

Participatory Methods for Scripture Engagement

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Abstract

This paper outlines the application of participatory methods to the “Eight Conditions for Scripture Engagement.” Using the new “Appreciative Inquiry for Scripture Engagement” facilitation tool, translation teams and local leaders explore existing strengths and future hopes for each condition. Together, they prioritize their goals, and make an action plan to achieve them. The eight conditions provide an analytic framework for participants to evaluate strengths and overcome obstacles to their community’s interaction with Scripture. Following appreciative inquiry, the new “Use of Our Arts in Ministry” tool allows teams to expand Scripture use to further artistic domains in ways that strengthen each weak condition. Participatory methods facilitation leads a team to engage their community with their translation in life-changing ways. Scripts outlines in appendices 1 and 2 explain how to use the two participatory methods discussed.

Introduction

Scripture engagement activities facilitate people encountering God’s Word together in life-changing ways.² In this paper, I seek to combine key principles of Scripture engagement with key principles of participatory methods. Participatory methods recognize that “development cannot be sustainable and long-lasting unless people’s participation is made central to the development process” (Kumar 2002, 23). Participatory methods seek interactive discussions among a variety of stakeholders leading to communities designing and implementing activities to make a better future. Keller (2015, 12) discusses three key aspects of participatory methods: a participatory mindset, participatory techniques, and participatory tools.

- **A participatory mindset** on the part of the facilitator affirms gifts that God has given communities. It highlights applying community strengths to community hopes more than diagnosing weaknesses. It focuses on relationships and doing activities *with* people rather than *for* people. A participatory mindset values all people, hearing the voices of both poor and non-poor; readers and non-readers; and men, women, and children. It keeps the end goals of God in mind and fosters hope even while acknowledging the pervasiveness of evil. It seeks truth, just and peaceful relationships, righteousness, forgiveness, reconciliation,

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² Forum of Bible Agencies International, scripture-engagement.org, 2019.

beauty, art and celebration. It says that the change process belongs to those who come to realize they need change. To grow in a participatory mindset, we deepen our commitment to trusting God, trusting others, and working with others (Myers 2011, 173-192).

- **Participatory techniques** begin transformational development by addressing “the need to articulate the better future the community desires it wishes to pursue. Making the better future clear requires a process that allows the community to clarify for itself what really matters and why it matters” (Myers 2011, 175.) Participatory techniques include asking open questions, using locally available materials, asking volunteers to write the group’s ideas in large letters, and organizing the ideas on a large table, floor or board. Scribes read lists back at intervals between discussion sections to help people listen well to one another’s ideas, prioritize or categorize them visually with tokens or headers, and move to a consensus. Diagrams of the process are left with participants (Keller 2015, 20-27). As a teacher and consultant, when I facilitate I have to exert great restraint to listen well and not to teach or consult at that time. A group can benefit from all three: teaching, consulting and facilitating—but not at the same time.
- **Participatory tools** are scripts for facilitators to lead groups as they discuss various kinds of issues together. Facilitation means the facilitator does not know the outcomes before the discussion takes place. Participants usually brainstorm ideas on a topic; categorize, prioritize, or organize the ideas; decide on a plan to act on certain ideas; and decide how to share the results with others. Examples of participatory tools with a strong record of accomplishment include “Appreciative Inquiry” researching good things and hopes, “Stakeholder Analysis” discussing additional stakeholders’ potential interests and contributions, “Force Field Analysis” researching ways to meet blocked hopes, and “The Cause and Effect Tree” researching assumptions behind practices, among many others (SIL Participatory Methods Workshop 2013). I have written two new participatory tools found in appendices 1 and 2 called “Appreciative Inquiry for Scripture Engagement” and “The Uses of our Arts in Ministry.”

Appreciative Inquiry for Scripture Engagement

Wayne Dye (2009) articulated how strengthening eight conditions can increase a community’s engagement with Scripture. The “Appreciative Inquiry for Scripture Engagement” tool (see Appendix 1) leads a group through discussing *Good Things* they have seen and are thankful for concerning their community’s engagement with Scripture and their *Hopes* for more good things in each of these eight areas. I adapted the tool from SIL’s general Appreciative Inquiry tool (SIL Participatory Methods Workshop 2013). Teams think through their *Good Things* and their *Hopes* in these eight areas:

Condition 1. Appropriate Language, Dialect, and Orthography: The language, dialect and orthography all need to be considered appropriate for expressing biblical truth. This condition is strengthened by increasing leadership approval to use local language Scripture in more domains, and Scripture actually being used in more domains (more parts of people’s lives). People need to use Scripture in all the languages they know well for Scripture to enter all parts of their lives.

Condition 2. Acceptable Translation: People accept the translation as God's Word to them. This condition is strengthened when the community trusts the translators, the translation process, the style of the translation and the key terms decisions. Accuracy is obtained through exegetical study, clarity through linguistic study (Giosanu 2019), and naturalness through the study of orality, or the use of written or recorded language that sounds the way people naturally speak.

Condition 3. Accessible Formats: People can read, hear or see Scripture in formats that meet their needs. Formats in addition to writing widen the audience to non-readers. This condition is strengthened by creating a variety of formats of Scripture and Scripture-infused supporting works in print, performances, recordings, and apps. Both readers and non-readers remember Scripture that they learn from multiple formats better than when they learn from any one format alone (Klem 1982, chapter 15).

