

SURAM Cameroon

Scripture Use Research And Ministry

2022-2024



Research Report and Recommendations

SURAM Cameroon
Scripture Use Research And Ministry

Report compiled by the SURAM team
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SURAM Cameroon

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¹ The DTA is a department of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Cameroon.



Members of the SURAM team

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SURAM Team members

Mr. John Ndemba	<i>SURAM Coordinator</i>
Mr. Ghislain Fouthe	<i>Survey team leader, Anglophone Regions</i>
Mrs. Patience Tamdja	<i>Survey team leader, Francophone Regions</i>
Mr. Derick Aseh	<i>SE team leader</i>
Mr. Barthélémy Abbé	<i>SE team member</i>
Rev. Michael Kuhn	<i>Data Analyst</i>
Mr. Fredy Ngasam	<i>Assistant Data Analyst</i>

² In alphabetical order by last name: Margaret Belinga (Wycliffe Netherlands), Dickon Crawford (Wycliffe UK), Lynette Dieleman (OneBook Canada), Zac Manyim (CABTAL), Wilfred Mbori (CABTAL), Ron Mohr (LBT Canada), Michelle Petersen (SIL SE Consultant), Anke Plange (Wycliffe Netherlands), Katharina Tupper (SIL Cameroon).

Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Meaning
ABC	Alliance Biblique du Cameroun (Bible Society of Cameroon)
AV	Audio-visual
CABTAL	Cameroon Association for Bible Translation And Literacy (a member of Wycliffe Global Alliance) https://cabtal.org
CFA	Confirmatory Factor Analysis ³
DC	Deuterocanonical books
DTA	Direction de la Traduction et de l'Alphabétisation (Department of Translation and Literacy of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Cameroon)
EFA	Exploratory Factor Analysis ²
EGIDS	Expanded Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale
ICC	Inter-Church Committee
Impact-Ch	Impact on the church
Impact-Cm	Impact on the community
Impact-P	Personal impact
ISO	International Organisation for Standardisation language code
LBT/C	Lutheran Bible Translators / Lutheran Bible Translators of Canada https://lbtc.ca
MLE	Multilingual Education
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding (Protocole d'accord)
MT	Mother Tongue
NORAD	The Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
NT	New Testament
OT	Old Testament
SE	Scripture Engagement
SIL	SIL Cameroon / Société Internationale de Linguistique https://cameroon.sil.org
SURAM	Scripture Use Research And Ministry
VS/U	Vernacular Scripture / Vernacular Scripture Use
VSU-P	Personal use of Vernacular Scriptures
VSU-C	Congregational use of Vernacular Scriptures

³ See the introductory paragraph in [section 3.4.1](#) for a brief description of what factor analyses aim to do. Or for a slightly more in depth introduction, go to <https://statisticsbyjim.com/basics/factor-analysis/>

Abstract

The aim of SURAM (Scripture Use Research And Ministry) Cameroon was to evaluate the ownership, use, and impact of vernacular Scriptures in communities across Cameroon where New Testaments or full Bibles in the local mother tongue were published between 2007 and 2017. The research, carried out in 25 communities from 2022 to 2024, employed both quantitative and qualitative approaches, including questionnaires, observation and interviews to gather data.

While collecting data in these communities, the Scripture Engagement team worked simultaneously, teaching Bible engagement methods in the mother tongue and helping revive existing SE activities.

The study revealed varying levels of Scripture use among communities, highlighting barriers such as dialect complexities and challenges in mother tongue literacy. Key findings underscore the importance of community ownership, the role of church leadership, and the influence of factors like literacy, orality, distribution efforts, and the integrity of translation teams and committees on the use of the local language Scriptures. Recommendations for greater success in current and future language development and Bible translation programmes include strengthening partnerships with churches, consecrating time for dialect research and community decision-making, promoting sustainable literacy programs, establishing effective systems for distribution and promotion, engaging more youth and women, and increasing awareness of digital and audio Scripture resources.

This research contributes to a deeper understanding of the transformative potential of local language Scriptures and provides actionable insights for improving Bible engagement strategies in Cameroon and beyond.

Executive Summary

Translating the Bible into the languages of the world is a direct response to the Great Commission of Jesus Christ, as found in Matthew 28:18-20. Churches, Bible agencies, Christian organizations, and movements are dedicating significant time and resources to make the Bible available in every language. Every year, many more communities are gaining access to the word of God in their own languages, bringing a deeper and clearer understanding of the Scriptures. Since the ultimate goal of Bible translation is the transformation of lives, this raises several key questions: Are the translated Scriptures being used? To what extent are they used? And what is the impact on the lives of the communities and the people they are destined for? If there is impact, what are the main factors behind this impact? Conversely, if there is little or no impact, what would be the possible hindrances?

The first SURAM (Scripture Use Research and Ministry) research project was conducted in Papua New Guinea from 2014 to early 2017, and was an attempt to answer some of these questions. The study revealed uneven Vernacular Scripture Use (VSU) across different language communities, with barriers such as lack of support from local church leaders, reading fluency issues, language attitudes, and lack of distribution.⁴ The survey's findings in Papua New Guinea inspired Bible agencies in Cameroon and resource partners to carry out a survey of a similar magnitude in Cameroon. These discussions included SIL Cameroon, Cameroon Association for Bible Translation and Literacy (CABTAL), Alliance Biblique du Cameroun (ABC), the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Cameroon's Department of Translation and Literacy (DTA), OneBook, Wycliffe Canada, Wycliffe UK and Ireland, Wycliffe Netherlands, and Lutheran Bible Translators of Canada (LBT).

The aim of SURAM Cameroon was to research the level of ownership, use and impact of vernacular or mother tongue Scriptures in 28 languages, each of which had received a New Testament or full Bible between the years of 2007 and 2017. The research tested 17 hypotheses about successful language programmes grouped in four categories: church leaders and inter-church committees, language and translation, literacy, and strategy. While the survey team collected data from August 2021 through October 2023 through administering questionnaires, making observations and recording interviews in these communities, the Scripture Engagement team worked simultaneously, teaching Bible engagement methods in the mother tongue and helping revive existing SE activities.

⁴ The full SURAM report for Papua New Guinea can be found at <https://scripture-engagement.org/content/scripture-use-research-and-ministry-suram/>.

Key findings

The main findings of the research can be summarized as follows:⁵

1. **Ownership and use of vernacular Scriptures is strong in Cameroon, with significant variation across the languages surveyed.** 79.7% of the 5,894 individuals surveyed attend churches that make regular use of the vernacular Scriptures. In terms of Scripture ownership, use, and impact across the languages surveyed, we found seven languages consistently receiving high scores and seven consistently receiving lower scores, with the others in the middle receiving a mix of good and average measurements.
2. **Bible translations in Cameroon are highly appreciated for their faithfulness, naturalness and ease of understanding.** This is a tribute to the dedicated work of the translation teams, reviewing committees and consultants, as well as the effectiveness of their training and mentoring.
3. **Higher levels of literacy in the mother tongue are associated with increased Scripture ownership and use.** Only 41% of those surveyed gave a positive assessment of their reading fluency, indicating there is much to be done in promoting local language literacy in Cameroon.
4. **Complex dialect situations present serious obstacles for Scripture engagement.** Eight languages were identified as having notable dialectal complexities. In all but one of these cases, Scripture ownership, use, and impact were adversely affected.
5. **Integrity matters in the translation team and inter-church committee.** Where translators and committee members were respected, there was generally higher vernacular Scripture use.
6. **Ongoing efforts to promote and distribute the Scriptures lead to more personal and congregational use.** Ownership and use of the Scriptures is generally higher in communities that make greater efforts to promote and distribute them - not only during the lifetime of the translation project, but on an ongoing basis.
7. **Community ownership of the translation programme, evidenced by prayer, giving and volunteering, correlates highly with the number of people who own mother tongue Scriptures.**
8. **Scripture-based songs, oral Bible storytelling and listening to audio Scriptures are widespread in Cameroon.** These are contextually appropriate methods of engaging with God's Word in communities across Cameroon.
9. **Youth groups are using local language Scriptures significantly less than other groups in church, and language vitality is lower among those under 20 years of age.** 70.3% of the respondents reported use of mother tongue Scriptures regularly in their

⁵ More detail on each of these key findings can be found in [Section 3.5](#).

meetings, with the exception of youth groups, of whom only 32.3% reported such use. Although overall language proficiency is high, the youngest respondents reported lower mastery and less frequent use of their mother tongue compared to older age groups.

10. **There is a lack of awareness, ownership and use of digital Scriptures.** Although Scriptures are available in digital format for most of the languages surveyed, there is very little ownership or use reported.

Recommendations

We propose the following **recommendations**.⁶

1. **Strengthen partnerships with church denominations and theological institutions, inspiring and equipping pastors in their use of local language Scriptures.** Examining the realities of Scripture use in communities several years after a translation project reminds us that sustained Bible engagement largely depends on the churches in each area, particularly their leadership.
2. **Encourage people to pray, give and volunteer in the work of translation and Scripture engagement in their language, promoting community ownership.** Keeping members of the community informed and actively involved throughout the translation program fosters a sense of shared purpose and can result in lasting impact.
3. **Consecrate sufficient time and resources to dialect research with wide community involvement, and ensure that the communities agree on the choices made.** Since complex dialect situations influence the use of local language Scriptures, we need to take seriously the research required to find solutions that respond effectively to the needs of local communities.
4. **Emphasize the recruitment of people of integrity in both translation teams and Inter-Church Committees.** We should be looking prayerfully not only for technical competency but for calling and character, for those who have a vision for the work.
5. **Ensure ongoing and sustainable distribution and promotion efforts well beyond the dedication.** We should consider very practically how the Scriptures and related materials will be marketed and made accessible for many years to come, and put an effective system in place well before the translation project is completed. Since ongoing engagement from partners can significantly enhance Scripture use in the years following the dedication, Bible translation agencies and resource partners should consider extending support during this period to help local churches strengthen Scripture engagement strategies.

⁶ More details on each of the recommendations can be found in [Section 4](#).

6. **Involve women more in the promotion of local language Scripture engagement.** Women's groups are especially dynamic in using the Scriptures in their mother tongue and have a key role to play in mobilization.
7. **Invest in sustainable literacy programs, especially among those who can already read in English or French.** Find ways of establishing literacy programs that will continue beyond the life of the project.
8. **Engage young people more in owning, reading, using and promoting the local language Scriptures.** Project plans need to take into account the youth, given that the median age of the population in Cameroon is 17.9 years old.
9. **Increase awareness of audio, audiovisual and digital Scripture resources.** Bible agencies and local committees must find more effective ways to promote what is available, and to actively involve local communities in their production.
10. **Keep learning and improving.** We have identified several areas that require further investigation such as researching vernacular Scripture use in urban areas, the use of the Scriptures among children and learning more from the translation programs we surveyed.

We encourage Bible translation agencies - alongside church partners, inter-church committees, resource partners and translation teams - to carefully consider the research results and implement the recommendations wherever possible in both new and existing translation initiatives. May we continue to learn from each other, and may the Lord guide us in applying these findings for his glory.

1. Introduction

1.1 Presentation of Cameroon



Map of the Republic of Cameroon⁷

Cameroon, sometimes called “Africa in miniature,” is situated to the northeast of the Gulf of Guinea between Nigeria and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Topographically, it features the terrains most commonly associated with the continent. It has desert and savanna in the north, dense rain forests in the south, mountains and highlands in the west, and rugged and sandy shores along its coast, each area featuring the industries that are

⁷ Map of Cameroon: <https://ian.mackay.net/pat/map/cm/cm.html> (public domain)

common to their respective topographies. The country has bustling and densely populated urban centres as well as vast expanses with very few inhabitants. Even its two official languages of French and English mirror much of the continent where the history of European colonialism is evidenced by the predominance of these global languages.



One of the famous attractions of Cameroon: the peak of Rhumsiki

Ethnolinguistic Diversity

Cameroon's rich ethnolinguistic diversity, comprising approximately 250 distinct ethnic groups, is another reason to call it "Africa in miniature". This diversity is often categorized into three main linguistic groups: Bantu, Semi-Bantu, and Sudanic-speaking peoples.⁸

The Bantu-speaking peoples predominantly inhabit the southern regions of Cameroon. Notable among them are the **Beti-Pahuin**, which includes sub-groups like the Fang, Bulu, and Maka, making up about 18% of the population. They are primarily Christian and have historical ties to agriculture and trade. The **Duala** and **Bassa** are also significant

⁸ The information in this section comes from the Ethnologue (<https://www.ethnologue.com/country/CM/>), "L'aménagement linguistique dans le monde" (Jaques Leclerc, CEFAN, <https://www.axl.cefan.ulaval.ca/afrique/cameroun.htm>), and "Demographics of Cameroon" (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Demographics_of_Cameroon), accessed December 9, 2024.

Bantu groups in the coastal areas, contributing to around 12% of the population. The Duala people are noted for their educational advancements due to early contact with Europeans.

The Semi-Bantu are the **Bamileke**, **Bamum**, and **Tikar** peoples, who reside in the western highlands, representing the largest ethnic cluster, accounting for about 38% of the population. They are known for their entrepreneurial spirit and agricultural practices.

The third group is the Sudanic-speaking peoples. They are found in the northern regions of Cameroon and include languages from the **Nilo-Saharan** and **Afro-Asiatic** families. Notable languages and ethnic groups include **Fulfulde** which is spoken by the Fulani people (or Fula), constituting approximately 14% of the population. They are predominantly Muslim and engage in pastoralism. We also have **Mafa** (sometimes called Kirdi), which includes various tribes that traditionally resisted Islam. They make up about 18% of the population and primarily speak Chadic and Adamawa languages.

Cameroon is not only ethnically diverse but also linguistically rich. The official languages are French and English. Additionally, Cameroonian Pidgin English serves as a lingua franca in many areas, especially in the English-speaking regions. Fulfulde is the language of wider communication in Cameroon's three northern regions.

Overall, the population's linguistic makeup is a blend of these languages, with around 24 major African language groups identified within the country, and 250 to 300 distinct languages, showcasing a variety of cultures, traditions, and languages coexisting within Cameroon's borders.

Religion

As far as religion is concerned, Cameroon has a diverse landscape, predominantly characterized by Christianity and Islam, along with traditional indigenous beliefs.⁹

Approximately 66.3% of the population identifies as Christian. Of those who identify as Christian, Roman Catholics (about 26.5% of the total population) and Protestants (22.5%) are the most numerous.

The **Muslim** community makes up around 30.6% of the population, with the majority being Sunni, particularly from the Maliki school of jurisprudence. There are also small communities of Shia and Ahmadiyya Muslims.

Those who still hold on to **traditional indigenous beliefs** represent about 1.3% of the population. There is a small presence of other faiths, such as the **Baha'i Faith**, with around 70,000 adherents, and a tiny **Jewish** community.

⁹ The percentages in this section are taken from "Religion in Cameroon", https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Religion_in_Cameroon, accessed December 9, 2024.

Interestingly, the practice of religion in Cameroon is distributed by region. Christianity for instance, is predominantly practiced in the southern and western regions, while Islam is found primarily in the northern regions. The Fulani ethnic group in the north as well as the Bamoun in the West is largely Muslim.

Cameroon is officially a secular state, allowing for freedom of religion. In urban areas, especially in larger cities, Christians and Muslims coexist, reflecting the country's religious diversity. However, there have been reports of tensions, particularly in the northern regions where Islamist groups operate, leading to some displacement and violence.

Demographics

According to the United Nations, the total population of Cameroon is estimated to be 29.4 million in 2024.¹⁰ The proportion of children below the age of 15 is 42%, 55% are between 15 and 64 years of age, while 3% are 65 years or older. Those living in urban areas are estimated to be 59.3% of the population.¹¹ The median age is quoted as 17.9 years and life expectancy at birth 63.97 years.¹²

1.2 Presentation of SURAM Cameroon

The goal of SURAM Cameroon was to conduct research and provide recommendations on best practices to guide decision-making for initiating and managing Bible translation projects. These projects aim to foster sustainable Scripture engagement and lasting impact. The specific objectives are outlined in detail below.

1.2.1 SURAM Objectives

1. Measure Vernacular Scripture Use (VSU) and Impact

- Measure the level of VSU in 28 Cameroonian language communities which published new Scriptures between 2007 and 2017.
- Measure the impact that the translation and literacy work has had on the spiritual life of these communities.

¹⁰ United Nations Population Fund, Cameroon, <https://www.unfpa.org/data/world-population/CM>, accessed December 9, 2024.

¹¹ CEIC Data for Cameroon, <https://www.ceicdata.com/en/cameroon/population-and-urbanization-statistics/cm-urban-population--of-total-population>, accessed December 9, 2024.

¹² United Nations, Population Division, 2024. *World Population Prospects: The 2024 Revision*, custom data acquired from <https://population.un.org/wpp/>, accessed December 9, 2024.

2. Identify and Analyze the factors that influence the use and impact of Vernacular Scriptures (VS)

- Identify the factors that maximize and limit the impact of VS.
- Discern whether and to what degree each factor influences VS ownership, use, and impact. (See the full list of research hypotheses in [Section 1.2.3.](#))

3. Bolster VSU in the participating communities

- Introduce communities to new ways of engaging with their mother tongue Scriptures.
- Reintroduce them to historic methods, seeking ways to promote VSU that may be especially relevant and effective in their particular context.

1.2.2 Research Questions

- To what extent are the translated Scriptures owned and used? Extent was measured in three ways: the percentage of people who own/use VS, the geographic reach, and the domains of use.
- What are the major changes (impacts) that the Bible translation and the literacy project have produced in the community? Three areas of impact were considered: individual lives, congregations, and community-wide.
- What are the factors that promote or hinder Scripture engagement in a given community?
- What can communities and organizations learn from the results that would lead to better practices and more sustainable results?

1.2.3 Research Hypotheses

We researched the following 17 hypotheses, which can be divided into four main sections.

Church Leaders & Inter-Church Committees (ICC)

1. Where **pastors of local churches have a strategy for using the local language Scriptures** regularly in church services, this increases overall Scripture Engagement.

2. Where the **translators and the ICC leaders were respected** by the community, the Vernacular Scriptures were accepted and used.
3. After the translation work was completed, where the **program received ongoing resources for some time**, there was greater acceptance and use.
4. After the translation work was completed, where the **community continued to be active in distributing and promoting** the vernacular Scriptures for years there was greater acceptance and use.
5. When it was evident from an early stage that **members of the local community own the project and are responsible for leading it and defining its success**, with external partners having a facilitating, training, and equipping role, there is greater use of the vernacular Scriptures by the community.

Language & Translation

6. When there is a **complex dialect situation in the language** (where there have been ongoing discussions over the choice of the reference dialect), overall Scripture Engagement in the language community is low compared to Scripture Engagement in non-complex situations (where it has been easier to agree on the reference dialect).
7. In contexts where many churches are multilingual, or where people are moving away from the use of the vernacular towards other languages (**shifting or shifted multilingualism**), there is less use of the vernacular Scriptures.
8. There is a direct correlation between **acceptance of the quality of the translation** by the community and the amount of Scripture engagement.

Literacy

9. Where **extensive literacy programs** (schools, communities, and/or church) have been carried out, leading to a significant number of people becoming **fluent readers in the language** there is more Scripture use.
10. Where the **orthography was accepted** by the community and successfully taught, there is greater Scripture Engagement.

Strategy

11. Where **Bible portions were published early and throughout the program, together with related SE activities**, there was greater acceptance and use of the whole New Testament when it was published.
12. Where the team has had **one or more people focusing on SE promotion**, more SE is happening.

13. Where the Scriptures are presented in **oral forms**, such as **Bible storytelling and ethno-arts**, there was greater use of the vernacular Scriptures.
14. Where the Scriptures have been made available in appropriate **audio and audiovisual forms**, together with encouraging **related activities** (such as Bible listening groups), there was greater acceptance/use/impact of vernacular Scriptures.
15. Where the Scriptures have been made available in **digital forms, such as apps for smartphones, websites, and social media**, together with appropriate digital strategies for distribution and promotion, there was more use of the vernacular Scriptures.
16. Where there has been a specific emphasis on encouraging **Scripture engagement for children and young people** (such as in materials development and training), there is more use of the vernacular Scriptures.
17. If the translation was **part of an appropriate mission strategy in partnership with others**, especially in contexts where the **spiritual climate is hard**, more Scripture use happened.

2. Methodology

2.1 Project parameters

Table 2.1 below lists the communities that were involved in the SURAM project. These communities were proposed by the Bible translation agencies that served as implementing partners for the project (CABTAL, SIL, ABC, and DTA/LBT). Each community had seen a new publication of Vernacular Scriptures (a first edition or a revised version) during the period 2007 to 2017.

Table 2.1 - Language populations who dedicated new Scriptures in Cameroon between 2007 and 2017

#	Language Name in Ethnologue	ISO Code	Region	FR or EN zone	Population in Cameroon (Ethnologue)	EGIDS Scale	Last Working Organization	Translation Done	Most Recent Publication
1	Akoose	[bss]	South-West	EN	100,000	5	CABTAL	NT	2011
2	Bulu	[bum]	Centre	FR	858,000	3	ABC	Bible/DC	2009
3	Bum	[bmv]	North-West	EN	21,400	5	CABTAL	NT	2014
4	Denya	[anv]	South-West	EN	11,200	5	CABTAL	NT	2010
5	Ewondo	[ewo]	Centre	FR	578,000	3	ABC	NT	2012
6	Fulfulde, Adamawa	[fub]	Adamawa, Far North, North	FR	999,500	3	ABC	Bible/DC	2016
7	Gbaya, Northwest	[gya]	Adamawa	FR	65,000 EELC-200,000	5	ABC/LBT	Bible/DC	2011
8	Giziga	[giz]	Far North	FR	60,000	5	ABC	Bible/DC	2010
9	Hdi ¹³	[xed]	Far North	FR	25,000	5	SIL	NT	2012
10	Kenyang	[ken]	South-West	EN	65,000	5	CABTAL	NT	2010
11	Kwanja	[knp]	Adamawa	FR	13,000	5	LBT	NT	2006 ¹⁴
12	Lamnsó'	[lns]	North-West	EN	240,000	3	CABTAL	Bible/DC	2016
13	Makaa	[mcp]	East	FR	80,000	5	SIL	NT	2014
14	Mbukó	[mqb]	Far North	FR	15,000	5	SIL	NT	2010
15	Merey	[meq]	Far North	FR	10,000	5	SIL	NT	2012
16	Meta'	[mgo]	North-West	EN	83,000	5	CABTAL	NT	2012
17	Musgu (Musgum)	[mug]	Far North	FR	140,000	5	ABC	Bible	2016
18	Muyang	[muy]	Far North	FR	30,000	5	SIL	NT	2012
19	Ngiemboon	[nnh]	West	FR	250,000	5	CABTAL	NT	2007

¹³ Old Testament work is in progress.

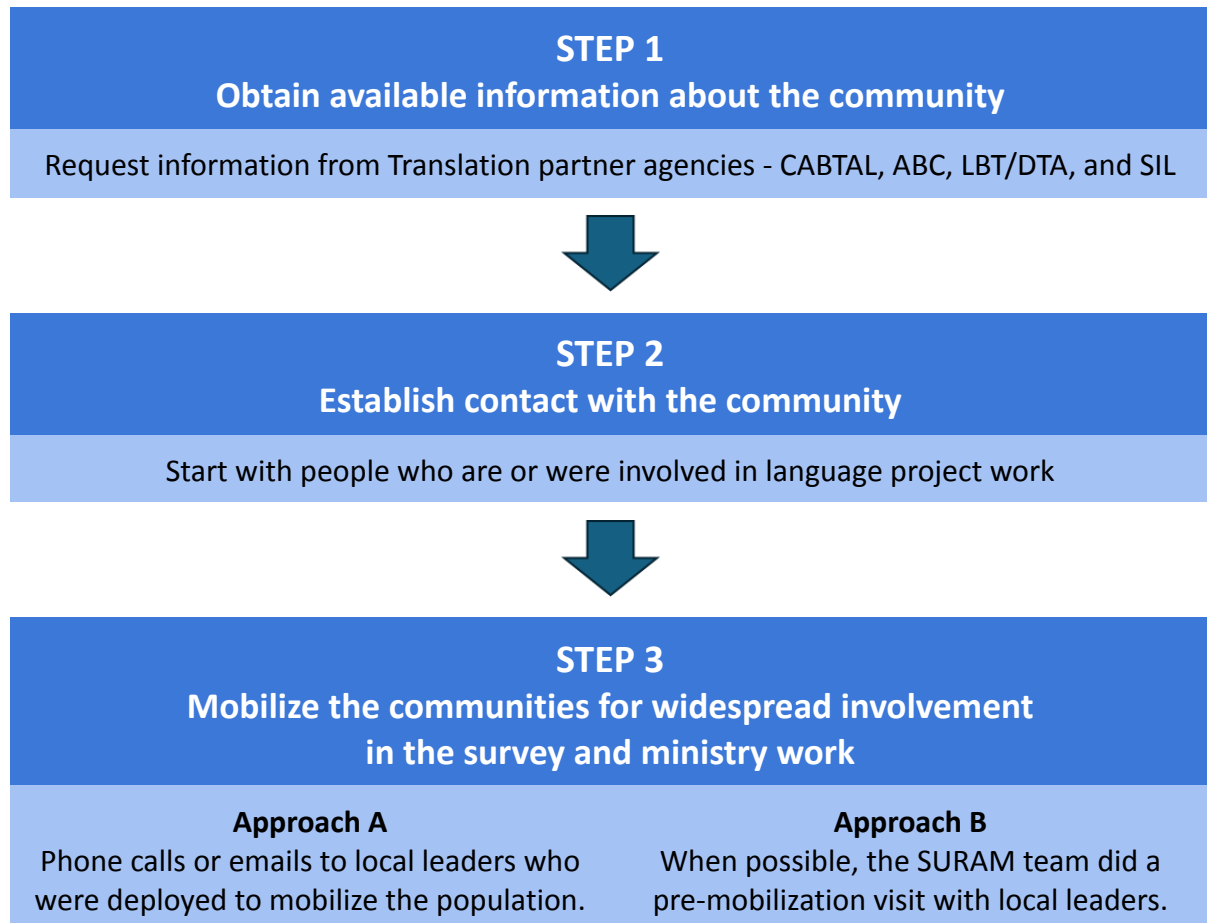
¹⁴ The Kwanja NT dedication took place on December 30, 2006.

#	Language Name in Ethnologue	ISO Code	Region	FR or EN zone	Population in Cameroon (Ethnologue)	EGIDS Scale	Last Working Organization	Translation Done	Most Recent Publication
20	Ngomba	[jgo]	West	FR	63,000	5	CABTAL	NT	2017
21	Nomaande	[lem]	Centre	FR	6,000	5	CABTAL	NT	2008
22	Noone	[nhu]	North-West	EN	40,000	5	SIL	NT	2011
23	Nugunu	[yas]	Centre	FR	35,000	5	CABTAL	NT	2017
24	Oku	[oku]	North-West	EN	87,000	5	CABTAL	NT	2012
25	Pere	[pfe]	Adamawa	FR	50,000	5	ABC / NORAD and LBT recently	NT/Ps	2017
26	Psikye	[kvj]	Far North	FR	40,500	5	ABC	Bible/DC	2016
27	Yambeta	[yat]	Centre	FR	3,700	6b	CABTAL	NT	2016
28	Yemba	[ybb]	West	FR	300,000	5	CABTAL	NT	2017

2.2 Visit Setup

In order to succeed in both the research and ministry aspects of the SURAM project, it was essential to mobilize each participating community for widespread participation. In order to achieve such participation, the project coordinator established a three step process to follow before each visit as illustrated by the mobilization strategy graphic below.

Mobilization Strategy



Generally, this mobilization approach made the communities feel involved in the whole survey and Scripture engagement process. However, our mobilization strategy did not always yield the results we anticipated. Some communities were slow to respond, either due to a lack of understanding of our objectives or because they viewed it as an opportunity for financial gain. Others were inaccessible due to ongoing crises in the Northwest and Southwest regions or what we identified as “religious bureaucracy”. To illustrate, in one community where a mainstream church dominated, we could not work with the local church congregation without permission from the church hierarchy. Despite trying to contact the hierarchy on several occasions, we received no response. Where these dynamics rendered it impossible to mobilize the local population, the SURAM team was unable to proceed with

plans to visit these communities. As such, the Bulu, Denya, and Ewondo communities were not included as initially hoped and planned.

In the other 25 communities where the local population was successfully mobilized, the SURAM coordinator worked with the two SURAM survey team leaders and the two SURAM ministry team leaders to schedule 10-day visits in each community. The same four SURAM staff members - survey and ministry team leaders - performed all of the visits. This was especially crucial for the survey work that was performed since this approach ensured that the same research approach was used in each participating context.

At the outset of the project, the SURAM team made pilot visits to evaluate their research and ministry plans before embarking on the general administration of the questionnaires in all communities. These tests were performed in two participating communities: Makaa (East) and Nomaande (Centre). This trial run enabled them to evaluate the research and ministry approach and to determine if the survey instruments gathered the data they needed. At the end of the testing, some of the questions were reformulated for better communication and clarity.

2.3 Survey and Ministry visits

As soon as possible after arriving in the host community, the SURAM team gathered with local leadership to plan and staff the 10-day visit. They used a participatory approach to drawing up these plans. This method was used intentionally to allow community leaders and other stakeholders to give their opinions freely on how we could carry out the work and meet our objectives. It also allowed us to understand the community's realities as leaders discussed and debated the proposed schedule. This ensured that the team was well informed about market and farming days or other community events that could be obstacles to our work. Based on the observation of the SURAM team and upon confirmation by the community leaders, they worked to gain consensus on when and where it was appropriate to do individual surveys, focus group discussions, and ministry activities.



Merey community: Meeting with Community leaders

As much as possible, these initial meetings included literature centre workers (both past and present), representatives from all of the denominations in the community, and traditional leaders (or their representatives). Strategically, it was these leaders and stakeholders who would give us access to their different villages within the community. The SURAM team also attempted to organize the work so that the data they collected and the ministry work that they performed accounted for the ecumenical demographics of the language population. They also endeavored to conduct surveys and ministry work in at least eight outlying villages in each context. The feedback and insights from local leaders was crucial in setting up the schedule so that the work was done in a way that was representative of the population and sensitive to their existing plans and rhythms. It also facilitated localized mobilization efforts for the ministry activities and focus group surveys since these leaders were able to inform the various villages and congregations about the schedule.

Other than the schedule, these initial planning meetings were also instrumental in recruiting local surveyors and ministry workers who could support the SURAM team in carrying out individual surveys and interpreting into the local language during the ministry activities. The local leaders provided insight into the capacity, credibility, integrity, and church affiliation of the candidate surveyors and SE workers. Those who were recruited had to have been recommended by a church leader, to be a member of a local church and living in that community. We also took into consideration others who, because of educational reasons, were not permanently in the communities. They had to be mother-tongue speakers who could speak French or English as well as their mother tongue. For more detail on how these volunteers were trained, please see the training manual in [Appendix G](#).

The final agenda item for these initial meetings was to schedule and publicize a community celebration of God's Word in their language. These celebrations were to serve as

an opportunity for the community to showcase their culture in Scripturally based songs, do some Bible memorization in their mother tongue, perform biblically relevant skits, and share testimonies of what God has done during the SURAM visit. As much as possible, these celebrations were scheduled during the last full day of the visit so that groups who practiced new ways of using Scripture during the visit could show the greater community what they had learned and prepared. In most communities, these celebrations were full of singing, laughter, speeches, and expressions of faith and gratitude to God.



The Hdi community came out to celebrate their language

2.3.1 Survey Process

The survey work began with the Survey team leader training the local survey workers who were responsible for collecting the majority of the individual survey responses in each language community. The goal was to interview at least 200 people per community. To achieve this, we used a **face-to-face survey** in which questions were asked to each individual by an interviewer. This is where the recruited local surveyors came in after being trained by the team on how to use the data collection tools to obtain clear information that was useful to the study being conducted.

Most of the questions on the individual survey allowed for five responses:

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

The surveyors were trained to ask the questions and to score their response according to the degree to which the individual agreed or disagreed that such was the case. Simple yes or no responses were scored 4 or 2 respectively. However, individuals who responded in ways that indicated strong agreement or disagreement were scored with a 5 or 1 respectively. In many cases, these extreme responses were helpful in allowing the surveyors to account for a greater variety of responses. That said, surveyors in some contexts seemed to default to the extreme scores rather than reserving those scores for the strongest responses.

The surveyors were also instructed to conduct the surveys in private so that the individuals would feel free to answer honestly. In many villages, local church leaders were asked to guide the surveyors to the homes of a representative sampling of the members of their congregation. Surveyors were instructed to solicit responses from a variety of individuals accounting for gender, age, education, wealth, and church involvement. Since some of the questions probed their experience in their congregation and the morality of leaders and translators, it was important for the surveyors to interview those who participated in a discrete manner. The surveyors were also instructed to orientate each interviewee on the nature of the research project and to gain their consent before administering the survey.



Yemba community: Field workers training

Once oriented to the individual survey, the local surveyors practiced on each other while the survey team leader looked on to assess their performance. After this session, still under the supervision of the survey team leader, they went out into the field to apply what they had learned. These initial survey efforts allowed the survey team leaders to critique and improve the quality of work that each local surveyor was doing. Finally, the local surveyors were assigned villages to survey in a daily schedule. At the end of each outing, the local

surveyors would drop off their survey forms. After debriefing the local surveyor on their experience each day, their survey forms were scrutinized by the survey team leader to ensure that they were numbered and filled out correctly. In cases where the data collected was deemed unexploitable because of a collection error by the surveyor or if a question was considered misunderstood, the local surveyor was sent back to ensure that any errors were rectified. This, however, required an additional day or two in that community.



Bum community: Surveyor on the field

Beyond the individual surveys, the SURAM survey team leaders conducted research with several other categories of people: community groups of men, women, and youth, the project team, and church leaders.¹⁵ This variety was due in large part to the variety of hypotheses to test, and the people who were best suited to give us feedback on each hypothesis. For each of these groups, the questions were asked to all who were gathered and responses were recorded as the group gained consensus on their response.

¹⁵ The focus group, denominational leader group, and project staff surveys can be found after the individual questionnaire in [Appendix A - Survey Tools](#).



Yambeta community: Focus group with project staff

As much as the SURAM research project was heavily quantitative in nature, it also incorporated some qualitative data as the survey team leaders used **semi-structured interviews** to learn about the story of the translation project in each context. See [Appendix B](#) for the script that was used to perform these interviews. Each interview was recorded using phones with the permission of the interviewees.

At the end of each visit, the responses from all of the surveys - individual, focus group, denominational leaders, and project staff - were entered into a spreadsheet designed to store the data in the SURAM project Google Drive. This sheet could only be accessed by SURAM team members who were closely monitored by the SURAM team leader. The recorded interviews were also uploaded and stored in this SURAM project folder.

2.3.2 Scripture Engagement Ministry

Before describing the Scripture Engagement activities, it is important to recall the objectives of the Ministry component of SURAM Cameroon. With the understanding that each community had a New Testament or complete Bible dedicated since 2007, the objectives were as follows:

- Re-engage communities in the use of mother tongue Scriptures.
- Encourage communities to enjoy using mother tongue Scriptures in churches and personal lives.
- Introduce churches to different techniques and methods to engage with Scriptures for a lasting life impact.
- Awaken the desire to use vernacular Scriptures even after the end of the SURAM project.

To achieve these objectives, the survey team leaders engaged in a programme of activities during *and after* each visit.

The timeline for work during the visit with the communities varied in each context, but the SE activities generally proceeded as follows:

Days 1-3	Selection and recruitment of SE mobilizer/facilitators. Training in theory and practice.
Days 4 to 8	SE activities based on the needs of each community, denomination, and church. Groups and congregations were encouraged in using their Scriptures in any of the following ways: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Adapting Scripture for dramatic skits ● Bible Study techniques ● Memorization techniques ● Composing songs Each group was encouraged to prepare something to share at the celebration event at the end of the visit.
Sundays	SURAM team members attend worship services in a variety of local denominations to make observations, collect testimonies, give SE presentations, and promote the celebration event.
Day 9 or 10	Celebration with the community and presentation of the different activities by groups



Psikye community: Orientation of an SE field worker

For the Sunday program, we attended the church service in different churches in pairs (different denominations). While worshipping there, we observed the level of use of the mother tongue Scriptures. We did a presentation of the SURAM project and objectives in the churches as a way of increasing mother tongue awareness and reviving or reintroducing MT Scripture use in churches. In some cases, as time was given to us, we did some SE activities such as Scripture memorization and played an audio version in the local language. This was very exciting for churches who had never heard or listened to the Bible in their mother tongue.



Pere choir singing from a mother tongue songbook in worship

During celebration activities in communities a typical program was followed. This varied from community to community, but generally included the following:

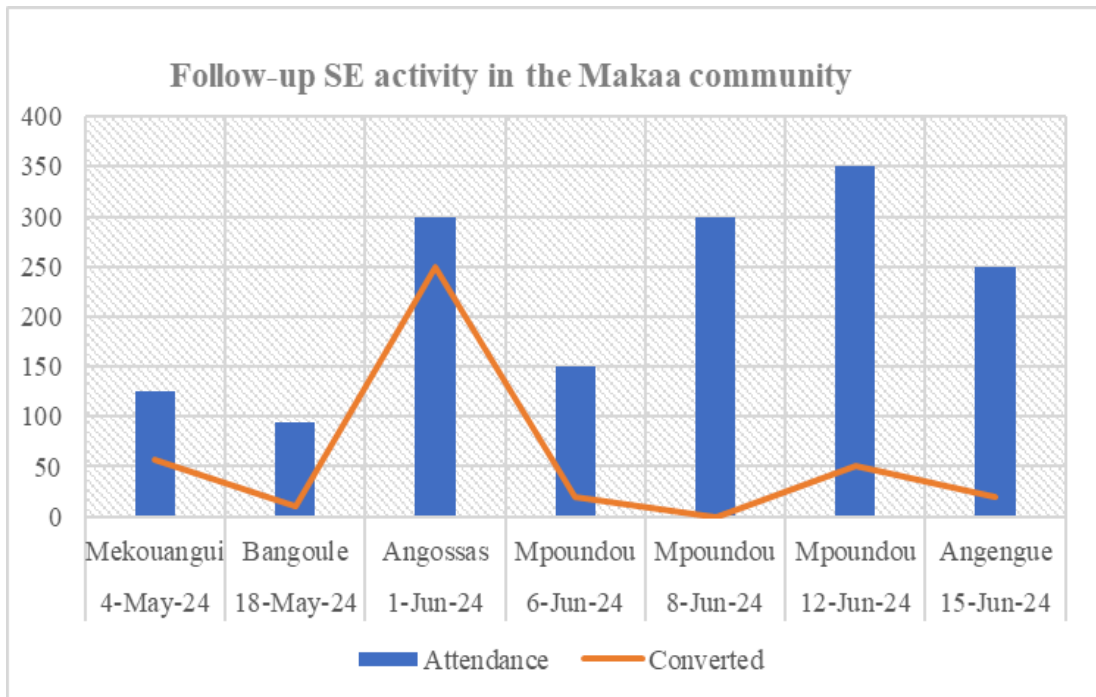
- **Prayers** (usually conducted in the mother tongue by the recruited SE facilitators or one of the pastors of the different churches where SE activity was done).
- **Adoration** with hymns in the local language. Choirs were also mobilized.
- **Speeches** (by church leaders, representatives of each community group, traditional authorities, translation team, SURAM team). Each one spoke for a maximum of three minutes.
- **Performances** according to the activities that had been prepared by the different church groups.
- **Awarding of prizes** if applicable and/or fraternal communion with the community.

- In some cases we bought **symbolic gifts** like bags of salt, rice, cubes of soap and handed them to the traditional authority. This was intended to be shared to the community as a way of appreciation for their hospitality and collaboration.



Gbaya woman singing a new composition at the Gbaya Scripture celebration - Meiganga

The SE field workers were trained so that they could continue to promote VSU in their context. The SURAM ministry team leaders followed up with these workers by calling them in the weeks after each visit. The graph below shows what one of the communities accomplished after the SURAM team left. The SE team that was trained in Makaa (a community in the East region of Cameroon), continued with SE activities in several villages in the community. From May 4th to June 15th 2024, they visited five villages, reaching out to 1,570 people with 407 people responding to the gospel. According to Pastor Balthazar (SE facilitator) they have been using audiovisual materials like the Jesus film and other short video materials available in the Makaa language.



Maka community: Working session between the SE team leader and Pastor Balthazar

2.3.1 Fulfulde and Anglophone region adaptations

Two research and ministry contexts that were included in the SURAM Cameroon study posed unique challenges that required that the team use an adapted approach to complete the work: Fulfulde and the Anglophone regions of Cameroon.

Fulfulde

The Fulfulde context was unique due to two factors. First, it was the only SURAM context where the ethnic church was not the primary intended audience for the Scriptures that were dedicated between 2007 and 2017. Fulfulde is a language of wider communication (LWC) in Northern Cameroon that many ethnicities use for worship. The Fulfulde language Bible (*Deftere Allah*) was translated primarily to serve these churches. Even the translators on the project were not ethnic Fulbe. Second, ethnic Fulbe are scattered across Cameroon's three northern regions (and beyond) and there are very few believers in this population. Since every other SURAM context sought out mother tongue speakers of the local language, the SURAM team felt that it was essential to survey these ethnic Fulbe Christians.



SURAM Data Analyst and a Fulbe pastor met to discuss work in the Fulbe context

Due to the vast geographical distances that needed to be covered to conduct our research among Fulbe believers, it was necessary to change the survey approach. Survey volunteers from the Adamoua and North regions in Cameroon were invited to Maroua¹⁶ for training. These volunteers were trained in our individual and group survey methods, and then sent out on tours of their native regions that collected responses over multiple days. At the end of their tours, they sent the response forms to the SURAM team in Yaoundé so that they could be scrutinized, entered into the database, and analyzed. Regrettably, one of the surveyors who collected the largest share of the individual survey responses brought back results that were identical across all of the questions. Due to the expenses associated with repeating these survey tours and the logistical complexities of correcting the approach

¹⁶ The translation work was performed and completed in Maroua, the capital of the Far North Region of Cameroon.

through remote training, we were unable to redo the survey work in the communities that were visited by this local surveyor.

