

MOTHER TONGUE

JUL - SEPT
2019

NEWS FROM GILLBT

ISSN 0855-1480



Expanding Partnerships for Resource Mobilisation



www.gillbt.org

EDITORIAL BOARD

Mr. Lawrence Darmani

Mrs. Agatha Akonor-Mills

Mr. Otabil Arthur

Mr. Mike Ewusi Arthur

Mrs. Dorothy Konadu

Mr. Eric Asare

Mr. Newmann Anane Aboagye

P. 1

Message From The Director

P.4

Apostle Nyamekye Assures of
COP's Continuous Support to
GILLBT

P. 6

Transforming Lives: The Paasaal
Story

P. 8

Is Taking Without Asking
Stealing?

CONTENTS

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Professor E.V.O. Dankwa

Chairperson

Prof. Akosua Adomako Ampofo

Dep. Chairperson

Rev. Thomas Sayibu Imoro

Executive Director

Bishop Charles Agyinasare

Board Secretary

Deacon Francis Kusi

Member

Rev. Dr. Solomon Sule-Saa

Member

Rev. Kwabena Darko

Member

Prof. Dzodzi Tsikata

Member

Dr. S. M. Zachariah

Member

Rev. Samuel Otu-Appiah

Member

Rev. Dr. Mrs. Grace Sintim Adasi

Member

P. 10

Adele Convert No Longer
Slaughters Sheep But Prays to
Heal the Sick

P. 11

GILLBT Gets A New Director

P. 12

GILLBT Tamale Chapter
Relaunched

P. 17

AGM 2019 In Pictures

MESSAGE FROM THE Director

REV THOMAS SAYIBU IMORO



When in July 2007 I was elected chairman of the then Executive Committee during the 35th Annual General Meeting, little did I know this was a call to serve for 12 continuous years in various capacities. If I had known, I would probably, like Moses, have complained to God about my inadequacy for the assignment. Now, in July 2019, I can only say glory to God who equips us for every assignment He gives us.

The Executive Committee I was honored to chair came into office at a time when all external funding partners had suspended funding to GILLBT. They requested many changes in the governance, accounting systems and reporting system of GILLBT. Instituting the position of Executive Director and appointing the first externally recruited Executive Director was the first major task of the Executive Committee.

Act of Faith

This was nothing less than an act of faith as GILLBT had no funds to pay serving staff their meagre monthly salaries or allowances. GILLBT's seaside property at Labadi in Accra was sold to provide for staff salaries or allowances for two months. In the face of suspended funding, it was inconceivable for GILLBT to have enough resources to attract the caliber of persons required

to be Executive Director of an organization with its rich history of Bible Translation work in Africa. This was where the Committee acted in faith, knowing that only the Lord could help us scale the mountains we faced—and He proved Himself.

The Executive Committee got committed to a paradigm shift in the governance of GILLBT. We commenced the process of improving our governance with the introduction of an external Board system and recruitment of an Executive Director through a formal advertisement and selection process.

After Management held consultations with staff and some stakeholders as well as deliberations at AGMs in 2008 and 2009, the first external Board was formed. It had representation from our stakeholders, including churches. The Board was installed on May 16, 2010 at the Presbyterian Church of Ghana, Immanuel Congregation, Madina.

The Executive Director's first task was working to restore funding from donor partners. His efforts were complemented greatly by the work of Ms. Linette Masiga, then Project Funding Officer of the Africa Area Office of Wycliffe Global Alliance. GILLBT is thankful to God for Linette. Eventually funding was restored.

Partnerships Awakened

Over the period, I watched with amazement as God awakened the partnership between the Church in Ghana and GILLBT, resulting in the accomplishment of great things here at home in Ghana and abroad. The relationship with the Church got a big focus as the new Executive Director put in place a series of steps towards Church Engagements. These notable steps were dedicated to building on earlier moves. Church Engagement was institutionalized and strengthened. Beginning with GILLBT's 50th Anniversary, periodic consultations focusing on the role of the Church were established.

Churches in Ghana are endowed with excellent professionals from almost all sectors of our national life, and they are eager to provide GILLBT with technical assistance in any area of need. Unfortunately, we are yet to tap into this huge resource to fill the gaps in our skills profile.