Condition 4. Background Knowledge: People need to understand enough biblical history, culture and theology to make sense of Scripture. This condition is strengthened through teaching that helps people better understand Scripture and through people accessing supporting materials that help them relate new concepts in Scripture to the known from their life experiences. The order of presentation of Scripture, beginning with worldview bridges to construct foundational understanding, working toward door openers that are unfamiliar but desirable, and finally crossing worldview barriers, can strengthen this condition (Brown 2001).

Condition 5. Scripture's Availability: People need to know how to obtain Scripture in its various formats from sources they consider reliable without too much effort or cost, and actually obtain it. This condition is strengthened by distributing, teaching and performing Scripture in multiple ways and from a variety of trustworthy sources. Activities that widen the reach of Scripture strengthen this condition.

Condition 6. Spiritual Hunger: People's spiritual hunger, or lack of it, influences their motivation to interact with Scripture. People need to want to know God better and believe His Word responds to their needs. This condition is strengthened by materials or events that relate Scripture relevantly to people's felt needs. Activities that deepen the reach of Scripture, heal wounds, or call out to people's hearts through beauty strengthen this condition.

Condition 7. People's Freedom to Commit to Christ: People are free to follow Christ wholeheartedly when they believe they can express their faith in culturally meaningful ways without being overcome by spiritual or social hindrances. This condition is strengthened when people receive the Word from someone trustworthy, when people pray for people, and by showing people how it is possible to be both Christians and members of their own culture. Activities that pass on the faith to the next generation, widen the reach of Scripture to more parts of the intended audience, or contextualize the faith in local forms strengthen this condition.

Condition 8. Partnerships: The different parts of the body of Christ work together in unity and use their various gifts well in diversity to engage their community with Scripture. Partnerships are strengthened by activities that increase collaboration to translate Scripture, validate Scripture, create Scripture-based supporting works, and promote events where people interact with Scripture and Scripture-infused supporting works. A variety of

respected stakeholders' involvement in Scripture translation and engagement work improves the status of the translation and widens the audience likely to accept it.

After discussing their good things and hopes in these eight areas, teams create action plans together to meet their hopes. Participants work in groups to design activities that provide opportunities and encouragement for more people to deeply interact with Scripture.

I have been serving with Wycliffe Bible Translators for thirty years, first in several countries in West and Central Africa in Scripture engagement through literacy, media and arts, and now teaching Scripture Engagement and World Arts as part of the teaching team at Dallas International University (DIU) and the Canada Institute of Linguistics (CanIL). Studying Scripture Engagement means students learn to work with communities to encounter God's Word together in life-changing ways. Students learn participatory methods for working with communities. They practice these methods in practical projects working with field teams. They interview a Bible translation team, and sometimes other stakeholders, usually by video conference calls, and facilitate "Appreciative Inquiry for Scripture Engagement." Even a small number of people can engage in appreciative inquiry. The facilitation is stronger when teams invite other community members to participate with them in appreciative inquiry. They make a two-year plan of activities designed to build on their Good Things to reach their Hopes and increase their community's use of Scripture.



CanIL student Rebecca Streit, for example, facilitated Appreciative Inquiry for Scripture Engagement with colleagues in Chad, Central Africa. The team found joy in verbalizing their strengths and hopes. They created a two-year plan working with the local church. Rebecca hopes to be part of fulfilling these plans.

They have a unique situation because there are very few Sokoro Christians, and the Christians who do live among the Sokoro tend to come from other parts of the country, speaking other languages. They decided to focus on strengthening the multilingual Sokoro Church in all their languages as a foundation for reaching the Sokoro people around them in the Sokoro language. Their plans include:

1. Read a portion of Scripture during worship. Until now, the Scriptures have been read in French and translated into Arabic during the service. We want to see that the Scriptures are read in all local languages.



Rebecca designed this logo with the Sokoro Bible Translation project in Chad

By announcing passages in advance, people can prepare to read aloud (condition 1, appropriate language; condition 5, availability).

2. Everyone prays in their mother tongue during the service. During worship, people pray freely. Prayer in local languages can also be encouraged when the pastor or elders use local languages in other parts of the service (condition 6, spiritual hunger).
3. Copy and distribute SD cards and apps with translated passages. All translated portions also exist in audio form. For portions that have been translated and checked recently, audio recordings must still be made. These will be available on SD cards and on a solar powered player at the medical center (condition 3, accessible forms, and condition 5, availability).
4. Children will learn Bible verses in their language at Sunday School (condition 1, appropriate language; condition 7, freedom to commit to Christ).
5. Start a “Listening Circle” for Bible storytelling, chatting, and praying the Scriptures. Given the low literacy rate, it is easier to start with Listening Circles than with Bible studies. We will partner with [another agency] for workshops and use their materials to train group leaders. This is similar to Bible studies, but all oral: getting to know the Scriptures and talking about them in groups (condition 1, appropriate language; condition 4, background knowledge; condition 5, availability; condition 6, spiritual hunger; and condition 8, partnerships).
6. Organize Bible studies around themes identified as needed by members of the church. Leaders will ask people which topics they wish to address. A workshop will train those responsible for the Bible study (condition 1, appropriate language; condition 4, background knowledge; condition 5, availability; condition 6, spiritual hunger).
7. Create more songs in Sokoro: Some songs have already been translated from Kenga to Sokoro. It would be nice to have more songs, especially in Sokoro's musical tradition. A workshop with local artists would be the best way to encourage new songs (condition 1, appropriate language; condition 5, availability; condition 6, spiritual hunger; condition 7, freedom to commit to Christ) (Streit, personal communication, 2019).

