

Akóṣṣē Update

Chán akóṣṣē átimeé?

Akóṣṣē Old Testament

Translation work has started!!!

Editorial

Amúḗ, Chán mekan?

Hello there,
 welcome to Akóṣṣē Update. This maiden edition is specially dedicated to God's special people; churches (Priests, Pastors, elders, leaders and all christians). However, it also provides vital information for anyone interested in the development of Akóṣṣē language and culture.

But why Akóṣṣē update? Many people already know there is work going on to develop Akóṣṣē language. Many even have Akóṣṣē literature. Few even have the New Testament Bible. However, only a few people know about The Akóṣṣē Old Testament translation and literacy project that has just began. Consequently, they don't know how they can be part of it.

Given that the translation belongs to you and me, we believe it is actually your right to be "Updated". Hence Akóṣṣē Update is intended to let you know what is going on, why you should be a part of it and how. We count on your prayers, suggestions and support to make this initiative better. We hope to make this a quarterly publication. May God bless you as you enjoy reading it.

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Editorial team

Mr. Esong Rhodes: Editor
Mme Kwedu Rita Ahone: vice
Dr. Kome N. Hipolite (Adviser)



The second phase of the Akóṣṣē Bible Translation Project has finally started. This long awaited project is intended to translate the Old Testament into Akóṣṣē in order to produce a complete Akóṣṣē bible. Work began with the Inter-Church Committee (ICC) locating a project office at Kumen quarters (Antenne street) - Tombel in November 2024. Thereafter, the ICC continued with the selection of a team of volunteers who were then sent for training at the Bamenda regional office of the Cameroon Association for Bible Translation and Literacy -CABTAL.

The translation team in training includes 2 former translators; Hipolite Ngalame Kome , Br. Ngole Enongene Daniel, 2 pastors: Ps Ngalame Thomas and Ps Esole Beckly and 2 others Sis Ahone R. Kwedu, and Elder Muabe Divine Akang.

While still in training, the team has already drafted the books of Ruth and Esther and is currently testing and reviewing the work to prepare it for consultant checking. Meanwhile, Mr Esong Rhodes (HM) and Mme Esabe Sabina amongst others have also been to training on literacy to facilitate literacy of the translated bible. Literacy classes are also going on.

It should be recalled that the New Testament translation project took 11 years and was dedicated since 2011. It is estimated that this project may take between 15 to 20 years depending on the support and commitment of all the stakeholders including: the donors, the ICC, the community and the project volunteers. The project therefore counts on your prayers and support.

By Hipolite Ngalame Kome-PhD
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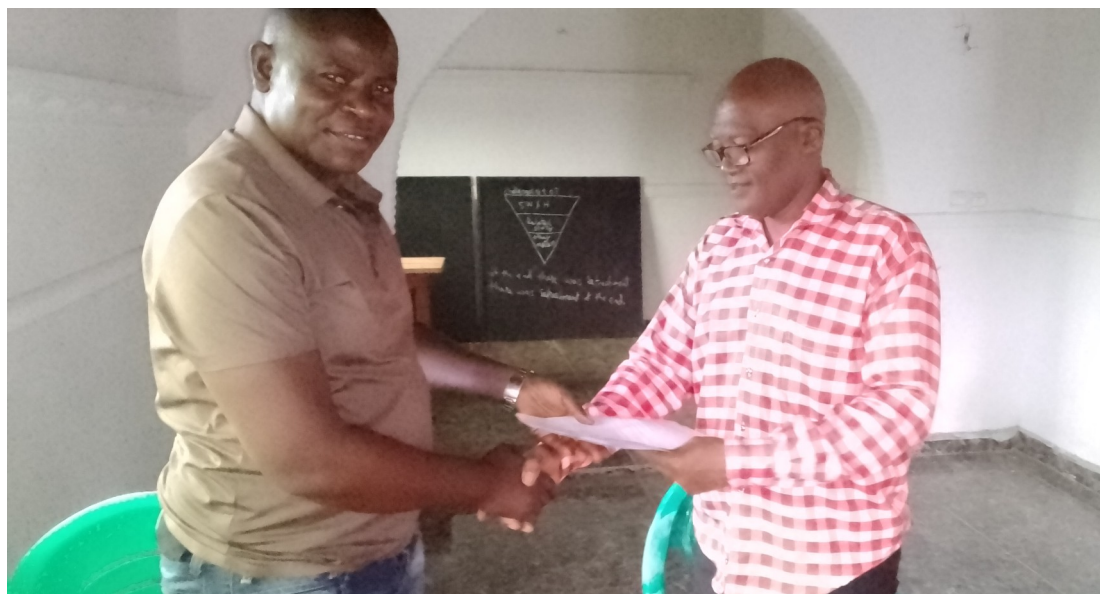
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Bible Translation: The Light of the Bakossi people

