



# MOMENTUM

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**ANNUAL REPORT 2019**

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*Multiplying efforts, resources, and partnerships  
as we move to Zero.*



# GREETINGS IN JESUS' NAME

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A MESSAGE FROM SAMUEL E. CHIANG, PRESIDENT AND CEO

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## I. TASTING HONEY WITH COMMUNITIES

In Jewish tradition, on the first day of class, Torah teachers would put honey on the writing slate of six-year-old students who came to study in Bet Sefer (House of the Book). Then, the Torah teacher would tell the students to taste the honey. As they tasted the honey, the Torah teacher would quote Psalm 119:103: “Your words are sweeter in my mouth than honey”; thus, a full embodiment of connection of the sweetness of the taste associated with the Word, and God is established forever in the memory of the learner.

Three communities across the world this summer, along with Seed Company and our investors, experienced a taste of God and honey in the dedication and celebration of full Bibles: Tharaka in Kenya; Quechua Huaylas in Peru; Achi de Cubulco Bible in Guatemala. We are thankful to you, investors in the Bibleless, who have made this possible. They were the 695th, 696th, and 697th full Bibles translated. Imagine that! Across centuries, with over 7,000 languages in the world, with 4,000 of them needing a translation, 2,000 of which do not have a single verse in their heart language, we are now only nearing the 700th full Bible.

What is remarkable is that Seed Company is invited to celebrate 10 full Bible dedications in FY2020. There are eight celebrations in South America and two in Africa. The population sizes of the languages range from 10,000 to 690,000 people. In fact, over the next two years, there will be 84 milestone celebrations of New Testaments, Old Testaments, and full Bibles.

As we think about the Bible translation movement’s 2025 goals—every language started, and 2033 completion goals—the vast majority of the world’s populations to have access to some Scripture, we are in a unique era to see both beginning and finishing of Bible translation for languages without Scripture. And we get to celebrate with the indigenous partners when they deliver their own fully completed heart language Scripture to their community.

## II. STARTING FOR FINISHING

God has worked through Seed Company to complete 576 New Testaments and 158 Old Testaments over the last 26 years.

We are partnering with you and stewarding over 950 languages currently under translation. We work with the dynamic that if people groups are desiring and needing Scripture in their heart language, we shall work with the most local expression of the church to support the translation process. With fervency and intentionality, we are relentlessly focusing upon the 2,000 remaining Bibleless language list.

The Bible Translation sector, similar to that of Real Estate Development, Oil and Gas, Mining, and Biotechnology sectors, all share one characteristic: long development lead times. Bible translation for every language group requires long-term labor, tending to the care of each translation team, resulting in meaningful accuracy that is acceptable by the community.

With urgency, Seed Company prays and seeks out new partners so as to be near or in the community of those who are without heart language Scripture. We are systematically looking for ways to reduce the long-term language translation process. And we are exercising faith to deploy innovative technologies to accelerate the translations.

We start by faith so that we can finish! In each of our last five years, God has allowed us to exceed the faith goal of starting 120 new languages each year. A generally desired time horizon for a translation of the New Testament is seven years, and for the full Bible a total of 16 years. Given the long development times, each project is similar to that of starting a brand-new venture; every new language start is like launching a new business! It is not for the fainthearted and it is a calling. Thank you for partnering with us to start over 120 new businesses (language translations) in each of the last five years. We are exercising faith to commence work in 130 new languages in FY2020.

We innovate by faith so that we can finish! Currently a New Testament sign Deaf translation requires approximately 40 to 50 years, and a full sign Deaf Bible is estimated to take up to 150 years. Concurrently on a global basis, there are only 24 fully recognized sign Deaf Bible translation consultants available to serve the 350 sign Deaf languages with a collective population size of 70 million people. Thus, the length of time and a lack of qualified personnel further compounds the problem of helping sign Deaf communities to receive their first Scripture in their heart language.

Two years ago, Seed Company Board launched a new entity, Avodah Labs, with the aim of reducing the time it will take for sign Deaf Bible translation. The faith goal for Avodah Labs is to use Artificial Intelligence and Convolutional Neural Networks, along with Deep Learning, to bring down the number of years, and to bring more people around the quality assurance problem of Bible translation consulting. I am delighted to state that we are now able to pilot a new software and hardware product—Visual Language Interpretation System or VLIS—with the sign Deaf communities. We are desiring to “experiment, fail, learn, iterate” over the next several quarters so that a faith goal of starting all the sign Deaf languages that need a translation can be reached by 2023.

We catalyze others by faith so that we can finish! In Seed Company, we have put VLIS with what was known internally as “second line of ministry.” We have now named this ministry Global Innovations Unit. This Innovation Unit already provides a 360-degree organizational development process for other Bible translation organizations so that each may have a highly functioning board to fully steward their field programs, operations, and full self-sustainability; and in turn, these entities will also assist other emerging Bible translation entities to become fully self-sustaining. Early emerging data is already showing several of the 20 different organizations served by the Innovation Unit have already moved into full sustainability. By placing the VLIS technology product with the Innovation Unit, we believe there are the talent, skills, culture, and will to push VLIS through the piloting, adoption, and scaling phases for the Bible translation movement.

### III. STEWARDING A SACRED TRUST

As we are together on this journey, we are striving to serve you, the resourcing partners, as best as possible. You might recall in our last annual report we invited each of you to grade us on your experiences with us. You participated, and we are grateful for your generous input and honest and forthright comments as to where we can improve. As a result, we have commenced a multiyear process of redesigning our “Investor Journey.”

Digital transformation has been rolled out within Seed Company in the last 24 months. We are far from reaping the entirety of the transformational benefits, but we are learning quickly and iterating with agility. We are already planning on complementing and buttressing the Investor Journey experience with digital transformation.

At Seed Company we are reminded of a sacred trust: the invitation into Bible translation, which is a ministry of the Church, and participating with you—the investors—to bring the Living Holy Word to communities around the world. We steward this sacred trust together so that across the world, both now and into the future, each generation will tell its children of God’s mighty acts (Psalm 145:4).

Until There are NONE,



**Samuel E. Chiang**



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1,722

CUMULATIVE LANGUAGES ENGAGED

951

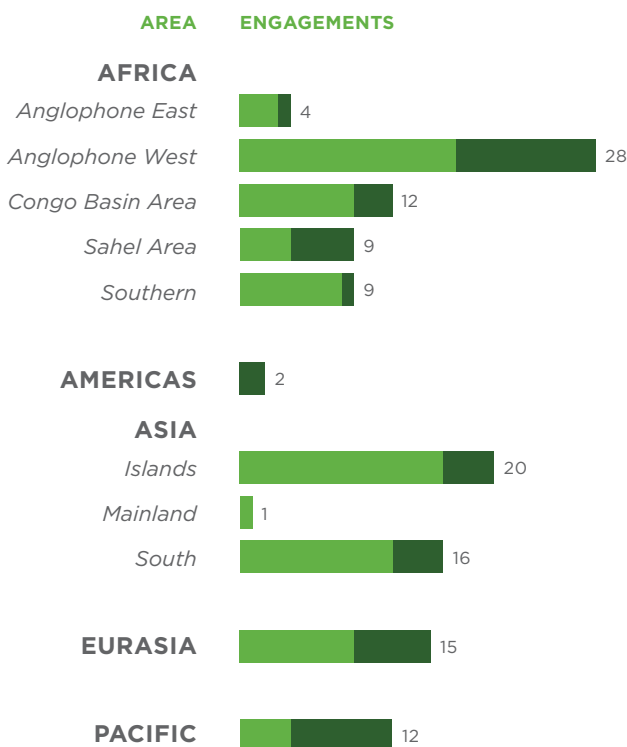
ACTIVE LANGUAGES AT YEAR END

# EVERY NUMBER HAS A NAME

The numbers on this page actually have many, many names. They represent men, women, and even children who provide—and receive—God’s Word. They represent the generosity of investors, the faith of prayer partners, and the commitment of the global church. Undergirding these statistics are countless stories of the goodness of God. We salute the commitment of translation teams and their field supporters who face trials and adversity, yet faithfully press on toward Vision 2025.

## SEED COMPANY FIELD AREA:

*New Engagements and First Scripture by Region*



## TOTAL ENGAGEMENTS

**83** FIRST SCRIPTURE **128** NEW ENGAGEMENT

*Seed Company reached 128 New Engagement Translations, and of those, 83 were First Scripture Projects.*

# 2,115

REMAINING LANGUAGES THAT STILL NEED A TRANSLATION

# 137

TRANSLATION CONSULTANT DEVELOPMENT INTERNS

# 54

PARTNER CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT INTERNS

# 131

COUNTRIES

# 1,255

ACTIVE FIELD PARTNERSHIPS

# 11,911

ACTIVE PRAYER PARTNERS



# MULTIPLICATION

## THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS

*Just as our bodies have many parts and each part  
has a special function, so it is with Christ's body.*

*We are many parts of one body, and we all  
belong to each other.*

— ROMANS 12:4-5





## THE GREAT COMMISSION FOR EVERYONE

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### CONNECTING GOD'S PEOPLE WITH HIS PURPOSES

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If the gospel of John can transform a primitive, head-hunting tribe from Northeast India into one of the most educated, successful segments of Indian society, imagine what Bible access can do when it's available in the heart language of every culture!

