

# ***The importance of Bible Translation today***

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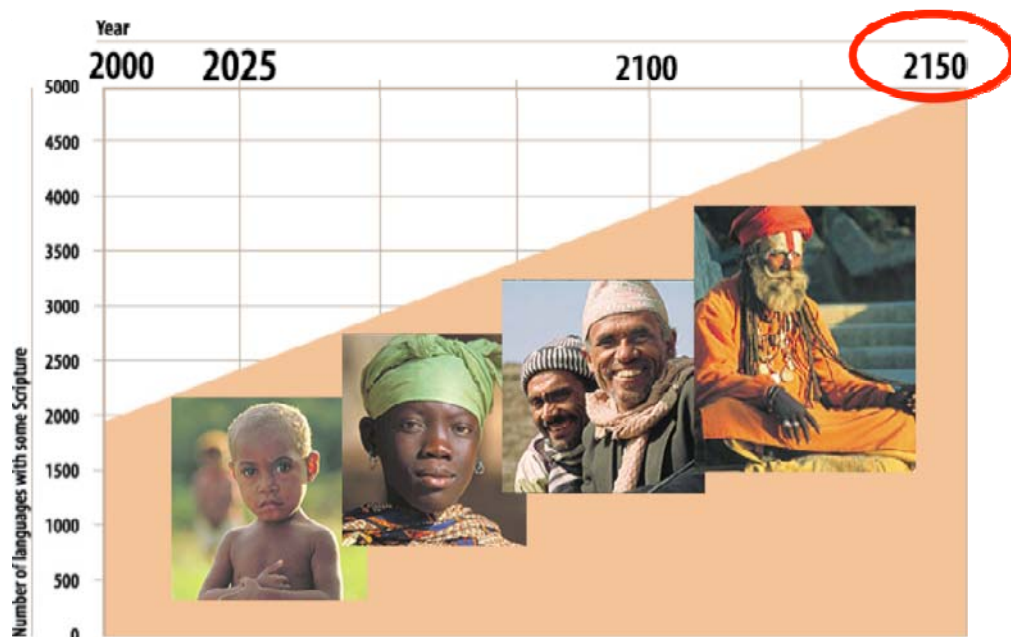
*“All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.”*

2 Timothy 3:16-17 (NIV)

The Bible Translation today is a tool that the Church has, to make a permanent impact in the world and leave an eternal legacy. The Church has to know this and use it to achieve the purpose of God. This project intends to show how the Caribbean Speakers Churches will learn about this tool and understand that is an effective one in our world. That the Bible Translation process not only brings the Gospel in the language of the country that is translated but help to improve quality of life of everyone. The plan is to impact around 100 Churches in Puerto Rico, 100 more in Dominican Republic and 50 in Cuba.

## **Overview**

In the last decade the Bible Translation pace was so slow that to begin a project in those language that need it, to finish the Bible Translation for everyone was going to reach on 2150. It's difficult to imagine that a lot of people have to wait until that to hear and read about God. So is important that the Church engage its members in this important area of the Great Commission.

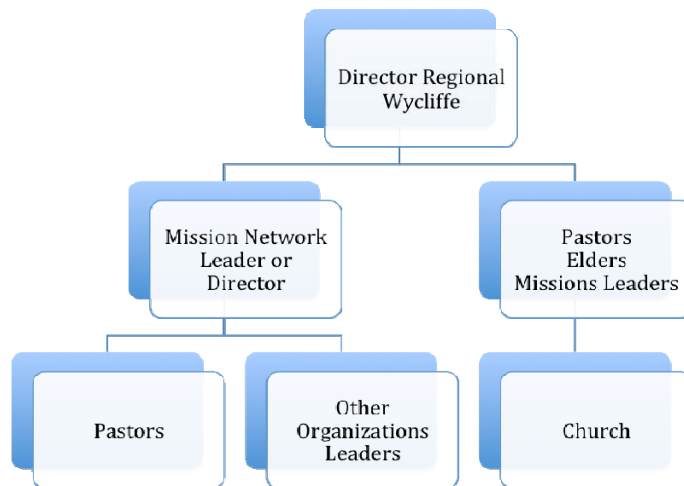


We belong to a community; the Church and we are sending by this community to serve in several places as a respond of God call. If we want to answer correctly to this call we have to know what is the need in our today world. This included the need of translate the God's Word to those language that doesn't have it just to ensure that everyone has the same opportunity to know Him and know about His sacrifice for us.

