

***Record-breaking  
progress***

**Wyc|iffe  
Bib|e  
Trans|ators**

***Your Bible  
translation  
progress  
report  
2023–24***



Cover photo:

At the dedication of the Kabwa New Testament, a young mother gets excited about having her own copy to share with her family

'We are praising Jesus, thanking the living God, that now the Bible is being read with joy in our own language.'

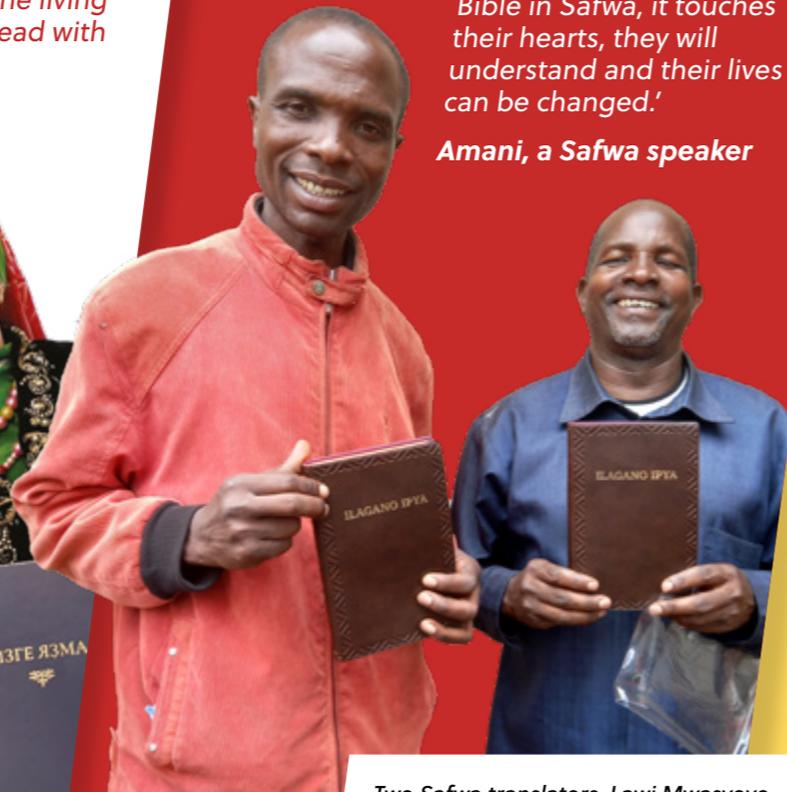
**Tanzila, a Bashkir woman**



Two Bashkir women with their Bashkir New Testament and Bible at the publishing of the Bashkir Bible in Russia after years of hard work

'When people read the Bible in Safwa, it touches their hearts, they will understand and their lives can be changed.'

**Amani, a Safwa speaker**



Two Safwa translators, Lawi Mwasyove and Amon Mwasonzwe, for the first time hold the Safwa New Testament they helped to translate

## An extraordinary moment in the history of world mission

The past year has been another record-breaking year for Bible translation. Newly translated Bibles have been launched at the rate of one a *month*, New Testaments at the rate of one a *week*. And translation work is beginning in a new language at the rate of one every single *day*!

This is such fantastic news! We are truly witnessing an extraordinary moment in the history of world mission. Your giving and your prayers are supporting dedicated Bible translators around the world to bring God's word to their communities in the language which speaks to them best. And God is using that to give more people than ever before access to the Bible in their own language.

Thank you so much!

Of course, it's not just about translating Bibles. It's about seeing God use the Bible to transform lives. That's why I believe that this is the key mission movement of this age.

As Bible translators continue to press ahead with this vital and urgent work, we want to match their ambition and keep up with their pace so that, together, we can move towards a world where everyone can know Jesus through the Bible.

Thank you for your support of their urgent and vital work.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James".