The Sokoro translation team is encouraged by increasing interest in the translation project following this facilitation (Sokoro Translation Team, personal communication 2019).

Another translation team, the Buhutu team in Papua New Guinea, worked by video conference calls with student Meilani Southern. Meilani led the Appreciative Inquiry for Scripture Engagement facilitation. The team made a two-year plan to reach their hopes. Their plans include holding workshops creating new Buhutu Scripture songs (strengthening conditions 3, 5, 6 and 7); teaching Bible stories to community storytellers and making video Bible stories (strengthening conditions 1, 3, 5, 6 and 7), and reaching out to neighboring language groups (condition 7).

Since the facilitation and plan, Meilani writes that there is now a separate ministry dedicated to outreach. They have been using new Buhutu Scripture songs as an avenue to share the Gospel with the neighboring



Buhutu Appreciative Inquiry in Papua New Guinea by video conference call with Meilani in Canada

Umanakaina. Elders are talking about their cultural practices for better understanding of their own culture, and “in Bible study they are more actively trying to assess what in their culture needs to be molded biblically and what needs to go” (Southern, personal communication, 2019).

Appreciative Inquiry for Scripture Engagement is a way to facilitate discussion of a broad range of parameters influencing a community’s interaction with Scripture, some of which might be missed with a more general Appreciative Inquiry tool.

The Use of Local Arts in Ministry

Involving a community in creating new Scripture-infused works out of their faith in their culture means artists and communities more fully own their faith. Although not every arts-based activity strengthens every condition for Scripture engagement, arts-based activities can strengthen all eight conditions for Scripture engagement (Petersen 2017).

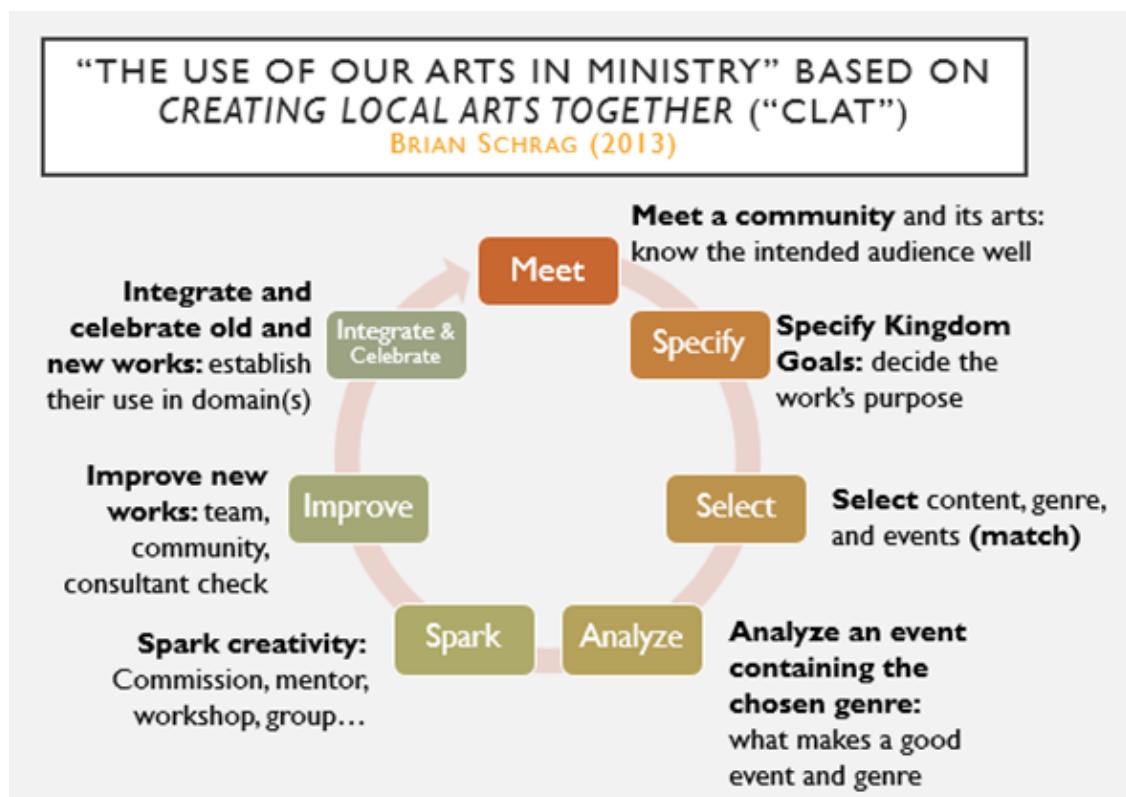
Brian Schrag (2013) in his book *Creating Local Arts Together* describes seven conversations that facilitate creation of local arts with communities. I have created a relatively brief tool to facilitate Schrag’s Creating Local Arts Together (CLAT) process. The tool is called “The Use of our Arts in Ministry” (see the script in Appendix 2). It focuses on working with local stakeholders to expand the reach of Scripture through local arts. Schrag’s method is summarized as follows:

1. **Meet a Community and its Arts.** Make a Community Arts List (CAL) together. List local artistic genres. Under each genre, list who does it, for what kinds of purposes, at what kinds of events, and what kinds of people especially like it.
2. **Specify a Kingdom Goal** together. Decide the purpose of the new works or events.
3. **Select Content, Genre, and Event(s):** Leaders and artists ponder, study, and discuss a) *Content*: Scripture and its applications; b) *Genre*: What local form(s) is/are appropriate for expressing this message? and c) *Event(s)*: When are good times for conveying messages of this type, or for what events do we need new creations?
4. **Analyze** events that contain the genre to see how the art form works well. Describe together the space typically used, the materials used, how participant organization works well (who does what), the shape through time (the order in which parts of the event occur), the performance features (what attributes characterize how it happens), the content (what messages are conveyed and their meanings), and underlying symbolic systems (artistic grammatical rules, lexicon and implicit meanings). Decide together which genres are most appropriate to meet which goals.
5. **Spark Creativity:** Create new works together in the chosen genre. Determine who creates what kind of work, for what uses, under whose authority, by what process and with whose approval.
6. **Improve New Works** by a) team, b) community, and c) consultant checking each new work prior to wider release. Ask first the creative team, secondly one or more respected advisors, and finally, representatives of the intended audience (who have not been part of the creative process) to evaluate the work. Ask community representatives questions like these to verify the work meets its goal (also see Petersen 2017, A69-70; Haaland 1984):
 - *Content*: What is it about? What is happening? How will people understand this?

- *Meaning*: What do you learn from it? What will people learn from it?
- *Strengths*: What do you like about it? What may people like about it?
- *Suggestions*: How can we improve it? What may offend someone? How can we make it clearer? Is this communication natural for the genre we are using? How well can other people use it, catch on to it, or participate in it?

7. **Integrate and Celebrate**: Work with the community to create ongoing times for using the new works for their intended purposes with gatekeepers' approval. Discuss when the works will be introduced to the community, what function they will serve, and who will teach others how to use them. Publicize the new works and events.

This process allows us to work with local singers, actors, dancers and storytellers, researching a community's arts and then sparking artistic creation, to reach mutual spiritual and social goals (SIL 2017).



Summary of Creating Local Arts Together (Schrag 2013) which provides the basis for “The Use of our Arts in Ministry” participatory tool (appendix 2)

Students at CanIL and DIU learn how to work with communities to pour Scripture in local genres. They work with an artist to co-create a new Scripture-infused work such as a new song, drama, video, or visual artwork using the CLAT process. They design it for a specific audience and “Kingdom Goal.” One student-artist team at CanIL created Scripture verse bookmarks in an Asian language. They designed them to show Scripture in a beautiful way with key words from key verses in calligraphy and artistic, scenic photographs or colors with peaceful connotations.

The artist, himself also a member of the intended audience, felt the peaceful images would call out to the hearts of busy students. The Scripture verse bookmarks were designed to meet felt needs of hard-working, tired international students with verses such as Matthew 11:28: “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.” QR codes on the back of the bookmarks lead to web pages where people can read the rest of the chapter or download a Scripture app.

Because the class is 9 weeks, the Creating Local Arts Together process is sped up. In step 6, Improve New Works, this team conducted strong community checking given the brief timeframe. They tested eight draft bookmark designs with speakers.

One community representative loved two bookmarks and could not choose between them. She was pleased when the checking team gave her both bookmarks that she liked. Her feedback helped the team finalize the four designs they printed. This community representative began reading Scripture in her language. She later said, “I used to think the Bible equaled Western culture, but now I know that’s not true. [...] I have never met a more powerful book.” Participating in the team’s creative process as a community checker was part of this woman’s journey that led her to give her heart to Christ.

The team gave bookmarks to everyone at CanIL Chapel and asked us to give them to others.

This activity strengthened several conditions for Scripture engagement. By presenting a verse of Scripture in an accessible form, and linking to an available Scripture app, the team strengthened conditions 3 and 5. By presenting a verse of Scripture in a beautiful form, some of the intended audience became interested in learning more about Scripture, strengthening spiritual hunger and freedom to commit to Christ, conditions 6 and 7. The team worked well in partnership with their community, strengthening condition 8.



*Commissioned bookmark at the
Canada Institute of Linguistics*



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Another CanIL student, Derryl Friesen (2015), worked with a Thai dancer named Maat to create a dance in a traditional genre that she had learned as a young girl.



The gestures in the dance communicate somewhat like those of a Deaf sign language. One gesture, for example, shows how when we fall, the Lord tenderly picks us up like a parent picks up a toddler learning to walk and gets us going again. Maat mentored a younger Thai woman from her church how to dance with her. The Thai pastor's wife consultant checked the choreography. The church's worship band came to CanIL Chapel to perform with Maat.

Maat became so enthusiastic about being commissioned that she in turn commissioned a friend to paint a mountain scene with light coming over the tops of the mountains. Maat said, "Before when I was a Buddhist, I worshipped the idols on the mountains, but now I worship the God who made the Heavens and the Earth." As Derryl and some Thai musicians sang in Thai and the two women danced in CanIL Chapel, the new painting stood to the side.

Maat invited her Thai Buddhist friends to see their dance in Chapel, and they came. Maat asked one of her friends to read Psalm 121, the passage that inspired the dance, aloud in Thai: "I lift up my eyes to the mountains. From where does my help come? My help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth." After performing, Maat said, "When I look at the mountains, they are so big, and I feel so small, and wow, can you imagine how big our God is who made the mountains?" This performance made Psalm 121 available to an audience that would not have heard it otherwise (condition 5). Derryl interviewed Maat, and Chapel participants heard Maat's testimony. The traditional dance demonstrated how it was possible to be truly Thai and truly Christian, strengthening condition 6, spiritual hunger, and condition 7, freedom to commit to Christ. The performance involved people with different gifts from the Thai community, strengthening condition 8, partnerships. The Thai dance performance is available at <https://youtu.be/hCspv34eFxA>.