The Bible Translation is the base of all kinds of ministry and each Church must assume not only their responsibility in the evangelization but also in the translation of God's word, that would be the tool use to help the new Church grow in each country. It is through the God's word in their mother tongue that the communities that need evangelization could understand the appropriateness of the Bible to their life.

The project will start on September 2010 and will end on September 2012. I hope that I can reach at least a missionary network in Puerto Rico, Dominican Republic and Cuba that assume the challenge to continue engaging Churches and communities in the Bible Translation and developing conscience of the importance of it. I expect to impact almost 200 Churches on both countries and see a lot of them involve in the translation of the Scriptures. I also intend to promote this project to be reply by our partners (around 48 in all Latin America) in their countries. In Wycliffe International Americas Area, the organizations in which I work already have partnership with this 48 agencies or Churches. I will have a meeting with the Regional Directors of Central and South America to share this project and they share with the partners of their region.

The idea is to contact the leaders of the missions network in each of the countries mentioned and share the project, ask them to help identify persons who can involve in the spreading of the information in their country. Also makes some pastors events in each country to begin to share information about the importance of the Bible Translation today to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ to everyone. In each country the leaders of the missions network and the ones identify to involve in this project will be the ones that work in each country, and I only will be a facilitator to them. We are going to have several meetings during the project and maintain contact by phone calls and emails. The plan is to impact around 100 Churches in Puerto Rico, 100 more in Dominican Republic and 50 in Cuba. Identify some key Churches that would like to be a voice in their country, and a group of persons that receive resources and be empower to continue the job.



**Information flow during the project**

This project will be funded by WBTI and by individuals and other organizations. I will motivate the leaders to look for some Churches that sponsor some things as the printing of brochures, develop promotional activities. The key to continuously find sponsors is the ongoing communication of the results of the project.

Some of the impacts of the project will be:

- \*Churches empower to accomplish the Great Commission through the Bible Translation

- \*Bible Translation projects beginning where is needed

This impact can be measure at the final year of the project counting the Churches that sponsor financially a Bible Translation project, send a translator or adopt a Bible Translation project.

Table 1.

Indicators	Base line September 2010	Goal 2012
Pastors that receive the information	PR-50 DR-57 Cuba-0	PR-150 DR-157 Cuba-50
Countries in the Caribbean (spanish speakers)involve	Puerto Rico and Dominican Republic	Cuba
Churches from the Caribbean sponsor a BT Project	0	5
Churches from the Caribbean impacting a community sending a translator	3	20

But the enduring impact of the project will be the transformation of people and communities by means of the Bible in their own language. This impact will not be possible to measure after two years of implementation but is for sure that it will come true. (Previous experiences told us this)

One of the objectives of this project is to help pastors, Churches, national movements and Christian communities to understand that the Bible Translation is part of the Great Commission and that is necessary that everyone participate in it.

*“And this gospel of the Kingdom will be preached in the whole World as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come”.* Matthew 24:14

*“After this I looked and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb.”* Revelation 7:9

These verses show us how important the Bible Translation should be to us. How we can preach in English or in Spanish to some one who speak Arapesh or Gbanu. How they can understand the Good News in a language that is not their mother language? As this vision came from God the prayer is the foundation of this Project and the element that ensure the reach of the objective. And the foundation of our prayer, “*..your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven*”.

### **Vision of the project**

The vision to involve Caribbean Spanish Speakers Churches in Bible Translation Movement through their mission’s leaders and pastors came from Jose De Dios, Director of Wycliffe Americas Area. The way to make this definitively was inspiration of God, giving me ideas, strategies and knowledge to work to make this possible.

