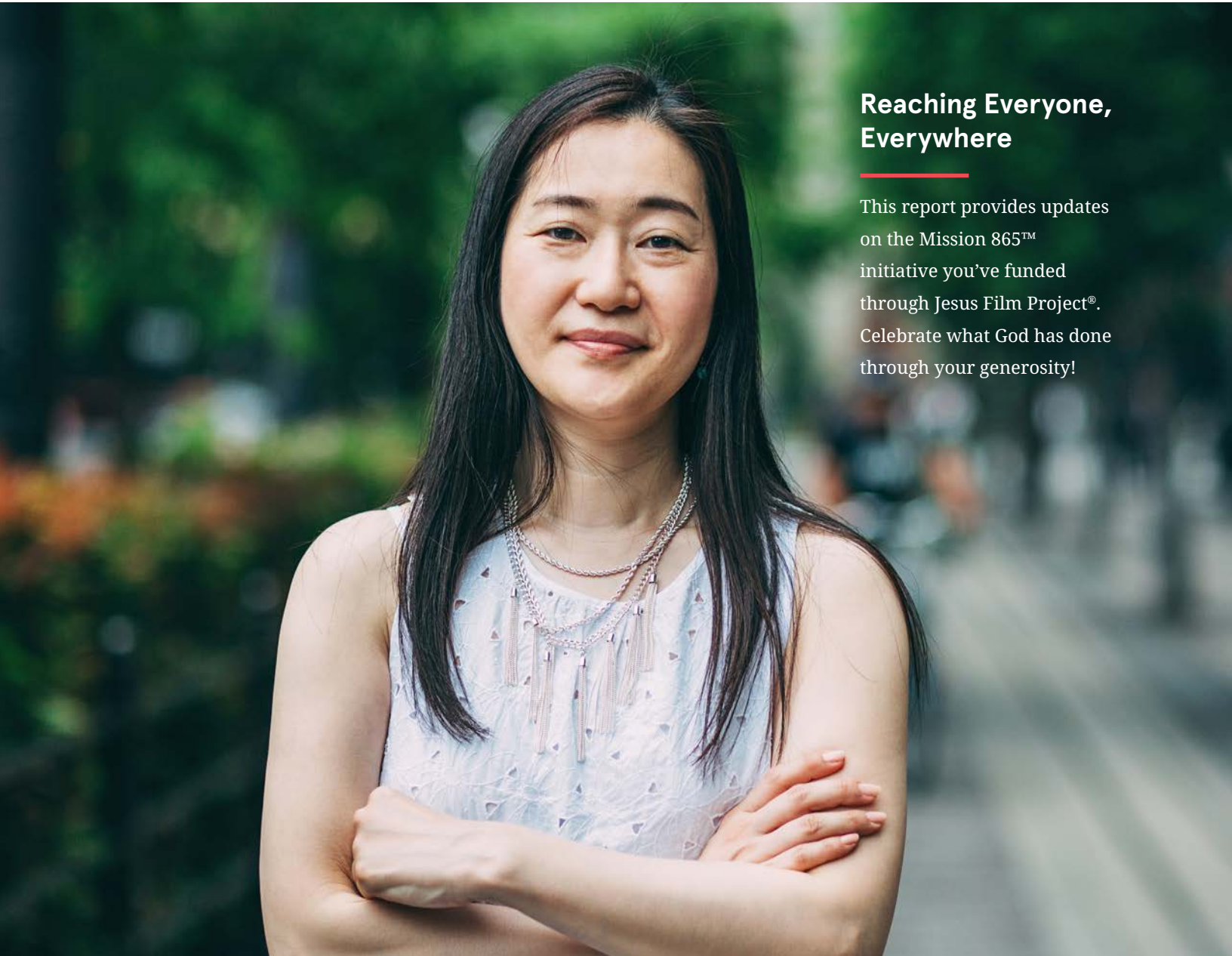


STANDING FIRM

Spring 2021 Biannual Report

Reaching Everyone, Everywhere

This report provides updates on the Mission 865™ initiative you've funded through Jesus Film Project®. Celebrate what God has done through your generosity!





MISSION 865

Table of Contents

Mission 865 Marches On <i>Introduction and Statistics</i>	3
Leaps and Bounds Through Partnership <i>Story and Statistics</i>	4-5
Spotlight on Africa <i>Stories and Updates</i>	6-7
Looking Ahead How You Can Pray	8

What Is Mission 865?

