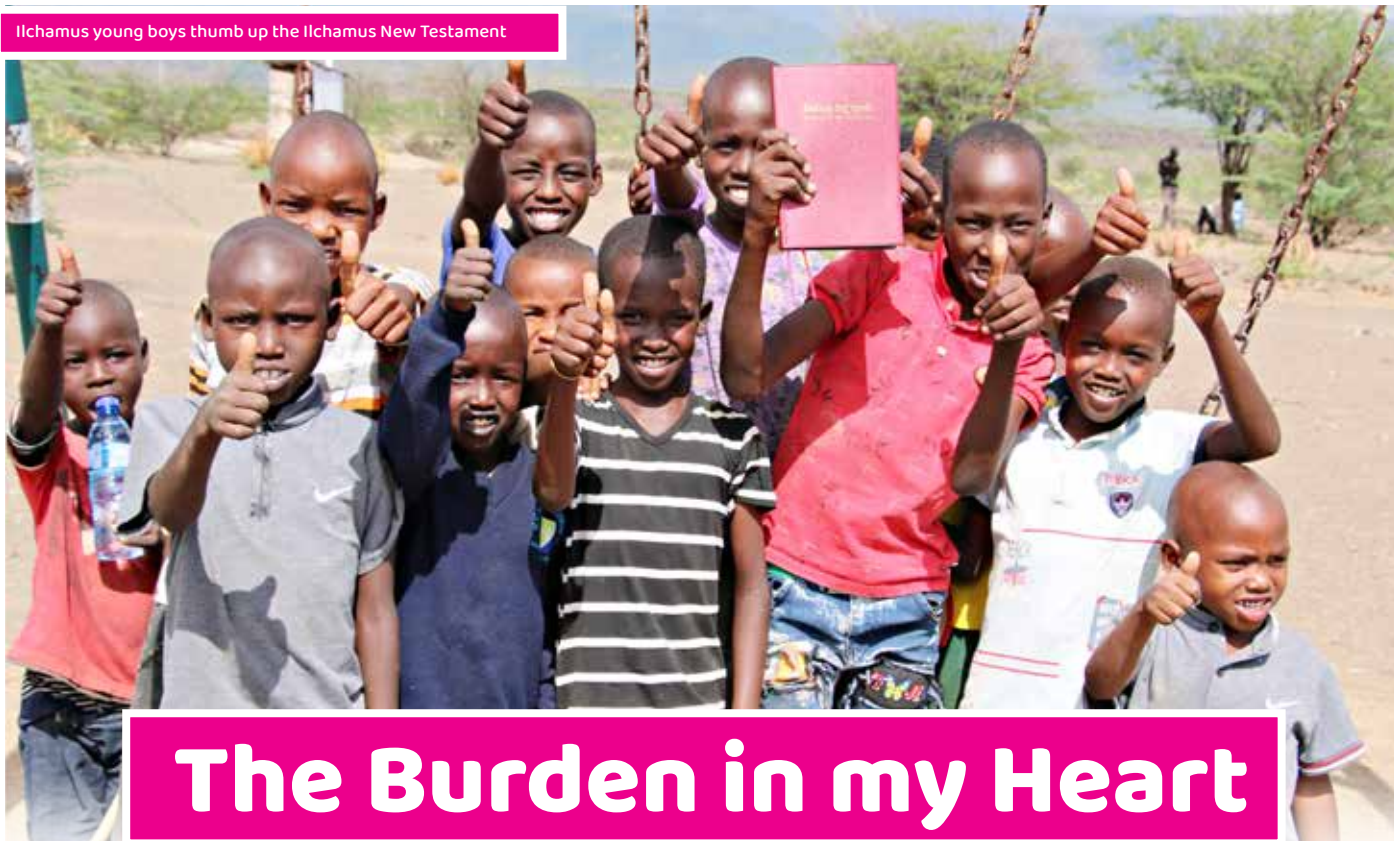
will help in preserving culture and weed out negative practices and vices that are hindering the community from prospering and progressing."

As we were about to conclude the event, torrents of rain fell from the skies. It had not rained in that region for several months and while we drove away, it became apparent that the rains had only seemingly fallen on the dedication grounds, possibly an indication of God's covenant to the Ilchamus people, as written in His word, "I will be with you always, even until the end of this age (the world)." Indeed, the entrance of God's Word was a symbol of life-giving water!

