Overall LDS Growth Trend Case Studies

>

Challenging Areas for Future LDS Missionary Activity due to Extreme Ethnolinguistic Diversity

Author: Matt Martinich

Posted: June 19th, 2015

Overview

Ethnolinguistic diversity poses significant challenges for LDS Church growth and missionary work. Many peoples require translations of church materials and scriptures into their native language to promote gospel understanding, effective proselytism approaches, and testimony development. Cultural differences between peoples also create challenges for the Church to understand and appropriately respond to societal and cultural norms. Areas of the world where extreme ethnolinguistic diversity exist pose the greatest challenges for LDS growth due to the complexity of language and cultural factors within a particular area or region. These conditions generally require a significant amount of resources and vision to efficiently and effectively proselyte and establish a long-term, self-sustaining LDS presence.

This case study identifies many of the most ethnolinguistically diverse areas or regions of the world. The demographic and cultural characteristics of each of these locations are summarized. Challenges for LDS outreach in each location are identified. Limitations to this case study are noted. A map that identifies each of these locations can be accessed here.

NOTE: The term “ethnolinguistic” refers to the combination of linguistic and cultural factors that delineate populations into different groups based upon similarities in language and culture.

AFRICA

Western Burkina Faso

Western Burkina Faso is home to 45 indigenous ethnolinguistic peoples who primary pertain to the Gur or Mande divisions of the Niger-Congo language family.[1] Most of these peoples follow indigenous religions although a small number traditionally adhere to Islam.[2] Most languages spoken by these peoples are primarily unwritten as literacy rates are extremely low. Burkina Faso numbers among the poorest nations in the world and most engage in subsistence farming.

//

The LDS Church maintains no presence in Burkina Faso despite no restrictions on Christian proselytizing groups and no major reports of societal or government abuses of religious freedom. It will likely take decades following the initial establishment of an LDS presence in the capital city, Ouagadougou, until the ethnolinguistically diverse west receives LDS outreach. No LDS materials have been translated into materials spoken in western Burkina Faso. There will likely be a need for audio translations of LDS materials due to extremely low literacy rates. The development of teaching and proselytism approaches tailored to those with an animist background will likely be needed to present the Latter-day Saint gospel witness to the understanding of indigenous populations.

Northeastern Nigeria, Northern Cameroon, and Southwestern Chad

The region of the eastern Sahel that includes northeastern Nigeria, northern Cameroon, and southwestern Chad is one of the most ethnolinguistically diverse areas in the world. There are approximately 526 indigenous peoples who inhabitant this semi-arid region – each of which speak separate languages. Most of these peoples adhere to Islam, Christianity, or indigenous beliefs. Most of these languages are unwritten. Extremely low literacy rates are found throughout this region.

The Church reports no presence in Chad or northern Cameroon. Only a few cities in central and northern Nigeria have an LDS presence. LDS materials are unavailable in languages indigenous to this region with the exception of a couple materials translated into Hausa. The extreme diversity in language, culture, and religion have created significant interethnic conflict for decades. Some of the greatest conflict has occurred between indigenous peoples and nonnative peoples who have resettled in these areas. Many conflicts have also been religiously motivated between Muslims and Christians such as in Nigeria. The terrorist group Boko Haram has annexed large areas of territory in northeastern Nigeria and poses significant threats to national security, communities, and religious harmony. Thus, the lack of an LDS presence in this region, concerns with violence and political instability, and extreme ethnolinguistic diversity pose significant challenges for future LDS outreach in this region.

The Nuba Mountains of Sudan

There are approximately 40 ethnolinguistic peoples who reside in the Nuba Mountains of South Kordofan Province. The population of most of these peoples ranges from 20,000 to 100,000 and most adhere to Islam, ethnic religions, or Christianity. The 2008 census reported 1.4 million people who resided in the province[3] – the vast majority of whom lived in the Nuba Mountains. The Nuba Mountains comprise one of the few locations where the tiny Christian Sudanese minority traditionally reside.[4]

Ethnolinguistic groups native to the Nuba Mountains present significant challenges for future LDS outreach. The Sudanese government restricts religious freedom and prohibits the conversion of Muslims to non-Islamic religions. The government has denied permits to construct churches and has forcibly closed or demolished buildings for Christian worship. Muslims have a long history of harassing non-Muslims or pressuring non-Muslims to convert to Islam.[5] The Church has never established a presence in Sudan. No LDS missionaries have served in Sudan. There appear to be extremely few, if any, Sudanese who have joined the Church abroad. Although the Church has made some minor inroads among South Sudanese, the Church does not have an official presence in neighboring South Sudan. The Church has not translated gospel study or missionary materials into indigenous languages spoken in the Nuba Mountains. The high degree of ethnolinguistic diversity in the Nuba Mountains will likely require specialized outreach for individual ethnic groups – a feat that will require substantial resources, energy, and vision to accomplish.

Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' Region, Ethiopia

There are approximately 56 ethnolinguistic peoples native to the Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' Region of southern Ethiopia. This administrative region supports a population of 17.9 million people.[6] The population of most of these peoples range from less than 10,000 to as many as 200,000. These ethnolinguistic groups pertain to the Cushitic, Nilo-Saharan, Omotic, and Semitic language families[7] and primarily adhere to Christianity or ethnic religions.[8]

The Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' Region presents challenges for future LDS outreach due to each of the 56 peoples in this administrative region possessing unique culture, language, and social identities. The Church maintains a minimal presence in Ethiopia and has struggled to achieve self-sufficiency in local leadership and missionary work among Amharic speakers in Addis Ababa and Debre Zeit. None of the languages spoken in this region of Ethiopia have translations of LDS materials or scriptures. Only two branches operate within close proximity to this administrative region in Awasa and Wendo Genet. Thus, the Church is currently unequipped to make any significant headway introducing the restored gospel to this ethnically diverse area of the world.

ASIA

The Chin Hills and Naga Hills of Burma, India, and Bangladesh

There are approximately 84 ethnolinguistic groups native to the Chin Hills and Naga Hills of Burma and India. These ethnolinguistic groups speak languages in the Kuki-Chin-Naga division of the Tibeto-Burman language family.[9] Christianity constitutes the largest religious group among most of these peoples. Some of these peoples are predominantly Buddhist, followers of indigenous religions, Hindu, or Muslim.[10]

The extremely limited presence of the LDS Church in nations that include portions of the Chin Hills and Naga Hills is a significant barrier to the establishment of the Church among these peoples. The LDS Church maintains no official presence in northeastern India, Burma, or Bangladesh. There is only one branch in Burma (Yangon Branch) and only one branch in Bangladesh (the Dhaka Branch). Young, proselytizing missionaries began serving in Yangon, Burma in early 2014 whereas no full-time missionaries have ever served in Bangladesh. No LDS congregations have ever operated in northeast India and no full-time missionaries have been assigned to this region of the country. The ethnolinguistic diversity of the Chin Hills and Naga Hills poses significant challenges for effective LDS proselytism. Although Naga and Chin peoples share many similarities in culture and region, there are approximately 33 Naga peoples and 31 Chin peoples – each of which speak different languages. No languages indigenous to the region have had LDS materials translated. Most ethnolinguistic groups reside in mountainous areas difficult to access from major cities in Burma, India, and Bangladesh. Limited religious freedom continues to exist in Burma notwithstanding improvements in the government becoming more open with other countries. The government discourages Christian groups from proselytizing but has recently permitted some foreign Christian groups to operate and obtain visas.[11] These conditions prohibit open proselytism by LDS missionaries and require missionary activity to occur on a member or investigator-referral basis. There do not appear to be any legal barriers to LDS proselytism in Indian areas of the Chin Hills

and Naga Hills. However, the Church in India has experienced chronic challenges obtaining foreign missionary visas.

The Karen Homelands of Burma and Thailand

The Karen comprise approximately two dozen peoples who inhabit the highlands of east-central Burma and extreme northwestern Thailand. Karen peoples number approximately five million in these two nations and primarily adhere to ethnic religions, Christianity, or Buddhism.[12] The Karen pertain to the Tibeto-Burman language family.

Remote location, rugged terrain, political conflict, and marginalization in Burmese society pose significant challenges for future LDS outreach among Karen peoples. The Karen Conflict has persisted since the mid-twentieth century as some Karen have sought for an independent Karen nation. The LDS Church maintains a minimal presence in Burma. Only one branch operates in the country in Yangon and young, full-time missionaries have been assigned since early 2014. No LDS materials have been translated into Karen. Significant ethnolinguistic diversity among the Karen will pose challenges for the Church to effectively proselyte this people group.

