

# KAY WILLIAMSON EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION (KWEF)

Report to Trustees, June 2016 covering financial year 2015-2016



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**Summary**

**1. Situation in Nigeria**

The situation in Northern Nigeria is improving marginally since Buhari came to power, and Boko Haram is in retreat. However, the security situation in the Niger Delta is deteriorating with a new group, the Niger Delta Avengers blowing up pipelines and in early May, an entire offshore rig.

**2. Activities in Nigeria**

Roger Blench was in Nigeria February-May 2016, working on KWEF projects.

**3. Social media**

The KWEF Facebook site has been regularly updated.

**4. Jos Linguistic Circle**

Jos Linguistic Circle is flourishing and will celebrate its tenth anniversary in September 2016. We are therefore planning a special event, perhaps a mini-conference, to mark this anniversary.

**5. Publications**

Support to publications is continuing. The dictionary of Lamnso is currently printed in Cameroun but we are awaiting copies. .

**6. Conferences where presentations were made**

Roger Blench has attended a series of conferences to present the work of the Foundation

**7. KWEF collaborators**

Dr. Robert Hedinger continues to assist with publication of dictionaries.

**8. Initiative by Yale University**

Yale University Linguistics Department names a room after Kay Williamson.

**9. Future commitments**

Roger Blench will be visiting Helsinki, Toulouse and Paris to talk about KWEF research in the coming year.

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## **1. Situation in Nigeria**

The situation in Northern Nigeria is improving marginally since Buhari came to power, and Boko Haram is in retreat. However, the security situation in the Niger Delta is deteriorating with a new group, the Niger Delta Avengers blowing up pipelines and in early May, an entire offshore rig. This continues to make work in the Delta very risky. See;

<http://thenerveafrica.com/6016/nigeria-oil-union-says-shell-chevron-workers-evacuated>

## **2. Activities in Nigeria**

Roger Blench was in Nigeria February-May 2016, working on KWEF projects. Since there were many activities, these are described by individual language group. Survey work in East Kainji languages was conducted in collaboration with the Language Survey Team of SIL, Nigeria, led by Luther Hon. KWEF would like to thank Luther, John Muniru and other members of the team.

### **Niger-Congo languages**

East Kainji languages

Boze = Buji

The Boze people have formed an active literacy committee with support from KWEF. We met regularly to work on a Boze dictionary which is now at an advanced stage. The current draft is posted at;

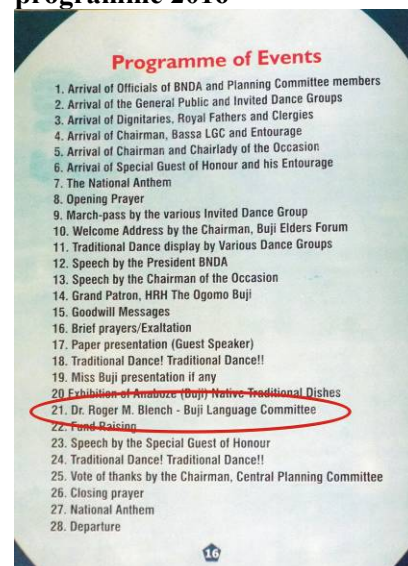
[https://www.academia.edu/3376199/Dictionary\\_of\\_the\\_Boze\\_language](https://www.academia.edu/3376199/Dictionary_of_the_Boze_language)

A notable event was the Remeze festival, a cultural festival held in the village of Mista Ali. Roger Blench was invited to present the work of the language committee (Photo 1, Photo 2).

**Photo 1. Speaking at the Buji Remeze 2016**



**Photo 2. Buji Remeze programme 2016**



## Nu

The Nu people are listed in the literature as 'Kinuku', but there is no evidence concerning their language. A field trip was made to Kinugun Kasuwa village on the 21st of April 2016 and basic linguistic data was elicited. KWEF would like to thank the Sarki of the Anu people for assisting with language documentation (Photo 3). Unfortunately, during this trip one of our vehicles swerved off the road into a ditch (Photo 4). Fortunately no-one was seriously injured.

