



ANNUAL REPORT 2006

Documenting and promoting Cameroon
national languages and culture



Web site : www.sil.org/africa/cameroun/index.html

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Words from the desk of the General Director

We were driving our vehicles to the village of Mbinon during the dry season and the dust was flying high in the air. The passengers were holding on to the seats or handles inside the vehicle as we bounced over the rough roads. The interministerial delegation from MINREX, MINRESI, MINEDUB, and MINJEUN, with a representative of NACALCO and members of SIL, was on its way to visit the mother tongue literacy work being done in the Noni language community. It seemed as if we would never reach our destination when, suddenly around a bend in the road, we encountered a group of singers and dancers. Noni people, who were active in the literacy programme, had come to greet us. We gladly got out of our vehicles while they sang and danced and read speeches welcoming us to the entrance of Noni land. A large crowd gathered. The Noni population was very proud to be learning to read and write their language, and to use their language for development.

The interministerial delegation was impressed by the enthusiasm of the local population, and they had a new impression of SIL. They saw that SIL was doing much in this rural area of the North West Province to fight poverty and promote local development. The delegation visited the villages of Lassin, Nkor, Din, and Djottin, and saw the Noni language being taught in schools and in adult literacy centres. One member of the delegation said, "Visiting the various literacy centres broadened my appreciation of SIL's activities. I commend SIL for developing local languages in Cameroon. This type of action should be emulated by other organizations. More grease on your elbows!"

SIL is grateful for the opportunity to serve the language communities, churches, and government of Cameroon for the last 37 years. I hope this annual report will broaden your appreciation for SIL's activities.



George Shultz
General Director

SIL Cameroon: Partners of language communities

SIL personnel in Cameroon originate from the following countries:

- Australia
- Bahamas
- Cameroon
- Canada
- Costa Rica
- Finland
- Portugal
- Spain
- Sweden
- Switzerland
- The Netherlands
- The Republic of Ireland
- The United Kingdom
- The United States of America

When a language dies, the culture, history and art of the people also die. Therefore, each people group should have access to the means to develop their language. This is what SIL Cameroon has been doing since 1969. Throughout the years, SIL has run training programmes aimed at building the capacity of local language communities. This training has enabled them to develop their own language. In order to succeed in this mission, SIL desires to cultivate the rich linguistic heritage of Cameroon through local development based on sociolinguistic research, literacy and translation.

As a non-governmental organisation, SIL operates in Cameroon under a Headquarters Agreement and a Convention of Scientific Cooperation signed with the government. It also collaborates with research institutions, other NGOs, educational establishments, and churches that have an interest in seeing national languages developed. Its personnel serving in Cameroon originate from 14 different countries.

"SIL develops national languages, and impacts the economic, social, domestic, and spiritual development of individuals as they learn to read, write, and to do translation in their mother tongue. A child's mastery of the mother language facilitates understanding of other languages and school subjects. I believe SIL will continue to be important in the national literacy programme." Mr. Ndzo Augustine, Ministry of Youth.



Visiting delegates to the Noni language development project

During 2005, SIL had some type of involvement in over 80 language development projects in the ten provinces of Cameroon.

Training

Empowering local communities

SIL has always put a high priority on making its research practical. Training nationals to develop their own languages is one key to reach that goal. On the other hand, the local community's goal is to be able to develop, encourage and maintain the use of its language. To achieve this, the community needs to look first among its own members for the needed skills, expertise and resources. Training is an important vehicle through which the capacities of nationals are built.

In 2005, 332 different people from 72 different languages took part in regional- and national-level training events in Cameroon. See the overview below. This does not include the many, many Cameroonians who were trained and mentored by SIL at the local level.