James Poole  
Executive Director





# Seeing God use the Bible to transform lives

Bible translators all over the world are working with real urgency so that their people can know Jesus through the Bible. Here, some of them share how they have experienced God at work over the past year...

## Steluța

'When translating John I came across the phrase "I AM". At the time I didn't understand why, but a light came on and, through that, my whole life changed. I have become calmer, I have managed to put down the worries of life in the Lord's hands, who knows what's best for me.'

*Steluța is part of the Standard Romani translation team – in 2023 they completed translating the Gospel of John. Now they are pressing on with translating the rest of the New Testament.*

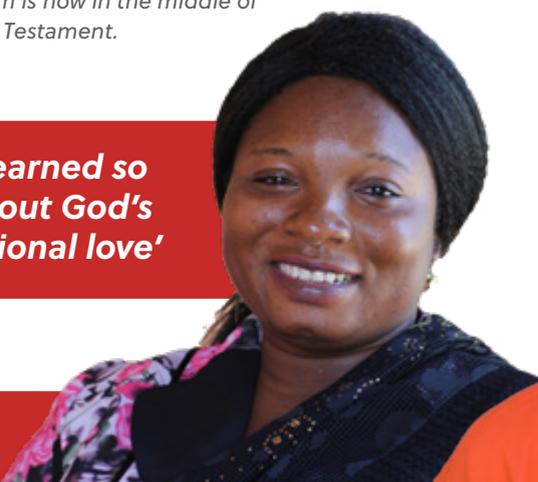


**'A light came on and my whole life changed'**

## Naomi\*

'As a Christian from a Muslim background, I did not come to know God as a loving God. But I have learned so much about God's unconditional love for his people through translating Hosea. I feel safe with a father who gave everything to save me – and I want other Flame\* speakers to also know the depth of God's love for them.'

*Naomi is part the Flame translation team in West Africa. The Flame people are 99% Muslim. After finishing the New Testament, the team is now in the middle of translating the Old Testament.*



**'I have learned so much about God's unconditional love'**



## Eka

'Greetings to you, my brothers and sisters, God is mighty for all of us! Praise God that in the last few months all the final checks on the Dobel New Testament are now complete and it is ready for publication! The translation has taken many years of work, but now it will provide sustenance for the Dobel people in the years to come. Thank you, for your prayers and for your financial help. Praise God forever!'

*Eka is part of the Dobel translation team in Indonesia. They have just completed translating the Dobel New Testament.*



**'Thank you, for your prayers and for your financial help'**

## Wajid\*

'We are very grateful to God for so much. Now that the Leoma\* New Testament is complete we are seeking to engage Leoma people with it – which is not easy given the hostility to the gospel.'

**'We are very grateful to God for so much'**

'We praise God that the New Testament app is available, and that a rough draft of the Old Testament translation has been done. Pray that the ministry of Bible translation to the Leoma people will be ever more fruitful.'

*Wajid works to translate the Bible for the over 15 million Leoma people who live in a country in West Asia that is hostile to the gospel.*

## Feruza

'Only a few years ago the Nakhud\* people in Central Asia had no written language, no Scripture, and no church. My friend started working to write down the language, and then became the first Nakhud Bible translator. After translating for a few months he said: "Now that I'm translating the Bible, I finally understand!" His joy was contagious, and despite the threat of persecution, he shared his faith with everybody in his family. Now there is a vibrant and growing Nakhud church.'

*Feruza works alongside translation teams across Asia on accuracy checking their draft translations.*



**'Now there is a growing community of followers of Jesus'**

*\*names changed for security reasons*

# Over the past year record-breaking progress has been made in Bible translation

A new Bible has been launched at a rate of **one every month**

A New Testament has been launched at a rate of **one every week**

Translation work has started in a new language at a rate of **one every day**

**7,394** languages spoken in the world

**736** languages have the full Bible (+12 from last year – equivalent to one a month)

**1,658** languages have the New Testament (+53 from last year – equivalent to one a week)

**3,742** languages have work in progress (+370 from last year – equivalent to one a day)

Wycliffe Bible Translators and our partners are involved in over 75% of Bible translation work worldwide

**Behind each of these numbers is a story of how God is at work.**

Source: State of the Bible Report, September 2023

## Tipping point

For the first time in history the number of languages with work in progress exceeds the number with no work in progress

Amani Mwandezi holds his Safwa New Testament at its launch event in Tanzania in September



# 1. PARTNERSHIP

## People like you who pray

'This is miraculous, and your prayers have been central to it happening.'