Caucasus

The Caucasus include approximately four dozen ethnolinguistic peoples. Consisting of six republics (Chechnya, Dagestan, Ingushetia, Kabardino-Balkaria, Karachay-Cherkessia, and North Ossetia-Alania) and one territory or kraj (Stavropol), the Northern Caucasus is a federal district or okrug of Russia where nearly 10 million reside. The Northern Caucasus is Russia's most ethnically diverse region where there are 13 native peoples that have populations over 100,000 (Azeri, Adyghe, Avar, Balkar, Chechen, Dargwa, Ingush, Kabadian, Kumyk, Lak, Lezgi, Ossetian, and Tabassaran) and approximately two dozen additional native peoples that have populations less than 100,000. Today all 13 of the most populous, non-Slavic peoples in the Northern Caucasus use the Cyrillic script to write their respective languages and all but one (Ossetians) are predominantly Muslim. The Republic of Georgia and northern Azerbaijan also exhibit significant ethnolinguistic diversity. Most of these ethnolinguistic groups pertain to the North Caucasian language family whereas the remainder pertain to the Kartvelian, Indo-European, or Turkic language families.

The complexity of religion, ethnic identity, language, and culture is extreme in the Caucasus and will require mission leaders who are skilled in cross-cultural proselytism, ethnographical awareness, and geopolitical issues in the region. The effective and coordinated opening of mission outreach centers among the various North Caucasian peoples may rank as one of the most daunting tasks for any mission president to face among realistic opportunities to expand outreach in the world at present. Close consultation with regional church leaders, geographers, anthropologists, sociologists, and linguists will be required to maximize the efficiency in potential missionary activity in the region. Due to the lack of any LDS presence among the most populous North Caucasian peoples at present, the prospects of reaching ethnic groups with fewer than 100,000 people appears remote and unlikely for many years or decades following any initial outreach in the region.

The level of religious freedom in Russia is low compared to other Eastern European nations. Consequently many religious freedoms in the Caucasus are not sufficiently upheld to allow proselytizing Christian faiths to operate without persecution, harassment, and intimidation from society and law enforcement. Societal and local governmental abuse of religious freedom remain serious challenges for the Church to operate without proselytism restrictions in many areas of Russia. Like many other United States-based proselytizing Christian denominations, the LDS Church is negatively portrayed by religious-themed government organizations.

There are no translations of LDS materials into any indigenous non-Slavic languages in the Northern Caucasus. The Church can utilize Russian language materials in the meantime, but the translation of materials into indigenous languages will be required to instill greater community and permanency of the Church for many of these peoples. There are few if any Latter-day Saints who speak these languages to serve as translators at present. Considering the long delays for approving and completing language translation projects, the Church may not translate materials into these languages for a decade or more following an official church establishment.

Southwest China

There are at least 200 ethnolinguistic peoples native to southwestern China that primarily pertain to the Hmong-Mien, Tai-Kadai, and Tibeto-Burman language families. Most of these people reside in Yunnan and Guizhou Provinces and the Guangxi Autonomous Region. Approximately 130 million reside in these three administrative regions.[13] Prominent peoples indigenous to this area include the Miao (Hmong), Zhuang, Yi, Dong, Bai, and Nasu. Some indigenous languages are well-developed and have good literacy rates among native speakers, whereas other languages are generally unwritten. The majority of these ethnolinguistic groups follow indigenous beliefs. Christians and Buddhists constitute a sizable minority among some of these peoples.

None of the indigenous peoples in southwestern China have an LDS presence established within their native communities. The Church’s operations within this region of China appear restricted to the city of Kunming among Han Chinese. No translations of LDS materials are available in commonly spoken indigenous languages in the region. The implementation of traditional LDS teaching and missionary approaches would likely face challenges as most follow indigenous beliefs. Current legislation and

policies governing religious freedom in China prevent any formal missionary efforts at present. Concentrated efforts by the LDS Church to target these populations may appear more suspicious compared to proselytism efforts among the dominant ethnic groups. Regulations on religious assembly and ecclesiastical contact between foreign and native members prohibit full-time missionaries and foreign church leaders to meet with indigenous populations. The Church has maintained a positive, respectful relationship with the Chinese government for many years by strictly following the law. Deviation from this approach could result in deleterious effects on the Church's relationship with the government and potential harm to local members as some accused of prohibited religious activities have been imprisoned or sentenced to labor camps.