The ministry aspects in the Fulbe visit were conducted in a similar fashion, except that volunteers from all three of Cameroon's northernmost regions were recruited, trained, and deployed to support the SE ministry work, each in his own region. Due to the dispersed nature of the Fulbe work, it was not possible to host a celebration event at the end of the visit in their context.

Anglophone regions

Regarding the languages that are situated primarily in the Anglophone regions (Northwest and Southwest), when the SURAM Cameroon visits were in progress, these regions were enduring a difficult socio-political crisis. As such, travel to and within these regions was deemed to be too dangerous to allow the SURAM workers to conduct the visits as usual. The communities in question are Bum, Lamnso', Meta', Noone, and Oku in the Northwest, and Akoose and Kenyang in the Southwest.

That said, residents of these communities knew when and how to move in and out of their zone. The SURAM team adapted their ministry and survey approach by training workers in locations just outside of these regions and then deploying them to return to their respective communities to conduct the work. In all, eight people were invited from each context for that 1) one inter-church committee member, 2) one language committee member, 3) three candidate survey workers, and 4) three candidate SE workers were able to attend. Phone calls and email exchanges with local leaders allowed the SURAM coordinator to assess the risk of including members of each community as well as to finalize the list of invitees. Each training event took place over four to five days, with the participating language groups being clustered with up to two other groups at a time. In total, three training events were held to include and serve the Anglophone language populations.

Since the survey and ministry team leaders were unable to administer their work directly, the volunteers from the Anglophone communities received more training than in other places. The surveyors were trained to conduct group surveys with focus groups, denominational leaders, and the project staff. The ministry workers were taught approaches to assessing the needs of a congregation or group and how to conduct a handful of SE ministry activities.

2.4 Data Analysis

The survey and interview responses were analyzed and used in two main phases.

While the visits were ongoing (Aug 2021 - Oct 2023), language-by-language reports were prepared and submitted. These reports featured three main sections: 1) Ownership and use, 2) Impact, and 3) Domains of use. Each section summarized the data from the individual surveys by giving percentages for ownership, personal use, personal impact, etc., followed by evaluative comments. These comments drew from data in the focus group responses and qualitative interviews and aimed to more fully clarify the ownership, use and impact of the Scriptures in the given context. Condensed details from these reports can be found in [Appendix C](#).

Once all of the data had been collected and uploaded to the drive, a master spreadsheet including the responses to all four survey tools from each of the 25 participating communities was compiled and the quantitative data was cleaned and prepared for final analyses. The cleanup was performed using OpenRefine.¹⁷ This allowed us to catch and correct typos and mis-entries as well as to distill the great variety of denominational and domain of use responses into more consolidated categories.

At this time, we also needed to consolidate the scores from all four of the survey tools into one comparison spreadsheet that would allow us to compare scores for each of the hypotheses side-by-side. Some hypotheses were measured by only one or two responses from project staff and leaders (like the dynamics of the relationship between the team and the Bible Translation organization and its staff) while others were measured by responses across three of the surveys (like the strength of the literacy program). For a detailed breakdown of how each score was found, please refer to [Appendix E](#) for the calculations that were used to distill the survey data into the comparison spreadsheet. The table itself will be presented and discussed in [Section 3.2.4](#).

3. Results and analysis

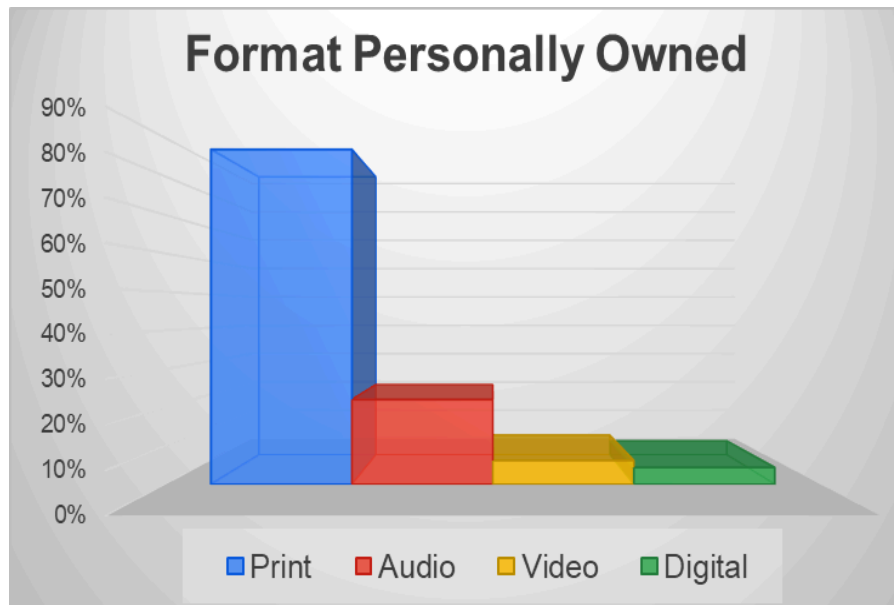
3.1 Vernacular Scripture ownership and use

3.1.1 Personal ownership and use

Of the 5,894 people who participated in the SURAM individual surveys, 5,881 responded to the question, “Do you own a copy of the Scriptures in your mother tongue

¹⁷ <https://openrefine.org/>

(Print, Audio or Digital)?” A total of 3,109 individuals affirmed that they do indeed own a copy of their Scriptures in one format or another accounting for a little over half of respondents (52.9%). Of those who affirmed that they own mother tongue Scriptures, 2,585 of respondents responded to the follow-up question, “What format do you possess?” and 2,249 (or 87%) explained that they own a printed form of the Scriptures.



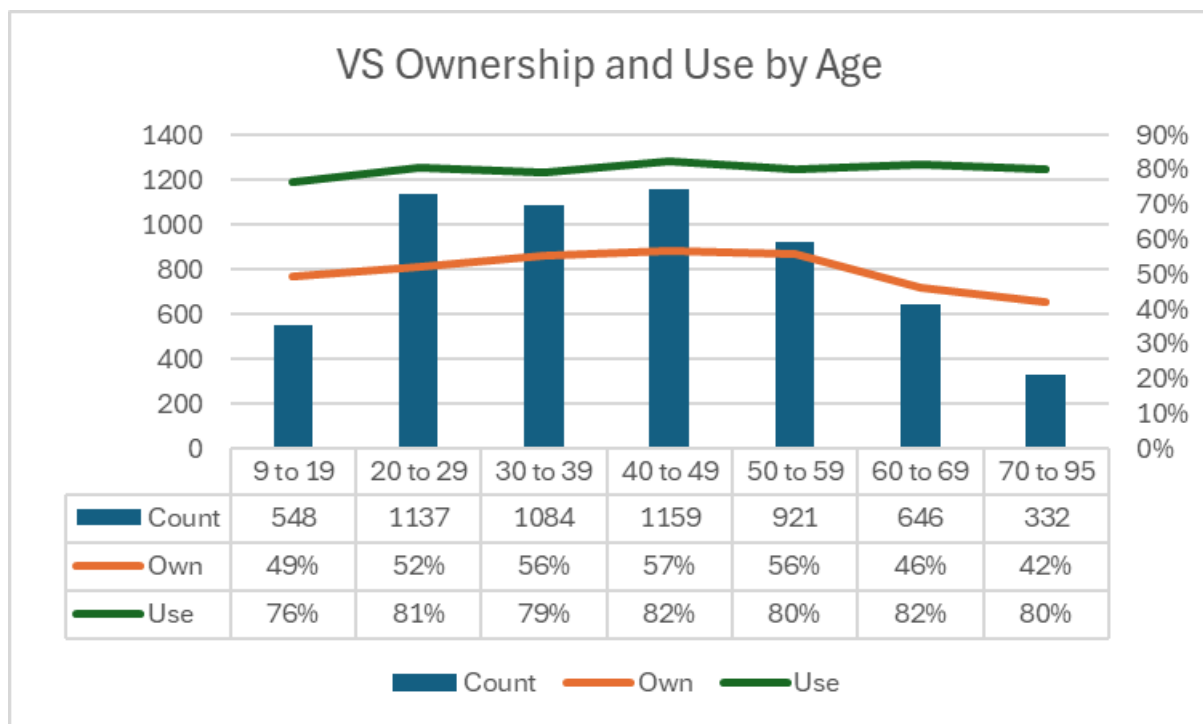
Personal ownership of Scripture by format, according to individual surveys



Gbaya People showing their printed Bibles

The other formats lagged behind print versions by a wide margin. The second most commonly owned version of vernacular Scriptures were audio formats with 569 individuals (or 22%) reporting that they owned audio Scriptures. The third most commonly owned product were video adaptations of vernacular Scriptures with 160 people (6.2%) reporting that they owned copies. Finally, only 114 individual respondents (4.4%) reported that they own digital copies of their vernacular Scriptures. 425 of respondents (16.4%) reported owning more than one format of the Scriptures.

The average age of those who report owning digital Scriptures was 37 which is 4 years younger than the average age of all of the individual survey respondents. While younger respondents were more likely to own *digital* Scriptures, elderly respondents were the least likely to own Scripture regardless of the format. That said, despite lower rates of ownership, they were just as likely to *use* vernacular Scriptures weekly as the other age groups. As the *VS Ownership and Use by Age* graphic shows, the age demographic of the SURAM respondents generally mirrors the profile of Cameroon (see the end of [section 1.1](#)) with the exception of young children who were not included in our survey. The graphic shows that while ownership decreases among older respondents, use remains relatively stable.



In summary, our research shows that a little more than half of those who were surveyed reported that they own copies of their vernacular Scriptures, and that roughly four times more people own print copies of vernacular Scriptures than those who own audio Scriptures, and 20 times more than those who own digital copies of vernacular Scriptures. Younger respondents are more likely to own digital versions of the Scriptures and older respondents are less likely to own copies of the Scriptures at all. It is unclear whether the

relatively low rates of non-print VS ownership are due to a preference for printed materials, ignorance about the existence of other formats, or other factors.

For example, digital versions are only useful to those who own smartphones or computers which are still not very common in the rural areas where we performed our research. It would be interesting to note that the objective of every Bible agency is to give the community a printed Bible. This helps to influence the ownership of printed versions in the communities. The other versions are sometimes only made available after a long period of time. Meanwhile, people get more and more familiar with their printed versions and take time to embrace new versions.

Concerning audio Scriptures, many people do not own their own copy of an audio Bible, but they participate in Scripture listening groups that use a Proclaimer or MegaVoice¹⁸ device in a group setting. We observed while carrying out our surveys in many communities that people were not even aware of the availability of audio versions. In Ngomba, for example, we had a workshop with five communities from the Northwest Region, none of them were aware of their Bibles in audio formats. Those who had heard them only had excerpts and did not know where to find the full versions. Such factors may help to explain the relatively high rates of print VS ownership when compared to other formats.

As for the question of how many people *use* mother tongue Scriptures regularly, 5,884 individuals answered the question, “do you read or hear the Scriptures in your mother tongue at least a few times each week?” An astounding 4,725 of these respondents (or 80.3%) answered in the affirmative. This discrepancy between individual ownership (52.9%) and use (80.3%) of mother tongue Scriptures could be explained in many different ways, such as participation in the weekly church service, Bible listening groups, congregational groups and choirs, neighborhood prayer groups (which are common in Cameroon), or even by in-home devotions where one family member owns the Scriptures and reads them to those in their compound as part of their daily devotional rhythm. Whatever the explanation, it is clear that Bible sales should not be used as an indicator of Scripture use in Cameroon.

Our survey also asked individual respondents to answer the question, “In *whatever* language, do you read or hear the Scriptures at least a few times each week?” so that we could compare vernacular Scripture use with Scripture use in general. 5,885 people answered this question, with 4,947 (or 84.1%) of respondents answering in the affirmative. With 4,725 reporting weekly use of *vernacular* Scripture, this *general* use number only slightly outpaces VSU. Curiously, 9 of the 25 language communities showed rates of VSU that even *surpassed* general SU which is a logical impossibility. This implies that some respondents did not understand this question as we intended it to be understood.

¹⁸ <https://megavoice.com>

3.1.2 Congregational use

As for congregational use of vernacular Scriptures, when asked whether their congregation organizes services, ministries, or events that use the Scriptures in their mother tongue at least a few times per month, 5,889 of individual respondents answered the question, 4,695 of whom answered in the affirmative for a percentage of 79.7% of all respondents. Of the 91 denominational leadership groups who participated in our survey, when asked if many, if not all, congregations in the respective language area publicly read their Scriptures in their Sunday services, 60 (or 65.9%) answered in the affirmative. These reported rates of use show that local language speakers are more likely to attend churches where their mother tongue Scriptures are being used in worship.

In general, the leaders of larger denominations (Catholic, Baptist, Lutheran, Evangelical, etc.) reported congregational use more regularly than the smaller, less established denominations. The exception to this generalization were the Presbyterian and Seventh Day Adventist churches. Concerning the Presbyterians, only four of the seven leadership groups surveyed reported that most of their congregations in the given language area use the mother tongue Scriptures regularly.¹⁹ This lower rate of congregational use was also borne out in the individual surveys (see table 3.1.1) where only 71.5% of Presbyterian adherents reported regular use of vernacular Scriptures in their churches compared with higher reported rates of use from adherents to other major denominations. Concerning the Seventh Day Adventists, the individual responses contrasted with the reports of the leadership groups we surveyed. All of the leadership groups reported that most, if not all, of their congregations use vernacular Scriptures regularly in their services, but less than half of individual respondents (45.8%) affirmed the same. Further research would be needed to understand and explain this discrepancy.

Table 3.1.1 - Scripture ownership and use by denominational affiliation as reported in the individual surveys (minimum of 100 respondents)

Denomination	# of Respondents	Owns VS	Personal use of VS	Congregation use of VS
Roman Catholic	1,789	46.2%	81.8%	79.9%
PCC - Presbyterian Church of Cameroon	727	44.6%	69.3%	71.5%
UEEC - Union of Evangelical Churches in Cameroon	572	73.4%	89.3%	91.6%
EELC - Evangelical Lutheran Church of Cameroon	523	62.7%	84.9%	79.5%

¹⁹ The alternatives to mother tongue Scripture for many churches in Cameroon are most commonly French, Fulfulde (in the north), and English or Pidgin (in the two anglophone regions).

EFLC - Fraternal Lutheran Church of Cameroon	398	72.3%	86.6%	96.0%
EEC - Evangelical Church of Cameroon	397	47.4%	85.1%	84.1%
CBC - Cameroon Baptist Convention	380	50.5%	93.2%	94.7%
Seventh Day Adventist	192	35.4%	43.2%	45.8%
UEBC - Union of Baptist Churches in Cameroon	107	65.4%	86.0%	93.4%

3.1.3 Use by church groups

Another finding about Scripture use from our research concerns how much vernacular Scriptures are used by men’s, women’s, or youth groups in the areas we visited. 91 such groups (comprising 1,758 people in total) that participated in our focus group survey answered the question, *“Has your group developed habits and strategies to use the vernacular Scriptures as part of your regular activities?”* Of those 91 groups, 64 (or 70.3%) answered in the affirmative. Women’s groups were the most likely to use vernacular Scriptures in their meetings with 29 out of 37 groups (or 78.4%) reporting use, while youth groups were the least likely with only 10 of the 31 groups (or 32.3%) reporting use.



Merey woman reading her New Testament in the women’s group

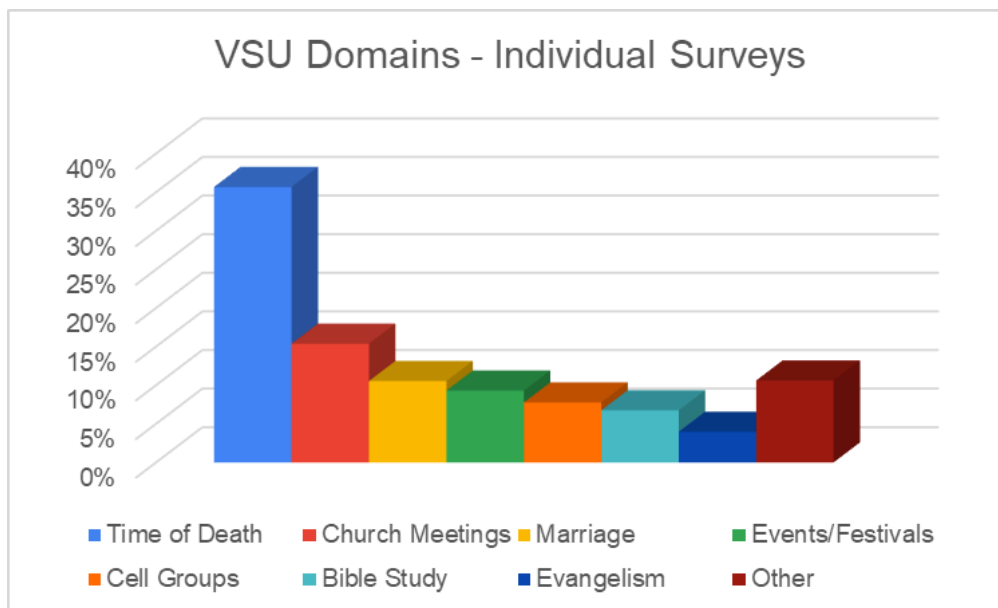
This is not to say that youth are not passionate about their language and mother tongue Scriptures. We found some inspiring examples in some communities where young people are engaged in using their language and Scriptures. For example, in the Hdi and Mbuko communities, it seemed that every family had at least one literate person. The young people in these communities interact in their languages everywhere including their church groups. In effect, there was no doubt about the VSU of youth in these communities during our SE activities with them. We could tell clearly from the way they memorized Scriptures and the ease with which they could flip through Scripture passages using their Bibles. They were familiar with Bible stories like the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37), the conversion of Paul (Acts 9:1-19, Acts 22:6-21) and others. In all, be it personally, or collectively, as far VSU is concerned, these communities are good examples and the young people are part of the story.



Hdi community - Focus group with youth at UEEC Tourou Centre

When researching how much the Scriptures are being used by a population, another way of answering that question is by considering the *domains* of use. We asked individuals and denominational leadership groups to list up to three contexts in which they knew that Christians in their community regularly use the Scriptures in their mother tongue. 4,768 individuals responded to this question and - as an open question - the responses were varied and it was not always clear what the respondent meant by their response. Still, some domains of use were clearly more common than others. By far the most common response from individuals was that mother tongue Scriptures are often used around the time of death

of a loved one, both at the wake and the funeral proceedings. Please see the VSU Domains graphic below for a breakdown of the major responses.



When asked the same question, 70 of the 78 denominational leadership groups listed domains of use of which they are aware. Their responses largely corroborated those of the individuals with a slight skew toward church activities, with Church Meetings (17%), Bible Study (10%), and Evangelism (8%) being mentioned a little more frequently and Time of Death (19%), and Marriage (10%) a little less frequently.

The overall picture of Scripture Use among the participating language communities is relatively expansive, varied, and robust. We offer the following summary statements as our main takeaways from our research on Vernacular Scripture ownership and use in Cameroon:

- Over half of individuals surveyed (Cameroonian Christians living in their traditional language area) reported that they own Vernacular Scriptures in one format or another.
- The vast majority of those who said that they own vernacular Scriptures (87%) reported owning *print copies* of the Scriptures.
- Individual vernacular Scripture *use* in the surveyed communities (80.3%) significantly outpaced individual *ownership* of the same (52.9%).
- The vast majority of those reporting regular Scripture use of any kind are regularly using vernacular Scriptures.
- Most individuals surveyed (79.7%) attend churches that make regular use of the vernacular Scriptures in their services and ministry programs.

- Most congregational groups (70.3%) report using vernacular Scriptures regularly in their meetings, with the exception of youth groups, of whom only 32.3% report such use.
- Cameroonian Christians use their vernacular Scriptures in many different domains, especially during major life events and in church activities.

3.2 Nature and degree of project impact

Our survey of individuals, focus groups, and denominational leaders also included questions that probed the impact that the project had on the people, church groups, congregations, and communities where Scriptures were translated. On the individual level, we asked people to indicate whether they had grown in their faith or church involvement over the term of the project. If so, we proceeded to ask whether they attributed these changes to their use of Scripture in their mother tongue. The same two-step approach was used with focus groups and denominational leaders to assess changes in the harmony and development of the whole community. Congregational leaders were also asked to respond to questions about conversion growth and church plants in the language area. Finally, we used the same approach with focus groups as we probed the numerical growth and spiritual quality of their group. In this section, we will highlight only the impacts that respondents attributed to their use of mother tongue Scriptures.

3.2.1 Translation project impact on individuals

“Hearing God’s Word in the mother tongue has made me more obedient to God’s word.” (Julia M., Oku women’s group)

“The mother tongue Scriptures speak directly to my heart avoiding wrong and bad interpretations.” (Eveline B., Oku women’s group)

Of the 5,892 individuals who answered the question, “Since the literacy and translation work began in your language community, has your faith grown deeper?” a total of 4,769 (or 80.9%) answered in the affirmative, of whom 4,126 (70% of all surveyed) went on to attribute their growth in faith to their use of the Scriptures in their mother tongue.

The following question probed an increase in personal church involvement over the term of the project. 4,426 out of the 5,885 who answered this question (or 75.2%) affirmed that such was their case. 3,990 of those who said they were more involved than before (or 67.8% of all respondents) attributed this change to their use of vernacular Scriptures.

These reported impacts lag only slightly behind the total number of people who reported reading or hearing their Scriptures at least a few times per week, where 4,725 (or 80.3% of respondents) affirmed this frequency of use. It seems that for a significant majority of individuals in the participating communities, they are both *using* and *reaping personal benefits from* their vernacular Scriptures.

Our interviews also demonstrated the impact that vernacular Scriptures are having on people's lives. One translator in the Kwanja area, Nganko Emmanuel, shared an encouraging testimony about how he personally benefited from his work as he studied and translated God's Word. Previously, he had been involved in some practices that the Scriptures described as demonic in nature. Since learning this, he denounced these things and his life and relationship with God has deepened as he learns more about the power and goodness of the God of the Bible.

Another testimony came from a catechist's helper from the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Cameroon in the Gbaya community. He shared how he had never set foot in school as a child, but thanks to the literacy work that was part of the Gbaya project, he learned to read and write Gbaya. This has helped him to be more engaged in his church and community more than ever before. It also improved his capacity to serve the Gbaya church in his role.

"The Kwanja Scriptures are used in all church denominations and prayer cells. Although I am educated in French, I still understand better the message of the Bible in my mother tongue. Those who open their hearts and discover the treasure of God's Word, they are the ones who read it at home... I pray that God will help me understand and obey the Word. I try to apply what I understand. I think and act differently now. I notice that I am more patient now than before: more patient with others, with myself. There is less anger."

(Jerome, translator and manager of the translation center, Kwanja)

3.2.2 Translation project impact on churches and church groups

All 78 of the participating denominational leadership groups answered our church impact questions. When asked whether they had seen conversion growth among those who speak the local language over the term of the project, 63 (or 80.8%) reported that new people had indeed been coming to faith. 48 of these leadership groups (or 61.5% of all groups) went on to agree that their use of the translated Scriptures was a key contributor to this conversion growth.

We also asked about new churches being planted among the local language population and 48 of the groups (or 61.5%) reported that their denomination had indeed planted more churches since the translation work had begun. All but three of these leadership groups (or 57.7% of the total) attributed this increase in church planting to their use of the Scriptures in the vernacular.

The 91 participating focus groups were also asked about the numerical growth in their group since the translation work began. All of the groups answered, with 74 (or 81.3%) reporting that their group had been growing in size alongside the work of the project. 61 of these groups (or 67% of the total) went on to credit this growth to their use of mother tongue Scriptures in their meetings.

The same groups were also asked to assess whether their group had grown in its spiritual character alongside the project, with fully 80 of the groups (or 87.9%) affirming as much. The same 61 groups mentioned in the previous paragraph (or 67% of the total) attributed this change to their use of the translated Scriptures.

3.2.3 Translation project impact on the broader community

The individual and denominational leadership surveys also sought to assess how the project and resulting Scriptures had impacted the broader language community. The first question we asked both groups concerned the **overall harmony enjoyed by the community**. 5,884 of those surveyed answered this question, with 4,594 (or 78.1%) agreeing that their community is experiencing more harmony; 4,112 respondents (or 69.9%) affirmed that their vernacular Scriptures were to be credited for this change. All 78 of the denominational leadership groups also answered this question, with 66 (or 84.6%) noting an increase in community peace and harmony in the language community in question and 63 of those (80.8% of all the groups) attributing this change to their use of mother tongue Scriptures.

The same two groups were also asked about the **pace of development in the community**. This is a way of asking whether humanitarian and community conscious efforts have been gaining traction since the translation work began. 5,887 individuals replied to this question, with 4,225 (or 71.8%) affirming that such was the case, and 3,924 (or 66.7% of all surveyed) attributing these changes to their use of vernacular Scriptures. All 78 of the denominational leadership groups also answered this question, with 55 (or 70.5%) noting this change, and 52 of the groups (or 66.7% of the total) linking the improvement to mother tongue Scripture use.²⁰

Pastor Pierre, in charge of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Cameroon's Yimberé ecclesiastical district, underscored these findings when we interviewed him. He said, "The

²⁰ Respondents were not asked to list reasons or ways that the translated Scriptures contributed to this (or any) impact. They were simply asked if they thought the impacts were due to their use of mother tongue Scriptures.

non-Muslim Kwanja have historically been mistreated.... They were unknown and considered a sub-population whose language had to be acculturated and even suppressed. But the translation project freed the Kwanja people, who could now learn to read and write their language as they wished. The project was like an open road to development for the Kwanja community, which began to see several of her sons and daughters rise to positions of local, regional and even national responsibility. The use of the Bible in Kwanja has led many to switch from animism to embrace Christianity.”

3.2.4 Translation project impact summary comments

The majority of responses from individuals, focus groups, and denominational leaders consistently attributed perceived impacts to their use of vernacular Scriptures. The strongest VSU impact that was reported was on the overall peace and harmony enjoyed by the communities that received the Scriptures with 69.9% of individuals and 80.8% of denominational leaders noting this impact. The next two largest impacts reported were on the personal level with 70% of respondents saying that their use of mother tongue Scriptures has caused them to grow in their faith and 67.8% saying that they are more involved in church due to VSU. Even the lowest impact reported, new church plants in the given language area at 57.7%, was reported by more than half of the groups. We offer the table below to summarize the impact findings.

Table 3.2.4 - Summary of SURAM Cameroon impacts reported

Personal VSU impacts		Congregational VSU impacts	
Growth in faith	70%	Conversion growth	61.5%
Church involvement	67.8%	Churches planted	57.7%
Church Group VSU impacts		Community VSU impacts	
Spiritual character of group	67%	Peace and harmony	69.9% (indiv) 80.8% (denom)
Numerical growth	67%	Increase in development	66.7% (both)

All of these lead us to conclude that simply providing communities with mother tongue Scriptures more often than not leads to positive impacts in that community. That said, there was a large degree of variation in ownership, use, and impact on a community-by-community basis, and each community had a different story to tell about their context and project. The table on the next page breaks down the relative rates of ownership, use, and impact on a community-by-community basis.

Table 3.2.4.1 - Community-by-community ownership, use, and impact

	Own	VSU - P	VSU - C	Impact - P	Impact - Ch	Impact - Cm
Akoose	3.2	3.4	3.3	3.5	0.7	2.5
Bum	3.2	4.1	4.3	4.4	4.2	4.7
Fulfulde	3.9	3.2	3.6	4.4	5	4.8
Gbaya	3.1	3.8	4.3	3.1	3.3	4
Giziga	3.4	3.9	4.4	3	5	4
Hdi	3.7	3.9	4.5	4.3	5	4.9
Psikye	3.2	3.9	4	3.7	2.5	3.6
Kenyang	2.2	3.5	3	1.7	1.2	1.5
Kwanja	3	3.9	4.4	3.3	3.8	4.2
Lamso'	3.1	3.6	3.6	4.8	5	4.3
Makaa	2.5	3.2	4	2.9	3.5	2.5
Ngomba	2.7	3.9	3	4.4	2.5	4.6
Mbukoo	4.2	4.3	4.6	4.9	3.8	4.9
Merey	3.3	3.8	4	3.7	3.8	4.4
Meta'	4	3.7	4.1	3.3	0	2.3
Musgu	3.2	3.6	3.8	4.3	0	4.7
Muyang	2.5	3.6	3.8	2.1	1.7	3.2
Ngiemboon	3.4	3.9	4	3.1	2.5	2.6
Nomaande	3	3.3	2.7	2.1	2.5	3.6
Noone	3	3.9	3.9	2.4	2.5	2.4

	Own	VSU - P	VSU - C	Impact - P	Impact - Ch	Impact - Cm
Nugunu	2.8	3.2	2.7	1.7	1.2	1.7
Oku	2.5	3.9	4.2	4.4	5	4.6
Pere	3.7	4.5	4.9	4.9	5	4.9
Yambeta	2.3	3.4	2.5	3.3	3.8	3.4
Yemba	2.9	3.9	4.4	1.7	3.8	3.2

Legend

The values in the cells are scored on a 1-5 scale with the exception of *Impact - Ch* which is 0-5.

Own	Ownership of Vernacular Scripture
VSU - P	Personal Vernacular Scripture Use
VSU - C	Congregational Vernacular Scripture Use
Impact - P	Personal VSU impact
Impact - Ch	VSU impact on the church
Impact - Cm	VSU impact on the community

	Darker shades of green indicate stronger aggregate measurements
	Red shades indicate lower measurements

As can be seen, while the overall ownership, use, and impact scores were relatively high, there were still some communities that reported low rates for each of these variables. What contextual factors contributed to greater ownership, use, and impact in the participating communities? What limited the same? It is to these questions that we now turn.

3.3 Findings related to the research hypotheses

Seventeen hypotheses were given to the SURAM Cameroon team to test (as already listed in [section 1.2.3](#)). Each of these were based on the intuitions and experiences of a variety of leaders and practitioners in Bible translation and Scripture engagement. In this section, we will discuss each hypothesis that was tested to see what the feedback from the participating communities have to say about each one.

The following correlations are based on a regression analysis that was performed on the community-by-community comparative table. For this analysis the already-discussed ownership, use, and impact aggregate scores were used as dependent variables while the scores we found for each question that tested a hypothesis served as independent variables. Only regression coefficients of .400 or higher are included here.²¹ These scores that will be featured in what follows indicate that every time a community gave a Likert response²² that was one value higher (like from 3-unsure to 4-agree) the dependent variable score increased by the value given.

3.3.1 Church Leaders & Inter-Church Committees (ICC) hypotheses

Five hypotheses concerned the local leaders for the translation project - their engagement, reputation, and post-dedication role in bringing the Scriptures to their community. Some of the hypotheses could have been understood in more than one way. Where this is the case, we will parse out the two meanings and comment on each.

3.3.1.1 Hypothesis 1 - Mother tongue use in worship

Hypothesis 1:

Where pastors of local churches have a strategy for using the local language Scriptures regularly in church services, this increases overall Scripture Engagement.

We looked at this hypothesis from two angles. First, by asking how often the mother tongue of the local population is featured in the Sunday services - reading, preaching, praying, and singing - and second by asking the denominational leadership if they consider the linguistic ability of a pastor or priest when they post workers to churches in the language area.

Our research found positive (albeit small) correlations for the first of these angles. Communities that scored higher on more robust use of the mother tongue in the Sunday

²¹ Regression coefficients show how two things correlate with each other, but they do not show that one variable causes changes in another. In other words, saying that literacy ability correlates with Scripture ownership at a factor of .855 simply says that these two variables track positively with each other, not that more literacy *leads to* more personal ownership. It is also possible that owning print scriptures leads to improved literacy ability because it affords people more opportunity to read. To ascertain the direction of any of the relationships uncovered in this section, other studies that measure these variables over time would be needed.

²² Likert responses are elicited on a five point scale. For our purposes, the responses were as follows: 1- Not at all, 2 - No, 3 - Unsure, 4 - Yes, and 5- Of course.

services had more personal ownership of Scripture by a factor of 0.493,²³ more personal use (0.413), more congregational use (0.477), and more community impact (0.450).

The independent variable scores for this hypothesis synthesized the average score of three questions we posed to the denominational leaders in a given language area. These questions were:

- “Does your denomination encourage that sermons are preached in or interpreted in [language name] in areas where that language is spoken by the majority of believers in the congregation?”
- “Does your denomination encourage that prayers are said in [language name] in areas where that language is spoken by the majority of believers in the congregation?”
- “Does your denomination encourage [language name] believers to sing their Scripturally based songs in Sunday service?”

Table 3.3.1.1 illustrates the relationship between intentional use of the mother tongue in worship on the one hand, and ownership, personal use, congregational use, and community impact on the other. Mother tongue use in worship is listed from highest to lowest.

Table 3.3.1.1 - Community-by-community correlations for mother tongue use in worship

	Own	VSU - P	VSU - C	Impact - Cm	MT use in worship
Mbuko	4.2	4.3	4.6	4.9	5
Pere	3.7	4.5	4.9	4.9	5
Kwanja	3	3.9	4.4	4.2	5
Yemba	2.9	3.9	4.4	3.2	5
Meta'	4	3.7	4.1	2.3	4.8
Hdi	3.7	3.9	4.5	4.9	4.8
Gbaya	3.1	3.8	4.3	4	4.8
Ngomba	2.7	3.9	3	4.6	4.8
Giziga	3.4	3.9	4.4	4	4.7
Makaa	2.5	3.2	4	2.5	4.6
Nomaande	3	3.3	2.7	3.6	4.5
Bum	3.2	4.1	4.3	4.7	4.4
Musgu	3.2	3.6	3.8	4.7	4.4
Nugunu	2.8	3.2	2.7	1.7	4.3
Yambeta	2.3	3.4	2.5	3.4	4.3
Merey	3.3	3.8	4	4.4	4.2
Psikye	3.2	3.9	4	3.6	4.1

²³ This means that, on average, every time the score for MT use in worship increases by one (1) on the 1-5 scale, the ownership score increases by 0.493. The values given throughout this section indicate the strength of each correlation in the same way.

	Own	VSU - P	VSU - C	Impact - Cm	MT use in worship
Fulfulde	3.9	3.2	3.6	4.8	4
Ngiemboon	3.4	3.9	4	2.6	4
Akoose	3.2	3.4	3.3	2.5	4
Noone	3	3.9	3.9	2.4	4
Muyang	2.5	3.6	3.8	3.2	4
Oku	2.5	3.9	4.2	4.6	4
Lamnsó'	3.1	3.6	3.6	4.3	3.7
Kenyang	2.2	3.5	3	1.5	3.3

One might expect that the strongest correlation in this table would be between the encouragement that denominational leaders give to mother tongue use in worship and the individual reports of hearing the mother tongue in their congregation (VSU - C). A few contexts stand out as clashing with this expectation - Ngomba, Nomaande, Yambeta, and Nugunu in particular. This discrepancy could be due to a lack of congregational interest in taking the denominational encouragement to heart or to the denominational leaders overstating their position on these questions. Seven interviews were conducted in the four communities named above and each interviewee affirmed that their Scriptures were being used in worship when asked an open question about domains of use.

As noted above, our research also looked at the question of whether the linguistic ability of a pastor or priest is a factor that denominational leaders consider when they post workers to churches in the language area. While no correlations were found in the community-by-community regression analysis we performed, the observations of our surveyors and stark contrasts in some contexts suggest that this is an important factor. The SURAM survey workers observed that churches where the vernacular Scriptures were not being used in worship were often served by pastors who did not speak or read the local language. In fact, the four communities highlighted as “clashing with expectations” were singled out by our surveyors as being contexts where local congregations were being served by clergy who did not speak or read the local language.

Further to this, two communities - Akoose and Muyang - had denominational groups who contrasted in their approach to posting workers. Two of the seven denominations in the Akoose area and two of the three participating denominations in the Muyang area considered the linguistic and literacy abilities of their clergy when posting them. In both contexts, members of these denominations owned, personally used, and attended churches that use the vernacular Scriptures far more frequently. See table 3.3.1.1.1 below for a breakdown of these rates of ownership and use.

Table 3.3.1.1.1 - Akoose/Muyang rates of ownership and use considering linguistic ability of clergy

	Does the denomination try to ensure that congregations in the local language area are served by clergy who speak and read the local language?			
	Yes		No / Unsure	
	Akoose	Muyang	Akoose	Muyang
Ownership	46/60 - 76.7%	88/154 - 57.1%	65/131 - 49.6%	20/151 - 13.2%
Personal Use	49/60 - 81.7%	141/154 - 91.6%	85/131 - 64.9%	69/151 - 45.7%
Congregational Use	58/60 - 96.7%	145/154 - 94.2%	84/131 - 64.1%	31/151 - 20.5%

As much as the Akoose and Muyang contexts show a stark contrast on this variable, other contexts where denominations contrasted on this question did not exhibit the same contrast in ownership and use. That said, seven of the nine communities that scored the highest on the personal impact of vernacular Scriptures (> 4.2) had at least one denominational group in their midst that was trying to ensure that believers in that language area were served by clergy who spoke and read the local language. Five of the seven communities that scored the highest on church impact questions (> 4.1) boasted at least one such denomination. Despite the lack of a correlation in our regression analysis, it would appear that the linguistic and literacy ability of clergy improves vernacular Scripture use and impact in at least some contexts.

Finally, the numbers for mother tongue use in worship are very strong overall, with all but two contexts scoring a four or better. A closer look into the responses that the denominational leaders gave to each of the three questions we asked for this hypothesis (preaching/interpretation, congregational prayers, and congregational songs) shows that congregations are encouraged to sing and pray in the local language more often than they are encouraged to interpret or preach in it. All but two of the 78 denominational leadership groups affirmed or strongly affirmed that they encourage congregational prayers and singing in the vernacular. However, six of the denominational groups responded in the negative when asked about whether they encourage sermons to be preached or interpreted into the vernacular.

3.3.1.2 Hypothesis 2 - Leader morality

Hypothesis 2:

Where the translators and the ICC leaders were respected by the community, the Vernacular Scriptures were accepted and used.

Our research also found positive correlations between questions we asked around **leader morality and virtue**. Both personal VSU at a factor of .425 and congregational VSU (.413) increased when the scores from the language community in question were higher.

The independent variable scores for this hypothesis synthesized the average score of two identical questions we posed to the individuals and denominational leaders. These questions were:

- “Were the people who translated your Scriptures upstanding and responsible people of godly character?”
- “Were the people who served as leaders on the translation association or committee upstanding and responsible people of godly character?”

Depicting the scores for leader morality in a table would run the risk of defaming translators and leaders in projects where the local population held a critical view of them. As such, we will refrain from showing the community-by-community scores for this hypothesis and simply proceed with the discussion of the data.

11 of the contexts had a largely favorable opinion of their translators and project leaders with a score of 4 or better. The lower scores in the other 14 communities may have more to do with the fact that many people, not knowing the translators and project managers, could only have a more neutral opinion of them. Of all of the questions that we asked individuals, these two questions about the morality of their translators and leaders were the most likely to receive responses of 3 (or unsure). 1,572 individuals said that they were unsure about the character of the project leaders and 1,362 said the same about the translators. It is probable that the response of 3 (unsure) was given due to the respondent’s lack of familiarity with the people in question rather than to a neutral view of them.

Very few denominational leaders gave responses of 3 to questions about the translators and project leaders. Only four did so when asked about the translators and three did the same when asked about the project leaders. In each case, these responses came from leaders of small denominations in the project area. A closer look at the denominational responses shows that the leadership groups in the three language communities with the lowest morality scores had misgivings about their translators *and* project leaders. Other than those responses, no other denominational group held a critical view of translators and only

two other groups had issues with the morality of the project leaders. It should be noted that two of these three contexts also reported little to no conversion growth or new church plants in their language areas. It would seem that moral issues that involve translators and project leaders are toxic not only for congregational use, but church impacts as well.

The story of the translation team and leadership group in one of the contexts that complained about the morality of their staff illustrates how such problems ruin a translation's prospects for widespread adoption. The members of one such community told us that the project kicked off very well. However, in time, one of the translators who also served as project coordinator, was suspected of embezzling project funds. That in itself was a big problem. But another problem sparked when the entire translation team decided to write against him and to replace him with the main translator's son who was a young pastor in a large denomination. The community took it as a plot and never came to terms with it. Seemingly, the air was never cleared and the whole team was considered to be dishonest as a result. Our surveyors found that six out of the seven denominations in this context lacked confidence in their Scriptures. The only denomination that had confidence in them was the denomination from which the young pastor had been chosen.

3.3.1.3 Hypothesis 3 - Ongoing moral and financial support

Hypothesis 3:

After the translation work was completed, where the program received ongoing resources for some time, there was greater acceptance and use.

This hypothesis was also considered in two parts. First, we asked the project staff about ongoing prayer and technical support that they received from their partner after the dedication (moral support), and second, we asked the same group whether they continued to receive subsidy for their work after the dedication (financial support). Both were found to correlate with congregational Scripture use: moral support at a factor of .436 and financial at .442.

The responses to the three questions below were used to determine the scores for moral and financial support in each community. The first two were averaged out to give the moral support score. The third question was the only one used to assess the financial support that was offered.

- "After the most recent dedication, did your main project partner continue to communicate with you and pray for you?"
- "After the most recent dedication, did your main project partner continue to offer technical assistance and advice to enhance your literacy and Scripture Use efforts?"

- “After the most recent dedication, did your main project partner continue to subsidize your literacy and Scripture Use efforts for at least two years?”

Below is table 3.3.1.3 which illustrates the relationship between these factors and Congregational VSU. This time, since Congregational VSU is the only dependent variable, it is sorted from highest to lowest.

Table 3.3.1.3 - Community-by-community correlations for ongoing moral and financial support

	VSU - C	Moral Support	Financial Support
Pere	4.9	2.7	2
Mbuko	4.6	4.3	4
Hdi	4.5	4.7	5
Giziga	4.4	4	4
Kwanja	4.4	4	4
Yemba	4.4	1	1
Bum	4.3	3.3	2
Gbaya	4.3	4.3	5
Oku	4.2	4.3	4
Meta'	4.1	3.3	2
Psikye	4	2.7	2
Makaa	4	5	5
Merey	4	3.7	2
Ngiemboon	4	3.7	1
Noone	3.9	4	4
Musgu	3.8	2	1
Muyang	3.8	4	4
Fulfulde	3.6	2.3	4
Lamnsa'	3.6	2	2
Akoose	3.3	3	1
Kenyang	3	2	2
Ngomba	3	2.7	1
Nomaande	2.7	2.2	1.5
Nugunu	2.7	3.3	2
Yambeta	2.5	2	2

The table shows that only 9 out of the 25 participating communities reported that they continued to receive moral support after the project, getting an average score of 4 or better, while 10 out of the 25 agreed to have had ongoing financial support after the project. Of these communities, only Noone, Muyang, and Fulfulde (discussed in the previous section) averaged less than 4 on the congregational impact measurement. Noone and Muyang were barely below this threshold with scores of 3.9 and 3.8 respectively. It seems clear that some projects are able to sustain high levels of congregational use *without* ongoing moral and financial support from their partner after the dedication, but that it is a great boon to

congregational use of the Scriptures in a community when their partner continues to support the work in prayer, counsel, and subsidy for at least a few years after the dedication.