But my involvement in all of this, of course came from God and I understand this since I have been working in Wycliffe. One night I have a dream where I was in an apartment building that has Wycliffe USA at Orlando headquarters. I was inside the apartment and there I open a door to a little room near the main door. In the reality this little room has a room and a vacuum cleaner that they let there to clean the floor of the apartment when you use it. But in my dream when I open the door the room was bigger (double it real size) and all the walls were full of new things, as mechanic tools, kitchen tools, gardening tools; equipments as radios, computers, and other machines that up today I have not seen and don’t know what are their use. When I saw that in my dreams I said: “Wow, this room is full of new tools that nobody has use before and can make our work easily” and I took a can opener and watch it as I never

saw one before of that kind. I said, “I have to share with everyone, there are still new tools and equipments to use and make our work easier”. Then I woke up but I always remember that dream and understand that God calls me to help discover new ways to spread the Vision already gave to Wycliffe in some way.

One-way is be intentional and strategic, I am a teacher of landscaping. I can plant a tree but if I teach how to plant trees, I plant a lot of them. Wherever one of my students plants a tree I am planting it with them. So this project wants to do the same. Wherever a mission leader or a pastor makes someone to understand the importance of the Bible Translation and how he or she can help to accelerate the pace of the translation, I feel that I am doing also.

Every day I pray for this project and for the purpose of God in my life and my participation. I also begin to ask others to involve in prayer with all of this. I just make a lunch with a group of 10 leaders of my Church to ask them to be part of a prayer group for this, thanks God they accept the invitation. So there will be a prayer group for this project. Also Wycliffe Americas Area have a prayer network where will be in touch we a lot of intercessors asking for prayer for all the steps of the project.

### **The Team**

- Wendy Colón De Amill, Regional Director Caribbean Spanish Speakers, Wycliffe International Bible Translators, Americas Area will be in charge of contact with leaders of missions networks at the three countries to identify people of missions agencies that could adopt the Vision2025. Also will be visiting some pastors let them know information about the importance of the Bible Translation in other languages for share the Gospel of Jesus Christ in the unreached groups.
- Zoraida Serrano, director of PETRA (Bible Translation mobilization agency) at Puerto Rico, will be helping to visit pastors and will be in charge to plan activities in Puerto Rico.
- Rev. Tomas Martinez, director de COMIDON (Dominican Republic) as a partner there he is spreading information and organizing pastors meetings allowing me the opportunity to share with them information.
- And others leaders that are expected to be identify in the two or three next months.
- The prayer group. (10 persons of my Church)

## Steps

The project will follow more or less the following steps:

1. Research-(already doing at two of the countries) study the country per se, the origins and the actual status Church of this country, the level of information about evangelism, missions and Bible translation. Worldview of their Churches, number of Churches and Christians. Identify Church leaders in those countries.
2. Communication-emails and phone calls to the mission's leaders and key pastors to ask for the opportunity to know each other.
3. Relations-Continuously communication, Skype and face-to-face meetings. Strengthen relations.
4. Pastors meetings-to begin to introduce some information, to wake interest and attention to their responsibility.
  - a. Let them know the importance of the Bible translation for the evangelism and the discipleship
  - b. Let them know how they can access to resources and more information
  - c. Share the opportunities for involve more and engage their Churches
5. Develop a team-ask for some volunteers and people to became the one in charge of spread information in their country.
  - a. Identify people from local ministries and Churches to became the staff
  - b. Make a one day training to this volunteers and staff member
  - c. Give them the resources available
6. Follow up meetings with pastors, leaders, volunteers and staff to measure some results and evaluate status of the project.
7. Evaluation and re-structure the plan if necessary

Before, during and after complete the steps we should be praying for every steps to follow any other direction God give us.