We praise God that beyond this New Testament, the Old Testament translation work which already commenced last year is continuing and we are hopeful that the Ilchamus community will soon have a complete Bible in their Language! Till then, the New Testament will continue to minister to the lives of the community. May this word of God go forth in power in the Ilchamus land.

We wish to greatly appreciate all our partners who have supported the translation of this New Testament. It would not have been possible on our own, but through your help, we can testify of God's faithfulness among the Ilchamus community. To God be the glory!

**Written by Daisy Kilel, BTL Communications Officer
and Executive Assistant to the National Director**



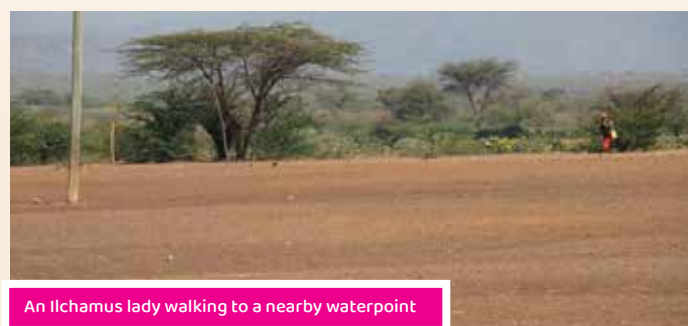
The Burden in my Heart

It's 3:10 pm at Loitip Primary School, a day before the Ilchamus New Testament launching ceremony. The school compound is silent in spite of the fact that the students are yet to break for the weekend. It is quite hot and sunny with no shade to take cover from the scorching sun. Women can be seen at a distance, carrying water jerry cans on their backs as they walk back and forth from the watering points nearby.

I am shortly distracted by the sound of heavy footsteps. I look in the direction of the footsteps and a few metres from where I stand is a young man walking in the opposite direction. We somehow look in each other's direction and I signal him to come to me.

'Hello, what's your name?' I ask him. 'I am Leshan,' he responds. 'You are not in school today?' No, the teacher asked me to patch a torn part of my school uniform'. He says.

Leshan is a standard seven pupil at a nearby primary school. He is also a Sunday school teacher at his local church. From our conversation, he has a grasp of the historic occasion that is about to take place in his community. 'I am aware of the unveiling of Scriptures in the Ilchamus language tomorrow. I was part of the publicity team, pinning the dedication posters on walls in churches and shopping centres.' He says.



An Ilchamus lady walking to a nearby waterpoint

"I use the Swahili and Maasai Bibles and not all the children read or speak the Swahili language. The intonation in the Maasai Bible doesn't sound as it should in the Ilchamus language."

Leshan is very happy that with the Scriptures that are about to be launched, his Sunday school classes are not going to be business as usual. "I take a lot of time trying to help the children to understand the Scriptures. I use the Swahili and Maasai Bibles and not all the children read or speak the Swahili language. The intonation in the Maasai Bible doesn't sound as it should in the Ilchamus language."

He pauses then breaks the silence, "my biggest prayer however, is to see God's word transform my community, especially my village." "You see that homestead there?" pointing to a homestead not too far from us, "it's the local joint for the drunkards around here." He continues. "Our village is known for alcoholism." He adds. I can sense a change in his tone as he narrates this big burden.

As we conclude our conversation, he ensures that I know where he fellowships and shepherds the young children. "The Church in front of us is where I fellowship." I excitedly take a photograph of the church.

As he walks away, I pray to God to meet the need and lift the burden of alcoholism in his heart. It touches me to know that at his age, he understands that it is a vice that is affecting his people.

Pray for Leshan and thank God for his Ministry with the children. Pray for God to deliver his village from alcoholism through the power of the Scriptures that have now been unveiled and handed to the community.

Written by Daisy Kilel

Sengwer church leaders go down on their knees to receive the Gospel of Luke, the first Scripture portion in their language during its launch on March 26 th 2022



The Perfect Gift

"Thank you Lord for granting us a new beginning today." Rev. Kiplelon prayed. "We have received our healing through the Word brought to us in our language, and we are going to heaven," he continued.

On that eventful day on March 26, 2022, Rev. Kiplelon, the Sengwer Church leaders and the community came out in large numbers to receive the Gospel of Luke, the first Scripture portion to be translated in their language.