At DIU, one of the student teams facilitated a community arts discussion online among Christian artists using the CLAT process. People in six time zones participated at the same time. Their hope was to start regional online community of practice arts groups with participants all over the world. One student started online arts fellowships for East Asia, and another coordinated for Europe. They wrote guidelines for how to start new groups with aims and objectives using Schrag's *Creating Local Arts Together* model (Hoi-Ling Poon, personal communication, 2019). This strengthened condition 8

for Scripture engagement, partnerships, and helped meet the Kingdom Goal of deepening fellowship among regional artists.

The Creating Local Arts Together process for working with local artists embodies a participatory mindset. The community participates in every step. The creation and performance of new Scripture-infused works by local artists allows more of the community to appreciate and interact with God's Word.

Conclusion

By using Participatory Methods, my students at CanIL and DIU have seen all eight conditions for Scripture engagement (Dye 2009) strengthened, and Kingdom Goals met (Schrag 2013), working with various communities around the world. Both literate and oral-preference communicators have become more actively involved in creating with and learning from their local language Scripture. Local musicians, visual artists, dancers, and storytellers have been creating Scripture-infused works and leaders have been arranging contexts for Scripture use. These works and activities have been increasing the number of people who interact with Scripture in meaningful ways. My hope is that you will work together with your community using a participatory mindset, participatory techniques and participatory tools to facilitate people engaging with Scripture in life-changing ways.

Contacts

To learn more about a participatory approach, ask for participatory tools developed by SIL and other partner organizations in Asia over the past 11 years, or find training opportunities, please contact the Participatory Approach Support Team:

<https://sites.google.com/a/sil.org/pa/regional-point-people>

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Appendix 1

“Appreciative Inquiry for Scripture Engagement” Participatory Methods Tool Script

Based on Dye’s Eight Conditions for Scripture Engagement

Scripture engagement activities facilitate people encountering God’s Word together in life-changing ways. This tool leads a group through a discussion of Good Things³ they have seen concerning their community’s engagement with Scripture and their Hopes for more good things in each of the eight areas Dye (2009) calls Eight Conditions for Scripture Engagement. Using this tool effectively takes time. The tool may need to be facilitated in more than one session. Ask the contact people at <https://sites.google.com/a/sil.org/pa/regional-point-people> if you would like any of the other participatory tool scripts mentioned.

Gather materials: markers; a pile of strips of paper for contributions; larger category header papers (Good Things, Hopes) with a border drawn around each in a different color than the text to show they are categories; medium-sized sub-header category papers (Sooner Hopes, Later Hopes) with a border drawn around each in a different color than the text; large pieces of paper for action plans; and colored small paper chips to mark prioritized hopes. Alternatively, take facilitation notes in an electronic document with a shared screen all participants can see, and make headers in a larger font than ideas.

Introductory remarks: Working toward our community’s Scripture engagement means we hope more people will interact with God’s Word in life-changing ways. Appreciative Inquiry is a way of thanking God for the good things He has already done in our community, and thinking of more good ideas together than any one of us could think of alone. All responses or ideas are encouraged. We will first focus on our community’s good things that help Scripture engagement in eight areas called Eight Conditions for Scripture Engagement. Then we will discuss our hopes for how we can strengthen these good things and encourage more people in our community to engage in more ways with Scripture. Then, we will develop an action plan for accomplishing the hopes we identify. Activities strengthening these conditions help more people in our community interact with Scripture in life-changing ways.

Introductions and prayer: *If people present do not all know one another well, invite them each to introduce themselves to one another. Optionally, ask them to express their hopes for this meeting. Pray and ask the Lord for His guidance, thankful hearts, and good ideas.*

1. **Good things:** Ask for a scribe to write all the group’s contributions down on rectangles of paper and lay them under the header *Good Things*. Two scribes can alternate writing contributions if there are many participants. Alternatively, a scribe can type contributions on a projected or shared screen. Please share some Good Things you saw, heard, or did that made you proud of your community’s use of Scripture or made you happy about a way someone engaged with Scripture. *If people sometimes express sad things rather than good things, either write the good in it, or ask participants to turn the sad things into hopes for better things, and scribe them under*

³ I capitalize Good Things and Hopes when these refer to category headers, but use lower case when hopes and good things refer to particular contributions to a category, under a header.

the header Hopes. How do we hope that will change? Scribes can list some contributions under Hopes even while we are focusing on good things.