## Statistics

### *Worldwide Bible Translation Statistics*

1. **World population:** 6.5 billion
2. **Languages spoken in the world:** 6,909 [Ethnologue, 16th edition, 2008]
3. **Languages with probable need of Bible translation:** 2,393 representing 200 million people
4. **Languages with some or all of the Bible:** 2,479. Of these, 451 have an adequate Bible; 1,185 have an adequate New Testament; 843 have Scripture portions [UBS 2008] (Wycliffe has participated in work for over half of all languages receiving translated Scriptures.)
5. **Languages included in translation, linguistic, or literacy programs known to be in progress worldwide:** 1,998 reaching an estimated 1.2 billion people (all known programs being carried out by any organization)

6. **Personnel needed:** More than 3,000 ongoing needs for linguist/translators, literacy specialists, trainers, project managers, computer specialists, accountants, administrative support workers, and a wide range of other professional roles.<sup>1</sup>

## Seven Pillars

To impact our world transforming communities with the Gospel of Jesus we need to work together, everyone need to understand that the Bible is for everyone and everyone should have access to it in their language. The Bible translation is a critical facet of demonstrating the Gospel among those who still need to hear God's message in a language they clearly understand. To share with the everyone this and challenge them to share it is essential to turn to the 7 pillars-Church, family, education, media, arts and entertainment, business and government.

As I can't do everything in some of the pillars I am going to give ideas and /or resources to the missions leaders or pastors in each country so they can use them, adapting them to their culture and reality.

**Church-**A lot of Churches has never hears something about Bible Translation and don't understand that this is part of missions. So they need to know this, if they want to be responsible of Jesus commandment. The Church has some responsibility to shape every area of life so is the one call to work in the common good of the communities. A Church that is centralize in the Gospel of Jesus Christ has to want to share it and make all possible to make it available to others so they can enjoy it too in their language. For this it's need to be translated to their specific context, to the language that's speak to their heart.

I am going to involve the Churches through their pastors. One of the blockage in this, are the pastor in itself because if they don't understand the importance of the Bible Translation they are not going to talk about it in their Churches. I am going to work with this first of all with prayer, and making some breakfast of other activities to join several pastors and make a little presentation about the importance of the Bible Translation and the unfinished task. The event will have a frequently ask question session so they feel free to ask about anything. In this activities I will let the pastors a kit of more information that could include: a DVD *"The Power of the Word"* (this video uncovers the ongoing work of Bible Translation and the transforming impact of the Bibles on lives, communities and cultures worldwide), a brochure of information of about 5 themes that the pastors should know about Bible Translations, a prayer guide for Bibleless people, information of how to involve the Church and what to do if a person wants to know how to involve in the work of the Bible Translation.

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<sup>1</sup> These statistics offer the most current estimates available. Ongoing improvements in information gathering may result in occasional discrepancies in the totals from year to year. Statistics presented here cover July 1, 2007 – June 30, 2008.

Whenever Paul wants to teach something important send a letter to the Churches. So it is important to keep in touch with pastors and leaders. Each five or six month I will be sending to the pastors some documents or videos of some study cases of the change that the Bible translation is making around the world and how the Jesus Christ Gospel is spreading during this process.

In Romans 15, Paul models to us the need to ask for prayer in some stages of our ministry or mission. He let the Romans Church to know about his plans and ask for something in particular. So is important to have a group that prays for us and with us through our work. There will be a prayer group helping me praying for every stage of the project (the blockages, the advance, the needs and the next steps).

I will be identify some organizations in the countries that I am working with to gave them all this information also; so they can spread this information in other Churches and stages anytime. In this way the country has several places to reach information about this.

**Family-**The Bible Translation helps spread information of several themes as health, nutrition, and agriculture; supply counseling and occupational trainings. The families that compound the Church has to know that when they translate God's word we help the communities to live now according to the norms of Jesus' messianic kingdom.

I am going to involve the family through the pastors, Churches and through medias giving the family examples of how the Bible translation are transforming communities and giving information of how they can help to spread the information about this impact. The blockage could be the pastors that can think this is not a responsibility of the Church and see Wycliffe and every missionary agency or leader as a thief of lambs. That's why with the first person that I have to work is with the pastors to let them understand that the Bible Translation is a responsibility of the Church and we are only facilitators. After the pastor catch the vision about the need and the responsibility of the Church in this issue, I will inform and teach them about the benefits of the Bible Translation in families (specially those families that need to be evangelized). To do this I will share with the pastors some videos as "*Health*", "*Literacy*" and "*Spiritual Transformation*".