During our stay in some communities, we were told that they developed fundraising strategies after the project to continue literacy and Scripture engagement activities. Others testified that forums were created where sons and daughters of the community in the diaspora (within and outside of the country) contributed funds from time to time to further literacy work in particular. Others raised funds to continue with the drafting of the Old Testament while waiting for the Bible Translation partner organization to come in.

3.3.1.4 Hypothesis 4 - Promotion and distribution of Scripture

Hypothesis 4:

After the translation work was completed, where the community continued to be active in distributing and promoting the vernacular Scriptures for years, there was greater acceptance and use.

Our research found a correlation between intentional efforts to promote and distribute the vernacular Scriptures and three of the dependent variables in question, namely personal ownership (.655), personal use (.606), and congregational use (.642). In fact, at .642, the promotion/distribution of vernacular Scripture has the strongest correlation with congregational use when compared with the other hypotheses we tested.

The responses to four questions - one on the individual survey and three on the focus group survey - were used to score each community on this variable. The four questions are listed below with the question from the individual survey being listed first.

- “If someone asked you how to get their own copy of your Scriptures (print, digital, or audio), would you know how to help them?”
- “Has your group implicated itself in the work of promoting the use of [language name] Scriptures?”
- “In the past year, have many members of your group helped [language] speakers to get their own copies of their Scriptures (print, digital, or audio)?”
- “Does your group have members who are responsible for encouraging people to purchase and use [language name] Scriptures?”

Table 3.3.1.4 shows the correlation between the intentional promotion of vernacular Scriptures and the ownership and use of the same. The community-by-community scores for Scripture promotion are listed from highest to lowest.

**Table 3.3.1.4 - Community-by-community correlations
for vernacular Scripture promotion**

	Own	VSU - P	VSU - C	Vernacular Scripture Promotion
Meta'	4	3.7	4.1	4.1
Merey	3.3	3.8	4	4
Mbuko	4.2	4.3	4.6	3.9
Psikye	3.2	3.9	4	3.8
Pere	3.7	4.5	4.9	3.8
Noone	3	3.9	3.9	3.7
Giziga	3.4	3.9	4.4	3.6
Bum	3.2	4.1	4.3	3.5
Hdi	3.7	3.9	4.5	3.5
Ngiemboon	3.4	3.9	4	3.5
Lamnsu'	3.1	3.6	3.6	3.4
Musgu	3.2	3.6	3.8	3.4
Yemba	2.9	3.9	4.4	3.4
Gbaya	3.1	3.8	4.3	3.3
Kenyang	2.2	3.5	3	3.3
Muyang	2.5	3.6	3.8	3.3
Oku	2.5	3.9	4.2	3.3
Kwanja	3	3.9	4.4	3.2
Nugunu	2.8	3.2	2.7	3.2
Akoose	3.2	3.4	3.3	3.1
Makaa	2.5	3.2	4	3
Yambeta	2.3	3.4	2.5	3
Ngomba	2.7	3.9	3	2.9
Fulfulde	3.9	3.2	3.6	2.8
Nomaande	3	3.3	2.7	2.5

As was the case with Scripture *use* in congregational groups (see [section 3.1.3](#)), it was the youth groups who lagged behind the men's and women's groups when it comes to Scripture promotion. Youth groups accounted for over a third of the groups in our study (33 out of 91, or 36.3%), but they were involved in Scripture promotion efforts less frequently than men's and women's groups (5% less frequently than the average) and they were much less likely to have someone in their group who was responsible for Scripture promotion (14% below the average).

It should also be noted that one of the conditions that many Bible agencies give to communities before they can begin OT translation is that they show proof of a clear distribution plan of the NT. This could explain why many communities responded in the affirmative that they had clear distribution plans. However, the responses did not correlate with what we saw on the field. Many people that we interviewed claimed not to have seen portions of the NT in circulation, though many were aware of a translation project.

3.3.1.5 Hypothesis 5 - Local ownership, agency, and initiative

Hypothesis 5:

When it was evident from an early stage that members of the local community own the project and are responsible for leading it and defining its success, with external partners having a facilitating, training, and equipping role, there is greater use of the VS by the community.

This hypothesis featured two factors to consider - ownership of the project on the one hand and leading and defining its success on the other. Both of these factors are complex. The former raises the question of what indicates ownership of a translation project. For our purposes, we measured volunteering, prayer, and material support as indicators of local ownership. For more on the viability of these indicators for measuring ownership, see [section 3.4.1](#). The latter of the two factors in this hypothesis brings into consideration the relationship between community leaders and the translation agency that is helping them; it probes the stance and role of each stakeholder in the project in launching and stewarding a given project.

Our research found correlations for both of these aspects of local ownership and initiative. Our indicators of *project* ownership correlated with *Scripture* ownership on a personal level at a factor of .562. Local agency in initiating and setting up the project patterned with impacts reported by the churches (conversions and new church plants) at a factor of .619. It should be noted that local agency in leading and defining the success of the project had the strongest correlation with impacting the local church.

The community-by-community ownership scores were determined by finding the average response from three questions that were asked to individuals, focus groups, and denominational leaders in each community. The questions were as follows:

- Did you pray regularly for the project?
- Did you give personal funds and/or goods for the advancement of the project?
- Did you volunteer your time and skills for the advancement of the project?

- Did your group pray regularly for the [language name] project?
- Did your group raise funds and/or collect goods for the advancement of the project?
- Did your group offer volunteer service to the [language name] project leaders for the advancement of the project?

- Did you ensure that the congregations in the [language name] area were praying regularly for the project work and staff?

- Did you lead congregations in the [language name] area to raise funds and donate goods to help the project move forward?
- Did you lead the congregations in the [language name] area to offer volunteer service to the project when and where you saw that there was a need?

Table 3.3.1.5.1 illustrates the correlation between these ownership indicators (prayer, giving, and volunteering) and personal ownership of the vernacular Scriptures. Ownership scores are ranked from highest to lowest.

Table 3.3.1.5.1 - Community-by-community correlations for a sense of local ownership

	Individual ownership of Vernacular Scriptures	Community sense of project ownership
Meta'	4	4.5
Mbuko	4.2	4.2
Merey	3.3	3.9
Bum	3.2	3.9
Hdi	3.7	3.9
Psikye	3.2	3.8
Musgu	3.2	3.8
Noone	3	3.7
Muyang	2.5	3.7
Nomaande	3	3.7
Giziga	3.4	3.5
Lamnsó'	3.1	3.5
Oku	2.5	3.5
Kwanja	3	3.5
Pere	3.7	3.4
Kenyang	2.2	3.3
Yambeta	2.3	3.3
Ngomba	2.7	3.2
Ngiemboon	3.4	3.1
Yemba	2.9	3
Nugunu	2.8	3
Akoose	3.2	3
Gbaya	3.1	2.8
Makaa	2.5	2.8
Fulfulde	3.9	2.6

As for the second aspect of the hypothesis in question - local agency and initiative - the community-by-community scores reflect the average scores of four questions that were asked of denominational leaders and six questions that were asked of project staff. These are the questions:

Denominational survey

- “Was the idea to translate/revise your Scriptures that were dedicated between 2007-2017 initially your own?”
- “Did you mobilize [language name] speakers and seek out partnership to assist you in translating/revising the Scriptures in your language?”
- “Did you, as [language name] Christian leaders, play an active role in defining the parameters and scope of the project?”
- “Did you, as [language name] Christian leaders, plan an active role in choosing the translators/revisers and leaders for the project?”

Staff survey

- “Did you play an integral role in defining the parameters and scope of the project?”
- “Did you participate in the development of a project brief that was intended to guide you in your work?”
- “Did your main project partner assist you in your efforts to complete the project more than they led these efforts themselves?”
- “Was your main project partner accepting of and responsive to your request and ideas for the project?”
- “Did your consultant demonstrate humility and a servant attitude in your interactions with him/her rather than having a controlling or authoritarian posture?”
- “Did your consultant seem to be just as concerned about the needs and expectations of your community as he/she was about the progress and literal faithfulness of the translation/revision?”

Table 3.3.1.5.2 shows the relationship between the degree of local agency and initiative in the project and the degree to which the church leaders reported that the new Scriptures positively impacted the mission and ministry of the local churches. The scores for local agency and initiative are listed from highest to lowest.

Table 3.3.1.5.2 - Community-by-community correlations for a sense of local agency and initiative

	Church impact	Local agency and initiative
Hdi	5	4.6
Makaa	3.5	4.4
Mbuko	3.8	4.3
Ngomba	2.5	4.2
Gbaya	3.3	4.2

	Church impact	Local agency and initiative
Giziga	5	4.1
Lamnsó'	5	4.1
Pere	5	4.1
Nugunu	1.2	4.1
Merey	3.8	4
Bum	4.2	4
Psikye	2.5	3.9
Muyang	1.7	3.9
Yambeta	3.8	3.9
Yemba	3.8	3.9
Oku	5	3.8
Meta'	0	3.7
Ngiemboon	2.5	3.7
Noone	2.5	3.6
Nomaande	2.5	3.6
Kenyang	1.2	3.6
Kwanja	3.8	3.5
Musgu	0	3.1
Akoose	0.7	3
Fulfulde	5	2.8

The Fulfulde language group looks like the obvious outlier in each of the tables in this section. They scored the lowest in a sense of ownership and agency which is not all that surprising when one considers that ethnic Fulfulde were not the main target audience of the most recent translation. That said, ownership of these Scriptures and the impact that they have had on the Fulfulde church are among the highest on both tables. These high results may be tied to orthographic adaptations and digital promotion strategies that are ongoing among Fulfulde speakers, both ethnic and non.

3.3.1.6 Summary comments on Church leader and ICC hypotheses

Each of the five hypotheses in this section concerned some aspect of the local leadership dynamics in the church and in the community and all five hypotheses were confirmed as correlating with the dependent variables (desired outcomes) in our study. That said, none of the hypotheses correlated with all six of the outcomes we measured. Since the discussion above looked at each *hypothesis* in turn, we will now discuss observations we have made concerning each of the *desired outcomes* in turn.

Three of the hypotheses appear to relate positively with individual ownership of mother tongue Scriptures (indicated as "Own" in the table below). Ranked by the strength of

their correlation, our research highlights the following factors as having the most significant connections to personal Scripture ownership:

1. the ongoing promotion and distribution of Scripture (.655),
2. a sense of local ownership of the project (.562), and
3. the use of the mother tongue in worship (.493).

When it comes to the *use* of vernacular Scripture, three hypotheses were confirmed as relating with personal use and four with congregational use. For personal use (VSU-P), the following were the most significant:

1. the ongoing promotion and distribution of Scripture (.606),
2. the perceived morality of their translators and leaders (.425), and
3. the use of the mother tongue in worship (.413).

For congregational use (VSU -C), the following were the most significant:

1. the ongoing promotion and distribution of Scripture (.642),
2. the use of the mother tongue in worship (.477),
3. ongoing financial (.442) and moral (.436) support from their partner, and
4. the perceived morality of their translators and leaders (.413).

Finally, for the *impact* measurements we took, only two hypotheses seem to have a clear relationship:

1. Local agency and initiative in the project patterned with church impacts (.619).
2. The use of the mother tongue in worship patterned with community impacts (.450).

We remind our readers that the church impact we measured were conversion growth and new church plants, while the community impacts we measured were improvements in harmony and the pace of development.

In summary, questions of local leadership, partnership, organization, ownership, and agency are pertinent when aiming at Scripture use and impact. Using the mother tongue in worship and having a local plan for Scripture promotion correlated with the most outcomes we included in our study, with Scripture promotion having the stronger correlations. Working to bolster local agency and initiative in the project also stands out as it has a stronger relationship with impacting the local church than any other variable included in our study.

Table 3.3.1.6 - Summary of correlations with Church leader & ICC hypotheses

	Own	VSU-P	VSU-C	Impact Ch	Impact Cm
MT in church	0.493	0.413	0.477		0.45
Respect for leaders		0.425	0.413		
Partner support (moral)			0.436		
Partner support (funds)			0.442		
Scripture Promotion	0.655	0.606	0.642		
Local ownership	0.562				
Local Agency				0.619	

3.3.2 Language and Translation hypotheses

The second category of hypotheses considers the ways in which sociolinguistic realities and the perception of the quality of the translation influence Scripture ownership, use, and impact. Three such hypotheses were put to the SURAM team to research. We will discuss each hypothesis in turn.

3.3.2.1 Hypothesis 6 - Ease of dialect

Hypothesis 6:

When there is a complex dialect situation in the language (where there have been ongoing discussions over the choice of the reference dialect), overall Scripture Engagement in the language community is low compared to Scripture Engagement in non-complex situations (where it has been easier to agree on the reference dialect).

This hypothesis and the next one (discussed in [section 3.3.2.2](#)) were the only two hypotheses in the study that posited inverse relationships. In other words, they predict *less* ownership, use, and impact when the variable in question is present. In order to better compare all of the scores for all of the hypotheses, we changed the polarity of these two hypotheses so that they, like the others, looked at positive relationships. For the present hypothesis, we asked about the *lack* of dialectal issues. If they were indeed lacking, a high score was given. If dialectal issues were complex, a low score was given.

Our research found that a lack of dialectal issues correlated with individual ownership at a factor of .699, the personal impact of vernacular Scriptures (.553), as well as the community impact of the Scriptures (.489).

Only one question was used to measure the dialectal complexity of the project context. It was asked of the project staff:

- “Did questions of dialect pose almost no problems in your project?”

Table 3.3.2.1 illustrates the relationship between the community-by-community scores given for this question and the three outcomes these scores correlated with - personal ownership, personal use, and congregational use. The ease of dialect scores are listed from highest (easiest) to lowest (most complex).

Table 3.3.2.1 - Community-by-community correlations for easy dialect choice

	Own	Impact - P	Impact - Cm	Easy dialect choice
Hdi	3.7	4.3	4.9	5
Mbuko	4.2	4.9	4.9	5
Lamnsó'	3.1	4.8	4.3	5
Meta'	4	3.3	2.3	5
Akoose	3.2	3.5	2.5	5
Nomaande	3	2.1	3.6	4.5
Ngomba	2.7	4.4	4.6	4
Gbaya	3.1	3.1	4	4
Giziga	3.4	3	4	4
Pere	3.7	4.9	4.9	4
Merey	3.3	3.7	4.4	4
Bum	3.2	4.4	4.7	4
Psikye	3.2	3.7	3.6	4
Yemba	2.9	1.7	3.2	4
Oku	2.5	4.4	4.6	4
Ngiemboon	3.4	3.1	2.6	4
Musgu	3.2	4.3	4.7	4
Nugunu	2.8	1.7	1.7	2
Muyang	2.5	2.1	3.2	2
Yambeta	2.3	3.3	3.4	2
Noone	3	2.4	2.4	2
Kenyang	2.2	1.7	1.5	2
Kwanja	3	3.3	4.2	2
Fulfulde	3.9	4.4	4.8	2
Makaa	2.5	2.9	2.5	1

This table shows that about two thirds (17/25) of the participating communities did not have to wrestle with complex dialect questions, while about one third (8/25) did. The community-by-community scores for personal ownership, personal impact of VSU, and community impact for VSU show that easy dialect decisions do not guarantee good results in uncomplicated contexts, but that *complex dialect issues* pose serious concerns. The 17

uncomplicated contexts have varying levels for each dependent variable (Own, Impact-P, and Impact-Cm), but only two of the 8 situations with complicated dialect issues scored better than 3.5 on the same variables. The higher community impact in the Kwanja area may be due to work that their partner (DTA) helped them to complete for a second large dialect in their area, work that resulted in the publication of a three-year lectionary in that dialect for use in their churches. That said, the adaptation did *not* result in the publication of a New Testament for speakers of this dialect which may account for the comparatively lower personal impact scores. The high ownership and impact scores in the Fulfulde area may indicate that questions of dialect were complicated, but that the decisions made by the translation team and leadership group are viewed as acceptable, if not favorable, among ethnic Fulfulde Christians.

3.3.2.2 Hypothesis 7 - Shifting or shifted multilingualism

Hypothesis 7:

In contexts where many churches are multilingual, or where people are moving away from the use of the vernacular towards other languages (shifting or shifted multilingualism), there is less use of the vernacular Scriptures.

This hypothesis features two related facets - language shift and multilingualism. Our project asked questions to measure both of these facets, but only language shift correlated with the outcomes that were measured. As in hypothesis 6, the polarity of this hypothesis was reversed. We found that in places where the language is *stable* we observed higher scores for personal use of vernacular Scriptures (.585), congregational use of the same (.430), as well as personal (.459), church (.410), and community (.453) impacts.

The community-by-community scores for language stability were based on two questions that were asked in the individual survey:

- “Do you speak your mother tongue just as often, if not more often, than you speak other languages?”
- “Do you understand and speak your ethnic language very well?”

We offer table 3.3.2.2 to illustrate the relationship between language stability and Scripture use and impact. The language stability scores are listed from highest to lowest.

Table 3.3.2.2 - Community-by-community correlations for language stability

	VSU - P	VSU - C	Impact - P	Impact - Ch	Impact - Cm	Language Stability
Pere	4.5	4.9	4.9	5	4.9	4.9
Bum	4.1	4.3	4.4	4.2	4.7	4.6

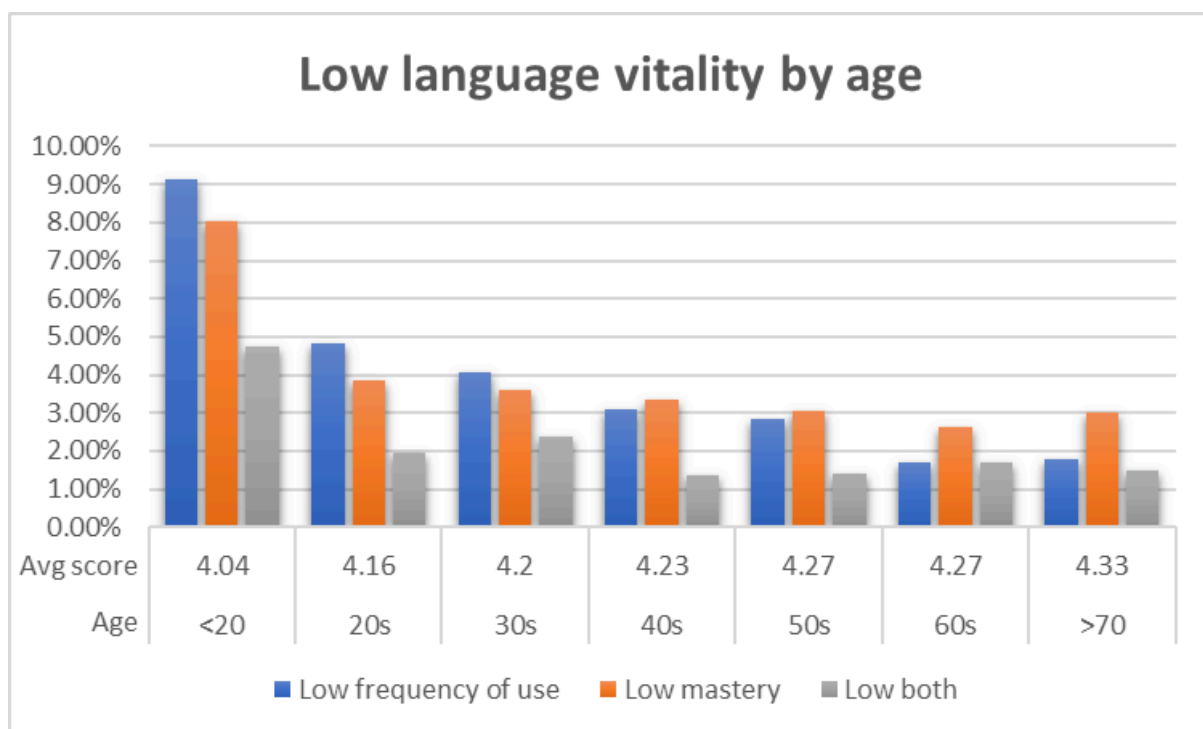
Mbuko	4.3	4.6	4.9	3.8	4.9	4.5
Psikye	3.9	4	3.7	2.5	3.6	4.5
Yambeta	3.4	2.5	3.3	3.8	3.4	4.5
Muyang	3.6	3.8	2.1	1.7	3.2	4.4
Hdi	3.9	4.5	4.3	5	4.9	4.3
Noone	3.9	3.9	2.4	2.5	2.4	4.3
Merey	3.8	4	3.7	3.8	4.4	4.2
Ngiemboon	3.9	4	3.1	2.5	2.6	4.2
Makaa	3.2	4	2.9	3.5	2.5	4.2
Meta'	3.7	4.1	3.3	0	2.3	4.1
Akoose	3.4	3.3	3.5	0.7	2.5	4.1
Nomaande	3.3	2.7	2.1	2.5	3.6	4.1
Ngomba	3.9	3	4.4	2.5	4.6	4.1
Gbaya	3.8	4.3	3.1	3.3	4	4.1
Giziga	3.9	4.4	3	5	4	4.1
Oku	3.9	4.2	4.4	5	4.6	4.1
Fulfulde	3.2	3.6	4.4	5	4.8	4.1
Musgu	3.6	3.8	4.3	0	4.7	4
Kwanja	3.9	4.4	3.3	3.8	4.2	4
Lamnso'	3.6	3.6	4.8	5	4.3	3.9
Yemba	3.9	4.4	1.7	3.8	3.2	3.9
Nugunu	3.2	2.7	1.7	1.2	1.7	3.8
Kenyang	3.5	3	1.7	1.2	1.5	3.7

In general, the individuals participating in our survey scored their use and proficiency in using their ethnic language quite highly. While encouraging, one score in particular contradicts what sociolinguistic surveyors have found for its vitality. As the participating languages table shows in [section 2.1](#), Yambeta is scored as a 6b on the EGIDS scale which means that it is “used for face-to-face communication within all generations, but it is losing users.”²⁴ As the language with the most critical EGIDS classification, it is perhaps surprising to see that Yambeta respondents assessed their use and proficiency in the language so favorably. This high score (as well as the generally high scores for many of the languages) may be due to the fact that our research was conducted in the main town for each language as well as the outlying villages where the languages are often more vital. In fact, we aimed to have at least 80% of the responses to our individual surveys come from these outlying villages. This survey method may have skewed the responses about language use and proficiency in all of the contexts we studied. On top of this is the fact that we did not include children in our study, but we did include many elderly respondents in each context. Since older people are more likely to master their ethnic language, the exclusion of young respondents undoubtedly skewed these scores. Finally, our survey approach simply asked respondents to assess their own ability to speak their language. Since language and one’s

²⁴ The Expanded Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (EGIDS) classifies languages based on the “level of disruption to the intergenerational transmission of the language,” with higher scores meaning that there is more disruption (or less transmission). <https://www.ethnologue.com/methodology/>

sense of identity are tightly connected, some respondents may have exaggerated their ability out of a desire to save face. There are many possible explanations for the generally high language vitality scores that were found in our study. In all likelihood, the high scores are due to a combination of these factors.

One aspect of the language vitality data that aligned with our expectations is the breakdown of language use and mastery by age. See the *Low language vitality by age* graphic below to see how the responses changed by age group. While all ages rated their use and mastery of their mother tongue quite highly, the youngest demographics had the lowest scores as well as the highest rates of respondents who disagreed when asked 1) if they speak their own language more than other languages and 2) if they understand and speak their language very well. The average age of the respondents under the age of 20 was 17 years old, so most respondents were already old enough to have good mastery of their language, but 8% evaluated their mastery negatively. This is more than twice the rate of those in their 20s, which indicates that language erosion and language shift in the participating communities may be accelerating.



During our research, we also found that language communities varied in their view of their respective languages. While some viewed their languages as almost sacred, others were quite indifferent. Upon closer examination, we found that this indifference often stemmed from several factors. In many cases, these communities were heavily influenced by languages of wider communication or neighboring languages that held greater prominence. More importantly, the absence of literacy activities — whether formal or informal — contributed significantly to the lack of connection and value placed on their language.

3.3.2.3 Hypothesis 8 - Quality of Translation

Hypothesis 8:

There is a direct correlation between acceptance of the quality of the translation by the community and the amount of Scripture engagement.

Our research found correlations between assessments of the quality of the vernacular translations and personal use of these Scriptures at a factor of .513, congregational use (.435), and the impact that these Scriptures had on the local church (.504).

To gauge the *quality* of the translation, we asked individuals and denominational leaders to assess the faithfulness and naturalness of the translation. The community-by-community scores for translation quality reflect the average between the individual and denominational assessments. The questions were as follows:

- “Do your mother tongue Scriptures faithfully communicate God’s Word in your language?”
- “Is the style of language used in your mother tongue Scriptures very natural and easy to understand?”

Table 3.3.2.3 shows the correlation between assessments of the translation quality on the one hand, and Scripture use (both personal and congregational) and church impact on the other. The scores for translation quality are listed from highest to lowest.

Table 3.3.2.3 - Community-by-community correlations for translation quality

	VSU - P	VSU - C	Impact - Ch	Translation quality
Pere	4.5	4.9	5	4.6
Bum	4.1	4.3	4.2	4.6
Mbukoko	4.3	4.6	3.8	4.6
Hdi	3.9	4.5	5	4.4
Makaa	3.2	4	3.5	4.4
Meta'	3.7	4.1	0	4.4
Kwanja	3.9	4.4	3.8	4.4
Yemba	3.9	4.4	3.8	4.4
Psikye	3.9	4	2.5	4.3
Yambeta	3.4	2.5	3.8	4.3
Merey	3.8	4	3.8	4.2
Ngiemboon	3.9	4	2.5	4.2
Ngomba	3.9	3	2.5	4.2
Giziga	3.9	4.4	5	4.2
Kenyang	3.5	3	1.2	4.2

	VSU - P	VSU - C	Impact - Ch	Translation quality
Nomaande	3.3	2.7	2.5	4.1
Gbaya	3.8	4.3	3.3	4.1
Oku	3.9	4.2	5	4.1
Lamso'	3.6	3.6	5	4.1
Nugunu	3.2	2.7	1.2	4.1
Noone	3.9	3.9	2.5	4
Musgu	3.6	3.8	0	3.9
Muyang	3.6	3.8	1.7	3.8
Fulfulde	3.2	3.6	5	3.5
Akoose	3.4	3.3	0.7	3.2

In general, those participating in our survey assessed the quality of their translated Scriptures very favorably. 21 out of the 25 participating communities gave responses averaging four or higher with two others averaging scores of just under four. A closer look at the Akoose numbers reveals that adherents to two denominations in particular (Presbyterian and Full Gospel) held critical views of the translation quality of the Akoose Scriptures. Respondents from these two denominations accounted for all but two of the critical appraisals of translation quality in our study. It seems that Akoose respondents were more critical of the naturalness of their Scriptures (15 critical and 24 unsure out of a total of 191 respondents) than those who were critical of the faithfulness of the same (11 critical, 8 unsure). The participating denominational leadership groups in the Akoose study were even more critical. The Presbyterian leaders did not participate in our survey, but of the seven other denominations to provide responses, five responded with critical views of both the faithfulness and the naturalness of the translation. It should also be noted that two of the bottom four contexts in this variable were contexts that were critical of the morality of the translation project leaders and staff (as discussed in [section 3.3.1.2](#)). Perhaps their appraisal of the translation quality was influenced by a negative view of these important actors.

3.3.2.4 Summary comments on Language and Translation hypotheses

As was the case with the first set of hypotheses on local leadership, the three hypotheses in this section were also confirmed as correlating with the dependent variables in our study, but none of them tracked with *all six* of the outcomes we measured.

Only one hypothesis tracked with individual ownership of mother tongue Scriptures. More ownership of Scripture was observed in contexts where *dialect questions were not an issue* (.699).

When it comes to the *use* of vernacular Scripture, two hypotheses in this section were observed to correlate with *both* personal and congregational use. These were where:

1. the language was stable (personal use at .585 and congregational at .430), and

2. the translation was assessed as good in quality (personal at .513 and congregational at .435).

Finally, for the *impact* measurements we took, all three hypotheses in this section were observed to correlate with our impact measurements - two with personal impact, two with church impact, and two with community impact. The personal and community impact of Scripture was higher where:

1. dialect questions were not an issue (personal at .553 and community at .489), and
2. the language was stable (personal at .459 and community at .453).

The church impacts were higher where:

1. the translation was assessed as good in quality (.504), and
2. the language was stable (.410).

Table 3.3.2.4 - Summary of correlations with Language and Translation hypotheses

	Own	VSU P	VSU C	Impact P	Impact Ch	Impact Cm
Ease of dialect	0.699			0.553		0.489
Language stable		0.585	0.43	0.459	0.41	0.453
Good translation		0.513	0.435		0.504	

3.3.3 Literacy hypotheses

The third category of hypotheses considers questions relating to the effectiveness of the literacy programs as well as the acceptability of the orthography.

3.3.3.1 Hypothesis 9 - Literacy Programs and Reading Fluency

Hypothesis 9:

Where extensive literacy programs (schools, communities, and/or church) have been carried out, leading to a significant number of people becoming fluent readers in the language there is more Scripture use.

Two aspects of literacy are featured in this hypothesis: the *extent* of the literacy efforts as well as the *success* of the project in producing fluent readers of the local language. Our study probed both of these aspects and found that both correlated with individual ownership of Scripture. A high self assessment of literacy ability tracked with ownership of

mother tongue Scriptures at a factor of .855 (the strongest relationship observed in our study). Positive assessments of the scope and extent of the literacy program tracked with ownership at a factor of .470.

The individual literacy scores were found by asking individuals in each community the following question:

- “Can you read and write your language very well?”

The average response to this question in each context was used as the individual literacy score in each community. We asked the translation project staff to assess the scope and extent of the literacy programs by answering three questions:

- “Do you have a very robust and successful literacy project?”
- “Have your literacy efforts resulted in all kinds of [language name] speakers learning to read and write - young and old, men and women, Christian and non, rich and poor?”
- “Do you have a variety of primers that are well suited for a variety of class types?”

The average response to these questions was used to score the literacy programs in each community.

Table 3.3.3.1 below illustrates the relationship between ownership of vernacular Scripture and the strength and success of the literacy programs. Since two different literacy scores are featured for each community (Individual literacy and Strength of literacy program), the ownership scores are listed from highest to lowest.

Table 3.3.3.1 - Community-by-community correlations for literacy

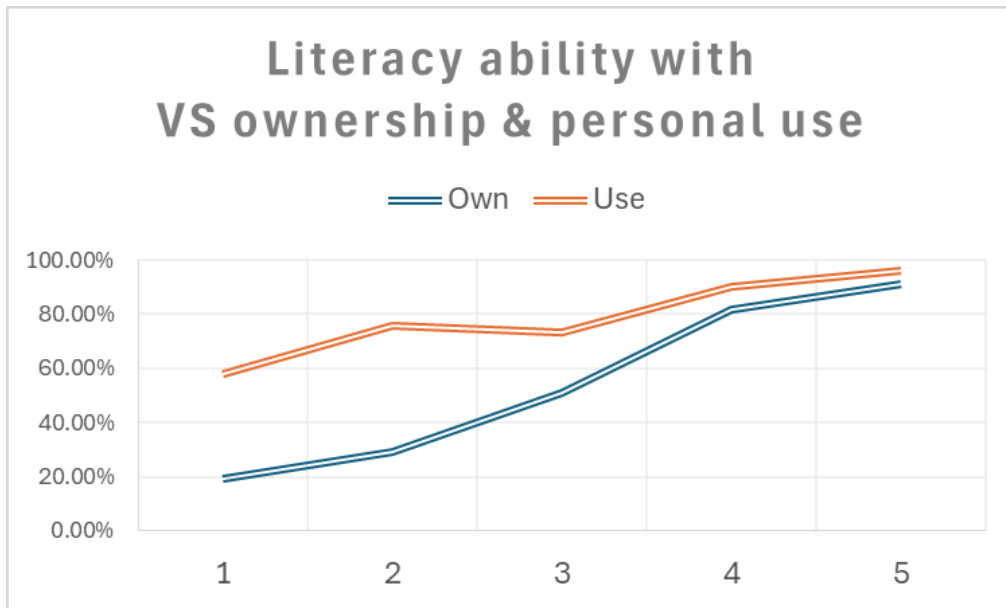
	Own	VSU - P	Individual Literacy	Strength of literacy program
Mbuko	4.2	4.3	4.2	4.3
Meta'	4	3.7	3.7	4.2
Fulfulde	3.9	3.2	3.9	4.4
Pere	3.7	4.5	3.4	3.6
Hdi	3.7	3.9	3	4.2
Ngiemboon	3.4	3.9	2.9	3.8
Giziga	3.4	3.9	3.3	3.9
Merey	3.3	3.8	2.7	4
Bum	3.2	4.1	2.6	2.9
Psikye	3.2	3.9	2.8	3.3
Musgu	3.2	3.6	3.4	3.6
Akoose	3.2	3.4	3.3	4
Gbaya	3.1	3.8	2.9	4.2

	Own	VSU - P	Individual Literacy	Strength of literacy program
Lamso'	3.1	3.6	2.4	3.9
Kwanja	3	3.9	2.8	3.8
Nomaande	3	3.3	3.1	3.6
Noone	3	3.9	3	3.8
Yemba	2.9	3.9	2.8	4.2
Nugunu	2.8	3.2	3	—
Ngomba	2.7	3.9	2.6	3.8
Makaa	2.5	3.2	2	3.3
Oku	2.5	3.9	2.3	3.5
Muyang	2.5	3.6	2.2	3.6
Yambeta	2.3	3.4	2.3	4
Kenyang	2.2	3.5	2.2	3.1

Note: The Nugunu score for strength of program is not available due to a lack of response to these questions in our survey.

Personal use of vernacular Scriptures was also included in table 3.3.3.1 despite the fact that no strong correlation was found between it and the literacy variables. The reason for this is that a closer look at the individual surveys shows that personal use of vernacular Scriptures correlated with ownership of these Scriptures at a factor of .300. This correlation did not attain the strength of .400 that has served as a benchmark in our study, but it still shows that literacy ability contributed positively to personal use of vernacular Scripture. In other words, personal literacy ability has a *strong* relationship with Scripture *ownership* (.855) which, in turn, correlates to a moderate degree with personal use of those same Scriptures (.300).

A closer look at the data from the individual surveys shows that the relationship between ownership and use may be stronger than the community-by-community analysis showed. We remind our readers that personal use of vernacular Scriptures outpaced ownership of these Scriptures by a relatively wide margin (see [section 3.1.1](#)). This suggests that many people *use* mother tongue Scriptures in church, group, and home settings without owning a copy themselves. That said, individual respondents who had positive assessments of their literacy ability, though less than half of all respondents (41%), reported owning the Scriptures at a rate of 84%. What's more, these literate owners of vernacular Scriptures reported *using* their Scriptures a few times per week at a rate of 94.3%. By comparison, people with average or poor assessments of their literacy ability owned *and used* the vernacular Scriptures at lower rates. The accompanying graphic shows how ownership and use of vernacular Scripture correlated with each response that we received in our individual survey data ('5' being a strongly positive self assessment of literacy ability and '1' being a very negative self assessment).



So, a lot of personal Scripture use is taking place among people who *do not* read their language well and *do not* own copies of their Scriptures, but literate people own and use the Scriptures more than those who do not read their language well.

3.3.3.2 Hypothesis 10 - Acceptable Orthography

Hypothesis 10:

Where the orthography was accepted by the community and successfully taught, there is greater Scripture Engagement.

Our research found that the acceptability of the orthography correlated with all six of the outcomes featured in our study - ownership of Scripture (.696), personal and congregational use of Scripture (.797 and .599 respectively), as well as personal, church, and community impact of Scripture (.641, .425, and .634 respectively). This factor was the only one in our study to correlate with all six outcomes and its degree of correlation with personal use, personal impact, and community impact are the most pronounced in our study.

To assess the acceptability of the orthography in each context, we asked individuals two questions:

- “Is the written form of your language easy to use?”
- “Do you like how your language looks in its written form?”

The average response for both of these questions was used to score the orthography in each community.

The table below shows the community-by-community scores for the acceptability of the orthography alongside each of the six dependent variables in our study. The orthography scores are listed from highest to lowest.

Table 3.3.3.2 - Community-by-community correlations for acceptability of orthography

	Own	VSU - P	VSU - C	Impact - P	Impact - Ch	Impact - Cm	Acceptable Orthography
Pere	3.7	4.5	4.9	4.9	5	4.9	4.6
Mbuko	4.2	4.3	4.6	4.9	3.8	4.9	4.5
Oku	2.5	3.9	4.2	4.4	5	4.6	4
Hdi	3.7	3.9	4.5	4.3	5	4.9	3.9
Giziga	3.4	3.9	4.4	3	5	4	3.9
Lamnsó'	3.1	3.6	3.6	4.8	5	4.3	3.9
Meta'	4	3.7	4.1	3.3	0	2.3	3.8
Merey	3.3	3.8	4	3.7	3.8	4.4	3.8
Bum	3.2	4.1	4.3	4.4	4.2	4.7	3.8
Psikye	3.2	3.9	4	3.7	2.5	3.6	3.8
Musgu	3.2	3.6	3.8	4.3	0	4.7	3.8
Gbaya	3.1	3.8	4.3	3.1	3.3	4	3.8
Kwanja	3	3.9	4.4	3.3	3.8	4.2	3.8
Noone	3	3.9	3.9	2.4	2.5	2.4	3.8
Nomaande	3	3.3	2.7	2.1	2.5	3.6	3.7
Fulfulde	3.9	3.2	3.6	4.4	5	4.8	3.6
Ngiemboon	3.4	3.9	4	3.1	2.5	2.6	3.6
Akoose	3.2	3.4	3.3	3.5	0.7	2.5	3.6
Yemba	2.9	3.9	4.4	1.7	3.8	3.2	3.6
Ngomba	2.7	3.9	3	4.4	2.5	4.6	3.5
Yambeta	2.3	3.4	2.5	3.3	3.8	3.4	3.5
Kenyang	2.2	3.5	3	1.7	1.2	1.5	3.5
Nugunu	2.8	3.2	2.7	1.7	1.2	1.7	3.4
Muyang	2.5	3.6	3.8	2.1	1.7	3.2	3.4
Makaa	2.5	3.2	4	2.9	3.5	2.5	3.1

Some language contexts cluster at the top and bottom of this table *and* table 3.3.3.1 from the previous section. For example, Pere, Mbuko, Giziga, and Meta' were four of the contexts that reported higher rates of literacy, and these four cluster toward the top table 3.3.3.2 as well. Conversely, Makaa, Muyang, Kenyang, and Yambeta all reported comparatively lower rates of literacy, and respondents from these contexts held more critical views of their orthography. It is possible that the complexity of the dialect situation in these latter contexts contributed to lower literacy rates and a more critical view of the orthography. In [section 3.3.2.1](#) we showed that Makaa, Muyang, Kenyang, and Yambeta all reported dialect-related complications in their translation project. By the same token, Meta',

Mbuko, Pere, and Giziga reported no such issues. Further research into the history of the contexts with complex dialect situations would be needed to better understand the impact that these questions may have had on establishing a widely accepted orthography and on literacy efforts among these communities.

3.3.3.3 Summary comments on Literacy hypotheses

As was the case with the first two clusters of hypotheses, both literacy hypotheses were validated. However, the *degree* of correlation between individual literacy with ownership of Scripture was the *highest* observed in this study. Individual literacy rates were relatively low among those who participated in our study, but we found that individuals who are literate in their mother tongue were far more likely to own *and use* the Scriptures in their language. Also, the *scope* of correlation between the acceptability of the orthography and *all* of the outcomes used in this study stands out as well. Taking time to develop an accessible and widely accepted orthography, and then going on to train many people to use it remains vital in today’s Cameroon if we want people to be impacted by God’s word in their language.

Table 3.3.3.3 - Summary of correlations with Literacy hypotheses

	Own	VSU P	VSU C	Impact P	Impact Ch	Impact Cm
Individual Literacy	0.855					
Literacy Project	0.47					
Good Orthography	0.696	0.797	0.599	0.641	0.425	0.634

3.3.4 Strategic hypotheses

The fourth and final category of hypotheses in our study probed a variety of strategic approaches that can be employed when translating and facilitating engagement with mother tongue Scriptures. Of the seven hypotheses that were tested in our study, only two showed correlations, one of which had a *negative* relationship with one of the impact measurements. As such, this section will begin with these two hypotheses before discussing the five hypotheses that were not statistically supported by our research.

3.3.4.1 Hypothesis 15 - Digital Scripture access and promotion

Hypothesis 15:

Where the Scriptures have been made available in digital forms, such as apps for smartphones, websites, and social media, together with appropriate digital strategies for distribution and promotion, there was more use of the VS.

This hypothesis was parsed into two parts in our study - Digital Availability and Digital Strategy. We wanted to know if the *availability* of digital publications of Scripture influenced ownership, use, and impact and if *strategic efforts* to distribute and promote such media did the same. Our analysis of the data showed that where digital publications of vernacular Scriptures were simply *made available*, the personal impact of these Scriptures in these communities was observed to be *lower* by a factor of -.501. These findings were based on community-by-community responses that were given to one question asked of the translation project staff in each context.

- “Have you adapted your vernacular Scriptures for digital formats (websites, apps, etc.)?”

However, a closer look at what is available for each language reveals that a number of translation teams simply *were not aware* of the availability of digital versions of the Scriptures that they had worked to translate. Coincidentally, four out of the five teams who responded in the negative when asked this question came from communities where personal impact scores were very high (which explains the negative relationship). However, by looking up each language in ScriptureEarth.org, we found that digital versions of their Scriptures are available for all but one of them (Kwanja) on the popular Bible app from YouVersion.²⁵ The same site shows that eight of the languages have Scripture apps²⁶ that have been developed and made available for Android users. Since this is the case, what can we conclude about the relationship between the availability and promotion of digital Scriptures on the one hand, and our dependent variables on the other?

