The Future of the Bible Translation Movement Survey
Conducted by the Wycliffe Global Alliance
Analysis and Report
(13 May 2020 version)
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction
During the last two weeks of April 2020, an online survey was offered to the directors of Wycliffe Global Alliance Organizations. The purpose was to identify what the Bible translation movement could look like during and after the Covid-19 pandemic. It was a means of determining how Alliance Organizations were affected, thus far, by the crisis and it offers a glimpse of how leaders are thinking about and preparing for the future.

Response overview
The survey asked seven questions. The first two looked at an organization's current primary needs and goals in the Bible translation movement. Emergent themes included collaboration and partnership (with organizations and churches), noting that this requires healthy communication in challenging contexts. Reasons for participating together may be the spiritual motivation of the Great Commission or specific goals for Vision 2025. Another theme was the opportunity to learn from changing contexts, re-evaluate, and reconceptualize what participation looks like. There was also emphasis on the Bible translation movement's continuing need for people, particularly those with certain types of expertise, skills, and experience and especially the next generation. Funding was another theme, with some organizations expecting a downturn in their funding. Others are looking for new sources and new ways of working with funding partners. Other themes included Bible translation program involvement, transformational impact, holistic ministry, training (including the use of online platforms), and the need for Old Testament and full Bible translations, while also adapting to digital production and distribution.

The third question asked what could prevent an organization from participating in the Bible translation movement. Leaders mentioned potential hinderances, both internal and external, but remained largely positive, focusing on God accomplishing what He intends regardless of organizational "successes" or "failures". Speculated hindrances included lack of interest and participation from the church, government regulations (regarding travel, missions, and HR policies), lack of resources, and reluctance to change. Other concerns included potential shortages of volunteers, short-term, and long-term personnel. The most frequently mentioned and most likely limitation was the potential lack of donors and funding. Several leaders also mentioned lack of vision and spiritual commitment as possible hinderances.

The fourth question explored how organizations are seeing God currently working. God's faithfulness and control were a primary undercurrent in the leader's responses. Organizations are recognizing His provision and that He has plans even when they don't understand. Along with this was the recognition of their own vulnerability and the need for trust. Leaders saw this time as an opportunity to "reset" and discern God's priorities

for their participation. They were observing the growth of local leadership, dependency on local resources, and a spirit of collaboration. They saw God awakening them to increased prayer and greater depth of relationship. Leaders have been surprised by God's provision on new personnel, new leaders, new funding and new thinking during this time.

The fifth question asked what new opportunities God might be opening. Leaders again responded concerning increased local leadership, greater collaboration (referencing technology and the need to work differently). Numerous examples of creativity and innovation included new ways of reaching people, new thinking about funding, and an increase in flexible working styles and approaches. Leaders cited new developments in technology, training, translation and mobilization methodologies, and mentioned new opportunities to collaborate with governments.

The sixth and seventh questions explored the future in terms of rethinking an organization's goals and what its unique contributions could be in the future. While some organizations are rethinking goals and priorities, others are content with their goals but are looking for new ways to reach them. Both groups indicated a realization that times, contexts, and the church worldwide have changed and will continue to change. The desire to see increasing local leadership of translation projects and related ministry is not new, but has been brought to the forefront for some organizations as a result of the Covid-19 situation. The same applies to the increased use of technology and increased collaborative thinking and participation. "New" factors that can be credited to the current virus context include increased dependence on God and each other; an opportunity, in some situations, to slow down and rethink, reorganize, and review goals, values, and strategies; and a new appreciation for relationships, both virtual and in person. These factors are changing attitudes and activities. Organizations are also taking time to consider their "uniqueness," or at least what skills, gifts and unique opportunities they might have. The range of skills and gifts is impressive and timely and the accompanying attitudes are critical for this era. The open-handedness, open minds, flexibility, generosity, and spiritual focus of the leaders who participated in this survey indicate that there is a body of believers who are truly desiring to be a body, truly desiring to participate in God's mission, and willing to trust Him for the future of the Bible translation movement.

Conclusion
In this survey, it was not just the optimism in the face of a pandemic that was encouraging. What was most encouraging was the evidence of a willingness to follow, change, collaborate, and serve that predates the Covid-19 situation by years and that continues through the current tumultuous times and into the future, whatever it may hold. Leaders recognized the current context as another bend in the road, or hill to climb, but they hold steady on their journey. They bring the gifts God has given them and are also willing to let them go. They proceed in faith and yet are willing to survey the terrain and adjust course as needed. And, as one leader said, they "...trust in God that he would use this crisis for his glory and purpose" (AP8).

ANALYSIS AND REPORT

Research methodology

At the request of Stephen Coertze, Kirk Franklin and Susan Van Wynen conducted research to develop a picture of what the Alliance will look like, post-Covid-19. The following questions were sent out by Phil Prior to all the Alliance Organizations through an email giving a link to an online survey, as represented below:

> Please briefly answer the following as you consider the likely impact of the Covid-19 crisis on your organisation's longer-term vision, purpose and strategies.
> Imagine the crisis is past, please briefly answer the following:
> 1. What are my organisation's primary needs as it participates in the Bible translation movement?
> 2. What are my organisation's primary goals in the Bible Translation Movement?
> 3. Looking ahead, what could stop my organization from meeting its goal of participating in the Bible translation movement?
> 4. How am I seeing God working in various ways?
> 5. What new opportunities might God be opening?
> 6. Looking ahead, how might I need to rethink my organisation's goals?
> 7. What unique contributions could my organisation bring to the Bible translation movement?

