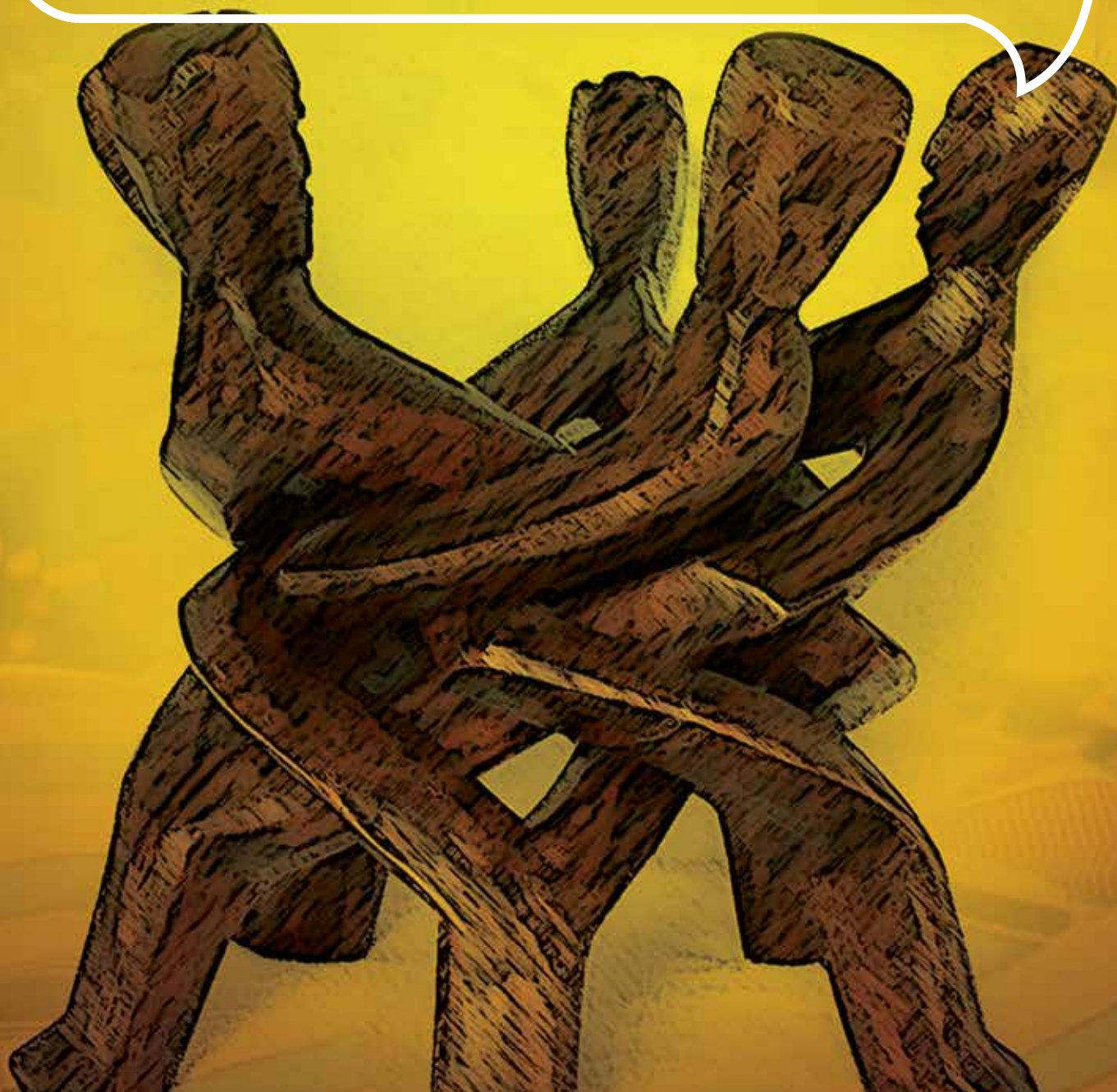


MOTHER TONGUE

OCTOBER

2017

NEWS FROM GILLBT



Partnerships

CONTENT

- 01** *Message from the Director*
- 02** *Bridging the Old Testament Translation Gap*
- 06** *GPCC Membership and AG Endorsement*
- 07** *Mother Tongue Scriptures, Key to Effective Discipleship*
- 08** *ICGC Visit: Dr. Mensa Otabil and ICGC as Inspirational Partners*
- 09** *New Direction for Church Engagement*
- 12** *Bible Society of Ghana and GILLBT to establish a National BT Platform*
- 13** *Jesus Speaks Logba*
- 14** *Buli Bible Dedication*
- 15** *Nkonya Audio New Testament and Psalms Launched*
- 16** *Reconnecting with the Institute of African Studies - Our Founding Partner*
- 17** *GILLBT and SIL Africa; Partners in Basic Education in Ghana*
- 18** *Feedback from our Readers*
- 20** *Celebrations*

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Rev. Thomas Sayibu Imoro - **Chairperson**

Prof. Akosua Adomako Ampofo - **Deputy Chairperson**

Dr. Paul Opoku-Mensah - **Executive Director**

Mrs Comfort Ocran - **Board Secretary**

Mr. Francis Kusi - **Member**

Apostle Dr. Opoku Onyinah - **Member**

Professor E.V.O. Dankwa - **Member**

Rev. Dr. Solomon Sule-Saa - **Member**

Rev. Kofi Okyere - **Member**

Rev. Professor Abraham Berinyuu - **Member**

Rev. Dr. Isaac Ababio - **Member**

Dr. S. M. Zachariah - **Member**

Rev. Samuel Otu-Appiah - **Member**

Editor in Chief

Dr. Paul Opoku Mensah
director_gillbt@gillbt.org

Editor

Arthur Abraham Otabil
communication_gillbt@gillbt.org

Graphic Designer

Mike Ewusi Arthur
mike_arthur@gillbt.org

ISSN 0855 1480



Paul Opoku-Mensah, PhD

Message From The Director

Organisation". In effect, our very identity and legitimacy was tied to these external partnerships, and the changes within them.

The strategic decisions we have taken since the establishment in 2010 of an all-Ghanaian external Board of Directors, and formalised in our strategic plan, are partly aimed at reversing this strategic focus of our partnerships. In practice that means being a national organization first, before anything else. To me, this was the central challenge facing GILLBT when I responded to the call to return to Ghana to support the building of GILLBT. As I explained in my Admin Memo write up of November 13, 2009 - at the very beginning of my tenure as the Director:

"...in my application, interview and interactions with the EC/Board, Trustees, management and staff, I have argued that my vision is to complete GILLBT's transition from a missionary to a national organisation. That is, I want to see the future of GILLBT as the founders envisioned: an organisation whose legitimacy derives, in a major part, from the quality of its relations to Ghanaian institutions..."

