

Mattocks Missionary Mosaic

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“This is my language.”

As Esana silently read several verses, he then looked up and said, “This is my language. It’s a good first draft, but it will need changes. We can work with this. It does need editing but I can edit this. Yes, please *import** it for us.” into Paratext, [the Bible translation software we use to edit Bible text.] I (Rich) had just handed Esana, the lead translator on the **Benabena** team, a print-out generated via an AI program named **Scripture Forge**. Over the past few years, missionaries have been programing and tweaking this program. Dozens of Bible translation teams are trying it and many are continuing to use this new AI tool. The inputs we gave the AI model were their newly translated and checked Benabena books of Luke and Matthew (2222 verses) and the NASB Bible text as the model text to output drafts of Mark and Acts.

There is no Benabena dictionary and the only other written items in Benabena were translated by missionaries in past decades which were all rejected by the Benabena speakers as very poor quality. Esana took the AI text and edited the text over the next few evenings until it could be team and advisor-checked over the next few days. When I walked in a few days later, Esana said, “Don’t let any team members do anymore drafting. We will have AI draft the rest of the New Testament.” James, who had spent those days advisor checking the team’s translation, concurred that the checking was going more smoothly. When Esana drafted Scripture, the best translator on the team, we had gotten 35-50 verses a day advisor-checked. When others had drafted chapters, the team was getting 20-25 verses checked per day, but often the five team members had to scrap and redraft verses. We had even tried having Esana do a second draft on other team member work. So with a stronger AI first draft, which Esana redrafts, the team is now averaging 45-55 verses on checking days. Praise the Lord for better progress!

We will honor the team’s decision to use AI, but it still leaves me praying and meditating on the cost/benefit.

1. It will significantly shorten the weeks the team members are away from their families and villages, and speed up retranslating their New Testament by probably a year or more.

2. From the hours I’ve spent with the team, the AI drafts seem to miss fewer key points in the verses than a human not well-versed in English and inexperienced writing their

own language miss when they draft Scripture. 3. Less expense with shipping, building and installing equipment. With the Kamano team, we had to ship, build, install and maintain 9 solar power systems and computers in different villages for 10 years to keep that Bible translation progressing. With AI, we could do it with 3 or 4.

4. Steward the resources to serve more languages. Pray God provides missionaries to come as Bible translation facilitators.

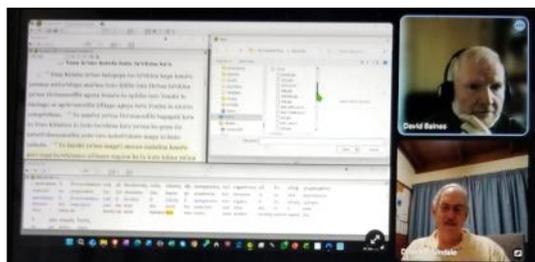
But what is lost? 1. Are we missing the discipleship opportunity of people struggling to draft? My observation is that engaging with God’s Word is like firewood that heats as it is cut, transported, stacked and burned, etc. However, with

with AI, it will probably get done faster with less stress with these frustratingly and embarrassingly poor drafts from villagers who have never written in their own language. This will get it to the community faster. 2. AI still misses things, and needs more training; I caught a few missing items in the AI verses while helping with a team check. That could have been AI’s fault or deleted during a second draft before the team check. As more books are completed and fed into AI, the better the draft of the next books. The books of Luke and Matthew took nearly a year of tenacious team building, training and work. According to the missionary that trained me to use the Scripture Forge AI tool, 2222 verses was barely enough to get a good enough draft. Most teams are feeding New Testaments into AI and using it to work on Old Testaments.

Please pray that God provides missionary Bible translation facilitators to empower villagers to utilize these new tools in God honoring ways.

“This is my language! It’s sweet, clear and good!”

Thursday, November 7, the last Gadsup NT chapter was recorded. However, with the village upheavals (see our December newsletter), it meant we had to teach Esther to edit the recordings, and then I (Rich) audio-edited the volume on the remaining 21 chapters. When Kossack returned to Ukarumpa, he loaded 100 MegaVoice audio players, which sold out in two weeks over Christmas break. That was awesome, and the community feedback from many directions and individuals has been stellar! Many have said, “Thank you, the translation is really good!” The team’s tenacity and tears were worth the hardship. Praise God!



Above Photo: Rich on Zoom call being trained on Scripture Forge AI.



Malon and Joyce (R.) on front porch. Malon is reporting sales of more Gadsup MegaVoices now in the villages.

👉 **Pray for financial support for Lemuel and Bethanny Davy** (from Jamaica and Pennsylvania). They are in the process of **raising support** to hopefully arrive in PNG in early August (after a siblings' early August wedding) to train to take over the coordination of the teams and language projects. Bethanny was here before as a single doing Bible recordings, and Lemuel has linguistic training and is a musician. Both have the computer skills we need to keep the village teams going. Our prayer is to transition us (Rich and Joyce) to the USA after this two year term in late January 2027, moving into about 75% director role and 25% language work via Zoom/WhatsApp. As director, Rich is currently doing 70% language and 50% TBT director work (yes, that's over 100%, and includes lots of evenings and Saturdays).