Opened Doors

Some churches have also opened their doors for us to reach their members with our message for individual support. However, our resource mobilization teams are struggling with follow-up and skills of engaging business men and women. There is need to recast stories of our successes in each of our core areas. We also need to categorize our donors into large, medium and small groups, and to design appropriate events and messages for each category.

Many churches have included GILLBT in their annual budget and increased their donations. This development requires a deliberate and persistent follow-up to ensure pledges of support are redeemed. Denominational or congregational heads usually make the commitments but directors of finance need persistent follow-up to secure the donations.

In all my years of close contact and work for GILLBT, my greatest surprise was to hear a regional denominational head during a recent

presentation of GILLBT work say "GILLBT, you are doing a great job, but you are not known." This means more work has to be done to introduce our work to churches and their members. In doing this, we have to present our challenges and needs to facilitate the decision-making by interested churches and or their members.

My greatest observation is this: out there in the churches and among their members, the Lord has created a tremendous goodwill for GILLBT. What remains a challenge is how to creatively use this goodwill to advance Bible translation in Ghana and beyond.

Changing Role

In Ecclesiastes 3:1, King Solomon says, *"For everything there is a season, a time for every activity under heaven"* (NLT).

As alluded to at the beginning of this message, I accepted to join the team not knowing the service period. Now the time has come for me to exit from active service. The Board gave me this opportunity to serve as Acting Executive Director until the 2019 AGM. The AGM ended on Saturday, July 20, 2019. On July 31, 2019, I handed over the baton to the new Executive Director, Sylvester Kwame Nkrumah who, until his appointment, served as our Director for Field Programmes. He is not new to GILLBT as he has been on staff for more than three decades and as a pioneer of the Translator Field Training Programme (TFTP). Sylvester Nkrumah was certified as a translation consultant in 2016.

I am grateful to the Lord for His mercies over me while I served in GILLBT. Now I slide into the role as a friend of GILLBT and supporter in the Baptist denominations in Ghana. The Lord's Name be honoured and praised forever.

Long live the ministry of GILLBT.

“ _____

We believe mother tongue literacy and the word of God in our mother tongue is the most effective way to build vibrant churches and transform our society.

Through a competent workforce, we create local partnerships to make the word of God in our mother tongues accessible to various language groups in Ghana.

_____”



Apostle Nyamekye Assures of COP's Continuous Support to GILLBT



A mobilization pillar involving the ownership of Ghanaians in the support of mother tongue Bible translation in Ghana, and the African continent was at the heart of the vision that founded GILLBT.

Many years after this vision was birthed by our founding fathers, the Church of Pentecost, a worldwide, non-profit Pentecostal church with its headquarters in Accra, Ghana, is showing the way to a church-led Bible translation.

Apostle Professor Opoku Onyinah, immediate past Chairman of the Church of Pentecost, did not only endorse the work of GILLBT by accepting to represent COP on the GILLBT board of directors, but also ensured that, at the national level, the Church of Pentecost became the largest church contributor to the work of GILLBT.

Continuous support to GILLBT

The newly elected Chairman of the Church of Pentecost, Apostle Eric Nyamekye is committed to deepening this partnership. Chairman Nyamekye made this known when a delegation from GILLBT paid a courtesy call on him on May 24, 2019 at his office in Labadi, Accra.

In his interaction with the delegation, he assured the leadership of GILLBT that COP shall continue to support mother tongue Bible translation, literacy and language development in Ghana.

The GILLBT Board Chairman, Prof. E.V.O Dankwa, who led the delegation, recounted the GILLBT – COP long standing relationship and acknowledged the enormous support of COP.

Apostle Nyamekye recalled his encounter with the work of GILLBT in the North, which left him intrigued. Noticing the complexities in translation he encouraged GILLBT to stick to translation naturalness. However, his interest in the work of GILLBT transcends Bible translation. The one time COP Tamale Area Head from 2011 to 2015, underscored the need to be literate in the mother tongue.

“Apart from producing the Bible,” he said, “people must learn how to read it.” He expressed interest in GILLBT’s literacy programme.