*"Health"*, in many areas of the world general health care and medically treatable disease and illness are a real issue. The work of Bible Translation often involves working within communities to translate information on health related issues. Care for the whole person is a real issue. This video is about this. (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bxFOXukMhuw&feature=related>) or in vodpod.com.

*"Spiritual Transformation"* is a video that let the people experience the stories of Guatemalans whose lives have been transformed by the Word of God in their own language. Spiritual Transformation was shot in Guatemala, Central



America, and was produced by Wycliffe Bible Translators. It can be found at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eW6fjZw6JD8>.

*“Literacy”* shows how “Literacy” fulfills the promise of Bible translation by making Gods Word accessible to all people in a language that speaks to their heart. Not only is literacy key to accessing Gods Word, it also offers communities and individuals many other advantages they may not currently enjoy. “Literacy” is opportunity: spiritually, emotionally, financially, politically and economically. (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kokaAsCe4w0&feature=related>)

**Education**-there are several trainings to be a Bible Translator or a literacy worker and is important that the pastors, Churches and missionary agencies know the options to be preparing to work in Bible Translation. Also education could be use to teach children and young people the importance of the Bible Translation.

Another aspect to work with education is to let everyone know about the advantages of the Bible Translation in the education area of those communities in which the Bible Translation is in progress. *“All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching...”* how this could happen if the people doesn’t know to write and read their mother language. So the Churches has to know this and ask themselves how they are going to help the people can read the Scriptures. To let the Church know more about this I will promote to watch *“Literacy”* video at [vodpod.com](http://vodpod.com), that show how importance is to raise the education in a community so it impacts everything in a country. The *“Health”* video emphasize in the importance of the maternal language for everything including the raise of the self-esteem. When a project of Bible Translation begins also begin a Literacy project. Without the knowledge of the language the information about health care, human’s rights are not accessible to the community.

The blockage can be the absence of lessons about this in Spanish (in English there are some, not to much either but exist some). I am going to promote the development of material for this and translate the ones that are in English already.

I will let to pastors information about the availability of the trainings for their areas. I will share the lessons that will be translated into Spanish. Recruit or promote the recruitment of Christians teachers to prepare lessons about the importance and the impact of the Bible Translation.

**Media**-It’s another way to teach pastors, Churches and missionary agencies leaders and others about the importance of the Bible Translation and how they can be part of the acceleration pace to finish the task and everyone could have a Bible in their language.

In this pillar I am going to recommend to the pastors and leaders do the same things that I am planning to do myself.

I am going to ask for interviews in several Christians radio programs to have the opportunity to talk about this, prepare some radio spots and write some articles for newspapers or some magazines (one of the station will be Wbmj Rock, The Rock Radio Networks). I am going to research all Christian radio station, magazines and newspapers of these countries and send information to them. I will ask my pastor the opportunity to share some information in her television program call "*En esto pensad*" in channel 54.

I will share some ideas with pastors about posters, brochures, t-shirts and anything else that can catch the attention of the importance of having the Bible translated to share the Jesus Christ Gospel with the world.

I am going to promote by internet, face book, twitter and all that socials nets links to some videos and webpage that talk about the Bible Translation, its importance, its impact and how everyone can help to finish the task. I will invite the Church members that have blogs to put information about this its (This has beginning already at <http://georginathompson.blogspot.com/2010/05/rumbo-las-naciones.html>) also in Web Newsletter as <http://evidenciasdigital.com/>.

The blockage could be that in some of this media they only present things with a payment, so this could be solve and for some sponsors to pay for it and do it. Also the information could be share as a public service in some medias that are free services.

**Arts and entertainment-**There are different ways to raise Christian consciousness to the need and to the way that they can do something for the Bible Translation if they want a healthy community.

I am going to invite those who write songs in my Church to write a song about the importance of the Bible. Promote dramas that present situation with the Bible or without the Bible in their language as those that use to present Wycliffe Canada. The blockage is time to makes relation with people in this area and money because this area requires a lot of it. I think I can work with this blockage engaging and recruiting someone in that already work and knows about this environment.