👉 **Praise the Lord**—TBT now has 24 missionaries and more inquiring. (Some are seconded to do SIL work.) Rich would especially like to spend more time teaching and on promotion to build Tyndale, and hand off the daily PNG hand's on work (i.e. computer repairs, backups, finances, keeping items ordered & shipped, answering many national questions and requests). These suck time from bigger projects, but without caring for these, Bible translation stalls out.

👉 **Praise the Lord—the TBT “general fund” (“where most needed”) is doing better!** Thank you for joining us to tithe to it! Needs will be bigger if we hire a finance person in PNG. This fund also keeps our USA finance team processing your support and keeps us serving.

👉 **Thank you for praying for Joyce's health.** Please continue to pray for the neuropathy stinging in her right hand and feet; and her eyes still feel like sand is in them and blur over a lot since her 2022 cataract surgery. Chronic pain zaps her energy. Joyce is a critical part of the finance work here in PNG. Pray for God to provide a replacement to do her job or for funds to hire and train a talented PNG person. (Rich has found a talented PNG lady, but we don't have the funds to hire this person).

👉 **Praise the Lord—the Gadsup audio recording of the New Testament was completed on time to get 100 audio players selling in the community by Christmas. They love them! Pray** that the news of the recording will spread to distant villages and those who want a player will get access to one of the villagers who sell players. Also, Kennedy is spell-checking the Gadsup NT so it can be printed later. The Gadsup Jesus Film is now approved for showing since December.

👉 **Praise the Lord that the Fore team has been consistent and has now completed recording Matthew through 2 Peter!** The Jesus Film is now approved for showing since the first week of February.

👉 **PTL—The Benabena team** has made steady progress, and praise for the AI drafts from Scripture Forge. The Benabena team is taking the month of February off to help their children and grandchildren register for school, and pay fees and buy uniforms required by even public schools. This takes parents many days to accomplish each year.

👉 **Please pray for Lofi (Benabena) and Manasseh (Gadsup,** inaccurately listed as Fore in the last newsletter). Lofi's location is still unknown because he has threats on his life. We're told we would hear if he were found and killed. Manasseh is married into the clan that is in the village fight. He is safe and living in a another village, along with other refugee men, until a formal ceasefire is declared. He was recording for the Gadsup team, but since he won the election, the other team members have now picked a new team member (we are now training), to take his place to record the 13 completed OT books.

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Moving?

Please send address changes either to us, or to Joyce's sister:

Carol Holter
2767 Pleasant Valley Rd
Rice, WA 99167

Windows and Light!

How's the progress on the Deer Park pole barn (upstairs)? Spokane County allowed us to get approved occupancy of the downstairs in Oct. 2024 as long as we insulated the second floor ceiling and roof to R60 (new code) and submit permits to complete the second floor following the new code. God blessed in amazing ways with the downstairs. Thank you to each of you who were part of that miraculous adventure. The upstairs now has windows and foam board between the studs against the metal and the fiberglass insulation put back in place. Plumbing in the studs and heat pump hopefully will be done toward the end of February. The contractors have all been gifted men who are supportive of our being in PNG and we are willing to use their non-booked days to get the upstairs livable Lord willing by January 2027.



Stephen, one of our TBT missionaries came to PNG on a vision trip we organized (Oct 24-Dec 1st). While here, he finished the Gadsup recording. Several weeks after Stephen left

PNG, he and Amanda (a missionary teacher, who is in our Thursday night Bible study) announced they were “in a relationship.” (Yes, that was one of the hoped-for outcomes of the vision trip ☺).

We finished a full Bible and recordings with the Kamano-Kafe in 2022, dedicating the printed Bible in 2023. During 2025 Kamano Christmas Camp, the Kamano team sold out all 78 MegaVoices in hours, all 40 Kamano-Kafe Bibles and 45 mico SD cards that we were able to send to Christmas Camp in Port Moresby (POM), inside the container of carrots and vegetables (see photo). Camp was hosted by Kamano people living in POM, the capital city (only accessible by planes or boats). We could have sold double that amount if there had been more people traveling by flights to send more Bibles and MegaVoices with them to Port Moresby.



Giving Options for Financial Partnership:

TBT has a very inexpensive and safe bank-to-bank transfer option!

1. For help, call or text (TBT Office) at 971-231-4196. Or email: Office@tyndalebt.org

2. Online: <https://tyndalebibletranslators.org/give/>

3. Or send a **check made out to Tyndale Bible Translators** with a note attached stating: “for the ministry of Rich & Joyce Mattocks” to:

Tyndale Bible Translators
PO Box 14003
Spokane Valley, WA 99214

