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Mission Lines

“As we have opportunity, let us do good to all people”

Galatians 6:10

“How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news”

Romans 10:15



Alemitu near her farm plot

4th Mar 2020

An occasional newsletter of mission news and activities

No.47

TEARFUND IN ETHIOPIA AND MALAWI – a report by Liu Liu

Three years ago, Tearfund started to work on a new cooperate priority called Environmental and Economic Sustainability (EES). This is not a departure from its core activities to reduce poverty. Rather, it is a new priority bringing greater focus to the following three areas:-

1. Creating green jobs and livelihoods which generate real income and are economically sustainable.
2. Helping to restore the environment at local, national and global levels.
3. Reducing inequality.

During the past two years, we started work with existing partners in 14 countries on new pilot EES projects. Initiatives in Pakistan, Haiti, Nepal, DRC and Nigeria are testing how to link waste management with energy generation, resilience and job creation. The work of recycling hubs in slums in Pakistan has attracted significant interest, and a UK fundraising appeal for their work won match funding through DFID’s UK Aid Match.

In Tanzania and Zambia, partners are introducing solar energy through their existing Church and Community Transformation programme, and providing households with light in the evening so that children can study for longer and adults can spend longer on income-generating activities.

The Ethiopia project is using self-help groups to create environmentally sustainable jobs, restore and protect the local environment and tackle inequality. Meanwhile, in Chad, we are scaling up a programme to promote climate-smart agriculture and strengthening communities’ access to markets. We are also about to introduce solar-powered irrigation to farmers.

In Malawi, India and Rwanda, our partners are helping to make livelihoods projects responding to climate change more focused on EES goals: for example, improving people’s access to markets so they get a better price for their crops, and helping them add value to their produce (eg drying and preserving it). In Nepal, our partner is reviving their local economy through restoration of ecological services, water and agriculture systems for resilient development.

In January 2020, I had the opportunity to visit Ethiopia and Malawi. Here is one Ethiopian lady’s story of transformation. W/ro Alemitu Ashebo is a 27-year-old married woman who has got two children. She and her husband were engaged in mixed farming: crop production and livestock

rearing but her household's livelihood was not enough to meet their needs. So her husband used to go to distant places every year to do daily labour on commercial farms. Even then, their needs were not fully met and they felt trapped and couldn't improve their lives. They eventually decided to work hard on their farm, even though it was very small and this year, they were given training on how to earn better income from small plots of land by producing high value crops like vegetables. The onions, tomatoes, peppers etc. that have been produced has enabled the family to have enough for their needs and to buy a bull!!

Alemitu said "I was not aware of vegetable production before I received the training. I used to consider that vegetables were for urban residents and not for people like me. But now, thanks to the training, I am able to produce three types of vegetables, namely onion, tomato and pepper. I have never ever generated such a big amount of money in my life." Alemitu joined a Self Help Group and regularly saves 5 birr per week. She has a plan to construct a house with corrugated iron roofing because her grass roofed house leaks during the rainy season.

PURULIA HOSPITAL NEW OUT PATIENTS DEPARTMENT

In West Bengal, India, Purulia Hospital New Out Patients Department was opened on 12 November 2019.

It will transform the experience and care of patients and staff and secure the future of this vital Christian presence in a very poor part of India.

Dr Joydeepa's words at the opening just summed up what it means when she said "Our hearts are overwhelmed when we think of God's goodness. Our cup runneth over. We asked for a little and he filled our cup up 'til it spilled over the brim."

Thank you all at BRBC for your part in bringing this project to fruition.

HEAL NEPAL UPDATE

BRBC folk contributed to this project to enable people affected by the early stages of leprosy in the remote areas of Nepal to be identified and treated. The vision is to create 100 clinical teams and to train and equip them to go into the remote areas. It was match funded by UK Aid.

The results are:-

- £4.18 million raised.
- DFID contract prepared and signed 22 Oct 2019
- Key 8 person management team formed
- The baseline assessment completed end Jan 2020
- Government and Local approvals to be secured end Feb 2020
- Field teams trained and starting by July 2020

Please keep praying!



WHY DOES BIBLE TRANSLATION TAKE SO LONG?

This is a question that those of us involved in Bible Translation are often asked together with a related one:- why can't computers do the job a lot more quickly? Computers are a great help in many ways at every stage of the process but they are not yet able to take over the whole job. So what all is involved?