This is the vision that has animated, and sustained me, in my role as the Director of GILLBT. Without the force of this vision, I would not have had the motivation to continue in my role for this long. Simply put, and to paraphrase Bob Creson, the President of Wycliffe USA, "this is what makes me wake up every morning to go to work."

Where are we in this crucial, outstanding, task? That is, to what extent are we shifting the strategic orientation of our partnerships from the external to the national? How is this reflected in our relations with Ghanaian Churches?

This is the focus of this issue of Mother Tongue, which reports on progress made in our national-level partnerships. Overall, the issue documents a significant shift in domestic partnerships, with our relationship with the churches witnessing

a degree of intensity and formalization that did not exist in the past. But this new direction also includes partnerships with non-church institutions in Ghana that are enabling us to extend the relevance and impact of our work. For instance, in the field of basic education, we are partners in an FHI360-led consortium, that is working with the Ministry of Education and the Ghana Education Service to implement a USAID-Government of Ghana program aimed at improving reading in Ghanaian schools.

This shift in strategic orientation does not mean autarky - the economic and political concept for self-sufficiency without any external assistance. As I have explained both at home and abroad, GILLBT cannot and does not desire to operate without external partnerships. Thus, we still affirm our international partnerships, and as the report in this issue of our partnerships with SIL on the FHI360 - led USAID project shows, in certain areas we are actually extending these international partnerships in ways that help us address national problems. In this particular case, our national-level partnership with FHI360 has enabled us strengthen our relationship with SIL by inviting their participation in material development for Ghanaian schools, as well as the revision of Ghana's Language Policy in Education.

In effect, rather than autarky, the underlying logic and assumption in our strategy is that GILLBT's ability to be an effective player at the international level, is dependent on the extent to which we can develop significant levels of "autonomy" at the national level. The logic is simple and straightforward: dependent organizations do not make effective international, interdependent partners!

As an organisation whose dominant partnerships the past fifty years have been external, the shift in orientation will, naturally, take time. The good news, however, is that we have begun the journey!

As an organization, GILLBT has operated on an ethos of partnership. Our very 'conception' was a partnership agreement signed in December 1961 between SIL International and the University of Ghana, and which created SIL Ghana. This agreement, coordinated at the University of Ghana end by the Institute of African Studies, involved the Linguistics Department, the Language Centre, Institute of Continuing and Distance Education (formerly Institute of Adult Education), and Institute of African Studies.

Besides this relationship with the University of Ghana, our strategic orientation and partnerships were mainly outside the country. The change in our name from SIL Ghana to Ghana Institute of Linguistics (GIL), and later to the Ghana Institute of Linguistics, Literacy and Bible translation (GILLBT), reflected a desire to move from the branch of an international organization to a national organization.

Yet, despite these name shifts, our strategic and dominant partnerships still remained external. More so our identity, and sustenance, were tied to these external partnerships. When there were changes in this external context, it had immediate implications for us, including how we defined ourselves. We were a National Bible Translation Organisation (NBTO) when that was the preferred term in the international system; we became a Wycliffe Member Organization (WMO) when that became the acceptable term; then we were an "Alliance Organisation with language projects," then simply an "Alliance

Bridging the Old Testament Translation Gap

An International Consultation

An international consultation on “Bridging the Old Testament gap in Bible translation” was held on January 24 and 25, 2017 at the Labadi Beach Hotel in Accra. Hosted by GILLBT with the support of the Seed Company, it had four main objectives, namely to:

- i) Make a national and global statement on the imperative of Old Testament translation
- ii) Examine the underlying factors for the Old Testament translation gap,
- iii) Outline strategies, and build a coalition to address this translation gap
- iv) Introduce an initiative to develop Hebrew capacity to facilitate Old Testament translation

Participants included some of the major actors both nationally and internationally. Ghanaian institutions represented by their Heads included the University of Ghana - Department for the Study of Religions, Akrofi-Christaller Institute, Pentecost Theological Seminary, Trinity Theological Seminary and the Bible Society of Ghana - represented by both the Chairperson of its Board, Mrs Afua Ghartey and the President, Rev Dr Joyce Aryee, and financial patron Rev Dr Kwabena Darko. The GILLBT participants included the Chairman and some members of the Board. International participants included the President and CEO of Seed Company, Samuel E Chiang; the President of Orality International Dr David Swar; leading OT Scholar, Randall Buth. African participants included Dr Uche Aaron, Seed Company consultant from Nigeria. The impressive involvement of the church in Ghana, itself, reflects the new directions in which our relations with the churches in Ghana is taking. Indeed, a reflection of this “embeddedness” of the work in the Ghanaian church, was the decision by Rev Prof Ansre to dedicate his opening keynote to the memory of the late Rev Prof Kwesi Dickson, the renowned Ghanaian Old Testament Scholar, and the seventh President of the Methodist Church of Ghana.

At both the individual and institutional levels, the speakers and the participants unanimously agreed that Bible Translation has to result in the “full counsel” of God, made up of the Old and New testaments.

To Rev Prof Gilbert Ansre,
“Since the 1960s I have often teased my SIL and Wycliffe colleagues that their name is “Wycliffe Bible Translators and not Wycliffe New Testament Translators.”

To the President of Seed Company, Samuel Chiang,
“if the twentieth century was largely a century devoted to the New Testament, we have to make bold decision to declare the twenty-first century, the century of the Old Testament.”

To the President of the Bible Society of Ghana, Rev Dr Joyce Aryee, all languages in Ghana, and elsewhere, must have the “full Bible. It’s that simple!”

The importance of the Old Testament in the African context was particularly emphasized. A series of strategies, including realignment of funding initiatives, OT technical capacity development, and establishment of a global coalition for OT work were outlined and extensively discussed.

Beyond its strategic importance, the consultation further consolidates our vision to be a leading convener and international site for the critical discussions on mother tongue Bible translation. It is the fourth in the series to be organised, building on the “Patrons of Bible Translation in Africa” Conference in June 26-28, 2016 in Kumasi; the Conference on “the Church and Bible Translation” held in Accra in 2014; and “The State of Bible Translation in Africa” conference held at the University of Ghana in September 2012. The expectation is that, through the “Bible Translation in Africa” conference series, the creative heart of the discussions on Bible Translation in Africa would come ‘home’ to the African continent.

In an immediate follow up to the conference, a GILLBT delegation led by the Board Chairman, and included financial patron Rev Dr Kwabena Darko, GILLBT Executive Director, and GILLBT Translation Consultant Naana Nkrumah were in Israel March 2-9, 2017 at the invitation of the School of Biblical Hebrew (SBH). The aim was to explore the possibility of GILLBT sending consultants for Hebrew training at the SBH.

