

FORWARD

Fall 2020 Biannual Report

Reaching Everyone, Everywhere

This report provides the results of the ministry efforts you've funded through Jesus Film Project®. Celebrate what God has done through your generosity.



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By God's grace, ministry work is still happening around the world. However, the COVID-19 pandemic has created challenges for information gathering, resulting in a decrease of Mission 865™ reporting. Instead of our usual reporting of film premiere events and stories of believers sharing their faith with others, this Fall 2020 report highlights the ways God has made it possible for M865 translation work to still progress during this unique year.

“Teach me to do Your will, for You are my God. May Your gracious Spirit lead me forward on a firm footing.”

Psalm 143:10 (New Living Translation)

Forward Motion

Praise God for His faithfulness! For He is still doing great things in the midst of uncertainty—opening doors for Mission 865™ languages to still be translated, recorded and completed. He has also blessed Jesus Film Project® and its partners with innovative ideas in ministry, and empowered ministry strategy leaders to make progress in the significant number of M865 languages that remain in sub-Saharan Africa.

God’s goodness is evident, and you are part of those answered prayers. Thank you for following His call to support the sharing of the gospel and trusting in His faithfulness. Despite the rest of the world coming to a halt, your investment helped propel our ministry efforts forward during this uniquely challenging year.



Counting on God

Your partnership has fostered the completion of

495 LANGUAGES

which is 57.23% of M865 languages completed.

Those **495** languages represent at least

269,075,597 PEOPLE

who now have a film presenting the gospel in their heart language.

Number of M865 languages completed by year:

2010:	11 languages	2015:	66 languages
2011:	10 languages	2016:	74 languages
2012:	30 languages	2017:	73 languages
2013:	27 languages	2018:	66 languages
2014:	49 languages	2019:	59 languages

FORWARD PROGRESS IN 2020:

11 languages translated and ready for recording.	5 languages recorded and in production.	30 languages completed and available for sharing!
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An aerial photograph of a city, likely Moscow, showing a mix of historic and modern architecture. In the foreground, there are several multi-story buildings with colorful facades (yellow, red, and grey). A white van is parked on a street in the lower right. In the background, a large church with a golden dome is visible on the left, and a tall, modern tower (the Ostankino Tower) rises in the distance under a blue sky with scattered white clouds. A red horizontal bar is positioned above the title.

Translating *JESUS* During a Pandemic

As countries began locking down and travel restrictions rapidly increased, Jesus Film Project® faced a need for innovation and creativity. While ministry workers in the field were figuring out new ways to share the story of Jesus, Language Strategies had to figure how to keep translation work moving forward. Two opportunities emerged during the summer of 2020—rewriting the *JESUS* Simplified Narration (JSN) script and developing Virtual Script Adapter Workshops. Both have positively affected progress on Mission 865™ languages.

“We have focused on a couple areas that we hope will not only help us make progress toward translation during COVID-19, but will also allow us to multiply our efforts once COVID-19 has passed,” said script translation strategies director, Chris Deckert. “We wanted to rewrite the JSN to make it a better tool for use in translation of the *JESUS* film in secure countries and in minority [or smaller] language communities.”

The JSN is a single-voice narration of the *JESUS* film. Because the recording only requires one voice actor, this film type is an M865 solution for secure countries where it can be difficult to get 26 voice actors to gather. It is also helpful for smaller languages when there are fewer resources or if partners are producing the film.

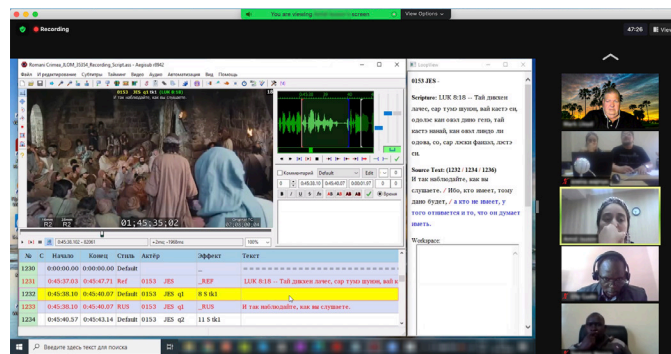
In addition to improving the JSN script, the Language Strategies team started developing virtual translation workshops. Despite the amount of preparation work and training required to host these workshops, having the opportunity to complete these scripts virtually has ensured the continuation of M865 translation work!

Virtual Script Adaptor Workshops

One of the solutions that came out of a need for innovation was the first ever Virtual Script Adaptor Workshop. Script Adaptor Workshops train translators—usually mother-tongue speakers—to adapt the *JESUS* film from the Gospel of Luke. There are two parts to these virtual workshops—an initial translation workshop that lasts two weeks and a checking workshop which allows for community checking of scripts. The first part happened right before this report was published. The second part will happen soon, so please be in prayer for this unique opportunity taking place in Ukraine!

“I’m excited that we might be able to pull this off,” the script translation manager for this workshop said. “It’s a pioneering effort. Not only have we not done a workshop over the internet before, but in this instance, our workshop leaders are from Kenya, the mother-tongue translators are from Crimea, the support team is Ukrainian and Polish, and we have a number of us from our team in America helping out too.”