This dedication was one of a kind; the joyous celebrations witnessed in the large crowd which had gathered made it appear more like a New Testament dedication, not just for one Scripture portion. The crowd was so large that many attendants sat across the fence; all the seats were fully occupied. This was arguably understandable given the community's long wait and sacrifice when in the year 2006 a survey was carried out in the community to establish the level of mutual intelligibility between the Marakwet and Sengwer languages. The survey revealed that the Marakwet language was widely spoken in the region inhabited by the Sengwer community more than the Sengwer language. This outcome necessitated that the Marakwet New Testament was first launched to ascertain if the Sengwer community could read and understand the Marakwet language. After the dedication of the Marakwet New Testament in 2009, eight years later, the Sengwer community once again expressed an interest to have the Bible translated in their language. This time, BTL took up the request from the community leaders and foundational work began among the Sengwer community.

The Director for Minority Communities in Kenya, Mr. Amos Ole Mpaka present at the event, applauded BTL for the good work to safeguard the languages of the minority communities in the Country.

"If it were not for this organization, many communities would have lost their identity. Losing a language is the most disastrous thing on earth. Through this Book, the Sengwer people will establish their permanent place in the country." Mr. Ole Mpaka said.

"Use this Bible to empower yourselves. This is a precious thing that many minority communities are in need of." Mr. Olé Mpaka continued.

Echoing the importance of the newly launched Scriptures, BTL's National Director, Rev. Peter Munguti, urged the community to use the word of God for their growth and foster peace and unity in the community. "I am making a special appeal to the men and women entitled to spread the Gospel to the Sengwer people. Use these Scriptures to preach the love of God as portrayed by our Lord Jesus Christ." Said Rev. Munguti.

Praise the Lord for a new beginning and healing in the Sengwer community through the powerful word of God. Pray that through interactions with the Scriptures, God will cause transformation among the Sengwer community. Pray for the translation team as they work towards completing the New Testament in the Sengwer language.

“

"If it were not for this organization, many communities would have lost their identity. Losing a language is the most disastrous thing on earth."

”



Sengwer ladies engrossed in the newly unveiled Scriptures in their language

Nearing the END

The Tugen Bible translation team is working around the clock to complete the translation of the Tugen New Testament.

According to Rev. Wilberforce Chelimo, Tugen's Project Officer, twenty-six books of the New Testament have been translated from draft to consultant check stage.

Furthermore, Chelimo stated that the team is concluding on the translation of the final Book so that the Tugen community could read the entire New Testament in their language soon.

"We are committed to finishing translation of the New Testament so that the Tugen community can interact with the Scriptures and spread the Gospel throughout Baringo County," Chelimo said.

Bible Translation & Literacy East Africa (BTLEA), commissioned Bible translation in the Tugen community in 2015. The Tugen dialect, which is spoken by three sub-groups; Lembus to the South, the Arror in the North, and the Samor in the Central parts of Baringo County forms one of the Kalenjin dialect clusters. Chelimo noted that the incorporation of the three sub-group speakers in the translation has made it successful owing to a common orthography (writing system) which was developed to safeguard the original Tugen language.

"Developing a writing system for our language is an accomplishment. It guides our translation and the original language safe, and it will remain so for future generations," Chelimo affirmed.

As the team is working tirelessly toward completion of the New Testament and the start of Old Testament translation, we appreciate their efforts in launching and dedicating the Gospel of Luke, as well as producing other literacy and Scripture use materials such as a hymn book, primer, alphabet chart, and study guide.

Pray for a smooth finish!

“

"We are committed to finishing translation of the New Testament so that the Tugen community can interact with the Scriptures and spread the Gospel throughout Baringo County."

”



The Tugen Project Advisory Committee receiving the Gospel of Luke during its launch in 2017

A Tugen elderly man holding a copy of the Gospel of Luke in his language

YOUR TRUSTED DESIGN & PRINTING SOLUTION

VISIT US AT

 **BTL Centre, Masaba Rd Upperhill**

T: 0722 209 606

E: tafsiripress@btlkenya.org | www.btlkenya.org




Refreshing Christian Hospitality
in a serene environment



Conference | Accommodation | Restaurant/Food | Swimming
Parking | Carwash | Team building | Outside Catering
Graduation Parties | Kids Playground
Tafsiri Springs | Salon & Barbershop

Follow us on:

 0714360 466

 @BTLcicc

 btl_cicc

 BTL Christian International
Conference Centre

www.btlcicc.org

CONTACT US ON

Ruiru Kiambu Road | P.O Box 512 - 00232, Ruiru Kenya
Tel: 020 231 9798, 0727 310 0324 | E: conference@btlkenya.org



Bible Translation & Literacy (E.A.)