**Abraham and Phoebe\***, speaking about the start of Bible translation among the Ceren\* people in a country in West Asia that is very hostile to the gospel



A woman and daughter in the country where Ceren is spoken



## Local communities

'There are many people who are committed to combatting our problems in Congo. Poverty, hunger, wars that never end. But the only way to truly transform our population is to use God's word in our own language.'

**Marius, Kisangani translation project coordinator, Democratic Republic of Congo**

Generous Wycliffe donors

## Local churches

'Being a pastor of a church when you don't have a Bible in your language has been very difficult. It was hard to convince people to study the Bible. But when they are using their language it makes a difference.'

**James Shaine, Bagwere pastor in Uganda**

# 2. FOUNDATIONS

## Surveying languages

'We visit and research where the language is spoken and if that language is growing or declining. The data gathered helps shape our decisions about translation.'

**Luther Hon, head of language surveying in Nigeria**

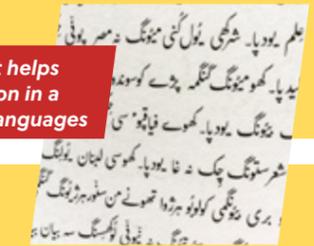


## Writing languages on computers

'Digital font development is a critical part of Bible translation and is also a service to the wider community.'

**Peter Martin, part of the team developing fonts for language using non-Roman writing systems**

The Awami Nastaliq font helps to enable Bible translation in a number of South Asian languages



## Training

Equipping local people to work in Bible translation in their own communities is a vital part of Wycliffe's approach to translation.

Translation consultants being trained in Asia



## Developing the language

In many communities where Wycliffe works, such as with the Ngoni people in Southern Africa, the language has never been written down. Here Armindo\* and Antonio practise reading the first ever draft Ngoni writing system in February 2023.



# The 4 stages of Bible translation

# 3. TRANSLATION

## Technology

Artificial intelligence (AI) is set to have an incredible impact on Bible translation, enabling local Bible translators to produce high-quality translations quicker than ever. The Bible Translator's Assistant is cutting-edge software that can cut overall project time by 40%.



## Accuracy checking

Ensuring that completed translations are accurate to the meaning of the original Greek and Hebrew is a vital part of the translation. Highly trained translation consultants work with each team to ensure that the translation is accurate.

Testing the Standard Romani translation of the Gospel of John among Roma people in Romania



## Drafting

The complex task of translating the Bible interweaves stages of drafting, checking, revising, more checking, and more revising, until an accurate, clear and natural translation is complete.



This team is translating the Bible into Russian Sign Language

## Community testing

It is vital that local people clearly understand the meaning of the translation. Community testing teams check with local people that the translation is understood clearly and accurately.

# 4. ENGAGING

## Scripture engagement

Once Scripture is translated, it's vital it doesn't just sit on dusty shelves. Scripture engagement helps communities and churches to use and apply translated Scriptures.

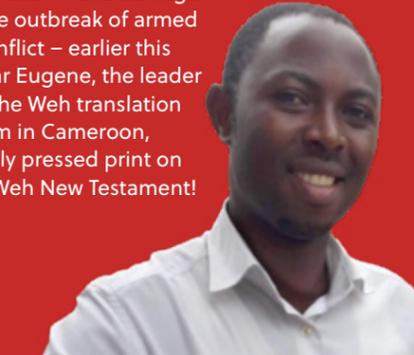
'I didn't know how to use the Bible, but from now on I'll be a teacher of the Bible!'