Mission 865™ is a Jesus Film Project® initiative to translate the *JESUS* film into the heart language of each people group with 50,000 or more speakers and smaller languages as determined.



“Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance.”

- James 1:2-3, *New International Version*

Mission 865 Marches On



As we work together to take the gospel to spiritually hard-to-reach places using Jesus Film Project® resources, it's clear a spiritual battle rages. Rifts between national translators threatened language recordings, tribal upheavals halted the distribution of new films and travel bans blocked access to recording villages.

As partners in faith we press on, submitting the goals of the Mission 865™ (M865) initiative to the One who gave the vision. And His sovereignty through every circumstance reminds us He is unfazed by obstacles.

In this report you'll find stories of what God's miraculous hand allowed in the midst

of difficulty. Script translators are finding unconventional ways to adapt the *JESUS* film into several heart languages. Language production managers are linking arms with recording partners around the world. And most notably, we are passing the baton to local believers and networks of churches, so they can keep the vision ablaze.

Thank you for standing firm with the Mission 865 project and funding its languages! Empowered by the Holy Spirit, your fervent prayers and generous giving are the reasons M865 continues to flourish. Together, we are witnesses to God's faithfulness in the fulfillment of the Great Commission.

Pressing Ahead in 2021



512

languages were completed†, which is 59.19% of the M865 languages total.



These languages represent at least

272,779,731

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



353

translations remain for Jesus Film Project to stay on track to complete the M865 initiative by the end of 2025.

**PROGRESS
MADE OVER
THE LAST
THREE YEARS**

2018

66

languages
completed

2019

59

languages
completed

2020

39

languages
completed

2021

8

languages completed
AND COUNTING!

† Numbers reported on March 4, 2021

Leaps and Bounds Through

PARTNERSHIP

LANGUAGE	Secure language
----------	-----------------

WORLD SPEAKERS	1.1 million
----------------	-------------

RECORDED	November 2020
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COMPLETED	December 2020
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Overcoming Obstacles to Reach Milestones

In December 2020 Operation Snap Dragon—a Jesus Film Project® ministry partner—and its network of partners helped complete the 500th M865 language. This secure language is spoken by an unreached Southeast Asian people group with 1.1 million speakers!

Working together, a local pastor and two mother-tongue translators drafted the *JESUS* film script in November 2018, scheduling to check the draft in March 2019. But a series of delays followed.

The principal translator got sick, forcing the team to reschedule to three months later. When the script was finally ready for recording, a miscommunication created a rift between translators and project facilitators, jeopardizing the project. Operation Snap Dragon sent staff members to help mend the relationships. With the issues resolved, the team looked for the first available date to record the script. Then the coronavirus pandemic hit, forcing the region into an early lockdown—no travel allowed.

Operation Snap Dragon persevered throughout these storms. After praying for the community to open up and waiting several months, the recording team arrived in the country. Voice actor auditions started immediately. And seven days later, the recording was complete!

A church planter from the community has already requested a projector to show the film. His people—most of whom follow another major religion—have historically been resistant to church planters, even sending them away. Pray this church planter is well received and can show the *JESUS* film with no impediments.

Despite the many setbacks in completing this milestone translation, God made a way in His perfect timing. Ministry workers around the world are standing firm in their faith during these difficult times, trusting in God's sovereignty and knowing that all things are possible with Him.

“It’s exciting to see the collaboration that Jesus Film Project is having with other ministries and [how we’re] relying on our contacts on the ground. [We’re] leaning on Him and what He’s providing, [and] He’s working through His church. ... Although [this] season has been slower in sending out our own recordists, God is working.”