Language Translation Experts For over 40 years

**for your
translation
needs**

VISIT US

BTL Centre, Masaba Road Upperhill

Tafsiri
TRANSLATION SERVICES

T: +254 722 209 606
E: info@btlkenya.org
W: www.btlkenya.org



Your Convenient Bible

ORDER For BIBLES



VISIT US AT

 **BTL Centre, Masaba Rd Upperhill**

T: +254 722 209 606
E: info@btlkenya.org
W: www.btlkenya.org



Bible Translation & Literacy (E.A.)

The Duruma women reading from the Duruma Full Bible (right), copies of the Duruma Full Bible



Sermons are coming to life

To a community whose first language is its mother tongue yet often are spoken to and preached to in the English and Swahili languages, the community can not be happier to receive the Word of God written in a language which speaks to their hearts.

The entrance of God's Word into the Duruma community in November 2021 quickly permeated into their Sunday services to which Kwale County Youth Secretary for Pentecostal Evangelistic Fellowship of Africa (PEFA), Mr. Kenneth Kadenge, alludes to its impact.

"The Duruma Bible has helped pastors to prepare sound sermons to their congregations." He said. "The preachers now have an in-depth understanding of the Scriptures which helps with the correct interpretation of the word of God." He added.

"The words used in the creation story for instance where Adam was put into deep sleep and his left side rib removed for the creation of Eve, the word of God in Chiduruma says *hewaaa....* which portrays satisfaction among the Duruma and is common in all aspects of our daily engagements." Mr. Kadenge continued.

The youth leader who also doubles as the Youth Pastor at PEFA Church in Miatsani further notes that Scripture memorization has improved in the church since the Bible was launched. According to him, the after-church discussions

are interactive and the congregants spend half an hour after sharing lessons from the day's sermons.

"We are happy; our engagements with our congregations have greatly improved. Before, we never had meaningful recaps of past sermons. Surprisingly, the majority could not remember most of the sermons, scenarios which are behind us now." Kadenge said.

In addition, Kadenge says, "When we are preaching, cheers of appreciation and understanding can be heard in the congregations, which was not common preaching in the Swahili and English languages. We appreciate BTL for giving us the word of God in a language which speaks to our hearts."

One year later, since this Bible was launched, the impact can be felt and we pray that God continues to cause His power among His people as He speaks to them in a language of their hearts. Indeed, sermons are coming to life! Praise be to God!

“

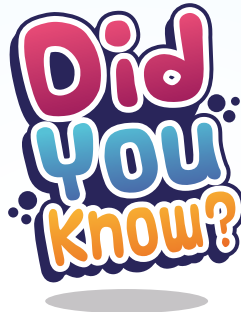
"When we are preaching, cheers of appreciation and understanding can be heard in the congregations, which was not common preaching in the Swahili and English languages."

”

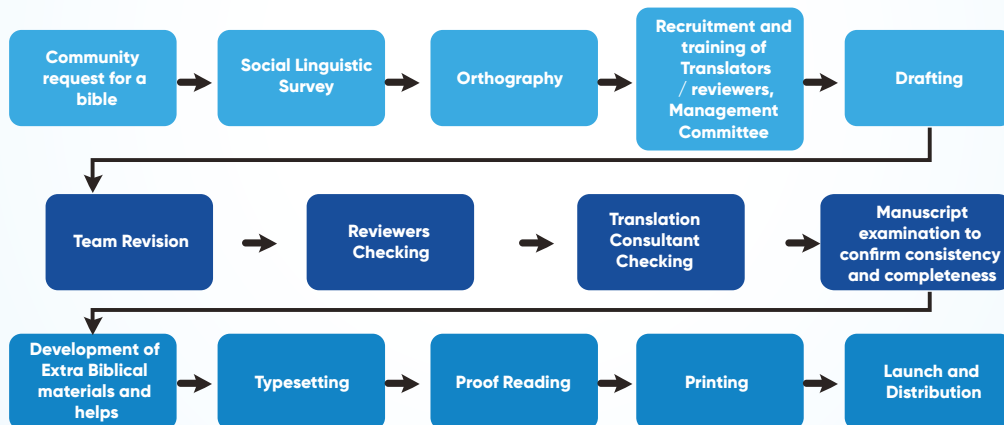
2023 Translation Focus

2023 TRANSLATION FOCUS

- Pokomo complete Bible (arrival into the country for dedication)
- Marakwet complete Bible (final checks)
- Chonyi New Testament (typesetting & Printing)
- Tugen New Testament (final checks)
- Upper Pokomo New Testament (final checks)
- Chuka New Testament (final checks)
- Waata New Testament (typesetting and printing)