- a. Condition 1, Appropriate Language, Dialect and Orthography is strong when leaders approve using local language Scripture in domains for which they are gatekeepers or decision makers, and Scripture is used in more domains (more parts of people's lives). People need to use Scripture in all the languages they know well for Scripture to enter all parts of their lives. How have you seen people show that they value using Scripture in our language and in our writing? At what weekly or yearly events are groups of people using Scripture? *Start the list of Good Things.*
- b. Condition 2, Acceptable Translation is strong when different parts of the Body of Christ use their various gifts to help with different aspects of the translation project, and when people respect the translation. What are some good ways people participate in the translation work? What are some ways you have seen people show that they trust and respect the translation? *Add to the list of Good Things, or add development papers next to prior Good Things to further detail or expand them.*
- c. Condition 3, Accessible Formats is strong when people can interact with Scripture in more than one format such as text, lectionary, songs, performances, apps and recordings. What good formats of Scripture do we have? What good Scripture-based songs, stories, recordings, poems or other materials or performances do we have that people like? *Add to the list of Good Things, or add development papers next to prior Good Things to further detail or expand them.*
- d. Condition 4, Background Knowledge is strong when people understand Scripture well and relate the new things they are learning to the life they already know. What are some good resources we have for studying Scripture in our language or understanding biblical history, culture or theology? What kinds of people study Scripture and teach it to other people? What are some good ways people are helping others make sense of Scripture? *Add to the list of Good Things, or add development papers to further detail or expand them.*
- e. Condition 5, Availability is strong when people know how to obtain Scripture in its various formats from sources they consider reliable without too much effort or cost, and actually obtain it. What are some good places where people can get Scripture? In what good ways are people distributing, performing or sharing Scripture or Scripture-infused supporting works? *Add to the list of Good Things, or add development papers to detail or expand them.*
- f. Condition 6, Spiritual Hunger is strong when people want to get to know God better and believe Scripture contains help for life. In what ways are people showing they care about Scripture? How have people been showing other people how Scripture can meet their needs? *Add to the list of Good Things, or add development papers to detail or expand them.*
- g. Condition 7, Freedom to Commit to Christ is strong when people hear Scripture from someone they trust and when they can show their faith in culturally meaningful ways. In what good ways have people been sharing Scripture, especially the Good News of forgiveness through Christ, with others? In what good ways do people pass along their faith to the next generation? In what good ways do people show they can live out their

faith in Christ in ways that are culturally meaningful? *Add to the list of Good Things, or add development papers to detail or expand them.*

- h. Condition 8, Partnerships is strong when all the parts of the Body of Christ use their gifts to encourage community engagement with Scripture. What are some good ways people are participating in our Bible translation project? Who community checks it? Who consultant checks it? Who communicates approval of it to the community? In what good ways are we working together with others? In what good ways are leaders encouraging use of the translation? In what good ways is our community encouraging people who make new Scripture-based works? *Write these under Good Things, or add development papers to detail or expand them. Take a picture of the Good Things list.*

2. **Hopes:** *Ask someone to read the list of Good Things aloud.* As we listen to the Good Things, let's think about our Hopes for more Good Things in the Future.

- a. Condition 1, Appropriate Language, Dialect and Orthography, is strong when Scripture in our language(s) can enter more parts of our community's life. What are our hopes for new times or events where people will use Scripture? What are our hopes for more ways children will learn Scripture in our language(s)? *Scribes write down these hopes, each on a different strip of paper, and place them under Hopes. [Optionally, for further depth on this topic, later facilitate the "Uses of Our Languages in Ministry" Participatory tool (SIL 2013).]*
- b. Condition 2, Acceptable Translation is strong when different parts of the Body of Christ use their various gifts to help with different parts of the translation project, and when people respect the translation. What are our hopes for more ways people will participate in translation work? In what ways do we hope people show that they respect the translation? *Scribes write down these hopes, each on a different strip of paper. Add to the list of Hopes, or add development papers next to prior hopes to further detail or expand existing hopes.*
- c. Condition 3, Accessible Formats is strong when people interact with Scripture and Scripture-infuses supporting works in more formats, like text, song, performances, apps and recordings. What kinds of formats do we hope people create? What kinds of supporting works do we hope people create? Who do we hope will create new Scripture-infused supporting works like songs, plays, poems, or other works using Scripture? *Scribes write down these hopes, each on a different strip of paper. Add to the list of Hopes, or add development to detail or expand existing hopes. [For further depth, later facilitate the "Uses of our Arts in Ministry" Participatory tool in Appendix 2 of this document.]*
- d. Condition 4, Background Knowledge is strong when people understand biblical culture, history and theology well enough to keep learning new information from Scripture and relate it to what they already know. What kinds of new tools or resources could help people study Scripture? What other events would be helpful for people to study it? *Add to the list of Hopes, or add development to detail or expand existing hopes.*
- e. Condition 5, Availability is strong when people know how to get Scripture and Scripture-infused supporting works at reasonable cost from a variety of places in a variety of ways. In what new ways do we hope people distribute, perform or share Scripture or

Scripture-infused supporting works? *Add to the list of Hopes, or add development to detail or expand existing hopes.*

- f. Condition 6, Spiritual Hunger is strong when people understand how Scripture meets their felt needs. How can we strengthen our relationships with our community in ways that meet their spiritual hunger? What materials, events or performances could help more people see how much God cares for them? In what ways could more people find out how God fulfills their needs better than other sources, that He cares for them and He is the ultimate Source? *Add to the list of Hopes, or add development to detail or expand existing hopes. [Optionally, follow up this section with the “Cause and Effect Tree” tool (SIL 2013) to discuss cultural reasons and results for practices that may not be in harmony with Scripture. Discuss how to revise these practices in ways that are culturally meaningful and give honor to God.]*
- g. Condition 7, Freedom to Commit to Christ is strong when people hear the Good News in Scripture from someone they trust, when people pass Scripture on to the next generation, and when they express their faith in culturally meaningful ways. How do we hope more people hear the Good News of forgiveness through Christ? How can more unbelievers interact with Scripture? In what additional ways do we hope people pass along their faith to the next generation? What new Christian celebrations or practices could help more people feel free to commit to Christ? How can people know how to live out their faith in Him culturally meaningful ways? *Add to the list of Hopes, or add development to detail or expand existing hopes. [Cause and Effect Tree may be helpful here to research assumptions behind cultural practices and revise practices to be biblically accurate and culturally meaningful.]*
- h. Condition 8, Partnerships are strong when different parts of the Body of Christ use their gifts to make a Scripture translation that is respected and encourage community engagement with it. What are our hopes for more ways we can work together with others? Who else do we hope will help with the translation? Who else do we hope will use it in ministry? Who else do we hope will promote or announce new Scripture materials, performances, practices or events using Scripture? In what ways can we invite more people to be a part of Scripture translation and Scripture engagement work? *Add to the list of Hopes, or add development to detail or expand existing hopes. [For optional depth, facilitate the “Stakeholder Analysis” participatory tool (SIL 2013).]*