The survey was released on 15 April in English and 7-10 days later in Indonesian, Portuguese, French and Spanish. The survey was closed on 30 April (with two included responses coming in on 1 May). In total there were 39 responses out of 108 recipient email addresses. This is an excellent response rate of 36%.

Responses are categorized as follows:

Area	Tag	No. of responses
Africa	AF1, etc.	7
Asia-Pacific	AP1, etc.	9
Europe	EU1, etc.	10
Latin America	LA1, etc.	8
North America	NA1, etc.	5
	Total	**39**

Due to considerable geographic, cultural and linguistic differences between Latin and North America in the Americas Area, the groupings are split into North America (Canada and US, excluding Mexico) and Latin America (including Mexico and Brazil).

The Global North and South breakdown is:

Region	Description	Non-participation	No. of responses	% of total
Global South	Latin America, Asia and Africa	Pacific and Caribbean	23	59%
Global North	Australia, Europe, US and Canada	New Zealand	16	41%

In order to keep the responses anonymous, if a respondent mentioned his/her country/nation or organization name it was substituted with '[country]' or '…'. As much

as possible, direct quotes were used with the identity tag indicating the region and assigned number of the person being quoted.

Research analysis
Each question is analysed through a summary of the responses that are grouped into noticeable themes for each question. Observations are then made that may influence strategies and engagement by participants in the Bible translation movement (referred to as 'movement' often throughout).

Question 1: What are my organisation's primary needs as it participates in the Bible translation movement?

Theme 1: Collaboration
Summary: Collaborating, partnering and networking is expressed in various ways such as: "collaboration with other organizations in the movement" (EU10), "joint strategizing" (AP7), and "coming closer to… partners" (EU2) who are "strong [and] who we can work with" (EU5). There's a desire to find "areas [to] contribute and [partner] with local organizations" (AP2). Leaders want to learn "from expertise within the movement" (AP7) and to "understand… field partners" because the contexts of their ministry have been affected by the pandemic (NA5). Collaboration is sometimes hampered by difficult working relationships with partners (EU9). Partnering needs to move beyond "commercially-minded entities eager to earn money [or] the partners who only come to earn money and influence" (EU9). A sense of "belonging to the global movement" is important and advantageous to an organization's needs (EU10).

Collaborating includes "prayer support from individuals and churches" (AP8, EU10). Drawing "closer to the Church" (EU2) is a new opportunity for some organizations. This starts with a "clear vision for the churches" (AP3) that includes "tools and chances to keep in contact" (EU8). Churches may need help to "understand how the mission field has changed" and how this opens new opportunities for their involvement in the movement (LA1).

Observations: Sixteen leaders (41% of total respondents) gave the theme of collaborating and partnering within the movement and with churches as a primary need. There is some awareness that partnering and collaborating within the movement will look different post-Covid-19. This creates opportunities for learning about the changing contexts, and sharing that learning within the movement and with the churches.

Theme 2: People
Summary: "People" (AP1), or "members" (EU1), "personnel" (LA2) or "human resources" (LA4) are still needed in the movement. But, not just anyone. People need to be "quality" (AF1), the "right" ones (AF5), "competent… with gifts, calling and maturity" (EU10), "with vision, discernment and skills" (EU3) and mentally sound (AF2). Some people need to be financially "supported… for administration work" or "able to raise support to work within [their] own country" (EU4). "Expertise" (AP1) is needed that includes roles of "keyboarders and team supervisors" (EU6), "administration" staff (EU4) and "leaders" (EU10).

New people are still wanted. Therefore, "mobilization strategies" (AP5) and "events" (LA2) are needed to "find new candidates" (AP5). A focus is the "young generation" (AP3) or "young missionaries" (AP8). The "freedom of movement" (LA2) may affect how people are trained and "work remotely" (AP6). "Systems [make] it possible… to work together" (EU10). Some current personnel may not be able to return where they were working so "exit strategies" may be needed (EU7). This requires "good communication with implementing" partners (EU7).

Observations: Sixteen leaders (41%) gave the theme of people involvement as a priority. People need to be skilled, mature, gifted and aware of their calling. Some organizations require certain types of expertise. Opportunities are arising for encouraging the next generation to consider serving in the movement. On another note, some people may not be able to return to their countries of service and may have to work remotely. Healthy communication with partners is needed as new ways of working are explored.

Theme 3: Funding
Summary: "Resources" (AP1) such as "people, prayer and money" (EU5) are needed. "Adequate funding" (EU1), "funding" (EU1, NA2), "finances" (LA2) and "financing" (AF6), "on-going financial support" (AF2) and "stable funding" (AF3) are common themes expressing financial needs. Organizations that are funders need "wisdom to attract new donors and audiences" (NA1). Local organizations need "both foreign and local support" and "partners" to ensure translation work continues (AF3). The likelihood of a downturn of "possibly significantly… donations" is expected by some (EU7).