CABTAL is joyfully welcomed by the ICC



Mr. Mesumbe welcomed by Pastor Callistus

The Inter-Church Committee (ICC) in partnership with the Cameroon Association for Bible Translation and Literacy (CABTAL) are currently working together to ensure that the Old Testament is translated into Akɔ́ɔ́sē language. But why does CABTAL and the embodiment of all the churches (ICC) in Bakossi consider it of utmost importance to support this project? The response is inspired by the words of Isaiah.

“Arise and shine Oh ye Bakossi people!”

“Arise, and shine for your light has come” (Isaiah 60:1). When the Word of God is translated into the language of a people so as to be well understood by the people, light is said to have come to the people and the community. This is because the Bible enlightens the people towards the will, purpose and mission of God for them.

With the New Testament completely translated and the Old Testament now in progress, the Bakossi man is said to be enlightened when fully engaged. Therefore it is a divine and inherent duty of the church in the Bakossi land to be mobilized in support of this translation project whether one is an indigene or not.

The Inter-Church Committee (ICC) is steering this task through the help of her major partner CABTAL and is calling on all good will individuals and groups to join her in this mission.

Late SN Ejedepang Koge once said and I quote, “Now that the word of God has become part of the culture, no one can take it away from among the people. We no longer have any excuse for failing to learn it and make it part of our life” unquote.

I am by this calling on all the CHRISTAIN churches, individuals of faith and lovers of language development to join us in this mission. On behalf of the entire Bakossi community, I wish to thank you in advance for your support and declare God’s abundant blessings upon your life in Jesus’ mighty name.

Amen.

By Ps Calistus Awowo

Presenting the Akóṣṣē Project Inter-Church Committee



The Regional CABTAL Coordinator Mr. Mesumbe with some ICC members and translators

The Inter-Church Committee, abbreviated (ICC) is the assembly of all Christian Churches and denominations in all of Bakossi land. It is a mobilization in support of the translation of the Word of God i.e. the Bible. Constituted for that singular purpose, this committee with a divine and delicate mission is led by an elected steering committee. The ICC for the Bakossi Bible Translation project was setup during the translation of the Akóṣṣē New Testament that was dedicated in 2011. Recently in November 2024, the steering committee was renewed and assigned to oversee the activities of the Akóṣṣē Old Testament translation Project.

The role of the ICC is to provide spiritual, material and financial support to facilitate the work of translators. This includes, praying for the project, renting or building an office, furnishing and equipping the office, selecting translators from various denominations, training and supporting the translators and other staff, recommending reviewers, facilitating testing, and validating and dedicating the translated bible materials. The current ICC steering committee is working in partnership with CABTAL and has already made a project office available in Tombel. It has also selected and trained translators and is working on sensitizing all churches in Bakossiland who are found in Kupe-Muanenguba and Mongo Divisions. A good number are also resident in diaspora in various parts of Cameroon and the world. The ICC plans to update them all about the project as their role in it.

All denominations and congregations in the language area should naturally be part of the ICC and pray and support the project. The ICC is also strongly appealing to individuals, well-wishers and donors of good will to support the project which is also in charge of developing the Akóṣṣē language and culture. The current steering committee has members and Resources Persons (RP) from various denominations including but not limited to the following:

The Roman Catholics Church (RCC)	– Mr. Ekeh Peter (RP. Mr. Esong Rhodes)
Presbyterian Church in Cameroon (PCC)	- Elder Ngole Hans Kede, (RPs. Daniel, Divine, Hipolite)
The Lutheran Church in Cameroon (LCC)	- Pastor Ngalame Thomas Metuge (RP)
The Full Gospel Church	-Mechame Titus, Rev Wangoh Sylvester (RP. Mme Ahone Rita)
Apostolic church	-Rev. Tancha
Victory center	-Rev. Calistus Owono
Shalom Ministries International	- Rev. Akisseh Ernest (RP. Pastor Esolle Beckly)
Christ Embassy	-Pastor Epie Eko Manfred

The History of Bakossi Bible Translation

by Hipolite Ngalame Kome (PhD)

The dream of having the bible in one's mother tongue is certainly one shared by most early Bakossi people (Bekóǝsē). This was true especially for the christians who had no option than to read the word of God in languages which were not theirs. Those who could read, read the bible either in the Douala language or in the English (for the anglophones) or in the French (for the francophones). Later, the Catholics introduced the Pidgin Bible given that Pidgin was a "Lingua franca".