3. **Group similar hopes.** *Take a picture of the Hopes, or save your document and then save it again with a new title before re-grouping, to verify nothing is lost in re-organization. Ask someone to read all the hopes.* As we listen, let's consider how we can group some of these similar hopes together. If we want, we can make sub-headers to summarize the ideas of several hopes combined. *Group similar hopes together.*
4. **Prioritize hopes.** Some of these hopes may be things our community can work on Sooner, while others may take more time to begin Later or may depend on some things happening first. *Ask someone to read each hope or group of hopes aloud.* As each hope is read, move the hope or group of hopes to the left under the Sooner sub-header or to the right under the Later sub-header. Some hopes may be in between Sooner and Later, and if we want to, we can make a third column between them.

HOPES	
SOONER HOPES	LATER HOPES

Let's choose which of these Sooner Hopes we would like to make a plan to meet first. As you listen, think about which of these sooner hopes are very important for you. *Ask someone to read the Sooner Hopes aloud.* Let's prioritize three [or four or five] by marking them with colored squares (or bolding them in our document). *Take a picture of the prioritized hopes, or save the document.*

5. **Draft action plans:** Let's make [three] groups, and then go to the hope group you feel most strongly about. *Give each group all the strips of paper that express the hopes they are working toward meeting, or a copy of their part of the document. (With a small group, stay all together to plan activities consecutively:* Let's choose which hope we'd like to talk about first.)

Each group, please write your summary Hope at the top of the large paper (or board, or document.) One person in your group, please read your group's individual hope papers that are part of your big Hope aloud to the group as a reminder.

What steps will help this Hope happen? We will have [half an hour] for your group(s) to develop an action plan for this Hope. A scribe please write on the big paper (or board or document) the Steps that work toward accomplishing your group's Hope. Include Who will do each step, When it will be done, and What materials are needed. Note any obstacles that may affect your action steps. Consider adding additional steps to move towards overcoming those obstacles. If there are no obstacles, feel free to leave that blank. *(For ideas how to meet hopes, optionally see <https://tastesee.org>)*

HOPE

STEP	WHO?	WHEN?	WITH WHAT?	OBSTACLES

6. **Share action plans:** *Small groups please share plans with one another. Other groups may ask questions or make suggestions to help the groups add to their plans.* What other people could we invite to be part of these plans—are there any more people with interest, skill or resources to turn the hope into reality? *If staying in one group, the scribe reads back the plan and when everyone is content, plan for the next prioritized hope together. Take pictures of the plans or copy them and share them with one another.* With whom do we now need to share these ideas? Who will share these ideas with them?

7. **Sustain:** *Plan to meet again in [six months], report to one another what each group or team accomplished, and discuss further plans at that time toward reaching more of these hopes.*
8. **Pray** in closing for our community's well-being, for their interaction with Scripture and for God's blessings on our lives and work.
9. **Meet again** *[in six months]. What is working well? What hopes have been blocked? What further ideas do we have to reach more of our hopes? Congratulate good things, commiserate over sad things, and encourage one another. To overcome blocked hopes, facilitate the "Force Field Analysis Tool" (SIL 2013). Plan further activities to reach further hopes or overcome blockages to hopes. Plan for Later Hopes.*

Appendix 2

“The Use of Our Arts in Ministry” Participatory Methods Tool Script

Based on Brian Schrag’s *Creating Local Arts Together* (2013)

Many churches or ministries use several kinds of music or arts, sometimes in several languages. They may use specific communication genres for certain activities. This tool focuses on working with church and ministry leaders to expand the reach of Scripture through local arts and help communities reach Kingdom Goals in appropriate genres. Schrag’s original intent was that Creating Local Arts Together be part of a very long process, such as a consultant living in a community for a time rather than making occasional visits for shorter workshops, so this tool script adaptation is a different innovation with the same structure. It may require more than one facilitation session. For an example of this process at work, see the seven minute video “Brian Schrag and ‘La Chorale Ayo’: Arts Consultants at Work series, no. 1” at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aR8fbbSPQDE>

Introductory remarks: The purpose of this facilitation is to assist you in discussing which communication genres you use in which activities related to worship, nurture and spiritual growth, and discuss how to fully meet the spiritual needs of the Christians and non-Christians in our area through appropriate and engaging communication genres.

Prayer and introductions: *If people present do not all know one another well, invite them each to introduce themselves to one another. Optionally, ask them to express their hopes for this meeting. Ask the Lord for His guidance, thankful hearts and good ideas. Ask a scribe or two to take discussion notes. Who will be our scribe(s)? If there are many participants, two scribes can alternate writing down their ideas.*

1. Meet a community and its arts: Let’s make a Community Arts List. What kinds of arts do people in our community like? Name the genres, such as different kinds of music, dance, drama, storytelling, poetry, proverbs or visual arts. Let’s write the name of each kind of art on a separate paper. Under each genre, list who does it or who is especially good at it, for what kinds of purposes, at what kinds of events, and what kinds of people especially like it. For example, the Mono people in Democratic Republic of Congo have a kind of song called *gbaguru* that is used for singing advice while playing a local harp called a *kundi*. What kinds of arts do we have? *Make a header that says Genre. Scribes take turns writing down genre names and descriptions, or a scribe types the contributions in a shared document. Sometimes the group gives more responses when participants divide into two groups and make a competition of who can think of the longest list (Anonymous 2015:45).* Which of these genres would we like to know more about? *Put a marker next to them or bold them.* What steps could we take to get to know more artists who perform each genre? How could we get to know more leaders who organize events containing this genre? What steps could we take to learn more about different kinds of artists and arts in our community?