Few know this better than Mary Pudaite Keating, who became a generosity strategist for Seed Company shortly after speaking at our 2018 forWORD gathering. Mary's grandfather was one of the first Hmar head-

hunters converted to Christianity after the brave Welsh missionary, Watkin Roberts, visited India. Her father, Rochunga Pudaite, was the first Hmar to receive a formal education and then go on to translate the entire Bible. He has since gone home to be with the Lord, but Mary is proudly following in his footsteps—passionately pursuing the gospel and the resources necessary to get it into the heart language of every group still waiting to receive it.

“The Great Commission is for *everyone*. I don’t care how poor you are. I don’t care if you’re in a hut in Africa or anywhere else. The Great Commission is for *all* of us, and it’s not just about money. God wants us on our knees, as a unified body of Christ. He wants us networking, growing, and loving one another. It’s all about the relationships!”

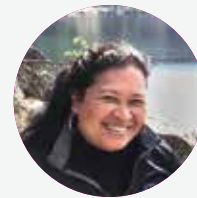
As a volunteer for Resource Global, Mary mentors future workplace leaders who want to spread the gospel and transform their companies as well as their communities. She is currently helping Sonia, a young woman from Jakarta, Indonesia, who is learning to run her family’s thriving international corporation.

Mary invited Sonia to a gathering of Bible translation investors in Jakarta, and Sonia invited her dad, who then invited enough people to fill their table. Sonia now sees that the more money they make, the more they can give away. She is eager to infuse her family’s business with eternal purpose and a biblical perspective on stewardship.

That’s another passion of Mary’s. Lately, she has been connecting the Journey of Generosity experience by Generous Giving with Seed Company initiatives. Through informal gatherings, like-minded individuals can focus on encouragement and stewardship, not money. Through short videos, Scripture, and stories, a facilitator leads the group to focus on God’s purposes—the heart of generosity.

Mary explains, “It’s a stewardship thing, another touchpoint on how to walk alongside people and say, ‘If God owns it all, what does that look like? How does generosity lead us to the heart of God, and how is generosity connected to the abundant life?’”

No matter where she is or what she’s doing for “work,” Mary is always in the business of connecting God’s people with His plans. And she’s never at a loss for stories that illustrate how He faithfully sets up those divine appointments: in a restaurant, on an airplane, in an elevator, or even in the restroom. She knows that when people of influence gather around a mission they are passionate about—specifically, God’s Word available for “every nation and tribe and people and language”—everything changes (Rev. 7:9).



## MARY’S STORY

My people, only three generations ago, were headhunters. They believed that if you cut off a head in this life, they would be your servants in the next life.

But the gospel changes everything.

A little over 100 years ago, a Welsh missionary visited the remote jungles of Northeast India and led five men to the Lord. One of those men, Chawnga, was my grandfather.

Chawnga knew his people needed the Bible in their own language, so he challenged his son, Rochunga, to go to school. My father hiked 96 miles through the jungle, warding off tigers, elephants, and python snakes, just to go to the nearest boarding school. Once there, he excelled. And after a divine appointment with Prime Minister Nehru, he—and eventually many more tribals—received a university scholarship.

God also brought “Uncle” Bob Pierce, the founder of World Vision, and Dr. Billy Graham into my dad’s life. These men made it possible for him to study in America.

Who would have guessed that a tribal boy would be used by God to translate the Bible into our heart language? Once Hmar people could read and truly understand God’s Word, they were forever changed. Now they are serving as teachers, lawyers, doctors, pastors, ambassadors, and government leaders.

And I am continuing my father’s legacy—proclaiming the gospel and sharing the great need for it among all people, in all nations, in a language they understand.

# SHOEBOXES AND SCRIPTURE

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“HIS WORD RUNS SWIFTLY”

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Last summer, residents of Ombaka, Namibia, heard God’s Word for the first time in their heart language. During a three-day celebration that included the dedication of their new church building, Himba speakers received solar-powered MP3 players loaded with the gospel of Mark and 40 Bible stories from Genesis and Luke.

As part of the celebration, Samaritan’s Purse, an evangelical organization that provides physical and spiritual aid to hurting people worldwide, arranged to distribute Operation Christmas Child shoebox gifts to Himba children. But these shoeboxes contained a priceless addition: printed copies of *The Greatest Gift*, a gospel booklet, in Himba.

The Himba were astonished to have this resource in their heart language. As an oral community of 60,000 speakers, they have few printed materials. A wave of excitement swept through the land as the distribution of gifts and recorded materials then spread to five other villages.

## GOD’S WORD AT WORK

Although a small group of Himba had heard Scripture during previous years of Bible translation activity, the audience rapidly multiplied in June. Seed Company had partnered with Samaritan’s Purse to translate *The Greatest Journey*, a discipleship curriculum, and *The Greatest Gift*. Both were included with Mark’s gospel and the Bible stories on the digital Himba recordings.

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*He sends his command to the earth; his word runs swiftly.*

— PSALM 147:15 (NIV)

“Mark is a highly oral gospel,” says Samuel Chiang, President and CEO of Seed Company and an orality expert. “It is particularly well-suited to people from a storytelling culture.”

Samuel went on to express another dimension to this multiplication of God’s Word: “When a predominantly oral people hear a story once, they already begin to memorize it. They live in the stories, and they are etched into their minds. So, they are eager to talk about the stories.” That longing leads the formerly unreached people to profess their faith in Christ, tell others about that faith, and then initiate discipleship programs.

*“We are hearing stories of villages gathering around the campfire, listening and learning, of children tending flocks ... and singing the songs to each other.”*



In addition to the Scripture and resources, each MP3 player included worship songs in the Himba language. Michael Cardy, strategic initiatives manager for Samaritan’s Purse, reports, “We are hearing stories of villages gathering around the campfire, listening and learning, of children tending flocks deep in the [Kaokoveld region of Namibia] and singing the songs to each other.”

### THE GIFT THAT KEEPS GIVING

God’s Word continues to have special significance for the hard-working translation team members. Elton-John Hepundjua, the team’s new project coordinator, serves as assistant pastor to the Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa. He says, “One of the benefits of being a part of the translation team is the exegetical work, where we learn Scriptures and have the opportunity to read whole books of the Bible in [the heart language].” A father of three, he works with youth, leads Bible studies, visits homes, and provides counseling based on biblical principles.

Rizera Hipakua, pastor of the church in Ombaka, is realizing his own personal dream—to reach all the Himba with the gospel. Not long after the church dedication, Rizera held a training session with five believers in the new church building. He now continues to mentor them while they serve as lay pastors.

Pastor Rizera also taught the lay pastors how to apply the Discovery Bible Study Method—*listen, repeat, review, and apply*—to what they were hearing on the MP3 players. They gathered with villagers, breaking into groups of four to practice the methodology. And so, the message continues, going forth into even more remote regions.

### The Rest of the Story

Key organizational partners in the first phase of the Himba Oral Bible Storytelling (OBS) translation, which lasted from 2015 to 2018, were Wycliffe South Africa, the Namibian Bible Society, and the local Dutch Reformed Church, with provision from the local Lutheran church and Seed Company investors. Together, these partners are now moving into the second phase of OBS in the Himba language.



## “WE CAN DO THIS FOR OURSELVES”

### LOCALS ASSUME OWNERSHIP IN SAHEL

In a part of Africa’s Sahel region where Christianity is a minority, Bible translation partners chose three language groups with established Christian churches. Their goal: to strengthen the churches’ reach and effectiveness through Oral Bible Storytelling (OBS).

When a fourth people group without an established church heard of the OBS initiative, a member of the majority religion said, “Can we join? We would like to learn how to tell Old Testament stories too.”

The fourth group sent three translators to the OBS workshops. By the end of the second gathering, all three made professions of faith. And even though these new believers receive pushback in their community, they are courageously living for Christ.

Scott Crickmore, Seed Company’s area director overseeing the Sahel region, says with excitement, “Local communities are taking initiative. They are owning the vision and running with it.”

### FINISHING THE TASK

Many traditional missionaries have had to leave sensitive areas because of violence and a lack of security. In turn, nationals have responded to the need for Scripture by becoming translators for their language groups. They have entered internship programs and assumed leadership roles. “And local churches and organizations of the Sahel are rising up to finish the task,” Scott says.

But this shift is not merely a response to finishing projects nearing completion. In fact, the identified needs for translation are greater than ever. For example, although Niger has only a few languages without Scripture, Chad still has more than 24 Bibleless languages. Mali, Burkina Faso, and the Ivory Coast also have varying needs.

In one West African country, coordinators of a cluster project of four related Kuluso languages plan to add a new language every year or so. The whole staff is Kuluso people, from top to bottom. The translation

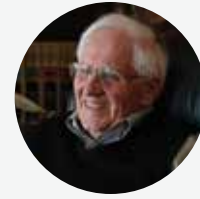
coordinator and project manager both completed Seed Company internships, and the translation facilitators are Kuluso pastors.