TRANSLATION PROCESS SIMPLIFIED



DISTRIBUTION

Once the Scriptures have been published in the form of a book, audio player, or DVD, they'll get placed on board a ship, plane, vehicle, or some other form of transportation headed in the direction of the language group. If necessary, a local agent will be responsible for getting the Bibles through customs and transported to their final destination. Digital Scripture versions can either be placed on a website for people to download or be transferred via cell phone or other storage devices. The community often plans an event to publicize, celebrate, and distribute the new Scripture.

BTL Board Chairman (right) and National Director (left) flag off the Nairobi Run for the Bibleless 2022 held on 11th June 2022



New Frontiers for Run for the Bibleless

Every year, Bible Translation & Literacy East Africa (BTL), organizes an annual event dubbed 'Run for the Bibleless.' This event was first held in the year 2008 with the aim of creating awareness about Bible Translation work in the country, casting vision about the Bibleless communities in Kenya and ultimately to generate funds to support Bible Translation, Literacy and Language Development work among the small language groups in Kenya.

Since its inception, the Run event has long since been held in Nairobi. The year 2022 however saw the Run on 11th June spread its wings to three other counties; Mombasa, Nakuru and Eldoret happening concurrently.

While addressing the crowd at Carnivore Grounds in Nairobi, Rev. Peter Munguti, BTL's National Director, appreciated the participants for their sacrifice, which has enabled more Bibles to be translated for the small language groups in Kenya. He stressed the fact that the incredible work done by the organization is credited to the partners who have faithfully given their resources to the ministry.

"We have completed several Scripture translations which include six full Bibles and eight New Testaments. At the same time, we have work going on at the different stages of translation of the New Testament in 14 other languages; all due to the support that you have accorded to us." Said Rev. Munguti.

He also noted that the work of translating the Bible is costly due to the unwritten nature of the languages that BTL is involved in which necessitates the development of orthography (writing system) first.

Furthermore, Rev. Munguti noted that the organization incurs extra costs to run literacy-based programs alongside Bible translation in a bid to improve the literacy levels of the target communities.



Flagging off of the first ever Nakuru Run for the Bibleless event



Children from our partnering schools participate in the annual fundraising event, Run for the Bibleless

He urged the participants to use BTL's income generating ventures in support of the ministry.

"Apart from meeting Bible translation and language development needs, we provide other services for your use as you support this ministry. You can buy drinking water from our Tafsiri springs or print your materials with the Tafsiri printing press and support the work of God." said Rev. Munguti.

Praise God for the Run's expansion! We also invite you to the 2023 edition scheduled for 4th March, 2023 in Nairobi, Nakuru and Eldoret, and on 8th July 2023 for the Mombasa Chapter.

**Pray for more doors of partnerships through
this noble course**

Thank you

*for your support in the
year 2022*

*We wish you a
merry Christmas and a
blessed year 2023*



Bible Translation & Literacy (BTL)

REACHING THE UNREACHED COMMUNITIES WITH GOD'S WORD IN THEIR LANGUAGE

MERRY
Christmas
& HAPPY NEW YEAR



Tel: 0722 209 606 | info@btlkenya.org | www.btlkenya.org



Bible Translation & Literacy (E.A.)



SERVING
28
COMMUNITIES

Who we are

BTL's mission since 1981, is to facilitate Bible Translation and sustainable literacy among small language groups in Kenya and beyond.

Accomplishments

- † 6 Complete Bibles
- † 8 New Testaments
- † 14 Projects work ongoing

To Get Involved:

- † Become a prayer partner
- † Subscribe to our social media handles
- † Support BTL financially (Translation cost per verse Kshs. 4,000)
- † Participate in our Annual BTL Run for the Bibleless

BTL KINGDOM BUSINESSES

P.O. Box 44456-00100, Nairobi
Tel: +254 722 209 606
Email: info@btlkenya.org
www.btlkenya.org



f Bible Translation and Literacy
t BTL_EA

Mpesa Paybill: 898301 Account No.: Support