**Photo 3. The Nu Community, 2016**



## Vori

TiVori is a language previously known as Srubu, spoken in Kaduna State. It has been known only from a very short wordlist. As a consequence, a field trip was made to Geshere, their principal village, on 29th March, 2016. The name of the Vori people seems never to have been recorded. Basic linguistic data was elicited by kind permission of the Sarkin Geshere (Photo 5).

**Photo 4. Hazards of field research**



## Zora

The Zora language, formerly known as Chokobo, has been known to be under severe threat. A visit was made to their central village on the 7th of March, 2016. The reports turned out to be true, and only 19 speakers of Izora remain, all over sixty years. Substantial documentation of the language was made (Photo 6) but clearly Zora is a high priority for future research.

**Photo 5. The Vori Community, 2016**





## Bin

The TiBin or Binawa language of Kaduna State has never been documented, despite being listed in many sources, and shown on maps. A field trip was undertaken on the 5th of April, 2016 and basic linguistic data elicited. Photo 7 shows the team who assisted KWEF with language data.

**Photo 7. Speakers of TiBin, 2016**



**Photo 6. Recording the last speakers of Zora, 2016**



## Map

Work has begun on the description of the TiMap language, in collaboration with Mr. Yusuf Jirgi and the TiMap Language Development Committee. A preliminary analysis of work completed to date will be posted on the internet in due course.

## Rigwe

Roger Blench has been collaborating with Daniel Gya on a grammar and dictionary of the Rigwe language. These are nearly complete and some sessions were spent on checking the existing data. Roger Blench was invited to be present at the annual horse-racing festival in Miango, the centre of Rigwe people (Photo 9, Photo 8).

**Photo 9. Annual horse-racing festival, Miango 2016**



**Photo 8. A Rigwe dancer, Miango 2016**



**Photo 10. Masquerade dancer at the Nze Mada Festival, Akwanga, 2016**



invited to speak on the project at the Nze Mada festival in Akwanga.

Mada

Roger Blench has collaborated with the late Barau Kato on a dictionary of the Mada language, but this has fallen somewhat into abeyance following his death in 2015. However, shortly after my arrival in Nigeria, I was contacted by a newly reformed Mada literacy committee to continue to work on the language and was

**Photo 11. Speaking on Mada Language Development at the Mada Culture Symposium, Akwanga, 2016**



### Afroasiatic languages

A comprehensive attempt was made to understand relations of the A3 group of West Chadic, as part of the continuing project to describe the Mwaghavul language. A survey was undertaken in April 2016 and abundant data was collected, the analysis of which is under way. Map 1 shows the approximate locations of the languages surveyed. Figure 1 shows my current model of how the languages of the A3 group fit together.