Only 4.4% of survey respondents reported owning digital Scriptures. Table 3.3.4.1 below shows that the highest rate of reported ownership of any community was Meta’ at 14.9% and many of the contexts had *no respondents* who reported owning digital versions of their Scriptures. Observations made by members of the SURAM team align with these statistical findings. While attending worship services in each community, they noted that most people brought their printed Bibles to worship and that very few people were using smartphones to read their Scriptures.

²⁵ YouVersion Bible App, <https://www.bible.com>

²⁶ The languages are Fulfulde, Kenyang, Makaa, Mbuko, Meray, Muyang, Nomaande, and Noone. These apps are standalone apps that are available for use *besides* the digital version that is available through YouVersion.

Table 3.3.4.1 - Community-by-community rates of ownership of digital Scriptures

	Reported ownership of digital Scriptures
Meta'	14.9%
Ngiemboon	8.7%
Gbaya	7.5%
Merey	2.8%
Bum	2.8%
Oku	1.8%
Fulfulde	1.0%
Noone	0.4%
Nugunu	0.4%
Muyang	0.3%
Musgu	0.3%
All others	0%

These low rates of ownership may be due in part to the fact that our research was conducted in outlying villages in each of the language communities that were included in our study. Android and iPhone ownership has been on the rise in Cameroon for many years, but rural areas have been the slowest to be reached and served by this market. Subsistence living conditions and limitations in the power grid are two probable reasons for this lag in rural smartphone use. It would be interesting to study the use and impact of digital strategies in larger urban settings where iPhones and Android devices are more common. The passage of time may also increase the use and impact of digital Scriptures as smartphones become more and more common even in rural areas. That said, such an increase would hinge on the affordability of smartphones and the availability of reliable power in these areas.

3.3.4.2 Hypothesis 17 - Spiritual Climate

Hypothesis 17:

If the translation was part of an appropriate mission strategy in partnership with others, especially in contexts where the spiritual climate is hard, more Scripture use happened.

This hypothesis was parsed into two parts in our research. We looked into the degree of *strategic communication and collaboration* between the translation staff and denominational leaders as well as the *spiritual climate* of each participating community. Our research found that areas with a more favorable spiritual climate exhibited more conversions and new church plants (Church impact) by a factor of .430. No significant relationship was observed between Church strategy and any of the outcomes in our study.

We assessed the spiritual climate of each context by asking individuals and denominational leaders two questions that probe two factors that could make Christian life difficult, persecution and licentiousness:

- “Are people who speak [language name] free to become Christian if they want?”
- “Do most of the people in your congregation(s) have a good level of integrity between what they teach and how they live?”

Table 3.3.4.2 illustrates the relationship between the spiritual climate of a community and the impact that the Scriptures have in the churches in those communities. The spiritual climate scores are listed from highest to lowest. High scores indicate a favorable spiritual climate.

Table 3.3.4.2 - Community-by-community correlations for Spiritual climate

	Impact - Ch	Spiritual Climate
Merey	3.8	4.5
Nomaande	2.5	4.4
Meta'	0	4.4
Pere	5	4.4
Bum	4.2	4.3
Gbaya	3.3	4.3
Yambeta	3.8	4.3
Mbuko	3.8	4.2
Yemba	3.8	4.2
Hdi	5	4.2
Psikye	2.5	4.2
Giziga	5	4.1
Muyang	1.7	4.1
Lamnso'	5	4.1
Makaa	3.5	4.1
Ngomba	2.5	4.1
Kwanja	3.8	4
Ngiemboon	2.5	4
Noone	2.5	4
Nugunu	1.2	4
Oku	5	3.9
Kenyang	1.2	3.9
Akoose	0.7	3.6
Musgu	0	3.5
Fulfulde	5	3.4

3.3.4.3 Other Strategic hypotheses

Our statistical analysis of the community-by-community data did not reveal significant correlations between the other five hypotheses in this cluster. That said, the lack of a significant finding does not mean that these strategies are inadvisable. In some cases, there was simply a lack of variation in the community-by-community scores for a variable. In others, the observations of our SURAM team members contribute to our understanding of what kinds of strategic approaches were having an impact in some contexts. As such, for these final five hypotheses, the discussion will focus less on statistical correlations and more on other insights drawn from the data as well as the experiences of the members of the SURAM team.

Hypothesis 11:

Where Bible portions were published early and throughout the program, together with related SE activities, there was greater acceptance and use of the whole New Testament when it was published.

This hypothesis was researched from two angles. First, we asked whether pre-publication portions were made available and, second, whether there was a strategy for their use. For the first question about availability, all but one of the projects (Fulfulde) answered in the affirmative when asked whether, from the earliest days of their translation or revision work, they published portions of the Scriptures for people to use. From this, we can say that it is common practice for translation projects in Cameroon to make pre-publication portions of Scripture available for people. During our visit to the Mbuko community, for example, we were told that the translated portions of the Mbuko Scriptures began circulating while the translation was ongoing. With almost no variation on this question, it is unsurprising that our analysis found no correlations.

The second question about whether there was a strategy for developing, distributing, and using these pre-publication portions revealed that 22 of the 24 groups who produced these materials went on to say that they themselves or leaders in their church had strategies for using them. The two who did *not* have strategies for using them, Nugunu and Psikye, were on the bottom half of the table for congregational use of vernacular Scriptures and the church impact of the same. The Nugunu context in particular had among the lowest scores for all of the dependent variables in our study. That said, the lack of variation in the data on these questions really limits what we can conclude about this hypothesis.

Hypothesis 12:

Where the team has had one or more people focusing on SE promotion, more SE is happening.

Project staff and leaders were asked whether they had designated someone on the translation team or in the translation committee or association to develop and roll out VSU strategies. While 16 of the 25 groups responded in the affirmative, the presence or absence of such a VSU agent did not correlate with any of the dependent variables that we researched. A couple of the projects that had no such person designated for VSU activities, Pere and Bum, were among the strongest contexts for overall use and impact of the vernacular Scriptures. In the case of the Pere project, the literature center director, who was neither a translator nor on the translation committee, was responsible for promoting the Scriptures. On the other hand, a number of contexts, like Akoose, Makaa, and Muyang, Meta', and Noone, had VSU agents, but were among the weakest contexts for overall use and impact.

The experiences of the SURAM surveyors in some of the areas we visited suggest that there may be a relationship between SE promotion agents and hypothesis 3 in our study about whether the project received ongoing moral and especially financial support in the years after the dedication of the Scriptures. In the Merey area, one promoter shared that Scripture promotion was going well while the project was ongoing. However, this work slowed and eventually stopped altogether when the literature center stopped receiving funding from their project partner. A closer look at the data shows that only nine of the projects in our study reported that their partner continued to provide financial support for a few years after the dedication of their Scriptures. All nine of these projects also reported that they had one or more people dedicated to promoting Scripture engagement in the area. By contrast, of the 16 projects that did *not* report that they continued to receive funding from their partner, only six reported having designated SE promoters.

Hypothesis 13:

Where the Scriptures are presented in oral forms, such as Bible storytelling and ethno-arts, there was greater use of the vernacular Scriptures.

Several of the testimonies recorded during the research point to the role of songs in the local language:

“Mother tongue songs we have sung are really good because they bring out the word of God in an understandable way such that we understand very well and we enjoy it because it is in our mother tongue.” (N. Mary, Oku)

“There is an intensification of Lamnso church music with lots of Lamnso songs being composed, there is a drama ministry in Lamnso...” (Survey report, Lamnso)

“A believer in the Merey community said that she became a Christian after hearing the New Testament in her language and now she composes songs for Jesus.” (Survey report, Merey)

As was the case with hypothesis 11 about pre-publications, the lack of correlations between questions that address hypothesis 13 and our dependent variables is most likely due to the fact that there were so few contexts where Scripture-inspired music and story-telling were *not* reported. Focus groups, denominational leadership groups, and project staff groups were asked questions probing the development and use of oral forms of Scripture.

- 192 of the 200 participating focus groups reported that members of their group compose Scripture-inspired songs to sing during their meetings and activities,
- 67 of the 78 participating denominational leadership groups reported using oral Bible Stories or Scripture-inspired songs to improve their ministry in the community, and
- 21 of the 25 project staff groups affirmed that they worked to adapt their Scriptures for use as oral Bible stories or new songs that use their instruments and musical genres.

It should be noted that two of the four staff groups who did *not* report producing these adaptations had the lowest scores for use and impact in our study. The lack of such efforts may explain, in part, these low rates of use and impact in some contexts.

Beyond this, the denominational responses from two contexts suggest that issues relating to leader morality (see [section 3.3.1.2](#)) and/or translation quality (see [section 3.3.2.3](#)) may impede oral adaptations of translated Scripture for use by the community. Of the eleven denominational groups who did *not* report using oral adaptations in their ministry contexts *eight* were from denominational groups in two areas where 1) people were critical of the morality of their translators and project leaders and 2) people held a relatively critical view of the quality of their translated Scriptures as well.

Hypothesis 14:

Where the Scriptures have been made available in appropriate audio and audiovisual forms, together with encouraging related activities (such as Bible listening groups), there was greater acceptance/use/impact of vernacular Scriptures.

Once again, a lack of variation in responses to questions about the *availability* of audio and audiovisual (AV) adaptations explains why our analysis did not find any correlations between this question and our dependent variables. Only one translation staff group (Psikye) reported *not* producing audio or AV adaptations. However, ScriptureEarth.org shows that an audio version of their New Testament is in fact available. What’s more, 128 of the 222 Psikye respondents referred to the audio version of their Scriptures when asked about non-print versions that they were aware of. So, all of the participating language groups have audio or AV adaptations of their Scriptures available.

To gauge the impact of audio and AV Scripture use *activities*, we asked denominational leadership groups if they were aware of and encouraged the use of audio and AV formats. We also asked the project staff groups whether they or the denominations in their area had strategies for using them. The responses from the denominational leaders demonstrate how failing to engage church leaders in promoting the use of these formats can impede doing effective ministry among a language population. Only 19 (of 78 total) denominational leadership groups replied in the negative when asked if they were aware of and encouraged the use of audio or AV adaptations of vernacular Scriptures. All 19 of these groups came from just seven language communities. See Table 3.3.4.3.1 below for a breakdown of how these seven communities scored in ownership, use, and impact of the vernacular Scriptures. They are listed from highest to lowest in their aggregate score for our Audio and AV strategy metric.

Table 3.3.4.3.1 - Communities with denominational leaders who did not promote audio/AV VSU

	Own	VSU - P	VSU - C	Impact - P	Impact - Ch	Impact - Cm	Audio/AV Strategy
Musgu	3.2	3.6	3.8	4.3	0	4.7	3.7
Nomaande	3	3.3	2.7	2.1	2.5	3.6	3.5
Kenyang	2.2	3.5	3	1.7	1.2	1.5	3.5
Akoose	3.2	3.4	3.3	3.5	0.7	2.5	3.1
Pere	3.7	4.5	4.9	4.9	5	4.9	2.3
Nugunu	2.8	3.2	2.7	1.7	1.2	1.7	2
Psikye	3.2	3.9	4	3.7	2.5	3.6	1.6

Of these seven contexts, only the Pere community stands out as an obvious outlier. In this community, their lack of engagement with audio and AV Scriptures was due to the fact that the denominational leaders did not know that such versions existed. All of the other six communities were among the weakest in church impact in our study. And three of the contexts, Kenyang, Nomaande, and Nugunu were consistently among the weakest contexts in all of the dependent variables that we measured. Does the failure to leverage audio and AV Scriptures for ministry in these contexts explain their relatively low rates of use and impact? More research would be needed to determine if there is a connection.

Hypothesis 16:

Where there has been a specific emphasis on encouraging Scripture engagement for children and young people (such as in materials development and training), there is more use of the vernacular Scriptures.

When it comes to the question of materials being developed for children and youth, 14 of the participating translation staff groups affirmed that their project worked to produce such materials with the other 11 translation staff groups saying that no such efforts were made. There is no clear correlation between these efforts and any of our dependent variables - ownership, use, or impact.

The same can be said about projects that did or did not engage in strategic conversations about reaching children and youth with vernacular Scriptures. Some projects, like Mbuko, Pere, and Hdi, engaged in such conversations to great effect. The SURAM team noted that the Hdi context in particular had great success in developing and using Hdi language materials that appealed to the children in their Sunday Schools. However, other contexts (like Nomaande and Makaa) also told us that they had produced materials for children and youth, and that they went on to discuss strategies for using these materials in their area, but these efforts did not result in high degrees of use and impact in their areas.

These results suggest that merely developing materials for children and youth does not result in greater use and impact of the Scriptures in a language area. So too for developing strategies for using such materials. The *quality* of materials, the *approaches* to using them that are devised, and the *character* of the people who are deployed for engaging children and youth also matter. Further research in each of these three directions would clarify how best to engage young people in using vernacular Scriptures so that greater use and impact are consistently achieved.

It should also be noted that children and youth were not included in our individual surveys despite the fact that, according to DataReportal, the median age in Cameroon is 17.7

years old with 37.1% of Cameroonians aged 12 or under.²⁷ Children are the main beneficiaries and users of Sunday School materials. If vernacular Scripture materials are being used by children in Sunday School, then it is clear that these children are in fact using vernacular Scripture products. Our surveys did not ask explicitly about use in Sunday Schools, so future research is needed to give more insight into the degree of use and impact of VS work among children.

3.4. Supplemental Analyses

The main focus of the research component of the SURAM project concerned the hypotheses discussed above. However, the individual surveys were developed so that other analyses could be performed on them to advance other conversations concerning the use and impact of vernacular Scripture in communities. It is to these other analyses that we turn now.

There is a lack of consensus about how to define some of the concepts that were featured in the hypotheses. A prime example of this is the notion of “ownership” that a community can feel or demonstrate toward their translation project (from hypothesis 5). A symposium organized by the Pike Center for Integrative Scholarship²⁸ in May of 2021 explored the question of what kinds of things indicate ownership. The participants in this symposium reflected on ideas like agency, psychological attachment, sacrifice, and relationship as they tried to isolate some of the main component parts of what it means to “own” a project as a community stakeholder. It became clear that there are many degrees of ownership that can manifest a variety of indicators and that it can look somewhat different in one context as compared to another. Yet there are a number of indicators of ownership that are common enough and intuitively knowable enough to allow us to agree that we are talking about the same thing.

The challenge is to test what some of those indicators are in an objective way so that they can be confirmed, refuted or tweaked. This is what the SURAM project analysis offers here for the concepts of literacy success, community ownership, who people see as the leaders of a project, what indicates mother tongue vitality, and what constitutes a favorable spiritual climate.

The results of the analysis reflect the *collective understanding* of all 5,894 individual respondents concerning *which questions group together and which do not*. The analytical

²⁷ Digital 2024: Cameroon, <https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2024-cameroon> (accessed on November 11, 2024). See also United Nations, Population Division, 2024. *World Population Prospects: The 2024 Revision*, <https://population.un.org/wpp/>, which estimated the median age to be 17.9 years.

²⁸ <https://pikecenter.org/>

process used seeks to test our intuitions about concepts like “ownership” against their collective impression of the same in their own context.²⁹

3.4.1 Factor Analyses

Two complementary factor analyses were conducted on the individual survey data set.³⁰ The goal of both analyses is to discern the “ingredients” that constitute a factor. For example, if we take categories like sweet, savory, and spicy, a “factor analysis” explores the ingredients that cluster together under those categories or tests that set of ingredients across a variety of foods. In both cases, the aim is to list ingredients (or variables) under categories (or factors).

Some of the factors that emerged were expected and straightforward. These are listed in table 3.4.1.1 below along with the questions that clustered under each factor.³¹

Table 3.4.1.1 - Anticipated and confirmed SURAM factor clusters

Factor	Questions
Mother Tongue Vitality	Do you speak your mother tongue just as often as, if not more often than, you speak other languages?
	Do you understand and speak your ethnic language very well?
Leader Morality	Were the people who translated your Scriptures upstanding and responsible people of godly character?
	Were the people who served as leaders on the translation association or committee upstanding and responsible people of godly character?
Spiritual Climate	Are people who speak your language free to become Christians if they want?
	Does the way that Christians live in your community encourage obedience to the Word of God?

²⁹ We direct our readers to two resources that may interest those with backgrounds in statistical analysis. [Appendix F](#) features the process used and the statistical readouts for the analyses that were performed. Also, the data analyst on the SURAM project, Mike Kuhn, discusses these results in greater depth in the research report he is writing about the SURAM project for a Doctor of Ministry study program offered through ACTS Seminaries on the Campus of Trinity Western University in Langley, BC, Canada. The research report should be available in late 2025 at <https://www.canil.ca/wordpress/student-services/academic-resources/completed-theses/>.

³⁰ An Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was performed on the odd numbered entries and a Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was performed on the even numbered entries. The software package called R 4.4.0 was used to conduct these analyses with the coding being provided with the help of ChatGPT 4o. The coding that was used and the outputs from R are in [Appendix F](#).

³¹ The names for these and the other factors are intuitive labels that describe the questions that clustered around the given factor.

Community Ownership	Did you pray regularly for the project?
	Did you give personal funds and/or goods for the advancement of the project?
	Did you volunteer your time and skills for the advancement of the project?

The fact that the questions under the mother tongue vitality and leader morality factors clustered together is intuitive and unsurprising. Mother tongue dominance and fluency both indicate language vitality and individual respondents grouped their translators and project leaders together when we probed questions of morality.

However, the spiritual climate factor and community ownership factors merit further comment. In the case of “Spiritual Climate,” hypothesis 17 (discussed in [section 3.3.4.2](#)) addressed contexts where the “spiritual climate is hard”. In preparing the survey tool, we recognized that there are at least two dynamics that can render the spiritual climate in a context “hard”; these are persecution and licentious living. The fact that they grouped together in our factor analysis affirms that Cameroonian participants in our survey also see them as being related. Second, in the case of “Community Ownership”, we wanted to test if prayer, material, and volunteer support all clustered together in the individual survey responses, which they did. We hope that this finding will advance the conversation around *what indicates a sense of ownership* in development work, language and otherwise.

Two other anticipated factors did *not* emerge as expected when we analyzed the individual response data (highlights in grey in the table below) and one *unexpected* grouping was found (Literacy Success). These remaining three factors are featured in the following table.

Table 3.4.1.2 - Unanticipated and unconfirmed SURAM factor clusters

Factor	Questions
Literacy Success	Can you read and write your language very well?
	If someone asked you how to get their own copy of the Scriptures (print, digital, or audio), would you know how to help them?
Acceptable Orthography	Is the written form of your language easy to use?
	X - Do you like how your language looks in its written form? ³²

³² The two factors in the table feature questions in gray cells that did *not* group together with the non-grayed question as expected. In both cases, their relationships with the factor were too weak to justify their inclusion. This is not to say that *naturalness* is not important in translation or that orthography *aesthetics* are unimportant. The analysis simply did not find that people viewed 1) translation faithfulness and naturalness, and 2) orthographic functionality and aesthetics as fitting together under the headings of translation quality and acceptable orthography respectively.

Translation Quality	Do your mother tongue Scriptures faithfully communicate God’s Word in your language?
	X - Is the style of language used in your mother tongue Scriptures very natural and easy to understand?

The literacy success factor merits further comment. We had wondered whether the literacy ability question (the first in the table) might group together with the two orthography questions (the two questions next to “Acceptable Orthography”). The factor grouping that fit the data set did *not* put these together. Rather, it grouped the question about being able to help others get copies of the Scriptures with literacy ability. Conceptually, these two may seem like an odd fit, but perhaps the fit can be explained by *the connection* that is created between individual members of a community and their literature center when they learn to read and write their language. The literature center and its staff (which includes literacy teachers in villages) are best suited to inform people about how, when, and where to get their hands on vernacular Scriptures. An individual’s participation in a literacy class connects them to the people and place of their literature center, which in turn enables them to more confidently and competently help another person to access all that the center has to offer, including vernacular Scriptures. In other words, when a literature center oversees an extensive literacy program (Hypothesis 9), it produces people who can promote the center’s programs and publications (Hypothesis 4) *on top of* producing people who can read and write.

3.4.2 Multiple Regression Analysis

The individual data set was sizable enough to warrant doing an analysis that compared all of the questions that concerned the hypotheses with all of the questions that measured vernacular Scripture ownership, use and impact (a Multiple Regression Analysis).³³

The results of this analysis produced many readings that were statistically significant. In fact, just over half of the comparisons (51.7%) of the relationships passed the significance test.³⁴ That said, the vast majority of the relationships that were observed were quite “flat”, meaning that a higher score for one question corresponded with almost no change in the comparison question. As such, here we will discuss only those pairings that exhibited a

³³ This analysis was conducted with R 4.4.0 with coding being provided with the help of ChatGPT 4o. As with the factor analysis, the code that was used and R outputs are in [Appendix E](#). While readings for all of the dependent variables in our study were included in the analysis, our discussion here will focus on ownership, personal and congregational use, and the four impact measurements that were attributed to this use (v4, v5, v10, v12, v14, v16, and v18 in the readout) since these are the outcomes that are the most salient to our study.

³⁴ Significance was determined by a P-value that was lower than 0.05.

change of at least 0.100 in the dependent variable when the independent variable increased by 1.

To illustrate, consider the relationship between the responses to our question about whether respondents can read and write their mother tongue very well (question 3) and whether they own their own copy of the Scriptures in their language in whatever format (question 4). This was the strongest relationship in this analysis at an estimate of 0.467. This means that, on average, when a person scored their literacy ability at one value higher on our five point scale, they scored their ownership of vernacular Scripture higher by almost half a point. This is a significant relationship.

None of the other relationships in our study exceeded an estimate of .200. See table 3.4.2 below for a summary of these other relationships.

Table 3.4.2 - Multiple Regression Analysis estimates exceeding 0.100 (Individual Surveys)

Scripture ownership	Personal use
Literacy ability (question 3) 0.467	Faithful translation (q7) 0.133
Can help others get Scripture (q6) 0.195	Can help others get Scripture (q6) 0.127
Congregational use	Natural translation (q8) 0.120
No strong relationships observed	Literacy ability (q3) 0.120
	Spiritual freedom (q26) 0.114
Growth in faith	More community harmony
Natural translation (q8) 0.175	Natural translation (q8) 0.177
Moral translators (q19) 0.139	Faster community development
Greater church involvement	Natural translation (q8) 0.197
Natural translation (q8) 0.160	Moral translators (q19) 0.184
Moral translators (q19) 0.121	Moral leaders (q20) -0.123 ³⁵

A few of the questions appear repeatedly on the table and should be highlighted. When people rate the *naturalness* of their translated Scriptures favorably, they are more

³⁵ This relationship between the perceived pace of development and the appraised morality of those on the ICC or translation project committee is inverse. This does not suggest that it is a good thing to have people lacking integrity on such committees. Rather, it suggests that Scripture impact does not hinge on their morality and that impacts can be felt even when the project leaders are of suspect character.

likely to use it, to be personally edified by it, and to give a positive assessment of the impact of the Scriptures on their community. Similarly, when people appreciate the moral integrity of those who translate their Scriptures, they are more likely to be personally edified by those Scriptures, and they experience a faster pace of development in their community. Finally, the question about being able to help others get Scripture tracks positively with both ownership and personal use.

3.5 Summary of the analysis and key findings

Four main analyses were performed on the SURAM data. In [Section 3.1](#) and [3.2](#), we presented detailed breakdowns of vernacular Scripture ownership, use, and impact in the participating language communities. In [section 3.3](#), we proceeded to test the 17 hypotheses of SURAM Cameroon by analyzing the community-by-community comparison chart that condensed the data from all four of our survey databases. [Section 3.4](#) discussed analyses on the 5,984 entry individual database that explored and confirmed factors that are cohesive and relevant to our research questions. It also explored relationships between all of the independent and dependent variables in our individual survey.

From our analysis, we can identify a number of key findings:

1. Ownership and use of vernacular Scriptures is strong in Cameroon, with significant variation across the languages surveyed.

Over half of the individuals who participated in our survey (52.9%) said that they own a copy of the Scriptures and the preferred format is a printed book. Personal use (80.3%) and congregational use (79.7%) far outpace Scripture ownership. The rates of weekly Scripture use that were reported in the participating communities was robust and varied across many domains of use.

Beyond ownership and use, our research found that over half of respondents report positive impacts related to their use of vernacular Scriptures on individual, church group, congregational and community levels. These Scriptures are not only being bought and used by many individuals and churches, but are also making a substantial, tangible impact on the lives of those who engage with them.

In terms of Scripture ownership, use and impact across the 25 languages surveyed, we found significant variation, with seven languages consistently receiving high scores and seven consistently receiving lower scores, with the other eleven in the middle receiving a mix of good and average measurements.

Table 3.5 - Levels of vernacular Scripture ownership, use and impact across languages

Level of Vernacular Scripture ownership, use and impact	Languages
Consistently high measurements	Bum, Giziga, Hdi, Kwanja, Mbuko, Oku, Pere
Mix of good and average measurements	Gbaya, Fulfulde, Lamnso', Meroy, Meta', Musgu, Ngiemboon, Ngomba, Noone, Psikye, Yemba
Consistently lower measurements	Akoose, Kenyang, Makaa, Muyang, Nomaande, Nugunu, Yambetta

2. Bible translations in Cameroon are highly appreciated for their faithfulness, naturalness and ease of understanding.

In answer to the questions, “Do your mother tongue Scriptures faithfully communicate God’s Word in your language?” and “Is the style of language used in your mother tongue Scriptures very natural and easy to understand?”, most projects scored highly. This is a tribute to the dedicated work of the translation teams, reviewing committees, and consultants, as well as the effectiveness of their training and mentoring.

3. Literate people own and use the Scriptures more than those who do not read their language well, and they also can help other people find Scripture products.

Our research revealed a strong correlation between Scripture ownership and literacy ability in the local language. Those who rate themselves highly in being able to read the Scriptures are more likely to own and use them. They are also more likely to know how to help others find Scripture products in the local language.

While there is still a significant amount of personal and congregational Scripture use by those who do not read well - likely through listening to Scriptures being read, preached or sung - overall, **higher levels of literacy are associated with increased Scripture ownership and use.**

In terms of individual literacy levels, only 41% of respondents gave a positive assessment of their reading fluency, indicating that there is much to be done in promoting local language literacy.

4. Complex dialect situations present serious obstacles for Scripture engagement.

While two-thirds of surveyed contexts reported no significant dialect issues, eight languages were identified as having notable dialectal complexities. In all but one of

these cases, Scripture ownership, use, and impact were adversely affected, with notably low scores. These complexities present a significant obstacle to Scripture engagement.

5. Integrity matters in the translation team and inter-church committee.

We asked respondents, “Were those who translated your Scriptures people of integrity, responsibility, and role models in their character?” and “Were the people who served as leaders on the translation association or committee upstanding and responsible people of godly character?” For most communities the responses were either positive or “unsure”. Our analysis found that **where translators and committee members were respected, there was generally higher vernacular Scripture use**. Believers not only want to receive a quality Scripture product; they want to know that the people responsible are respected. They are interested in the messenger as well as the message. In two of the communities with the lowest morality scores, church growth was also low.

6. Ongoing efforts to promote and distribute the Scriptures lead to more personal and congregational use.

The levels of promotion and distribution of vernacular Scriptures varied considerably among the communities surveyed. Our research found that personal ownership and use of these Scriptures is generally higher in communities that make greater efforts to promote and distribute them - not only during the lifetime of the translation project, or the year of the dedication ceremony, but on an ongoing basis. A similar pattern was observed for congregational use, where intentional promotion of Scripture correlated with its use in communal worship and church activities.

7. Community ownership of the translation programme, evidenced by prayer, giving and volunteering, makes a difference.

In the individual questionnaires, we asked, “Have you prayed regularly for the project?”, “Have you donated your personal funds and possessions for the advancement of the project?”, “Have you volunteered your time and skills to advance the project?”. We found that **those who prayed, gave and volunteered were more likely to own a copy of the Scriptures**. Positive responses to these questions clustered together in our analysis, indicating that these three activities (praying, giving, volunteering) are a good way of encouraging community ownership of the translation programme.

8. Scripture-based songs, oral Bible storytelling and listening to audio Scriptures are widespread.

Most communities reported using Scripture-based songs and oral Bible storytelling in their ongoing vernacular Scripture use, demonstrating that these are contextually appropriate methods in communities across Cameroon. Surprisingly, a few church leaders were unaware of the existence of audio Scripture recordings in the local language.

9. Youth groups are using vernacular Scriptures significantly less than other groups in church, and language vitality is lower among those under 20 years of age.

Most congregational groups (70.3%) reported using vernacular Scriptures regularly in their meetings, with the exception of youth groups, of whom only 32.3% reported such use. Youth groups accounted for over a third of the groups in our study, but they were involved in Scripture promotion efforts less frequently than men's and women's groups and they were much less likely to have someone in their group who was responsible for Scripture promotion.

The research revealed that although overall language proficiency is high, the youngest respondents reported lower mastery and less frequent use of their mother tongue compared to older age groups. Notably, 8% of those under 20 rated their language skills negatively—more than twice the rate of respondents in their 20s—suggesting that language erosion and shift may be accelerating.³⁶

10. There is a lack of awareness, ownership and use of digital Scriptures.

Although Scriptures are available in digital format for most of the languages surveyed (such as in the YouVersion Bible App and in standalone Scripture apps), there is **very little ownership or use reported**. This is due to a combination of factors: lack of awareness that these products exist, lack of smartphone use in rural areas, lack of internet access, and meager efforts in promoting digital formats.

4. Recommendations

The SURAM research has given us a much clearer picture of Vernacular Scripture Use in communities across Cameroon, revealing what helps and hinders people from engaging with God's Word. In response to our findings, we propose the following recommendations to facilitate the impact of the Scriptures on individuals, churches, and communities.

³⁶ See [Section 3.3.2.2](#) on shifting or shifted multilingualism.

The recommendations are especially directed towards Bible translation organisations, local translation teams and committees, as well as resource partners.

1. Strengthen partnerships with church denominations and theological institutions, inspiring and equipping pastors in their use of local language Scriptures.

Examining the realities of Scripture use in communities several years after a translation project reminds us that **sustained Bible engagement largely depends on the churches in each area, particularly their leadership**. The attitudes and priorities of church leaders regarding the use of local language Scriptures significantly influence what happens when the Bible agency reduces its involvement and external funding ceases.

To address this, Bible agencies should prioritize **deepening relationships with major church denominations** before, during, and after the term of the project. This could take the form of formal partnership agreements, such as Memoranda of Understanding, regular communication of news for prayer, and active involvement of church leaders in advisory and governing boards. It is vital to recognize the transformative impact that local language Scripture use can have on church growth and community life. Assigning pastors to churches based on their ability to speak and read the local language can play a key role in facilitating this engagement.

Church denominations can set the tone when it comes to promoting regular use of local language Scriptures in church services. During our survey, one church pastor noted, “When I preach in the mother tongue, I do not preach with power, but when I preach in the English language I feel fulfilled.” This highlights the need for Bible agencies to **develop ongoing partnerships with theological institutions** to train pastors intentionally in the value of communities hearing the word of God in their mother tongue and the potential impact it can have. Such partnerships could explore the development and use of resources that clergy can use in sermon and worship preparation and planning.

There is also a need for the **training of existing church leaders**, encouraging them in their use of the vernacular Scriptures.³⁷ This training could include literacy classes tailored especially for church leaders. Such initiatives greatly benefit churches by equipping pastors to read the local language translation in church services, and it also sets a positive example for the congregation.³⁸

³⁷ The manual “Translating the Bible into Action” by Margaret Hill and Harriet Hill contains practical training modules for church leaders on a range of topics.

³⁸ In her article, “How literacy can harm Scripture Use”, Margaret Hill argues that it is most effective when local language literacy programmes begin by training the educated, influential people in society - including church leaders. When this happens it is easier to arouse motivation among those who cannot read at all. <https://scripture-engagement.org/content/how-literacy-can-harm-scripture-use/>

In addition, it is essential **not to overlook the smaller church denominations**. Our observations indicate that they are often less involved in using local language Scriptures compared to major denominations. Strengthening partnerships with these groups can ensure broader and more consistent Scripture engagement across all church communities.

2. Encourage people to pray, give and volunteer in the work of translation and Scripture engagement in their language, promoting community ownership.

Community mobilization is already a key element in translation programs in Cameroon, and our research findings reaffirm its importance. Taking time away from the translation office to connect directly with churches, foster unity among church leaders, engage in participatory discussions, and inspire local believers to actively support the work is a vital investment. Clearly communicating the translation program's vision and **encouraging communities to take ownership through prayer, giving, and volunteering** can strengthen long-term commitment and enhance the program's sustainability. Such efforts should include individuals, church groups, and congregations.

To support these efforts, sufficient time, personnel and financial resources should be allocated in program plans and budgets. While mobilization is certainly necessary during the initial phase of a project, it should not be limited to this period. *Keeping* members of the community informed and actively involved throughout the translation program fosters a sense of shared purpose and can result in lasting impact.

Healthy community ownership involves people from all walks of life: men and women, young and old, leaders and richer people in society as well as those with fewer material resources. Effective communication is vital, and we should consider how best to reach everyone, rather than a small subset of the community. This could be through announcements in church services, local radio, social media, church conferences, and whatever communication channels the community uses to keep people in touch. We want to ensure everyone feels a part of the work.

3. Consecrate sufficient time and resources to dialect research with wide community involvement, and ensure that the communities agree on the choices made.

Since complex dialect situations influence the use of local language Scriptures, we need to take seriously the research required to find solutions that respond effectively to the needs of local communities before launching a translation project. This will require Bible translation agencies to **investment in sociolinguistic survey**, taking time to meet with diverse groups from across each language area, employing participatory

methods,³⁹ testing translations with representatives from multiple dialects, and facilitating decision-making by church leaders. The local communities should be included as widely as possible in this process.

Bible translation agencies must **resist the temptation to make dialect choices quickly without sufficient research and community engagement**. In such contexts, resource partners should recognize the need for more investment in sociolinguistic research and extensive community testing of translations, appreciating that language programmes with complex dialect issues may require additional time in the initial phases of translation and in the development of Scripture engagement materials compared to contexts without such complexities.

Similarly, where dialectal differences are significant, we recommend **investing time in verifying the orthography for other dialects**. When and where these other dialects have phonological patterns that are different from the reference dialect, we must work with the speakers of that dialect to establish their own orthography and literacy materials.

4. Emphasize the recruitment of people of integrity in both translation teams and Inter-Church committees.

When identifying those who will play key roles as translators or committee members, it is important to find people who are respected in their communities and who live lives of moral integrity. Bible translation agencies and community church leaders should be **looking not only for technical competency but for calling and character**, for those who have a vision for the work and who promote unity rather than division. This decision-making will require prayerful reflection, seeking God's direction,⁴⁰ and should involve a representative cross-section of each community. Bible agencies should meet together with a broad collection of church leaders and local traditional leaders, explaining clear criteria for each role.

This is important at the recruitment stage, and also throughout the life of the translation programme: Bible agencies should look for ways of encouraging each translator in their spiritual growth, and ensure they are participating fully and serving in the life of their local church.

³⁹ For ideas on participatory approaches, see Cahill, Davison, Stirtz (eds.), *Participatory Linguistics: Methods and Case Studies from Around the World*. <https://www.sil.org/resources/archives/99113>

⁴⁰ "Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account." (Hebrews 4:13, NIV)

5. Ensure ongoing and sustainable distribution and promotion efforts well beyond the dedication.

It is vital for communities, supported by Bible translation agencies, to put in place an effective system for the promotion and distribution of the Scriptures during the lifetime of the translation programme. This needs to be a system that will continue beyond the date of the dedication ceremony, such that five, ten, fifteen years later, people know how to obtain copies of the Scriptures and can do so easily.

Distribution questions should be considered even before translation begins, and the role of the community explained clearly in any partnership agreement (MoU). It can be useful for translation teams to have a dedicated promoter working alongside them during the life of the project, encouraging the distribution of Scripture books as they are translated, but distribution responsibilities should not be exclusively in the hands of the translation team. If there is a promoter, he/she should spend time in facilitating the establishment of an effective community-based distribution system.⁴¹

It is important to spend time planning for the medium and long term. Such planning should **consider very practically how the New Testament and related materials will be marketed and made accessible for many years to come**, after financial support from the Bible translation agency and resource partners comes to an end. It would be helpful if such a system is already in operation well before the translation project is completed. In order to do this, we suggest learning from the experiences of those communities that are doing this well.

While some projects successfully maintain high levels of congregational Scripture use without continued external support, our findings indicate that ongoing engagement from partners - through prayer, counsel, and financial assistance - can significantly enhance Scripture use in the years following the dedication.⁴² Bible translation agencies and resource partners should consider **extending support beyond the dedication, helping local churches strengthen Scripture engagement strategies** until they become increasingly self-sustaining.

6. Involve women more in the promotion of local language Scripture engagement.

During our research, we observed that women's groups in particular are especially dynamic in using the Scriptures in their mother tongue. Bible translation agencies

⁴¹ In the conclusions from the SURAM research in Papua New Guinea, they recognised that certain assumptions needed to be reassessed. The first was related to distribution: "Translation agencies can focus exclusively on a quality product (the NT), since the local church will take responsibility for distribution and use after the dedication." (p.16). This points to the reality that Bible agencies cannot simply say that distribution and promotion is the responsibility of the church and then forget about it. There is a need for training, coaching, facilitating, and putting effort into developing an effective system with the churches that works well in each context.

⁴² See [section 3.3.1.3.](#)

and inter-church committees need to take more notice of this and **involve women more in mobilization efforts** at all stages of the project. Women have a great capacity for mobilization in their communities. They are an essential link to the younger generation, being the ones who spend more time with the children. They can encourage their families in informal literacy, and promote the use of the Scriptures among the younger generation.

7. Invest in sustainable literacy programs, especially among those who can already read in English or French.

Given that our research affirmed the value of literacy in the local language for Scripture ownership and use, we recommend that **literacy activities continue to be prioritized and supported** as an integral part of what it takes to run a successful translation program during all of its stages.

Since communities cannot rely on external funding for years after the Scripture dedication, it is important to find ways of **establishing literacy programs that are sustainable beyond the life of the project**. Without this, we will see the following generations less literate in the local language than the ones before them.⁴³

41% of survey respondents rated their literacy ability highly in their local language. This is to be compared with a published adult literacy rate of 78% for Cameroon.⁴⁴ We do not know how many of the 59% who did not rate their literacy ability highly are able to read well in English or French, but it is likely that there is room for an **emphasis on transition literacy**.⁴⁵

8. Engage young people more in owning, reading, using and promoting the local language Scriptures.

Project plans need to take into account the youth, given that the median age of the population in Cameroon is 17.9 years old.⁴⁶ While young people are engaging with vernacular Scriptures in congregational settings, their use of these Scriptures in youth groups remains significantly lower.

⁴³ In Cameroon, many ethnic groups have succeeded at introducing multilingual education (MLE) in the schools in the area where their language is prevalent. This measure, when successful, is a great way to promote sustainable literacy. As an added benefit, it has also been shown to produce better academic results for the students who participate in these mother tongue programs. Bible Translation agencies would do well to consult with the governments in their countries about this possibility so that they can potentially help and advise local language leaders on how to secure mother tongue schooling for their children. For more information see the “Multilingual Education” page at https://cameroon.sil.org/language_development/literacy_education/multilingual_education

⁴⁴ <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SE.ADT.LITR.ZS/?locations=CM>

⁴⁵ See Trudell, Barbara. “Making readers literate: Transition literacy in Sub-Saharan Africa” <https://www.sil.org/resources/publications/entry/5573>

⁴⁶ <https://www.worldometers.info/demographics/cameroon-demographics/#median-age>

To address this, consider strategies to encourage greater engagement with the Bible in their mother tongue while the project is ongoing as well as in the years after dedication. One approach could involve organizing **Scripture engagement workshops specifically tailored for youth groups**. These workshops could help young people discover the value of their language in understanding God’s Word, deepening their prayer life, and sharing the gospel with others. Participants can also be guided to appreciate how studying the Bible in multiple languages enriches their understanding and offers a deeper appreciation of spiritual truths. We need to avoid giving the impression that the Bible in the local language is only for the older generation, the less literate and for those who have had less education in school.

Since many young people are learning to read in English or French at school, there should be an emphasis on **transition literacy**, helping them transfer these reading skills to their mother tongue. To some, there can be the impression that such literacy is of little value since it does not help them to pass formal exams, but it is important for them to see the usefulness of being literate in their own language beyond obtaining school certificates. Additionally, they can be encouraged to obtain their own copy of the Scriptures, fostering personal ownership and deeper connection with the Word of God.

Our observations in a few communities also underscore the importance of **preparing high quality vernacular Scripture materials for children in Sunday Schools**. In contexts where children are learning the local language at home, and where this language would be the most understandable in Sunday School,⁴⁷ we recommend that local churches, literature centres and Bible agencies work together to develop Sunday school materials that will help children grow in faith and obedience.⁴⁸

9. Increase awareness of audio, audiovisual and digital Scripture resources.

It was striking to observe the lack of awareness of non-print Scripture products in many of the communities we surveyed. In some cases this included limited familiarity with the audio Scriptures, and even less awareness of digital resources such as smartphone apps and websites. To address this, Bible agencies and local committees must find more effective ways to **promote what is available**, and to **actively involve**

⁴⁷ This will require churches researching the languages that the children in their Sunday School know best. In urban areas, and where children are not learning the local language well at home, it is possible that the children would be best served by materials in a language of wider communication. Such questions could be raised within the community in language development planning discussions (such as “A Guide for Planning the Future of Our Language”, <https://www.sil.org/guide-planning-future-our-language>) and in assessments of multilingualism (“Multilingualism Assessment Tool”, <https://sites.google.com/sil.org/mat>).

⁴⁸ An example of Sunday School materials which have been developed in Cameroon and used effectively in different languages is “Lessons from Luke” by Chris and Karen Jackson. <https://scripture-engagement.org/content/lessons-from-luke/>

local communities in their production while translation work is ongoing and in the years after dedication.

Publishing an app or website is not sufficient if much of the intended audience does not know it is there. Promotion and marketing could be done via social media, such as WhatsApp groups and Facebook pages. This could include creating locally produced publicity videos, and advertising spots on local radio to generate interest, awareness and community interaction.