Recently, the church there chided Seed Company and its partner, SIL, as they prepared for the first workshop. Because of a change in software, the project was delayed for a couple of months. Church leaders asked, “Why are you delaying this? We want to do it now.”

That eagerness signifies real passion. Though primarily a community of subsistence farmers, they manage to contribute several thousand dollars a year to the work of translation. The people are hungry for the Word in their own language, and they’re beginning to say and believe: “We can do this for ourselves.”

Scott says that, in the past, Seed Company and others have facilitated oral translation of the “JESUS” film into various languages. Missionaries trained and organized workers, taking up to four weeks to adapt the translation of Luke into a film script. “Now, with a 100-percent Kuluso team, this is happening in 10 days,” he says enthusiastically.

Clearly, momentum is building in the Sahel region as communities take the lead in bringing Scripture to those who are waiting.



## EMPOWERING NATIONALS

*Seed Company founder Bernie May shares his thoughts about the participation of our national partners.*

I have always thought of Seed Company as “special forces” ... just a few people empowering other people to do the work. And that concept has been accepted for the last 25 years. But I think the shift now is similar to the shift you see when children grow up. Babies soon learn to feed themselves, but you still provide all the food, and you protect them and cover them.

Then, when they get to be about 18 or so, they get their own ideas. They move out, and they’re on their own. If you’re still feeding your kids and they’re 30 years old, something’s wrong. They should be doing it on their own. Early on, I started teaching my three sons, “You’re going to have to do this yourself. You’d better start learning, because I’m not going to be doing this when you grow up.”

In the last 20 to 30 years, globalization has been the world’s economic thing. But, all of a sudden, that’s breaking down, and nationalism is back. As a result, we are going to have to be much more national minded—empowering nationals for the work of translation, and trusting them to get it done.



# CELEBRATION

OF GOD'S WORD

*You love him even though you have never seen him.  
Though you do not see him now, you trust him;  
and you rejoice with a glorious, inexpressible  
joy. The reward for trusting him will be the  
salvation of your souls.*

— 1 PETER 1:8-9







## CONTINUED MOMENTUM

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### OLD TESTAMENT BRINGS “THE FULL STORY”

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Albert Kathenya’s heart burns with a deep desire for his Kenyan community to have more of God. This former leader of the Tharaka New Testament translation now leads a Bible school. But early on, no one would have imagined his life could take such a path.

As a child, Albert missed school frequently, and he spent time in the hospital during secondary school because of an eye problem. A very large and debilitating cataract in one eye brought him very close to complete blindness.

When Albert was struggling with his sight, he came across some books written by T. L. Osborn that changed the course of his life. He remembers it as if it were yesterday.

“[Osborn] was talking about hearing from Christ. After [I read] that book, God healed me miraculously,” he explains, then adding, “Imagine my surprise that now—even at my age—I don’t wear glasses.”

And with new eyes, Albert gained new vision. Merriam-Webster defines *momentum* as the “strength or force gained by motion or by a set of events.” And for Albert, that movement started with God’s call.

While working as the headmaster of a primary school, he felt the call to full-time ministry. He chose to attend Pan Africa Christian University to complete

his bachelor’s degree. The general secretary of Bible Translation and Literacy (BTL) at that time shared about translation work with students during chapel. Following that service, a teacher told the general secretary that Albert was a native speaker.

“He asked me, ‘Would you be interested in helping your people translate the Bible?’” Albert remembers. He immediately replied yes.

“God’s Word is so important in our first language because when you receive it in [your] mother tongue, you don’t question the meaning,” Albert says. “Tharaka is self-explanatory to Tharaka readers. In the mother tongue, God’s Word touches your heart. You clearly and immediately understand what the Bible says.”

### MEETING THE NEEDS OF THE COMMUNITY

Albert served on the translation team for the Tharaka New Testament as the project leader from 1988 to 2001. After the Tharaka New Testament was dedicated on August 26, 2001, he went to Africa International University, where he completed a master’s degree in Christian education in July 2006. He immediately began to teach in churches. The Tharaka New Testament was a grounding force for all denominations.

“We share the common faith in Christianity,” Albert says. “We only come together through the Bible. The Word of God is God Himself. What He says is true. I’ve never seen any community drag behind if they accept the Word of God.”

Pastors, teachers, priests, and ministers came together to read and share the New Testament. Having God’s Word in a language they could understand left little room for misunderstandings. Albert remembers, “We had never experienced that kind of forum before, where all the denominations sat down together and shared [Scripture]. And as we went through that transition period, some theological questions arose. One of the pastors, when we presented to him the gospel of Mark, asked, ‘The Bible says, in the book of Revelation, you should not subtract or add anything to the Bible. Why do you bring us a portion and not a complete Bible?’”

Albert began praying that translation work would begin on the Old Testament so that, ultimately, his people would have the full counsel of God (Acts 20:27). Momentum should carry us on to the end—to the whole story.

### UNITY OF FAITH AND A BIBLE SCHOOL

When Albert retired from his work on the translation, he followed the next call of God on his heart: to begin a Bible school. He and his colleagues realized that pastors need a theological education, so he purchased property for the school. Albert stressed the importance of classes being taught in the Tharaka language. “Pastors are ministering to their locals. There are no foreigners in the villages,” he says.

## *Beyond Zero*

Partners in the global Bible translation movement are committed to Vision 2025: Zero languages without Scripture, and the translation of God’s Word begun in every language by the year 2025. The Tharaka story demonstrates another dimension of commitment. Beyond Zero, we support communities as they work toward finishing well—completing their Scripture goals.

The school’s diploma is now recognized and accepted by all churches as coming from an accredited inter-denominational Bible school. To date, they have celebrated the accomplishments of 48 graduates.

*“The Old Testament is very important because, without the old, there is no new.”*

### VISION BECOMES REALITY

In all the time Albert spent building and launching the school, he never stopped praying for all Tharaka people to have the full Bible in their heart language.

“The Old Testament is very important because, without the old, there is no new. The complete Bible is the whole story,” Albert says.

His prayer became reality when the Tharaka Old Testament was dedicated on June 13, 2019. As chairman of the planning committee, Albert could hardly contain his joy. He remembers how he felt while reflecting on the celebration a few days after the event:

“I thank God that I was able to see it [completed] and participate in the dedication. Now we have the complete Bible in Tharaka. In previous times, I used the Tharaka New Testament without the Old Testament. Now I can teach from Genesis to Revelation.”

And that he does, traveling from church to church and school to school. He holds open-air meetings while still holding classes at the Bible school. And he prays that others will know what he does—the life-changing power of Jesus. “My hope for the Tharaka community is to see God’s Word change the way people think, their world-view transformed,” he says.





## CELEBRATING GOALS, HONORING PEOPLE

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39 COMMUNITIES REACH THE SUMMIT

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*“The best views come after the hardest climb.”*

— AUTHOR UNKNOWN

A breathtaking vista is only as gratifying as the level of courage, strength, and sacrifice it took to get there. But few “climbers” carry so great a burden as those who translate the Word of God. We would be remiss in celebrating this incredible view—39 dedications in 2019—without acknowledging that more than half of them took place in areas hostile to Christianity.

Please remember to pray for courage, peace, and protection over our translators, their families, and all our partner organizations who support not only the translation work, but also the ongoing use of heart language Scripture in evangelizing and discipling God’s people for His kingdom. To God be the glory!

## HEART LANGUAGE SCRIPTURE DEDICATIONS IN FISCAL YEAR 2019

### Africa (12)

- Aari
- Basketo
- Elhomwe
- Gofa
- Huba\*
- Ika
- Kinga
- Melo
- Nyakyusa-Ngonde
- Oyda
- Wamey
- Tharaka

### Americas (4)

- Achi de Cubulco
- Huaylas
- Mixteco de Mechoacan
- Northern Pame

### Asia (18)

- Barthawi\*
- Bunug\*
- Duga\*
- Ehty\*
- Ganit\*
- Huntang\*

- Hoen\*
- Mahn\*
- Nagut\*
- Nakbi\*
- Priau\*
- Rigab\*
- Rowba\*
- Rumba\*
- Sagu\*
- Ula\*
- Uvan\*
- Wolola\*

