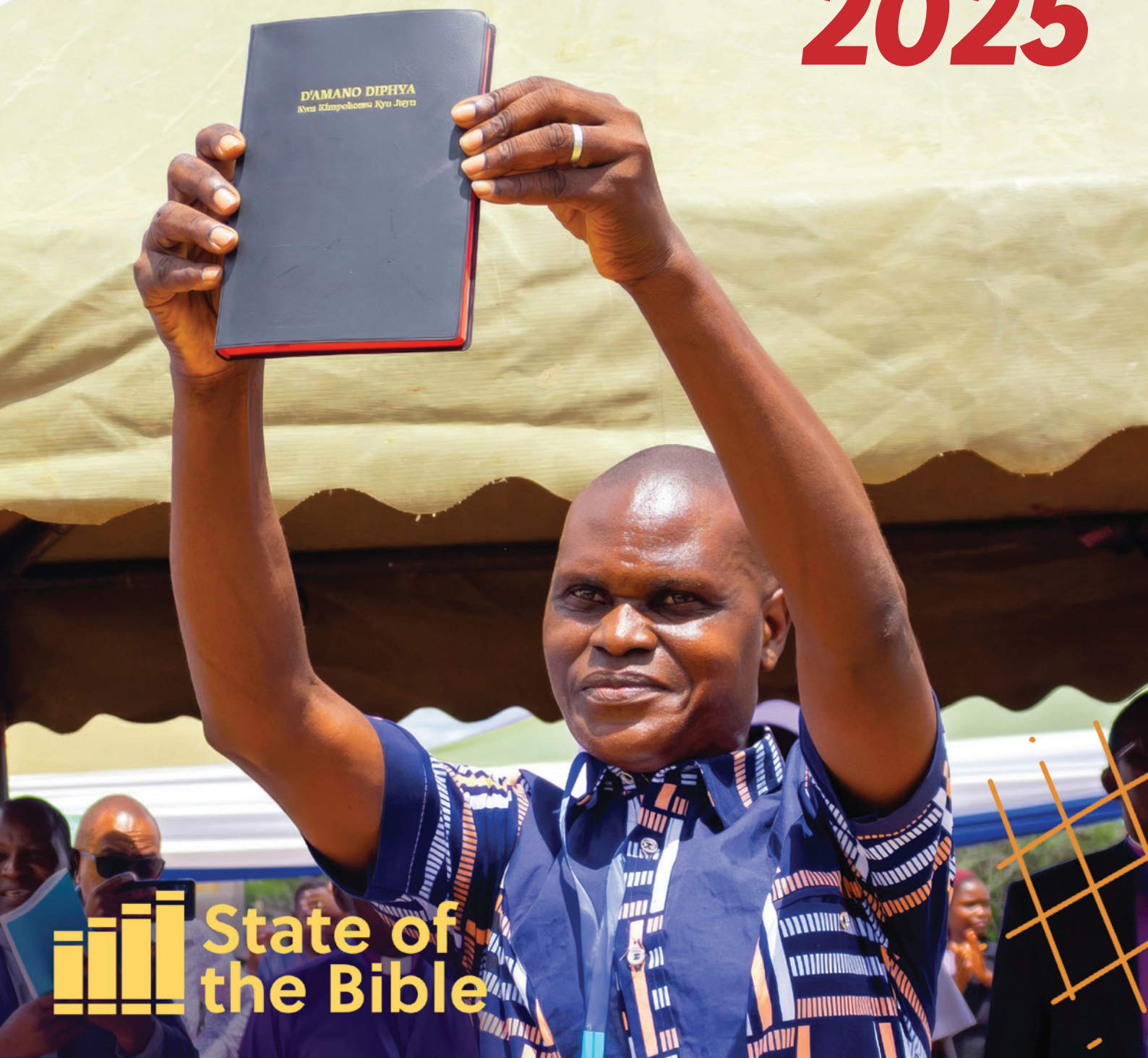


# **| State of the Bible** **2025**



**State of  
the Bible**

## **| It's coming down!**

**The greatest obstacle to world mission  
is being dismantled!**

**Wycliffe  
Bible  
Translators**

# In summary

It has been another exceptional year in Bible translation. The progress we have seen in previous years has continued, and in fact accelerated in many areas. What has been called the greatest obstacle to world mission – the lack of Scripture in people's heart languages – is being dismantled at an unprecedented rate.