The thirst for God's Word in Akóǝsē led to earliest translations.

As far back as the early 1900, **patches of scripture and prayers were translated into Akóǝsē** and used in almost all churches in Bakossiland (Ekóǝsē). One of the icons of these early translations was the now celebrated **"St. Pius Epiebong" of Baseng**, a Catholic catechist who lived in Mesaka (Western Bakossi). These early translations were the vehicle of the gospel and served as the key to the spread of Christianity in most of Ekóǝsē. Some of the Akóǝsē prayers are still very useful in most village congregations till date. Given that a vast majority of the people could only understand Akóǝsē, preaching was mostly in Akóǝsē. Where it was not, some churches had to use interpreters. **A good example of such practice is the Apostolic Faith church** that still does this till date.

However, what is now formerly known as the Bakossi Bible Translation Project was the brain child of two students of the Presbyterian Theological Seminary in Kumba. These were **Pastor Ndando Nelson of Nyasoso (of blessed memory) and Pastor Ekinde of Ngomboku (now Rev Dr. Ekinde- in USA)**. Though they had this vision while they were still in school, the work actually began several years later (1997) while the then Rev. Ndando was in Mweba-Nninong working as parish pastor of PCC Mweba. Working with the then newly created Cameroon Association for Bible Translation and Literacy (CABTAL) and under the technical supervision of the Summer institute of Linguistics (SIL), their goal was to translate the New Testament. The Akóǝsē Language committee was then created under the technical coordination of Late **Pa Ejedepang Koge and Rev. Dr. J.S. Ngalame**. Fund raising abroad was by **Ernie Frederick (USA)** who dedicated his life to this course. One of the earliest Akóǝsē literate persons was Mr Roggy Metuge who finally worked with SIL thanks to his literacy skills.



Dr. Robert
Hedinger



Samuel Ngome
Ejedepang-Koge



Godfred Elong
Metuge Roggy



Ndando Nelson



Ngole Hans Kede

Sometime after that (1998), Rev. Ndando was sent on secondment to CABTAL and transferred to Tombel as the first Project Coordinator. He headed a 4-man translation team including; **Pa Ngole Hans Kede, Pa Z.N. Masango and Pa Abraham Kogge (all volunteers of blessed memory)**. Together they translated the book of Ruth, the gospel of Luke and a few other portions of scripture. Meanwhile, Mrs Ekinde Beatrice (Now in USA) was also involved in literacy work and instrumental in the production of literacy materials including the multi-strategy primer. Mr Hipolite Ngalame became the literacy supervisor producing the first Akóǝsē newsletter (Póle e nchéb) in 1999. However, the project at that point faced several challenges. The first was that Rev. Ndando had administrative huddles with CABTAL. The second challenge was the fact that the volunteers were of advanced ages. The third challenge was that the then Pastor Ekinde and his wife Beatrice traveled abroad. A new team was thus required for the project to meet up with deadlines.



Kome Ngalame
Hipolite



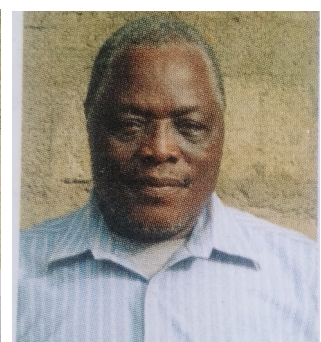
Ngole David



Nkwelle Ngome
Joseph



Ngwese Simon



Otto Elong Mebune

Consequently, by the year 2000, a younger and more dynamic 6-man team headed by **Rev. Ngole David as coordinator** continued the job. Other members included: **Mr. Hipolite Ngalame, Mr. Nkwelle Ngome Joseph** as 2 full time volunteers. **Pa Ngolle Ajang Abraham, Mr. Ngole Enongene Daniel and Ps Epie Vincent** were also volunteers but on part time. This team was expected to complete the New Testament by 2013. However, thanks to their strong commitment, hardwork and dynamism, by **2011**, the New Testament was completed and dedicated. The colourful ceremony that brought together all facets of Ekóǝsē, CABTAL and donors from Cameroon and abroad was organized in Tombel. The Inter-Church Committee (ICC) coordinated the dedication led by **Pastor Calistus Owowo** (a Nigerian who till date fully dedicates his time for this course) Glory to God!