In addition to completing scripts during the pandemic, script translation strategies director Chris Deckert also sees this as a new opportunity to accelerate translation work for the future. “With the success of the Ukrainian virtual



workshop, we hope to then conduct a follow-up workshop with more languages [in Ukraine,]” he shared. “We are starting with one language but there are three [Mission 865™ languages] in Ukraine that we could bring together for a future workshop.”

This first workshop will build the format and address problems to ensure more success with future virtual workshops. Following this flagship endeavor, the Language Strategies team hopes to work out the best way to train partners in completing virtual workshops as well. This would allow partners to host both virtual and in-person workshops, multiplying the number of people groups who could have the *JESUS* film in their heart languages.

God’s Perfect Timing

The recording team was prepared to record the version of *JESUS*, but the coronavirus was quickly spreading around the world! At that point the country had only a few suspected cases and the recording team felt safe traveling.

Local believers connected the recording team—who are partners of Jesus Film Project®—with speakers in the city who might audition for the film. Not one person in the cast followed Jesus, yet they willingly lent their voices for this project.

On the first day of recording, team members started with the minor characters, giving the field producer time to audition more people for the roles of Jesus and the narrator. Once found, another problem arose: The two voice actors could only record late each afternoon. As local

government employees, the men had prior work commitments during daytime hours.

Nevertheless, God worked out the details.

The team completed the recording in six days. After a thorough review of the film with many mother-tongue speakers, they all agreed: The *JESUS* film was ready for their community!

COVID-19 was reportedly spreading very slowly across the country. However, one person in the area started showing symptoms of the virus. The team scrambled to return home as local authorities began locking down. Despite the looming threat of the pandemic, God made a way for this people group to have the powerful story of Jesus in their language.

LANGUAGE:
Secure Language

REGION:
Southeast Asia

SPEAKERS:
79,000

RECORDED:
March 2020 – May 2020

COMPLETED:
June 2020



Pressing On in Africa

Another way Jesus Film Project® has been able to move forward with your help is by focusing on Mission 865™ progress in sub-Saharan Africa. The largest portion of remaining M865 languages are in that region, and therefore, the strategic resource team for Africa has adopted a language-focused strategic direction. “This reality [of the remaining M865 languages] naturally fueled our need for partnership acceleration,” the strategic resource team leader for sub-Saharan Africa said. “Partnership becomes our focus in order to make sure that all completed M865 [versions] are put to good use.”

**“I press on to reach the end of
the race and receive the heavenly
prize for which God, through
Christ Jesus, is calling us.”**

Philippians 3:14 (New Living Translation)

M865 Language Completions in Sub-Saharan Africa

207 M865 languages have been completed:

63

languages in
West Africa

53

languages in
Francophone Africa

91

languages in Southern
and Eastern Africa

182 M865 languages to be completed:

28

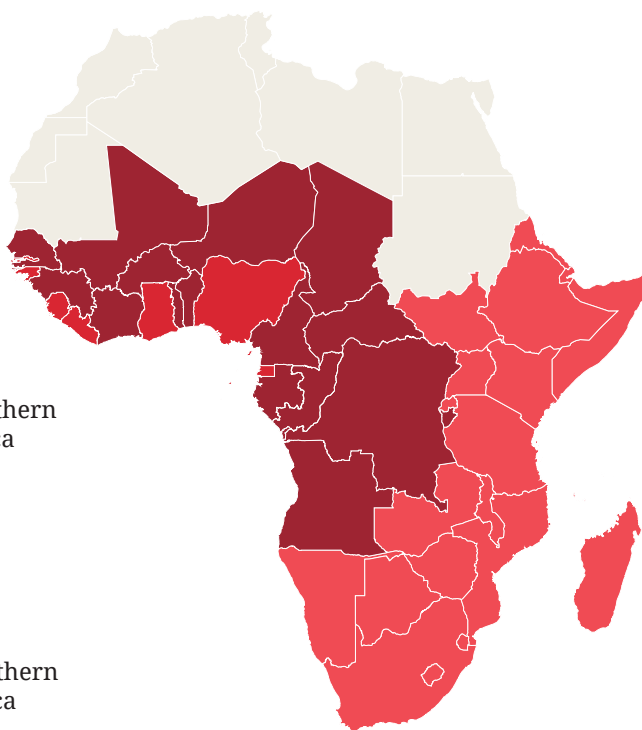
languages in
West Africa

102

languages in
Francophone Africa

52

languages in Southern
and Eastern Africa



“Is Jesus Talking Tachoni?”



LANGUAGE:

Olutachoni
(also known as Tachoni)

REGION:

Kenya

SPEAKERS:

253,000

RECORDED:

February 2020

COMPLETED:

March 2020

For many years the Olutachoni people watched the *JESUS* film in other languages, as it was unavailable in their own local language. But as the elders on the review committee watched their newly recorded version of *JESUS*, they excitedly said, “Now wow! Is Jesus talking Tachoni?”