Observations: Eleven leaders (28%) stated how funding is a priority. Funds are needed for ongoing projects, and are needed from local and overseas partners. Some organizations expect a downturn in their funding. Others are looking for opportunities to engage with new funding partners.

Theme 4: Training
Summary: "Face-to-face… training" (LA1) and "academic training resources" (LA6) needs to be reconceptualized to take advantage of "virtual platforms" (LA6). Some organizations offer expertise such as "exegetes [and] consultants" (LA6). Some training organizations want to make a "greater contribution" and are looking for "more student[s] to educate" (NA4).

Observations: Three leaders (7%) noted that training people for the movement is an interest or concern. Some are aware of how more can be done with online or virtual platforms. There is the need for additional students.

Theme 5: Leadership, management and spiritual health
Summary: Times like this are opportune for reflecting, "moving… together [and] seeking God's guidance" (EU2). As we "come closer to the Lord" (EU2), we hope for the "Word of God [to] reach… people in the language that speaks to their hearts" (AF7). This is also an opportunity to see "effective leadership and management" (AF1) that brings "innovation" (LA3), decides how to "cover lost ground" (AF2) and "determine[s] organizational health" (AF2). Some look to the Alliance (as a whole and perhaps also to

their Area) for "issues [of] economies of scale and coordination" such as in the areas of "strategic planning for fields, training, assignment, consulting" (AP4).

Observations: Six leaders (15%) identified issues that broadly fit in the category of spiritual vitality, leadership and management. There is a call for effective leadership and management of organizations in the movement to discern together in community and determine how to engage in the new realities.

> ### *Question 2: What are my organisation's primary goals in the Bible translation movement?*

Theme 1: Bible translation programs
Summary: Organizations' primary goals include promoting "the impact of Bible translation… in communities including churches" (AF1). Organizations are partnering in Bible translation programs "to see God's Word come to every language community that still needs it" (NA3), that are "leading to community mobilization" (AF1), "community transformation" (AF1), "transformation of life through language and media" (AP9) and "evangelism and discipleship [as] people engage with the Bible" (EU5).

Goals are met through "language capacity build[ing]" (AP7), "language development, linguistics and Bible translation" (AF4) to "reach all the language groups in the [country]" (LA8). Organizations desire to "reach out to the remaining language communities" of their countries "with the translated scripture" so that it "impacts… the communities" (AF3). Organizations "promote the use of Scripture [so] literate people… can read translated texts [that] improve the life of communities" (AF7). Organizations "want to contribute to seeing the Bible translated and used" (EU10) with strategies of "scripture use and scripture engagement" where "either full or portions" exist. This may lead to "transformation" (AF3), "holistic development" (AF6), and "ending Bible poverty and addressing the spiritual roots of all forms of poverty" (NA5).

Organizations desire to "support Bible translation projects" with priority for "an accelerated impact" for languages where there is no translation (NA2). Organizations want to "ensure that the Bible tools… put into [a communities'] hands are being used" (AF2). Goals include completing what "was supposed to be completed this year" as well as starting "projects that have been delayed" (AF2). Some have a specific focus on translating "the Bible in a way that facilitates Muslim evangelism and discipleship" (LA7).

Translation goals include "providing education and tools to accelerate access to the full Bible for people of all languages, whether written, oral or signed" (AP7). Some want to provide training to "translators [and] exegetes… with exegetic-hermeneutical elements [associated with] Biblical Sciences, Philology and Theology" (LA6). Others plan "to digitise more translations in order to make them accessible" (EU6), while others are able "to convert translation work, programs online and learn to do church engagement remotely" (AP6). One organization wants to "update and adapt the Fundamental Linguistics Course" so it is better suited for the newer paradigms of ministry (LA1).

Some organizations are primarily focussed on providing and strengthening leadership for the "translation of the Old Testament [where] that is lacking in many groups" (LA8). Some organizations are "participating in whole Bible translation" projects (AP5), or working to "accelerate translation of the Old Testament and full Bible in every language" (AP7). As one leader put it, their organization "want[s] to see the full Bible made available… in the language(s) and forms that best serve them" (NA3).

One organization wants us to consider the "value of the history of translations", "the formation of the text, the canon" and "the contributions that the Bible as the most copied and translated book of humanity can give to the field of translation, linguistics and literary studies" (LA6).

Observations: Eighteen leaders (39%) stated goals associated with Bible translation and Bible translation programs. Many were focussed on the transformational impact of the Bible translated and used within communities. Some touched upon the wider field of scripture use, language development and linguistics—all aspects of holistic ministry. Four leaders singled out the Old Testament or full (whole) Bible translations. Some offered specializations such as digital/online production and distribution, and specialized training for exegetical work. The responses showed a widely articulated understanding of, and engagement with, Bible translation as core or critical to their ministry.

