



from Our World to Yours...

eberhard newsletter

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Dear family and friends,

Zero-Zero gets Language survey:

Have you ever wondered where zero latitude and zero longitude actually meet? In July Dave found himself getting off a plane in the two island nation of São Tomé e Príncipe (West Africa) which prides itself in being the country closest to the "center of the earth" (look it up on a map!). He had led a workshop there in 2014, and was asked to return and conduct a survey of two creole languages, Santomé and Angolar. This allowed Dave to ask his favorite question - "who speaks what language to whom and when" - to everyone he met. Literally. Through hundreds of informal conversations and formal interviews, 400 questionnaires, and a full month of constant observation, he was able to get a good handle on how much each of those languages are being used in that country. With that information he then wrote a report with recommendations to Wycliffe leadership about the possibilities for future Bible translations, as well as ideas for using ethnomusicology and oral scripture stories.



Sao Tome, the capital city

Although Dave only focused on two of them, there are 5 ethnic groups on this small dot in the middle of the Atlantic, each with its own creole language. Due to its colonial past, Portuguese is the national language. This of course suited Dave just fine, as this allowed him to talk to anyone.



Pico Cao Grande – 'Big Dog' Peak

In spite of severe poverty, the people of STP are incredibly hospitable. Most of them are traditional fishermen (fishing giant swordfish in very small canoes) and palm wine harvesters (yep - they tap palm trees for wine!). Dave was hosted by a fisherman's family for part of that time - and had to "suffer" living right on the beach! Everywhere he went people helped him, fed him, and gave him transportation. Two of the highlights of the month were: 1) catching a boatload of fish during an all-day fishing expedition with some Angolar fishermen using home-made nets,

and 2) spending another full day in the jungle helping a palm wine tapper harvest wine from his trees. Dave made some close friends while he was there, and came back with an extreme respect for the resilient people and cultures which make up Sao Tome society.



Here's an example of many similar things that happened during that month. One day Dave took a motorcycle to Trindade, a town he had never visited before. He started walking down a street. Passing a house on a hill, he looked up and saw two young men talking in the yard. For some reason, Dave decided



to turn around and go talk to them. They were very friendly and they all ended up talking for over 2 hours. As he was getting ready to leave they said, "Before you passed by on the street, we had

just been talking about how we could ever encourage our people and help them to use more of their language and value their culture more. Then we saw you walk by and one of us said to the other, "I wonder if that white guy might have any ideas for us?" And lo and behold you turned around, walked straight up to us, started a discussion about this very topic, and shared with us ideas that will be very helpful as we begin to plan ways to strengthen our language. We are amazed and so thankful!" When Dave heard that he told them it had to have been God that led him there. They agreed.

Since July, Dave has had several other trips with one more this month, and then it's quiet again until January when he heads to Brazil to do a training event for another mission in Manaus. He'll also get the opportunity to visit the Mamainde while there.

As we head into the holidays, may you have a wonderful season of joy and thankfulness. We are thankful for you. Let us know how your family is doing and how we can pray for you.

Dave and Julie



Angolar women working as 'palaie' – fish-sellers who are going out to meet the boats as they come in with fresh fish.



Nino and Preta's house where I stayed among the Angolar.

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Please include a separate note indicating, "Preference for the Wycliffe ministry of Dave and Julie Eberhard, Account # 222369