

Sahel

In the Sahel region of Africa, God has built strong partnerships among translation teams, churches, and mission organizations to help everyone have access to God's Word.

Pray for Obstacles to Bible Translation

CIVIL UNREST	RELIGIOUS EXTREMISM	NATURAL DISASTERS
Bible translators in the Sahel persevere amid political instability in several countries.	Threats of violence from religious extremists are common in many areas.	Severe droughts often cause loss of crops, resulting in serious poverty for many.

Pray God's Word

Pray 2 Corinthians 4:6 over the Sahel: "For God who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness,' has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of God's glory in the face of Jesus Christ." May the light of Christ shine to everyone in the Sahel through his Word.

[Why Pray for Zero?](#)

[Go deeper in specific, strategic prayer for the Sahel with this 3-part article from the Lausanne Movement.](#)

Regional Praise

Saxwe People in Benin Dedicate the New Testament

In a quiet village in Benin, around 2,000 Saxwe people gathered on August 12th to celebrate the arrival of the first Saxwe New Testament. But it was anything but quiet! See the people's excitement as the Bible, lifted up high, makes its way through the crowd like a bride walking down the aisle:

In an area where voodoo is commonly practiced, the power of God's Word in the heart language is already evident. Dozens of people spoke at the dedication—including one man who might surprise you. Known locally as “the prophet of the voodoo world,” this man stood up and said, “When someone feels sick, just one word from the Saxwe Bible will heal them.”

[Watch the Saxwe NT Dedication.](#)

PRAY

That this “voodoo prophet” who recognizes the healing power of God's Word will soon come to Christ for healing that will last forever.

Monday

And then he told them, "Go into all the world and preach the Good News to everyone."

—Mark 16:15 (NLT)

PRAY FOR A BIBLELESS PEOPLE GROUP Taking Back What the Enemy Has Stolen in West Africa

Hundreds of years ago, a certain people group in West Africa identified as Christian. They didn't have Scripture in their language. When another major world religion took control of the area, this group was easily forced to follow.

Today, there are few believers among them, but they are faithful and growing. They completed the New Testament almost 20 years ago, and while they listen with great interest, they must do so in secret. In this area of the world, it is dangerous to show interest in Jesus as Lord.

For years, local church leaders have been requesting help to translate the Old Testament, which could be used to build bridges to the gospel. One local pastor expressed an urgency to move forward "while there is still daylight in which we can work."

[Get a glimpse into this area of the world.](#)

PRAY

For all barriers to be removed and for details to fall into place for beginning this project soon.

Pray for the Namkeli* Team in West Africa

Only about 1% of Namkeli people profess Christianity. But on the clifftop, where only Namkeli is spoken, people eagerly listen to Scripture on small radios. Some trek down the cliff to discuss what they've learned with pastors.

The Namkeli team has been translating the New Testament since 2012, and they're hoping to finish within the next 3 years. Yet as is so often the case, the enemy is increasing his attacks as this language project is nearing the finish line. The project coordinator and main translator is having to step back from responsibilities for a variety of reasons. He will continue to work with the project, but in a reduced role and capacity.

PRAY

For the successful continuation of this project, and that the Lord will be glorified in the completion of the New Testament for the Namkeli people.

Tuesday

God will do this, for he is faithful to do what he says, and he has invited you into partnership with his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

—1 Corinthians 1:9 (NLT)

PRAY FOR PARTNERS

SIL Togo-Benin

Because of the faithfulness of [SIL Togo-Benin](#) over the years, many language groups in these two countries now have the full Bible, and others are nearing completion! They are currently partnering with Seed Company to translate Scripture into one language in Benin and one language in Togo.

PRAISE

- According to Progress.Bible, Togo only has 2 languages left waiting to begin Scripture translation, and Benin has 9! Praise God that these nations are quickly approaching Zero.

PRAY

- For two new language groups SIL Togo-Benin is hoping to begin working with soon. They have only small portions of translated Scripture, but their growing churches are eager for more.
- For God to protect communities in the northern regions of both countries from violence and insecurity.
- For God to strengthen the translation teams, especially those nearing the finish line.

Pray Now

For protection over the family of project coordinator Mbuta Sem, who is working with six translation projects and must frequently travel down rough roads that are also fraught with kidnapping risks. Pray also for complete healing for his wife, who has recently been diagnosed with a nerve issue.

Pray Now

For a project in a sensitive Sahel country that is attempting to restart after several years. Workers disagree on the best way forward, including translation style and team members. Ask for wisdom from the Lord, unity in the Spirit, and the bond of peace, that the people might soon have the full counsel of God in their language.