2. Specify kingdom goal: We are going to think of a Kingdom Goal that will inspire our creativity. In our community, what good things do you see to be thankful for? *Make a header “Good Things.” Two scribes alternately write down answers on slips of paper. Optionally, ask follow up questions:* What makes us thankful about how we worship? Our outreach? Our youth discipleship? Our Sunday School children’s worship? Our celebrations, holidays, weddings, funerals? *Ask a scribe to read the*

list of good things. Make a column header “Hopes.” What are your Hopes for how our community can grow? What are your hopes for how your life will be better for you or your children in the future? What are your hopes for people outside the church? Write each possibility on a paper or type it in a shared document. As you listen to all our Hopes, consider, which of these seems most important for now? Ask a scribe to read the list of Hopes. Ask participants to prioritize one of them and mark it with a colored paper chip or bold it in the note document. Keep the list of the others for possible work later. In a large group, you can pick three hopes and divide into three groups to work on three projects.

3. Select content, genre(s) and event(s): These three parts may be discussed in any order.

a. Select content: What [Scripture] content could help people create new works that help reach that goal? *Scribes write possible passages on papers. Ask volunteers to read these passages aloud.* Which of these Scripture passages seem most important for reaching our Kingdom Goal? Which *three (or four or five)* shall we mark with chips to show they are very important? Three volunteers, please read these *three (or four or five)* passages again. As we hear each passage, think what the first audience understood, and how can we apply these passages to our experience today. What may other people who hear this not know that they need to know to understand this rightly? How can we help them understand it rightly and not be confused? How can we present this in a way that will help people care about the meaning?

b. Select genre(s): Let's read aloud the names of arts in our Community Arts List, and as we listen, let's think, in what genre or kind of art can we express these Scriptures well? For example, the Mono people at first did not use the *gbaguru* advice-genre to sing Scripture, but they started singing their Mono Scripture in *gbaguru* choirs that spread throughout their region. As you think about the various arts you could use, which two or three of these do you believe could be the most important ones for helping people grow spiritually? Let's put small colored chips on them [*or bold them in our document.*] Let's break into three groups to talk about the three possibilities and bring our findings back to the group [*or talk about each of the three possibilities by turn*]. Let's decide which genre(s) you would like to use, or ask others to use, to create new Scripture-based works.

c. Select event(s): For what events do we need new artistic works to help our life be biblically faithful and culturally meaningful? What are good types of events for conveying messages in this genre? When would be a good time to share new Scripture-infused works?

4. Analyze: What kinds of elements need to be part of this event for it to be a good event? What kind of space do we need—where will this happen? What kinds of materials do we need? What kinds of participants do we need? What are our choices for when this could be? What order of events makes a good performance? What performance features make a good event? What is the content of similar events—how will our event be the same or different to glorify God and be culturally meaningful? What are the rules or standard by which we can create a beautiful, meaningful performance? *Write notes on a large paper, board or shared document.*

5. Spark creativity: What steps will help this event happen? We will have [half an hour] for your group(s) to begin developing an action plan for this event. A scribe please write on the big paper/board/document the Steps that work toward accomplishing your group's event. How will people make a new Scripture-based work or works for this event? Who could create new works?

(For example, could we commission a group of local artists; or assign different passages to different choirs; or hold a workshop; or encourage an apprenticeship program; or hold a contest; or organize a showcase event; or start a creative group who meet weekly or monthly?) When could each step happen? Note any obstacles that may affect your action steps. Consider adding steps to overcome those obstacles. If there are no obstacles, feel free to leave that blank.

EVENT(S)

STEP	WHO?	WHEN?	WITH WHAT?	(OBSTACLES)

6. **Improve new works** by community checking and consultant checking: Add to your plans who will *community check* the draft by showing it to 3-15 average representatives of the intended audience, and ask them for their ideas to make the new work communicate more clearly and meaningfully. Who will they ask, when? These are the kinds of questions artists or organizers can ask the community representatives after they see a rehearsal or draft: “What is it about? What do you learn from it? What is confusing? What do you like? How could we improve it?” Also add to your plans who will *consultant check* draft works to verify that they are biblically accurate and culturally meaningful. Revise the draft. Who will approve the new works as being ready for performance or presentation?

7. **Integrate and celebrate:** Add to your plans how you would like to integrate and celebrate the new works. You may want to think about questions like: Who could invite people? Who could introduce the event? Who could perform the new works? Who could teach participants how to participate or perform? On what kinds of occasions can we plan for people to experience the new works again? Let’s decide which people or group of people will be responsible for each activity.

8. **Sustain:** Let’s plan to meet again in [six months], report to one another what each group or team accomplished, and discuss further plans at that time.

9. **Pray:** Let’s pray together for the effective implementation of these ideas and plans.

10. **Meet again** [*in six months*]. What have we learned about our community’s arts? What ideas do we have for more ways we can use more communication genres? *Discuss further plans. To overcome blocked hopes, facilitate the “Force Field Analysis Tool” (SIL 2013).*