These discussions led to the sending of five GILLBT consultants to the SBH: Naana Nkrumah; Konlan Kpeebe; John Adinyah; Joshua Kwotua and Bernard Asewie. Ultimately, the training would facilitate the ability of these consultants to speed up their OT translation work, as well as support the training of others. The plan is to explore the siting of a similar program in Ghana in collaboration with existing institutions.



Bridging the Old Testament Gap in Bible Translation consultation participants

“Since the 1960s I have often teased my SIL and Wycliffe colleagues that their name is Wycliffe Bible Translators and not Wycliffe New Testament Translators.”



Rev Prof Gilbert Ansre

“If the twentieth century was largely a century devoted to the New Testament, we have to make bold to declare the twenty-first century, the century of the Old Testament.”



Samuel E. Chiang,
President, Seed Company

“All languages in Ghana, and elsewhere, must have the Full Bible. It’s that simple!”



Rev Dr Joyce Aryee,
President, Bible
Society of Ghana



OLD TESTAMENT CONSULTATION





GPCC Membership & AG Endorsement



GPCC leadership formally introduced GILLBT at the National Delegates Conference

Extending the frontiers of Church Engagement

In a major extension to our Church Engagement strategy, GILLBT was formally introduced and fully accepted as a member of Ghana Pentecostal and Charismatic Council (GPCC). This took place at the 2017 GPCC National Delegates Conference held on June 7, 2017 at the Evangel Assemblies of God Church, Adabraka – Accra.

The GPCC is the umbrella Church Council of most Pentecostal and Charismatic churches in Ghana, with a membership of over two hundred (200) member churches and a total congregation membership representing about a third of the Christian population in Ghana. Established in 1969 as Ghana Evangelic Fellowship with four founding member churches (i.e. Assemblies of God Church, The Church of Pentecost, The Apostolic Church Ghana and Christ Apostolic Church) to foster Christian unity and fellowship among Pentecostals at the time and to expand the Pentecostal Movement in Ghana, this fellowship has grown over the years to what is now the Ghana Pentecostal and Charismatic Council (GPCC). While seeking to unite the Body of Christ in Ghana and leading in the fulfillment of the Great Commission of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Council also seeks to be the foremost prophetic voice and focus on the Ghanaian church advocating for social and economic justice in Ghana.

The membership process began in February 2016, when GILLBT made a membership proposal to the GPCC. Following this, GILLBT submitted completed membership application forms on May 27, 2016 at the head office of GPCC. The outcome of the council's

membership interview session with GILLBT on November 29, 2016 was an overwhelming endorsement of GILLBT's request by all five panelists. Practically, GILLBT no longer require a special invitation to attend any GPCC organized functions. Similarly, GILLBT has a voting right in the decision making of the council.

Since June 2016, GPCC has introduced GILLBT to all member churches. This has been a springboard to reach over 200 GPCC member churches. An opportunity to extend our call for partnership nation-wide. GILLBT has so far sent introductory letters from GPCC to over 150 member churches. Another major outcome of this membership has been the endorsement of the work of GILLBT by the Central Leadership of Assemblies of God Church. The leadership of the church sent introductory letters and granted permission for GILLBT to directly engage all Assemblies of God branches in Ghana.

The GPCC membership, and AG endorsement, represents a significant extension of our Church Engagement strategy. That is, from a bilateral strategy in which we have engaged individual Churches and/or branches, the GPCC membership provides us with a multilateral framework in which we can engage significant number of churches simultaneously. This allows for a major expansion of our Church Engagement at a time when our vision is to embed the work in the Church.

MOTHER TONGUE SCRIPTURES KEY TO EFFECTIVE DISCIPLESHIP



Apostle Dr. Stephen Amoani believes mother tongue scriptures is key to effective discipleship

The leadership of the Christ Apostolic Church International (CACI) have endorsed and committed to support mother tongue Bible translation in Ghana. This was made known on February 28, 2017, when a GILLBT delegation led by the Executive Director, Dr Paul Opoku-Mensah, met the International Chairman of CACI Apostle Dr. Stephen Amoani at the Church headquarters to express appreciation for the support of the Church for the work of GILLBT.

Christ Apostolic Church is the first of the Pentecostal Churches in Ghana, out of which emerged the Church of Pentecost, The Apostolic Church and other Pentecostal Charismatic Churches in Ghana. The Church started as a prayer group in 1917 led by the late Apostle Peter Anim. The Church exists to bring salvation to all men, by preaching the word of God and His saving power to mankind, planting of churches and equipping believers, raising transformational leaders to impact the world by demonstrating the love of God through the provision of socio-economic services in partnership with governments, communities, and the organizations that share in the vision of the Christ Apostolic church international.

During the discussions, Apostle Dr Amoani articulated the vision of the church as having to do with "reaching all the tribes in Ghana with the Gospel in their mother tongues." This, to him, is at the heart of the enthusiasm of the Church to support mother tongue Bible translation in Ghana. As he explains:

"Our core business as a Church is to fulfill the great commission, send the gospel across and ensure the message of Salvation is well understood and accepted by all Ghanaian communities. So, the first time I heard about GILLBT and the work you are doing, I realized that you are the organization CACI should partner with."

As a Church, CACI is known in Ghana and globally for their use of the various Ghanaian mother tongues in teaching the word of God and their Christian discipleship program. This approach has

Apostle Amoani & CACI

contributed to the successful church planting and growth across Ghana with over one and a half million members and counting. Apostle Dr. Amoani explains, further:

"As an indigenous church, CACI has been built on the use of the Mother Tongue, and this explains how far the Lord has brought us. And since our vision as a Church is to reach all the ethnic groups in the country, we would continue to use our indigenous languages. In using each and everyone's own dialect, we get the message across. If you go to certain places and they don't have the Bible in their mother tongue, how do you spread the word to them? So essentially, the use of the Mother Tongue scriptures is the key to effective discipleship."

Apostle Dr. Amoani recounted the significant church planting and church growth among the Frafra community in the Upper East Region of Ghana, during his tenure as the regional Head of the Church. This rapid growth, he argued, was the direct result of the use of their mother tongue (Frafra) in evangelizing and discipleship training. He therefore pledged to join the advocacy for the use of mother tongue especially among the clergy.

As part of CACI's strategy to reach every tribe with the Word of God in their heart language, Apostle Amoani indicated that the Church would soon establish Ghanaian language assemblies. The Executive Director of GILLBT, Dr Opoku-Mensah, indicated in his response that GILLBT would be willing to support this strategy by translating all CACI Bible study materials and other religious text used by the church into Ghanaian languages for effective discipleship.