Eastern Nepal

There are approximately nine million people[14] and 70 indigenous peoples in eastern Nepal. Most of these ethnolinguistic groups pertain to the Tibeto-Burman or Indo-Aryan language families. These peoples generally adhere to Hinduism, indigenous religions, and Buddhism.

The LDS Church maintains only one branch in Nepal located in Kathmandu. No proselytizing missionaries serve in the country. The Church has yet to translate the Book of Mormon into Nepali. No languages indigenous to eastern Nepal have had LDS materials translated. The lack of a Christian presence among most of these people groups poses challenges for the Church to teach individuals and families who have little or no familiarity with Christianity. Rugged terrain has traditionally separated people groups for hundreds or thousands of years, resulting in rich cultural and linguistic diversity. Some areas of eastern Nepal have dozens of ethnic groups clustered within small geographical areas who each speak their own language. The Church may experience significant challenges in establishing a presence in these locations due to remote location, a rural population, and linguistic diversity. Bans on open proselytism constitute the only legal barrier to missionary activity in Nepal.

Southern Areas of the Western Ghats, Southern India

Mountainous areas of the southern Western Ghats are home to approximately 35 ethnolinguistic groups. Each of these peoples speak their own language – all of which pertain to the Dravidian language family. Most the population of these peoples follow indigenous beliefs or Hinduism. Many of these peoples support populations of less than 10,000.

Ethnolinguistic groups indigenous to the southern portion of the Western Ghats present significant challenges for future LDS outreach due to their small numbers in a nation with an enormous population. These peoples reside in remote, rural locations in mountainous areas that are difficult to access from major cities. Christians have made very few inroads among these peoples. The Church has yet to develop teaching and missionary approaches tailored to those from an animist or Hindu background. Many of these peoples speak Kannada, Malayalam, or Tamil as a second language. However, the Church has only translated a sizable number of gospel study and missionary materials into Tamil.

The Highlands of Thailand, Laos, and Burma (Golden Triangle)

There are 36 peoples who reside in the interior highlands that overlap the borders of Thailand, Laos, and Burma in a region known as the “Golden Triangle.” These peoples pertain to the Tai-Kadai, Austro-Asiatic, Hmong-Mien, and Sino-Tibetan language families. Most adhere to ethnic religious, Buddhism, or Christianity.[15]

National governments has historically experienced challenges with maintaining control and order in the Golden Triangle. The region is notorious for opium production and illegal activity. Many peoples indigenous to the region are divided between two or more nations. These conditions pose significant challenges to extend LDS outreach among ethnolinguistic peoples native to the region one day. The Church in Thailand operates branches in three cities within the region including Chiang Mai, Chiang Rai, and Lampang. However, ethnic Thais appear to constitute the bulk of LDS membership. LDS materials have been translated into Hmong and Thai but not in the dozens of other languages indigenous to the area.

Northwestern Vietnam

There are approximately 45 ethnolinguistic groups indigenous to northwestern Vietnam that pertain to the Tai-Kadai, Hmong-Mien, Austro-Asiatic, and Sino-Tibetan language families. These peoples primarily follow indigenous beliefs. Each of these peoples speak a separate language although many of these languages are largely unwritten.

Government restrictions on religious freedom pose significant challenges for the Church to establish congregation in additional locations. No LDS congregations operate within northwestern Vietnam. Distance from mission headquarters in Phnom Penh, Cambodia and a lack of missionary manpower assigned to Vietnam indicate no feasible prospects for future LDS outreach in northwestern Vietnam for many years or decades to come. The high degree of cultural and linguistic diversity in the highlands of northwestern Vietnam will likely require specialized outreach for individual ethnic groups – a significant feat that will require substantial mission resources and the translation of LDS materials into indigenous languages. Indigenous religious beliefs are followed by most of these peoples. The adaptation of LDS teaching and proselytism approaches to the religious background of followers of ethnic religions will be necessary for effective missionary work and fostering gospel understanding.

