



INfocus

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GOD SPEAKS DUKAWA

By Melissa Petersen

The Dukawa people of Nigeria didn't have the Bible in their own language. They tried to use the Scriptures in Hausa, the language used in the marketplace, but it wasn't the language of their homes or their hearts. Now God's Word is being translated into their own Dukawa language, and many are surprised to find out what it really means. One man, a pastor for eight years, said, "I have recently compared my understanding of the Hausa Bible with the Dukawa translation, and I now realize that I misunderstood what the Hausa Bible was saying almost all of the time."

As pastors and lay people alike understand the Good News for the first time, many are turning their hearts and minds over to Christ. Churches are also multiplying. When translation advisers David and Carleen Heath first went to Nigeria in 1995, they only knew of two churches with Dukawa pastors and a majority of Dukawa worshipers. There may have been more, but not many. Today there are over 200.

Dukawa church leaders, along with the Heaths and a partnering church in Ohio, are intent on getting the translated Word ingrained in Dukawa hearts so that lives will be transformed. They've chosen two tools — the "JESUS" film and the audio Bible — and have built a careful program of training and follow-up.

The "JESUS" film, based on the Gospel of Luke, debuted in the Dukawa language in 2003 and continues to speak to people. Almost 10,000 viewed it during the recent dry season; 655 received Christ and

260 renewed their commitment to him. After most showings, a two-member discipleship team is assigned to work through basic discipleship materials with those who respond.

One individual shared after watching the film, "We went to church for many years, but it wasn't until we saw the "JESUS" film in our own language that we understood that Jesus died for our sins. We always thought he died because he did something wrong."

With the partnership and investment of a vacation Bible school in Florida in 2014, the audio Bible program was launched. Almost 200 audiobooks (solar-powered audio players with Scripture portions recorded on them) were distributed to Dukawa churches. The Dukawa team trained believers to lead listening groups where people could hear and discuss the oral Scriptures. Their initial goal was to disciple believers, but church members took their audio Bibles out into the villages and played them for their neighbors. Within a year, 1,000 neighbors made a commitment to follow Christ.

God is building his church among the Dukawa. He's speaking to them in their own language. He's bringing to light truths that have been hidden from them for a very long time. He's drawing them to himself. And he's doing it through a beautiful partnership of Dukawa leaders, Wycliffe translation advisers and partnering churches in the U.S. as they work together to see every people group on earth able to engage with the Good News in a language they truly understand.



DEAR FRIENDS,

Over the years, I've heard story after story of lives that are transformed when people finally have access to the Scriptures in the language that they understand best. But no matter how many stories I hear, I never get tired of hearing how God's Word impacts

lives when it's shared in a way that speaks directly to the heart.

As the Dukawa story on the first page illustrates, if we don't understand the Bible, we can't understand key concepts of the gospel — like the fact that Jesus died for our sin, not his own! It's when the truth of the gospel is clearly conveyed that lives are transformed for God's glory.

Thank you for helping to make God's Word available to people everywhere so they will be able to understand his message for themselves and respond to him in faith. Your partnership is impacting lives not just for their years on earth, but for all eternity.

Warmly in Christ,

Bob Creson

Bob Creson
President, CEO
Wycliffe Bible Translators USA

WORLD *focus*

PEOPLE WILL BE INTERESTED — TOGO

After getting a copy of the Gospel of Luke in Akebu, a member of the team said, "When we preach in church, we use the Bible in the Ewe language — a language that is not our own. People are not very interested in going to church, partly because the [biblical] texts are read in another language, and partly because they don't understand anything. Now that we'll be reading the Scriptures in our own language, everyone will be interested! People will invite their friends and neighbors to come to church because now they'll understand everything that is said in church." Praise God!

NO LONGER BLIND — PACIFIC

PACIFIC SALT is a project that helps church leaders find ways to use Scriptures in their language effectively so that lives can be changed. After a training course, one woman shared, "My eyes were blind to the truths in Scripture, but now I feel as if I am beginning to see. It is as if cataracts have been removed from my eyes!"



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