CACI has included GILLBT in its annual budget, after making an initial donation earlier in the year. The church is ready to second some of its members who are Old Testament scholars to serve as consultants to some translation projects. This was in response to a request made by GILLBT as part of our strategy to accelerate the Old Testament translation gap in Ghana.



Apostle Dr. Stephen Amoani received a copy of the Mother Tongue

ICGC VISIT

Dr Mensa Otabil and ICGC as Inspirational Partners

On December 18, 2016, a GILLBT delegation joined a partner church - International Central Gospel Church (ICGC) at Christ Temple, the headquarters and seat of the General Overseer in Accra to worship. The delegation, which included GILLBT Executive director –Dr Paul Opoku-Mensah, a member of the GILLBT Board of Directors – Dr S.M. Zakariah, GILLBT Operations Director – Comfort Ansong, Church Engagement manager – Ebenezer Ameyaw and Communications Manager – Arthur Otabil, met Dr Mensa Otabil after the church service. The meeting was to thank Dr Mensa Otabil and the ICGC for their support to GILLBT over the years, and to share our new strategy for the work with him.

On the strategy for the work, the Executive Director informed Dr Mensa Otabil that GILLBT's vision is one that seeks to complete the Bible translation task in Ghana, and to do so within a "Beyond Aid" funding strategy that involves the mobilization of Ghanaian resources. To implement this vision, last year, on June 27, 2016, a campaign was launched in Kumasi dubbed "Operation Cover the Land". Located in the vision of Habakkuk 2:14 "Operation Cover the Land" seeks to ensure that by 2020, all languages in this country that do not have the Bible, would have translation work started in them. To ensure that, "Operation Cover the Land", moves Bible translation in Ghana Beyond Aid, a Financial Patrons platform, led by Rev Dr Kwabena Darko and Ken Ofori-Atta, Ghana's Finance Minister has been established to mobilize Ghanaian Christian businessmen and women to support Bible Translation in Ghana, and beyond.

The Executive Director explained, the vision of national ownership that underpins "Operation Cover the Land" was inspired, directly, by the vision that founded the International Central Gospel Church. He recalled a "small book" written by Dr Mensa Otabil that he had read in the 1990s and which fundamentally influenced his outlook, and which informs his own commitment to "National

Ownership" of language development and Bible translation. In the book, "Beyond the Rivers of Ethiopia:..." Dr Mensa Otabil, then at the very beginning of the development of his church, outlined his vision for the church he was seeking to establish:

"The Lord called me to teach my congregation to stop looking to Europe and America as their source of supply but to cultivate a new spirit and ethic of national development. . . I do not believe the church in Africa should be ruled from anywhere but Africa. Our leaders must be home brewed. Our finances must be generated from the productive work of our own resources. Our headquarters must be Africa! When it becomes necessary to cooperate with other churches and ministries beyond our continent it must be based on mutual respect and love"

Dr Opoku-Mensah indicated it was inspiring that what was at the time a seemingly unrealistic vision, has ultimately led to the development of one of the vibrant churches in Ghana, a University – Central University, and currently the largest non-governmental scholarship programme for students in pre-tertiary in Ghana – Central Aid. And this has been done while remaining true to the call to "build a church whose financial resources is not tied to the apron strings of the west."

This same "new spirit and ethic of national development," Dr Opoku-Mensah concluded, is what informs GILLBT's vision of national ownership, and which animates his work as the Director of GILLBT.

In his response, Dr. Mensa Otabil expressed admiration for the desire for national ownership underpinning "Operation Cover the Land", and GILLBT's work, in general. He cautioned that as an organisation that has relied solely on external support for all these years, it was going to be a long and arduous process to break this dependency. He, however, encouraged GILLBT to stay the course.



Dr. Mensa Otabil (third from left) hosted the team from GILLBT after the main church service

New Direction for Church Engagement

GILLBT Visit Partner Churches

Mother tongue Bible translation work cannot be successful in Ghana without the direct involvement of the Ghanaian Church. Embedding the work in the context of the Ghanaian Church ensures ownership and usage of the materials produced. Hence our Church-Led Bible translation strategy.

We visited some of our partner churches to worship, update, celebrate and share with them GILLBT Vision 2020



A Team from GILLBT led by Prof. E. V. O Dankwa (4th from left) met the Apostolic Church of Ghana president - Apostle Peter Okoe Mankralo (3rd from left) at the National Headquarters



A high-powered delegation from GILLBT led by the Board Chairman - Rev Thomas Sayibu Imoro, including former GILLBT Executive Director - Mrs. Grace Adjekum, the Executive Director - Dr Paul Opoku-Mensah and eight GILLBT staff from the GILLBT Accra Business office and the Gikyode translation project, honored an invitation by the Korle Bu Community Chapel on Sunday March 12, to climax KBCC at 50 Anniversary celebration.



From left, GILLBT Executive Director, Rev Dr. Kwabena Darko, The immediate past Chief Justice of Ghana, Her Ladyship, Georgina Theodora Wood and Apostle Prof Opoku Onyinah Chairman of the Church of Pentecost, at the launch of the 15th Session of the Extraordinary Council Meetings of The Church of Pentecost – General Headquarters held at the magnificent Pentecost Convention Centre, Gomoa-Fetteh on Wednesday, May 3, 2017. At the national level, the Church of Pentecost is the largest church contributor to the work of GILLBT.



Church Engagement team met Catholic Bishops to call for their support in finishing mother tongue Bible translation in Ghana



Divine Healers Church made their first donation to GILLBT.



Rev. Nuku Tamakloe - Head Pastor ICGC Rock Temple, made a donation to GILLBT on behalf of the church. ICGC Rock Temple, is a new partner.

On May 29, 2016, GILLBT honored an invitation to share with the Accra Ridge Church congregation the work of Bible Translation at both first and second services.



Pastor Edward Duodu - National Overseer- and Pastor David Obeng - Administrator with a team from GILLBT. GILLBT visited Deeper Christian Life Ministry at their National Headquarters and introduced the work of mother tongue Bible translation and our vision to complete the work in Ghana. The church, after the meeting have donated twice and included GILLBT in their annual budget.



Rev. Jonas Coffie, Principal of Victory Christian College presented cash to GILLBT on behalf of the student. The College, is a subsidiary of Victory Bible Church.



Rev. Jeff Korum - Head Pastor Elim International Family Church displayed the GILLBT Annual Planner to the congregation after receiving it from the GILLBT Church Engagement manager. Elim Church, have pledged to support GILLBT financially every year.