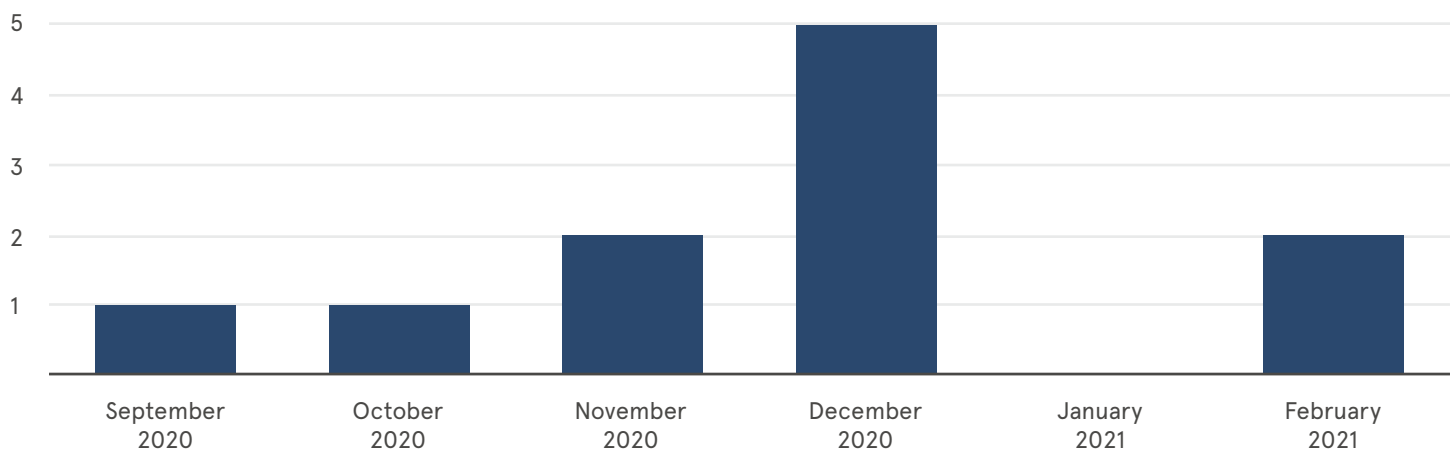
- Sarah*, language production manager for Francophone Africa

A Model for Progress in Southeast Asia

SEPTEMBER 2020 – FEBRUARY 2021

*Operation Snap Dragon
completed 11 languages in just
one country in **Southeast Asia**!*

LANGUAGES COMPLETED BY OPERATION SNAP DRAGON

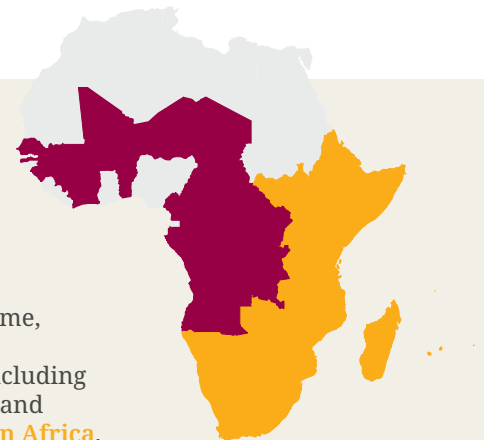


***"For the Lord is good and
His love endures forever;
His faithfulness continues
through all generations."***

- Psalm 100:5,
New International Version

To Put This in Context:

During this same time frame,
23 M865 languages were
completed worldwide, including
4 in **Francophone Africa** and
2 in **Southern and Eastern Africa**.



Spotlight on

AFRICA

LANGUAGE | PEOPLE Ale Gawwadda | Gewada

WORLD SPEAKERS 129,000

RECORDED September 2017

COMPLETED January 2018

“Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.”

- Galatians 6:9, *New International Version*

Until Everyone Hears

In 2018 the Ale Gawwada version of *JESUS* premiered in Southwest Ethiopia. Great Commission Ministry (GCM) Ethiopia—as Cru® is known there—planned to train a team to distribute and show the film in the region. Due to ongoing conflicts with bordering tribes, the area was unstable for some time, and no one was able to visit the Gewada people to provide the training.

But the community didn’t give up hope, placing their faith firmly in God’s providence. In November 2020 a GCM staff member made his way to a nearby town to hold the training. A man named Kofi showed up for the training—he was the voice actor for the part of Jesus in the film! About 30 years earlier, Kofi had launched an extensive ministry, showing the film to his community in the widely understood Amharic language. His efforts resulted in several church plants.

Now formally trained, Kofi uses a backpack projector to show the film in the Gewada region, traversing the rugged hills of the territory on a rented motorbike. He can hardly keep up with requests from villages eager for him to visit and show the film. The Ale Gawwadda speakers presently number 129,000.

Today representatives for the local ministry are making the rounds, raising funds at Ethiopian churches in Canada and the U.S. for a motorbike Kofi can use to reach every Gewada village.