Apostle Nyamekye called for broader collaboration between GILLBT and the Church in Ghana in the area of pastoral training. He argued that church leaders must be literate in their mother tongue. This he believes will enable them extend the word of God to all areas in Ghana effectively.

“Apart from producing the Bible, people must learn how to read it.”



From left: Rev Thomas Sayibu Imoro, Prof EVO Dankwa, Aps. Eric Nyamekye (Chairman-COP), Sylvester Kwame Nkrumah, Newmann Anane-Aboagye

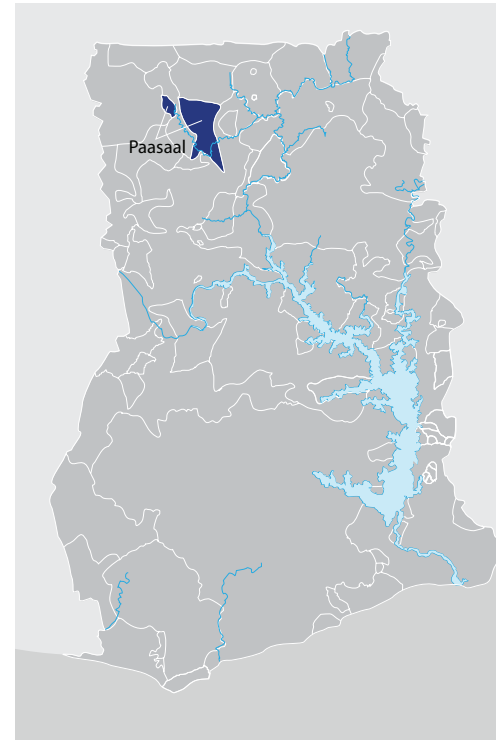
TRANSFORMING LIVES:

The Paasaal Story

Funsi, a town once described as “overseas”, very remote and with very little connection to central government and church organizations, having neither running water nor electricity, has become a beacon of development. Funsi and all other surrounding communities of Paasaal speakers in the Upper West region of Ghana never once dreamt that the Almighty God would speak to them in their own language.

With their language yet to be written and less than 5% of the total population being Christian, the people waited and hoped for the advent of change. Ethnic religion was deeply rooted in the people’s ethnic identity. The fear of traditional spirits was strong and the people depended on their ancestors’ spirits to protect them from harm.

In 1992, Sylvester, who had just left Bible college, and serving as a trainee translator with GILLBT, together with his wife, Naana, agreed to relocate to Funsi to complete the language development and translation work started by Mike and Vicki Toupin. The determined couple arrived in Funsi inspired to serve and show the Paasaal people God’s love by translating the New Testament into their language.



The Paasaal people are in the south-eastern corner of the Upper West region of Ghana. They make up about fifteen communities with a population of about 30,000. Some of the Paasaal speaking communities include Kajikperi, Kundugu, Yala, Sombis and Kumyabin.



At the dedication of the Paasaal New Testament in Funsi



Sylvester and Naana (left) with other Paasaal project staff

Amidst all the infrastructural challenges, Sylvester and Naana spent the next ten years learning Paasaal and working with some natives to complete the translation. In 2002, the New Testament in Paasaal was published and dedicated. With the language written and Bible published, many churches, including the Church of Pentecost, dispatched missionaries to Funsì. Evangelism thrived, Christian population increased and infrastructural development soared. One of the converts, Saaka Awuno, is now leading the translation of the Old Testament into Paasaal.

The once obscure town is now a “city on a hill”. At the dedication of the New Testament, one of the local chiefs said, “The church is our government.” Today all the surrounding villages have vibrant churches. Funsì has seen significant development and the people can’t wait to have the complete Bible in Paasaal.

PRAYER NEEDS

- Pray for the team translating the Old Testament into Paasaal.
- Pray for all Paasaal Christians to be filled with the knowledge of the will of God through the understanding that the Holy Spirit gives.
- Pray that they live to please the Lord in every way to glorify him.



The Paasaal people were elated to finally have God’s word in their heart language



"If it is not
yours and you
haven't asked, ...

Abigail Koni (Nyabosore - Volta Region)

As I sat with Abigail Koni, a senior high school graduate, on a rock behind the GILLBT translation office in Nyabosore, a village in the Volta region, she was all smiles narrating to me how she found the truth after reading the Bible in her mother tongue.