1. Language research – If the target language does not already have a recognised alphabet, the sounds of the language need to be identified and assigned symbols in an agreed script so that a system of writing can be developed. Then in order that the translation will sound natural in the language and will use appropriate idioms, the grammar and semantics of the language need to be studied. Even those translating into their own language need to have some awareness of how their language works in comparison with others. Otherwise they are tempted to translate word by word and their translation will sound 'foreign' or even incomprehensible.
2. Study of the Biblical text – Before a translator can translate a passage accurately, he or she has to understand it well enough to choose the best words to use and make decisions about how the different parts of the passage relate to each other. In many passages there are questions that even commentators cannot agree on! They can give alternative interpretations but translators have to choose one way or the other, at least for their main text.
3. Drafting the translation and deciding on how to translate theological terms such as grace, Holy Spirit, righteousness etc.
4. Checking the translation – It is important that the translation is an accurate rendition of the original text and that it communicates clearly to its readers or hearers, so thorough checking is needed. Especially trained consultants will go through every verse to ensure accuracy and native speaker reviewers will be asked to give comment as to its clarity or otherwise. This all takes time.
5. Final consistency and spelling checks – Before the final manuscript is handed over for typesetting and printing, the spelling needs to be consistent, names need to be spelt the same way in every occurrence and key terms need to be translated similarly in each place.

After many years of work, the Bench Bible translation team in Ethiopia has reached stage 5 and they are hoping to be able to hand over their manuscript to the typesetters before the end of the year. We pray that this will be possible. Pray also for other translation teams around the world seeking to make God's word available in their people's heart languages.



The Bench Translation Team



The Bench New Testament

Continue to pray for our other friends involved in mission work overseas:-

Cally Magalhaes – The Eagle Project, Brazil –Praise God that the sessions being held regularly in the youth and women’s prisons in Sao Paolo are going well and that the project was able to replace it’s old car. Pray concerning Cally’s relationship with her brothers after their mother’s recent passing. She also asks for prayer for Wallace, one of those helped by the sessions while he was in prison and who is now in his last year of study at university. Cally has recently written a book about her life and how God transformed it and led her into the work she is now doing. Pray that God will use it to transform and encourage others.

Ray and Kitty Sherrod – Praise God that funding for Ray’s Livelihoods Project looks solid for the next two years. They say that they are enjoying life, but are very busy and the needs and opportunities are endless! They would appreciate prayers for wisdom to know when and how to say ‘no’ when they get so many requests for help. Pray, too, for a lasting peace to come in the troubled country in which they live.

Claire Bedford in Chad – Claire is praising God that the long-awaited hospital equipment is now installed and working, meaning that patients can have x-rays at Guinebor II Hospital rather than have to make the long journey into town. She is also praising God for some other BMS colleagues joining the hospital team, but she now has extra responsibilities as she has been made the Guinebor BMS team leader.

Peter and Louise Lynch in Bangladesh – Praise God that long term visas were eventually granted. The Lynches are now very busy with a wide variety of activities. Recently they were both asked to preach at the Bangladesh Baptist Church conference when several thousand Baptist Christians from all over the country gathered. New leaders came into office and the next 4-year cycle of life in the BBCS family got underway. Pray for the newly elected leadership of BBCS that they will be God centred in all that they do. Pray also for the Lynches that they would be able to focus on the essential work God has for them to do. We look forward to welcoming Peter and Louise to BRBC on Sunday 12th July.

Guera Translation Project in Chad – Praise God that New Testaments in two of the languages in the project have been printed and are on their way to the areas where the languages are spoken. Dedication celebrations are being planned in both areas for April, so pray the copies will arrive in good time. Pray, too, that people will be ready to receive the Word of God in their own language. Work on another of the languages is approaching the finishing line and the team is hoping that the New Testament will be typeset in Cameroon in July this year.

Persecuted Christians – Let us continually remember in our prayers Christians in areas of the world where there is serious persecution. After a recent fact-finding visit to Nigeria, Baroness Cox estimated that at least 7,000 Christians have been killed in the north of the country in the last 5 years by various Islamist groups. Such groups are also infiltrating other West African countries and targeting Christians. Pray, too, for the release of girls kidnapped and held by such groups.

If you have a news item for inclusion in the next edition of Mission Lines, send it to mission@brbc-horsham.org.uk