

- Bible Day 2020 -



Sango Translation Checking



Ferd & Ina Rosenau



Sango Translation Team. 1960

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Ferd & Ina Rosenau



Sango Translation Team. 1960

The Original Sango Bible Committee

When Ferd Rosenau and his wife, Ina, some of Baptist Mid-Missions' earliest missionaries, went out to the heart of Africa in 1920, Ferd had two main goals. The first of these goals was to learn the Sango (Sahng-go) language well enough to translate the Bible into that language. Secondly, he desired to teach men to preach from that Bible. He could not have known in 1920 that he would lay down his life in an effort to see the Sango Bible published.

Part of Ferd and Ina's lifetime ministry was to rear children who also had a love for Central Africans and their language. They succeeded in doing this. That love was passed on to sons, Eugene and Bruce.

Recently retired president of Baptist Mid-Missions, Dr. Vernon Rosenau, grew up in the Central African Republic, where Bible translation work was a part of his parents' life. Eugene and Ernestine Rosenau had inherited a burden for the translation of the Word of God from Eugene's parents, Ferd and Ina Rosenau. Often, Dr. Rosenau heard his parents proofreading the text of the Bible. One parent would read aloud to the other: "capital letter, comma, period ..." so they didn't miss any punctuation. Since they had no computers or word processors at that time, one person

read the corrected manuscript to the other, including all punctuation as we do today in the talk-to-text process.

The logistics were challenging. Dr. Rosenau has a letter written by his mother to another committee member. "I have paper for the next meeting—21 pieces. That should be enough." Clara de Rosset joined BMM in 1944, a secretary from the corporate world. She typed the entire Bible three times, making carbon copies as she went. Her typing ability was legendary.

With the help of Brethren missionaries, the Sango team saw the New Testament completed and printed in 1935. Then work began on the Old Testament. That work, along with a revision of the New Testament, was finally completed and published in 1966. But it did not come soon enough for Ferd Rosenau. Cancer took his life as he waited to see a copy of the entire Sango Bible. He is buried in his beloved, adopted country.

In the words of Dr. Vernon Rosenau, "Grandpa and Grandma [Ferd and Ina] gave their lives to the Sango Bible." And thousands have come to know the Lord due to the efforts of early committee members.

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God's Word Still Changes Lives

Just as the translation work of the Sango Bible Committee changed the lives of many people, God's Word continues to do the same today. Without His Word in their own language, people struggle to understand God's truth. They may trust Christ, but without His Word in a language they can easily understand, spiritual growth is very difficult.

If you would like to be involved in the life-changing ministry of Bible translation, you may contact Bibles International at 616.942.7712 or inbox@biblesint.org.



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