## **Almost 1 every 3 days**

It's been another extraordinary year, with the highest number of Bible and New Testament launches ever. The combined number is 118 (23 Bibles and 95 New Testaments) or, put another way, **almost 1 every 3 days – or 10 a month.**

## **The day is much closer**

The day when all people have Scripture in their language is getting very close. The number of languages waiting for work to begin now sits at 550, which is 44% lower than last year!

## **1 every 19 hours**

A new language programme has started at the rate of 1 every 19 hours in the past year. That translates to work starting for people speaking 461 languages. It also means 60% of all languages currently have work in progress!

## **197 million people**

This year, 197 million people have the whole Bible in their language for the first time. That's almost equivalent to the population of Brazil.

## **54 million people**

A further 54 million people have the New Testament in their language for the first time. That's nearly the population of England (57 million).

## **Scripture for the first time**

A total of 174 languages have selections of Scripture for the first time. This year, the people who speak these languages are now hearing or reading some of God's word in their language!

In the past year, we have seen further amazing progress towards the fulfilment of Wycliffe's vision – to create a world where everyone can know Jesus through the Bible.

Across the board, more people than ever have access to God's word in their own language. And more communities than ever have taken the first steps towards getting Scripture in the language that speaks to them best.

We are so grateful – to God, first and foremost, for all the blessings he has poured on the Bible translation movement in the past 12 months. But we are also so grateful to you, our supporters, for all you have contributed through prayer, encouragement and giving. And to our translation partners too, who continue to faithfully work to unlock God's word for every heart.

Together, we are playing our part in bringing the gospel message of salvation, hope, transformation and reconciliation to a broken and hurting world.

*Front: The Upper Pokomo New Testament is presented to the people at the launch in Kenya on 26 April 2025*

*Right: Young men read the Waata New Testament at its launch event in Kenya on 5 July 2025*





# ***It's coming down!***

**The greatest obstacle to world mission is being dismantled!**

**What exciting news! What has been termed the greatest obstacle to world mission is being dismantled at an unprecedented rate.**

That obstacle – the lack of Scripture in people's heart languages, which has been highlighted in the past few years by Loren Cunningham, founder of Youth With A Mission – is being flattened.

And it is happening rapidly, as Bible translation teams, communities and organisations work together to translate God's word into the languages of those peoples still without any Scripture in their language.

**The day when every people group has Scripture in their language is getting close,**

***God's word  
really is being  
unlocked for  
every heart***

as borne out by the latest Bible translation statistics! God's word really is being unlocked for every heart.

**Just a year ago (September 2024), there were 985 languages considered viable for translation work that had no Scripture and no work in progress. Now, that number has come down by 44% to 550! (Four years ago, in September 2021, the figure was 1,892!)**

That decrease is largely the result of an extraordinary push to initiate translation efforts among those peoples who do not have any of God's word in their language.

James Poole, executive director of Wycliffe, says:

***118 Bibles and New Testaments  
launched in the past year...***

***at a rate of almost 1 every 3 days***





**'The New Testament in Mokpe is more than a translation; it is a powerful symbol of our identity, culture, and faith. It embodies the hopes and dreams of our community, and we firmly believe it will be a transformative tool for spiritual growth, healing, and empowerment.'**

Princess Lynn at the launch of the Bakweri New Testament in the Mokpe language on 29 March 2025 in Cameroon

*'For centuries, billions of people have lived without a single verse of the Bible in their language. The absence of God's word in people's own languages is one of the greatest barriers to the good news reaching all people.'*

*'But that story is changing. In recent years we have seen an extraordinary surge in Bible translation. Progress is happening at a pace and scale not witnessed before, and whole communities are beginning to receive the Scriptures far sooner than we could once have imagined.'*

*'This is a remarkable moment in world mission. God is at work, and we have the privilege of being part of it.'*

## **Time to praise... and press on**

This progress, and all the other amazing work that is going on, is testament to:

- | the faithful and committed work of Bible translation teams
- | the vision and resilience of people who long for God's word in their language
- | and the loyal and generous support of people like you, who through prayer and giving have enabled and secured the ongoing work of translation programmes across the world.