### Eurasia (1)

- Tabib\*

### Pacific (4)

- Amanuban
- Dhuwya
- Kandas
- Lole

*\*Indicates pseudonyms used for areas hostile to Christian activity*

## PRODUCTS BY REGION

### Africa

- 3 Full Bibles
- 4 New Testaments
- 5 Sets of Oral Bible Stories

### Americas

- 2 Full Bibles
- 1 New Testament
- 1 John Series

### Asia

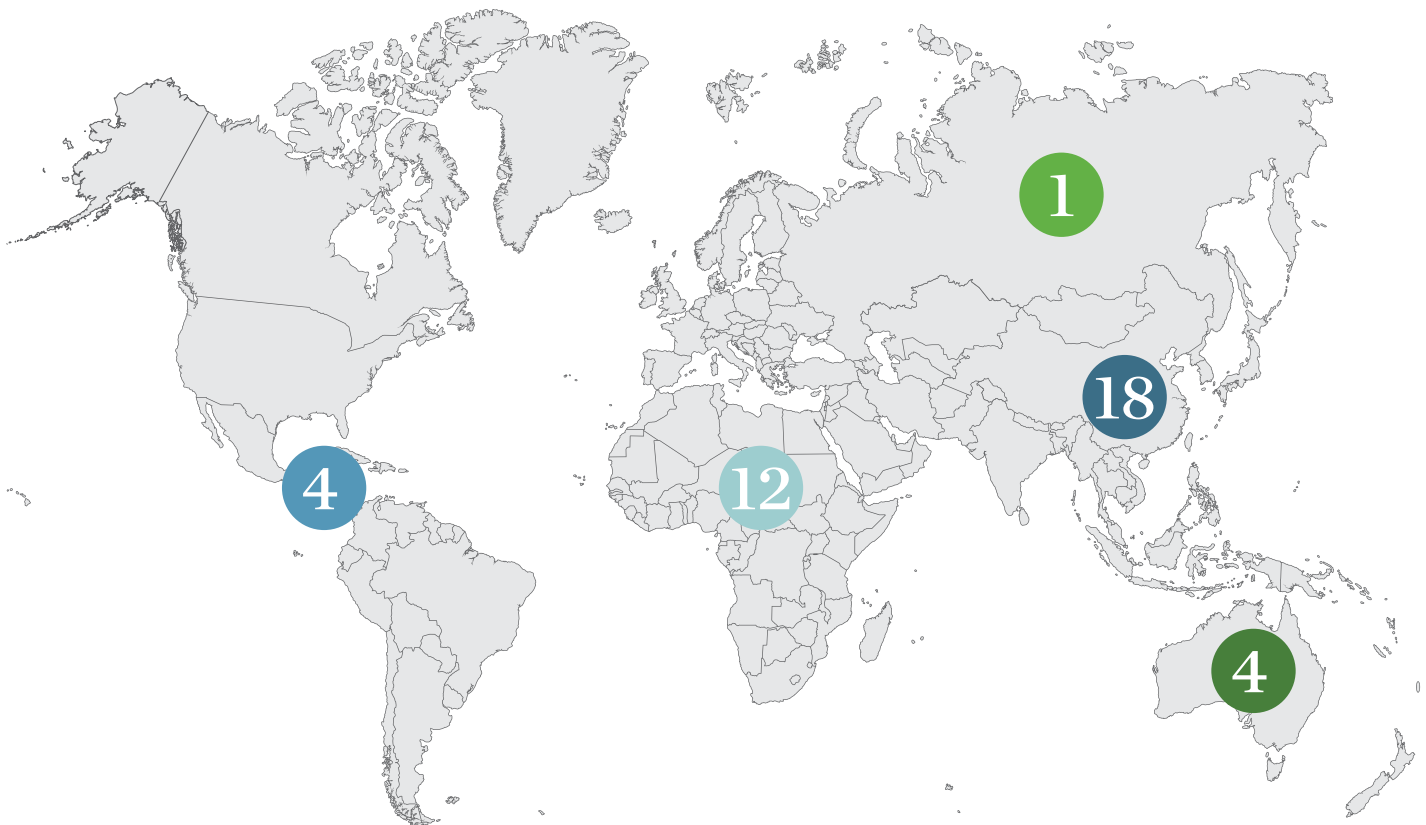
- 18 New Testaments

### Eurasia

- 1 Luke Film

### Pacific

- 2 New Testaments (1 includes Genesis)
- 2 Gospels of Mark





# THIS CHANGES EVERYTHING

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## THE POWER OF LANGUAGE IN INDIA

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“Ideas travel in the chariot of language. If you want to send an idea into a culture ... if you want to bring transformation ... language is the way to do it.”

Dr. Alex learned those words the hard way. He was trained to be a doctor, but he knew God was calling him on a different path: to share the gospel with the people of Bihar. Known as the “graveyard of missions,” Bihar is one of the darkest, most impoverished regions of India. With severe overcrowding and high rates of illiteracy and mortality, the future looked grim. But Dr. Alex tried to focus on the positive. At least he had been able to practice their language, or so he thought, while in medical school.

“I thought, *if only I perfect Hindi*. I would speak in Hindi, I would read the Hindi Bible, and I would try my best to sing Hindi songs. I would give a nice message on Sunday morning in Hindi. That’s it! And I sincerely believed it,” he recalls.

So for the next 10 years, Dr. Alex helped orphans, educated children, and preached God’s Word in Hindi. He thought people understood what he was saying, so the lack of spiritual growth among them was surprising. He noticed that, although some would try to speak to him, many more simply nodded and smiled their replies. It was sobering to learn that those gestures were simply respectful acknowledgments of this cross-cultural missionary in their midst. To discover that they understood only 30 to 40 percent of his words was a crushing blow.

“I never knew my words were not in their *heart language*. I never knew,” he remembers sadly.

### A LANGUAGE OF TOP PRIORITY

Dr. Alex first learned what the term *heart language* meant in 2007 when three men from Seed Company were touring India and requested a meeting with him. By this time, he was the director of a national organization that placed a high priority on “more budget, more missionaries on the field” to accomplish the work. Considering how those missionaries *communicated* with the people was never a concern. Until now.

Dr. Alex’s three guests asked him what the people spoke, and it was as if he heard the question for the very first time.

“Well, I’m not sure. I thought it was Hindi, but I hear there’s another language called Angika,” he replied.

Dr. Alex would hear Angika spoken in the bazaar by men and women, boys and girls, but whenever he asked anyone about it, no one ever acted like it was a legitimate way to communicate.

“All the feedback I would get is, ‘Oh, that’s a different language. They speak it at home. You don’t have to learn it. Hindi’s enough.’ It’s almost like they were saying, ‘That’s their little dialect in the home, but they surely know the language of wider communication.’”

That assumption could not have been further from the truth. One of the men from Seed Company flipped open his ThinkPad and pulled up a list of world languages. When he typed in A-N-G-I-K-A, four lights showed up. As Dr. Alex excitedly asked what that many lights meant next to that language, he got the answer that still amazes him today.

*Top priority in the world.*

“I’m looking at that screen, and I’m saying, ‘My goodness. Four lights. So long I have been here, and I can’t believe that in my own backyard, I’m sitting among people whose language is considered a top priority of the world!’” he says. “I wanted to get under the table. I was so ashamed of myself. I learned the painful truth that it’s not about us, or our work. It’s about lives being changed, and God getting the glory. At best, we’re unworthy servants.”

Within three months, he had already partnered with Seed Company and 30 leaders from different parts of the region. It was a fine start! But, with the exception of one SIL missionary, no one had experience working with languages. When they first started meeting, they weren’t even sure where to begin. But before long, the group had identified six languages being spoken by over 100 million people in this region of Northern India. Three of them had no Scripture at all.

“Is that fair, or what? They didn’t even have Scripture on an audio device to hear God’s Word. Yet maybe dozens

of ministers were using Hindi, and preaching in Hindi, and singing Hindi songs, and reading the Hindi Bible.” Dr. Alex shakes his head at the memory of it. But, together with his new partners in the field and Seed Company, he resolved to change all that.

### TRANSLATION TAKES OFF

Translation teams began crafting 25 Bible stories, four to five minutes in length, in each of the six languages. That’s 125 minutes of content in their own languages. Would it make a difference?

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*After only one month, thousands of people from more than 500 villages had heard—and understood—the gospel message.*

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*“That was the day of my conversion. I understood that this is the way God speaks ... not in an alien language, but in the language of the heart.”*

— DR. ALEX

“I sat there, and I said to myself, ‘I have never, ever seen this. What has happened? Certainly, there must be God in this. Certainly, there’s something right in this ... some power in it ... some acceleration,’” he explains. “I said to my assistant pastor, ‘My goodness, we’d better learn this language. What is this happening in front of us?’ [It was] as if you put a key in the ignition and suddenly had power. Suddenly, there was this dynamite ... this conviction ... this thought that the language means a lot to these people.

“For me, as a cross-cultural missionary, even though I thought that the language of wider communication was okay, it wasn’t okay. That was the day of my conversion. I understood that this is the way God speaks ... not in an alien language, but in the language of the heart.”

Over the last 20 years of ministry, Dr. Alex has seen a great deal of pain, and he has heard from his share of critics. They tell him that his approach is not practical, that it takes too much money to translate Scripture into so many different heart languages. But his response never wavers.

“The only thing I can say to them is, ‘May God change your heart as He has changed mine.’ In 10 years of working and translating the Scriptures, I have yet to meet a person who came to me and said, ‘Alex, you’re wasting your time; don’t do this in my language.’ Not even one. I hear just the opposite. Whenever we do something in their language, they say, ‘Thank you for doing this. Thank you.’”



