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The 25 trainees came to the Aari tutor training (August 1-6) with only mild interest, but by the end of the week they were excited about using the Aari primers to teach others to read. The (SIM-related) Word of Life Church leaders asked for tutor training for themselves. *Pray that they will want it enough to make the necessary preparations for its success.*

The next week, 29 highly motivated trainees attended the Banna tutor training in Alduba; but many of them could not read and write well enough to teach the primers. Banna translators Getu, Ayke, David, and 4 others have agreed to teach the rest of the group to read. If they meet at least 4 times a week they should get through all 3 primers in 6 months. Then each one can start teaching someone else. *Please pray that they will all follow through on this.*

On August 16, we drove 3 hours south to Turmi, where 24 Ethiopian evangelists were trained to teach the Banna primers. Shello, a Hamer man who just “dropped in” on the workshop, agreed to do the pre-reading exercises with Getu. (Banna and Hamer are different dialects of the same language.) Getu then taught him the first primer lesson, and everyone got excited when he could actually read the sentences in the lesson. *Pray that Shello (at front right in both photos) will not only learn to read, but that he will come to know Jesus Christ as his Savior and Lord.*



The next week, the evangelists’ wives received tutor training. As in Alduba, some of the trainees could not read well enough, or did not know the Banna/Hamer language well enough, to teach the primers. *Still, we prayerfully anticipate that some of them will use this tool for evangelism and discipling effectively. Please pray with us to that end.*



I suffered culture shock in Turmi. Tourists pay to photograph the Hamer people in their native dress. So the people say, “Why should we listen to the Gospel or learn to read? We make more money keeping our native customs.” I have nothing against their native dress, but I grieve over the spiritual darkness they live in. When a woman marries, seven men tie a leather skirt around her waist, and she never takes it off. I am told that she never bathes or washes her hair. Liquor and sex can be bought in the town. When AIDS begins to decimate their numbers, will the tourists care? How do we bring the light to these people in a way they can understand? I came away with a deep ache in my heart. *Please pray for the evangelists to the Banna and Hamer people. Ask God to soften hearts and draw these people to Himself.*

Aari translators Duba and Fikadu worked with me from August 28 to September 3. It was unrealistic to think we could finish both Joshua and Judges in one week. We completed Joshua through chapter 17, and Judges through chapter 16. I hope we’ll have 3 weeks together on my next trip so we can finish these two books.

I had sent Banna translators Getu and Ayke a CARLA draft of Luke 1-10, and they had revised it through chapter 8. We were able to go over their revision through Luke 5:16. On September 8, SIM and government leaders came to evaluate the Banna literacy and translation project. God undertook for us that day, and we expect the report to be generally positive. *We need, though, to develop closer relationships with the local population, especially those outside the church, and with local officials. Pray that God will show us how to do this effectively.*

After much agonizing prayer, and discussion with both him and the church elders, we asked Banna translator David to resign. It was a struggle for him to do so, but I believe his willingness to resign opened a door for the Holy Spirit to work in his life afresh. *Please pray with me that David will take all of his anger to the cross and leave it there. Pray for complete restoration in his relationships with people and with God.* I long to have him back as part of the team.

I arrived safely back in Longview the evening of September 14th. I found Mother well, praise God! Thank you for praying, giving and caring. I have seen God at work, and even though we didn’t “accomplish” as much tangibly as I had hoped, I am confident that He will fulfill His purpose as we continue to look to Him.

The Banna roast coffee shells and make a hot drink called “shofro”, which they drink from half-gourds. This was served at break time along with roasted corn during our workshops.



Counting on your prayers,

Carolyn Ford

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