James Poole says:

*'These are such exciting times to live in. Many more millions of people are able to access the biblical stories and truths in the language of their hearts for the first time – stories and truths we are so used to having.'*

*'The impact will be profound. As people come to understand clearly the depth of God's love and the greatness of Christ's work for them, lives and communities will be*

**779** languages have a full Bible

**1,802** languages have a complete New Testament







**1,433** languages have some portions of the Bible

**4,473** languages have work in progress

*transformed. What a privilege it is to see this happening in our lifetime.'*

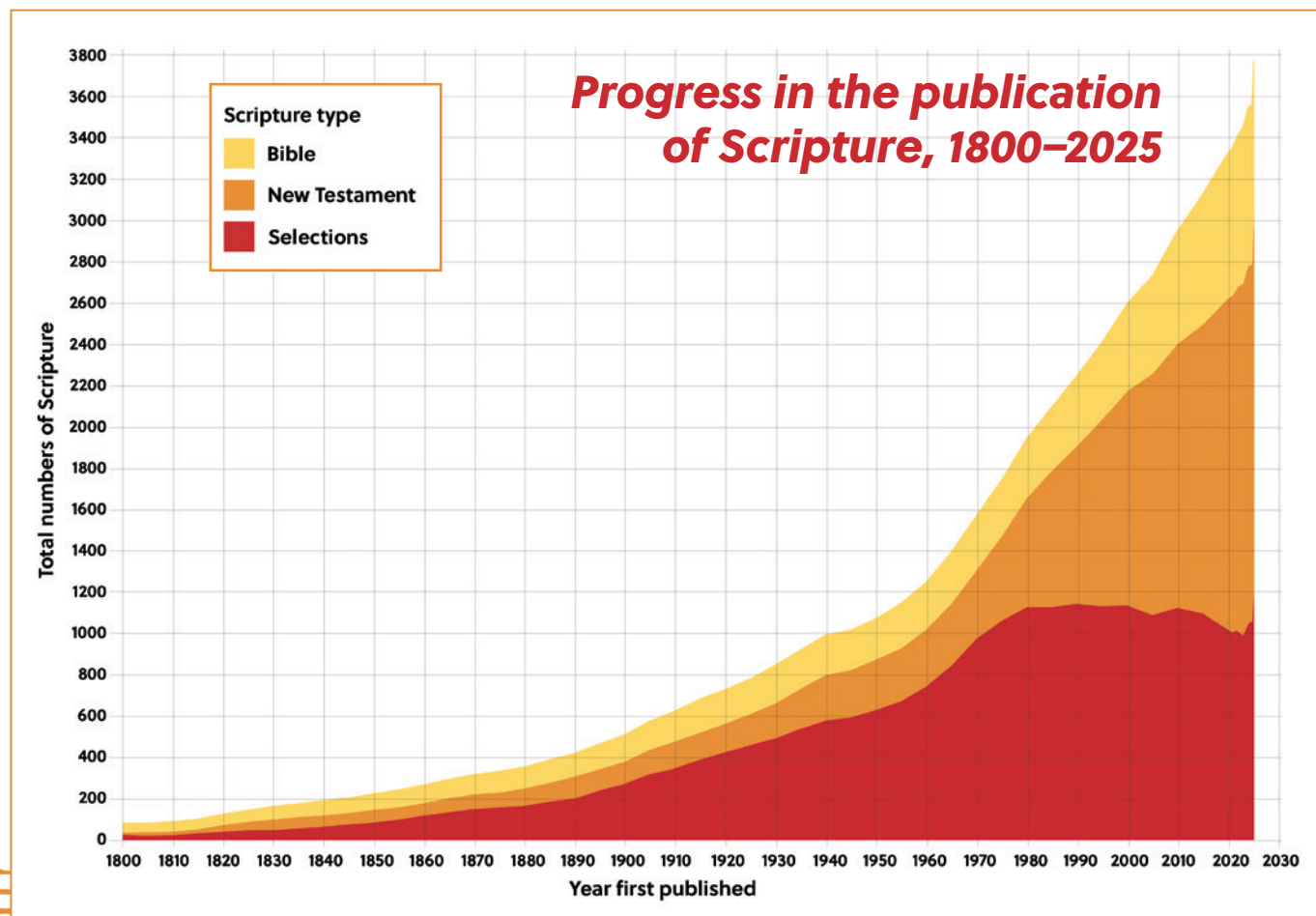
Praise God that we can look back at the past year and see his hand at work in so many ways. Please join us to pray that his hand will continue to guide translators, communities and organisations as they press on with this vital and urgent work.