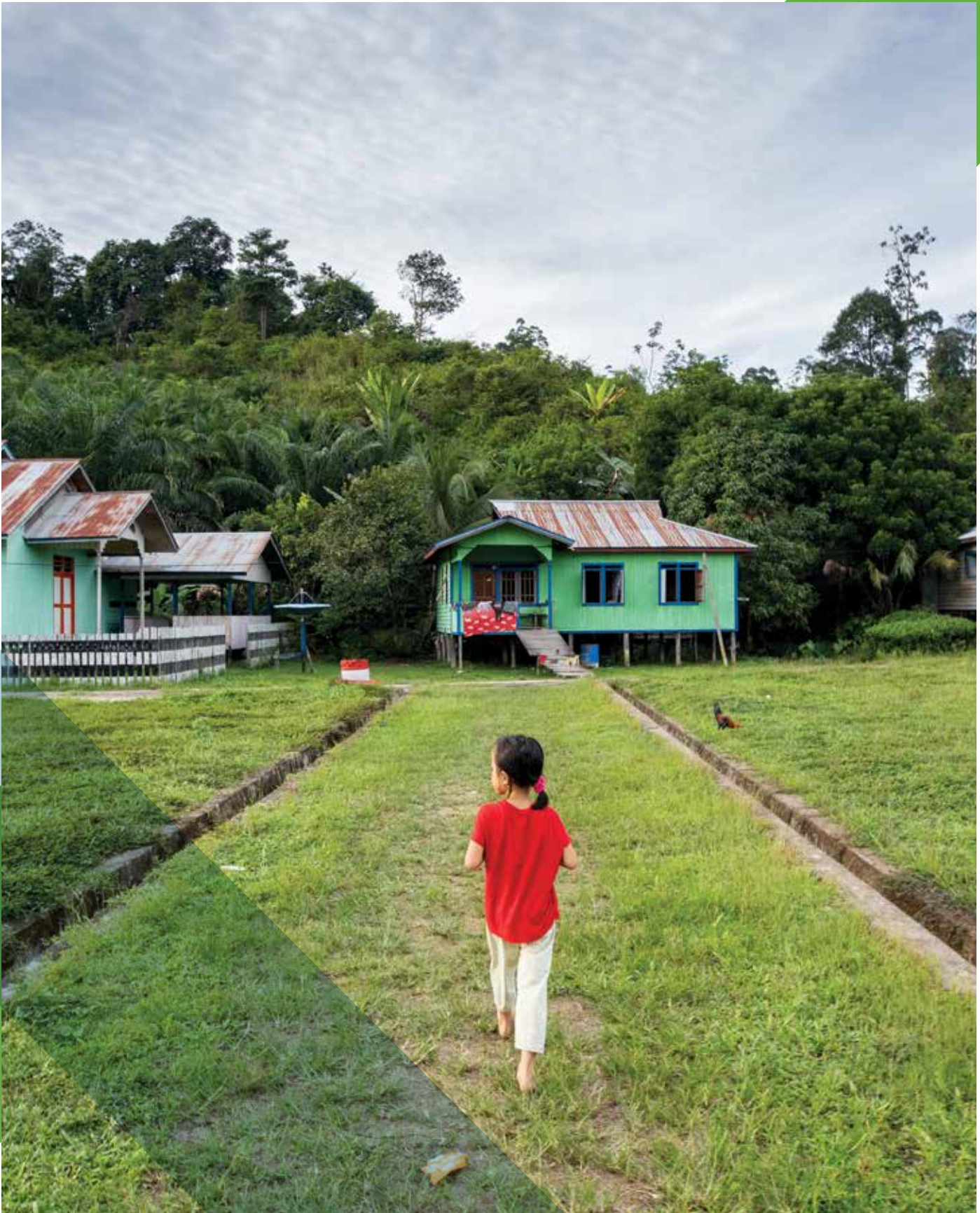


# TRANSFORMATION

## OF GOD'S PEOPLE

*So all of us who have had that veil removed can see and reflect the glory of the Lord. And the Lord—who is the Spirit—makes us more and more like him as we are changed into his glorious image.*

— 2 CORINTHIANS 3:18



# A VOICE FOR JESUS

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## FRUITS OF LOVE AND LABOR IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

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Sometimes, those who believe in Jesus hold on to Him with one hand while clinging to their traditional beliefs with the other. But God's Word is changing that. His love, spoken through heart language Scripture, is shining a bright light all over Southeast Asia. People are beginning to question the purpose for their rituals and the source of their fears.

In this environment, the Robeno Cluster Bible translation project was born. Dani, a pastor, felt a holy nudge to expand his church's vision to a fuller undertaking of the Great Commission. He began hosting storytelling workshops and realized that his Buddhist neighbor, Lyun, was a native Kahak speaker. He invited her to join the team. The Bible stories fascinated her, and she soon came to faith while working on the project.

### AN ANGRY MAN SEES THE LIGHT

As Robeno storytellers told these Bible stories to their families and friends, people wanted more of God's Word. Soon the Robeno Cluster took its next steps—translating the gospel of Luke and using it as a script for the "JESUS" film.

When three days of voice auditions failed to produce a suitable voice for Jesus, Lyun suggested her husband, Andra, try out. Andra was not only antagonistic toward Christianity, but he was equally angry about his wife spending so much time on the project. Nonetheless, the "JESUS" film crew paid him a visit, and since it's culturally unacceptable to refuse a request for help, he obliged them.

Andra auditioned by reading the part of Jesus driving the money changers out of the temple—a perfect script for one who was already angry! His deep voice made him their obvious choice, but God's plan for his role was far greater. Andra had been meditating on the life of Zacchaeus for the first two days of recording, and for the first time, he understood the peace and love he had been missing. Through tears, he asked his wife for forgiveness and shared openly with his children. That Sunday, he gave his testimony in church.

Now Andra works alongside Lyun on the Kahak team. After translating the parable of the lost sheep recorded in Luke 15, he remarked, "From this parable, I realize that God prioritizes the lost. We, too, need to be prioritizing the people who don't know Jesus."

### THE WORK PROGRESSES

God is using the Robeno Cluster to bring other churches and local mission organizations together. Church elders once hesitant to support the work financially now see things differently. Their churches grew in spiritual maturity because the people started practicing what they were learning. Naturally, generosity grew with this deepening faith. Now the work that began locally is spreading to others. Two new clusters, Arui and Simar, will benefit from 12 new translation advisors who trained in the Robeno Cluster. As the seed is sown, multiplication is at hand.



# A RETURN ON INVESTMENT

## TWO FAMILIES PURSUE HEART CHANGE IN THE CONGO

Chris Hawkinson and Marc Kohler are friends and business partners. They go to church together, and their wives and children are friends as well. But on the deepest level, both agree that their relationship has been forged by their equally shared vision for—and commitment to—the Bibleless.

In the lobby of their small printing company in Houston, they've hung a huge world map showing all the places where they've made a difference. In an industry that has been less than profitable for many, Marc and Chris believe God is blessing their capacity for giving—in part, through the work of their dedicated staff.

Chris says they take employees to look at the map, and they tell them, “Because of the job that you do, these kids in Haiti are getting an education. Because of your hard work, these kids in Uganda are getting clean water. It's a big visual representation—a witness—because most of the people we work with are not believers.”

But Chris and Marc do not shy away from talking openly about their faith. They pray every Tuesday for their 90 employees, and they tell them about how Bible translation in “a really, really tough part of the world” is indirectly impacted by their efforts in the office.

They are referring to the Congo.

### A HUGE LEAP OF FAITH

Marc's wife, Leigh, has been involved in the anti-trafficking movement in Houston for the last five years, so it came as no surprise when the Lord led their family to support a Bible translation project in this country known to be the rape capital of the world.

Leigh asks, “How do you heal without the Word of God? How do you heal if you don't have His truth? I haven't been through anything like these women, but I've had enough pain and wounds to know that God's Word has been my saving grace.”

At a forWORD event in 2017, while standing on a map of Africa, Leigh and Marc met an older couple who had

been missionaries for 30 years in the Congo and knew exactly what Seed Company projects were starting up in that very dark place. When Marc and Leigh returned to Houston, they shared the need with Chris and Kristen, who also had a link with the Congo through a ministry to Congolese refugees.

“The Lord has really opened my eyes to not only the work to be done, but the treasure we have,” Kristen says.

*“We certainly want to give,  
but more importantly,  
we want to give of ourselves.”*

— CHRIS HAWKINSON

So the Hawkinsons and Kohlers took a huge leap of faith. The three-year commitment for a translation of Luke and the “JESUS” film was \$180,000. Together, the two couples got the word out by hosting parties and dinners. Chris and Marc shared inspirational video clips of their vision trip to the Congo. The missions pastor of their church got on board, and so did many others. Friends and fellow believers funded roughly half the project, but Chris and Marc wanted to take their commitment a step further.

“We certainly want to give, but more importantly, we want to give of ourselves,” Chris says. “Whatever project I'm involved in, I have to meet the people. That's just how I'm wired. And Marc's wired the same way.”

Chris and Marc have been to the Congo two summers in a row. On the first trip in 2018, they visited homes in several villages to send a message: we love you, God loves you, and the Bible is coming in your language. They visited a prison and two refugee camps. They met the translation team. And they met a Ugandan man who moved his family to the Congo to start a marriage discipleship ministry. Now, Seed Company is partnering with this ministry as well.

*“It was ‘boots on the ground’ for Seed Company in an area where no prior contacts or connections existed. It was a total God thing, partnering a local ministry with a more global one.”*

“There’s a Bible translation element, and now a discipleship element,” Chris says. “It was ‘boots on the ground’ for Seed Company in an area where no prior contacts or connections existed. It was a total God thing, partnering a local ministry with a more global one.”