Growing up, Abigail only read the Bible in English and Ewe because the Bible was not yet translated into her mother tongue - Tutrugbu. After GILLBT published portions of the ongoing New Testament translation in her mother tongue, Abigail, who is fond of reading, got a copy. She has been reading a copy of the gospel of Mark for almost a year and half now.

Abigail had a habit of taking money from her mother's purse without asking. In her opinion, once it belonged to her mother, it wasn't stealing. Reading about Jesus' teaching in her mother tongue has been epiphanic. She has come to understand that, taking anything that doesn't belong to you, from anyone, including one's parents without asking, is stealing. And stealing is a sin in the eyes of God. With this understanding, she knows taking without asking is stealing. "If it is not yours and you haven't asked, don't take it," Abigail cautioned.

Is Taking Without Asking Stealing?



PRAYER NEEDS

- Praise God for young Abigail's continuous interest in reading the Bible in her mother tongue.
- Pray for deeper understanding of God's word as she grows in her faith.



GILLBT
WORKS IN

40 LANGUAGES INCLUDING
SIGN LANGUAGE TRANSLATION

Your Support Can Help Transform Lives!



Stanbic Bank
A member of Standard Bank Group

Stanbic Bank (Tamale Branch)
GILLBT Operation Cover The Land
9040006447613



Stanbic Bank
A member of Standard Bank Group

Stanbic Bank (Tamale Branch)
Ghana Institute of Linguistics
9040006449438
Swift Code: SBICGHAC



MTN Mobile Money
0541980637

GHANA INSTITUTE OF LINGUISTICS, LITERACY AND BIBLE TRANSLATION

Serving through Linguistics, Literacy and Bible Translation

church-engagement_donor@gillbt.org / communication_gillbt@gillbt.org

050 132 9465 / 050 149 9407 / 050 138 5894

www.gillbt.org / facebook.com/gillbt.org

Adele Convert No Longer Slaughters Sheep But Prays to Heal the Sick

A visibly joyous sixty-eight year-old Moses Okese would not end any statement without expressing joy in his new-found faith in Christ. Growing up in Kecheibe, one of the Adele speaking communities where GILLBT is working on completing a full Bible, Moses knew only the gods his parents served. To him a god that did not speak or understand his language was not worth worshipping. "I knew and served two big gods," he said, pouring scorn on the daily slaughtering of sheep and chicken at the shrine.

Moses recounts seeing a gathering of Christians in his neighbourhood one afternoon on his way to farm. As he walked past them, he heard one of them reading in Adele. Out of curiosity he stopped and asked questions. To his surprise they were reading words from the Bible, reassuring words in his own mother tongue! This first encounter with God's word in Adele led him to faith in Jesus Christ.

After the New Testament was translated and published in Adele in 1996, majority of Christians got copies which they used during church service. It was the reading of the Bible in his local dialect by these Christians neighbours that drew him to God.

Today, Moses is an active member of a small church in his neighbourhood. All of his nine children are Christians. He testifies to God's glory about the gift of healing which he manifests during church service. "I can say to the glory of God that since I became born again, I pray for all who are sick in the name of Jesus and they are healed."



Moses Okese (Kecheibi - Volta Region)

"I can say to the glory of God, that since I became born again, I pray for all who are sick in the name of Jesus and they are healed."

PRAYER NEEDS

- "Pray for me as I seek deeper understanding of God's word," Moses says



GILLBT Gets A New Director

Sylvester Kwame Nkrumah Takes Over As GILLBT Executive Director

The GILLBT Board of Directors has appointed Mr. Sylvester Kwame Nkrumah as Executive Director effective August 1, 2019. Sylvester until his appointment was the Director for Field Programmes at GILLBT.

Since joining GILLBT in 1990 as a trainee translator, Sylvester has worked among the Paasaal people in a New Testament project which was dedicated in 2002. He later worked as a consultant to finish the Delo (his mother tongue) New Testament, in 2006.

In 2015 Sylvester received his certificate as a Translation Consultant. He served on the GILLBT Executive Committee for six years and also served as the Associate Director for Language Projects from 2001 to 2006, overseeing 34 language projects.