Participants at the local level workshop in Maroua

Courses / Workshops	Attending languages	Participants
2 in Computing	3 language groups	8
4 in Linguistics including grammar, phonetics and writing	17 language groups	45
14 in Literacy including reading and writing, dictionary-making, multi-strategy teacher trainings, and AIDS materials development	55 language groups	162
2 in Scripture in Use including community mobilisation and audio workshop	12 language groups	36
3 in Training including leadership, anthropology specialist and learning that "LASTS"	19 language groups	36
12 in Translation including translation principles, exegesis and translation of a narrative text, and training in translation software "Adapt-it"	65 language groups	178
TOTAL : 37 courses	171 languages from 72 different language groups	465



Aids materials development workshop

Linguistics

The main goal of the linguistics department is to work closely with SIL and other researchers by providing the training and feedback necessary to produce quality research on the languages of Cameroon. This aspect of SIL's programme is important in that basic linguistic research is a crucial foundation stone that supports applied areas like literacy and translation. Though achieving this requires a heavy investment of time, SIL's linguistics consultants have put it a priority to work closely with government agencies, the academic community and other trained Cameroonians. The year 2005 saw the official closing of the 'Foundations for Writing' course series, an event presided over by the Minister of Scientific Research and Innovation, Dr. Madeleine Tchuinte.

This series of 6 courses, given over a 2-year period, helped 9 language communities develop an orthography. Thanks to this orthography, these communities can write and read their language, and can teach those who are not literate in the official languages so that they can better understand the problems in their communities, such as HIV/AIDS, health, agriculture...



The Scientific Research and Innovation Minister during her visit at SIL

Translation

Translation is an area of applied linguistics in which SIL assists Cameroonians to address their need for translated documents. Proper translation requires careful analysis of the meaning of words, sentences and discourse structures used in the source language. Then it is necessary to examine the syntactic, semantic and discourse structures of the receptor language. A good translation often requires the rearrangement of the elements within each statement in order to produce a clear, accurate and natural translation. National language translations include Scripture portions, health materials and agricultural booklets.



Kom New Testament translation team

Literacy

SIL Cameroon is privileged to work together with language communities to develop their capacity to carry out their own language and literacy development activities and to enjoy the benefits of that development. The ability to read one's own language can bring changes in the social, cultural, political, economic and spiritual needs and goals of the speakers.



Some Government Officials lead by SIL attending a mother tongue class at Nkor Government High School

This booklet saved the life of my child!

My child was very sick with diarrhea. And you know how some give us advice. Don't give her anything to drink! Look at all that diarrhea! For days and days it is coming out. There must be too much liquid in your baby - don't you give her anything more to drink. Then maybe her diarrhea will dry up.

Well, that is how many a life has dried up. Fortunately I had been going to a Kako reading class. And when there was a book table set up during the celebration of our reading awards, I profited to buy this bright yellow book about how to treat diarrhea. At the time I chose to buy it because it cost only 100 CFA ...and that was all I had.

It was some time later that my child was very sick. And I remembered my book and started to read it. It explained to me about rehydration drink and how giving lots of liquid could save the life in many cases of diarrhea. So I followed the instructions. And now look at my little healthy girl. It is because I could read that she is now alive.



SIL Today and Tomorrow

The goal of SIL Cameroon is to work together with Cameroonian individuals and organisations to serve language communities. In order to do this, there are 5 key strategies, which are:

- Increasing national involvement,
- Strengthening partnership with CABTAL,
- Developing strategic cooperative agreements with other organizations,
- Increasing distribution of research, and
- Strengthening current work.

PUBLICATIONS

SIL Cameroon publications are primarily written for national language speakers. In 2005, SIL members worked together with nationals to produce over 40 publications in mother tongue covering a wide range of topics including dictionaries, folktales, health booklets, husbandry, literacy and primers

Thesis and Academic publications

SCHRAG, Brian E. How Bamiléké music-makers create culture in Cameroon. Los Angeles, California, University of California. 320 pp.
WILKENDORF, Patricia Lynn. Training manual in exegetical principles for mother-tongue translators with application to the translation of 1 Corinthians 9:1-18. St.Louis, Missouri. Covenant Theological Seminary. 121pp.

National Language Publications

Aghem - Aghems! Don't be speaking only, be writing also.

Bafut - Kande's story, student book.

Bamali - The Bamali alphabet book.

Bangolan - Learn Bangolan language 1.