**For, despite all the progress we are seeing, 1 in 5 people still do not have the Bible in their language.**

James continues:

*'The progress we are seeing in Bible translation today is a result of the efforts and investment of many people and organisations over many years, laying the foundations that we are now privileged to build on.'*

*'God has given us a historic opportunity, to get behind this acceleration and support translation teams and their communities as they do their vital work. My hope and prayer is that we will continue to rise to the challenge, so we reach the day when everyone has God's word in their language.'*





*'Hearing God's word or reading it for the first time in my language... revives me spiritually and personally. It makes a lot of difference, because it gives me a sense of belonging. I am no longer reading God's word in a foreign language... It's a beautiful thing. For the first time, the Shang language – my language – has been recognised. To have God's word in my language, it is a beautiful feeling and it's inspiring.'*

Juwa-Dang of the Shang community, reading Bible stories in his Shang language

For more on the Shang story, visit [wycliffe.org.uk/mark-road](http://wycliffe.org.uk/mark-road)

## Flourishing

The day when every people group has God's word in their language is getting very close! But that's not all! The work of Bible translation has continued to flourish across the board in the past year:

- It's been another extraordinary year of Bible and New Testament launches. **There have been 23 Bibles and 95 New Testaments launched.** That is the highest combined number (118) ever, and represents a rate of launches of well **over 2 a week – or almost 10 a month or 1 every 3 days!**
- There has been a surge of languages with selections of Scripture – 174 in total.** That means that the people who speak these languages now have some of God's word in their language in some form (books, apps etc) for the first time!
- 197 million people have got the whole Bible in their language for the first time.** That's not far off the population of Brazil, the seventh most populous nation in the world.
- 54 million people have the New Testament in their language for the first time.** That's not far off the population of England (57 million).
- A new language programme has started at the rate of 1 every 19 hours in the past year.** Work has started for

people speaking 461 languages. It means 60% of all languages currently have work in progress.

**This growth is phenomenal, and the numbers are so encouraging! But while numbers are important, it's the stories of transformation and impact that bring home just what it means to have God's word in your own language.**

So let's visit a few places around the world to glimpse that impact...

### Vision 2025: a gamechanger

Vision 2025 was launched by Wycliffe in 1999, to 'have a translation programme in progress in every language still needing one by the year 2025'.

The vision has changed the way Bible translation is done, shifting the focus to 'raising up local churches to take the lead in Bible translation for their own communities, countries and even entire regions, accelerating the pace like never before'.

Now, 25 years on, the impact is clear: the acceleration in the number of translation programmes is happening at an unprecedented rate. The day when every language has Scripture and/or translation work in progress is very close.

## Starting out

You have to start somewhere with Bible translation. The Mark Road programme in Nigeria is just a couple of years old, assisting communities speaking 40 languages to begin translating Scripture into their own languages. It is still very much in the early stages, and yet progress is swift.

For example, in last year's report, the Shang community was celebrating having 40 verses of the Bible in their language. Those 40 verses comprised one story – Jesus calming the storm. Now, 12 months on, 21 more Bible stories have been recorded and distributed in homes and churches.

Naomi, a Shang Christian, says, 'Understanding God's word in another language is very difficult for us. But when the translation was done in our language, we found out that the message is clear.'

## Building on the foundations

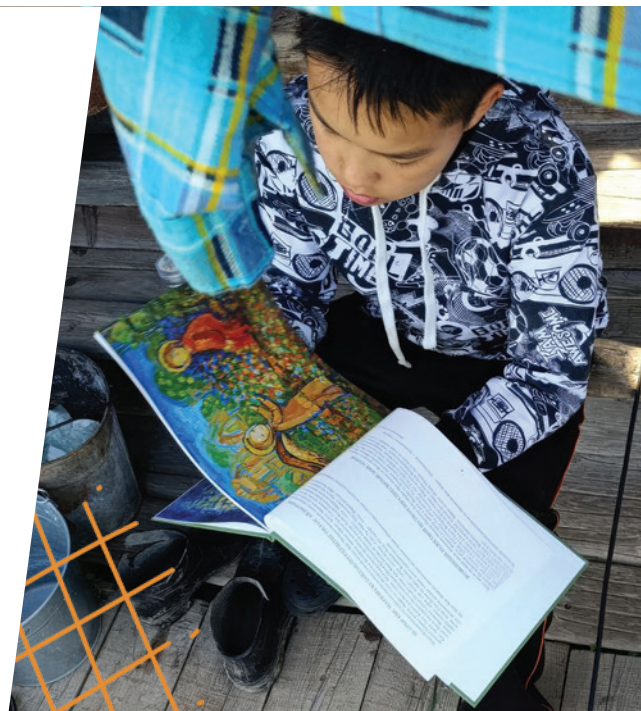
After the initial work has been done and the first few verses translated, the natural next step is to begin to work on story collections and books to reach people with God's word in their language.

