

But how can we keep the work going?

Maybe we could take 30% pay cuts.

Maybe we can go to the churches in our country and see if we can get funds another way, or maybe we could start a business (Kingdom business) together that can generate income to support the work of Bible translation in Africa.

My friend Pauline Mwanzia is the HR Director for the Africa Area Office. Unlike most Americans involved in Bible translation, general giving to Wycliffe pays for salaries for many dedicated Kenyans including Pauline.

There was a decrease in giving. Pauline was given the news to deliver to her staff that layoffs would be necessary in the next months; potentially half the staff might be let go. Pauline called a meeting to deliver bad news: Layoffs coming.

She expected what we would expect: people would be concerned about losing their jobs and paying their rents, school fees for their children etc. She didn't expect the reaction she got. *But if half of us leave, those people who don't yet have the Bible in their own language will have to wait longer. That can't be. How can we keep the work going?* They started brainstorming. The focus of the meeting Pauline thought would be about addressing fears was about Bible translation.

Pauline was encouraged. She said: here we have these people committed to Bible translation. We have the laborers. We just don't have the creative strategy to pay them. Yet. We don't know what God is doing, but we see God at work here.

And I was encouraged by Pauline, who, along with her staff, is facing a potential job loss in the coming months. Pauline has worked for 20 years as an employee in the Bible translation movement. More than an income, although the income loss is a huge concern, Pauline wants to see those still waiting have access to God's word in their own language sooner rather than later.

You, me, Pauline, those people on Pauline's staff, and other people none of us have met yet, all have the same God given passion for the people still waiting for God's Word. I like that. Even in the face of bad news, I like that.

Is there a problem in Cameroon? (while I'm speaking of bad news...)

An email administrator stopped by my office to see if I'd heard anything from Cameroon. The email server there hadn't picked up mail from its queue since Friday. I checked the emergency contact list and dialed a cell phone in Cameroon.

"We've had a lightning strike" was the discouraging reply. "The equipment we use to connect to the internet was fried as well as many of our network switches. And after the switches, the lightning also damaged servers and PCs."

With a feeling something like being kicked in the stomach, knowing the work and the expense just to get the network back where it was and in the meantime all those in the office are unable to do their jobs, I mumbled to Francis I would pray and wished I could help. While he hasn't finished the list of things to replace, his list stands at \$2,700 of damaged equipment (switches, wireless access points, motherboard, and network cards). And, of course, equipment purchased locally costs twice what it costs to buy in the US but if we buy it and ship it, it'll be that much longer before the network is back up and people can work again...

It looks bad. But...

1. An alert email admin checked; we had an emergency contact cell phone; and if nothing else, I felt Francis' pain when his customers waiting for him to get the network back up might not understand as well.
2. The IT guys there were able to get all the important stuff (not the whole network, but email and internet access for a few people at a time) up within two days and without our help. (I know "without our help" might not make sense but I was proud that they did it without us. I recall past issues that involved hours consulting, remotely connected to the server there to diagnose issues over frustratingly slow connections, not sure whether we were doing the things that cause real development for them or just creating dependencies on us. And here it was, proof that we're no longer needed. Super cool.). I like that. Even in the face of bad news, I like that.

Also, it looks bad, but God knows... Pauline's staff and the work in Kenya, the network in Cameroon, whatever big or little deal looks like bad news to you or me. It only *looks* like bad news... but GOD...

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