This kind of promotion often benefits from the involvement of the younger generation who are more familiar with social media and digital communications. It can be a way of getting the youth engaged in meaningful ways. Seeing their mother tongue on their phone and creating local media in their language demonstrates to them that their local language has value in the digital age.⁴⁹

10. Keep learning and improving.

Bible translation agencies need to instill a culture of learning and development. We need to continue to ask questions, put into practice what we are learning, and improve our practices and strategies.

While compiling our research findings, we identified several areas that require further investigation, including:

- a. **Learn more from the translation programs we surveyed:** It would be helpful to return to the three communities that recorded the highest VSU scores to develop case studies that probe the stories of their translation projects. We want to see if there are aspects of these projects that were not addressed by the hypotheses and survey questions. We could do the same for the three projects that had the lowest VSU scores to determine if there are additional aspects to avoid.
- b. **Vernacular Scripture Use in urban areas:** much of our research took place in rural communities, and so we recognize the need to investigate more what is happening in the larger towns, and the extent to which people continue to use their local language Scriptures when they move away from their home area.
- c. **Use of the Scriptures among children:** Although 42% of Cameroonians are under the age of 15, they do not figure sufficiently in our research. It would be helpful to survey VSU in children's Sunday Schools. This would include researching which languages are being used for the Bible in different age groups and the kinds of materials being used.

⁴⁹ See chapter 3, "Media Strategies for Social Change" in Ernst, Andreas. 2023. *Translating the Bible into Media*.

Conclusion

The aim of SURAM Cameroon was to understand to what extent the Scriptures translated into local languages are being used in Cameroon, and to what extent these Scriptures are having an impact on churches and communities. Overall, the results of the research give encouraging answers to these questions, revealing relatively high levels of Scripture ownership, individual and congregational use, church and community impact.

Our analysis of seventeen hypotheses, together with observations recorded during the survey, highlight key factors that helped and hindered ownership, use and impact. It is clear that there are strategies that make a difference from the very start of a translation programme, such as encouraging local involvement, making careful dialect choices together with the community, and recruiting respected translators and committee members. There are also factors that make a positive difference during and after the translation project, such as church leaders encouraging the use of the translation, facilitating local language literacy, as well as ongoing distribution and promotion.

This report presents ten recommendations, based on the survey results. We encourage Bible translation agencies — alongside church partners, inter-church committees, resource partners and translation teams — to carefully consider the report's findings and implement the recommendations wherever possible in both new and existing translation initiatives.

The research revealed a significant area of concern which needs to be investigated further: young people are less likely than other church groups to use the local language Scriptures in their meetings, and language vitality among the under 20s is lower than in other age groups. Given that much of the SURAM Cameroon research was conducted in rural areas, it is likely that these findings would be even more pronounced in urban settings. With half of the population in Cameroon under approximately 18 years of age, this is an issue that needs focussed attention, both in Scripture engagement activities for children and youth, and also in participative research among this demographic.

The whole SURAM team gives praise to God for his protection on our travels throughout the country, for the openness of everyone who has taken part in the surveys, for the testimonies of changed lives we have recorded and for the strong support we have received from churches and partner organizations. May we continue to learn from each other, and may the Lord guide us in applying these findings for his glory.

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Appendix A - Survey Tools

1 - Individual Survey Tool

Language: ____ Sex: M / F Age: _____ Number of inhabitants: ____

Christian Denomination: _____

1. "Do you speak your mother tongue more often than other languages?"

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

2. "Do you understand and speak your mother tongue very well?"

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

3. "Can you read and write your language very well?"

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

4. "Do you have a copy of the Scriptures in your native language (printed, digital, or audio)."
If so, please precise the format.

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

5. "Do you read or listen to Scripture in your native language at least a few times a week?"

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

6. "If someone asked you how to get their own copy of your Scriptures (printed, digital, or audio), would you know how to help him/her?"

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

7. "Do the Scriptures of your mother tongue faithfully communicate the Word of God in your language"?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

8. "Is the style of language used in your mother tongue Scriptures very natural and easy to understand?"

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

9. "In any language, do you read or listen to the Scriptures at least a few times a week?"

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

10. "Do your congregation leaders organize services, ministries, or events that use the Scriptures (audio or print) in your native language at least a few times a month."

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

11. "Did the literacy and translation work in your language community help you grow in your faith?"

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

12. (If they answered 4 or 5 to the previous question, ask) "Was it because of your use of the Scriptures in your own language that you grew in your faith?"

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

13. "Did the literacy and translation work in your language community help you become more involved in your church?"

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

14. (If they answered 4 or 5 to the previous question, ask) "Was it because of your use of the Scriptures in your own language that you got more involved?"

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

15. "Did the literacy and translation work in your language community help your family and your community enjoy greater harmony?"

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

16. (If they answered 4 or 5 to the previous question, ask) "Was it because of your use of the Scriptures in your own language that you have more harmony?"

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

17. "Did the literacy and translation work in your language community help your community develop faster?"

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

18. (If they answered 4 or 5 to the previous question, ask) "Was it because of your use of the Scriptures in your own language that your community developed faster?"

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

19. "Were those who translated your Scriptures people of integrity, responsibility, and role models in their character?"

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

20. "Were the people who served as leaders of the association or translation committee people of integrity, responsibility and role models in their character?"

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

21. "Have you prayed regularly for the project?"

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

22. "Have you donated your personal funds and possessions for the advancement of the project?"

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

23. "Have you volunteered your time and skills to advance the project?"

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

24. "Is the written form of your language easy to use?"

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

25. "Is the written form of your language pleasing to your eye?"

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

26. "Are all people who speak your language free to become Christians if they wish?"

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

27. "Does the way Christians live in your community promote obedience to the word of God?"

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

28. Are you aware of a few contexts (habits, meetings, events) in which you know that people regularly use the Scriptures in your native language? Please list some.

29. Other than the printed form of the Bible, are you aware of other formats in which you know that people regularly use the Scriptures in your native language? Please list some.

2 - Survey Tool for Community Groups

Language: ____ Focus group: Men / Women / Youth City/Town: ____

Christian Denomination: ____

1. Did the literacy and translation work in your language community help improve the spiritual life of your group?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

2. Did the literacy and translation work in your language community help your group to grow?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

3. (If they answered 4 or 5 to one of the previous two questions, ask) Was it because of your group's use of the Scriptures in your own language that these changes happened?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

4. Has your group been involved in promoting the use of the Scriptures in your community

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

5. Over the past few years, have multiple members of your group helped other [name of language] speakers to obtain their own copies of your Scriptures (printed, digital, or audio)?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

6. Does your group have members who are responsible for encouraging people to buy and use the Scriptures in [name of language]?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

7. Did your group pray regularly for the project to translate the Holy Scriptures into the [name of language] language?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

8. Did your group raise funds and/or property for the advancement of the project?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

9. Did your group offer volunteer service to the [name of language] project managers for the advancement of the project?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

10. Has this group developed strategies to encourage [name of language] children and youth to use Scripture in their language?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

11. Has your group developed habits and strategies for using the [name of language] Scriptures in your regular activities?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

12. Has this group requested that project managers and their [name of language] teams prepare specific Biblically-based products and materials for your group to use?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

13. Has your group organized a literacy course in [name of language] for your members?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

14. Do members of your group compose and sing Bible songs in [name of language] for use during your meetings and activities?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

15. Do some of your members exhort others or pray in [name of language] during meetings and activities?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

16. During meditation times in meetings and activities, is it common for [name of language] members to read the Scriptures (privately or publicly) in their language?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

17. Does your group have many people who do not speak or understand [name of language]?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

18. (If they answered 4 or 5 to the previous question, ask) Does the multilingual composition of your group discourage you from using the [name of language] Scriptures in your meetings and activities?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

3 - Survey Tool for Ecclesiastical Leaders of Linguistic Communities

Language: ____ Percentage of faithful __ Christian denomination: ____

(1) Did the literacy and translation work in your language community result in a noticeable increase in the number of [name of language] Christians?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

(2) (If they answered 4 or 5 to the previous question, ask): Was it because of your church's use of the Scriptures in your own language that this growth occurred?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

(3) Did the literacy and translation work in your language community result in more churches being planted in the [name of language] area?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

(4) (If they answered 4 or 5 to one of the previous two questions, ask): Was it because of your church's use of the Scriptures in your own language that these churches were planted?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

(5) Did the literacy and translation work in your language community result in greater peace and harmony in the congregations of the [name of language] area?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

(6) (If they answered 4 or 5 to the previous question, ask): Was it because of your church's use of the Scriptures in your own language that this peace and harmony developed?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

(7) Did the literacy and translation work in your language community result in accelerated community development?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

(8) (If they answered 4 or 5 to the previous question, ask): Was it because of your church's use of the Scriptures in your own language that this development happened?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

(9) Do many, if not all, congregations in the [name of language] community publicly read their Scriptures in their local language at their Sunday services?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

(10) Does your denomination try to ensure that congregations in the [name of language] area are served by pastors/priests who speak the local language?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

(11) Does your denomination try to ensure that congregations in the [name of language] area are served by pastors/priests who can read and write the local language?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

(12) Does this denomination encourage sermons to be preached or interpreted in [name of language] in areas where that language is spoken by the majority of believers in the congregation?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

(13) Does your denomination encourage public prayers to be said in [name of language] in areas where that language is spoken by the majority of believers in the congregation?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

(14) Does your denomination encourage [name of language] believers to sing their Scripture-inspired songs at Sunday service?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

(15) Do the majority of congregations in the [name of language] area have a lot of people who do not speak or understand the language?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	Not	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

16) (If they answered 4 or 5 to the previous question, ask): Does the multilingual composition of these congregations discourage you from using [name of language] during Sunday services?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	Not	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

(17) Was the idea of translating/revising the dedicated Scriptures between 2007 and 2017 initially yours?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

(18) Did you mobilize [name of language] speakers and seek out partners to help translate/revise the Scriptures into your language?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

(19) Did you, as Christian leaders [name of language], play an active role in defining the parameters and scope of the project?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

(20) Did you, as [name of language] Christian leaders, play an active role in the selection of translators/revisers and project leaders?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

(21) Were the people who translated the Scriptures upright and responsible people who are good role models?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

(22) Were the persons who served as leaders of the association or the translation committee honest and responsible people who are good role models?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

(23) Did you make sure that the congregations in the [name of language] area prayed regularly for the work and staff of the project?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

(24) Did you mobilize congregations in the [name of language] area to raise funds and donations to help the project move forward?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

(25) Did you encourage the congregations in the [name of language] area to volunteer their services to the project when and where you identified a need?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

(26) Do the Holy Scriptures in your mother tongue faithfully communicate the Word of God in your language?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

(27) "Is the style of language used in your mother tongue Scriptures very natural and easy to understand?"

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

(28) Did you develop strategies to encourage [name of language] children and youth to use the Scriptures in their language?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	Not	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

(29) Did you request that project managers and their [name of language] teams prepare specific Biblically-based products and materials so that you can use them for ministry and evangelism?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

(30) Did you engage with [name of language] project leaders to develop plans and strategies to advance God's work in the local context?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

(31) Do you use oral Bible stories and songs based on the [name of language] Scriptures to improve your ministry and sensitizing efforts in your community?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

(32) Are you aware of and encourage the use of digital copies of Scripture in [name of language]?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

(33) Are you aware of and encourage the use of audio or audio-visual versions of [name of language] Scriptures?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

(34) Are all [name of language] speakers free to become Christians if they wish?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

(35) Does the way Christians live in your community promote obedience to the word of God?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

Are you aware of a few contexts (habits, meetings, events) in which you know that people regularly use the Scriptures in your native language? Please list some.

(36) Are you aware of a few contexts (habits, meetings, events) in which you know that people regularly use the Scriptures in your native language? Please list some.

4 - Project Staff Survey Tool

Language: _____

(1) After the last dedication, did your main project partner continue to communicate and pray for you?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

(2) After the last dedication, did your main project partner continue to offer technical assistance and advice to improve your literacy and Scripture engagement efforts?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

(3) After the last dedication, did your main project partner continue to subsidize your literacy and Scripture engagement efforts for at least a few years?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

(4) Did you play an essential role in defining the parameters and scope of the project?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

(5) Did you participate in the preparation of a translation brief that was to guide you in your work?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

(6) (If they answered 4 or 5 to the previous question, ask) Did you regularly refer to the translation brief as you progress through the project?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

(7) Did your main project partner *help* in your efforts to carry out the project more than taking the *lead* himself?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	Not	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

(8) Did your main project partner respond to and accept your requests and ideas concerning the project?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

(9) Did your consultant show humility and a servant attitude in your interactions with him/her rather than having a controlling or authoritarian posture?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

(10) Did your consultant seem to be just as concerned with the needs and expectations of your community as he/she was with the advancement and literary faithfulness of the translation/revision?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

(11) Did dialect issues pose almost no problems in this project?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

(12) Did you have a very solid and successful literacy program?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

(13) Have these literacy efforts enabled all kinds of [name of language] speakers to learn, to read and write - young and old, men and women, Christian or not, rich and poor?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

(14) Do you have a variety of basic documents that are well suited to a variety of literacy class types?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

(15) Did you engage with groups and leaders in your language community on ministry plans and strategies so that you could provide them with the materials and resources that they needed or requested?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

(16) Did you have anyone on your team, committee, or association who was specifically tasked with developing and implementing Scripture engagement strategies?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	Not	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

(17) Did you, from the earliest days of your translation/revision work, publish portions of the Scriptures for people to use?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

(18) (If they answered 4 or 5 to the previous question, ask) Did you or church leaders have strategies to use these pre-dedication publications?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

(19) Have you adapted your mother tongue Scriptures for digital formats (website, applications, etc.)?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

(20) (If they answered 4 or 5 to the previous question, ask) Did your church leaders have strategies for using these digital formats?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

(21) Did you adapt your mother-tongue Scriptures for audio or audiovisual formats?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

(22) (If they answered 4 or 5 to the previous question, ask) Did your church leaders have strategies for using these audio or audio-visual formats?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

(23) Did you adapt your mother tongue Scriptures for Oral Bible Storytelling or to compose new songs that use your cultural instruments and musical genres?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

(24) (If they answered 4 or 5 to the previous question, ask) Did you or the leaders of the church have strategies for using these adaptations?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

(25) Have you developed Scripture-based materials that are specifically designed to encourage children and youth to use them?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

(26) (If they answered 4 or 5 to the previous question, ask) Did you or church leaders have strategies for using these materials with children and youth?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	No	Uncertain	Yes	Of course

Appendix B - Questions for interviews

N.B: The questions in gray are for use with speakers who come from congregations that do not use the Scriptures in (name of language)

Level of use

What can you say about the level of Scripture use in your community? In terms of frequency? In terms of scope? In terms of the people involved (all age groups, social status, etc.)? Can you say that the level is low, medium or high?

What is the most used form of Scripture in your community? In what contexts?

Impact

How has the Scripture use in your language changed according to your observations? What are the transformations you have or can observe in people's lives at the individual and community level? Do you have concrete testimonies to share?

Factors/barriers

(If the use is high), what could have promoted all this?

(If the use is average) we can ask both questions while referring to the good and limiting things that the speaker mentioned.

(If usage is low), what do you think has kept people from using your Scriptures?

Appendix C - Community-by-community reports

The graphs on each of the pages in this appendix give Scripture ownership, use, and impact rates for each context.

Ownership

Own MT Scriptures - the percentage of people who responded in the affirmative when asked if they owned their own copy of the Scriptures in their mother tongue (print, video, or audio).

Use

Use weekly - the percentage of people who responded in the affirmative⁵⁰ when asked if they read or listen to the Scriptures in their mother tongue at least a few times per week.

Use any Scriptures wkly - the percentage of people who responded in the affirmative when asked if, in any language, they read or hear the Scriptures at least a few times per week.

Cong uses monthly - the percentage of people who responded in the affirmative when asked if their congregational leaders organize services, ministries or events where their mother tongue Scriptures (print or audio) are used at least a few times per month.

Impact

Deeper faith - the percentage of people who responded in the affirmative when asked if they had grown in their faith during the term of the translation and literacy project.

More church activity - the percentage of respondents who reported greater church involvement during the term of the project.

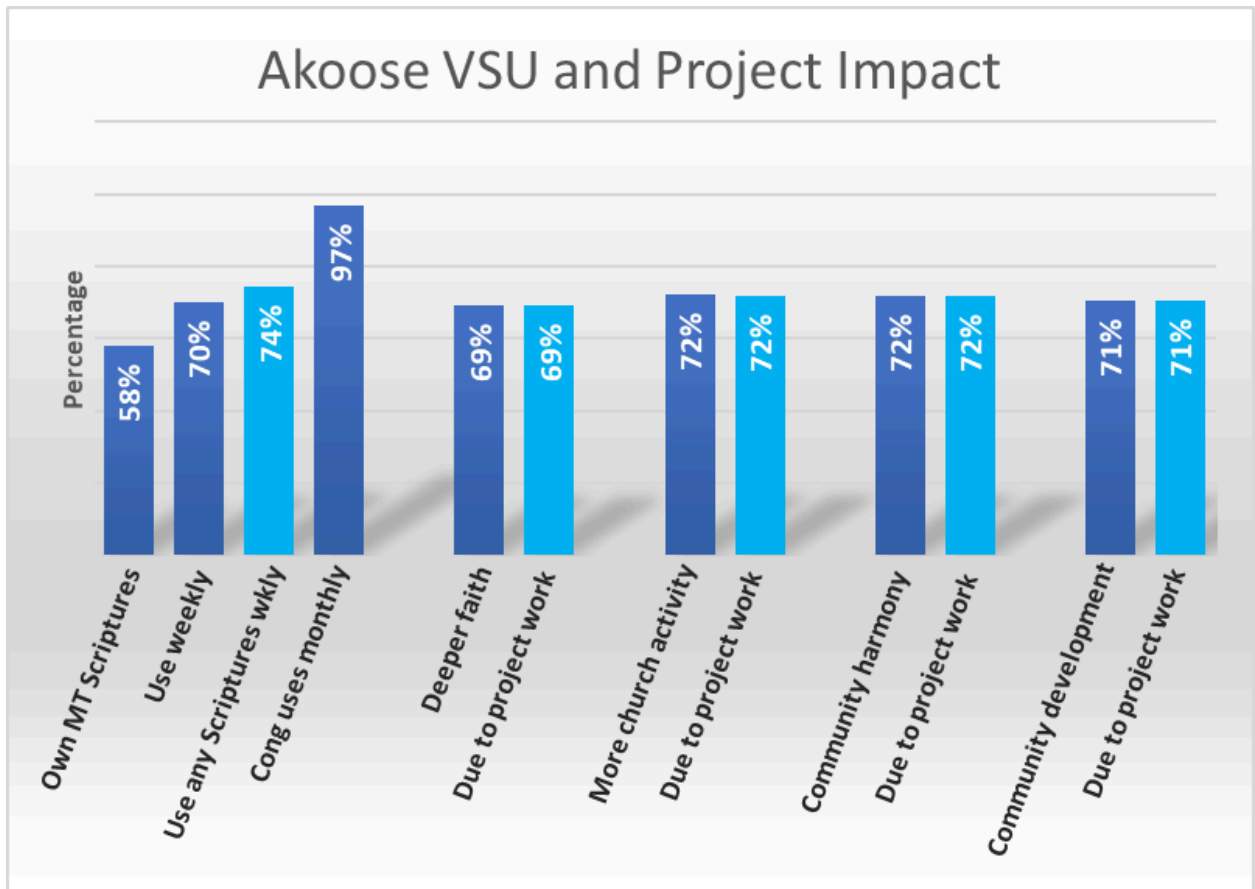
Community harmony - the percentage of respondents who noted an increase in community harmony during the term of the project.

Community development - the percentage of respondents who noted a faster pace of community development during the term of the project.

Due to project work - For each of the above, this indicates the percentage of people who *both* reported the impact *and* attributed the impact specifically to their use of mother tongue Scriptures (for the personal impacts) or to their community's use of the same (for the community impacts).

⁵⁰ Affirmative responses are the combination of all who responded with "yes" (or 4) and "of course" (or 5).

Akoose



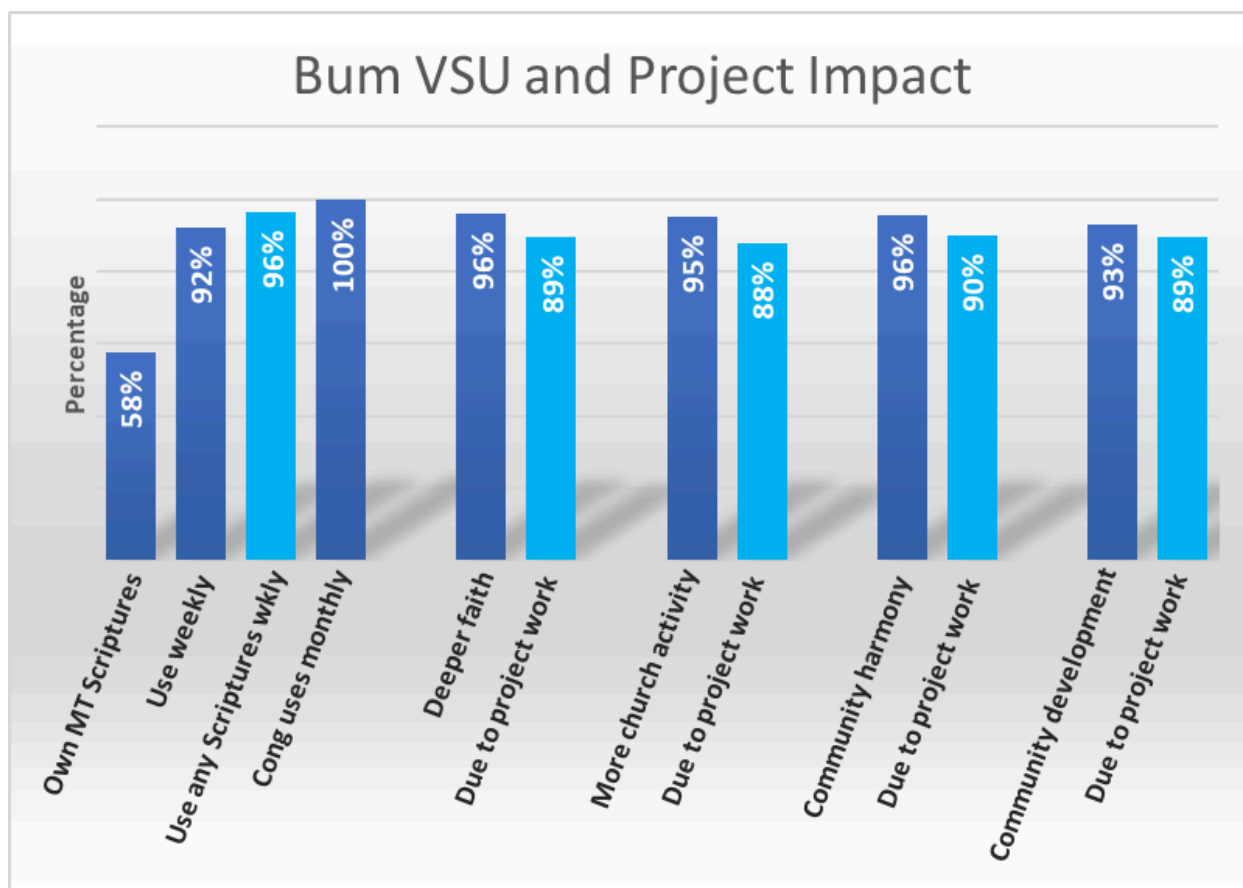
Domains of use

It appears that the surveyors did not understand what was being asked in the question about domains of use. They consistently responded with formats rather than domains in the majority of responses.

Formats of Scripture used in the community

1. 88/155 radio, Proclaimer – 56.77%
2. 77/155 video, projector, Jesus film – 49.67%

Bum



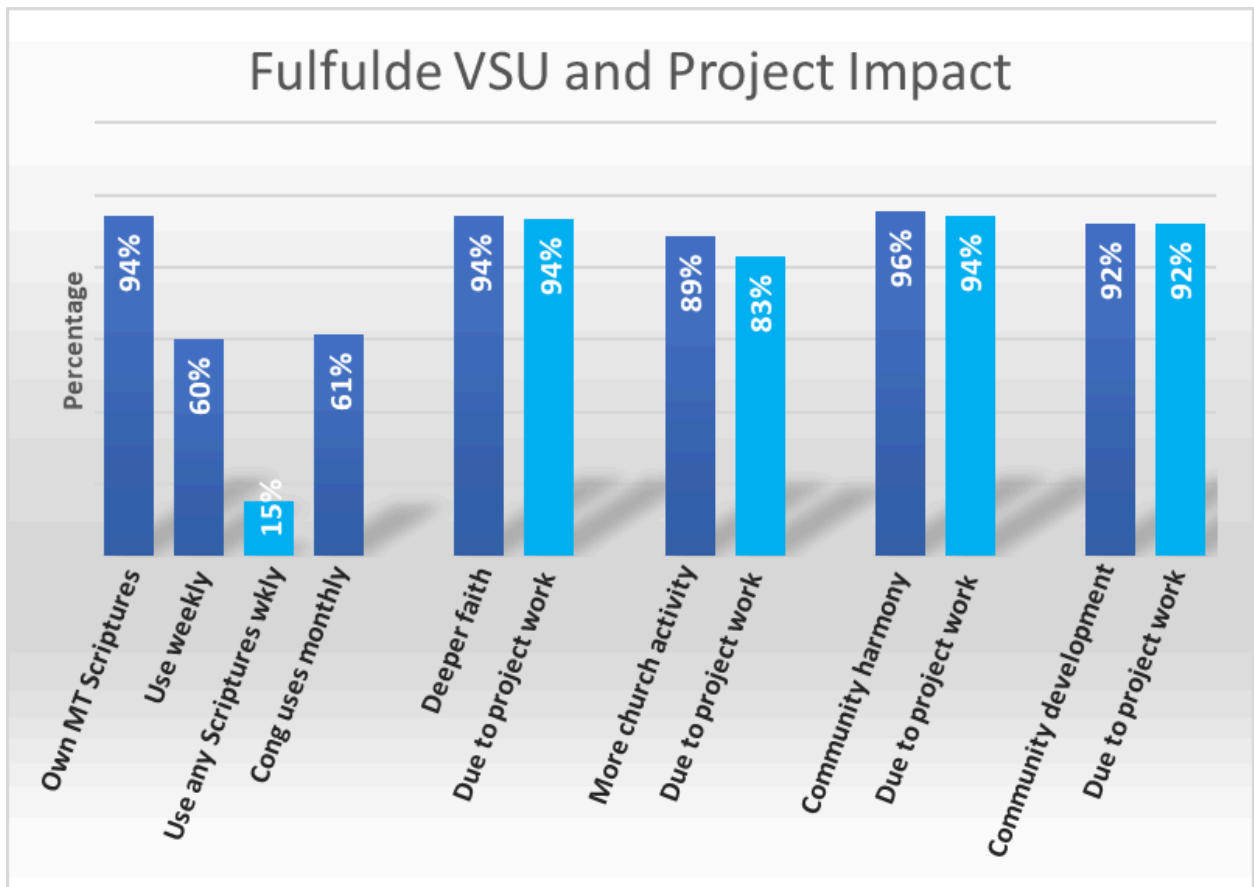
Domains of use of mother tongue Scripture

1. 198/240 Burials (122) ; Funerals (76),– 82.5%
2. 147/240 Marriage; wedding; traditional wedding– 61.25%
3. 54/240 Born house– 22.52%
4. 48/240 Graduation – 20%
5. 38/240 Birthdays – 15.8%

Formats of Scripture used in the community

1. 235/235 Audio, Proclaimer – 100%
2. 159/235 Video, Jesus Film – 67.66%
3. 54/235 Digital – 22.97%

Fulfulde



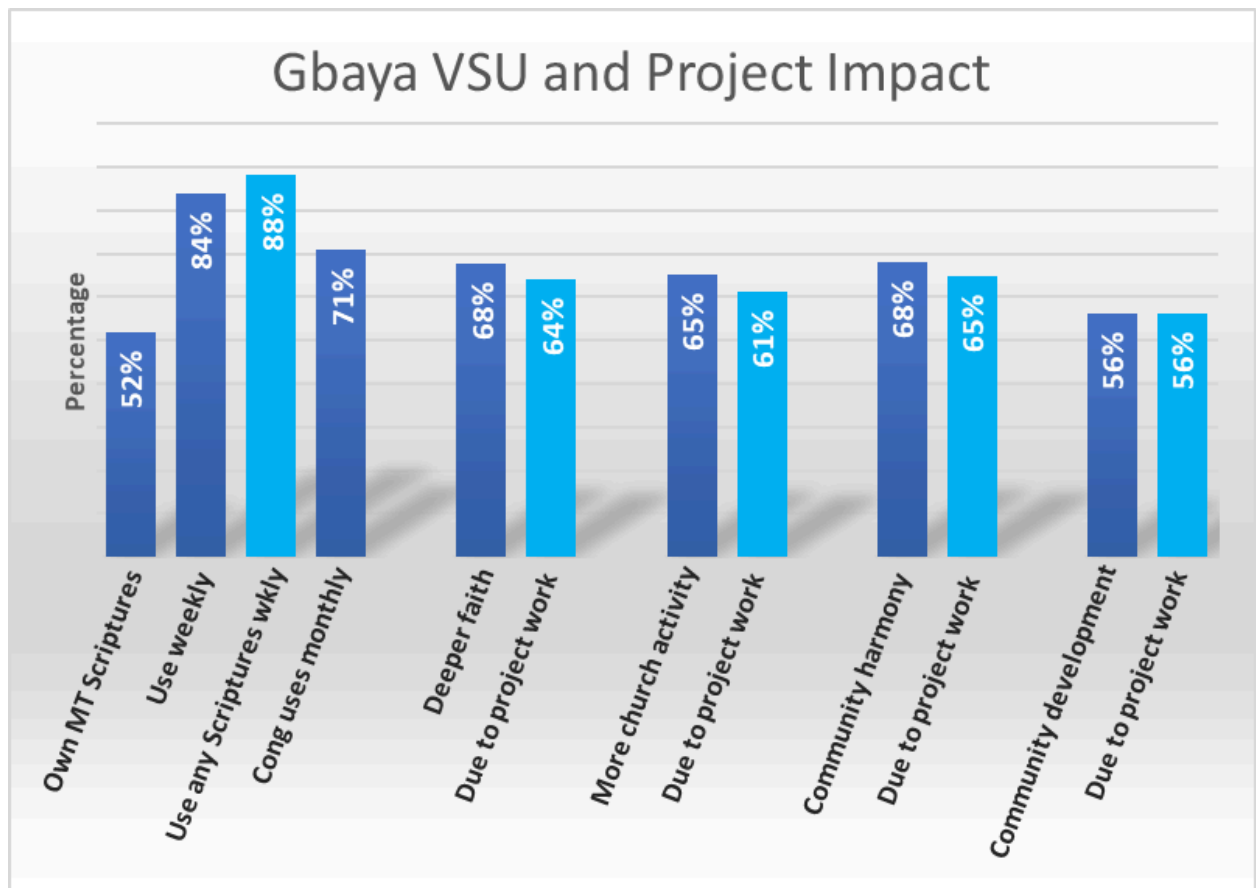
Domains of use of mother tongue Scripture

1. 24/76 Ceremonies – 31.58%
2. 22/76 Meetings – 28.95%
3. 19/76 Campaign/Evangelism– 25.00%
4. 16/76 Marriage – 21.05%

Formats of Scripture used in the community

1. 59/68 Audio – 86.76%
2. 10/68 Video – 14.71%
3. 4/68 Digital – 5.88%

Gbaya

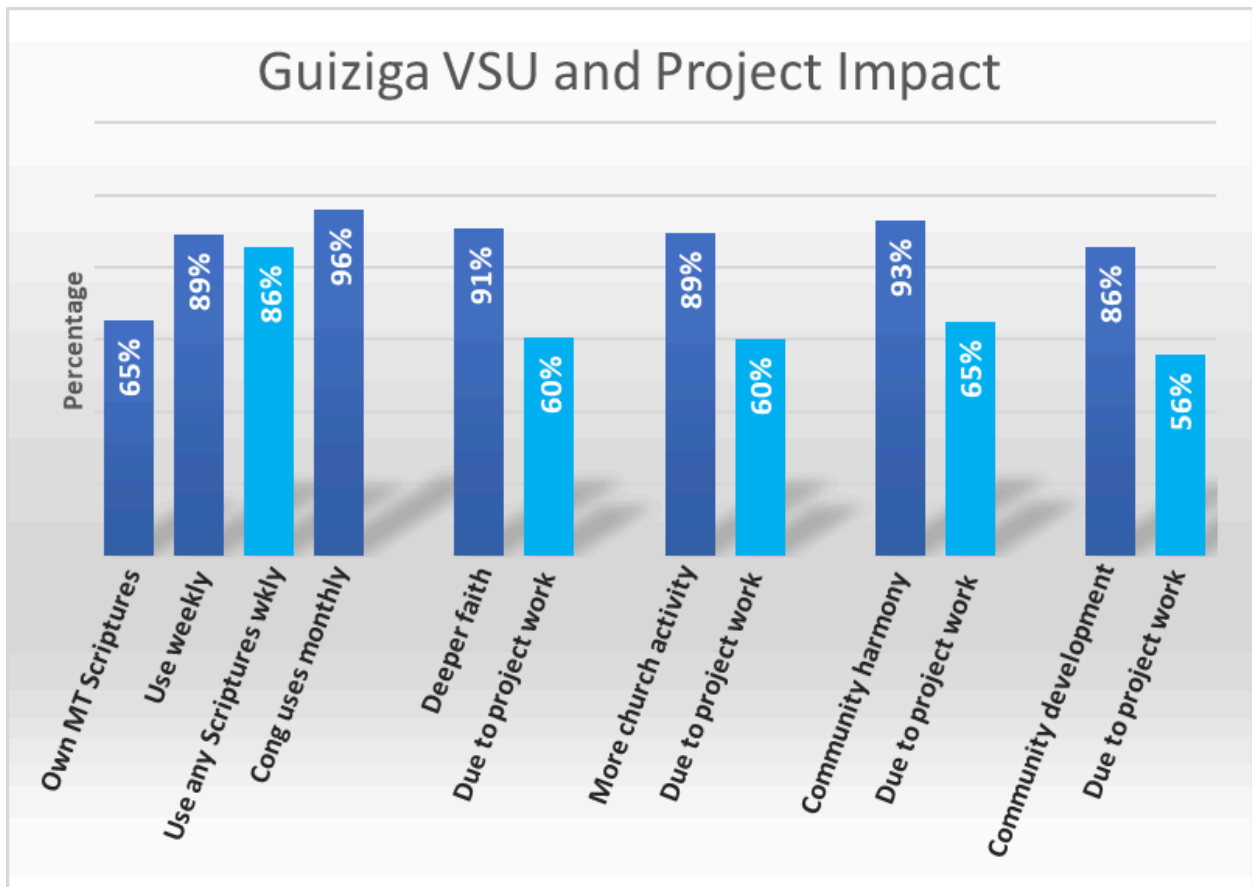


Domains of use of mother tongue Scripture

1. 163/247 church, worship, mass– 66.0%
2. 89/247 Wake, Funeral – 36.0%
3. 51/247 Prayer cell groups - 20.6%

Formats of Scripture used in the community

1. 120/236 Film/video – 50.8%
2. 103/236 Audio/radio/Memory card – 43.6%
3. 60/236 digital/app – 25.4%



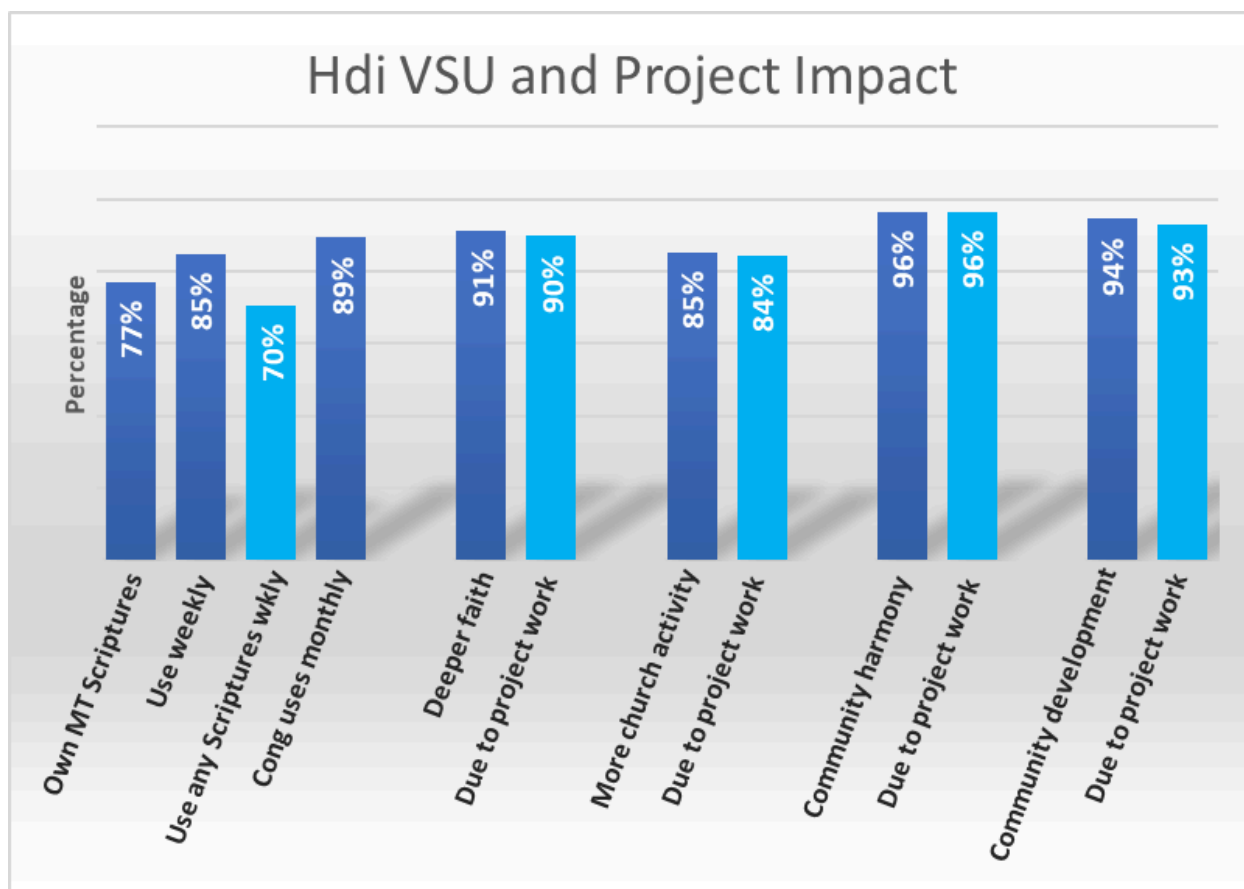
Domains of use of mother tongue Scripture

1. 78/257 Funerals – 30.35%
2. 66/257 Holidays/celebrations – 25.68%
3. 61/257 Bible camp, Youth camp – 23.74%
4. 61/257 Meetings – 23.74%
5. 29/257 Teaching/Bible Study– 11.28%

Formats of Scripture used in the community

1. 174/187 Audio – 93.05%
2. 143/187 Video – 76.47%
3. 6/187 Digital – 3.21%

Hdi



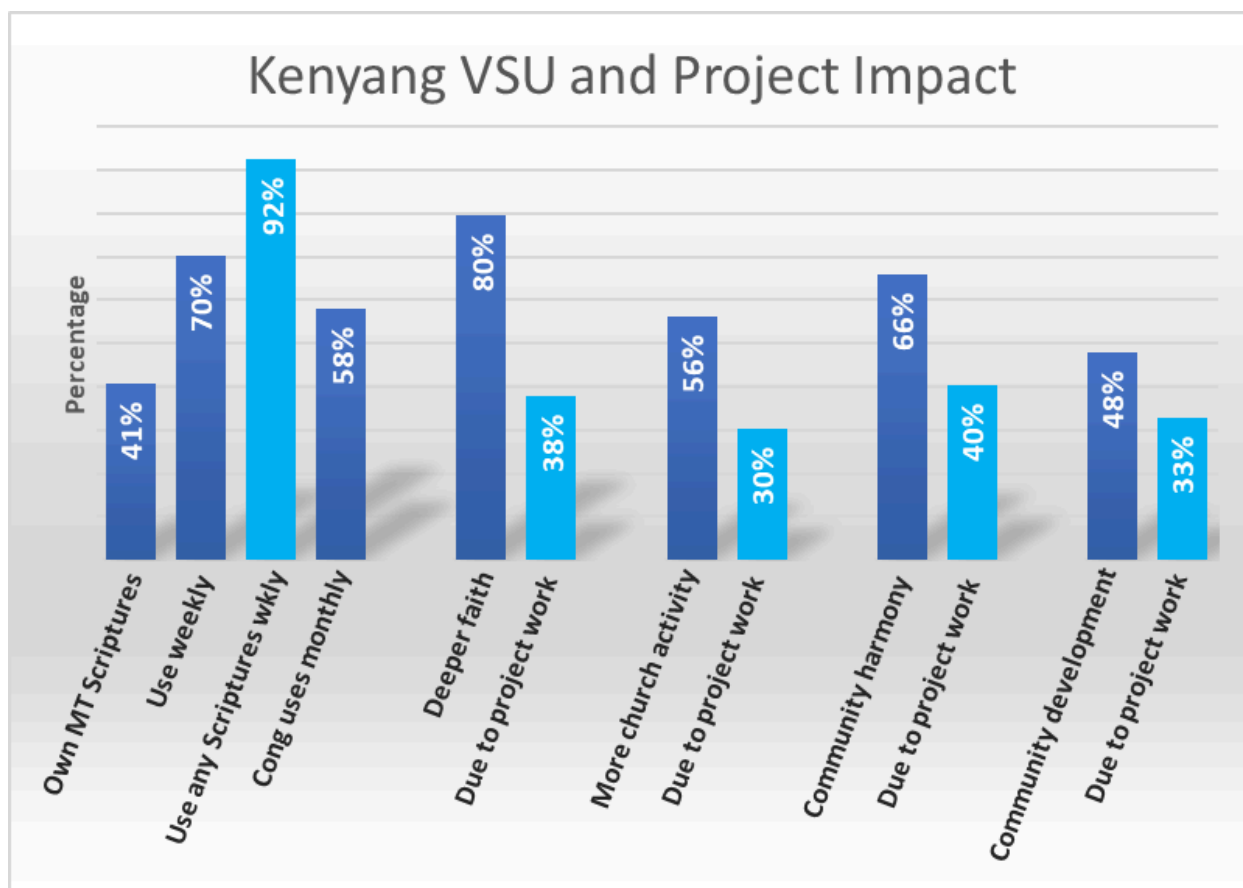
Domains of use of mother tongue Scripture