**Map 1. The West Chadic (A3) languages**

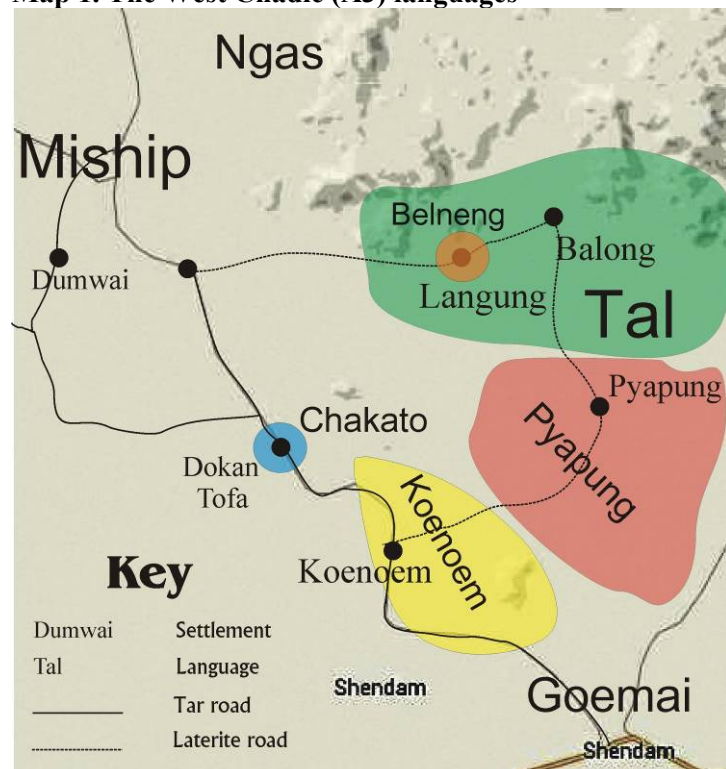
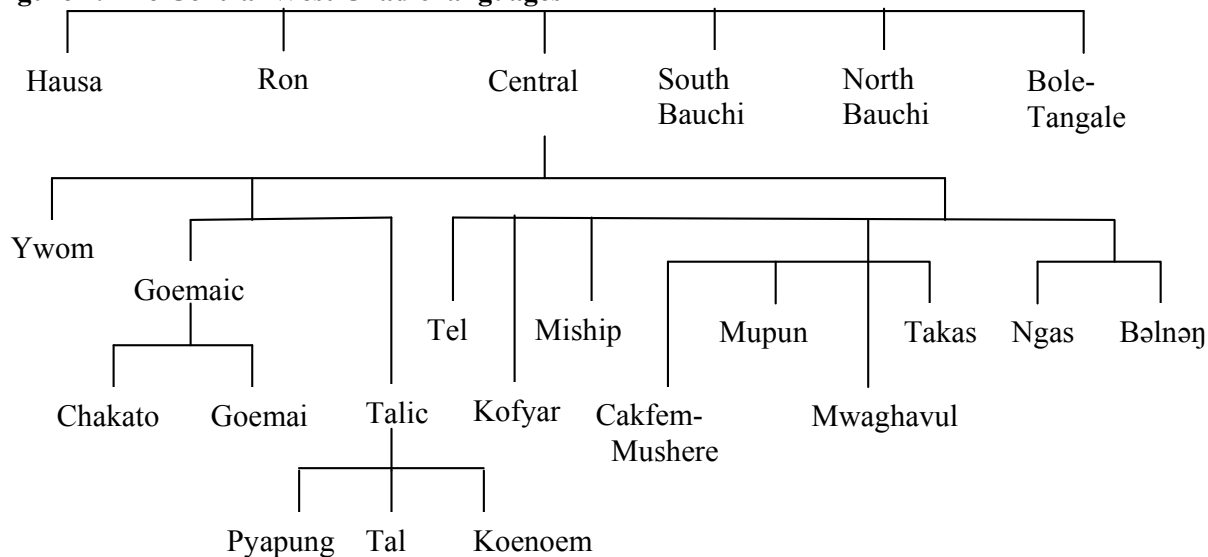




Figure 1. The Central West Chadic languages



## Mwaghavul

KWEF has a long-term collaboration with Jacob Bess, Raymond Dawum and Nathaniel Daapya on a description of the grammar and dictionary of the Mwaghavul language and work continued during this field trip. The most recent version of the dictionary is posted online while many chapters of the grammar are approaching completion.

[https://www.academia.edu/3764864/Mwaghavul\\_Dictionary](https://www.academia.edu/3764864/Mwaghavul_Dictionary)

Roger Blench was also invited to attend the Puus Kat Festival held in Mangu in April, where the dictionary was presented to the audience (Photo 13, Photo 12).

**Photo 12. Playing the transverse clarinet, Mangu, 2016**



**Photo 13. Dancers at the Puus Kat Festival, Mangu, 2016**





## Tal

Roger Blench is working with Michael Bulkaam on a description of the Tal language, spoken in Southern Plateau State, Nigeria. A visit to Balong in April 2016, was extremely productive (Photo 14).

**Photo 14. Michael Bulkaam eliciting data, Balong, 2016**



## Pyapung

Pyapung is an undocumented Chadic language spoken south of Tal, which turns out to be its closest relative. Basic data was collected on Pyapung and is currently being analysed. A field visit to their chief town is shown in Photo 15.

**Photo 15. Pyapung informants, Pyapung, 2016**



## Koenom

Koenom is an undocumented Chadic language spoken southwest of Tal. A visit in April 2016 allowed for the collection of basic data on the language (Photo 16).