“Translating the JESUS film is very much a cooperative work with many partners. If we didn’t have people like the Bible Society, Bible Translation and Literacy, and SIL [International®] we wouldn’t make near the progress we’re making. So much of our work has to do with us having good relationships with our partners. The more partners we find in-country, the more likely we are to get those languages completed.”

- Tom and Melissa, language production managers for Southern and Eastern Africa

AS OF MARCH 2021, 183 OF THE REMAINING M865 LANGUAGES ARE IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA.

This is the largest portion of remaining languages. Strategic resource teams rely heavily on partnership with churches, local ministry organizations and dedicated believers to not only complete the languages but also to host film showings.

God Turned It Around

The call came as their plane soared over the Atlantic Ocean—the trip was canceled, and the U.S. recording team members had to turn back. COVID-19 was spreading quickly, and countries were shutting down. The U.S. government had imposed a travel restriction—if the team members didn’t return soon, they might not make it back for months. The recordists braced themselves for a frantic layover as their coworkers on the ground rushed to get them home. The five major languages they intended to record in Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) went on hold for eight months after that.

Enter Stephen—a believer from Ghana and frequent recording partner trained by Jesus Film Project®. As a Ghanaian citizen, he could travel to DRC. In November 2020 Stephen took on the job to record three of the languages. After testing negative for COVID-19, Stephen flew out to the people group to record. He equipped the actors with masks and hand sanitizers, and he allowed no more than 10 people in the studio. Many waited outdoors for their turns to record.

Stephen and the actors successfully recorded all three language versions of *JESUS* and the short film *My Last Day!* And a week before Christmas, Stephen arrived in Ghana to complete the films in his recording studio.

Language coordinators for each language are eager to show these new resources. There are plans to send Jesus Film® projectors to them this year to help make this a reality!

LANGUAGES	Mbandja, Furu and Budza
WORLD SPEAKERS	1.3 million
RECORDED	November 2020
COMPLETED	January 2021



Oral Script Translation Workshops

Many of the remaining M865 languages in Africa pose the most difficulty for a variety of reasons. “It might be secure countries that have issues with persecution. It might be that they’re oral languages. It might be that they have no ministry working on oral translations,” language production manager Melissa said.

The keys to successful translation of the *JESUS* film into oral languages are the participation of a trained translation consultant, as well as an existing translation of the New Testament (particularly the Gospel of Luke) in that heart language. But most of the remaining M865 languages are oral languages that do not have a translation of the Gospel of Luke available.

With this in mind, script translation managers have set their sights on oral script translation workshops, which they believe will open a lot of doors. With the involvement of trained translation consultants, the workshops will allow for the translation of the *JESUS* film into languages with no existing Scripture resources!

Script translation managers are looking to put together the first virtual script adaptor workshops for oral languages soon—with languages in Tanzania hopefully among the first to be adapted.

Looking Ahead

Jesus Film Project® recording teams pray they can return to the field to forge ahead with M865 languages—pending the lifting of travel bans—in summer 2021. In Francophone (French-speaking) Africa alone, teams hope to record 13 M865 languages by fall 2021. In Southern and Eastern Africa, four language scripts are ready for recording.

All in all, 45 M865 language scripts are ready to be recorded once Jesus Film® teams or partners can record. Until then, teams prayerfully seek the Lord for creative ways to translate and record M865 languages—standing firm in their task and pushing forward wherever they can.



How You Can Pray

- 1** **Praise** God for unity of the body of Christ and its role in seeing the gospel go out in the midst of a global pandemic.
- 2** **Pray** for God to open doors, facilitating the travel and safety of international recording team members in the coming months.
- 3** **Ask** God to tear down spiritual strongholds and dismantle persecution in regions most devoid of the message of salvation through Christ.
- 4** **Pray** the Lord grants translators, recordists, script translation managers and language production managers wisdom and creativity around how to translate and record the remaining M865 languages.

Thank You

Thank you for your steadfast support in this special mission—to see the gospel reach the ends of the earth through the JESUS film. Your gift has made it so millions have an opportunity to hear the words of Jesus in their heart languages. May God use the film to draw many more to redemption through His Son.



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Duplicating, emailing or posting this information on the internet may result in believers being persecuted or even killed. The safety of many depends on your discretion.

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