**A Kisi speaker at a Scripture engagement workshop in Tanzania**



## Printing

After working for over a decade – and through the outbreak of armed conflict – earlier this year Eugene, the leader of the Weh translation team in Cameroon, finally pressed print on the Weh New Testament!



## Apps

Apps on smartphones enable people to listen to and read the Bible easily. The Contemporary Wolof team launched the app of Luke this year – the first book of the Bible available for the 16 million Contemporary Wolof speakers in Senegal!



## Recording

Providing the Bible in audio forms is crucial for engaging people, especially in oral cultures, which are common across Africa and Asia. The Gusilay translation team in Senegal has been capturing the New Testament in audio to reach as many Gusilay people as possible through radio programmes, as well as online and via apps.



# Wycliffe Bible Translators

Bible translation enables people to know Jesus through the Bible

'When I preach in the Nyiha language people get so quiet. It's because they understand very well. And when they understand, they repent and change.'

**Wilhelm Mwakavanga, a Nyiha pastor, at the launch of the Nyiha New Testament in Tanzania in May (below)**

# Thank you!

The work of Bible translation is accelerating, thanks to supporters like you. Here are the accounts for the year ending 30 September 2023.

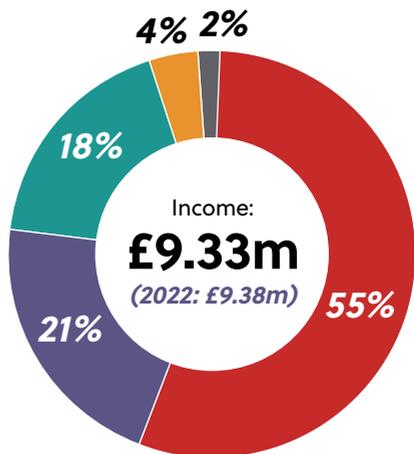
**Individuals**  
£5,144,000

**Trusts and organisations**  
£1,928,500

**Churches**  
£1,667,600

**Legacies**  
£381,600

**Other**  
£205,300



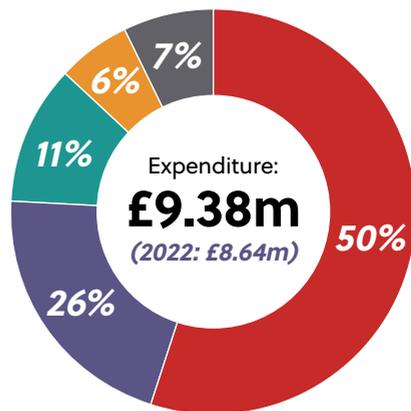
**Supported people**  
£4,699,300

**Programmes and partners**  
£2,395,600

**Supporting charitable costs**  
£1,047,800

**Church and supporter relations**  
£582,900

**Fundraising**  
£658,700

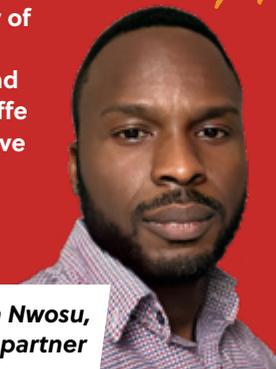


**Thank you for supporting the work of Bible translation – we are grateful to God for you.**

These are provisional accounts. Audited accounts will be available on request. All numbers rounded to the nearest hundred.

'The Bible is God's love letter to us all. Through the study of the word I get to know God and his great love for me and all mankind. I support Wycliffe every month because I believe it is important for everyone to receive this message in a language they understand.'

*Dr Olisaemeka Nwosu,  
Give the Word partner*



'God's word has the power to change lives for the better, as it has mine. That is why I have left a gift in my Will to Wycliffe, because future generations deserve the opportunity to read God's word for themselves.'