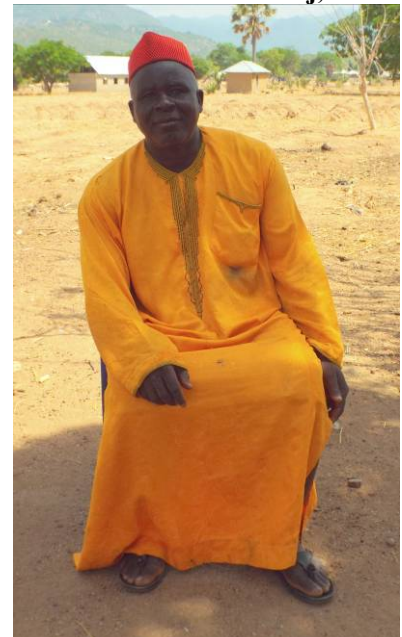
## Belnəng

The existence of this language, spoken in a village immediately due west of the Tal, has not previously been recorded. A visit was made in April 2016 and a preliminary analysis of the data suggests that its closest relative is the Ngas language. Belnəng only has a small number of speakers, perhaps 500, so further research should be considered a priority. The Sarkin Belnəng kindly recorded the elicitation list himself, assisted by one of the elders (Photo 17).

**Photo 16. Koenom informants, 2016**



**Photo 17. Sarkin Belnəng, 2016**



**Chakato**

The existence of this language, spoken in a village on the Shendam road at Dokan Tofa, has not previously been recorded. It may be the same as Jorto, a language noted but not described in early sources, which is unknown to the people in the area today. The closest relative of Chakato appears to be Goemai, although this awaits more detailed analysis. Chakato only has a small number of speakers, perhaps 1000, so further research should be considered a priority. A research trip to Dokan Tofa resulted in basic language, and KWEF is grateful to the Sarkin Dokan Tofa who arranged for the sessions (Photo 18).

**Photo 18. Chakato informants, Dokan Tofa, 2016**



**3. Website**

The KWEF website has been updated

<http://www.rogerblench.info/KWEF/KWEF/KWEFOP.htm>

The Facebook Page continues to be visited regularly

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Kay-Williamson-Educational-Foundation/147159102128443>

**4. Jos Linguistic Circle (JLC)**

This has been one of our most successful initiatives. Since its inception in 2006, KWEF has supported meetings of JLC with hire of rooms and refreshments, and has been able to bring together a growing number of enthusiasts for Nigerian languages. Jos Linguistic Circle is flourishing and will celebrate its tenth anniversary in September 2016. We therefore propose a special event, perhaps a mini-conference, to mark this anniversary. A list of talks given at JLC over the past year can be consulted in the Appendix.

The JLC Page continues to be visited regularly;

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Jos-Linguistic-Circle/157255621102227?fref=ts>

Roger Blench gave a talk at JLC on 23rd March, 2016, entitled

**Weeping over the disappearance of Nigeria's minority languages: how to get more reliable information and what to do about it**

The talk can be downloaded at;

[https://www.academia.edu/23910838/Weeping\\_over\\_the\\_disappearance\\_of\\_Nigeria\\_s\\_minority\\_languages\\_how\\_to\\_get\\_more\\_reliable\\_information\\_and\\_what\\_to\\_do\\_about\\_it](https://www.academia.edu/23910838/Weeping_over_the_disappearance_of_Nigeria_s_minority_languages_how_to_get_more_reliable_information_and_what_to_do_about_it)



## **5. Publications**

KWEF supports a series of local publications in Nigeria (or in Cameroun if the language is also spoken in Nigeria). Published and projected volumes are given in the Appendix.

Work continues on the two following volumes

1. An Atlas of the Mammals of the Niger Delta
2. Ethnobotany of the Niger Delta

The preliminary version of the Lamnso dictionary, worked on in Cameroun in April 2014 has now been printed and copies are being sent to the United Kingdom.

Dr. Constanze Schmalig has been preparing a series of folios of Hausa Sign Language following a series of workshops in Kano (Photo 19). Funding for these was pulled due to the security situation and KWEF has offered to fund both the printing of Folios 3/4 and the upcoming workshop in Kano in October 2016.