BIBLE SOCIETY OF GHANA AND GILLBT TO ESTABLISH A NATIONAL BT PLATFORM



Staff of BSG and GILLBT discussed strategies to complete Bible translation in Ghana

On May 12, 2017, the GILLBT Board approved a draft report of a joint Bible Society – GILLBT technical committee for GILLBT and the Bible Society of Ghana to work together on the remaining translation needs in the country.

A response to the imperatives of “Operation Cover the Land” - which seeks to ensure that translation projects are started in all Ghanaian languages by 2020 - the technical committee was set up to prepare an authoritative analysis of the Bible translation needs of the country. In addition, it was to assess the costs, and propose a strategy to establish a joint BSG-GILLBT national platform to implement the vision. In approving the report, the Board mandated the Administration to work with the Bible Society of Ghana to operationalize the vision of establishing this national platform around which the fundraising component of “Operation Cover the Land” would take place.

The report is the culmination of efforts over the past years to develop a national platform led by the main actors in Bible translation in Ghana, the BSG and GILLBT, but which would ultimately include all the Bible agencies in the country. The immediate forum that led to the establishment of the technical committee was a joint BSG-GILLBT consultation co-chaired by the General Secretary of the Bible society of Ghana Rev Dr Erasmus Odonkor, and the Executive Director of GILLBT on December 21, 2016 at the Oceanic Resort in Accra.

This historic consultation, had as participants from GILLBT: Rev Prof. Gilbert Ansre; the Executive Director - Dr. Paul Opoku-Mensah; Field Programs Director – Sylvester Nkrumah; Advancement Director – Newmann Anane-Aboagye; Translation Consultant – Dr Fabian Dapila; Communications Manager - Arthur Otabil; and Communications Assistant – Esinam Deku. The team from Bible society of Ghana was led by the General Secretary – Rev Dr Erasmus Odonkor, and included the Chairman of Translation and Literacy – Rev. B.Y. Quarshie; Translation Consultant – Prof. John D. Ekem; Church Relations and Programs Manager – Rev Charles Adu-Twumasi and Assistant Publishing Officer – Dokurugu Yahaya Issifu. We are grateful to this consultation for its historic decision to establish the technical committee. We are also thankful for the extensive work done by the Committee chaired by Rev Prof Gilbert Ansre, and including from the Bible Society of Ghana--; Prof John D Ekem; Dokurugu Yahaya Issifu and Charles Adu-Twumasi. The GILLBT team included Sylvester Nkrumah; Dr. Fabian Dapila; Ed Lauber, Newmann Anane-Aboagye and Arthur Otabil.

This is a significant moment in Bible Translation in Ghana, and we look forward to the Board of the BSG's approval to begin the process of formalising this critical national platform.



Patrick Aloka

Jesus Speaks Lobga

What is the impact of the word of God in the mother tongue in the life of the people?

A translation reviewer from Logba Tota, Patrick Aloka, shared a testimony on the impact of the Mother tongue scriptures in his life.

While Patrick was reviewing the book of Matthew in his heart language Logba, the meaning of Chapter 5 verses 43 to 48 on Love for our Enemies came to him in a very strong way. After the review meeting, he went home, read it repeatedly, and prayed to God for forgiveness. His greatest challenge has been that he is never able to forgive people who offend him. He has a very strong urge to revenge and has not lived in peace with a number of people in his community. He admitted the review work has helped him to understand many of Jesus' sayings in a very special way. Patrick is growing as a Christian and living peacefully with his neighbours.



- Social Functions
- Accommodation
- Catering Services
- Meetings/Workshop



GILLBT Hospitality, Accra

+233 245 015 017 / 0302 772 074 / 0303 761 476

accra_gh_gillbt@gillbt.org

Buli Bible Dedication

in their capacity as Translation Consultants. GILLBT also appointed Peter Wangara as the Literacy Coordinator. Rev. Adekaldu completed the translation of the New Testament with Bob Schaefer as consultant. Nancy assisted with testing the translation, and did linguistics and anthropological research needed to meet the prerequisites for translation.

The Buli New Testament was completed in 1995 and dedicated in 1996. Five-Thousand copies of the first edition sold out quickly and an additional 5000 were printed in the year 2000. These also sold out so that by 2005 there were no print copies in stock. However, the Buli translation team produced the audio New Testament with Hosanna/FCBH. They also worked with Great Commission to produce the Buli Jesus Film and "God's Story" in Buli.

Also in 1995, the Local Council of Churches directed that the translation of the OT be undertaken and asked Rev Adekaldu to continue to serve as exegete and coordinator for the project. They appointed Rev. Daniel Ayarik as a second translator in 2000. Pastor Kobina George also contributed to the translation of the book of Psalms.

It was all joy as the Bulsas' welcomed their complete Bible first in Sandema in the Upper East region and in the capital town of Ghana - Accra on February 4 and 12 respectively. Bulsas' are in the Upper East region of Ghana and speak the Buli language. It has taken over 40 years of perseverance and collaboration by various national and international personnel assigned to the project, as well as support from the Chiefs and people of the Bulsa traditional area to bring this long awaited desire to reality.

History

The Buli Bible is the 14th full Bible dedicated by GILLBT. GILLBT's involvement in the Buli Translation and Literacy project began in 1978 when Ian and Claire Gray moved to Sandema. The Grays' produced the initial Buli primer series and began New Testament translation including the gospels of John and Matthew with Samson Amoak (of blessed memory).

When the Grays' had to return to Ireland, GILLBT assigned Paul and Jean Dancy to take over. With the help of Peter Wangara, Jean revised and expanded the primer series. Paul drafted most of the remaining New Testament with Presbyterian Catechist, Collins Abagme. He also worked with Frans Kroeger and Peter Wangara to produce a Buli dictionary.

Todd and Karla Poulter joined the project and took over when the Dancys' returned to UK. They worked with Peter Wangara to expand the phonology and did an analysis of Buli tone. Todd developed a project plan that included working with the Local Council of Churches to form a translation committee for the project and asked Rev. Albert Adekaldu to coordinate Bible translation for the project.

When the Poulters' left, GILLBT asked Bob and Nancy Schaefer to move to Sandema and serve the Buli New Testament translation



Bulsas' welcomed the Buli Bible amidst drumming and dancing



The Buli Bible dedicated in Accra

The Local Council of Churches have provided support for the translation project in launching it, hosting dedications, Bible days, and reviewers/committee meetings. The translators have been able to do the translation because they are supported by their own congregations, other congregations in the US, and individuals who were friends of the Schaefers.

In 2016, the Buli Translation team completed the full Buli Bible.