### It's a Shor thing

Over the summer, a team visited the Shor people of Siberia, armed with a box of books and another box of audio players.

The books were *Stories of Jesus*, now translated into the modern Shor language and illustrated with beautifully drawn pictures by a well known local artist.

The audio players included recordings of the Gospels of Mark and John in the Shor language (together with the whole New Testament in Russian). The batteries in these



| A Shor boy reads his *Stories of Jesus* book

audio players charge using a built-in solar panel, making them ideal for these remote Siberian locations.\*

## The impact of a Story Bible

For the Magend† people, it's been an exciting time of anticipation, as the New Testament in their language is at the final stages of checking before being sent to the printers.

But in the meantime, the community is celebrating the production of the *Story Bible*, a collection of the main stories throughout the Bible (effectively a children's Bible). This was launched this summer in various countries in Europe with large diaspora Magend populations, and features illustrated stories of key biblical characters and events.

\*For more, visit [wycliffe.org.uk/shor](http://wycliffe.org.uk/shor)

**354** languages where Bible translation work has begun – a rate of almost one a day





**1 in 5** people are still waiting  
for the Bible in their language

**7,396** languages are spoken  
in the world



| A Magend woman reads the Story Bible



At the same time the book has also been taken to that part of Asia where the majority of the Magend people live. A man living in one of the countries has distributed 50 copies of the book and a church is also distributing it in their area.

## **Onto a New Testament**

You've got some books of the Bible. But these are just a stepping stone: as a community you have impetus, and now you

eagerly desire the whole New Testament.

Imagine being in rural Kenya last March, where the Upper Pokomo community has come together in anticipation.

You've waited years, and now, here comes the procession with the New Testaments wrapped in a box like a present for your loved ones. There is much celebrating, with lots of singing and dancing. The gift reaches the dais and is unwrapped... and then you see it! There, as the book is held aloft, is your first view of the New Testament in your language! What a moment!

And after the initial excitement quietyens down, you hear the first reading of God's word from a copy of the New Testament in the language that speaks to you best!

That scene has been played out across the world in numerous communities – such as the Saliba people of Papua New Guinea, the Buamu Laa people of Burkina Faso, the Waata people of Kenya, and the West Yamdena people of Indonesia. Just a few of the 54 million people who have had the New Testament in their language for the first time in this past year.

| The West Yamdena people joyfully celebrated the launch of the New Testament in their language in Indonesia in October 2024







*'The Upper Pokomo community has been using foreign languages... they have not held their language like treasure. However, today, a precious gift has been unveiled. My people will hold it like a treasure in our community. Speaking, teaching, and walking our language will become the norm.'*

*'The gatherings will now hear the life of Jesus told not in a distant language, but in the one they first learned from their mothers. Religious leaders will now preach with renewed power. Local songs will rise, no longer borrowed from other tongues, but sung in our beautiful language.'*

Bishop Douglas Machafu at the Upper Pokomo launch event

## Completing the job

For many, having the New Testament is the catalyst for moving onto translating the Old Testament. When you have the New Testament, and you realise what you are missing by not having the whole Bible, it spurs you on.

***'It is very important for our people to have all of the Bible'***

Kaleb Edoh, who led the Ifè Bible translation team in Togo and Benin until

his death early this year, applied the need for the Old Testament specifically to his community's culture.

He said: 'There are many stories in the Old Testament which help us understand the New Testament. The sacrifices written about in the Old Testament are very similar to the animist sacrifices done in traditional Ifè life. Reading what Leviticus has to say about sacrifices will help our people to understand what they were before coming to Christ, and how they have changed since.'