Cuvok - Tchouvok stories + Writers' guide.

Gemzek - Writers' guide + Guemzek stories.

Hdi (Hidé) - Hedi stories.



Karang - Language learning book of the Karang language 3.

Koozime (Konzime) - Cook book + Wisdom of the Koozimes.

Kwanja - Kwanja stories and their lessons.

Limbum - Kande's story, student book.

Mbuko - Mbuko hymns + Stories + Stories 2 + Faced with AIDS! What should I do?

Merey (Meri) - Mere stories. + Writers'guide.

Mofu - Teacher's guide for the 2nd primer in the mofu-gudur language + Stories in mofu-gudur language.

Ngie - Ngie alphabet book + Alphabet of the Ngie language.

Ngomba - The construction of an out-house+ Diarrhoea: how to treat it at home + Let us learn to read the alphabet of the language of the ndaa.

Ngyemboon - Beekeeping in Cameroon.

Nugunu (Gunu) - Lullaby + Reading book + Reading book + Nugunu alphabet.

Pinyin - Pinyin alphabet book + The alphabet of the Pinyin language.

Technical Manuscripts

Baka - Pragmatic features of Baka narrative discourse.

Kemezung (Dumbo) - Kemezung orthography guide + Notes on the phonology of Kemezung.

Lagwan - Phonology of Lagwan.

Mambila - Alphabet and orthography statement for the Mambila language + Initiation course to the orthography of the Mambila language.

Mbuko - The use of additive particles in Mbuko discourse.

Mekaa (Maka) - Discourse features outline - Makaa.

Mpade (Makary, Mandage) - Borrowing in Makary Kotoko.

Pinyin - The Pinyin orthography guide.

Vamé (Pelasta) - An orthography proposition for Vamé.

Yemba (Dschang) - Forms of exhortation in a Yemba text.



For a complete listing of 2005 SIL mother tongue publications, please visit our website:
www.sil.org/africa/cameroun/index.html



2006

CAMEROUN

Au cours de la période couverte par le présent rapport, la SIL oeuvrait dans plus de 80 projets de développement de langues au Cameroun.

During 2005, SIL had some type of involvement in over 80 language development projects in Cameroon.

Yaoundé - Siège et centre de formation de la SIL Cameroun / Administrative office and training centre of SIL Cameroon

Bamenda - Bureau régional de Bamenda / Bamenda Regional Office

Maroua - Bureau régional du Grand Nord
Greater North Regional Office



Province de l'Extrême-Nord
Far North Province

Bana
Buwal
Cuvok
Gemzek
Guidar
Hdi / Hidé
Jimi
(Kotoko)
Muyang
Mambay

Mazagway-Hidi
Mbuko
Mbedam
Merey
Mofu-Gudur
Moloko
Mpade
Lagwan(Kotoko)
Ouldéme
Vamé

Province du Nord
North Province

Daba
Karang
Pana

Province de l'Adamaoua
Adamawa Province

Kwanja
Mambila

Province du Sud
South Province

Kwasio (Ngumba)

Province du Nord-Ouest
North West Province

Aghem
Awing
Baba
Babungo (Vengo)
Bafanji
Bafut
Bamali
Bambalang
Bamunka
Bangolan
Bum
Essimbi
Ffulde
Kejum
Kom

Kemezung
Lamnsò'
Limbum
Mbembe
Meta'
Mfumte
Moghamo
Nchane
Ngamambo
Ngie
Noni
Oku
Pinyin
Yamba

Province du Sud-Ouest
South West Province

Akóóse
Denya
Kenyang
Mundani
Oroko

Province du Littoral
Littoral Province

Bakoko
Mkaa

Province de l'Ouest
West Province

Ngiembóón
Ngomba
Yémba

Province du Centre
Centre Province

Basaa
Bulu
Ewondo
Lefa
Mmaala
Nómaande

Nuasue
Nugunu
Nulibie
Tuki
Tunen
Vute
Yambetta

Province de l'Est
East Province

Badjwe'e
Kóonzime
Baka
Mékaa
Bikele
Njyem
Kakó