GILLBT's work in the Buli language have not only provided Bulsas' with the word of God, but also contributed to the literature. GILLBT took over the administration of the Buli Literacy Project in 1996 and funded it. A full set of literacy materials have been produced for the GILLBT adult literacy program among the Bula's along with materials for teaching Buli in their schools. This is the major linguistics work done so far in the Buli language.

Dedication

In Sandema, speaking on the theme for the dedication: ***'The word of God, the best salvation gift to the Bulsas and the whole world'***, Chairman for the Upper Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana, Rev. Emanuel Ntami indicated that the word of God could be likened to the biggest pharmacy shop. It has an antidote to all kinds of ailments. He entreated the Bulsas' to use the word of God in their mother tongue to cure the spiritual, social and economic maladies in their society. Quoting from 2 Timothy 3:16-17, he said the only disease we are permitted to transmit to others is the word of God. "Spread the word so vigorously until it causes a major pandemic" he added.

GILLBT Executive Director Dr Paul Opoku-Mensah in his speech at the Accra dedication charged all gathered to recognize and repay years of hard work and sacrifices by various translators to ensure the Bulsas hear God speak their language.

In a speech read on behalf of the Moderator of the Presbyterian Church Rt. Rev. Prof Cephas Omenyo who was the Special Guest of Honor at the ceremony in Accra, he entreated Bulsas' to apply the word of God they have now in their heart language for positive impact in their daily activities.

Nkonya Audio New Testament and Psalms Launched



An impressive ceremony was held on Friday, August 26, 2016 to commemorate launching of the Nkonya Audio New Testament. This coincided as the 1000th Audio New Testament recorded in the global Faith Comes by Hearing recording ministry (FCBH). In addition to this was a presentation of Nkonya Audio Psalms which also happened to be the first language in Africa to have the whole Psalms in audio format.

The durbar brought together chiefs and people of Nkonya traditional area, churches and their leaders as well as officials of the recording partners, GILLBT and Theovision International.

In her welcome address, the paramount Queen-mother of the Nkonya traditional area, Nanabea Afua Asieduwa Kobri commended GILLBT, the Nkonya Language committee and Theovision International for their contribution to developing the Nkonya language and making the audio recording possible. She, on behalf of the traditional authorities pledged the support of the Nkonya community in ensuring that the audio materials are used effectively in the language area and beyond.

In a speech read on his behalf, GILLBT Executive Director, Dr. Paul Opoku Mensah said our societies are to a large extent oral, and having the scriptures in audio format will immensely complement the printed text in reaching a wider audience in propagating the gospel. He said the word of God transforms lives, communities as well as brings peace and development. He also commended Theovision International and Hosanna Ministries for providing the technical and financial resources for the recording.



Reconnecting with the Institute of African Studies - our Founding Partner

A delegation from GILLBT led by the Executive Director, Dr Paul Opoku-Mensah, paid a courtesy call on the new Director of the Institute of African Studies (IAS), Prof. Dzodzi Tsikata at the University of Ghana on February 9, 2017. The visit, which was to formally congratulate Prof. Dzodzi Tsikata on her appointment as the substantive Director of the Institute, was also used to update her on the work of GILLBT, discuss new ways to deepen the existing partnership with the IAS, and invite her to take her place on the GILLBT Board as the institutional representative of the University of Ghana.

The discussions recalled the foundational and pioneering nature of the partnership, which started in 1962-- at the founding of the Institute of African Studies. The objective of the partnership was for the University of Ghana and SIL to work together "at all times" to develop a research agenda and programmes that involved: a) the intensive study of some languages indigenous to Ghana which have not yet been studied, including an adequate analysis of their phonological and grammatical systems and a comprehensive collection of their vocabulary, b) a comparative study of these languages, c) the collection of legends, songs and all types of folklore of these people, d) the recording of these languages, e) the collection of anthropological data in these language groups.

After 55 years of collaboration, it was agreed that the partnership has achieved an appreciable measure of the objectives for which it was developed. Specifically,

the relationship has led to the development of 40 of the hitherto undeveloped languages in Ghana, and has provided the University of Ghana with phonologies, grammars, dictionaries and other anthropological material in these languages. Indeed, through this academic output to the University of Ghana, the GILLBT – IAS partnership is the largest contributor to the documentation and analysis of the minority languages of Ghana.

The challenge for the future was to build on this documentation by deploying the Ghanaian languages in different domains of national life. Consequently, the Director of GILLBT, Dr Paul Opoku-Mensah proposed a new framework for a research partnership that focuses on the role of Ghanaian languages in different domains of national life. In the immediate term, this partnership could begin with collaboration on the development of a new language policy in education, where GILLBT is the national convener.

Currently GILLBT presents an annual report to IAS. Both heads have agreed to expand the presentation from a ceremony of handing out documents to one that would discuss and adopt strategies to implement the research implications of these reports.

The Director of the Institute of African Studies thanked the GILLBT delegation for their congratulatory message, and committed to exploring the proposed expansion of the research partnership.

GILLBT and SIL Africa Partners in Basic Education in Ghana



Historically, GILLBT started as SIL Ghana. With the end of SIL's formal presence in the country, new ways of partnering that allows GILLBT to scale up its impact, and to tap into the global expertise and best practices of SIL are constantly explored. One area has been the partnership between GILLBT and SIL Africa in the effort to bring Ghanaian language-medium instruction into the nation's primary schools. This partnership took on an exciting new dimension in 2015, when a consortium of international and Ghanaian education organizations (including GILLBT and SIL Africa) won a large USAID bid for early-grade reading improvement in the 11 approved Ghanaian languages of instruction and English. The USAID Ghana Partnership for Education: Learning project aims to improve the reading performance of over 1 million primary public school pupils (KG2 to P2) in Ghana. *Learning* is working closely with the Ministry of Education (MoE), the Ghana Education Services (GES), and other affiliated institutions to achieve this goal by implementing early-grade reading programs in all eleven official Ghanaian languages and English.

As the major Ghanaian partner in the Learning consortium, GILLBT plays a key role in engaging the language communities involved, providing needed linguistic expertise on each language, and hosting and managing the various workshop events for developing teaching and learning materials in these 11 languages. As the primary source of reading consultants for the project, SIL Africa is responsible to lead and train the Ghanaian mother-tongue authors in writing, editing and revising the materials. Together, GILLBT and SIL expertise constitutes the backbone of the process by which these reading instructional materials are planned, constructed and finalized.

This focus on reading instruction in the 11 official Ghanaian languages actually developed at the end of the second year of the project, when the USAID funders indicated their desire for a very sharp, accelerated programmatic focus on reading, setting aside the range of infrastructural activities that had been in progress. At this pivotal point in the project, *Learning* leadership turned to GILLBT and SIL for solutions. Together, these organizations brainstormed on how to meet the new USAID expectations.