**1 every 19 hours...**  
**the rate at which a new language programme has started**





*'Today I am very excited to hold the word of God in my native language. It is going to help my community to deepen their understanding of faith.'*

Rev Pastor Henry Ye

*The Buamu-Laa New Testament was launched on 14 December 2024 in Burkina Faso*

'So it is very important for our people to have all of the Bible translated into Ifè.'

The Ifè team hopes to complete translation work on the Bible in their language in the next two years.

### **'The entire Bible'**

This past year, a further 23 communities have launched the Bible in their languages. That's 196 million people who got the complete word of God this year.

One of the communities that celebrated getting the Bible in their own language this year was the Nobonob people of Papua New Guinea. One of the people who worked on the translation, Ulys, proclaimed at the launch on 19 June:

'In 1990 the Nobonob New Testament was dedicated, but the Nobonob leaders wanted the entire Bible. But all that was not just so it can be said, "The Bible is translated into the Nobonob language." No, it was done so the Nobonob people, and others who can read

it, get its meaning and follow it. God's word is not for us to see casually. No, it's to give us guidance.'

Join with us in thanking God for the 23 people groups who have got the whole Bible in their languages this year.

### **Ripple effects**

Having God's word in your own language, so that you can fully, really understand it, is vital for people's lives to be transformed spiritually – and paramount in creating a world where everyone can know Jesus through the Bible.

But having God's word in your language – and the foundational work on the language that goes into that – also creates other pathways to hope.

### **Saved from extinction**

For some, the work of translating the Bible also helps to save your language – and possibly your culture – from extinction.

**'It is very important for our people to have all of the Bible translated'**

Impact story

**550** languages\* with no Scripture and no work in progress...

**BUT that is a reduction of 435 languages in the past year**



\*This figure excludes languages that have insufficient vitality to support translation





*Scenes from the Nobonob Bible launch in Papua New Guinea on 19 June 2025*

## Impact story

In 2005 that's what was facing the Label people of Papua New Guinea. The Label language was considered not viable.

Yet, for a group of Label Christians, the thought of not having God's word in their Label language was too much. The language had to be saved.

Now, 20 years later, the Label people don't just have their language written down – they have the New Testament too! For the Label community celebrated its launch on 24 November 2024!

And because they have the New Testament in their language, the Label people are growing in their faith, as now they understand God's word in a new, deeper way that wasn't available to them before.\*

### **A basis for learning**

For others, it provides the basis of learning to read and write. Not only does this mean you can read the Scriptures translated into your language, but also you have access to all the benefits that come from literacy, as Pierre so eloquently describes (overleaf).

As the 'Let's Read Together' programme in Uganda has discovered, when you teach people to read in their language – and especially when you are using God's word as the basis for that learning and people regularly read from Scripture – the whole of people's lives change. The word sinks deep

*Saved! A Label woman enjoys reading her New Testament at the launch*



\*For more, visit [wycliffe.org.uk/label](https://wycliffe.org.uk/label)





## From no words to God's word

*'I wasn't educated. I helped my parents in the field and in their work. Because I wasn't educated, I didn't feel dignified.'*

*'One day I learnt that... a literacy class was starting and teaching people to read and write in their first language. At the time I was 18. I studied my lessons even while tending to my animals in the pasture. I went to church because I could find books to read there. In church I enjoyed the fellowship as well as reading together.'*

*'Thanks to Bible translation, today I can read my medical prescriptions. The knowledge I learned by reading I apply in raising my livestock. I could buy a mill, as well as a motorcycle which helps me with my shopping purchases and transport of oil for the mill.'*

*'I was in the darkness but now I am in the light because I have freedom and enough to eat. Now that I know how to read my life has been transformed.'*

Damindjoin Pierre Lare†

into their being: their behaviour gets better, hygiene improves, and attendance and performance at school soars.\*

Lives and communities transformed. Life opportunities created. Cultures and languages allowed to develop and flourish. Just some of the ripple effects that result from the work of Bible translation.†

## For such a time as this

The work of Bible translation continues to

**accelerate, and there is the real prospect of every people group having some Scripture in their language very soon.**

That acceleration has happened as a result of a number of things – first and foremost, the anointing of God on the ministry of

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\*For more, visit [wycliffe.org.uk/together](https://wycliffe.org.uk/together)

†For a fuller explanation of the ripple effects of Bible translation, watch [wycliffe.org.uk/ripple](https://wycliffe.org.uk/ripple)

‡For more on Pierre, watch [wycliffe.org.uk/pierre](https://wycliffe.org.uk/pierre)



Bible translation 'for such a time as this' (Esther 4:14).