Theme 2: Considerations about people, resources and operations
Summary: There is a desire to be faithful to a calling "to go into the whole world and make disciples of all nations. Matt 28:18-20" (EU1) and to see "the glory of God [and] church growth worldwide" (EU5). Some organizations seek to be "involved in the movement through prayer, financial support, training and human resources" (AP1). There are efforts "to organize a network of people praying for the Bible translation work" (EU8), "mobilising youth for a participation and commitment in the Bible translation" (LA2), to "raise up more workers" (AP4) and "recruit more believers [for] this task" (AP3). People are needed "to support and personally participate in missionary work" (EU8). Some organizations focus on "training and sending people" (LA4) and "sending people trained to high academic standards" (EU9) who "cross language and culture boundaries with the accredited education" (NA4). Some specifically send "translators, literacy workers, and support workers" (AP8). Some organizations seek to be both "sending and funding for the movement" (AP4) and some have a specific "focus on unreached people groups" (EU1).

Some organizations "still [focus on] all Participation Streams except Bible translation programs (EU7). Some see the Participation Streams as motivational in their "commitment to the Alliance" (EU10). Some carry out ministry "with the aim of removing language and culture related obstacles between communities and God's kingdom" (EU3). This may be expressed as to "participate in collaborative Bible translation ventures and collaborative resourcing efforts; provide a hub for strategic support services; mobilise focussed prayer for the movement; increase awareness of movement issues" (AF5).

Some have specific numeric plans for "Vision 2025 goals" (EU2) such as funding "approximately 10% of Vision 2025 using national workers as the chief owners of each

project" (NA1) or "25 new partner churches; 25 new members; 25 new projects with involvement of…; 25 thousand US\$ a year supporting Bible translation projects [and] 5 new consultants" This includes the need for "bigger office space for…." (EU2) while another plans to "reduce heavy structure and be more fluid" (LA3).

The Covid-19 crisis presents the opportunity to "evaluate the way of supporting the movement… especially with implementing partners" because some organization's "contribution [won't] stay exactly the same… due to change in consequence[s]" (EU7). Some continue to serve their field partners but expect "major shifts like this one" will require discarding "old assumptions" (NA5). There is a need to "develop skills and an organizational mindset that respond to new challenges and realities (leaders who are capable of dealing with multiple challenges)" (LA1). For local organizations, it may be an opportunity to "operationalize… beyond… their [country] strategy" (AF2).

Observations: Twenty leaders (51%) offer ways they are participating in the movement with different resources (financial, prayer, people, engagement with churches). Some mentioned motivation starting with the Great Commission. Others give specific goals for Vision 2025. Others see the Covid-19 crisis as an opportunity to re-evaluate and reconceptualize what participation in the movement looks like.

Theme 3: Collaborating with the church
Summary: Leaders recognize the importance of the church. They may want to "reconnect with the local church (face-to-face networks)" (LA1), or "mobilize with the church in the vision of Bible translation (face-to-face and non-face-to-face)" (LA1) and "mobilize the [country] church" (LA5), "promote the Bible translation movement among churches in [country]" (AP3), "encourage the churches to invest more prayers for this movement" (AP3) or "to engage all [country] local churches and individual Christians in the movement by praying, supporting [and] sending missionaries" (EU4). Some recognize the need to "share information about the needs, blessings and results of Bible translation" (EU8). Others plan to "strengthen the participation of [country] churches" (EU3) "to know about the Bibleless people groups" (LA5). This includes "training the local churches and other mission organizations to send missionaries to serve in the movement" (LA5). For others it is the strategy of "working together with the Bible Society, FCBH [and] local indigenous churches [in] producing audio Bible" (AP2). One organization has a specific strategy for "the Church to key into the Common Framework strategy and eventually playing the leading role in the movement" and this includes "targeting… heads of denominations [for] the second National Pastors Conference" after the Covid-19 crisis subsides (AF3).

Observations: Seven leaders (18%) give goals of engaging and involving the church in the movement. This covers a range of strategies from mobilizing the church for greater awareness about Bible translation, how Bible translation is a blessing, the results of the movement, and practical ways the church can collaborate in the movement, including in the sending of missionaries. It includes specific strategies of engaging with denominational leaders.

Theme 1: Church interest/involvement
Summary: The goal may not be met if there is "loss of interest from churches/Christians in our home country—without people/prayer/money we have nothing to offer our partners" (EU5). Some leaders focused on the importance of the church/people being interested and involved in praying, giving and going (AP1, AP 8, AP 9, AF6). Several leaders expressed concern regarding the "overall decline in [their country's] Church" (EU3, NA5). Another spoke to the specific potential impact of Covid-19 with church "activities, including meetings and youth camps" suspended, leading to a need "to organize differently" (EU8). (AF3) cited current fears, trauma, and loss of jobs as potentially impacting the church.

Observations: Seven leaders spoke of the Church or churches specifically, while many others referenced the involvement of individuals or groups of believers in general. Several leaders expressed recognition and concern regarding church involvement. Some acknowledged the basic importance of church involvement. Several expressed concern for the well-being of the church in their country. Others were recognizing potential changes, currently or in the future, because of the virus. Some were probably just expressing what would happen if, in the future, the church lost interest in Bible translation or missions in general, citing church involvement as a determining factor in the continuation of organizational goals.