The newly-concentrated focus on early grade reading outcomes, and the need for testing processes and products at a small scale, led to the development of a single-language prototype reading instructional program to serve as a precursor to the larger, multi-language reading program. The prototype program was intended to allow testing and refining of key program features such as materials development and teacher support, which would feed directly into the larger reading program.

At the recommendation of GILLBT and SIL, the prototype reading program focused on Dagbani-speaking schools. The Dagbani language is one in which GILLBT translators and literacy experts have worked for many years; this meant that a great deal of linguistic information about Dagbani was readily available, including phonological write-ups, a large dictionary in electronic format, a spelling guide and a number of texts published in the language. In addition, GILLBT's strong links with the Dagomba community and the Dagbani language allowed quick mobilization of writers, editors and teachers for the prototype. The prototype program began with a residential workshop of Dagbani-speaking authors, held from 24 October to 9 December 2016 at the GILLBT Training Center in Tamale. The goal of the 7-week workshop was to produce Dagbani-language reading instructional materials for P1 Term 1 and 2.

GILLBT pulled together the Dagbani materials development team: five Dagbani-speaking authors who were experienced readers and writers of the language, with the ability to invent interesting, culturally appropriate stories for children. The workshop was led by SIL reading consultants Leila Schroeder and Tanya Spronk, using PrimerPro linguistic software developed by SIL language software consultant Kent Schroeder to develop the pupil's books and teacher's guide. GILLBT's Language Technology Consultant, Stephen Ayuuni, provided technical support on the use of the PrimerPro software while GILLBT Deputy Director Peter Wangara supported the team and managed the workshop.

By the end of the seven-week workshop, Dagbani reading instructional materials for P1 Terms 1 and 2 had been produced. The content of each reading lesson includes decodable stories that the

learners can easily read and understand, and illustrations that are appropriate both to the stories and the culture of the learners. Recent assessment of the 20 classrooms where these prototype materials are now being taught indicates impressive success in improving children's reading performance.

Based on the lessons learned through the prototype program, *Learning* then gave GILLBT and SIL experts the task of developing comparable reading instructional materials for KG2, P1 and P2 in the 11 official Ghanaian languages; these materials will then be used in a national scale-up of the prototype program. The first workshop, for KG2 Term 1 and P1 Term 1 materials development, took place at the GILLBT Training Centre in Tamale from 27 March to 26 May 2017. This ambitious workshop brought together 44 mother-tongue authors, 11 illustrators, 7 seven SIL reading consultants, and 5 GILLBT experts: a team of more than 60 participants, in a massive, 9-week collaborative effort. Against all expectations,



this group successfully completed the materials development tasks set before them. A second workshop that began in September and ends in November, 2017 is focusing on the remaining pupil and teacher materials for KG2, P1 and P2. Another workshop from February to March 2018 shall complete the material development process.

The partnership between GILLBT and SIL Africa has been essential to the progress made so far by *Learning*. Both organizations are prioritizing the collaboration of reading consultants, linguistics experts, language technology experts and program management specialists, with the same aim: quality teaching and learning materials that are built on decades of experience with Ghanaian languages and the communities that speak them. As a result, SIL and GILLBT are increasingly seen as desirable professional partners in the field of international education.

In the rapidly changing world of Wycliffe and SIL, the GILLBT-SIL Africa partnership provides a potentially viable template for addressing, reflecting on and some of the current challenges. For instance, this bilaterally funded, NGO-implemented initiative for improving reading outcomes for Ghanaian children could do more to enhance the use of translated Scriptures in Ghana than many church-based initiatives may be able to accomplish. Similarly, the partnership, potentially, provides for the development of GILLBT and national-level capacity. Not only so, but the *Learning* project is paying for GILLBT and SIL staff involvement in the project; this added benefit is highly significant in the current financially strapped SIL and Wycliffe environment. Finally, it provides insights into ways in which Wycliffe, SIL and National organisations like GILLBT - can rethink their relevance in the light of the changed and changing contexts in which our work is located. Essentially it is a win-win partnership!

Feedback from our Readers



Dear Paul,

We were able only to cross paths momentarily at the recent SIL Board meetings. I had wished we had time to talk more. Then yesterday I received the GILLBT newsletter. The reports were a wonderful blessing and brought great joy to my heart. I thank God for your leadership of GILLBT and the vision God has given you for what the Church in Ghana can and should be doing in providing translations of God's word to the people of Ghana and beyond. You have worked to bring the spiritual, social, intellectual, and economic capital of Ghana to bear on the ministry of Bible translation and language development. May the Spirit produce the fruit that is needed from the labor of your hands and others in the coming year. I was greatly encouraged also by the testimonies of commitment from the patrons who have committed themselves to make a financial difference: spiritual leaders, educators, financial leaders like Ken Ofori-Atta, and so on.

It has been a delight to pray for you and your family over the past many years, and I continue praying for and with you in the matters of the future.

Your brother,
John Watters, PhD (Ex-President, SIL International)

Dear Paul,

I just read your editorial in the GILBT Newsletter Mother Tongue November. It was really inspiring. I am praying for you Paul, for your vision for finding African patrons for all the projects in Ghana and that as you succeed with this in Ghana, it will inspire others in the rest of Africa to pray and work for the same.

Blessings, Kathie Watters

Dear Paul,

I was really encouraged reading your article on Patrons in the latest GILLBT Newsletter. The Aitape project will be looking for new funding over the next few years to cover expenses that Wycliffe US is no longer able to cover. We have considered for some time the role of the Papua New Guinea (PNG) churches in our area in contributing to the costs of the work.

This article is timely. The idea of patrons for the gospel is not new as you have shown, going back to Biblical accounts in Paul's ministry. And patrons for Bible translation are also quite prevalent in history. I'm looking forward to sharing your article with our team as motivation to begin our own reflection and prayer, not only for our financial needs but also for the growth and maturity of the PNG church.

Blessings.

Bonnie Bystrom, SIL International

Dear Paul,

Greetings. I have just read through the recent GILLBT newsletter and I just wanted to let you know how excited I was to read of your vision with respect to Indigenous Patrons. I want to say that I thank God for this vision and encourage you to keep it up.

I am saying this because over this past year I have battled with cancer. I chose to remain in Ghana for my operation and

subsequent treatment and it has been a profoundly humbling experience for me. This is particularly because of the level of giving I experienced as an expatriate from Ghanaians. It reaffirmed to me that Ghanaians have an enormous capacity to give, but given the challenges that most Ghanaians face financially, there is a depth of spiritual commitment that takes many beyond their limitations and thus there is a deep ability to give. This is not a new characteristic. I am in the process of editing a book with Professor Robert Addo-Fening on Christianity and Cocoa and one of the papers that will be included in the book documents the depth of giving by Ghanaians after the first world war to relieve the suffering of German Christians. Ghanaian Christian leaders actually personally visited Germany a number of times with financial gifts from Ghanaian churches to help their German brothers and sisters in their suffering.