Sylvester comes to his new role with a deep understanding of the Bible translation and mother tongue literacy industry, having attended many

workshops, consultancy sessions and leadership forums. He has served as a facilitator at various translation and literacy workshops globally.

Sylvester was born in the Volta region of Ghana and became a born again Christian in 1978. He completed the University of Ghana with a BA (Hons) degree in French and Linguistics and he speaks nine languages.

In November, 2008, he completed his graduate studies and obtained a Master of Arts degree in Development Management from the Ghana Institute of Management and Public Administration (GIMPA).

Sylvester is a founding member of the Messiah Baptist Church in Kanda, Accra, and was commissioned as a Baptist Pastor in 1993.

His tenure as Executive Director expires after three years and he becomes eligible for re-appointment.



GILLBT Tamale Chapter Relaunched

One of the practical responses to GILLBT's desire and aspiration to deepen the involvement of Ghanaians and national institutions in the work of mother tongue Bible translation has been the formation of regional chapters.

Building a mobilization pillar involving the ownership of Ghanaians in the support of Bible translation work in Ghana and the African continent is partly the vision that founded GILLBT. At the heart of this mobilization pillar is the issue of national ownership, which is aimed at creating a viable national organization whose legitimacy derives partly from the quality of our relations to Ghanaians and national institutions. The mobilization and situating of the work in Ghanaian church is central to the creation of this national ownership. The end point of this ownership would be the establishment of a church-led Bible translation movement.

The once vibrant GILLBT's church engagement and resource mobilization efforts in Northern

Ghana had become dormant over the past few years. The GILLBT Tamale Chapter needed a shot in the arm to resuscitate the organization, that is one major reason why it has been relaunched.

At the beginning of this year, Rev. Thomas Sayibu Imoro, GILLBT Ag. Executive Director, held series of meetings with many churches and para-church groups, including the Ghana Pentecostal Charismatic Churches (GPCC), Northern Region; Tamale Local Council of Churches; the Catholic Church and some Methodist Bishops in the Northern region to reintroduce GILLBT and discuss strategies to deepen existing partnerships.

One of the strategies was to reconstitute a GILLBT Tamale Chapter that would be responsible for ensuring ownership of the work of mother tongue Bible translation by Ghanaian churches. In view of this, a meeting of church leaders was convened at the GILLBT premises

in Tamale on June 6, 2019. Six denominations honoured the invitation—Global Evangelical Church, Church of Pentecost, Assemblies of God, International Central Gospel Church, Perez Chapel and Ghana Baptist Convention.

These churches were tasked to appoint members for both the advisory and executive committees and the following were appointed for the chapter.

Executive committee members

1. Rev. B.A.M Abogorago - Church of Pentecost
2. Pastor Dr. Mathias Fosu - IGCC
3. Rev. Wisdom Adegle - Global Evangelical Church
4. Rev. Jonathan Imoro - Assemblies of God
5. Rev. Matthew Naboma - Revival Faith Foundation Ministry
6. Rev. Jonathan Nantoma - First Baptist Church
7. David Ayabah - GILLBT

Rev. Rufus P Kaleem - Ghana Baptist Convention was appointed as the Chairman of the committee.



The core mandate of this committee is to ensure that the work of GILLBT is owned and supported by the churches in Tamale.

GILLBT Printing Press, Tamale

Call or Email:

Tel.:(03720) 98 682

Mob.:054 302 1155

accra_gh_gillbt@gillbt.org

Location:

Link Road, Russian Bungalows
Tamale, NR Ghana

*Contact us for all your
general design and
printing needs*





GILLBT Hospitality, Accra

+233 20 855 5221 / 24 501 5017

accra_gh_gillbt@gillbt.org

Accommodation

Affordable, comfortable accommodation for up to 24 guests. Located in a quiet area close to the Kotoka International Airport and set in pleasant gardens

- Air-conditioned rooms
- Wireless internet access in all rooms
- Full service restaurant (local & continental dishes)
- Special diets accommodated (diabetic, vegetarian, vegan, no salt, low salt, etc.)
- Self-catering apartments
- Airport pickups
- Car rental services
- Laundry services
- Stand-by plant/generator