*David Laviers,  
Wycliffe supporter*



'I want to say a huge thank you! This work could not happen without you. Your support means that incredible transformation through Bible translation is a reality for millions more people around the world. Thank you!'

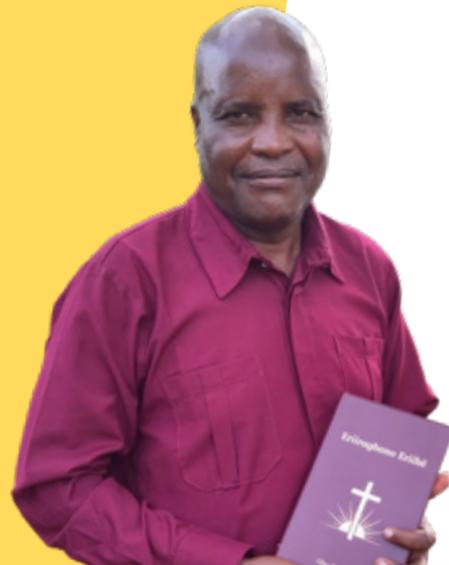


*Helen van der Walt,  
serving with Wycliffe in South Africa*

'I am so grateful to God for you and for the opportunity you have given me to study Bible translation. My prayer is that God will use what I am learning to reach more people with the Bible. Thank you and God bless you!'



*Kyernum Patrick,  
Bible translation student, Nigeria*



# Record progress: how can we keep up?

Last year, 370 new Bible translation projects began – that’s the equivalent of more than one a day, and it’s more in one year than ever before! This record-breaking progress built on the previous record-breaking progress in 2022 and 2021. The sustained acceleration in the work of Bible translation, which shows no sign of slowing down, is absolutely fantastic news. It means that soon more and more people throughout the world will be able to know Jesus through the Bible. We give thanks to God that we are living through this time in history.

## But this incredible progress also brings challenges.

Local Bible translators are not forming orderly queues waiting to be next to receive funding before beginning their projects. They are starting anyway, and then coming to Wycliffe and our partners for help. This is wonderful: it is so exciting to see genuinely locally led projects seeking expertise

and finance from the West, but not our leadership. It leads to a key question that we are asking at the moment:

## Can we keep up with this unprecedented demand?

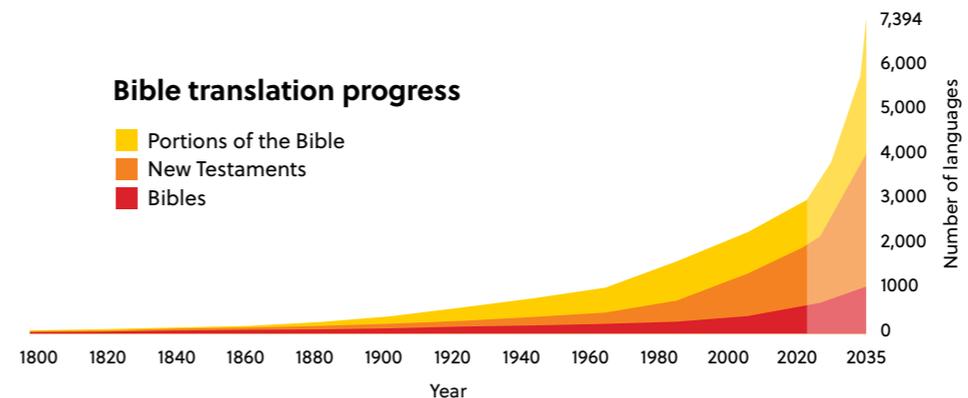
Recent figures from the worldwide Bible translation movement show that in order to keep up with local Bible translators, significantly more new funding is needed *in addition* to current funding projections.

This is especially challenging given the current economic climate. Our income (see page 12) – and therefore our ability to fund Bible translations – is not accelerating at the same rate as Bible translation. In the past 20 years we’ve invested heavily in building capacity around the world to accelerate translation, so now we want to keep up with the ambition of Bible translators and churches to ensure that their communities have God’s word in their own languages.