Previously only a select few could understand the film clearly because they knew the trade languages the film was available in. “But now it’s for the elite and the illiterate,” one man said. “They’ll be able to watch and understand ... the life God has for the Tachoni people.”

Ministry workers plan to show the film in churches, as well as go door to door to share the good news. During the evenings when the people’s work is done, these evangelists hope to gather them at the marketplace to watch the film together—giving people a clear opportunity to trust in Christ for the forgiveness of their sins.



Looking Ahead

Even with the forward momentum, Jesus Film Project® continues to seek God's guidance for innovative and effective strategies for continuing His work in the midst of challenges. Pandemic-related travel restrictions have complicated the translation process. So in addition to working digitally, Language Strategies is researching ways to work with immigrants in the U.S. to translate and record the *JESUS* film into their heart languages.



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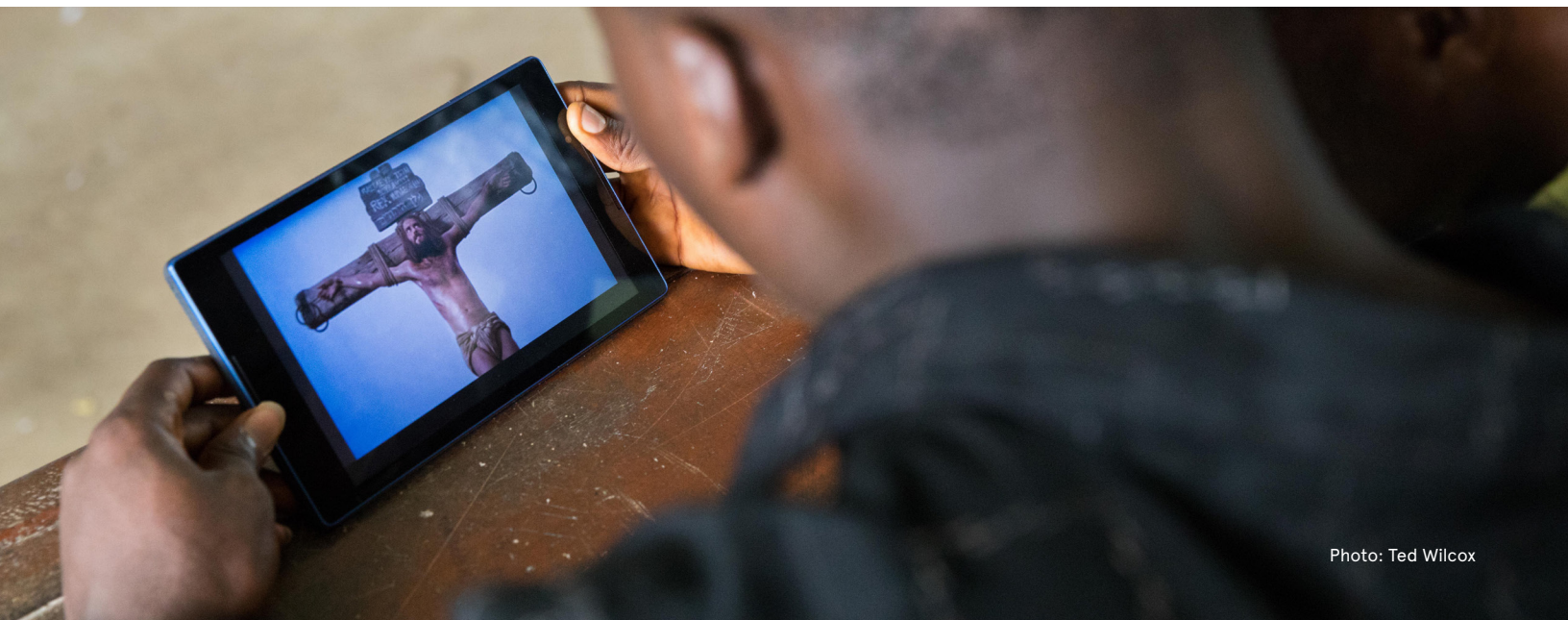


Photo: Ted Wilcox

How You Can Pray

- 1** **Praise** God that despite everything that happened in 2020, 30 more Mission 865™ languages now have the *JESUS* film. **Ask** God to continue opening doors and gifting new ideas for ministry workers to continue forward in these unique circumstances.
- 2** **Praise** God for the 495 completed M865 languages. **Pray** for those who continue to work on the remaining 370 M865 versions.
- 3** **Pray** for the strategic resource team for Africa as they focus on seeking new strategies that will encourage the spread of the gospel through translation efforts.
- 4** **Pray** for recently recorded and completed M865 languages. May God create new ways for ministry workers to start sharing the powerful story of Jesus.
- 5** **Pray** for the complex process that goes into completing a virtual script translation workshop. **Praise** God for the ability to continue translating His powerful story through digital means.

Thank You

Thank you for helping this M865 initiative move forward, even in times of challenges and uncertainty. Your desire for people around the world to know the powerful story of *JESUS* is fueling ministry efforts.

We appreciate you and your faithfulness.



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