Theme 2: Restrictions
Summary: One leader said they could be stopped from meeting their goals, "Only if [our country is] prohibited by the government to do mission work but still the Bible translation movement would go on (AP3). Another stated they "could be hindered by restrictions on gathering and on travel" But they also said "we are trying to be creative so our organizations will not be stopped. (LA2). Other leaders also mentioned travel restrictions (EU10), closed borders (NA5), or borders closing to [region] students (NA4). Another said their "national government requirements" could be a potential hinderance (LA5). One leader mentioned government controls, including human rights challenges to hiring practices (NA5). Another focused on the challenges of restricted access countries, saying organizations "need to plan and strategize…" AP4. Some leaders focused on potential roadblocks if "transition becomes too slow" (LA3) or if they themselves did not change their "methodologies and ways of working" (NA3). "Organizational bureaucracy, hierarchy, unilateral plans" (EU9) and "Lack of knowledge and management of existing programs or platforms, lack of planning to anticipate events" (LA8) were among the other potential restrictions mentioned.

Observations: Leaders expressed optimism even in the face of potential hindrances Restrictions presented by the leaders represented both Covid-19-related and non-related restrictions, and both external and internal restrictions. A number of countries indicated that the potential positions of their own governments could create barriers. Restrictions included travel-related and border-control issues. There were also restrictions mentioned that involved the organizations themselves (and SIL). These included bureaucracy issues, lack of focus on Bible translation (particularly Old Testament), and administrative issues.

Theme 3: Resources and/or people
Summary: There could be: a "[f]inancial support drop due to Covid-19" (AP2). Other leaders also spoke of actual or potential lack of funds or problems with continuity of funds (AP7, LA7, EU 7, NA 2), and of "limited financial resources" (AF3, AF4). Following potential financial concerns was the concern for adequate personnel. Potential hindrances cited included, "loss of key staff and lack of leadership, limited pool of supported staff" (AF5), lack of people (AF1, LA4, EU 4), including short-termers (EU7), and volunteers (NA1) (they previously had more early retirees) (EU6). One leader summarized "lack of qualified staff, lack of partnership and funding" (AF 6). Others mentioned funding and resource mobilization (AF4, AF 7), "[l]ack of prayer reflection, partnership direction" (EU2). Several others focused on the spiritual aspects: Potential lack of vision "based on what God is telling us and where he is leading us" (AF1), "Unfocused attitude and faith" (LA1), "Absence of filling of the Spirit" (LA6), and "failing to listen to God and trust Him" (AF1).

Observations: Thirteen leaders made specific references to potential lack of donors/funding. Twelve leaders mentioned a potential shortage of people. The lack of resources and/or people was primarily a focus on possible future scenarios, though some represented current needs and issues. Several leaders focused on issues more related to lack of vision and spiritual focus, rather than on material resources. Several mentioned the need to be aware of changes around them and the need to be willing to change. "[T]he new paradigm takes more cooperation and less control to be able to adapt to constant changes, but without losing vision and purpose, the new paradigm requires more awareness of the other (vulnerability, financial needs, limitations to perform the task or their needs)" (LA1).

Question 4: How am I seeing God working in various ways?

Theme 1: Provision
Summary: "God took what we were doing away, so we could think about what he wants us to do" (LA1). God continues "calling people to his mission" (LA4), "He stirs in people's hearts to pray, give or go" (AP1), and we are seeing "Growing numbers of local ('field' and 'home') partners" (EU5, LA3). "New members are showing up [who were trained years ago] and rejoining us due to the fact we have a translation program here in [Country]" (EU1). "It is unbelievable to see God's faithfulness and special care in our translation activities here, He takes care of every detail" (AF7). "God continues to provide in areas that we have little control over" (AP1).

Observations: There was a strong emphasis on God being in control, a growing awareness of vulnerability and dependence on him, and recognition of his provision. There was emphasis on the fact that though organizations' methodologies may be hindered, he continues to call people (EU1), take the work forward, "sustaining and increasing excellence in Bible translation preparation and achievement" (EU9).

Theme 2: Leadership
Summary: God is "bringing more leaders in Bible translation [and] community mobilization for the development of their language" (AF1). Another leader stated, "...we see a stronger interaction with the [country] leadership of several denominations,

despite the smaller number of recruits" (LA3). And another said, "We are seeing this season as an opportunity to re-examine how we work and to look for new ways of engaging with communities so that they own the work and make more of the decisions" (NA3). One leader noted that, "Limited resources in funding organizations is resulting in greater dependency on local partners to take the lead in Bible translation project decisions; an increase in local expertise... a spirit of collaboration among Bible translation organizations" (AF5).

Observations: There were two underlying foci in this theme. One was the focus on local leadership. Some leaders approached it pragmatically as a necessity, others emphasized how God was leading in this direction. There was also a focus on collaboration among denominations, organizations, and other partnerships.