**Business-**The business could be a supplier for different things that will be need to complete the translations and can be a channel to promote the importance of the Bible Translation in a community.

As in media pillar I am going to invite the pastors and leaders do the same things that I am planning to do myself in this one.

I am going to make the same thing with the business man (in this case Christians) as I do with the pastors, and activity to teach them about the Bible translation and about the need to finish the task. Pray and let the Spirit guides themselves identify what they can do to change the numbers from 2,342 languages without the Bible in their language to 0. The blockage could be the fear of investment in something (because of the swindlers) and that they could not understand that this is an eternal investment. I am going to work with this with

all the evidence of all the years working with this and all the testimonies of those who already make an investment in this area. Another blockage could be that the financial sponsors will like to control what we can do or say during the project. This could be avoiding making a writing arrangement with the responsibilities and participation of all the parts.

The business man could be impact watching some videos and hear some stories of how the Bible Translation process help the community development, making the possibility to help others to have their own business in their country.

**Government**-Could be a source of tools and resources, as they understand that the translation of the Bible promotes justice for all the citizens and its process helps the development of the healthy communities. The idea is to let the government know and understand that the Bible Translation looks for the common good.

The literacy that came as a result of the process of the Bible Translation helps the government of every country to look for the achievement of the goals of the Millennium Development of the United Nations for the 2015:



When the people learn to read and write in their language they can have more opportunities of a job, improving family income. The women that learn to read also learn to care more her family and herself reducing children mortality, and spreading of diseases. Learning to read allows the communities to understand the importance of the environment and learn that Bible Translation is about creation care.

I am going to promote the Churches to develop a campaign to let know the government all the benefits that the Bible are doing in all the places that is been translated, so they can see this is good for the country and promote that they can be part. The blockage could be those persons who don't believe in God and are working with the government. This blockage has to be work with

prayer. Another blockage could be involve too much with the politicians or identify with a party. To avoid this we must maintain our integrity, keep our biblical values intact, remember and maintain our goals and prays always in front of us.

Other videos that can be use to use in this project could be:

*\*Trauma Healing-Working* with minority language speakers, Wycliffe Bible Translators has created Trauma Healing Materials. These resources facilitate grief and forgiveness counseling among the 223 spoken languages in DRC. This could be use as an example of different aspect of how the Bible Translation process impact.

*\*Cultural Preservation-* Preserving cultures are necessary because it provides the individual with a sense of value, contribution and belonging. Having a language documented in a person's mother tongue gives them, their history, and their unique perspective on the world an outlet for engaging those outside of their culture on more level terms.

*\*The World is an open book-*This video describes the many reasons why it is important for Women to learn how to read in their own heart language.

*\*It starts in the strangest place-*In this video you can see how the work of Wycliffe Bible Translators and others impact issues of social justice such as literacy, cultural preservation, health, trauma healing and more.

## **Crossing Lines**

To crossing lines with this project bringing rich and poor together is important keep in mind that as we are of our Lord we all have a call to serve Jesus Christ and that doesn't depend on our wealth.

*"Rich and poor have this in common: The Lord is the Maker of them all."  
Proverbs 22:2 (NIV)*

Crossing lines bringing Evangelicals and Catholics to the understanding of the importance of the Bible Translation today so they decided to involve in it can be possible remember them first that we are a body, the body of Jesus Christ and that Jesus will came back for one Church without name.

*"There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to one hope when you were called— one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all."  
Ephesians 4:5-6*

Another thing that can help to do this could be develop a forum where I can share information about some of the Bible Translation in which Catholics has

been involve for long time ago, as the first Bible in Chinese. The same can be saying about the Evangelicals, as the German Bible translation by Martin Luther.

## Evaluation

The involved organizations and the team will be doing an ongoing evaluation of the project. The number of the Churches involve will be compare with the number of the Goal present in the table 1. There will be necessary to prepare some surveys to measure the impact in some Churches in each country selected in a random way.

All the results will become a resource for further planning or replying in other countries. Besides this evaluation my immediately supervisor will evaluate my involvement in this project in the light of current policy.

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