Oaxaca State, Mexico

Some of the greatest ethnolinguistic diversity in the Americas is found in Oaxaca State, Mexico where there are approximately 166 Amerindian ethnolinguistic groups. Prominent ethnolinguistic groups include the Zapotec, Mixtec, Mazatec, Mixe, and Chinantec. Each of these peoples speak their own native language and many of these ethnolinguistic groups exhibit limited proficiency in Spanish. Roman Catholicism, Protestantism, and indigenous beliefs are most commonly practiced by these peoples.

Many of these ethnolinguistic groups traditionally reside in remote, rural areas that are difficult to access. Rugged terrain has helped preserve Amerindian culture and language, but has also contributed to the high degree of linguistic diversity. Due to this combination of remote location and linguistic diversity, it appears that most of these ethnolinguistic groups have never received an LDS gospel witness and have no Latter-day Saint converts at present. Reaching these peoples will require intuitive planning by church leaders to conserve limited resources and identify suitable methods to extend outreach. Successes by the Church in reaching other Amerindian peoples in Latin America with similar geo-demographic characteristics have required mission leadership to visit these communities, find investigators and isolated members, and consistently visit these individuals and prepare the groundwork to establish a church presence. The amount of energy, time, and vision required to properly establish a long-term LDS presence among Amerindian peoples who reside in remote areas and speak indigenous languages is often seen as too great of an inconvenience and burden for mission and area leaders to incur on themselves, especially considering the ease and simplicity of further saturating urban areas with greater numbers of Spanish-speaking full-time missionaries. The fact that many of these languages are usually unwritten and difficult for nonnative people to learn may discourage mission and area leaders from seriously considering specialized language outreach due to the complexity of the task, challenges inherent in nonnative missionaries learning to teach in Amerindian languages, and difficulties translating church materials and scriptures.

OCEANIA

Papua and West Papua Provinces, Indonesia

Formerly called Irian Jaya, Papua Province is the most eastward province in Indonesia and comprises the western half of New Guinea. Western New Guinea remained under the administration of the Netherlands following the independence of Indonesia in 1949 but jurisdiction for the region was transferred to Indonesia in 1963. In 2010, there were approximately 2.84 million inhabitants and nearly 200 indigenous languages spoken in Papua Province. Anthropologists have been fascinated by the extreme ethnolinguistic diversity in Papua Province. Like neighboring Papua New Guinea, Papua Province exhibits some of the most extreme linguistic and cultural diversity in the world notwithstanding a population of less than three million.

Proselytizing Christian faiths have made significant headway within the past century conducting missionary activity among Papuan peoples. Prior to Christianization efforts, Papuan peoples adhered to traditional beliefs. Today, 83% of the population is Christian and overwhelmingly Protestant. Notable religious minorities include Muslims (15.89%), Hindus (0.09%), and Buddhists (0.05%). Many continue to practice or infuse traditional religious beliefs with government-recognized religions.

Political instability lasting for half a century constitutes the greatest barrier to establishing an LDS presence in Papua and West Papua Provinces. Skirmishes between security force operations under the Indonesian military and Free Papua Movement separatist guerillas (OPM) has resulted in chronic violence and instability for decades. Military personnel have been tried and prosecuted for torture and unlawful killings but sentencing is far below the severity of the crime.[16] In 2012, there were reports of Indonesian troops killing civilians in Wamena after bombings in the area.[17] Foreign individuals are generally not permitted to visit Papua and West Papua Provinces due to security and safety concerns. Government officials forbid Papuans from flying the Morning Star flag in Papua despite the Papua Special Autonomy Law permitting Papuans to fly this flag in symbolism of their cultural identity. Large demonstrations frequently occur and at times have been dispersed by local police despite most demonstrations occurring peacefully.[18] Other United States-based Christian groups such as Baptists and Adventists operate in Papua notwithstanding these challenges. Some Baptist groups have managed to place nonnative families in remote villages to supervise proselytism. Local Christian pastors and ministers often occupy local government positions and may thwart efforts by LDS missionaries to proselyte if they label the Church as heretical.