1. 201/253 worship – 79%
2. 84/253 prayer – 33%
3. 74/253 wake – 29%
4. 58/253 teaching – 23%
5. 33/253 marriages – 13%

Formats of Scripture used in the community

1. 118/253 Audio – 47%
2. 56/253 Video/Film – 22%
3. 34/253 Digital/Electronic – 13%

Kenyang



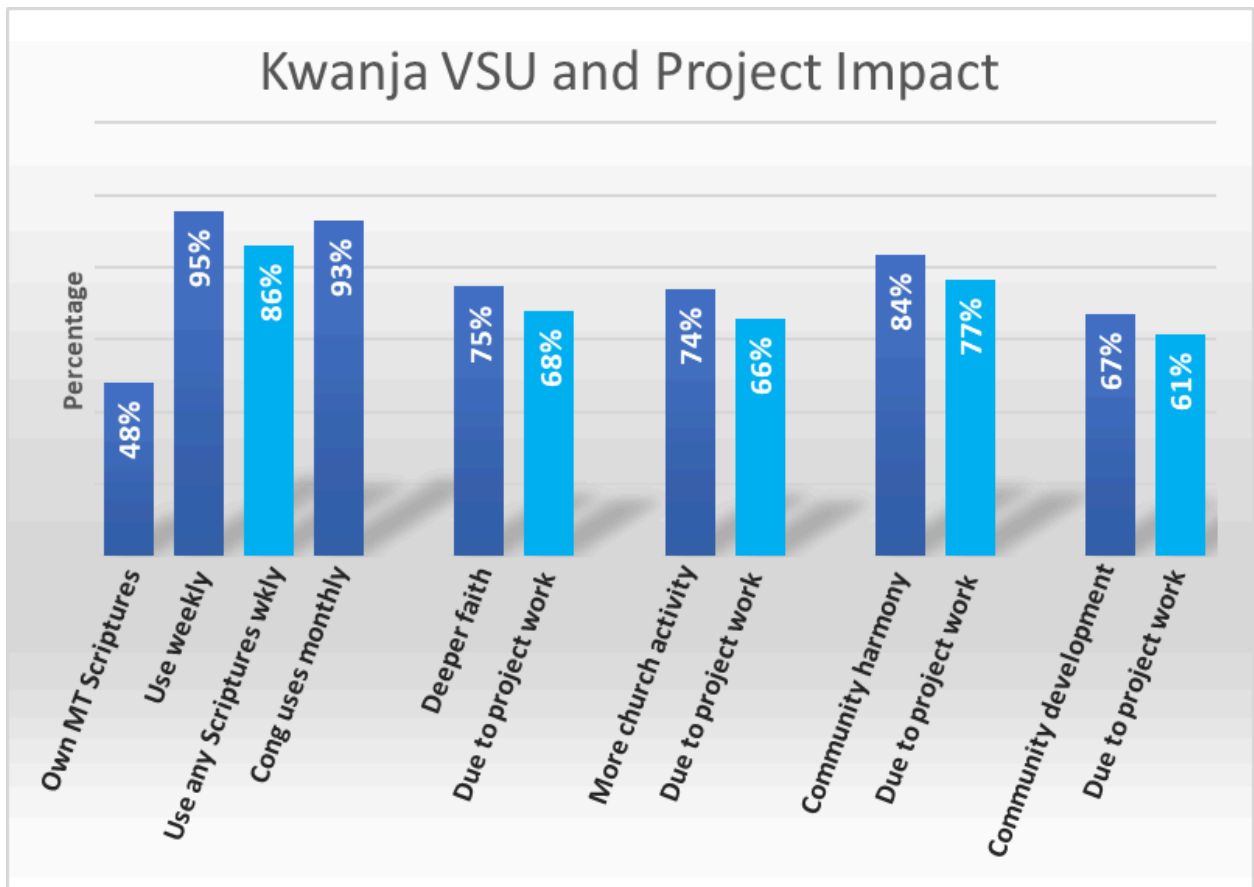
Domains of use of mother tongue Scripture

1. 109/194 Church (23) ; Sunday reading (35) ; Sunday Lesson (51) – 56.19%
2. 80/194 Song composition (52) ; Choir (20) ; singing (4); music (4) – 41.24%
3. 46/194 Meeting (35) ; Council (1) ; Come Together (10) – 23.71%
4. 26/194 Christmas – 13.40%

Formats of Scripture used in the community

1. 50/99 songs (26); music (24) – 50.51%
2. 47/99 Radio (20), audio (23), Proclaimer (3), Faith Comes by hearing (1) – 47.47%
3. 35/99 Video (14), Jesus Film (15), audio-visual (6) – 35.35%

Kwanja



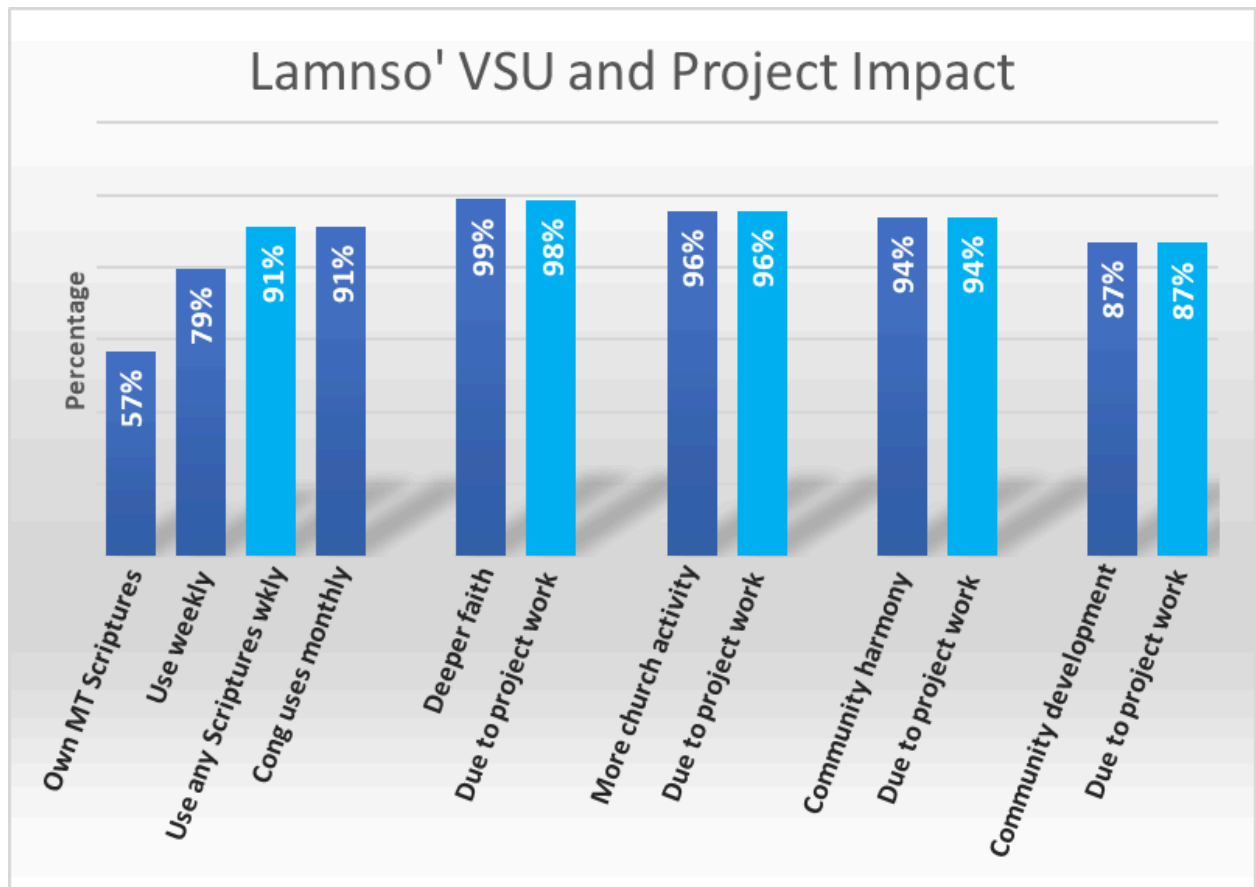
Domains of use of mother tongue Scripture

1. 59/145 Wake, funeral– 40.68%
2. 41/145 Worship, church – 28.27%

Formats of Scripture used in the community

1. 72 /115 audio, Proclaimer – 62.61%

Lamnso'



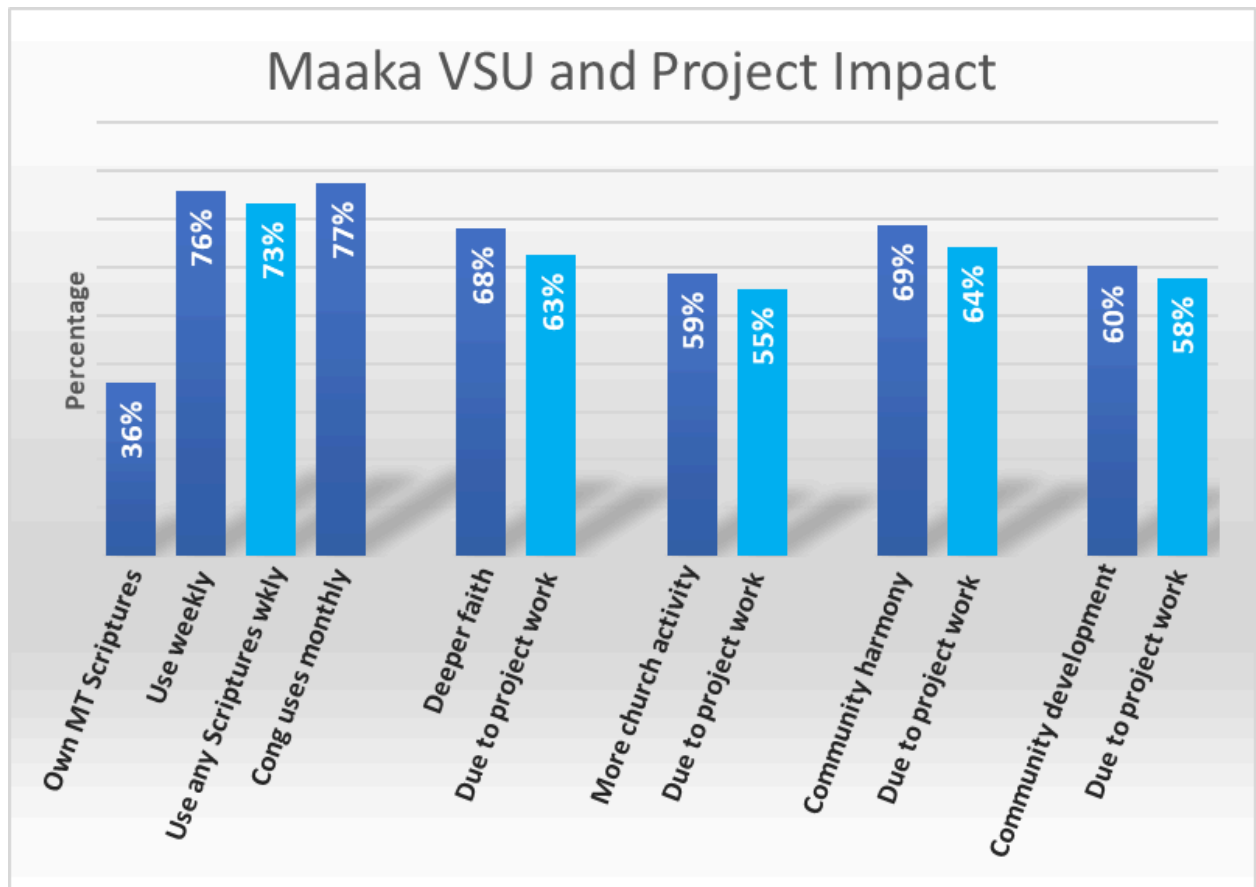
Domains of use of mother tongue Scripture

1. 51/203 Meetings – 25.12%
2. 45/203 Small Community groups, home cells, quarter group – 22.17%
3. 34/203 Funerals, death celebrations; burials, memorials, Condolence visits – 16.75%

Formats of Scripture used in the community

1. 45/69 Audio – 65.22%
2. 42/69 Digital – 60.87%
3. 37/69 Jesus film – 53.62%

Makaa



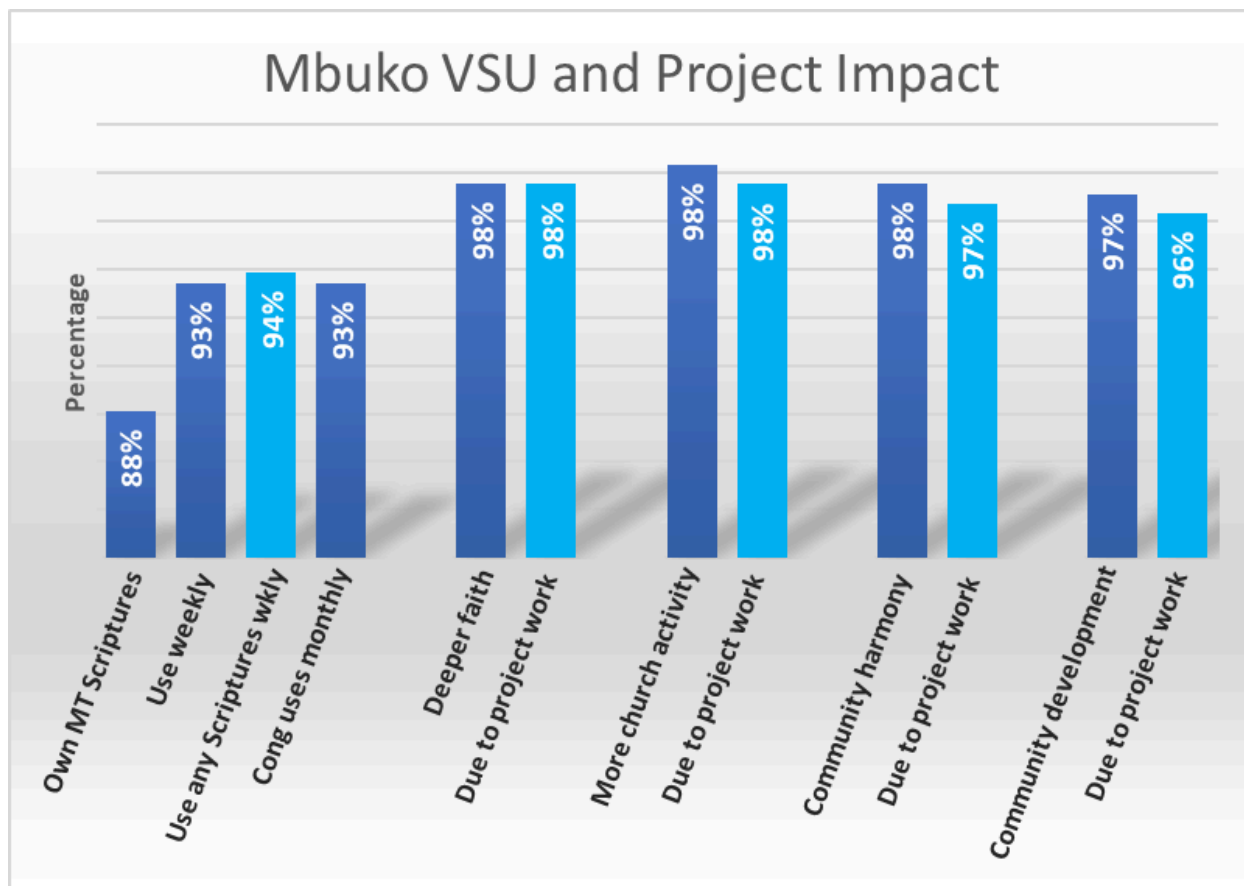
Domains of use of mother tongue Scripture

1. 68/106 Wakes – 64.2%
2. 49/106 Worship/church – 46.2%
3. 32/106 holidays – 30.2%
4. 31/106 marriages – 29.2%
5. 30/106 work groups – 28.3%

Formats of Scripture used in the community

1. 72/78 Proclaimers
2. 38/78 Jesus film
3. 19/78 radio

Mbuko



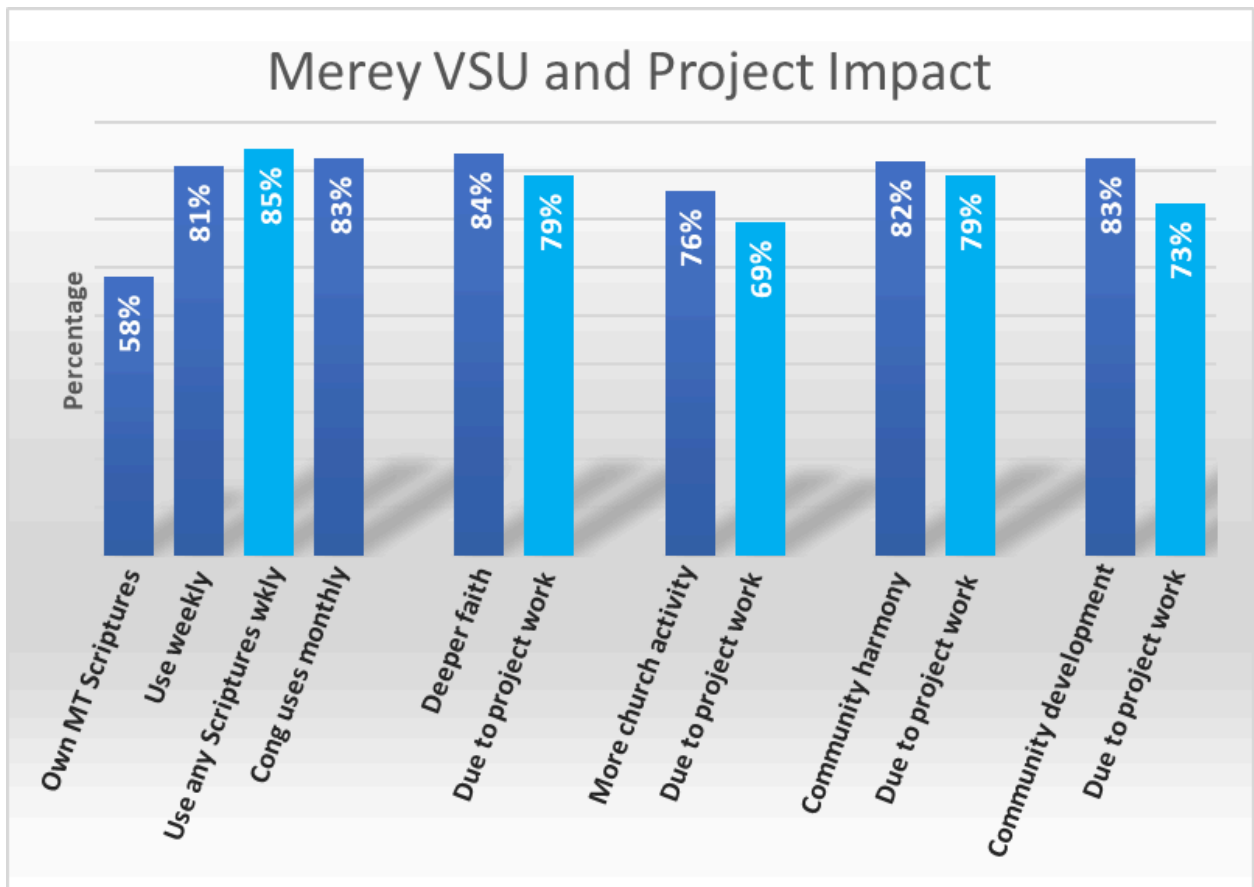
Domains of use of mother tongue Scripture

1. 104/228 Meetings– 46%
2. 52/228 Worship, church– 23%
3. 51/228 Funerals, wake – 23%
4. 38/228 Holidays– 17%
5. 33/228 marriages – 14%

Formats of Scripture used in the community

1. 104/118 Audio – 88%
2. 89/118 Film/video – 75%

Merrey



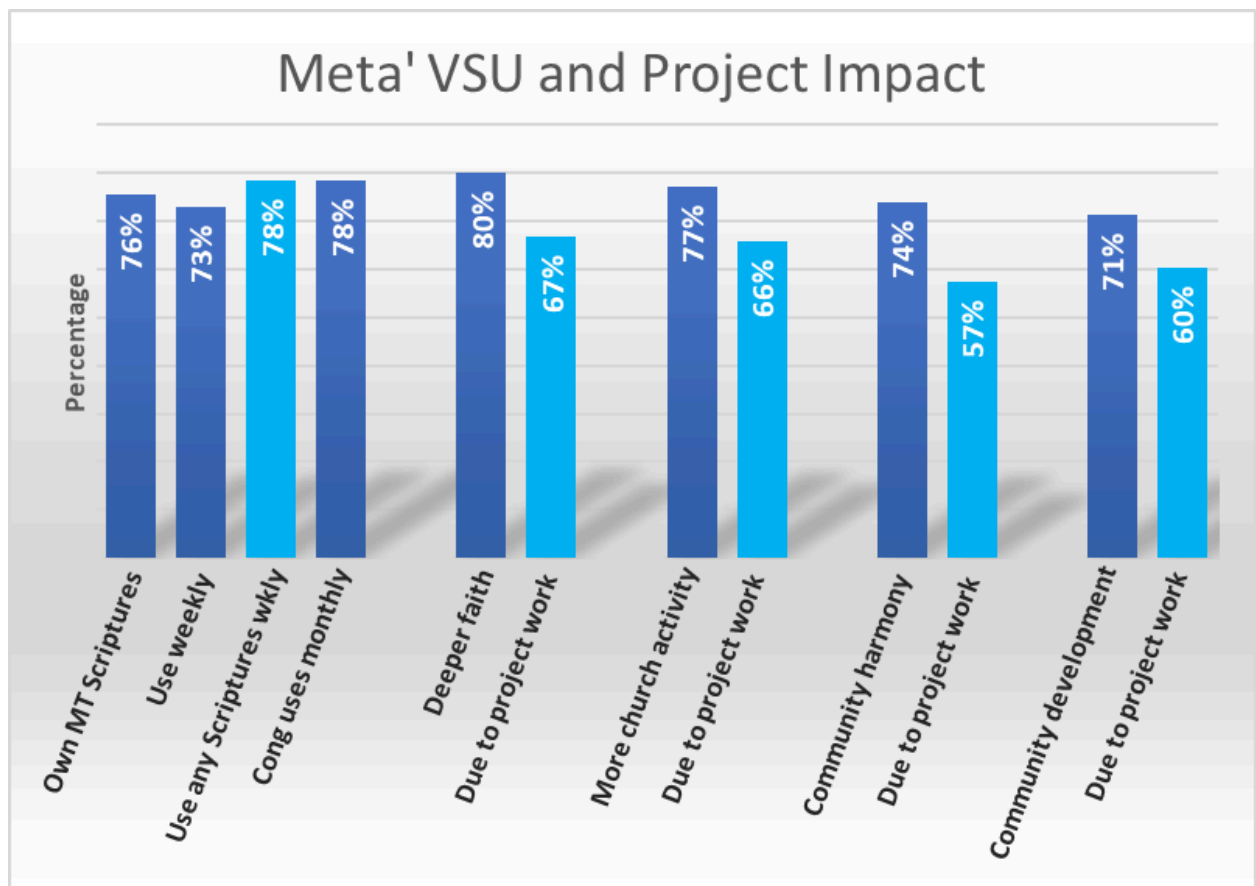
Domains of use of mother tongue Scripture

1. 67/178 Meetings – 37.64%
2. 59/178 Holidays – 33.15%
3. 49/178 Wake, funeral – 27.53%
4. 35/138 Teaching/Bible study – 25.36%

Formats of Scripture used in the community

1. 114/133 Audio – 85.71%
2. 70/133 Video – 52.63%
3. 5/133 Digital – 3.76%

Meta'



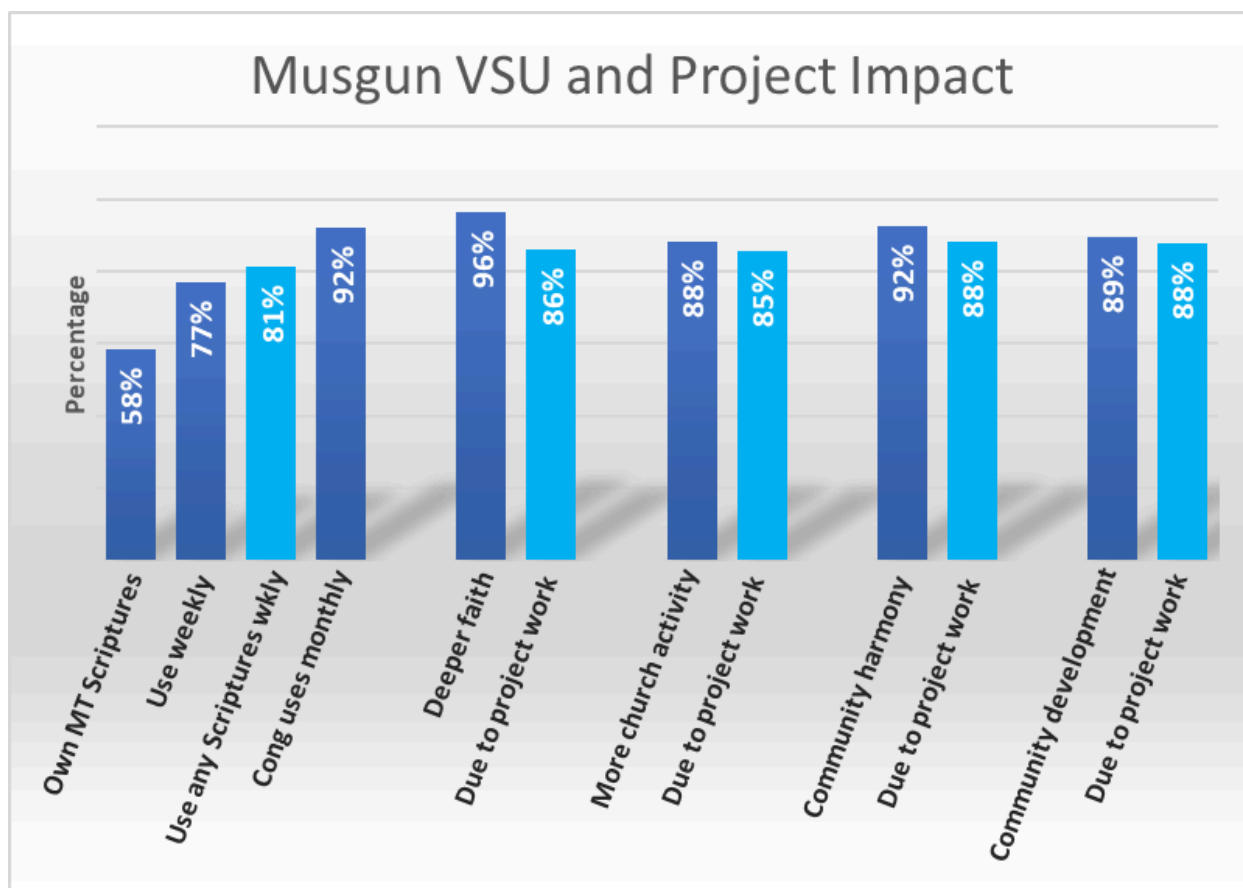
Domains of use of mother tongue Scripture

1. 94/138 Church – 68.12%
2. 20/138 Meeting (9) ; Gatherings (10) ; Djangi (1) – 14.49%
3. 16/138 Family or morning devotion (16) – 11.59%

Formats of Scripture used in the community

1. 82/91 Digital – 90.11%
2. 71/91 Video (70); Jesus film (1) – 78.02%
3. 57/91 Audio – 62.64%

Musgu



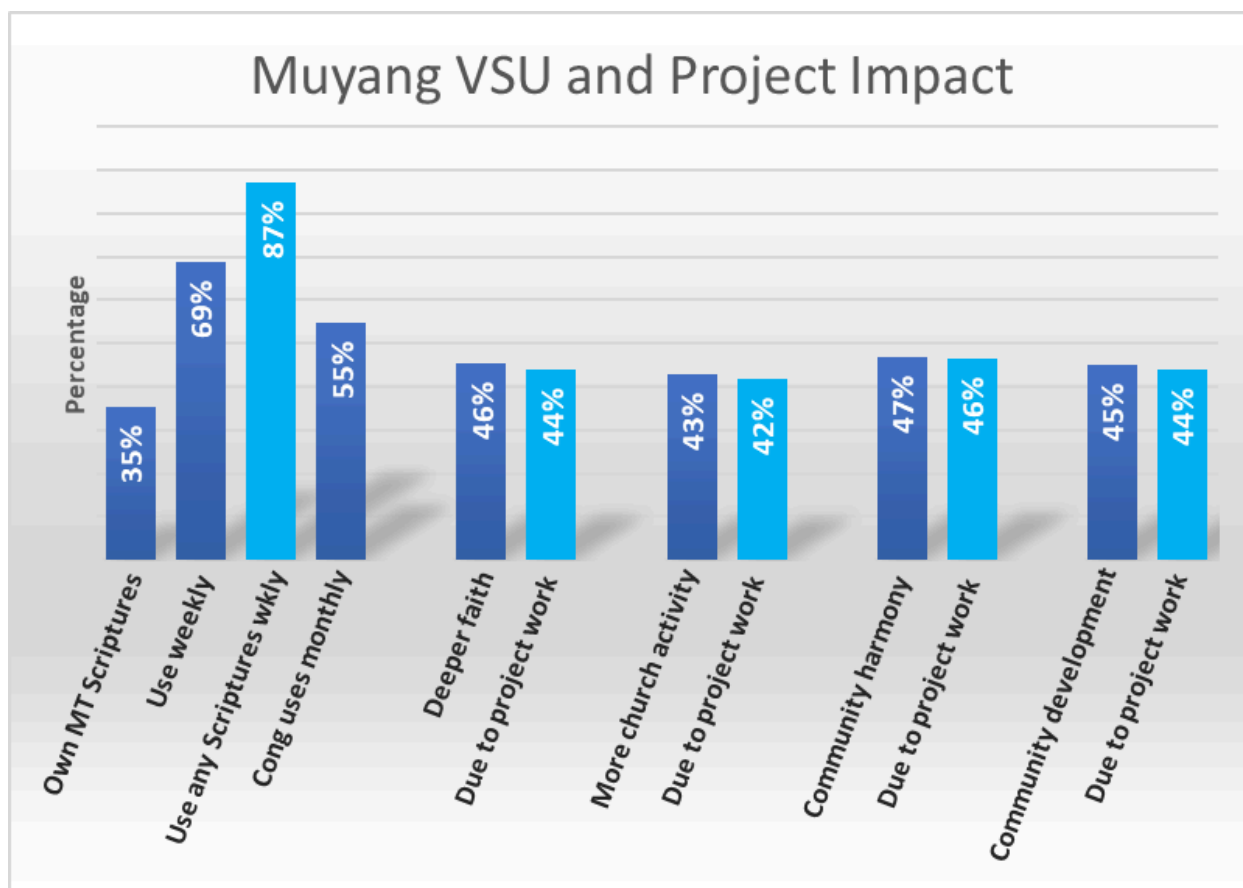
Domains of use of mother tongue Scripture

1. 69/271 Bible Study, Bible class, Teaching, Catechesis – 25.46%
2. 56/271 Bible Camp, Conference, Retreat, Seminar – 20.66%
3. 47/271 Prayer Cell group, Prayer day, Worship and prayer– 17.34%
4. 45/271 Death, Wake, Funeral service – 16.61%
5. 39/271 Marriage – 14.39%

Formats of Scripture used in the community

1. 38/79 Audio – 48.10%
2. 35/79 Video – 44.30%
3. 23/79 Digital – 29.11%

Muyang



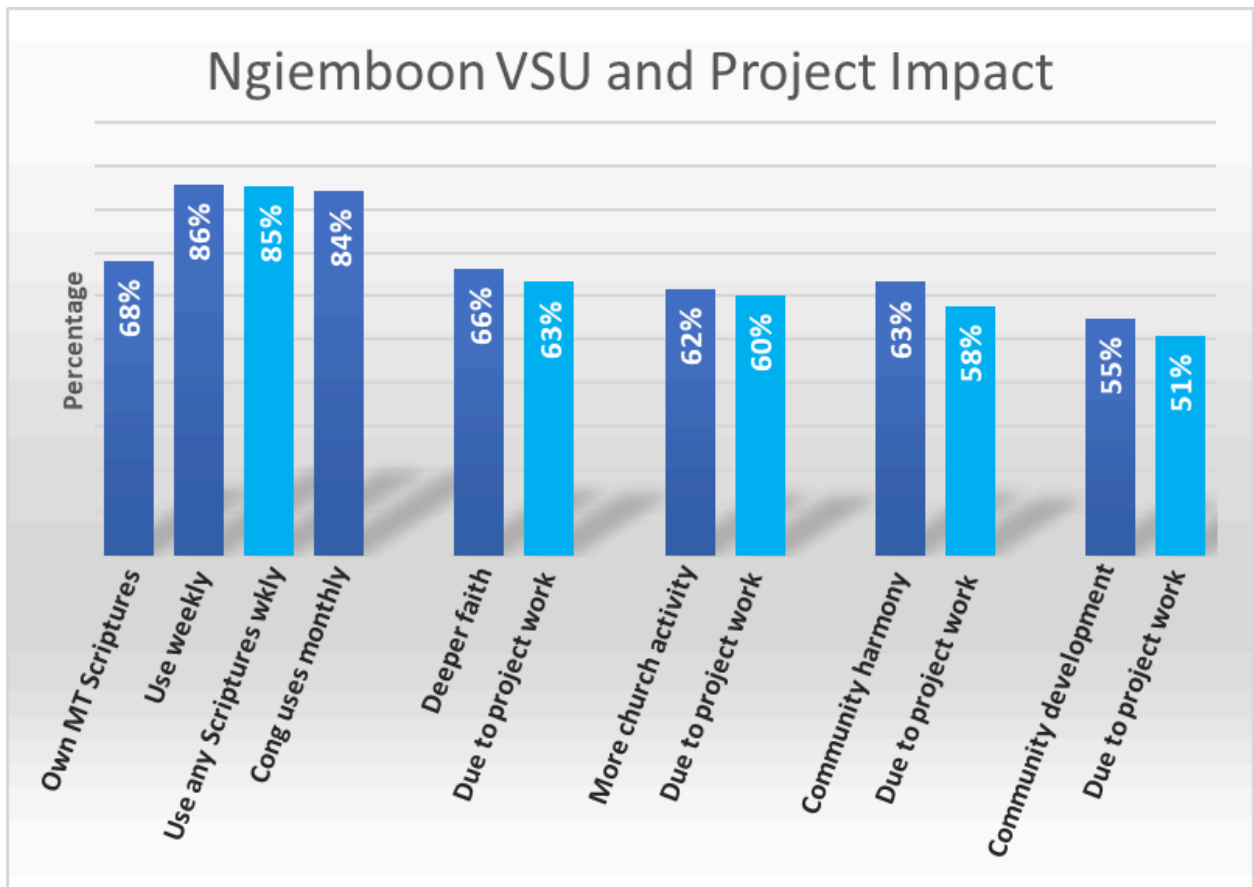
Domains of use of mother tongue Scripture

1. 190/256 Church, Worship, Mass – 74.22%
2. 104/256 Meetings, AGM – 40.63%
3. 95/256 Wake – 37.11%
4. 77/256 Holidays – 30.08%
5. 73/256 Funeral, Burial – 28.52%

Formats of Scripture used in the community

1. 249/255 Audio, Radio – 97.65%
2. 188/255 Video, Television – 73.73%
3. 104/255 Telephone, digital – 40.78%

Ngiemboon



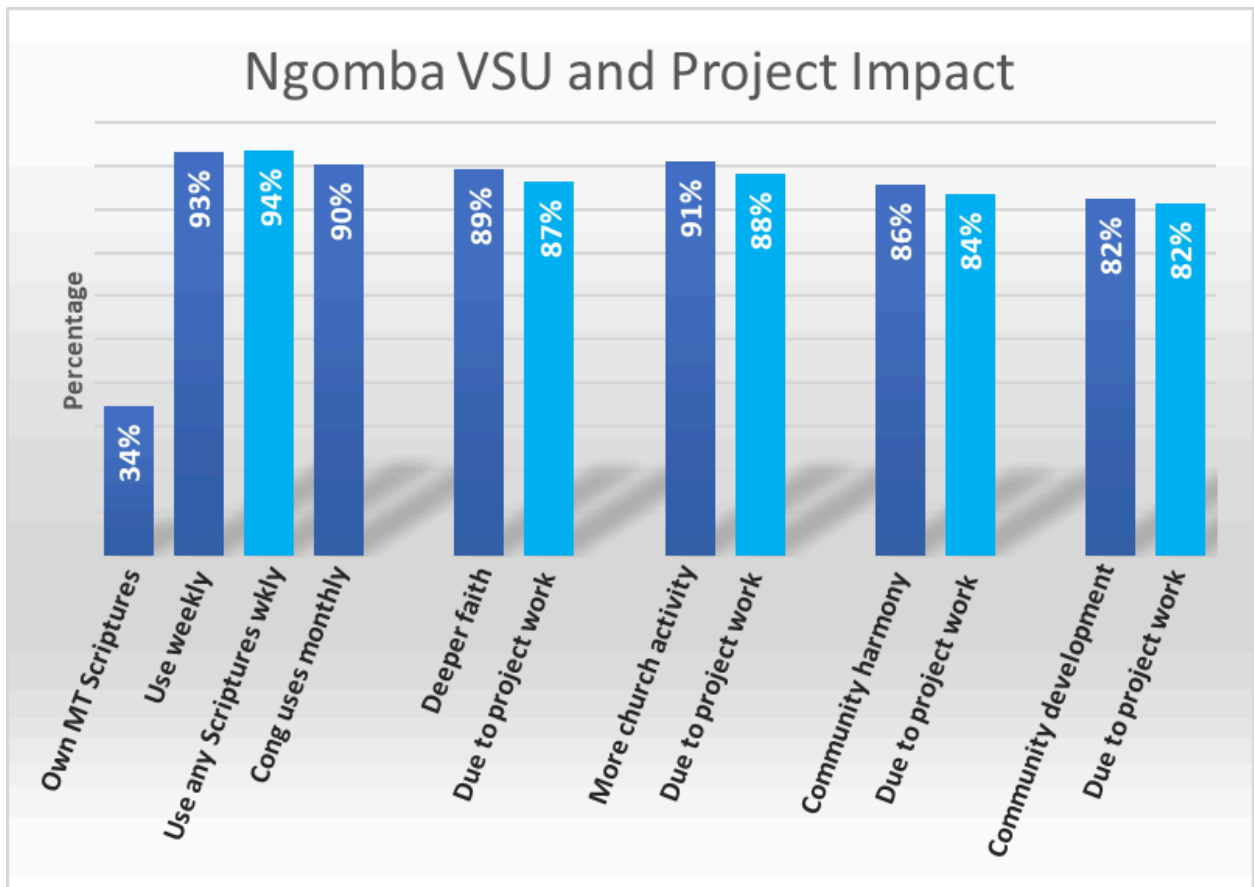
Domains of use of mother tongue Scripture

1. 67/180 Church, worship – 37.2%
2. 67/180 Wake, funeral, burial – 37.2%
3. 47/180 Bible Study – 26.11%

Formats of Scripture used in the community

1. 128/139 radio, Proclaimer – 92.1%
2. 96/139 video – 69.1%
3. 66/139 digital – 47.48%

Ngomba



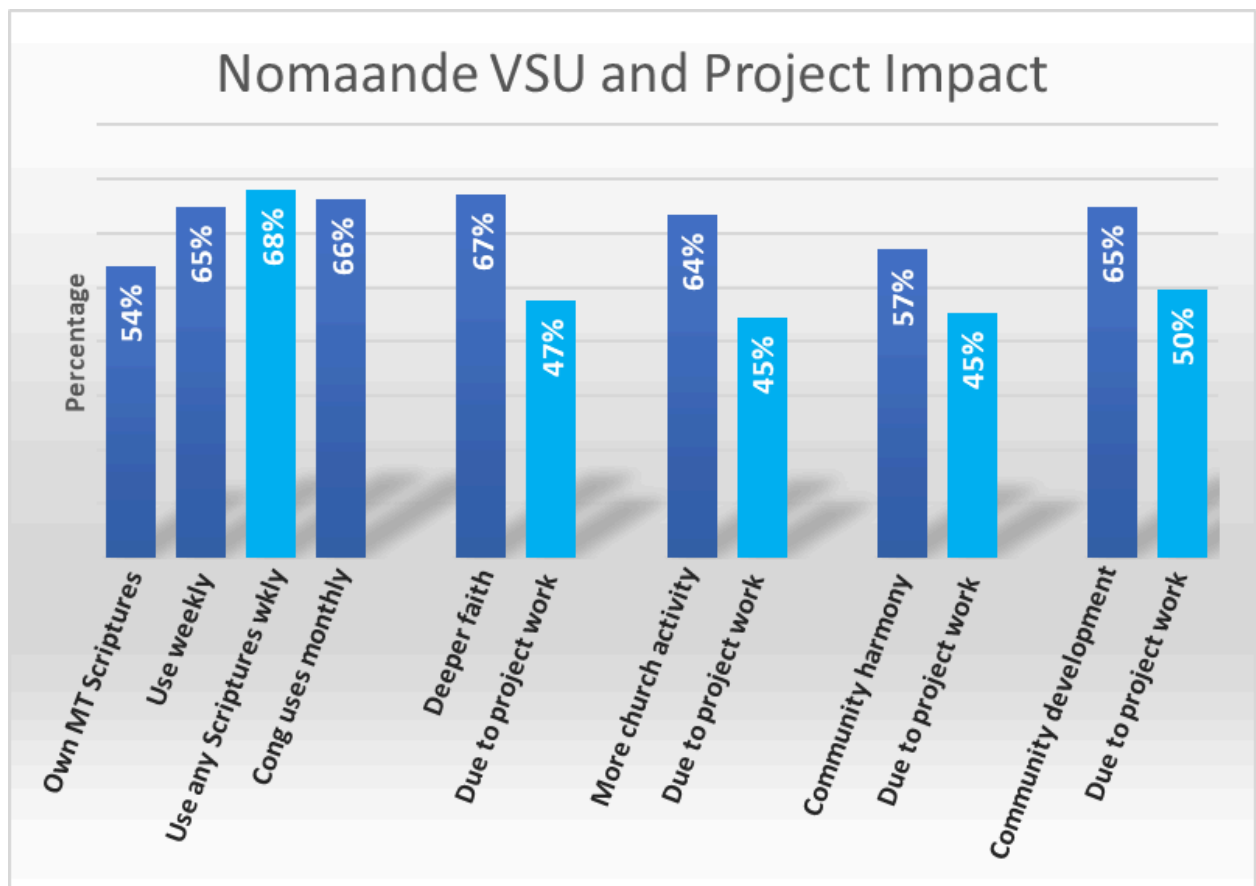
Domains of use of mother tongue Scripture