## Bible translation progress

- Portions of the Bible
- New Testaments
- Bibles



The generosity of people like you over the last number of years has enabled us to say ‘Yes’ to many more translations. There are others, however, that we have been unable to say ‘Yes’ to – yet. Some of these projects that we would love to be able to say ‘Yes’ to are:

- A whole-country strategy focused on Sudan, aiming to reach dozens of languages that currently have no adequate Scripture.
- Growing the work in Nigeria, where speakers of 111 languages are still waiting for Bible translation to begin.
- Developing a large multilanguage project in a country in West Asia that is hostile to the gospel, aiming to reach some of the most-difficult-to-reach people groups in the world.

While we celebrate all that has already been achieved with God’s help, we also keep our eyes firmly on what has yet to be achieved. The stakes are high: 1 in 5 people today are still living – and in some cases dying – without the Bible in their language. On their behalf, we must press on and play our part to contribute as much as we can to keep up with the ambition of Bible translators and churches around the world.

## What the work of Bible translation is all about: people now and in future generations knowing Jesus through the Bible



*‘I’m really happy, God has given us the New Testament in Ikoma. I can read it with my children. It’s the work of God! God is good!’*  
Neema, an Ikoma speaker



# Thank you for playing your part

Chris and Anna, Cambridge, Increasing your monthly donation • Tabho, Democratic Republic of Congo, Bunia Bible translator • Kerry and Nick, Worcester, Responding to the Bible printing appeal • Abraham\* and Phoebe\*, West Asia, Ceren\* Bible translators • Ruth, Belfast, Raising money on your 70th birthday • Pastor Paul\*, West Africa, Bible translation team leader • Adebimpe, Erith, Praying through WhatsApp prayer • Amir\*, West Asia, Leoma\* Bible translator • Sanna, Hampton, sending a message of hope to persecuted translators • Yoke, Indonesia, Dobel Bible translator • Asuncion, London, Becoming a new *Give the Word* partner this year • Komi, Coordinating Bible translation in Togo • Bath Abbey, Avon, Praying for Komi and supporting the Ifè translation team • Luka, Nigeria, Bible translation student • Vivien, Inverness, Leaving a gift to Wycliffe in your Will • Konlan, Ghana, Koma translation project manager • James, Buckinghamshire, Supporting the Koma project from start to finish • Sorin, Romania, Standard Romani Bible

translator • Gabor, London, Offering match funding for the Christmas appeal • Lois\*, South Asia, Faegen\* Bible translator • Kenneth and Angela, Stirling, Introducing friends to Wycliffe • Hamadou, Senegal, Contemporary Wolof Bible translator •

Valerie and Derek, Cambridge, Raising money for Wycliffe instead of receiving wedding gifts • David, Europe, Developing AI technology to help Bible translators • Junior, Dunmow, Generously giving monthly • Lonh, Cambodia, Bunong Bible translator • David, Laleston, Serving as a Wycliffe volunteer in Wales • Ruth, Uganda, Banyole Bible translator • First Newtownards Presbyterian, Northern Ireland, Adopting Wycliffe as a mission partner • Tabitha\*, West Africa, Flame\* translation accountant • Ian, Newcastle, Encouraging your church to give regularly •

Eugene, Cameroon, Weh Bible translator • Nick and Cecilia, Bournemouth, Funding printing for the Tado-Lindu New Testament in Indonesia • Ibrahim\*, West Asia, Bible translator • Derrick and Llio, Aberystwyth, Being *Give the Word* partners

*\*names changed for security reasons*

***'We are all one worldwide community of believers in Jesus Christ. Thank you for supporting the work of Bible translation, we will all have the joy of seeing the fruit it produces.'***

Pastor Gaby Sagna,  
President of the  
Assembly of Evangelical  
Churches in Senegal