## **6. Conferences attended 2015-2016**

Conferences make it possible to both present work done with KWEF funding and to distribute the flyer, and purchase books to improve Nigerian library resources. The following conferences were attended to present the results of KWEF fieldwork between April 1<sup>st</sup> 2015 and May, 2016.

### **2015**

April. Museu Emilio Goeldi, Belem and INPA, Manaus in April 2015, to present some of the work of KWEF.

May. MPI, Nijmegen, to talk about results from KWEF work

June. Lyon, for Reflex workshop

July. Australia visiting fellowship at UNE Armidale, to give talks in Canberra, Sydney and Armidale partly on KWEF research

November. Wisconsin, presentation at the meeting Current Indian Ocean History Research.

### **2016**

January. Invited paper, Linguistic Society of America in Washington, DC. [Greenberg's Universal Project](#).

March 23. [Talk](#) to Jos Linguistic Circle (see above)

May 4. Talk to Nigerian Field Society, Lagos. [The evolution of masquerades in Central Nigeria](#).

May 5. Talk to African Book Group, Lagos. [Africa in literature and popular novels in English](#).

## **7. KWEF collaborators**

Dr. Robert Hedinger continues to assist with the preparation and publication of KWEF dictionaries from his new base in the United Kingdom. Again, many thanks.

Mark van de Velde, CNRS, is establishing a research base for Nigerian Languages at Research Centre for Nigerian Languages at Kwasu, Kwara State University. The idea is to provide an institutional home for researchers, both Nigerian and external with strong financial management. However, the French government is currently restricting travel for French researchers to Nigeria which has led to delay in these plans.

**Photo 19. Participants at a previous Hausa Sign Language Meeting**



**8. Initiative by Yale University**

Yale University has named a teaching room after Kay Williamson;

<http://ling.yale.edu/yale-linguistics-diversity-initiative>

**9. Future commitments as of May 30, 2016**

June 20-22nd. Helsinki. Presentation at Bantu VI.

June 26-July 2nd. Presentations at SAFA, Toulouse

August 28-30. Leiden. Presentation at CALL.

September 3-5. Paris. Presentation at Niger-Congo meeting

**Accounts.** Presented separately.



## **APPENDIX I**

### **Publications in progress**

#### **International series**

1. Kuteb grammar [published]
2. Mofu Dictionary [published]
3. Copy pronouns [published]
4. Mambay grammar [published]
5. Proceedings of the Jos Linguistic Circle, Volume I. [published]
6. Languages of the Nuba mountains [published]

#### **Ethnoscience series**

1. An Atlas of the Mammals of the Niger Delta [in preparation]
2. Ethnobotany of the Niger Delta [in preparation]

#### **In the future**

1. Berom dictionary
2. Mada dictionary
3. Tarok Dictionary
4. Muyang dictionary
5. Kuteb dictionary
6. New Atlas of Nigerian languages
7. Wawa grammar

#### **Nigerian series**

1. The Tarok language [printed]
2. Babanki dictionary [printed]
3. Ngwo dictionary [printed]
4. Akoose dictionary [printed]
5. Moghamo dictionary [printed]
6. Mambay dictionary [printed]
7. Ngiemboon dictionary [printed]
8. Lamnso dictionary [printed]
9. Hausa Sign Language Dictionary, Folios 3-4 [ready for printer]

## **APPENDIX II: Jos Linguistic Circle**

Report of Meetings to Kay Williamson Educational Foundation

Speakers and Titles back to April 2015 onwards

**KWEF Annual report 2015-2016**

Speaker	Date	Title
Roger Blench	23/3/16	Weeping over the disappearance of Nigeria's minority languages: how to get more reliable information and what to do about it
Gareth Mort		

The organisers of the Jos Linguistic Circle wish to express their thanks to the Kay Williamson Educational Foundation for their interest and support for local linguistic meetings in the Jos area. The meetings serve students, researchers and development workers engaged in the study of linguistics and Nigerian languages. They provide a forum for presentation of work or research in progress and enable linguists and language development workers to engage in useful debate. Attendees include staff and students from the Theological College of Northern Nigeria Bible Translation Department; University of Jos (linguistics and mass communications departments); Nigeria Bible Translation Trust; Bible Society of Nigeria and others.

Margaret Mado, TCNN