1. 77/117 Preaching Stations – 65.8%
2. 27/117 Wake, funeral, burial – 23.1%

Formats of Scripture used in the community

1. 98/105 radio – 93.3
2. 50/105 video – 47.6

Nomaande



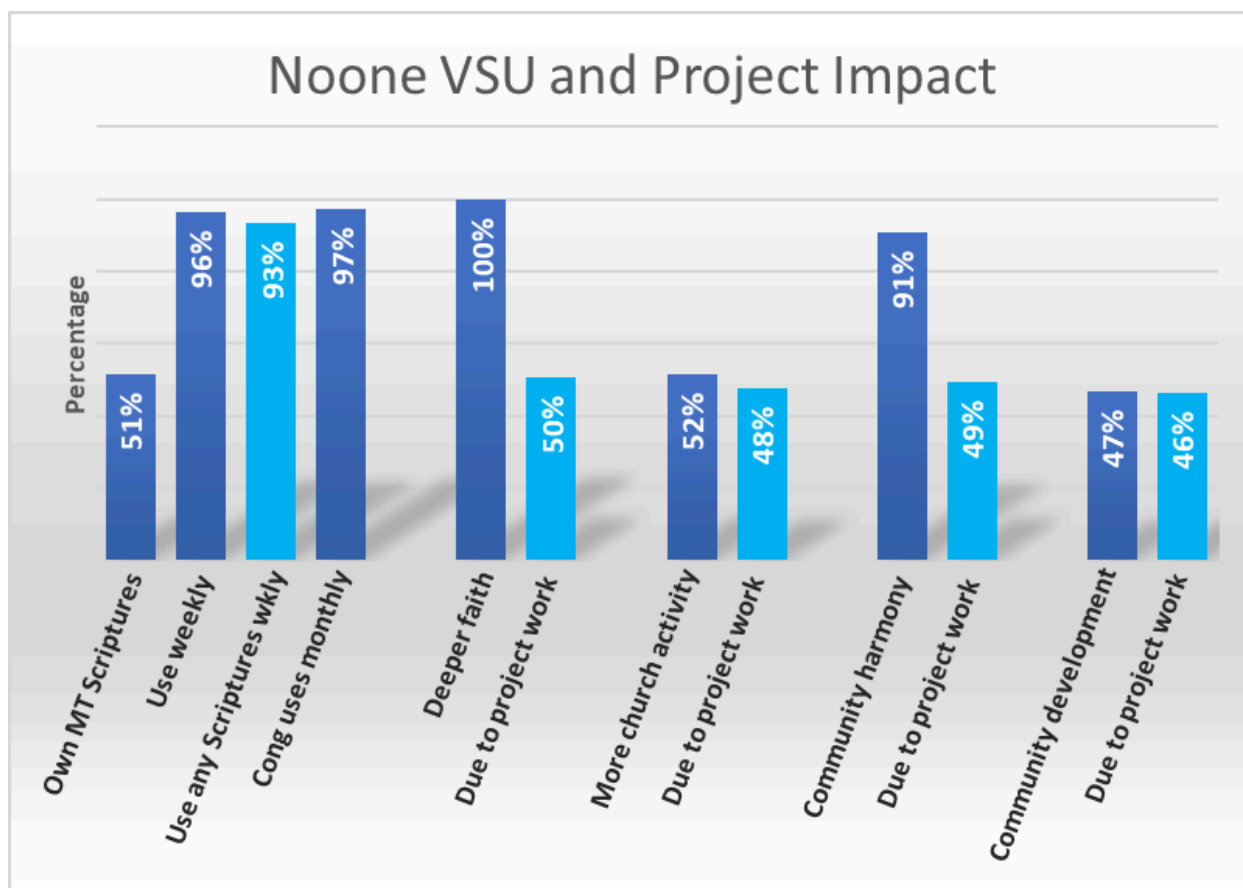
Domains of use of mother tongue Scripture

1. 134/188 Worship/church – 71.3%
2. 111/188 Wakes/funerals – 59%
3. 72/188 marriages – 38.3%
4. 69/188 meetings – 36.7%
5. 39/188 School/Sunday School – 20.7%

Formats of Scripture used in the community

1. 132/168 Songs – 78.6%
2. 94/169 Tales/preaching/recitations – 55.6%
3. 40/169 Proclaimer/USB/audio – 23.7%

Noone



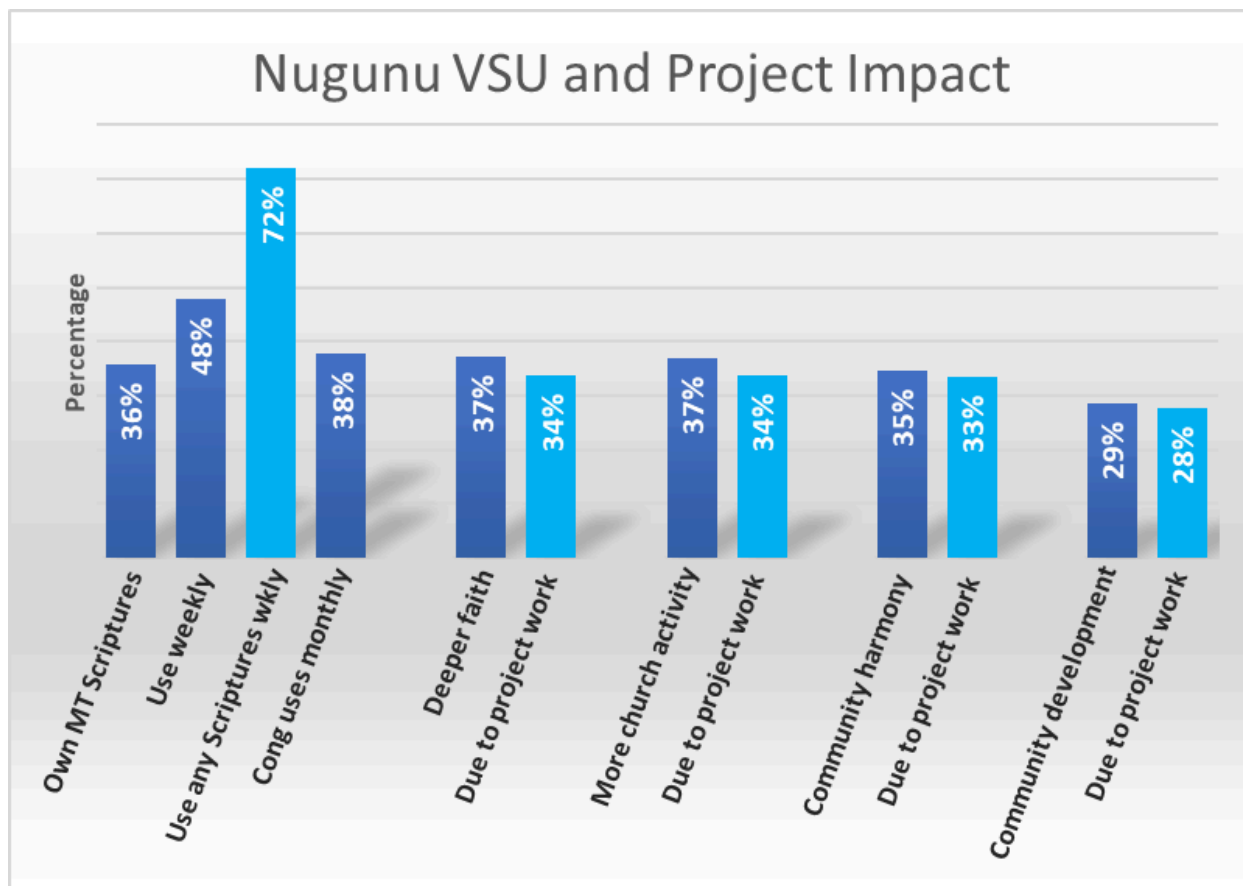
Domains of use of mother tongue Scripture

1. 92/178 Gospel sharing (77) ; Bible sharing (15) – 51.68%
2. 34/178 Burials – 19.10%
3. 23/178 Birth celebration – 12.92%

Formats of Scripture used in the community

1. 123/179 audio (106), Proclaimer (17) – 68.71%
2. 94/179 video (14), Jesus film (80) – 52.51%

Nugunu



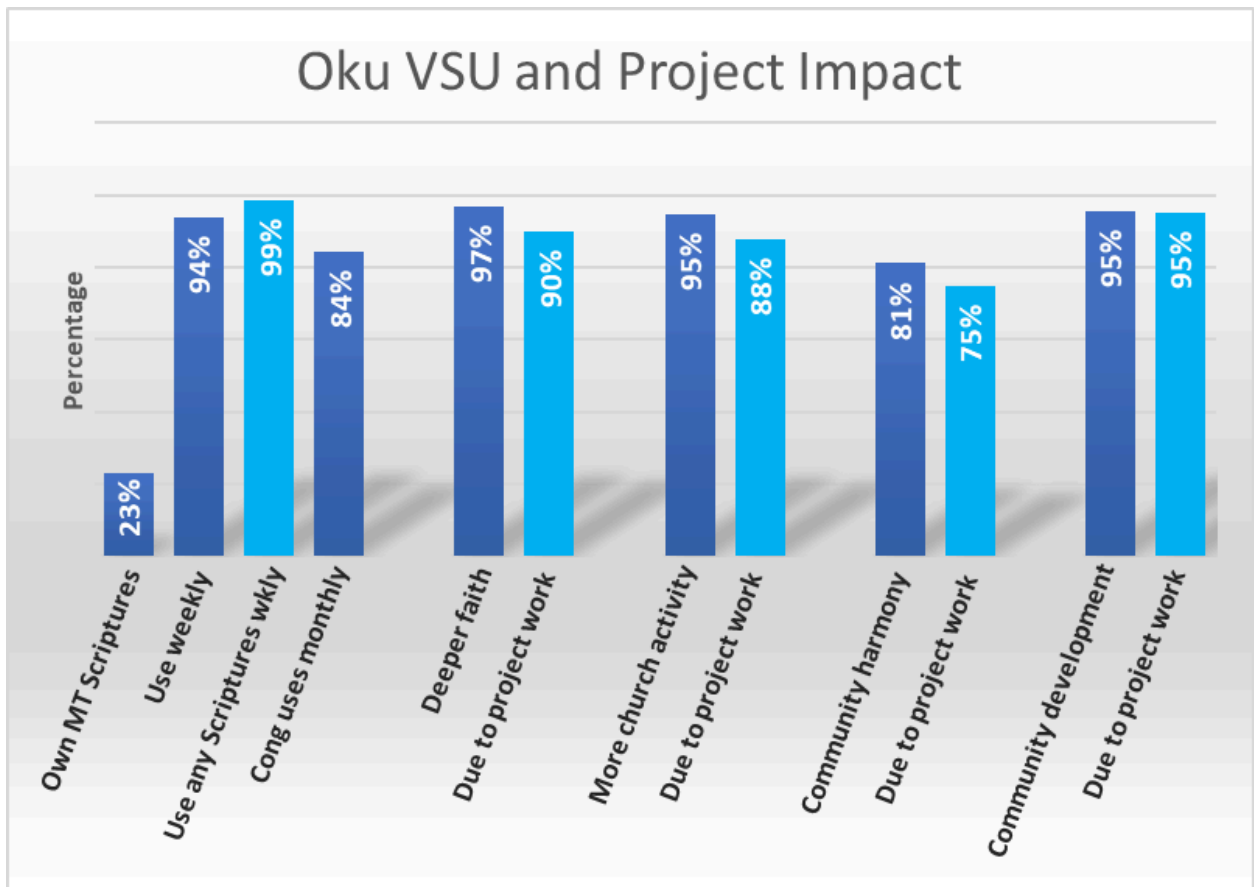
Domains of use of mother tongue Scripture

1. 164/231 Mass, worship, church – 71.0%
2. 52/231 wake, burial, funeral – 22.5%
3. 42/231 prayer – 18.2%

Formats of Scripture used in the community

1. 38/231 Audio – 16.5%
2. 17/231 Digital – 7.4%

Oku



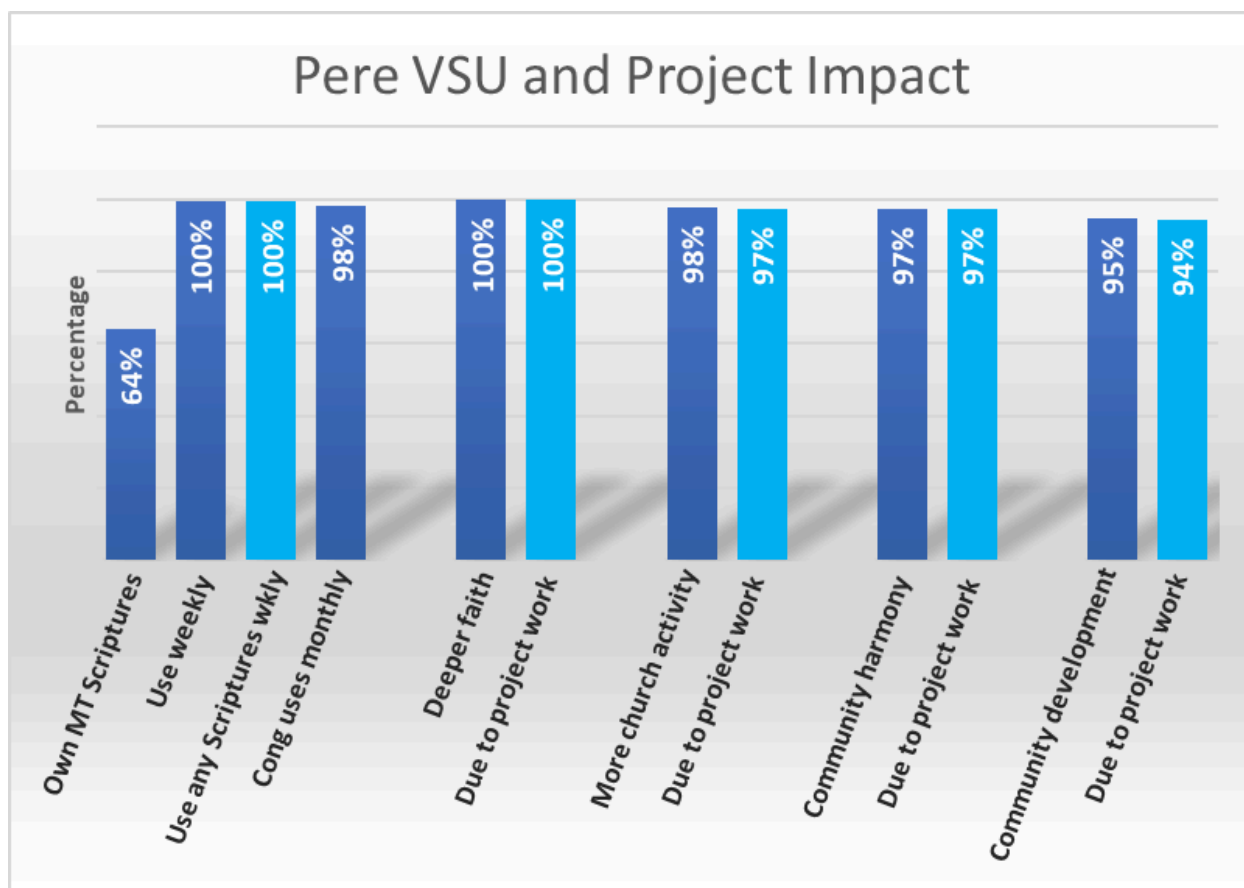
Domains of use of mother tongue Scripture

1. 96/191 Funerals, burial– 50.26%
2. 66/191 Gospel sharing– 34.55%
3. 39/191 Meeting, Christian meeting– 20.41%

Formats of Scripture used in the community

1. 93/122 audio – 76.22%
2. 46/122 Digital– 37.70%
3. 37/122 Jesus film, video – 30.33%

Pere



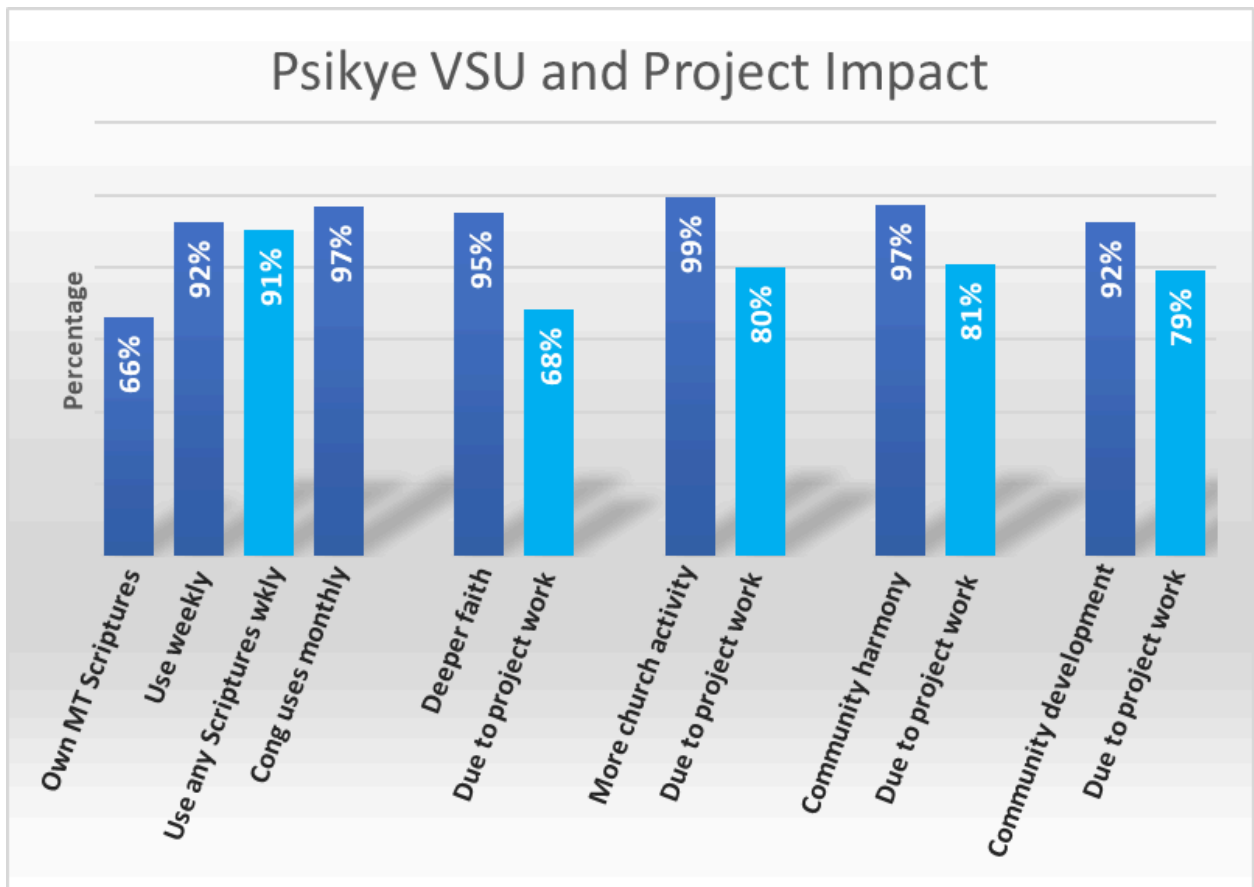
Domains of use of mother tongue Scripture

1. 193/234 church, worship – 82.5%
2. 77/234 Prayer (morning, cell group, individual) – 32.9%
3. 47/234 Wake, funeral, burial – 20.1%
4. 30/234 Naming ceremony – 12.8%

Formats of Scripture used in the community

The Pere were only aware of the print version of their Scriptures.

Psikye



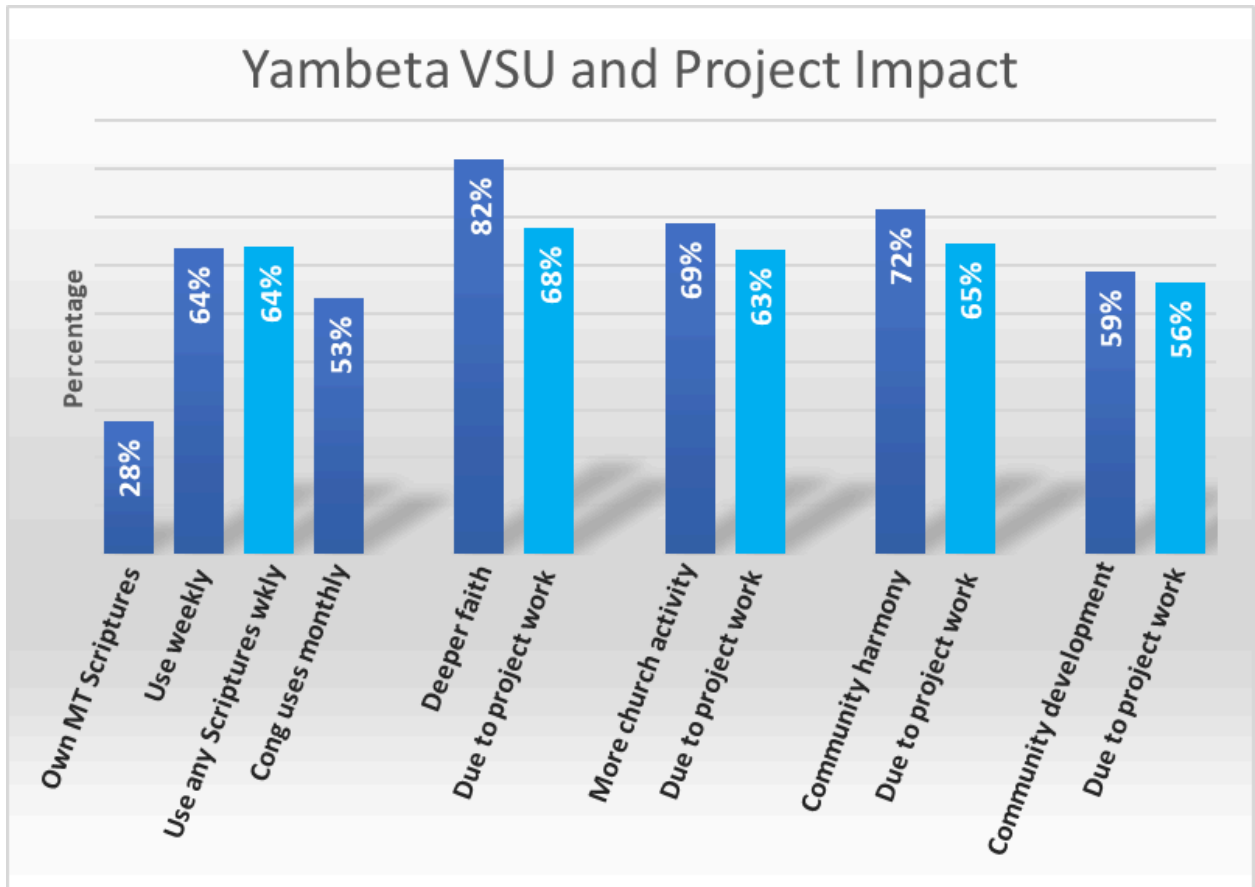
Domains of use of mother tongue Scripture

1. 128/213 Wake – 60.09%
2. 63/213 Classes, Catechism, Teaching – 29.58%
3. 59/213 Marriage – 27.70%
4. 38/213 Prayer, Morning Prayer – 17.84%

Formats of Scripture used in the community

1. 156/156 Audio – 100%

Yambeta



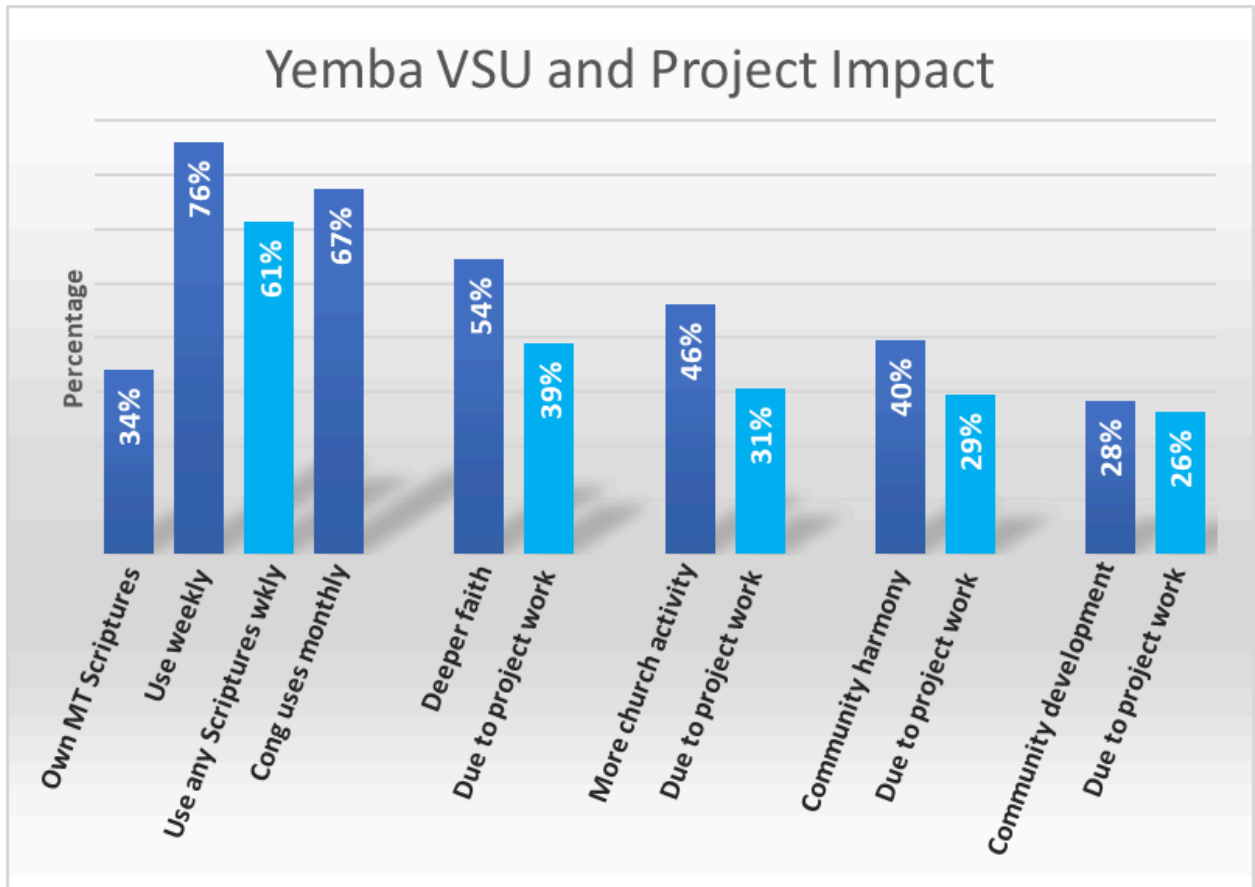
Domains of use of mother tongue Scripture

1. 145/174 Worship, church – 83.3%
2. 73/174 Meetings – 42.0%
3. 66/174 Wake – 37.9%
4. 40/174 Marriage – 23.0%

Formats of Scripture used in the community

1. 49/218 Audio – 22.5%

Yemba



Domains of use of mother tongue Scripture

1. 50/99 Wake, funeral, burial – 50.50%
2. 30/99 Meeting – 30.30%

Formats of Scripture used in the community

1. 69/91 video (67), Jesus Film (1), Comic strip (1) – 75.82%
2. 41/91 audio – 45.05%

Appendix D - Project limitations and recommendations for future research

Limitations

- Having over 50 volunteers conduct the individual surveys in 25 different minority languages undoubtedly introduced variation into our methodology that we were not able to control.
- The conflict in the anglophone regions of Cameroon forced us to work with volunteers, church leaders, and project staff outside of their language context. We had to relocate the work environment with community leaders coming from these regions to Mbouda and Kumba respectively.
- Including the Fulfulde translation project alongside the rest of the projects introduced a substantially different project into our study. The Fulfulde Scriptures were translated by translators from other ethnicities primarily for congregations who use Fulfulde as a language of wider communication. This makes the Fulfulde project unique among those included in the SURAM Cameroon study.
- This was a heavily quantitative study and the human resources on the SURAM team was lacking in advanced training in statistics, with only the part time assistant data analyst having studied statistics at an advanced level.
- The remoteness and isolation of many communities was a great challenge and required the team to spend more days than expected away from our respective families. But by the grace of God, we made it happen.
- Inaccessibility of some communities due to bad roads. Our SIL aviation services played a major part in getting the team to some communities. But the rest of the journeys had to be done on bikes or bush cars for very long hours.
- We were not able to survey two of the communities. One was because of security reasons (Denya in the southwest region). And the other because of what we called “religious hierarchy”. A case in point were the Ewondo and Bulu communities. Being predominantly a Catholic community, the local churches could not collaborate with us except with authorization from the Bishop. Several attempts to get this authorization were unsuccessful.
- We had to dig deeper in some communities in order to get information. This is because most communities do not have any data storage system. Therefore, if the

original project workers were no longer in a given community, we had to make sure we had the right information.

- The disunity of certain community leaders also posed a problem for the team as we sometimes had to listen to plights from different individuals, denominations and groups of persons before beginning our survey work.
- All the communities had their realities. In some it was only possible to do either survey or/and Scripture engagement with them in the evenings and this at times went into the night.
- Including “writing” in the question about literacy skills may have introduced a variable that is not important to using Scripture. Future iterations of VSU research could ask only about reading ability.

Recommendations

- Engage a person with advanced training in statistical analysis to work with the SURAM data, especially to validate the work that the SURAM team did on the factor analyses and to proceed with a Structural Equation Model analysis that would probe the individual survey database for internal structure.

Appendix E - Comparison Spreadsheet Calculations

Below are the column-by-column descriptions for how the aggregate scores were calculated in the community-by-community table (table 3.2.4.1 in section 3.2.4). This allowed us to assess the scores for each hypothesis in one chart, regardless of which survey tool was used to research each hypothesis.

Hypothesis 1a (Vernacular strategy: worship) – Denominational survey. The mean of all responses to questions 12, 13, & 14.

Hypothesis 1b (Vernacular strategy: worker) – Denominational survey. The mean of all responses to questions 10 & 11.

Hypothesis 2 (Staff/Leader morality) – Individual survey. The mean of the responses to questions 19 and 20. Denominational survey. The mean of the responses to questions 21 and 22. The average between the two scores.

Hypothesis 3a (Continued partnership) – Staff survey. The mean of the responses to questions 1-3.

Hypothesis 3b (Continued funding) – Staff survey question 3.

Hypothesis 4 (Promotion) – Individual survey. Mean of responses to question 6. Focus group survey. The mean of the responses to questions 4-6. The average of the two scores.

Hypothesis 5a (Ownership) – Individual Survey. Mean of the responses to questions 21-23. Focus group survey. Mean of the responses to questions 7-9. Denominational survey. Mean of the responses to questions 23-25. The average of those three scores.

Hypothesis 5b (Partnership) – Denominational survey. Mean of the responses to questions 17-20. Staff survey. Mean of the scores for questions 4-5, and 7-10. The average of those two scores.

Hypothesis 6 (Dialect) – Staff survey. The result for question 11 can be used. It is the only question that addresses this hypothesis.

Hypothesis 7a (Language shift) – Individual survey. The average of the responses to questions 1 & 2.

Hypothesis 7b (Multilingualism) - Focus group survey. Average of question 18 responses. Denominational survey. Average of question 16 responses. Mean of both scores will be inputted on the spreadsheet.

Hypothesis 8 (Translation Quality) – Individual survey. Average of responses to questions 7 & 8. Denomination Survey – Average of the responses to questions 26 & 27. The mean of those two scores.

Hypothesis 9a (Individual Literacy) – Individual Survey. Average of responses to question 3.

Hypothesis 9b (Literacy project) – Individual Survey. Average of responses to question 3. Staff Survey. Average of responses to questions 12-14. Mean of those two scores gives the base score for the literacy project. Focus Group surveys. The average score of the responses to question 13 will be noted. We subtract 1 from that score and then divide by 4. That figure will be multiplied by the difference between 5 and the mean score of the other two surveys, divided by two, and then added to that score itself. We do this because focus groups that do not organize classes (as the question asks) do not necessarily indicate a weak project. However, church groups who implicate themselves in organizing classes is a sign of strength for a project. NOTE: The Excel calculation used was $=(((\text{Focus Group score}-1)/4)*((5-[\text{Avg of individual and Staff scores}])/2))+[\text{Avg of individual and Staff scores}]$

Hypothesis 10 (Orthography) – Individual Survey. Average response to questions 24 & 25.

Hypothesis 11a (Prepublications) – Staff survey. Response to questions 17.

Hypothesis 11b (Pre-pub strategies) – Staff survey. Responses to questions 15 & 18 will serve as the base measure for this hypothesis. Focus Group survey. The average of the responses to question 12 will be found. We subtract 1 from that score and then divide by 4. That figure will be multiplied by the difference between 5 and the mean score of the staff survey and then added to that score itself.

Hypothesis 12 (SE worker) – Staff survey. The response to question 16.

Hypothesis 13 (Oral forms) – Focus group survey. The average of responses to question 14. Denominational survey. The average of responses to question 31. Staff survey. The average of questions 23 & 24. The mean of all three responses will provide the score.

Hypothesis 14a (AV) – Staff survey. Question 21.

Hypothesis 14b (AV Strategy) – Denominational survey. Average of responses to question 33. Staff survey. Question 22. Average of these two scores. If the staff did not produce AV Scriptures, the score for these two hypotheses will be 1.

Hypothesis 15a (Digital) – Staff Survey. Question 19.

Hypothesis 15b (Digital Strategy) - Denominational survey. Average of responses to question 32. Staff survey. Question 20. Average of these two scores. If the staff did not produce digital Scriptures, the score for these two hypotheses will be 1.

Hypothesis 16a (Children and Youth) – Staff Survey. Question 25.

Hypothesis 16b (C&Y Strategy) – Denominational survey. Average of responses to question 28. Staff survey. Question 26. Average of these two scores. Focus Group surveys. The average score of the responses to question 10 will be noted. We subtract 1 from that score and then divide by 4. That figure will be multiplied by the difference between 5 and the mean score of the other two surveys and then added to that score itself.

Hypothesis 17a (Church Strategy) – Denominational survey. Questions 29 & 30 average score.

Hypothesis 17b (Spiritual Climate) – Individual survey. Questions 26 & 27 average score. Denominational survey. Questions 34 & 35 average score. The mean of these two scores.

Own (Ownership) – Individual survey. The mean of the scores for question 4.

VSU - P (Personal Use) - Individual survey. The mean of the scores for question 5.

VSU – C (Congregational Use) – Individual Survey. The mean of the scores for question 10. Denominational Survey. The mean of the scores for question 9. The average of these two numbers. NOTE : Where the percentage of adherents is estimated, weight the responses accordingly. For example, 80% catholic and 20% other would be calculated as follows : $(\text{CATHOLIC.SCORE} \cdot .8 + \text{OTHER.SCORE} \cdot .2) / 2$. This weighting will apply to all other similar calculations as well.

Impact – G (Global Impact) Individual Survey. Find the percentage of responses that are 4 or 5 in columns 12, 14, 16, and 18. Focus Group survey. Find the percentage of responses that are 4 or 5 in column 3. Denominational Survey. Find the percentage of responses that are 4 or 5 in columns 2, 4, 6, and 8. Find the average of all 9 of these above-mentioned percentages and divide by 20.

Impact – P (Personal impact) Individual Survey. Find the percentage of responses that are 4 or 5 in columns 12 and 14. Divide the average of these two percentages by 20.

Impact – Ch (Church impact) Denominational survey. Find the percentage of responses that are 4 or 5 in columns 2 and 4. Divide the average of these two percentages by 20.

Impact – Cm (Community Impact) Individual Survey. Find the percentage of responses that are 4 or 5 in columns 16 and 18. Denominational Survey. Find the percentage of responses that are 4 or 5 in columns 6 and 8. Find the average of all 4 of these above-mentioned percentages and divide by 2

Appendix F - Statistical Coding and Outputs for Factor and Regression Analyses

Coding and output for EFA and CFA

```
# Install necessary packages if you haven't already
install.packages("tidyverse")
install.packages("cluster")
install.packages("readxl")
install.packages("psych")
install.packages("lavaan")
install.packages("mice")

# Load the packages
library(tidyverse)
library(cluster)
library(readxl)
library(psych)
library(lavaan)
library(mice)

# Load the Excel file
file_path <- "C://Users//camer//Downloads//[xlsx_FILE_NAME]"
data <- read_excel(file_path, sheet = "[sheet_name]")

# Split the data into odd and even rows so that both analyses are possible
odd_data <- data[seq(1, nrow(data), by = 2), ]
even_data <- data[seq(2, nrow(data), by = 2), ]

# Perform Parallel Analysis
fa.parallel(odd_data, fa = "both", n.iter = 100, show.legend = FALSE, main = "Parallel Analysis")
Parallel analysis suggests that the number of factors = 6 and the number of components = 4

# Perform Velicer's MAP test
```

```
vss <- VSS(odd_data, n = ncol(data))
print(vss)
```

The Velicer MAP achieves a minimum of 0.02 with 1 factors
 BIC achieves a minimum of -100.72 with 7 factors
 Sample Size adjusted BIC achieves a minimum of -34 with 7 factors

Statistics by number of factors

	vss1	vss2	map	dof	chisq	prob	sqresid	fit	RMSEA	BIC	SABIC	complex	eChisq	SRMR	eCRMS	eBIC
1	0.71	0.00	0.022	90	4.3e+03	0.0e+00	9.6	0.71	0.127	3562	3848	1.0	4.7e+03	8.8e-02	0.096	4011
2	0.55	0.77	0.026	76	2.8e+03	0.0e+00	7.5	0.77	0.112	2218	2460	1.5	2.6e+03	6.6e-02	0.077	2014
3	0.49	0.77	0.032	63	1.8e+03	0.0e+00	6.4	0.81	0.099	1324	1524	1.6	1.7e+03	5.3e-02	0.069	1203
4	0.47	0.72	0.037	51	9.8e+02	2.2e-171	5.4	0.84	0.079	570	732	1.7	9.5e+02	4.0e-02	0.057	547
5	0.48	0.70	0.042	40	4.9e+02	2.8e-79	4.3	0.87	0.063	174	301	1.7	3.5e+02	2.4e-02	0.039	32
6	0.47	0.65	0.051	30	1.9e+02	1.5e-24	3.6	0.89	0.043	-52	43	1.8	1.1e+02	1.3e-02	0.025	-132
7	0.45	0.60	0.066	21	6.7e+01	1.3e-06	3.2	0.90	0.027	-101	-34	2.0	2.9e+01	6.9e-03	0.015	-138
8	0.46	0.62	0.090	13	3.5e+01	8.0e-04	3.0	0.91	0.024	-68	-27	1.8	1.4e+01	4.8e-03	0.014	-90
9	0.43	0.60	0.122	6	1.0e+01	1.1e-01	2.7	0.92	0.016	-37	-18	1.9	3.8e+00	2.5e-03	0.010	-44
10	0.42	0.57	0.199	0	1.3e+00	NA	2.5	0.92	NA	NA	NA	1.9	4.5e-01	8.6e-04	NA	NA
11	0.43	0.58	0.287	-5	2.5e-03	NA	2.5	0.93	NA	NA	NA	2.0	1.1e-03	4.3e-05	NA	NA
12	0.44	0.58	0.358	-9	5.3e-05	NA	2.4	0.93	NA	NA	NA	1.9	1.8e-05	5.5e-06	NA	NA
13	0.44	0.59	0.470	-12	2.1e-07	NA	2.5	0.92	NA	NA	NA	2.1	5.9e-08	3.1e-07	NA	NA
14	0.44	0.59	1.000	-14	1.1e-10	NA	2.5	0.92	NA	NA	NA	2.1	3.5e-11	7.6e-09	NA	NA
15	0.44	0.59	NA	-15	1.1e-10	NA	2.5	0.92	NA	NA	NA	2.1	3.5e-11	7.6e-09	NA	NA

NOTE: ATTEMPTS WERE MADE WITH FOUR, FIVE, SIX, AND SEVEN FACTORS. THE BEST FIT AND MOST INTUITIVE OUTPUT HAS SEVEN FACTORS.

```
# Perform EFA on odd-numbered rows
efa_model <- fa(odd_data, nfactors = 7, rotate = "varimax")
```

```
# Print the EFA results
print(efa_model)
```

RESULTS

	MR1	MR2	MR6	MR5	MR4	MR3	MR7	h2	u2	com
v1		0.73						0.61	0.3925	1.3
v2		0.80						0.70	0.3017	1.2
v3							0.58	0.43	0.5698	1.6

v6			0.50	0.42	0.5761	2.5
v7	0.95			1.00	0.0047	1.2
v8	(0.35)			0.35	0.6470	5.0
v19	0.73			0.67	0.3343	1.5
v20	0.71			0.63	0.3708	1.6
v21	0.58			0.50	0.4960	2.1
v22	0.82			0.73	0.2735	1.2
v23	0.66			0.55	0.4459	1.5
v24		0.90		1.00	0.0045	1.5
v25		(0.35)		0.36	0.6362	5.1
v26		0.73		0.55	0.4463	1.1
v27		0.49		0.28	0.7161	1.4

NOTE: V# RELATES TO THE QUESTION NUMBER ON THE INDIVIDUAL SURVEY.