Theme 3: How we respond
Summary: God is "awakening the need for sincere prayer" (LA1). "God has brought, through vulnerability and our weakness, dependence on him" (LA1) He is "slowing down our consumer-based culture, inviting us into a depth with Him that we were not experiencing in the midst of 'doing, doing, doing.'" (LA2), "bringing us closer to Himself, making us meditate and reflect on His way ahead" (EU2). The "Covid-19 situation...gave us the opportunity to be more silent to talk with God and to see what could be done moving forward" (AP9). "There is a strong focus on helping each other in society... and we feel God is working through many small encounters and a strong openness in society for church and Christian community development" (EU7).

"The Western church is experiencing a little of what it means to be a church elsewhere. People are understanding that life is fragile. Some workers are becoming bolder" (LA7). As some structures in the church "become irrelevant, there is a search for actual meaning and values behind the structures" (EU3). Learning new, less expensive ways of working (NA 2).

Observations: The overall emphasis of the response is one of reflection, taking organizations, churches, individuals, and partnerships under consideration. There is a focus, again, on God's provision but also a realization that this is a time to pause and re-examine priorities, methodologies, and a time to recognize dependence on God and each other.

Question 5: What new opportunities might God be opening?

Theme 1: Increased local leadership
Summary: "With the departure of so many [country] members from their assignments due to Covid-19, I see much more involvement of local/national Bible translation organizations in the leadership of their programs and more remote consultative type work by expatriate translators" (AP1). Another leader said, "Taking away distractions of 'unproductive' travels and inviting us to invest locally with relevant theologies and strategies" (LA2). The local theme continued, "With increasing local ownership comes the possibility of more organic approaches to the Bible translation process..." (AF5). And with the local focus came the global awareness, "Increasingly leadership is from around the world. We look forward to seeing how this will change things" (EU5). "God

might be opening our eyes to see the potential within our communities that can sustain the work and the need for us to explore it to the full" (AF4). God is working among Alliance Organizations to develop Bible translation projects in their area (AP5). There are "…new opportunities to work in ways that come alongside of communities so that they can carry out what God has laid upon their hearts…" (NA3). "God might be challenging the citizens and indigenes of various language communities to play major roles in sponsoring the translations instead of depending on others" (AF3).

Observations: Again, there is a strong focus on local leadership. The majority of the responses on this theme are in recognition of this being how God is leading and also in recognition of the value of this trend.

Theme 2: Greater collaboration
Summary: Virtual meetings are allowing more people to meet more frequently as needed. "[We (the Alliance)] are coming even closer to each other. This is true for our relationships with the partners too" (EU2). Leaders cited new partnerships and greater opportunities to connect with the church, diaspora churches, and the broader community (EU6, EU3, NA1, LA6), and said, "this shared experience of isolation gave an excuse to have a chat" (EU3).

Increased collaboration is also being seen in prayer (LA3) and in "…more material collaboration and cost sharing with field partners" (NA2). One leader also mentioned, "Greater use of technology in training and inter-agency collaborative initiatives" (AP7).

A Latin American leader summarized it well, "With this crisis we can see and learn that we are not just local. We are global and connected to each other. If we want to continue making a difference and be effective in this world, we need to work together as one body, as we really are in Jesus Christ" (LA4).

Observations: There is a major theme of relationships actually growing stronger in this time of isolation. Organizations are able to more comfortably connect with churches, technology is making more frequent connection possible, and a stronger sense of community is growing because of shared experience. Seeing the benefits of these relationships and connections is helping organizations put a higher priority on relationships into the future as well.

Theme 3: Innovation
Summary: Many leaders are finding this an ideal time to reconsider their priorities and to make some major, creative changes. "I feel despite all the investment, all that the Lord has accomplished so far, we are not heading where the Lord wants us to be on the continent! Another opportunity would be to listen more to the Lord and warn our surroundings about the Lord's expectations" (AF1). One leader mentioned they were restructuring their organization to meet current needs (LA5). Leaders also mentioned the "…remarkable ways God is providing…" These included opportunities to reach people through television (EU1), and online programs (AP6), including "…digital media that we can use to make Wycliffe [country] more known" (EU7). Noting that churches will also now be more accustomed to online activity and social networks, one leader mentioned that it might "…be easier to keep in touch with them virtually after the …crisis" (EU8).

Increased "flexibility of working style and method, and relationship" (AP8) is leading to new ways of approaching translation and training (AF2), and new software development. One leader said, "We are trusting God to lead us into the new area of linguistic training for sign languages" (NA4). Another said they could "[D]evelop new and innovative resources for training and mobilization" (LA1). For those organizations that have had to call personnel back home, there are new opportunities for using their skills in training and technology and in reaching out to the communities, including Christian schools (EU4), in their own country.

"In this changing world, it is hard to predict what new opportunities may arrive. Only if we are willing to open our minds, try new ideas, not forbid our thoughts, then many doors will be open" (AP3). This comment highlights how changed thinking is leading to innovation in many areas. One organization has facilitated the translation of Covid-19 materials and said, "We see God changing the minds of most mother tongue speakers that have not appreciated and valued mother tongue; presently, the Covid-19 jingles and adverts are done in different languages, we see God using this to make them to develop deeper interest for the translated scriptures." Another leader said, "…I have recently come across a number of people who have become aware that accumulation of wealth in this world is not what we are here for and therefore they are willing to give more to organizations that are making a difference…" (AF2).