The Akóǝsē dictionary was also compiled by Dr. Robert Hedinger working in collaboration with the team and many other resource persons including Pa Ejedepang, Pa Mebune Otto and a host of others.

At the end of that project, translation activities still went on but on a very low key. Key achievements within that period were; the recording of the audio New Testament (2012) sponsored by Theo Vision and the Translation of the Jesus film (2014) sponsored by the Jesus film project. The anglophone crises were a dark era of silent prayers (2017 -2021). That notwithstanding, minimal literacy activities were still striving. Activities included reading in the churches, teaching in the schools and some holiday classes. Some teachers training was also done under the supervision of Mr. Esong Rhodes with some support from BACDA USA. Yet, the prayers were that the Old Testament (OT) translation too should begin to make the complete bible available to the church in Ekóǝsē.

Fortunately, these prayers were answered by October 2024. The Bakossi OT Translation Project (BOTP) started! At the initiative of CABTAL, it began with the revamping of the ICC and the selection and training of translators. The new 6-member team is headed by the project coordinator Dr. Kome Hipolite and includes Mr. Ngole Enongene Daniel, Mr. Muabe Divine Akang, Mme Kwedu Rita Ahone, Pst Metuge Thomas and Pst Esolle Beckly. They have already redrafted the book of Ruth and translated the book of Esther. It is hoped that this project could take between 10 to 20 years depending on the resources available and work methods. Yet we hope it will be fast especially given that the team is made up of young and educated persons with some as old hands in translation still involved in the translation work at various levels.

To begin with, Rev. Ngole went for further training and is now a translation consultant at CABTAL assisting other language groups in Cameroon. He will be serving as translation consultant for this Project. Mr Nkwelle (Now Pastor Nkwelle) is now also a Translation Consultant with CABTAL. He is in charge of Training the translators of 6 language groups including Akóǝsē. Hipolite (Now Dr. Kome Hipolite) well known deputy mayor, writer, lecturer, Literacy Supervisor, dialogue director for the audio NT and Jesus film project, is now the Project Coordinator. Mr. Ngole Enongene Daniel, former translator and Bursar of PCSS Tombel is also on the team which also includes 2 former literacy supervisors (Ps Ngalame Thomas and Mr. Muabe Divine) and two pastors (Pst. Esolle and Pst. Ngalame Thomas). New in the team is the spiced of a female translator Mme Kwedu Rita Ahone with a Bachelor Degree in African Literature. So the team has very adequate capacity to deliver if properly motivated. Though CABTAL and some external donors are doing their best to support some aspects of the project, the greater responsibility remains that of the Bakossi community at home and abroad. The church in Ekóǝsē and all well-wishers are therefore directly or indirectly concerned. Everyone should therefore pray for the project and support it in any way they can. Little drops make the mighty ocean, so nothing is small. We therefore count on your prayers and support. May God Bless you.

Learn the Akóṣṣe alphabet in 30mins.

E'kii bé Akóṣṣe

By Mr. Esong Rhodes

The Akóṣṣe alphabet (E'kii bé Akóṣṣe) is composed of 27 letters. There are 26 sounds and one letter that has no sound (glottal stop). There are eight vowels (a, e, ε, ə, i, o, ɔ, u) and 19 consonants (including the glottal stop). The consonants are (b, ch, d, g, h, k, l, m, n, ŋ, p, r, s, t, w, y, z, '). There are many sounds/ letters that are familiar to those who are literate in either English or French (official languages). Some sounds are specific for the Akóṣṣe language. Unlike in English where the same symbol (letter) can represent different sounds, in the Akóṣṣe writing system, each symbol represents just one sound.

Akóṣṣe Available Literature

Kálag é Akóṣṣe

(1) Scripture – based.

-Mele'mékóṣṣe(New testament Bible)

-Nkalaŋ míme Rúte(Book of Ruth)

-Hánaa Mmwaád awě ankáne(Hannah the woman who prayed – 1samuel 1:1-28,2:11,19-21)

-Yésu krístə awóó nǵine əsoŋ alongé áde syánē.(excerpt from the gospel of mark)

-Nkalaŋ ín bwáam míme Yésue.(the four Gospel in Akóṣṣe)

Audio Visual

- The Jesus film in Akóṣṣe (DVD) video

- The proclaimer in Akóṣṣe (New testament audio version)

(2) Literacy-Based.