But also, through the coming together of people and communities to get involved in the work. Through the multiplying of Bible translation teams. Through technological advances. And through a greatly increased and engaged network of supporters who have caught the vision and pray and give.

James Poole comments:

*'We live in extraordinary times. The first disciples looked back at the heroes of the Old Testament who longed for Christ's coming but did not see it.*

*'So we look back too with gratitude at those who laboured faithfully in Bible translation before us. They laid the foundations on which we are now building. Today we have the privilege of seeing walls rise and roofs take shape. Things such as every viable language having translation work started, every language having at least some Scripture, and the prospect of seeing two significant barriers broken in the next year or two – 800 Bibles and 2,000 New Testaments! These are historic milestones!*

***'Join us to be part of this historic moment'***

*'And yet the need remains great. One in five people – some 1.5 billion – still wait for the Bible in the language that speaks to their hearts. So the work of Bible translation is as vital as ever. That's why we continue to work with urgency to translate the Bible into every language and unlock God's word for every heart. My invitation is that you join us to be a part of this historic moment.'*

You can support the vital work of Bible translation through giving and prayer.

To donate to the work, please visit:

**[wycliffe.org.uk/donate](https://www.wycliffe.org.uk/donate)**

And you can get the latest stories and news about Bible translation, including what to pray for, by signing up to receive our *Words for Life* magazine and daily prayer diary:

**[wycliffe.org.uk/wfl](https://www.wycliffe.org.uk/wfl)**

or our emails:

**[wycliffe.org.uk/email](https://www.wycliffe.org.uk/email)**

Thank you for your interest in and support for the work of Bible translation.

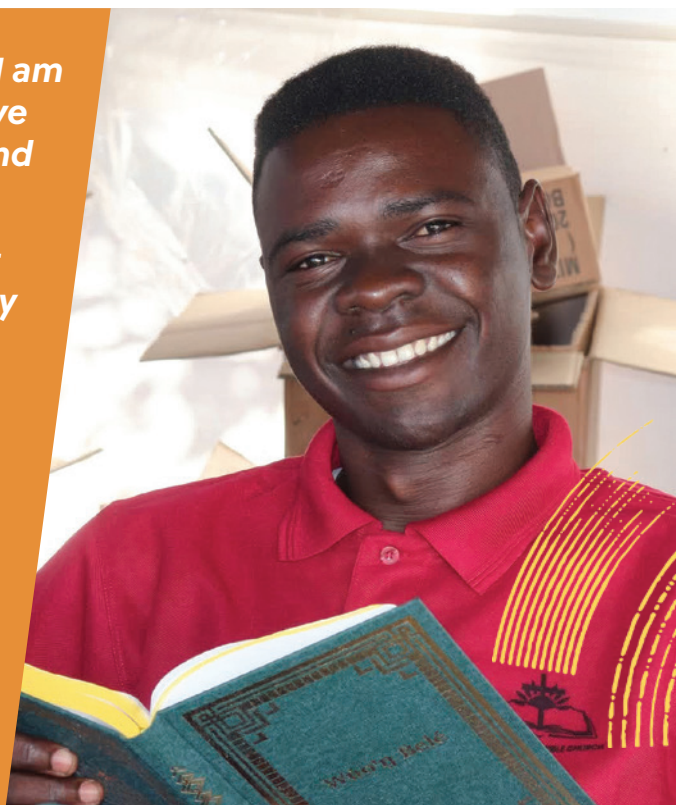
***'I don't know how to express my joy but I am very excited... For many years people have had their Bibles in different languages and it is the first time for us to have our own.***

***'It's my expectation that this Bible will not be just a book but a path of message to my fellow brothers and sisters who are still in the Islamic religion, for them to accept the Christian faith.'***

A Fur\* believer

The Fur New Testament with Old Testament portions was launched on 30 August 2025 in South Sudan. The Fur people are predominantly Muslim

\*previously known by the pseudonym 'Mitto', but now the Fur Church has decided to be more open



## ***One job AI is never going to replace***

Artificial intelligence (AI) is reshaping nearly every field – from health care to journalism, from transport to banking.