Some organizations are finding new ways to interact with their own governments. "There is a collaborative movement coming into being between my organisation and the Federal Government in sponsoring literacy and language development activities in our country" (AF3). Another leader said they were going to "Apply for government fund since the government has a goal to preserve indigenous languages in [country]" (AP2).

Observations: Many doors are opening. New ways of working with the help of technology and new partnerships. New ways of thinking that are more flexible, collaborative, and creative. New opportunities for reaching more language communities, more partners, and for working and serving in new ways. None of it seems like innovation for innovation's sake, but innovation that has grown out of observation, listening and reflection. "I have a strong sense God is with us and he will show the way" (EU10).

Question 6: Looking ahead, how might I need to rethink my organization's goals?

Theme 1: Church involvement
Summary: The core of this theme was "Stronger emphasis on churches (church growth, church leaders)" (EU5), relationships, and roles (EU9, LA4, NA5). "My organization should reflect more and more the aspiration of the Church i.e. being available to help the Church understanding mission in a wide perspective, helping churches go beyond their traditional thinking in terms of Church system and contextualization" (AF1). LA1 expressed similar views. Another leader spoke of being intentional "in the last few years…recognizing and communicating that [the] mission of Bible translation does not rest on our shoulders but we participate in what God is doing through his church globally… 'globalization' of church and mission will continue to have more and more practical implications to our sending of people and project work" (EU3). One leader

mentioned the possibility of becoming facilitators to denominations so they can lead in recruiting and training (LA3).

Observations: Responses indicate a continuation of focus on relating with churches and understanding their dominate role in mission. The Covid-19 event has perhaps heightened attention to this and has provided new opportunities for connecting. Eight of the leaders specifically mentioned the Church or churches.

Theme 2: Strategies
Summary: Because of the variety of strategies mentioned, we have chosen to divide them into four categories below, each with its own observations.

1) Technology: One leader said they needed to enable and use mass media to carry out the work and that their main role would be to manage platforms. [(LA8). "We need to put more emphasis on electronic media and social media to reach the populations we pray for. I think the Lord is forcing us to use more of the new tools that we conservatively embraced very slowly" (LA7). "It will be essential to strengthen virtual services related to exhibitions, academia, and research" (LA6). "[E]xplore digital means of providing immersive source language training and remote training" (AP7).

Observations: The emphasis on technology was strong throughout this survey. For some leaders the pandemic situation has opened up new opportunities for using online communication tools. For others it has created an urgency to explore technology they may not have felt inclined to approach previously. And for some, there has been space for creative thinking on how to better use technology to accomplish their goals and build their relationships.

2) Rethink: A number of leaders commented that they probably didn't need to rethink their goals, but did need to evaluate their strategies and values "in deciding placement and priorities of resources" and other facets of their ministry (EU 8, EU7, AF4, AP 3, EU2, NA3). Several named specifics, "I could rethink the prayer strategy…I could rethink the mobilization of resources to put more emphasis on indigenous resources, and especially income-generating activities to support the translation of the Bible" (AF6). Another was thinking of "…resources that can come from government or secular world" (AP2). One leader stated, "[W]e will need to give more emphasis to social/humanitarian functions of Bible translators in order to bring a more holistic approach to the Gospel and attract a different donor that is more sensate to these issues" (NA1). "[W]e are constantly evaluating and rethinking our goals in light of global developments and Covid-19 is no exception. One of [country's] goals has been to focus on supporting and developing national translation organizations and this I believe will be strengthened as a result of the fallout of the pandemic" (AP1). One leader made the practical observation, "My guess is less travel…maybe some harder rules for doing it…" (EU1).

Observations: "…more openness and flexibility to move ourselves forward" (AP8). "Be aware of changes and the need to follow the movement of things" (AF7). These two leaders summed up the discussion well. Leaders have been considering everything from travel plans to funding sources, to major changes in strategies and priorities. For some, the pandemic seems to have encouraged a more holistic approach to ministry. For

many, it is not so much about any changes to goals, but rethinking the strategies that will get them to those goals.

3) Reorganize: "[T]he purpose of my organization is to reach more languages with God's Word... is indeed experiencing delays... this must be effectively reorganized so that delays can be pursued" (AP9). A number of leaders see this as a time to reorganize, to "...change the way we plan our operations" (AP6). "[W]e are trying to become more focused and using the time to analyse our origination and respond with proper restructuring" (LA2). One leader mentioned, "We may need to invest more in being able to coach, mentor, and train local partners, given their increasing role in executing all aspects of the Bible translation process" (AF5). Others said, "We see our organization moving from just talking about the Bible translation movement to be more involved in sending people," (LA5) and "[w]e are moving away from the training of 'doers' to the training of those who will train 'doers'" (NA4).

Observations: A number of the organizations already had changes underway, but the current situation has given them more time to think things through and seems to have confirmed some ideas they were already considering. Much of the focus is on the increasing role of local (field) partners and more training rather than "doing."