By the time Marc and Chris made their second trip last summer, they were going back to encourage old friends and demonstrate their commitment. On the first trip, the people said to them, “Please come back. Nobody ever comes back.” The fact that they returned, with family, blessed them deeply.

That second trip included Marc, Chris, Chris’s son Hayden, and Garrett, a friend from Houston who responded to his friends’ fundraising efforts and was equally eager to serve alongside them. Together, they had the opportunity to partner with their Ugandan friend’s discipleship ministry and host a three-day event in a very difficult-to-reach province. They taught God’s Word to 50 pastors and their wives, plus 100 college-aged students and young professionals. Some pastors walked more than 20 miles to hear them teach, with the help of a translator, for eight hours a day. Together, they sought the Lord, praying over the topics they were asked to teach about. Even Hayden, only 14 at the time, did some teaching.

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*At the end of the three days, 70 of the 100 youth made a profession of faith. The pastors hung on every word. Chris challenged them to “pastor themselves” by reading the Word daily.*

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“It was just the most physically and spiritually demanding trip, with the most spiritual warfare. On other mission trips, you might pray over somebody or repaint a fence,” Chris explains. “But the Congolese are so hungry for God’s Word that they just sit there in silence and say, ‘Please share with us,’ everywhere you go. At the end of the trip, we all got very ill. But when I asked my son, ‘Would you do it again?,’ he answered, ‘In a heartbeat.’ As hard as it was, we can’t wait to go back.”

#### **NEXT STEPS**

As the Luholu River Cluster project reaches its current goals, Marc and Chris are planning another trip for the summer of 2020. They hope to visit several Hunde villages, showing the newly translated “JESUS” film and encouraging team members as they begin planning the next project—the translation of more books of the New Testament. Based on their previous experiences with the Hunde, Marc and Chris are not surprised by the passion with which their new friends are pursuing more heart language Scripture. When people taste transformation, they want the whole meal: the full counsel of God (Acts 20:27).



*Garrett, Hayden, Marc, and Chris gave gifts from back home to the Mwami, or village chief. The photo he is holding was taken during their first vision trip.*







# INNOVATION

## THROUGH TECHNOLOGY

*“... who would patch old clothing with new cloth?  
For the new patch would shrink and rip away from  
the old cloth, leaving an even bigger tear than be-  
fore. And no one puts new wine into old wineskins.  
For the wine would burst the wineskins, and the  
wine and the skins would both be lost. New wine  
calls for new wineskins.”*

— MARK 2:21-22

# SEEDS OF INNOVATION

## TECHNOLOGY ACCELERATES TRANSLATION

1

### ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE CLOSES THE GAP

*A new tool provides translation help for sign languages.*

The Visual Language Interpretation System (VLIS) is innovative hardware and software that captures American Sign Language and outputs English text. After one glimpse of VLIS in action—watching a person sign and the artificial intelligence (AI) interpreting the data—you can't help but exclaim, "WOW! What a powerful tool."

Unlike audio translation apps, void of the ability to learn and adapt, the VLIS tool not only translates, but it learns the language and makes adjustments as users interact with it. Even so, man is kept in the middle. The human factor can never be removed from translation because only man has a soul and is able to relate to the Spirit of God. Rather than replace people,

this artificial intelligence allows individuals who are not software engineers to comfortably and efficiently interact with the VLIS tool.

"VLIS could very quickly allow many Deaf communities to experience God communicating in their language," Shawn Ring, Seed Company's chief information officer, says.

Of the 2,115 languages in the world that remain without God's Word, approximately 350 are sign languages representing 70 million

people globally. To date, none of these have a complete Bible. The complexity and cost of current methods of sign language translation have served as a driving force to birth a solution through Avodah Labs, Inc., established in May of 2017. Seed Company founded Avodah to test and refine the software for sign language Scripture translation.

Using VLIS, the plan is to engage all remaining global sign languages in Bible translation by the end of 2023.



*Want to see*

*VLIS in action?*



Scan the QR code or watch online at [vimeo.com/366575642](https://vimeo.com/366575642).

## 2

### THE LIGHTSTREAM POCKET

Developed by Renew World Outreach, the Lightstream Pocket is a mobile distribution center that allows gospel media to be downloaded on cell phones in places where internet is limited, restricted, or nonexistent.

Seed Company used the Pocket during the Alis I Ron New Testament dedication Saturday, October 26, 2019, in Nigeria. Immediately following the ceremony, large groups gathered outside the church doors in anticipation of holding God's Word in their hands. Although the Pocket manages 15 connections at a time, young guards who had already received the apps enthusiastically shared them with those waiting. Each user received a Bible storybook and a hymnal.

The Alis I Ron language represents over 400,000 speakers. Having their mother tongue represented in the format they use most raises the perceived value of the Alis I Ron language.



Mary Ekpe hears God's Word for the first time.



## 3

### THE VILLAGE RADIO

People in Nigeria can buy a village radio in the market for the equivalent of five US dollars. These radios not only have AM/FM capabilities but also have slots for micro SD cards and USB sticks to play MP3 files. A Nigerian translation team recorded Scripture portions, exported an MP3, put it on an SD card, and inserted it into the village radio.

Mary Ekpe, a local believer, had the opportunity to hear Scripture in her heart language for the very first time. As she listened to the radio, a big smile spread across her face. She said, "This is amazing!" She excitedly pointed to her friend and said, "You have to hear this!"

Mary then fell prostrate outside of her church with the radio in front of her, thanking God that she could

finally hear His Word in her mother tongue. The translators gave Mary the radio, and she begged them to record more Scriptures.

Later they learned Mary was going to the town square, sitting on the curb, and playing all of the Scripture portions the team had translated. Day after day, she drew crowds of people who came to listen to Scripture in their language. She returned again and again to the team, asking for more.

Field Technology Specialist Darcie Drymon said, "It's the first time the community realized the translation team was doing any work. They knew the team had some kind of support from westerners, but once they received audio Scripture and gave it to the community, listeners became very inspired."

Today, the community is contributing 30 percent of the budget for this project.

## 4

## RENDER'S SMALL CHUNK EDITING FEATURE

Last summer, Render, a widely used translation software, released an editing tool that prevents Oral Bible Translation (OBT) teams from unnecessarily re-recording entire passages when only one small section needs to be corrected. With this new audio slicing tool, a team can take out a segment as short as ten seconds, re-record it, and insert it back into the passage.

OBT trainer Nathan Richey believes this feature—available at the final consultant checking and revision stages—is extremely beneficial for teams that are close to the finish line. Mistakes happen, and up until now, they haven't been easy to fix.

“When the Skala team was recording a chapter in Ruth, the last word they needed to record was ‘Ruth,’” Nathan remembers. “They had already been recording for over an hour, so they were tired. Only

one person's voice can be used for the recording of a whole passage. Unfortunately, instead of the speaker saying ‘Ruth,’ she said ‘Rachel.’ The whole team was so defeated. They had to start all over.”

The chance for mistakes is even greater when you consider that passages in an oral culture are

typically memorized and recited over and over again to prepare for a recording. Where once it might have taken a whole day to produce a perfect two-minute recording, now a team can correct small mistakes easily and move on to the next passage. “It saves a ton of time and frustration for the team,” Nathan says.



*Ma'di South team members translate Genesis at a Render workshop in Uganda.*



## 5

## A DREAM OF “TALKING BOOKS”

In 2011, when Charles Anyim joined CAPRO Ministries—an indigenous, interdenominational, cross-cultural missions agency in Nigeria—they asked what he brought to the organization.

“God wants me to do talking Bibles ... talking books for our field,” he said, “for more than 36 language groups.”

Eight years in the making, Charles' vision is now reality. Utilizing the Scripture App Builder (SAB) and another tool known as Bloom, both

developed by SIL International, Seed Company and CAPRO provided him with valuable training. Now he's able to share the gospel and deliver what God put in his heart.

“This training has made my dream come true!” Charles explains.

The app combines audio and written Scripture. As the user listens, the spoken text is simultaneously highlighted. This tool can be used for literacy as well as Scripture distribution, thus broadening people's ability to engage with God's Word on their own.



## 6 HOLLYWOOD, MOROCCO, AND LUMO

LUMO is the producer of Hollywood-quality movies of the four Gospels that change the way people engage with God's Word. To make the videos even more realistic, LUMO filmed onsite in Morocco, using Middle Eastern actors. Crews plan to shoot additional footage that gives a panoramic view of the Old Testament. Those scenes will help some viewers understand biblical story elements—boats, the sea, temples—that may not exist in their culture.

Currently available in more than 200 languages, LUMO videos are opening doors to heart language Scripture across the globe. Our partner organization, Faith Comes By Hearing (FCBH), reports that more than 125 Bible translation partners are using or planning to use these videos. The exciting visual content facilitates group discussion and discipleship.

LUMO movies offer the ability to incorporate audio versions of translated Scripture without the need for script translation, voice actor training, and dubbing. According to John Lamphear, Seed Company's manager of field technology, "The LUMO gospel films are created with a voiceover in mother tongue, instead of lip sync, so it's easier to produce. We are able to engage language communities more quickly, and more effectively."