-Akóṣṣe English Dictionary

-Akóṣṣe Grammar book

-Kálag e e'kii bé Akóṣṣe (unpublished Alphabet book)

-Dé yáge Akóṣṣe vol. 1 (unpublished Transition primer 1)

-Dé yáge Akóṣṣe vol. 2 (unpublished Transition primer 2)

-Détel Délaŋ-ε Akóṣṣe (Transition primer)

-Nwóge Akóṣṣe (listening story book for beginners)

-Mbíí Akóṣṣe (post primer 1 story book)

-Ndíi Nkóṣṣe (post primer 2 story book)

-Ndəŋge echě mesóde, kálag e meléede (Teachers story book on HIV)

-Ndəŋge eche mesóde, kálag e bad ábe bəyágke (learners story book on HIV)

-Ngan é Akóṣṣe (Akóṣṣe proverb book)

-Kálag e mesoŋgé e'só(first Arithmetic book)

(3) On-going research

-Mín mé Bekóṣṣe (Bakossi names etymology)

-Adúbe á mod e nkóṣṣe(myth of the Bakossi people)

-Ngan é Akóṣṣe émpēē(more Bakossi proverbs)

(4) Documents

-Dekále dé Nkōŋsé n̄syāēl dé kunzeé baányoŋ (universal human rights)

-Mbéndé é kansel é myad mé aloŋ á kamerûn(local council laws of cameroon)

Letter/ sound	In Akóṣṣe words	English equivalence
a	Abad (loin cloth)	<u>a</u> nt
b	Bwel (tree)	bee <u>f</u>
ch	Echin(colocasha)	chi <u>n</u>
d	dyad (village)	do <u>g</u>
e	etom (plantain)	<u>a</u> ge
ε	ese (toothbrush)	<u>e</u> nter
ə	nsəl (mouth)	shi <u>r</u> t
g	ngom (drum)	go <u>l</u> d
h	haa (local gin)	<u>h</u> en
i	tid (louse)	<u>i</u> nk
j	njed (baby sitter)	J <u>u</u> mp
k	lake (on borrow)	K <u>e</u> ttle
L	Len (mushroom)	Lea <u>d</u> er
m	məl (trees / drugs)	mi <u>n</u> d
N	Ngen (branch)	no <u>n</u>
ŋ	Ntaŋ (band)	lo <u>n</u> g
o	Som(chimpanzee)	to <u>l</u> d
ɔ	ngon(moon)	<u>L</u> aw
p	Pid (calabash)	pa <u>s</u> te
r	taareε(sun bird)	br <u>i</u> ng
s	Sii(wound)	ki <u>s</u> s
t	taaku (tobacco)	Bo <u>t</u> tle
u	Ekun (maggot)	Fo <u>o</u> l
w	Wε (you)	We <u>l</u> l
Y	Dyon (market)	Ya <u>m</u>
Z	Nzab(soup)	Ze <u>r</u> o
'	E'boŋ (beauty)	ex <u>p</u> ort

The challenges of translating the Old Testament into Akóṣṣē 1

Mme Kwedu Rita Ahone

The Team of translators selected by the Inter Church Committee (ICC) is currently translating the Old Testament (OT) into Akóṣṣē language. Just as it is commonly said, “nothing good comes easy.” This is true to the work of translating the Old Testament to Akóṣṣē. The challenges are many but in this edition I will cite just a few.

The first is the linguistic challenge. There are some words in the source language which have no direct equivalence in the target language. Examples of such words are: queen, garden, barley, wheat, window just to name a few. In the course of translating such words we may only borrow from another language or use descriptive phrases.

Also, we need a good understanding of English language which is our source language. In addition we need a good mastery of both the grammar and orthographic rules of Akóṣṣē language which is the target language.

Another challenge is that we need to study the culture of the source language community as well as that of the Akóṣṣē people in order that our translation work to be natural, accurate and concise.



Akóṣṣē Old Testament Translation team while at the CABTAL Regional office in bamenda



Receiving translation training certificates



Translation team during exegetical check in BRO



Translation team at work in Tombel office



Literacy team at a workshop in Bamenda



Testing group at Full Gospel Tombel



Translation team in a workshop in Bamenda



Receiving working tools

Mod awě eewógé ntyág
aá ngyág ntoge'