4) Review: Leaders are taking time to "Continue to review the relevance of the services we offer" (EU6). This is happening in several ways, one leader said their "[Organization's] new leadership and team will consider this part" (AP5). Another said, "This will be done during the appraisal and review of the strategic plan already developed" (AF3). Part of this review process may include reprioritizing or rebalancing. "[W]orking with children is a long run work but worth it-it is difficult to find the right balance between the activities which raise funds instantly and the work which will bring fruits in the future." (EU4). "[T]ranslation of health materials... ethno arts... trauma healing.... Traditionally Wycliffe/SIL have always tried to jump to Bible translation. I am wondering if we should instead try a different approach. We could try to meet immediate language needs of people groups first, and then perhaps some of these may lead to language projects" (AP4)*.*

Observations: Organizations are focusing on what to change, and why. Some leaders mentioned ongoing review, others mentioned a formal review process. Still others spoke of specific activities they see as priorities based on review. One of the observations that comes to mind in looking at the responses is the importance of knowing the history, contexts and "whys" of the Bible translation movements, the Alliance as a whole, and a leader's own organization. This includes understanding relationships with other organizations and partners as well.

Question 7: What unique contributions could my organization bring to the Bible Translation Movement?

Theme 1: Attitudes
Summary: The diversity of responses represents the diversity of the organizations, but a number of leaders expressed something similar to AP8's comment, "I trust in God that He would use this crisis for His glory and purpose." Others spoke of their specific

context: "Unity within the Americas... youth committing at an early age" (LA2); "[Country] missionaries are very flexible and they can adapt to the local culture very well and very fast" (EU4); "[We are] smaller and very nimble... lovingly challenge the status quo through innovation to accelerate Bible translation... example of funding and promoting national translation movements may be helpful to the Bible translation movement globally" (NA1).

Others spoke from a spirit of community and partnership: "Friendship, live in communion..." (AF7); "[s]eeking God's guidance together with partners "(EU2); "[we are] happy to participate" (EU3). One leader commented, "[W]e would appreciate the opportunity to have these types of discussions with our partners around the world. We are willing to shift resources to working differently with partners as we determine together with those partners" (NA3). There is a need to reflect on "...the fate of Bible translation organizations [as relates to the Church taking over translation], a need to reflect on the 'Post Language Completion era', also the issue of having many organizations in one country, and the issue of needing to focus on countries with the most unreached language communities" (AF3).

Observations: Several leaders were reluctant to accept the idea of their organization being "unique" (EU5, EU7), but they are willing to serve (EU3, EU10), align to where God is at work, bridging gaps (AF5). Some of these organizations are among those that serve in many ways, so they may not see a particular unique quality. Others have a very specific focus, so are ready to accept the title of "unique," and still others believe they have specific skills or gifts that can be used. A number of organizations demonstrated a flexibility and agility in their attitudes and willingness, and a desire to work with others.

Theme 2: Skills
Summary: Leaders presented a wide range of skills and giftings. Some involved mobilizing and training: "Catalyst, mobilizer, and trainer of next generation translators and consultants" (AP7); Mobilizing churches, basic training, collaborating in sending and contacting the field (LA1, LA5); Mobilizing through music (AF6). A number of respondents specifically focused on connecting churches with missions including, but not restricted to, Bible translation (EU8, NA2), training (LA3), and development [AF1]. Numerous types of training were mentioned: "transformational leadership development in (name of continent)" (AF1); "Identifying and training more indigenous translators and consultants..." (AF7); "...innovative and effective source language training accessible across the movement" (AP7); Training teams in "use of means of communication (platforms) [LA7]. Some leaders focused on education: accredited education at multiple levels (NA4); "academically serious historical-theological training for translators, exegetes, pastors and the Church... perform revision and evaluation of translations. (LA6); and "[q]uality and adequate training to go to the field with "a focus on the Islamic work in and around Europe" (EU7). EU7 went on to say, "[w]e can place Bible translators in teams close to the ethnic groups in which they need to work... we can instruct in Islamic studies" (LA 7).

Skills included both helping and doing. One leader said, "Our privilege is helping others achieve their goals" (EU6). Another stated, "[We] can contribute to Old Testament translation... experienced members who can participate as consultants, Bible translation advisors and Bible language teachers" (AP5). There were many possibilities:

"We have a team dedicated to supporting the spread of the Word by electronic media" (LA7); "[We promote] Audio Bible and go along with Vision 2033" (AP2); "we have formed a Think-Tank group for [Country] comprised of very high level [Country citizens]" (AF2). One leader noted that their organization was the main provider of promotional materials in X language. Others remarked on their financial resources (AP4, AF2). As mentioned before, not everyone felt comfortable with the "unique" label, but everyone had much to contribute. "Not sure what would constitute a 'unique' contribution, but our organizational distinctives are as follows: Promotion, advocacy, recruitment, training, networking, empowering, resourcing" (AP1).

Observations: Responses to this question offered a glimpse of the many gifts and skills found in the different organizations. Some organizations saw advantages they have based on history and experience, others focused on specific skills or on strategies they are implementing. There was an overall willingness to share and to collaborate. Many had very clear ideas of what they might have to offer and how their skills and gifts could be used.

[End of report]