# DEDICATION

TO HIS CALLING

*For as the waters fill the sea, the earth  
will be filled with an awareness  
of the glory of the LORD.*

— HABAKKUK 2:14



*Orville Rogers, center, poses with Special Advisor to the President Jim Akovenko and President and CEO Samuel Chiang in front of a mural by artist Hyatt Moore. The mural is a historical depiction of Seed Company staff throughout the years.*

# CROSSING THE FINISH LINE

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## IN MEMORY OF A VALUED PARTNER

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Orville Rogers started running when he was 50 years old. He read a book about the importance of aerobic exercise and started running the very next day. By the time he was 100, he had logged more than 43,000 miles. He earned 18 world record titles ... *after* he turned 90. Not many have the years, or the stamina, to live the way Orville did.

Orville was inspired by two things when he was only 10 years old: his new faith in Jesus and the transatlantic flight of Charles Lindbergh. But it would be many years before he saw those passions merge. After graduating from the University of Oklahoma and recommitting his life to the Lord, he went on to seminary to ultimately pursue a career in vocational Christian ministry. But when World War II broke out, he saw that God wanted his service in a different arena—the Army Air Corps.

Flying soon became an integral part of Orville's life. After serving his country, he flew for commercial airlines for the next 30 years. During that time, he met William Cameron Townsend, the founder of Wycliffe Bible Translators. That fated meeting in 1965 propelled Orville into service with the Jungle Aviation and Radio Service (JAARS) for over 50 years. He ferried 46 missionary airplanes to places where they were most needed: 20 in the United States and 26 in South America or over the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans—quite a feat when some were single-engine airplanes!

When Orville wasn't flying, he was investing, and giving ... to the tune of \$35 million in his lifetime. He had been a generous supporter of numerous Christian ministries, including Seed Company.

"Save all you can, invest all you can, give all you can. I can't pin it down any closer than that," Orville said. For everything in life—from giving to running to living out his faith—Orville's advice was simple, and he practiced what he preached. "It's not difficult to remain disciplined if you have a deep-set conviction in your heart that you are a child of God, saved by the efficacious death of our Lord Jesus on the cross. That's the primary prayer of my life ... that I would live well for Jesus as long as He gives me life and breath."

As a token of their support, Nike gave Orville running gear that he proudly wore through the years. But he was particularly fond of a custom pair of running shoes designed by Dank & Co. for his 100th birthday. Inscribed on the tongue of the right shoe is the address of his favorite verse:

Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a huge crowd of witnesses to the life of faith, let us strip off every weight that slows us down, especially the sin that so easily trips us up. And let us run with endurance the race God has set before us. We do this by keeping our eyes on Jesus, the champion who initiates and perfects our faith. Because of the joy awaiting him, he endured the cross, disregarding its shame. Now he is seated in the place of honor beside God's throne. — Hebrews 12:1-2

On Thursday, November 14, 2019, Orville crossed the finish line into His Master's glory.

He was surrounded by family as he celebrated his homecoming, just two weeks shy of his 102nd birthday.

Thank you, Orville, for inspiring us—for running your race well and finishing strong.

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*"I never asked God for a long life, or fame, or riches. And he's given me all three.  
And I'm happy to be where I am. I'm delighted to be where I am."*

— ORVILLE ROGERS



# STAFF HIGHLIGHTS

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*“Here at Seed Company, the business principles we uphold are complementary to our missions work and are rooted in the truth of God’s Word and God’s character.”*

## AMY EASTERLIN

*Senior Field Coordinator – Nigeria*

When Amy accepted Christ while in the Marine Corps, she quickly found herself without the friends she once had. During that lonely time, she felt as if all she had was God and His Word. And that was just what she needed. God used that season to plant a call on her life. She knew that, one day, she would go and proclaim His name, sharing with everyone the same Scripture that sustained her.

After spending 11 years serving the government as a logistics analyst, Amy transitioned to full-time ministry as a missionary with Wycliffe Bible Translators. However, her journey to “the field” took an unexpected turn when she visited Seed Company. After hearing about our process for developing and managing Bible translation projects, Amy quickly realized how God was directing her to use her gifts and experiences.

Now, as the senior field coordinator for Nigeria, Amy does not see a distinction between missions and business principles; instead, she sees them as complementary. God uses both to accomplish His work.

“Missions God’s way includes principles like accountability, intentionality, and stewardship,” Amy says. “I have learned to not view business and missions as opposing efforts. Here at Seed Company, the business principles we uphold are complementary to our missions work and are rooted in the truth of God’s Word and God’s character.”

# STAFF HIGHLIGHTS

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*“Story has a way of not just affecting the mind but affecting the heart. It invites someone into a world and shows them a perspective.”*

## MICAH FAIRCHILD

*Film Producer*

After Micah spent three months in Asia, he developed a passion for two things: the power of storytelling and the countries where the gospel message is restricted. When he moved to Texas to take care of his grandfather, he discovered Seed Company—a place where he could pursue both.

As a film producer here, Micah is responsible for creating videos that connect partners with the on-going work of Bible translation around the world.

“I find and tell stories of individuals, families, communities, cultures, countries, and governments that have been transformed, are in the process, or are looking to be transformed by God’s Word,” he explains. “Story has a way of not just affecting the mind but affecting the heart. It invites someone into a world and shows them a perspective. It’s a way to effectively get past different cultural boundaries, as well as political boundaries and intellectual boundaries.”

Through his work here, Micah has visited several countries and heard many stories about people who have given up their lives for the sake of the gospel. He says stories like these keep him focused on the goal, and the working power of God’s Word in his life is what motivates him.

“It’s easy to get caught up in day-to-day tasks,” Micah states, “but the work we are doing is eternal.”

# STAFF HIGHLIGHTS

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## PRESTON FRANCIS

*Product Owner*

In his role as a product owner at Seed Company, Preston works to ensure that the goals of both developers and users of the Seed Company website are represented and accommodated. But throughout his time here, Preston has found that he has received support and opportunities to achieve his own goals as well.

After working in product management in a variety of corporate settings, Preston decided to transition to Seed Company to grow spiritually as well as professionally. He is continually encouraged by the personal investment leaders make to help their employees succeed; more than just criticism and feedback, they give of their own time and experience to make growth a reality.

“A lot of organizations say they value their people; this organization *does*,” he says.

But Preston does not see his own professional development as the end goal. Instead, he sees his work as product owner ultimately supporting Seed Company’s greater mission of Bible translation.

“I have been more satisfied with my career choices than I have been in a long time,” he says. “Previously, it was about climbing as high as I could. Now, it’s not about me trying to get a promotion. It’s about me getting God’s Word out there.”

*“Previously, it was about climbing as high as I could. Now, it’s not about me trying to get a promotion. It’s about me getting God’s Word out there.”*

# STAFF HIGHLIGHTS

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*“We’re actually doing something that is very fundamental in helping people find who God is and who they are in Christ.”*

## KETLIEN MANUEL

*Field Coordinator — Islands Asia*

Ketlien first came to the United States from Southeast Asia to pursue a degree at Moody Bible Institute. As part of her education, she had the chance to stay in the States for another year and work full time in a practical application of her degree. After a few months of working at her church, a friend suggested that Ketlien consider Seed Company.

Now as a field coordinator, Ketlien communicates with a variety of field partners in Islands Asia on a daily basis. This communication ensures that field partners’ practices are meeting the guidelines of Seed Company’s values and goals, so those organizations can receive support, funding, and resources. She views Seed Company’s work in Bible translation as one phase in the overall Great Commission process.

“It’s like one level,” Ketlien explains. “You need to have the Word of God in the language you understand best. So, we’re actually doing something that is very fundamental in helping people find who God is and who they are in Christ.”

Ketlien is committed to Seed Company’s core value of managing for quality results, both for projects she manages as field coordinator and in her own life. She approaches the role of working with God’s Word with reverence, knowing it is impacting individuals for eternity.

“We are here because we honor our God,” Ketlien says. “It’s not about projects. It’s about, first of all, that we live to honor God in all the things that we do. And it’s reflected through prayers and the way you relate with one another.”

As Ketlien returns to her home country to continue working as a remote field coordinator with Seed Company, she says she knows she will carry these values back with her.

# EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP TEAM

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**SAMUEL E. CHIANG**  
President and CEO



**J.R. THOMPSON**  
Chief Financial Officer



**LORI MILLER**  
Chief Administration  
Officer



**SHAWN RING**  
Chief Information Officer



**BILL McCOY**  
Chief Field Officer



**MIKE TOUPIN**  
Chief Story Officer



**CRAIG SHAVER**  
Chief Development Officer

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The members of **Seed Company's Executive Leadership Team** are stewards of God's provision. They lead their teams in the global work of Bible translation with prayer, wisdom, and humility. President and CEO Samuel E. Chiang determines Seed Company's corporate strategies, oversees organizational initiatives, and steers the team in executive-level decisions.

**Seed Company's Board of Directors** represents business knowledge from many vocational fields. Along with a passion for God's Word, each brings a unique, God-imparted vision for accelerating global Bible translation. Their collective experience, dedication, and insight allows this governance board to assess the best direction for Seed Company.

# BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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**JASON S. BAKER**  
Chairman of the Board  
2012–present  
Principal/Owner  
Baker Katz, LLC



**MATTHEW MANCINELLI**  
Vice Chair of the Board  
2014–present  
Chief Executive Officer  
Soar Detroit



**JILL ANSCHUTZ**  
2016–present  
Freelance Communications  
Strategist



**KENT BRESEE**  
2017–present  
Managing Principal  
Revayah Capital, LLC



**JOHN CHESNUT**  
May 2019–present  
President and CEO  
Wycliffe Bible  
Translators USA



**STEVEN GANSS**  
2019–present  
Managing Partner and  
Co-Founder, ReignRock  
Capital Partners



**MICHEL KENMOGNE**  
2016–present  
Executive Director  
SIL International



**ANDREA LEVIN KIM**  
2016–present  
Partner  
Daniels & Tredennick, LLP



**ROBBY MOSER**  
2015–present  
President and CEO,  
Clark Construction Group,  
LLC



**CHRIS ORDWAY**  
2018–present  
Executive Director  
Empart North America/  
OneEgg.org



**JOYCE WILLIAMS**  
2010–2019\*  
Board Member  
Cornerstone Trust  
*\*Board Chair term  
completed in May*

Lori Miller, Nyla Nelson, Anita Jansen, Janice Jones, Steve Rickler, Jane Bussard, Fran Basse, MC Mustin, Sharon Wells, Jessica de Carvalho, Amy D. Rickwartz, Annie Jones, Nyanjigu Githui, James Kotyaki, Becca Lewis, Tracy Brandt, Adrianne Huang, Kelly Jones, Alex Windle, John Tseninger, Blake Brown, Janice Stefanis, Canmy, Linda K Jones, Je Rynolds, Tammy Cortimilla, Sarah Villa, William Upton, Carol Johnson, Anne Lin, Marg Holman, John Langhear, Pat Fi, Roger H, Shelia Boetinger, Isleming, Kelly Ross, John, Dave! John Kinia, Tom Holman, Shanda Gregor, Tony Hubbs, King, Robin, John Schick, Kara Suddiff, Apollo R. Silva, Jessica Lambrase, Tom Boyce, Amy Ngunjiri, Janet Stahl, Dana Flynn, Katy Gregor, John, AJ Shuk, Mike E. Stann, Mary Walton, Pat Edmiston, Kayla Spann, Annie Laing, John Kinia, Ken Jones, Jim J, Mary Borsh, Drew Moore, Bobbie Owens, Scott Calogian, in, Andy Ring, Fred Diggins, Sandy Gould

Although we are an organization made up of more than 300 individuals, our signatures on this page represent a singular commitment—an unwavering belief in the transformational power of God’s Word ... for all people, in all places, for all time. We are devoted.



# FINANCIALS

## FOR FISCAL YEAR 2019

*Oh, how great are God's riches and wisdom  
and knowledge! How impossible it is for us  
to understand his decisions and his ways!  
For everything comes from him and exists by  
his power and is intended for his glory.  
All glory to him forever! Amen.*

— ROMANS 11:33, 36



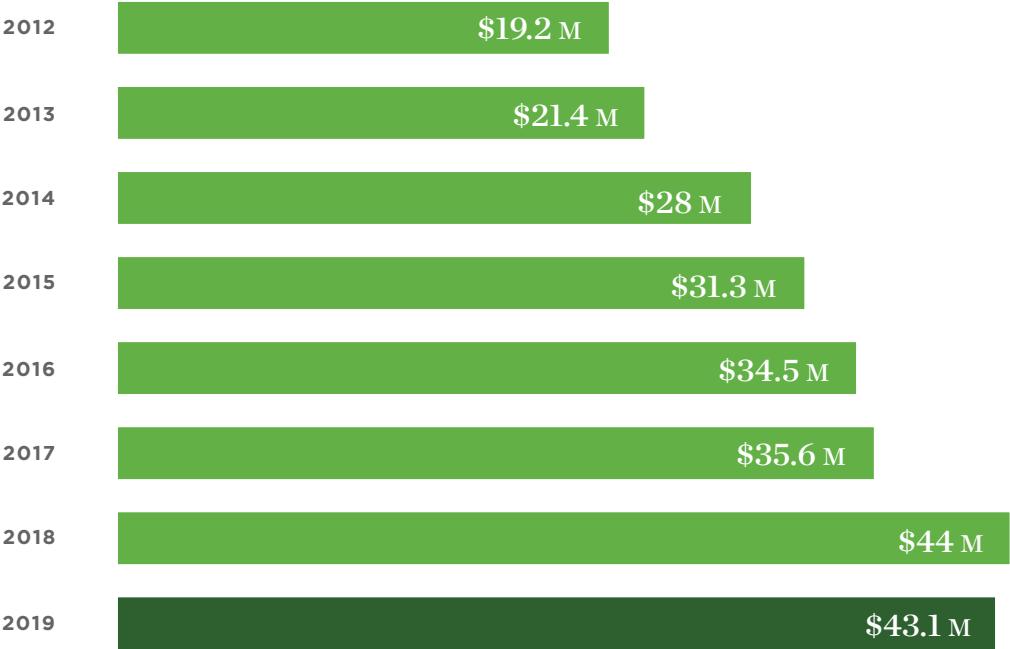
# REACHING GOALS—TOGETHER

As we set our sights on reaching Zero and beyond, the staff of Seed Company strives for humility, generosity, integrity, and accountability. We can only accomplish those goals in partnership with our financial investors. God has blessed that partnership with mutual trust,

shared vision, and an unwavering passion for the unreached. And He continues to amaze us with the faithfulness of those who provided generous contributions in FY2019.



## CONTRIBUTION INCOME



THE WYCLIFFE SEED COMPANY, INC. | CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

FOR THE YEAR ENDED SEPTEMBER 30, 2019

With Comparative Totals for the Year Ended September 30, 2018

	Without Donor Restrictions	With Donor Restrictions	Total 2019	Total 2018
<b>SUPPORT AND REVENUE</b>				
Contributions	\$ 4,640,360	\$ 37,942,668	\$ 42,583,028	\$ 40,683,523
Support from affiliates (Note 11)			-	-
Wycliffe contributions	40,062	505,188	545,250	2,178,151
Member support	4,759,741	-	4,759,741	5,097,880
Service income	15,000	-	15,000	276,567
Investment income (Note 4)	474,159	-	474,159	848,666
Other Income	9,414	-	9,414	64,133
Net assets released from restrictions			-	-
Field operations adjustments	6,483,998	(6,483,998)	-	-
Administrative adjustments			-	-
(19% administrative & fundraising)	6,951,347	(6,951,347)	-	-
Satisfaction of program restrictions	25,968,497	(25,968,497)	-	-
<b>TOTAL SUPPORT AND REVENUE</b>	<b>49,342,578</b>	<b>(955,986)</b>	<b>48,386,592</b>	<b>49,148,920</b>
<b>OPERATING EXPENSES</b>				
Program services - Bible translation	43,327,237	-	43,327,237	37,323,711
General and administration services	3,356,719	-	3,356,719	3,807,707
Fundraising services				
(Includes communications, marketing)	7,241,331	-	7,241,331	7,643,752
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>53,925,287</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>53,925,287</b>	<b>48,775,170</b>
<b>CHANGE IN NET ASSETS</b>	<b>(4,582,709)</b>	<b>(955,986)</b>	<b>(5,538,695)</b>	<b>373,750</b>
Net Assets, Beginning of Year	12,674,167	20,083,705	32,757,872	32,384,122
<b>NET ASSETS, END OF YEAR</b>	<b>\$ 8,091,458</b>	<b>\$ 19,127,719</b>	<b>\$ 27,219,177</b>	<b>\$ 32,757,872</b>

NOTE: All financial figures cited in this document for FY19 are unaudited and unconsolidated as of press time. Audited numbers will be available in early 2020, and can be viewed at [seedcompany.com](http://seedcompany.com).



The Seed Company is a member of the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability (ECFA) and complies fully with its rules for Christian ministries, including an annual independent financial audit.



Seed Company earned the Excellence in Giving Transparency Certificate by submitting 175 strategy, leadership, financial, and impact data to Nonprofit Analytics. Review our cost effectiveness at <https://analytics.excellenceingiving.com/overview/seed-company>.

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## SPECIAL NOTES

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Over 2,000 people groups, representing hundreds of millions of people, do not have a single verse of Scripture in their heart language. Seed Company exists to come alongside these people groups, to help resource the Bible translation process. We invite families and churches to partner with us through prayer and financial investments.

Seed Company is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization with a vision to accelerate Scripture translation and impact for people without God's Word through Great Commission partnerships.

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Pseudonyms have been used throughout this report to protect the identities of individuals in regions hostile to Christians.

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*Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a huge crowd of witnesses to the life of faith, let us strip off every weight that slows us down, especially the sin that so easily trips us up. And let us run with endurance the race God has set before us.*

— HEBREWS 12:1



A Wycliffe Bible Translators Affiliate

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