There are no known Latter-day Saints living in Papua or West Papua. The Church has an extremely limited presence in Indonesia that is constrained to a handful of cities on Java and one city each on Bali, Sulawesi, and Sumatra. Distance from mission headquarters, difficulties securing visas for foreign missionaries, mission resource allocation centered on Java to facilitate districts to become stakes, caution expanding missionary activity in a predominantly Muslim country, and no change in the number of Indonesian members serving missions over the past 30 years has resulted in extremely limited progress expanding outreach into unreached areas. The introduction of the Church into new areas has depended on active members relocating to other areas and petitioning mission leaders to organize a congregation. A handful of inactive members who have lost contact with the Church may reside in Jayapura. The establishment of a group and holding cottage meetings may help efforts to find any isolated members and interested individuals from which to build a new congregation.

Most of the population of Papua Province resides in sparsely populated, remote areas that are difficult to access. Rugged terrain and dense tropical forest have isolated Papuan peoples for centuries, resulting in extreme ethnolinguistic diversity. Some

peoples were not formally contacted by outsiders until the twentieth century such as the Dani.[19] Anthropologists estimate as many as 40 peoples remain uncontacted by outsiders.[20] Some tribes such as the Asmat have practice headhunting and cannibalism although these traditions have declined in recent years.[21]

The Church translates no materials or scriptures into indigenous languages in Papua Province. There are 17 languages or language groups spoken by 10,000 or more speakers including Ambai (10,100), Asmat languages (19,000), Awyu languages (31,010), Biak (30,000), Damal (14,000), Dani languages (270,000), Ekari (100,000), Kayagar (10,000), Ketengban (10,000), Moni (20,000), Muyu languages (12,000), Nalca (11,100), Nduga (10,000), Ngalum (10,000), Sentani (30,000), Yali languages (30,500), and Yaqay (10,000).[22] Translations of basic proselytism materials into indigenous languages with the most speakers will be important for maximizing the success of future proselytism efforts.

Papua New Guinea

There are 830 living languages in Papua New Guinea. Church leaders and missionaries utilize Tok Pisin for teaching and church business in most locations as only two other languages (Hiri Motu and Kiwai) have a translation of one or more basic proselytism materials. Extreme linguistic diversity creates challenges for church administration and testimony development but the Church has experienced relatively few difficulties thus far. The Church remains largely unable to meet individual language needs and proselytizing a predominantly rural population with only two missions, approximately one dozen districts, and two stakes.

Poorly developed national transportation and infrastructure and safety concerns create challenges for outreach expansion. Mission leaders frequently travel by airplane, boat, or car to conduct church business. Church leaders travel by a large convoy consisting of several cars for safety concerns due to high crime rates. Interethnic violence has at times threatened local members and LDS congregations. Mission leaders have become briefly stranded due to boating accidents while traveling to outlying areas only accessible by sea or river. Natural disasters such as flooding, earthquakes, landslides, volcanic eruptions, and tsunamis pose safety concerns and challenges for travel. Poor sanitation and high risk for infectious disease create challenges for assigning missionaries and have led to the deaths of dozens of members from cholera outbreaks.

Papua New Guinea has one of the least urbanized populations in the world. In 2014, only 13% of the population resided in an urban location, indicating that 5.7 million of the country's 6.6 million inhabitants reside in rural areas. Rural areas present many challenges for formal missionary activity utilizing traditional LDS proselytizing approaches. The assignment of a single missionary companionship to a single village is generally unfeasible due to a lack of mission resources, small target populations, and difficulty training and managing missionary manpower spread over large and often difficult to access areas.

The Solomon Islands

Ranking as the fifth most populous country in Oceania, the Solomon Islands are located in the Melanesia sub-region and support a population of nearly 600,000. The islands possess considerable ethnic and linguistic diversity as there are over 300 inhabited islands and approximately 70 ethnolinguistic groups.[23] Most indigenous languages pertain to the Austronesian language family whereas a small number pertain to the Central Solomons language family. Pijin, or also known as Solomons Pidgin, is a widely spoken Creole language for interethnic communication. The population is homogenously Christian. Protestants constitute a large majority.