Catering

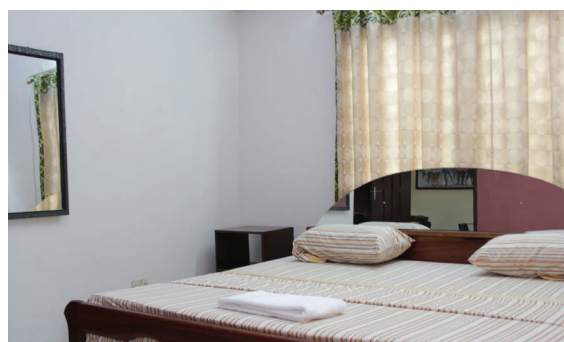
For meetings, conferences, special occasions, events for up to 35 people - on or off-site.

Meetings / Workshops

Suitable for meetings, workshops or seminars for up to 30 people with tables or 45 theatre style seating. Wi-fi internet.

Social Functions

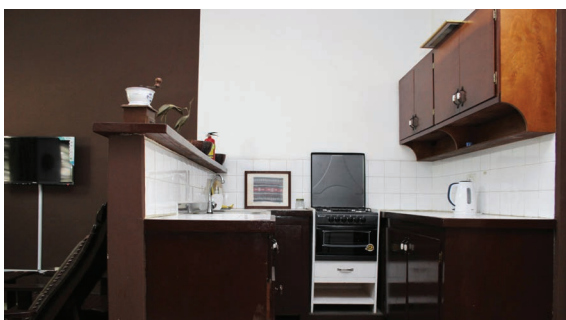
Gardens or indoor venue for events, special occasions, weddings.





GILLBT Hospitality, Tamale

+233 3720 99 038 / 99 402 kgh_gillbt@gillbt.org



Accommodation

Comfortable accommodation in a quiet residential area near the Tamale Airport and main transport centre.

We offer:

- Catered accommodation for up to 60 people
- Room service
- Self-catering apartments
- Satellite TV
- Airport pickups
- Laundry and ironing services
- Air conditioned rooms
- Stand-by plant/generator

Catering

Special occasions and functions: weddings, parties and receptions for up to 200 people - on or off-site

Conference

Three halls for meetings, training, seminars and events for groups of 10-300 people. Wi-fi internet, presentation equipment.

AGM 2019

in Pictures

Theme:
**FAITHFUL STEWARDS
IN GOD'S VINEYARD**



PLEASE CHECK SAFETY SEAL



**NATURAL
MINERAL WATER**

L'EAU MINERALE NATURELLE

BOTTLED BY  **Co. Ltd. (GH)**
Box 23, Nkwanta, Volta Region, Ghana



600ml X 24

Your Response

THE VISION

GILLBT is committed to finishing the Mother Tongue Bible Translation task in Ghana and proposes to do so through a campaign dubbed

‘Operation Cover the Land’

Specifically this campaign seeks to ensure that by 2020, translation work would start in all language groups in Ghana where there are no scriptures.

**You can help
make it Happen**

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Tel./Mobile: _____

Church/Branch: _____

- ☐ I want to receive GILLBT's 31-day Prayer Bulletin
- ☐ I want to join GILLBT's Prayer Network
- ☐ I wish to receive news from GILLBT
- ☐ I want to be a volunteer (Please specify)

☐ I want to be an advocate for GILLBT

☐ I wish to donate:

in kind _____

in cash _____

Weekly / Monthly / Quarterly / Yearly

Kindly send your response to the address or call:

advancement_director@gillbt.org or +233 (0) 501 568 672

Fill out form, snap &
send through mail

GILLBT

Thanks You

WE THANK ALL OUR INDIVIDUAL DONORS,
PRAYER PARTNERS, CHURCHES AND
INSTITUTIONS



© GHANA INSTITUTE OF LINGUISTICS, LITERACY AND BIBLE TRANSLATION

Serving through Linguistics, Literacy and Bible Translation



Email: communication_gillbt@gillbt.org
Tel.: (+233) 303 977 123 / 501 329 465 / 501 385 894
Website: www.gillbt.org

