



Baines Broadcast

April 2006

David and Evelyn Baines.
Serving with SIL in Chad.

The Kera New Testament Dedication

JAA TƏMARWAJ ' means 'New Friendship'.

There were many speeches and a great deal of rejoicing as the Kera welcomed the New Testament in their own tongue. Previously, they would say to outsiders that they were Tupuri, the neighbouring tribe, as they felt the Tupuri were more prestigious. They are now proud to be called Kera because they have God's "New Friendship" in their language.

A Story

Our colleague, Jackie Hainaut, spoke at the dedication telling the Kera a story of a man who was starving along with all his family. He worked hard to find a little food. Fortunately a friend saw his need and gave him a big sack of grain. The man was overjoyed! He put the sack in the storeroom and was happy every time he thought about the sack of grain. Some time later, the friend noticed that the man and his family were still wasting away. He asked him: 'What happened to the sack of grain I gave you?' and the friend replied he still had it, was very grateful for it and it made him happy every time he thought about it. Neither he nor his family had eaten any of the grain! You can imagine the friend's reaction! Jackie urged the people not just to put the New Testament on a shelf to show it off to others, but to learn to read, and to feed on the Word of God.

'Here it is, Here it is!'

During the celebration a group of people danced in, carrying boxes of the first Kera New Testaments and singing: 'Here it is, Here it is!'. Later on, others danced in carrying the head and feet of a cow that had been killed for the meal afterwards. The Kera rarely eat meat and for them it was important to show that they had meat to eat for this celebration. In the afternoon, New Testaments were sold, first to those who had travelled from afar to attend. Some had travelled from Douala, a 3-day journey. People were so eager to buy them. More than 2000 copies were sold in the first 3 days!

Trouble in Chad.

Tensions have been growing steadily in Chad since mid October. Rebel factions who oppose the President have gathered in the east of the country and started attacking villages. People now need to drive in convoys between towns. Our level of contingency was raised to a level 2 which involves having a backpack of essentials ready at all times should we need to be evacuated. These tensions have an impact on our work here: we need wisdom to decide if we should travel outside of Ndjamenas as we did when we celebrated Christmas in Bitkine, when we travelled to attend the Kera New Testament dedication and later when we visited the Mother Tongue Education projects near Kelo.

Highlights

December 2005: *At Christmas, we spend a week with Olwen and Ursula in Bitkine and have a lovely time! On the 27th, 2 men and 30+ Arab women come for a meal at Olwen's. When she had visited them previously, they had asked to be invited to one of Olwen's festivals. This is quite a breakthrough!! David talks with the men in French, Evelyn sits with the women and tries to communicate with them. She comes away determined to learn Chadian Arabic!*

January 2006: *After 3 weeks of repairs to our house, we are relieved to have it to ourselves again!*

February: *2 weeks of Branch Retreat and Conference go well. Evelyn is relieved that the catering and accommodation on centre worked out fine. We enjoy the teaching of Chris Wright during the retreat.*

The Kera New Testament is dedicated, 2000 sold in 3 days!

March: *Evelyn hands over the supervision of the Training Centre after 14 months. She's very glad to have just the one job rather than three!*

We travel down to Kelo, visit some preschool classes taught in the Mother Tongue, meet village leaders and parents who are supportive of the project.

April: *We have a weekend away with some colleagues.*

Lowlights: *in January: A demonstration turns violent, a friend is attacked and her car burnt. We remain alert after an attempted coup and general unrest in the country.*

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What's new in IT?

The Technical Support department has been working on several new developments. We installed a replacement file server for the administrative offices. It gives us more space for our data and should be more reliable as it runs a 'RAID' of 4 hard drives; should one fail the data can be recreated from the other drives. We have a permanent internet connection, but it is slower than anticipated and we haven't yet made internet access generally available to SIL members.

Another new technology we have been experimenting with is wireless networking. During conference and retreat people were able to access the office network wirelessly. The range of wireless networks has improved considerably over the past few years, and this has made it a useful technology for the SIL centre. We hope that before too long we will be able to wirelessly surf the web and access the office network from anywhere on centre!

Mother Tongue Education (M.T.E.)

In November 2005, the first MTE training course took place. SIL teams and partners who took part went back to their villages to set up preschool classes in their language. In March, we travelled with Elisabeth Gfeller to Kelo, in southern Chad, to visit some preschool classes. It was exciting to see how the children, who are taught in their own language, were keen to answer their teacher's questions. It was clear they understood much more than those we'd seen being taught in French. We came away pleased to see how much teaching children to read, write and count in their own language makes a positive difference!

We really appreciate your partnership with us in this work! Thank you for your prayers and your words of encouragement.

With our love, *David and Evelyn*

Praise the Lord with us.

- It was exciting for us to take part in the dedication of the Kera New testament - the first to be completed by SIL Chad! Pray that the 'New Friendship' will bring many to Christ and strengthen the faith of the believers.
- For a safe visit of Mother Tongue Education projects in the south.

Pray with us.

- For the Mother Tongue Education classes that have begun and others that are now being planned.
- For the upcoming elections on May 3rd: for peace and stability in the country. That we would remain alert and wise while trusting God for our security.
- Continue to pray for openness to the Gospel among the peoples of Chad.

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