The population spread over hundreds of islands, significant cultural and linguistic diversity among the scores of ethnolinguistic groups, and no translations of LDS materials into indigenous languages pose serious difficulties for the Church to achieve growth. The Church currently operates only four official branches in the entire country – three of which are located on Guadalcanal in Honiara. A lack of LDS infrastructure in the country and significant diversity between peoples poses challenges for future growth. There appears a need to translate LDS materials into the native language of many peoples. The Seventh-Day Adventist Church, for example, translates printed materials into16 languages indigenous to the Solomon Islands.[24]

Limitations

Locations with extreme ethnolinguistic diversity were identified through reviewing the country listings and maps on www.ethnologue.com. Not all locations with a high degree of ethnolinguistic diversity were examined in this case study such as northern Australia, the Amazon Basin of Brazil, the northern Democratic Republic of the Congo, the island of Sulawesi in Indonesia, the highlands of Peru, Tanzania, and Vanuatu. Challenges in establishing an LDS presence in each of the areas or regions identified in this case study are not comprehensive. There are likely many other factors that pose challenges for future LDS proselytism efforts. Information on the growth and status of the Church in some of the areas or regions examined was limited during the written of this case study.

[1] “Mande,” www.ethnologue.com, retrieved 27 May 2015. http://www.ethnologue.com/subgroups/mande-0

[2] “Country: Burka Faso,” Joshua Project, retrieved 27 May 2015. http://joshuaproject.net/countries/UV

[3] “Sudan,” www.citypopulation.de, retrieved 26 May 2015. http://www.citypopulation.de/Sudan.html

[4] “Sudan,” International Religious Freedom Report 2013, retrieved 26 May 2015. http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/irf/religiousfreedom/index.htm?year=2013&dlid=222101

[5] “Sudan,” International Religious Freedom Report 2013, retrieved 26 May 2015. http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/irf/religiousfreedom/index.htm?year=2013&dlid=222101

[6] “Ethiopia,” www.citypopulation.de, retrieved 26 May 2015. http://www.citypopulation.de/Ethiopia.html

[7] “Southwestern Ethiopia,” www.ethnologue.com, retrieved 26 May 2015. http://www.ethnologue.com/map/DJER_z

[8] “Country: Ethiopia,” Joshua Project, retrieved 26 May 2015. http://joshuaproject.net/countries/ET

[9] “Kuki-Chin-Naga,” www.ethnologue.com, retrieved 26 May 2015. http://www.ethnologue.com/subgroups/kuki-chin-naga-0

[10] “People Cluster: Kuki-Chin-Naga,” Joshua Project, retrieved 26 May 2015. http://joshuaproject.net/clusters/207

[11] "Burma," International Religious Freedom Report for 2012, retrieved 7 March 2014. http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/irf/religiousfreedom/index.htm?year=2012&dlid=208218

[12] “People Cluster: Karen,” Joshua Project, retrieved 27 May 2015. http://joshuaproject.net/clusters/200

[13] “China: Province and Major Cities,” www.citypopulation.de, retrieved 27 May 2015. http://www.citypopulation.de/China-UA.html

[14] “Nepal: Administrative Divisions,” www.citypopulation.de, retrieved 26 May 2015. http://www.citypopulation.de/php/nepal-admin.php

[15] “Country: Thailand,” Joshua Project, retrieved 27 May 2015. http://joshuaproject.net/countries/TH

[16] http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/humanrightsreport/index.htm?dlid=186273

[17] Kendal, Elizabeth. "Papua (formerly Irian Jaya), Eastern Indonesia: Sweeping Wamena," ASSIST News Service, 17 October 2012. http://www.assistnews.net/Stories/2012/s12100075.htm

[18] "Indonesia," Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2011, retrieved 27 October 2012. http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/humanrightsreport/index.htm?dlid=186273

[19] "History and cultural relations - Dani," Countries and Their Cultures, retrieved 29 October 2012. http://www.everyculture.com/Oceania/Dani-History-and-Cultural-Relations.html

[20] "Question and answers: Uncontacted tribes of Papua," Survival for tribal peoples, retrieved 29 October 2012. http://www.survivalinternational.org/articles/3122-questions-and-answers-uncontacted-papua

[21] "Asmat," Countries and Their Cultures, retrieved 29 October 2012. http://www.everyculture.com/wc/Germany-to-Jamaica/Asmat.html

[22] "Languages of Indonesia (Papua)," www.ethnologue.com, retrieved 27 October 2012. http://www.ethnologue.com/show_country.asp?name=IDP

[23] "Solomon Islands," www.ethnologue.com, retrieved 1 March 2014. http://www.ethnologue.com/country/SB

[24] “2014 Annual Statistical Report,” adventistarchives.org, retrieved 27 May 2015. http://documents.adventistarchives.org/Statistics/ASR/ASR2014.pdf