	MR1	MR2	MR6	MR5	MR4	MR3	MR7
SS loadings	1.78	1.40	1.36	1.21	1.08	1.02	0.95
Proportion Var	0.12	0.09	0.09	0.08	0.07	0.07	0.06
Cumulative Var	0.12	0.21	0.30	0.38	0.45	0.52	0.59
Proportion Explained	0.20	0.16	0.15	0.14	0.12	0.12	0.11
Cumulative Proportion	0.20	0.36	0.52	0.65	0.78	0.89	1.00

Mean item complexity = 2

Test of the hypothesis that 7 factors are sufficient.

df null model = 105 with the objective function = 4.55 with Chi Square = 13067.21
df of the model are 21 and the objective function was 0.02

The root mean square of the residuals (RMSR) is 0.01

The df corrected root mean square of the residuals is 0.02

The harmonic n.obs is 2877 with the empirical chi square 29.01 with prob < 0.11

The total n.obs was 2877 with Likelihood Chi Square = 66.53 with prob < 1.3e-06

Tucker Lewis Index of factoring reliability = 0.982

RMSEA index = 0.027 and the 90 % confidence intervals are 0.02 0.035

BIC = -100.72

Fit based upon off diagonal values = 1

Measures of factor score adequacy

	MR1	MR2	MR6	MR5	MR4	MR3	MR7
Correlation of (regression) scores with factors	0.87	0.87	0.84	0.99	0.78	0.97	0.68
Multiple R square of scores with factors	0.76	0.75	0.70	0.98	0.61	0.95	0.46
Minimum correlation of possible factor scores	0.52	0.51	0.40	0.96	0.22	0.90	-0.09

NOTE: PROCEEDING TO THE CFA...

```
# Create CFA model specification based on EFA results (adjust variables accordingly)
```

```
cfa_model_7 <- '  
  F1 =~ v22 + v23 + v21  
  F2 =~ v2 + v1  
  F3 =~ v19 + v20  
  F4 =~ v7  
  F5 =~ v26 + v27  
  F6 =~ v24  
  F7 =~ v3 + v6  
,
```

NOTE:

```
F1 = (OWNERSHIP)  
F2 = (MTVITALITY)  
F3 = (MORALITY)  
F4 = (TRANSLATION)  
F5 = (SPIRITLIB)  
F6 = (ORTHOGRAPHY)  
F7 = (LITERACY)
```

```
# Fit the CFA model with 5 factors
```

```
cfa_fit_7 <- cfa(cfa_model_7, data = even_data)
```

```
# Print the CFA results
```

```
summary(cfa_fit_7, fit.measures = TRUE, standardized = TRUE)
```

```
lavaan 0.6-18 ended normally after 49 iterations
```

```
Estimator              ML  
Optimization method    NLMINB
```

Number of model parameters	45
Number of observations	2877
Model Test User Model:	
Test statistic	476.006
Degrees of freedom	46
P-value (Chi-square)	0.000
Model Test Baseline Model:	
Test statistic	10353.100
Degrees of freedom	78
P-value	0.000
User Model versus Baseline Model:	
Comparative Fit Index (CFI)	0.958
Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI)	0.929
Loglikelihood and Information Criteria:	
Loglikelihood user model (H0)	-44360.309
Loglikelihood unrestricted model (H1)	-44122.306
Akaike (AIC)	88810.618
Bayesian (BIC)	89079.021
Sample-size adjusted Bayesian (SABIC)	88936.039
Root Mean Square Error of Approximation:	
RMSEA	0.057
90 Percent confidence interval - lower	0.052
90 Percent confidence interval - upper	0.062
P-value H ₀ : RMSEA ≤ 0.050	0.006
P-value H ₀ : RMSEA ≥ 0.080	0.000
Standardized Root Mean Square Residual:	

SRMR

0.029

Parameter Estimates:

Standard errors
Information
Information saturated (h1) model

Standard
Expected
Structured

Latent Variables:

	Estimate	Std.Err	z-value	P(> z)	Std.lv	Std.all
F1 =~						
v22	1.000				0.939	0.797
v23	0.960	0.028	34.496	0.000	0.902	0.723
v21	0.841	0.025	33.370	0.000	0.790	0.692
F2 =~						
v2	1.000				0.564	0.800
v1	1.001	0.044	22.625	0.000	0.564	0.793
F3 =~						
v19	1.000				0.648	0.838
v20	0.953	0.030	31.776	0.000	0.618	0.789
F4 =~						
v7	1.000				0.709	1.000
F5 =~						
v26	1.000				0.473**	0.669
v27	1.084	0.073	14.843	0.000	0.513	0.600
F6 =~						
v24	1.000				0.931	1.000
F7 =~						
v3	1.000				0.663	0.550
v6	1.080	0.052	20.655	0.000	0.716	0.651

Covariances:

	Estimate	Std.Err	z-value	P(> z)	Std.lv	Std.all
F1 ~~						
F2	0.160	0.014	11.794	0.000	0.302	0.302
F3	0.334	0.017	19.931	0.000	0.549	0.549

F4	0.209	0.015	14.140	0.000	0.314	0.314
F5	0.153	0.013	11.391	0.000	0.344	0.344
F6	0.364	0.020	18.059	0.000	0.416	0.416
F7	0.410	0.024	17.317	0.000	0.659	0.659
F2 ~~						
F3	0.128	0.010	13.464	0.000	0.351	0.351
F4	0.128	0.009	13.919	0.000	0.321	0.321
F5	0.104	0.008	12.228	0.000	0.389	0.389
F6	0.093	0.011	8.122	0.000	0.177	0.177
F7	0.137	0.012	11.254	0.000	0.367	0.367
F3 ~~						
F4	0.167	0.010	16.247	0.000	0.364	0.364
F5	0.122	0.009	12.874	0.000	0.397	0.397
F6	0.226	0.014	16.624	0.000	0.374	0.374
F7	0.218	0.015	14.797	0.000	0.508	0.508
F4 ~~						
F5	0.091	0.009	10.419	0.000	0.272	0.272
F6	0.181	0.013	14.235	0.000	0.275	0.275
F7	0.213	0.014	15.074	0.000	0.454	0.454
F5 ~~						
F6	0.123	0.012	10.618	0.000	0.278	0.278
F7	0.093	0.011	8.261	0.000	0.297	0.297
F6 ~~						
F7	0.334	0.020	16.950	0.000	0.541	0.541

Variances:

	Estimate	Std.Err	z-value	P(> z)	Std.lv	Std.all
.v22	0.508	0.023	22.072	0.000	0.508	0.365
.v23	0.744	0.027	27.807	0.000	0.744	0.478
.v21	0.679	0.023	29.538	0.000	0.679	0.521
.v2	0.178	0.014	12.908	0.000	0.178	0.359
.v1	0.188	0.014	13.507	0.000	0.188	0.371
.v19	0.178	0.012	14.552	0.000	0.178	0.297
.v20	0.232	0.012	19.425	0.000	0.232	0.378
.v26	0.276	0.016	16.912	0.000	0.276	0.552
.v27	0.468	0.021	22.126	0.000	0.468	0.640
.v3	1.014	0.034	30.143	0.000	1.014	0.698
.v6	0.697	0.030	23.160	0.000	0.697	0.576
F1	0.882	0.039	22.673	0.000	1.000	1.000

F2	0.318	0.018	17.837	0.000	1.000	1.000
F3	0.420	0.019	22.332	0.000	1.000	1.000
F4	0.502	0.013	37.928	0.000	1.000	1.000
F5	0.224	0.018	12.251	0.000	1.000	1.000
F6	0.866	0.023	37.928	0.000	1.000	1.000
F7	0.439	0.034	12.842	0.000	1.000	1.000

PROCEEDING to THE MULTIPLE LINEAR REGRESSION..

```
# Load necessary packages
install.packages("tidyverse")
install.packages("broom")
library(tidyverse)
library(broom)
file_path <- "C://Users//camer//Downloads//ALL_NEW_FOR_R.xlsx"
data <- read_excel(file_path, sheet = "Individual for r")

data_filtered <- data %>%
  filter(!is.na(v12) & !is.na(v14) & !is.na(v16) & !is.na(v18))

# Define independent and dependent variables
independent_vars <- c("v1", "v2", "v3", "v6", "v7", "v8", "v19", "v20", "v21", "v22", "v23", "v24", "v25", "v26",
"v27")
dependent_vars <- c("v4", "v5", "v9", "v10", "v11", "v12", "v13", "v14", "v15", "v16", "v17", "v18")

# Initialize a list to hold the model summaries
model_summaries <- list()

# Perform multiple linear regression for each dependent variable
for (dv in dependent_vars) {
  formula <- as.formula(paste(dv, "~", paste(independent_vars, collapse = " + "))
  model <- lm(formula, data = data_filtered)
  model_summaries[[dv]] <- summary(model)
}

# Print the summary of each model
for (dv in dependent_vars) {
  cat(paste("\nResults for", dv, ":\n"))
}
```

```
print(model_summaries[[dv]])
}
```

Results for v4 (Scripture ownership):

Call:

```
lm(formula = formula, data = data_filtered)
```

Residuals:

Min	1Q	Median	3Q	Max
-3.4055	-0.6344	0.0942	0.6049	3.3679

Coefficients:

	Estimate	Std. Error	t value	Pr(> t)	
(Intercept)	-0.1301839	0.1853085	-0.703	0.482398	
v1	0.0149917	0.0334842	0.448	0.654379	
v2	-0.0318377	0.0331559	-0.960	0.336999	
v3	0.4671910	0.0141981	32.905	< 2e-16	***
v6	0.1950194	0.0179524	10.863	< 2e-16	***
v7	0.0807821	0.0328566	2.459	0.013995	*
v8	0.0008256	0.0261223	0.032	0.974790	
v19	0.0703468	0.0294075	2.392	0.016802	*
v20	-0.0967247	0.0270663	-3.574	0.000357	***
v21	0.0567903	0.0186134	3.051	0.002297	**
v22	0.0611800	0.0143221	4.272	1.99e-05	***
v23	0.0379023	0.0157189	2.411	0.015949	*
v24	0.0913793	0.0217421	4.203	2.70e-05	***
v25	0.0256657	0.0285402	0.899	0.368562	
v26	0.0254220	0.0288293	0.882	0.377939	
v27	0.0072409	0.0207267	0.349	0.726846	

Signif. codes: 0 '***' 0.001 '**' 0.01 '*' 0.05 '.' 0.1 ' ' 1

Residual standard error: 0.9195 on 3544 degrees of freedom
Multiple R-squared: 0.4111, Adjusted R-squared: 0.4086
F-statistic: 164.9 on 15 and 3544 DF, p-value: < 2.2e-16

Results for v5 (VSU Personal):

Call:

```
lm(formula = formula, data = data_filtered)
```

Residuals:

	Min	1Q	Median	3Q	Max
	-3.3430	-0.1776	0.0990	0.3767	2.2359

Coefficients:

	Estimate	Std. Error	t value	Pr(> t)
(Intercept)	0.675578	0.134931	5.007	5.80e-07 ***
v1	0.064182	0.024381	2.632	0.008515 **
v2	0.069485	0.024142	2.878	0.004024 **
v3	0.119525	0.010338	11.561	< 2e-16 ***
v6	0.127097	0.013072	9.723	< 2e-16 ***
v7	0.133131	0.023924	5.565	2.82e-08 ***
v8	0.120153	0.019021	6.317	3.00e-10 ***
v19	0.029932	0.021413	1.398	0.162249
v20	-0.104063	0.019708	-5.280	1.37e-07 ***
v21	-0.003977	0.013553	-0.293	0.769211
v22	0.035122	0.010428	3.368	0.000766 ***
v23	0.007609	0.011446	0.665	0.506249
v24	-0.017679	0.015831	-1.117	0.264197
v25	0.059067	0.020781	2.842	0.004504 **
v26	0.114416	0.020992	5.451	5.37e-08 ***
v27	0.085405	0.015092	5.659	1.64e-08 ***

Signif. codes: 0 '***' 0.001 '**' 0.01 '*' 0.05 '.' 0.1 ' ' 1

Residual standard error: 0.6696 on 3544 degrees of freedom

Multiple R-squared: 0.2417, Adjusted R-squared: 0.2385

F-statistic: 75.31 on 15 and 3544 DF, p-value: < 2.2e-16

Results for v9 (Personal SU):

Call:

```
lm(formula = formula, data = data_filtered)
```

Residuals:

Min	1Q	Median	3Q	Max
-3.7248	-0.1357	0.0583	0.3264	2.1405

Coefficients:

	Estimate	Std. Error	t value	Pr(> t)	
(Intercept)	1.565093	0.144810	10.808	< 2e-16	***
v1	-0.092928	0.026166	-3.551	0.000388	***
v2	0.072087	0.025910	2.782	0.005427	**
v3	0.046716	0.011095	4.210	2.61e-05	***
v6	0.118509	0.014029	8.447	< 2e-16	***
v7	0.010591	0.025676	0.412	0.680021	
v8	0.197030	0.020413	9.652	< 2e-16	***
v19	-0.041529	0.022981	-1.807	0.070826	.
v20	0.045896	0.021151	2.170	0.030081	*
v21	-0.087518	0.014546	-6.017	1.96e-09	***
v22	-0.006904	0.011192	-0.617	0.537390	
v23	0.089520	0.012284	7.288	3.87e-13	***
v24	-0.039097	0.016991	-2.301	0.021444	*
v25	0.042179	0.022303	1.891	0.058680	.
v26	0.210687	0.022529	9.352	< 2e-16	***
v27	0.054284	0.016197	3.351	0.000812	***

Signif. codes: 0 '***' 0.001 '**' 0.01 '*' 0.05 '.' 0.1 ' ' 1

Residual standard error: 0.7186 on 3544 degrees of freedom

Multiple R-squared: 0.1796, Adjusted R-squared: 0.1761

F-statistic: 51.72 on 15 and 3544 DF, p-value: < 2.2e-16

Results for v10 (Congregational VSU):

Call:

lm(formula = formula, data = data_filtered)

Residuals:

Min	1Q	Median	3Q	Max
-3.5589	-0.1749	0.0426	0.3492	1.8716

Coefficients:

	Estimate	Std. Error	t value	Pr(> t)	
(Intercept)	1.544956	0.133125	11.605	< 2e-16	***
v1	0.035095	0.024055	1.459	0.14467	
v2	0.060320	0.023819	2.532	0.01137	*
v3	0.082082	0.010200	8.047	1.14e-15	***
v6	0.084979	0.012897	6.589	5.08e-11	***
v7	0.070414	0.023604	2.983	0.00287	**
v8	0.097355	0.018766	5.188	2.25e-07	***
v19	0.039555	0.021126	1.872	0.06124	.
v20	0.007623	0.019444	0.392	0.69507	
v21	0.020962	0.013372	1.568	0.11706	
v22	0.058052	0.010289	5.642	1.81e-08	***
v23	0.012905	0.011292	1.143	0.25320	
v24	-0.029025	0.015620	-1.858	0.06322	.
v25	0.032536	0.020503	1.587	0.11263	
v26	0.056596	0.020711	2.733	0.00631	**
v27	0.014708	0.014890	0.988	0.32332	

Signif. codes: 0 '***' 0.001 '**' 0.01 '*' 0.05 '.' 0.1 ' ' 1

Residual standard error: 0.6606 on 3544 degrees of freedom
Multiple R-squared: 0.1624, Adjusted R-squared: 0.1589
F-statistic: 45.82 on 15 and 3544 DF, p-value: < 2.2e-16

Results for v11 (Personal Project Impact) :

Call:

```
lm(formula = formula, data = data_filtered)
```

Residuals:

Min	1Q	Median	3Q	Max
-1.2600	-0.2397	-0.1241	0.2350	1.4354

Coefficients:

	Estimate	Std. Error	t value	Pr(> t)	
(Intercept)	1.877463	0.075778	24.776	< 2e-16	***

v1	0.084639	0.013693	6.181	7.08e-10	***
v2	0.043872	0.013558	3.236	0.001224	**
v3	-0.001816	0.005806	-0.313	0.754413	
v6	0.001849	0.007341	0.252	0.801210	
v7	0.144599	0.013436	10.762	< 2e-16	***
v8	0.052493	0.010682	4.914	9.32e-07	***
v19	0.015535	0.012026	1.292	0.196493	
v20	0.007875	0.011068	0.712	0.476817	
v21	0.049743	0.007612	6.535	7.26e-11	***
v22	0.022293	0.005857	3.806	0.000143	***
v23	-0.025942	0.006428	-4.036	5.56e-05	***
v24	-0.026115	0.008891	-2.937	0.003333	**
v25	0.108175	0.011671	9.269	< 2e-16	***
v26	0.064688	0.011789	5.487	4.37e-08	***
v27	0.029227	0.008476	3.448	0.000571	***

Signif. codes: 0 '***' 0.001 '**' 0.01 '*' 0.05 '.' 0.1 ' ' 1

Residual standard error: 0.376 on 3544 degrees of freedom
Multiple R-squared: 0.2465, Adjusted R-squared: 0.2433
F-statistic: 77.3 on 15 and 3544 DF, p-value: < 2.2e-16

Results for v12 (Personal VSU Impact):

Call:

lm(formula = formula, data = data_filtered)

Residuals:

Min	1Q	Median	3Q	Max
-3.616	-0.246	-0.061	0.505	40.775

Coefficients:

	Estimate	Std. Error	t value	Pr(> t)
(Intercept)	2.1585539	0.1986873	10.864	< 2e-16 ***
v1	-0.0619520	0.0359017	-1.726	0.08451 .
v2	0.0388416	0.0355497	1.093	0.27464

v3	0.0135887	0.0152232	0.893	0.37211	
v6	-0.0442487	0.0192485	-2.299	0.02157	*
v7	0.0884929	0.0352288	2.512	0.01205	*
v8	0.1751524	0.0280083	6.254	4.49e-10	***
v19	0.1388684	0.0315306	4.404	1.09e-05	***
v20	-0.0469841	0.0290204	-1.619	0.10554	
v21	0.0652974	0.0199572	3.272	0.00108	**
v22	0.0214448	0.0153561	1.396	0.16265	
v23	-0.0026074	0.0168538	-0.155	0.87706	
v24	0.0338667	0.0233119	1.453	0.14638	
v25	0.0001489	0.0306007	0.005	0.99612	
v26	0.0352200	0.0309107	1.139	0.25461	
v27	0.0580852	0.0222231	2.614	0.00899	**

Signif. codes: 0 '***' 0.001 '**' 0.01 '*' 0.05 '.' 0.1 ' ' 1

Residual standard error: 0.9859 on 3544 degrees of freedom
Multiple R-squared: 0.05716, Adjusted R-squared: 0.05317
F-statistic: 14.32 on 15 and 3544 DF, p-value: < 2.2e-16

Results for v13 (Personal church involvement due to project):

Call:

lm(formula = formula, data = data_filtered)

Residuals:

	Min	1Q	Median	3Q	Max
	-2.05363	-0.22665	-0.12393	0.03656	1.31441

Coefficients:

	Estimate	Std. Error	t value	Pr(> t)	
(Intercept)	2.472677	0.075899	32.579	< 2e-16	***
v1	0.038981	0.013715	2.842	0.004504	**
v2	0.068926	0.013580	5.076	4.06e-07	***
v3	0.014212	0.005815	2.444	0.014580	*
v6	0.004756	0.007353	0.647	0.517808	
v7	0.050424	0.013457	3.747	0.000182	***
v8	0.051209	0.010699	4.786	1.77e-06	***

v19	0.007262	0.012045	0.603	0.546595	
v20	0.004025	0.011086	0.363	0.716566	
v21	0.035780	0.007624	4.693	2.79e-06	***
v22	0.023976	0.005866	4.087	4.46e-05	***
v23	-0.018373	0.006438	-2.854	0.004345	**
v24	0.004590	0.008905	0.515	0.606305	
v25	0.066062	0.011690	5.651	1.72e-08	***
v26	0.045807	0.011808	3.879	0.000107	***
v27	0.025105	0.008489	2.957	0.003125	**

Signif. codes: 0 '***' 0.001 '**' 0.01 '*' 0.05 '.' 0.1 ' ' 1

Residual standard error: 0.3766 on 3544 degrees of freedom
Multiple R-squared: 0.1527, Adjusted R-squared: 0.1491
F-statistic: 42.57 on 15 and 3544 DF, p-value: < 2.2e-16

Results for v14 (Personal church involvement due to VSU):

Call:
lm(formula = formula, data = data_filtered)

Residuals:

Min	1Q	Median	3Q	Max
-3.4779	-0.2184	-0.0699	0.4825	1.6753

Coefficients:

	Estimate	Std. Error	t value	Pr(> t)	
(Intercept)	2.610569	0.132121	19.759	< 2e-16	***
v1	-0.013004	0.023874	-0.545	0.58598	
v2	-0.010081	0.023640	-0.426	0.66979	
v3	0.019566	0.010123	1.933	0.05333	.
v6	-0.028750	0.012800	-2.246	0.02475	*
v7	-0.001395	0.023426	-0.060	0.95251	
v8	0.159672	0.018625	8.573	< 2e-16	*** #1
v19	0.120853	0.020967	5.764	8.92e-09	*** #2
v20	-0.060436	0.019298	-3.132	0.00175	**
v21	0.063153	0.013271	4.759	2.03e-06	*** #4
v22	0.019057	0.010211	1.866	0.06210	.

```

v23      0.021754   0.011207   1.941  0.05233 .
v24      0.082877   0.015502   5.346  9.54e-08 *** #3
v25     -0.013385   0.020349  -0.658  0.51070
v26      0.005590   0.020555   0.272  0.78566
v27      0.034865   0.014778   2.359  0.01837 *

```

Signif. codes: 0 '***' 0.001 '**' 0.01 '*' 0.05 '.' 0.1 ' ' 1

Residual standard error: 0.6556 on 3544 degrees of freedom
Multiple R-squared: 0.1024, Adjusted R-squared: 0.09863
F-statistic: 26.96 on 15 and 3544 DF, p-value: < 2.2e-16

Results for v15 (Community Harmony due to project):

Call:

```
lm(formula = formula, data = data_filtered)
```

Residuals:

```

      Min       1Q   Median       3Q      Max
-2.1401 -0.2236 -0.1214  0.0418  1.3222

```

Coefficients:

```

              Estimate Std. Error t value Pr(>|t|)
(Intercept)  2.369888   0.073856  32.088 < 2e-16 ***
v1            0.040483   0.013345   3.033 0.002435 **
v2            0.060586   0.013214   4.585 4.70e-06 ***
v3            0.004466   0.005659   0.789 0.430064
v6           -0.010907   0.007155  -1.524 0.127511
v7            0.087137   0.013095   6.654 3.29e-11 ***
v8            0.061376   0.010411   5.895 4.09e-09 ***
v19           0.005636   0.011721   0.481 0.630638
v20           0.007333   0.010787   0.680 0.496665
v21           0.036960   0.007418   4.982 6.59e-07 ***
v22           0.033984   0.005708   5.954 2.88e-09 ***
v23          -0.019367   0.006265  -3.091 0.002008 **
v24          -0.020755   0.008665  -2.395 0.016666 *
v25           0.092197   0.011375   8.105 7.17e-16 ***
v26           0.039335   0.011490   3.423 0.000625 ***

```

```
v27          0.026328   0.008261   3.187 0.001449 **
---
Signif. codes:  0 '***' 0.001 '**' 0.01 '*' 0.05 '.' 0.1 ' ' 1
```

```
Residual standard error: 0.3665 on 3544 degrees of freedom
Multiple R-squared:  0.181,    Adjusted R-squared:  0.1775
F-statistic: 52.22 on 15 and 3544 DF,  p-value: < 2.2e-16
```

Results for v16 (Community Harmony due to VSU):

```
Call:
lm(formula = formula, data = data_filtered)
```

```
Residuals:
    Min       1Q   Median       3Q      Max
-3.4998 -0.2415 -0.0996  0.5117  1.8899
```

```
Coefficients:
              Estimate Std. Error t value Pr(>|t|)
(Intercept)  2.5960493   0.1288545  20.147 < 2e-16 ***
v1           -0.0307131   0.0232833  -1.319  0.18722
v2            0.0412756   0.0230550   1.790  0.07349 .
v3            0.0039884   0.0098727   0.404  0.68625
v6           -0.0387204   0.0124832  -3.102  0.00194 **
v7           -0.0002617   0.0228469  -0.011  0.99086
v8            0.1772991   0.0181642   9.761 < 2e-16 ***
v19           0.0816617   0.0204485   3.994 6.64e-05 ***
v20          -0.0506938   0.0188206  -2.694  0.00710 **
v21           0.0724676   0.0129428   5.599 2.32e-08 ***
v22          -0.0014793   0.0099589  -0.149  0.88192
v23           0.0309377   0.0109302   2.830  0.00467 **
v24           0.0703387   0.0151184   4.653 3.40e-06 ***
v25          -0.0303812   0.0198454  -1.531  0.12589
v26           0.0384348   0.0200465   1.917  0.05528 .
v27           0.0441328   0.0144123   3.062  0.00221 **
```

```
---
Signif. codes:  0 '***' 0.001 '**' 0.01 '*' 0.05 '.' 0.1 ' ' 1
```

Residual standard error: 0.6394 on 3544 degrees of freedom
Multiple R-squared: 0.1029, Adjusted R-squared: 0.09913
F-statistic: 27.11 on 15 and 3544 DF, p-value: < 2.2e-16

Results for v17 (Community Development due to project):

Call:
lm(formula = formula, data = data_filtered)

Residuals:
Min 1Q Median 3Q Max
-2.08432 -0.22293 -0.12165 0.07471 1.38153

Coefficients:
Estimate Std. Error t value Pr(>|t|)
(Intercept) 2.4943943 0.0743633 33.543 < 2e-16 ***
v1 0.0108916 0.0134370 0.811 0.41767
v2 0.0277138 0.0133053 2.083 0.03733 *
v3 0.0245530 0.0056976 4.309 1.68e-05 ***
v6 -0.0093335 0.0072042 -1.296 0.19521
v7 0.0790220 0.0131852 5.993 2.26e-09 ***
v8 0.0960998 0.0104827 9.167 < 2e-16 ***
v19 -0.0007833 0.0118011 -0.066 0.94709
v20 0.0251990 0.0108616 2.320 0.02040 *
v21 0.0448045 0.0074694 5.998 2.19e-09 ***
v22 0.0300835 0.0057474 5.234 1.75e-07 ***
v23 -0.0165519 0.0063079 -2.624 0.00873 **
v24 0.0036948 0.0087250 0.423 0.67197
v25 0.0455100 0.0114530 3.974 7.22e-05 ***
v26 0.0253387 0.0115690 2.190 0.02857 *
v27 0.0410524 0.0083175 4.936 8.36e-07 ***

Signif. codes: 0 '***' 0.001 '**' 0.01 '*' 0.05 '.' 0.1 ' ' 1

Residual standard error: 0.369 on 3544 degrees of freedom
Multiple R-squared: 0.1833, Adjusted R-squared: 0.1798
F-statistic: 53.01 on 15 and 3544 DF, p-value: < 2.2e-16

Results for v18 (Community Development due to VSU):

Call:

```
lm(formula = formula, data = data_filtered)
```

Residuals:

	Min	1Q	Median	3Q	Max
	-3.4241	-0.2441	-0.0904	0.5007	1.9878

Coefficients:

	Estimate	Std. Error	t value	Pr(> t)	
(Intercept)	2.878069	0.128018	22.482	< 2e-16	***
v1	-0.082429	0.023132	-3.563	0.000371	***
v2	0.020729	0.022905	0.905	0.365535	
v3	-0.002327	0.009809	-0.237	0.812489	
v6	-0.028438	0.012402	-2.293	0.021907	*
v7	0.014542	0.022699	0.641	0.521800	
v8	0.196880	0.018046	10.910	< 2e-16	***
v19	0.184010	0.020316	9.058	< 2e-16	***
v20	-0.123130	0.018698	-6.585	5.22e-11	***
v21	0.066801	0.012859	5.195	2.16e-07	***
v22	-0.003685	0.009894	-0.372	0.709598	
v23	0.034982	0.010859	3.221	0.001287	**
v24	0.055176	0.015020	3.673	0.000243	***
v25	-0.001976	0.019717	-0.100	0.920167	
v26	-0.047988	0.019916	-2.409	0.016026	*
v27	0.052576	0.014319	3.672	0.000244	***

Signif. codes: 0 '***' 0.001 '**' 0.01 '*' 0.05 '.' 0.1 ' ' 1

Residual standard error: 0.6352 on 3544 degrees of freedom

Multiple R-squared: 0.1165, Adjusted R-squared: 0.1128

F-statistic: 31.17 on 15 and 3544 DF, p-value: < 2.2e-16

Appendix G - Training Manual

SCRIPTURE USE RESEARCH AND MINISTRY

TRAINING MANUAL

FOR LOCAL SURVEYORS AND MINISTRY VOLUNTEERS

September 2022

INTRODUCTION

Scripture Use Research and Ministry (SURAM), was developed by SIL Papua New Guinea in 2014 to answer these questions;

- To what extent are the vernacular Scripture translations produced by SIL in Papua New Guinea (PNG) used?
- What are the crucial factors that help or hinder Vernacular Scripture Use (VSU) in a given language community?
- What can SIL PNG (and other entities within SIL International) learn from these findings, leading to better practices/strategies and more effective and sustainable?

A total of 11 communities in Papua New Guinea were surveyed, meanwhile, Scripture engagement (SE) activities were also carried out alongside. In the context of SURAM Cameroon, we shall be:

- Evaluating the level of Mother tongue Scripture use and impact in 28 chosen communities that had their mother tongue scripture translated between 2007 – 2017.
- Identify and Analyze factors that influence the use and impact of mother tongue scripture use.
- Present recommendations based on the findings of the study.
- Bolster mother tongue Scripture use in the participating communities.

These communities are spread across 7 out of 10 regions of Cameroon giving a favorable representation for a survey of this magnitude.

To meet the above objectives, SURAM Cameroon shall proceed with a community survey and ministry activities during their visits to these communities. Through the survey, we shall obtain analyzable data which will help us come out with results. The ministry part on the other hand is aimed at revitalizing Scripture use in these communities.

SURAM Cameroon will need the help of community members of good standing to help with the accomplishment of this task. They will be field surveyors and scripture engagement field workers.

The rest of the content in this write-up will serve as a manual to recruit and train these community workers on how to carry out these assignments properly.

We shall attempt to clarify the criteria for recruiting Field surveyors and SE field workers, how they will be trained, and what they will be expected to do in the field.

I. SURVEY

I.1 DEFINITIONS OF CONCEPTS

Maxime de Boileau: "What is well conceived is clearly stated / And the words to say it come easily". To better understand this manual, some concepts will be defined.

Survey

"Carrying out a survey means questioning a certain number of individuals to generalize". Ghiglione and Matalon (1998). The survey is particularly suitable for research that wants to investigate opinions, attitudes, beliefs, perceptions, experiences, or behaviors.

I.2 THE MAIN TYPES OF SURVEY

There are two main groups of surveys: interview surveys and questionnaire surveys.

I.2.1 Interview Surveys

An interview or face-to-face survey is a survey done by an individual asking questions to another individual or a group of individuals to obtain clear information about a subject matter.

- a. The **non-directive interview**: This is an interview during which the interviewer is completely free in the answers he brings, based on the subject matter. In this case, the interviewer poses stimulus questions and guides the discussion. During this time, he just listens and observes.
- b. The **semi-structured interview**: This type of interview is aimed to obtain a certain number of answers from an "interview guide" previously prepared for this purpose. In this case, questions are usually chosen and prepared ahead of time.
- c. **Group interviews**: Like face-to-face surveys, the focus group survey method is in-person. The only difference is that there is a group of people (around 6-10). The group is selected to represent the survey's target population. The focus group survey method favors:
 - Social perceptions and behaviors and
 - encourages the emergence of new opinions.

I.3 SURVEYS QUESTIONNAIRE

I.3.1 Definition of the questionnaire

A questionnaire is a technique for collecting quantifiable data that comes in the form of a series of questions asked in a specific order.

A questionnaire is a tool regularly used in the social sciences (sociology, psychology, marketing). It also allows you to collect a large number of information or opinions. The information obtained can be analyzed through a statistical table or a graph. *“The main function of the questionnaire is to give the survey a wider scope and to verify statistically to what extent the information and hypotheses previously constituted are generalizable”.* (Combessie, 2007).

I.3.2 Characteristics of a questionnaire

- A questionnaire has several questions.
- A questionnaire is generalistic.
- A questionnaire takes into consideration an adequate number and a representative sample.
- A questionnaire seeks to confirm a given hypothesis.

For the sake of our study, the document will use two survey techniques, a face-to-face survey (semi-structured interview with church leaders and focus groups for women, men, and youths, and a translation team), and a survey through the administration of questionnaires to answer our hypothesis and objectives of SURAM Cameroon. Other survey methods are.

- Direct observation survey method
- Experimentation method
- Trace studies method
- The poll method.

SURAM Cameroon will however concentrate on the interview and survey questionnaire methods.

I.4 PRACTICAL ASPECTS

I.4.1 Wording of questions

The wording always depends on what the questionnaire is looking for. Thus, the question may seek to understand behavior or may be aimed to understand if the interviewee knows a particular subject matter. It may also require the interviewee to give an opinion on a topic or an intention on a giving matter.

I.4.2 Administering a questionnaire

When it comes to an interview method, the data is collected in a direct face-to-face approach. On the other hand, a questionnaire can either be administered by the interviewer or self-administered.

I.4.2.1 Instructions to surveyors and Scripture engagement field workers

Respect all the instructions given by the Survey Team leader as follows:

- The field workers must dress properly in order to carry out their assignments.
- Politeness and courtesy should be observed in the field.
- Ensure a convenient and secure venue for the interview and SE activities.
- Make sure that the interviewee has consented to the interview
- Master all the survey questions very well.
- The surveyor should not lose focus of the questionnaires.
- All equipment including survey questionnaires must be handed in a good state to the survey team leader at the close of the day.

I.4.2.2 Procedure for administering a questionnaire

In most cases, the interviewer is in a face-to-face situation where he asks the questions and records the answers. This requires certain qualities on his part he should be able to make the interview interesting;

- Properly introduce him/herself and the SURAM project and goals.
- Reassure the interviewee of utmost anonymity and confidentiality of the interview and their freedom to answer a question or not.
- Take note of the interviewee's level of understanding.
- The interviewer should be sure of the interviewee's answer before noting it down.
- Ask clear and precise questions.
- Transcribe all answers into the answer sheet accordingly and faithfully.

I.4.3 Familiarization with the questionnaire

Generally, the questionnaires include demographic information that usually comes at the beginning or the end of the questionnaire. This part of the questionnaire could be very useful when analyzing data. The most familiar information includes sex, age, and social status. The questionnaire is structured as follows:

- The filling procedures are consistent.
- The questions are in line with the objective and hypothesis which are being verified.
- The questions are logical and sequentially, making them easy to understand.
- The questions are closed-ended and the answers are based on a rating system from numbers 1 – 5. 1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest.

I.4.4 Organization of the conduct of the survey

- Training of proposed and selected surveyors.
- Pilot survey in one of the churches proposed by the church leaders. a minimum of 40 people must be interviewed on this day.
- General orientation on the conduct of the survey the following days: handing out of equipment and deployment of surveyors to the field.
- Surveying with the different focus groups.
- Feedback from the survey team and perspectives for the following day.

II. SCRIPTURE ENGAGEMENT (MINISTRY)

Scripture engagement (Ministry) involves accessing, understanding, and interacting meaningfully with the life-changing message of the word of God. Various Scripture engagement techniques have been developed by Bible agencies together with communities.

SURAM Cameroon will exploit the participatory approach to ministry in these 28 communities. This approach seeks to get community stakeholders to actively participate by bringing to the table the ministry needs of the community. This will enable SURAM and community leaders to seek workable and sustainable solutions to these needs and also to massively mobilize the community to participate.

The ministry's needs in the different communities abound, but SURAM Cameroon will focus on the needs expressed by the communities during the meeting with the leaders.

II.1 PRACTICAL ASPECTS

Bible agencies and SE consultants have developed various techniques of SE. We shall explore some of them below.

II.1.1 Bible study

One of the best ways to help Christians during Bible study is to organize groups within the church. The phrase Bible study can mean different things in different places. The type of Bible study recommended for SURAM is a small group study rather than just one person preaching or teaching. We can use text in oral or written format.

After understanding a passage, the facilitator needs to come out with questions that would help people discover what God is saying to them through that particular Scripture. There are four major questions.

- **Polar questions:** yes or no response. Not very good because participants can respond without thinking about the passage.
- **Content questions:** The answers are found in the passage. It helps people understand what the text says.
- **Reflection Questions:** Demands a response requires thinking about the passage as a whole rather than just a particular verse. It makes people think deeply about the text and search for answers. Usually, they begin with “why”.
- **Application Questions:** It does not have any clear answer from the text but helps people to apply the text to their lives.

Examples of questions for a Bible Study (audio or using a text):

- “Can we repeat what we have read or heard in our own words?”
- “What touched your heart from what you heard or read?”
- “What do we learn about God from what you heard?”
- “What was God telling the people at that time?”
- “What is God saying to you personally and what will you do about it?”
- “Who will you tell?”

II.1.2 Gospel and culture

- How do we live in a way that honors God while still being culturally meaningful?
- How do we use Scripture to both evaluate cultural practices and discern what to do?

- When cultural practices and values clash with obedience to God, what do we do?
- When pressures from family/community require us to behave in an ungodly way or participate in certain ceremonies, what choices do we make?
- How can we make choices that align with Scripture—especially when the costs are great and when - cultural beliefs are powerfully ingrained? Can we do this while still being culturally relevant?
- Which beliefs and practices agree with scripture? Which beliefs and practices need to be modified?
- Analyze the functions of any belief and practices that you feel need to be removed and propose functional substitutes that are acceptable for Christians.

II.1.3 The Use of Local Arts in Ministry (Ethnoarts)

Involving a community in creating new Scripture-infused works out of their faith in their culture means artists and communities more fully own their faith. Although not every arts-based activity strengthens every condition for Scripture engagement, arts-based activities can strengthen all eight conditions for Scripture engagement (Petersen 2017 summarizing Schrag 2013). Meet a Community and its Arts. Make a Community Arts List (CAL) together. List local artistic genres. Under each genre, list who does it, for what kinds of purposes, at what kinds of events, and what kinds of people especially like it.

1. **Specify a Kingdom Goal** together. Decide the purpose of the new works or events.
2. **Select Content, Genre, and Event(s)**: Leaders and artists ponder, study, and discuss
 - a) *Content*: Scripture and its applications;
 - b) *Genre*: What local form(s) is/are appropriate for expressing this message? and
 - c) *Event(s)*: When are good times for conveying messages of this type, or for what events do we need new creations?
3. **Analyze** events that contain the genre to see how the art form works well. Describe together the space typically used, the materials used, how participant organization works well (who does what), the shape through time (the order in which parts of the event occur), the performance features (what attributes characterize how it happens), the content (what messages are conveyed and their meanings), and underlying symbolic systems (artistic grammatical rules, lexicon, and implicit meanings). Decide together which genres are most appropriate to meet which goals.
4. **Spark Creativity**: Create new works together in the chosen genre. Determine who creates what kind of work, for what uses, under whose authority, by what process, and with whose approval.
5. **Improve New Works** by a) team, b) community, and c) consultant checking each new work before a wider release. Ask first the creative team, secondly one or more respected advisors, and finally, representatives of the intended audience (who have

not been part of the creative process) to evaluate the work. Ask community representatives questions like these to verify the work meets its goal:

- *Content*: What is it about? What is happening? How will people understand this?
 - *Meaning*: What do you learn from it? What will people learn from it?
 - *Strengths*: What do you like about it? What do many people like about it?
 - *Suggestions*: How can we improve it? What may offend someone? How can we make it clearer? Is this communication natural for the genre we are using? How well can other people use it, catch on to it, or participate in it?
6. **Integrate and Celebrate**: Work with the community to create ongoing times for using the new works for their intended purposes with gatekeepers' approval. Discuss when the works will be introduced to the community, what function they will serve, and who will teach others how to use them. Publicize the new works and events.

II.1.4 Trauma healing

One way to show people that the Bible is relevant to their lives is to do what is called an integrated Bible study to address their human concerns. This type of study combines material from Scripture with information from other fields to help meet the needs of the community. Examples of trauma healing topics are; Where does suffering come from, why is there sin in the world, and should men grieve?

II.1.5 Listening groups

Bible listening programs, such as those facilitated in partnership with Faith Comes By Hearing, are based on Romans 10:17 "Faith Comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God."

Listening groups bring together a congregation, a local church, a community, a language group, a literacy class, a group of individuals, or a family to listen to a portion of the audio Bible in their mother tongue or a language they understand for at least 30 minutes and allow participants to ask questions and have their doubts clarified. During the listening process, the audio is stopped from time to time to ask questions, similar to those used in a Bible study, to ensure that people are listening and follow-up is being done.⁵¹

⁵¹ Margetts, Richard. 2016. *Bible Listening Groups Training Guide: An Interactive Workshop for Training Listening Group Leaders and Promoters*.
<http://scripture-engagement.org/content/bible-listening-groups-training-guide>

Language celebrations with the community

At the end of each trip, SURAM intends to celebrate the language of that community.

While the survey and ministry work are going on, the community and the population will be mobilized and invited for a language celebration at the end of the survey trip.

The program on that day would be as follows.

- Prayers
- A worship time with hymns in the local language. Choir animation.
- Speeches (by Christian leaders, representatives of each community group, traditional authorities, translation team, SURAM team). Everyone will intervene for a maximum of 3 minutes.
- Various performances according to the activities that have been prepared.
- Awards of prizes if any.

II.2 Conditions of eligibility for field workers in survey and Scripture Engagement

While taking gender into consideration, the following criteria will be used to select these field workers.

- Have strong faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and be willing to serve.
- Be open-minded and understand the interdenominational milieu very well.
- Should be willing to learn.
- Have some knowledge of surveys (for field surveyors).
- Have some knowledge of Scripture engagement (for SE field workers).
- Ability to speak the mother tongue will be an added advantage.
- Be able to read and write either English or French.
- Can easily work in a team.
- Should have a good physical and mental capacity.
- Should be a member of a local church in the community surveyed.
- Should have a good salvation testimony and be of good standing in the community.
- A good knowledge of the geography of the community will be an added advantage.

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