Thus, your thoughts on Indigenous Patrons is built upon a rich, but little known legacy because this side of giving in the African context has too often been subsumed by negative reports in the western press or the assumptions that Africa can only survive on the patronage from the west. God bless you for your thoughts and creative leadership in this area and I pray that many more Ghanaian and other African patrons will emerge to support the work of Bible translation. With best wishes.

Dr. Allison Howell, Associate Professor, Akrofi-Christaller Institute

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

- ☐ I want to pray for Operation Cover the Land
- ☐ I want to serve as a Financial Patron for Operation Cover the Land
- ☐ I want to support the work of GILLBT

**Kindly send your response to the
addresses or call:**

communications_gillbt@gillbt.org

+233 50 138 5894

Celebrations

Ken Ofori-Atta appointed Ghana's Finance Minister



President Nana Akufo Addo introducing Ken Ofori-Atta as Ghana's Finance minister.

One of GILLBT's leading financial patrons and Christian businessman, Ken Ofori-Atta has been appointed as Ghana's finance minister. He assumed office after having been sworn-in on January 27, 2017, by the President of Ghana.

Ken Ofori-Atta is an advocate for the national ownership of the work of mother tongue Bible translation in Ghana and Africa. He and Rev Dr Kwabena Darko are currently leading GILLBT's Vision 2020 fundraising campaign dubbed "Operation Cover the Land". The overarching goal of Operation Cover the Land is to engage and mobilize Ghanaian Christian businessmen and businesswomen of all denominations to support financially mother tongue Bible translation. By 2020, a Bible translation project must start in all remaining Ghanaian languages where there are no Scriptures.

In congratulating Ken Ofori-Atta, we recall the parallels between him and his Uncle, William Ofori-Atta, affectionately called "Paa Willie," a member of the 'Big Six' of Ghanaian politics, and the founding Trustee Chairman of GILLBT. William Ofori Atta was the leading advocate for the involvement of Ghanaian Christians in active politics and public service. When he was the Chairman of the Board of Trustees of GILLBT, He was also Ghana's Minister of Foreign Affairs, and later the Minister of Education and Culture.

It is therefore gratifying to see Ken following the footsteps of his illustrious uncle.

And this is not just in politics, but in the support of our work. As the Executive Director explained at the launch of the Lelemi Bible in Baglo on November 22, 2014 at which Ken Ofori-Atta was a Special Guest:

"Talking about history, when the work on the Buem Bible began in the mid 1980s, Ghana's foremost Christian statesman, Mr William Ofori Atta-- one of the "Big Six" and affectionately called Paa Willie-- was here. As the Chairman of GILLBT's Board of Trustees, the Hon William Ofori-Atta, agreed to come to the Buem paramount town, Bodada in 1983 to kick start the work. Today, as we celebrate the dedication of the complete Bible into Buem, we have the nephew of Paa Willie, Mr Ken Ofori-Atta, one of Ghana's leading Christian businessmen here to celebrate with us, and kick start the next phase of the work... One of the reasons I invited Ken Ofori-Atta to be with us is his desire to mobilize our businessmen and women to be the patrons of the work in this country. William Ofori Atta mobilized his generation to provide national legitimacy for the work. Ken's presence here is to assure you that you are not alone as you seek ways to move the work into the future."

And this future is one in which Ghanaians take ownership, including funding for, language development and Bible Translation.

This theme of national ownership finds expression and continuity in Ken Ofori-Atta's vision as the Finance Minister, where he commits to "building an economy that is owned by Ghanaians and creates opportunities for all." As he put it:

"...I think the world should begin to know, foreign investors who are coming should begin to know that it's Ghana first and indigenous Ghanaians. I can't think that I am going to be waking up at 4am, coming to the ministry and working until 11pm and by the time I wake up in ten years I have built this country for foreigners. It's no."

The entire leadership and membership of GILLBT congratulate Ken Ofori-Atta on his new position as Finance Minister, and pray for God's strength and wisdom for him.



Mr. Ken Ofori-Atta at the Dedication of the complete Lelemi Bible

GILLBT Hospitality, Tamale

kgh_gillbt@gillbt.org 024 660 5500 / 0207 372 259 / 0247 034 980

• Social Functions • Accommodation • Catering Services • Meetings/Workshop



PLEASE CHECK SAFETY SEAL



**NATURAL
MINERAL WATER**

L'EAU MINERALE NATURELLE



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

600ml X 24

GILLBT THANKS YOU

GILLBT THANKS ALL OUR INDIVIDUAL DONORS, PRAYER PARTNERS, CHURCHES AND INSTITUTIONS INCLUDING;

- Accra Ridge Church
- Aglow International Ghana
- Assemblies of God Church, Ghana
- Bethel Prayer Ministry International
- Calvary Crusaders Ministry
- Christ Apostolic Church International (C.A.C.I)
- Covenant Family Community Church (CFCC)
- Deeper Christian Life Ministry International
- Divine Healers Church
- Elim International Family Church
- Foursquare Gospel Church
- Full Gospel Church International
- GetFund
- Ghana Pentecostal and Charismatic Council (GPCC)
- Great Commission Church International
- Grace Cathedral Ministry
- Ghana Evangelism Committee (GEC)
- Global Evangelical Church
- International Central Gospel Church – Christ Temple
- Korle-bu Community Chapel
- Legon Interdenominational Church
- Maclellan Foundation
- Methodist Church Ghana
- Mount Calvary Cross Ministry
- Oasis of Love Church
- Oikonomos Foundation
- Perez Chapel International
- Salt and Light Ministries
- Seed Company
- SIL International
- St. George's Church – Kumasi
- The Apostolic Church- Ghana
- The Apostolic Continuation Church
- The Church of Pentecost
- Theovision Int
- The Lord Pentecostal Church Int
- The Redeemed Christian Church of God
- The Stuart Hine Trust
- Victory Bible Church
- Winners Chapel Int. Accra-Ghana
- Wycliffe Bible Translators USA
- Wycliffe Bible Translators UK
- Wycliffe Bible Translators Netherlands
- Redeemed Baptist Church, Madina
- Presbyterian Church of Ghana
- Fountain Gate Church



© **Ghana Institute of Linguistics,
Literacy and Bible Translation**

Serving Ghana Through Language Development, Literacy And Bible Translation