AI is also helping to speed up the work of Bible translation, particularly in the early stages of the translation process. For example, in using the translated New Testament to generate a first draft of an Old Testament translation.

However, one thing is clear: AI cannot replace a human Bible translation team.

Although Bible translation requires a lot

of technical ability and knowledge, it's also deeply relational work that requires understanding of language, culture and life in a given setting and context. Translations are forged in the furnace of team interaction and debate. AI can never replace the heart, discernment, and emotional and cultural sensitivity of a Bible translator, nor the vital guidance of the Holy Spirit.

The need for human Bible translators who commit to many years of faithful service will continue.

## ***'Take it, take it, take it... this is life'***

**The Akébou New Testament was launched in Togo on 2 August 2025. Koudjovi, a motorcycle mechanic, was there, and tells of its impact...**

'I was born into a pagan family and was therefore a pagan myself, but on the day the New Testaments were dedicated, I was there. During the ceremony, one moment made a deep impression on me: all the pastors and priests gathered around the table where the copies of the New Testament lay. They prayed together, and at the end, the priest raised the book high, surrounded by the entire pastoral body. This solemn gesture touched me deeply.

'I then asked myself a question: in our traditional ceremonies, do we see such mobilisation, such unity among the people around a sacred book? This image remained engraved in my mind.

'That night, I had a disturbing dream. A huge man dressed in white approached me. He was holding that same book in his hands and handed it to me, saying, "Take it, take it, take it... this is life." I took it, and at that moment, I woke up.

'This dream moved me deeply. The way this man spoke to me, with such authority and gentleness, convinced me to change my life. I decided to abandon my old ways, bought the book, and accepted Jesus as my Saviour.

'I give thanks to God for this transformation, and I sincerely thank everyone who contributed to this project. This book is a blessing.'

*An Akébou man holds his precious New Testament at the launch event*





Tamki / Ikpeng / Uru-Pa-In / Bajelani / Pela  
 Kaytetye / Cook Islands Sign Language / Namuyi  
 Larike-Wakasih / Lopi / Gurindji Kriol / Sukurum  
 Guizhou Sign Language / Ahe / Waritai / Namo  
 Limba, East / Noipä / Boor / Romkun / Löyöp  
 Yoruba Sign Language / Hoia Hoia / Auwe / Bragat  
 Pintiini Ambrak / Yangum Mon  
 Murkim / Kuamasi  
 Sause / Manep  
 Ginyar / Khang  
 Kla-F / Duvle  
 Wa / nda  
 Kir / nē  
 Ta / be  
 X / ja  
 P / zi  
 N / ec  
 Do / ra  
 Fuj / ani  
 Jiam / elimi  
 Noak / opang  
 Nukak / Zenag  
 Waritai / A / Awetí  
 Tanglang / L / guán / Asilulu  
 Fortalezinha Sign Language / Kaxararí / Suganga  
 One, Kwamtim / Avá-Canoeiro / Bomboli / Asilulu  
 Sangkong / Adamorobe Sign Language / Numèè  
 Gorakor / Erem / Kpasham / Gorakor / Bomboli  
 Disa / Asilulu / Kucong / Miao, Northern Guiyang  
 Adamorobe Sign Language / Sangkong / Angaité

**There's still much to do.**

**Here are some of the  
languages needing  
work to start.**

**Please pray for God to raise  
up teams to start the work  
among these groups.**

# 'Alive and active'

## Hebrews 4:12–13 in Label and English

<sup>12</sup> Anasa a warwara ane God i laun pa i titol. I harat kol tana liwan na harum ning naur a ris. I kas pa i kokot tuk ana pukna ning a ingundala pa balandala dia han taum ia. Pa i kas pa i kokot tuk ana pukna ning a surla la han taum ia. Pa i warkurai a nuknukindala pa balandala.  
<sup>13</sup> Pa bel ta utna ning e God ka akes tari ning i mumun kusun a matana. A ututnala rop i tur langolango pa i talapor rop ka ana matana. Pa lamur dalar tur namatana pa dalar atong puasa a ututnala rop ning dala ka tol tari.

<sup>12</sup> For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart. <sup>13</sup> Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account.

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**State of  
the Bible**

**Unlocking God's word for every heart**

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All statistics provided by ProgressBible