Wednesday

So I am willing to endure anything if it will bring salvation and eternal glory in Christ Jesus to those God has chosen.

—2 Timothy 2:10 (NLT)

Kadaban sɔna acin, kata musuf am takwaniy cike, makavay hidiy Bayzlav mə welta. Za kə jan taniy təm Yesu Kristu kə mbəлта kad, za buw kə pətiy am mordoy ngetik maa a way bahdabkwən.

—2 Timote 2:10 (Midi*, a language in West Africa)

PRAY FOR AN ACTIVE TRANSLATION PROJECT Midi* New Testament Team in West Africa

Most Midi* people practice African Traditional Religion, seeking protection through animistic rituals. Many churchgoers identify as Christians but lack a full understanding of the gospel. Midi* believers are enthusiastic about having a New Testament in their own language.

One translator writes:

“At certain points, I’ve wondered why it is taking us so long to finish translating the New Testament. A verse that really struck me was Matthew 19:30: ‘Many who are first will be last, and many who are last will be first.’ I said to myself, even though we’re still last in terms of the development of our translation project, if as a team we set to work with God’s help, we hope one day to become first and not the last. So I no longer keep the spirit of last but rather the spirit of first. Whatever we do with the Lord’s help is always the best.”

Watch a Midi Worship Song and Dance

The song in this video is a traditional Midi song, but the words have been replaced with worship lyrics!

[**A traditional Midi song that the church has changed the words into a worship song**](#)

You'll also notice some people pressing paper money onto the foreheads of singers and dancers. In the Sahel region, this is a traditional way of showing appreciation. In this video, this money was collected as an offering to support the Bible translation project.

PRAY

For the team to catch up after being hindered by many obstacles, and that all remaining challenges that stand in the way of completing their New Testament would be overcome.

Thursday

Their responsibility is to equip God's people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ.

—Ephesians 4:12 (NLT)

EQUIPPING THE SAINTS Franklin Muya Aju at CABTAL

Franklin started an internship in August to build his skills as the fundraising coordinator for Cameroon Association for Bible Translation and Literacy (CABTAL), an organization we prayed for in [April](#). CABTAL has made local fundraising a top priority and chosen Franklin to spearhead these efforts.

PRAY

- For wisdom for CABTAL's leadership as they develop their fundraising approach during the next few years.
- For wisdom for Franklin, as he is preparing for an unprecedented role in facilitating these changes.
- That God would continue to build CABTAL into a healthy organization that serves communities across Cameroon and the wider region.

PRAISE

- For Franklin's God-given talent, his breadth of experience in supporting Bible translation efforts, and his willingness to take on new responsibilities and serve his neighbors across Cameroon.

Update on Translation Consultant Intern Jacques Malo

We have prayed for Jacques Malo in the previous three Sahel prayer journals (in January, April, and July). He has a cancerous tumor near his bladder. He has been in Rabat, Morocco, since July 26 for treatment and surgery. His family needs him, and the projects he works with need him.

PRAY

For his complete healing, and for all needs for his treatment and his family to be provided for.

Friday

Rise up, O Lord, in all your power. With music and singing we celebrate your mighty acts
—Psalm 21:13 (NLT)

IMPACT STORY

From the Hubb* Oral Bible Storytelling Team in West Africa

Laura* had been through great pain at the hands of those who should have loved her most. Her husband left her. Then, when their daughter came of marrying age, he came back into the picture and collected the bride price for himself. Laura's new son-in-law took her daughter away immediately, rather than following the local custom of allowing his bride to remain with her mother for a short time.

Laura was ready to completely cut ties with her daughter, son-in-law, and ex-husband. But that very day, Sara*, a Bible storyteller, happened to visit. After Laura heard the story of Joseph—another person who was betrayed by family—in her heart language of Hubb, she began to cry, asking God to forgive her and heal her from bitterness.

The next day, Laura visited her family for a different reason: reconciliation. Today, she has a restored relationship with her daughter and full support from her son-in-law. Even her ex-husband visits from time to time to check on her.

PRAY

- That the seed of God's Word would continue to find good soil in the hearts of the Hubb community through people like Sara.
- That unrest in other parts of the country would not reach the Hubb or distract hearers from being touched by Scripture.

Pray Now

For the country of Niger. On July 26, the country's presidential guard detained President Mohamed Bazoum, and the commander of the guard proclaimed himself to be the new leader. Partners say they are fine but can feel tension building that could cause tight curfews, hindering translation work.