**State of the Bible text for press release**

***Title:* The greatest obstacle to world mission** **is being dismantled**

***Press release: embargoed until 30 September***

**The greatest obstacle to world mission** – the lack of Scripture in people’s heart languages – **is being dismantled** at an unprecedented rate! That’s the main headline from what has been another exceptional year in Bible translation, as revealed in the annual Bible translation statistics (released 30 September – United Nations’ International Translation Day).

The progress we have seen in previous years has continued, and in fact accelerated in many areas. Among the highlights are:

**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.** 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!)

**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).

**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.

**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.

James Poole, executive director of Wycliffe, says:

‘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 language 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.’

**Notes to Editors**

1. For further information, call the Wycliffe Communications team on 0300 303 1111 or jackroyd@wycliffe.org.uk.

2. Wycliffe Bible Translators seeks to create a world where everyone can know Jesus through the Bible. It does this through a range of activities, including Bible translation, literacy and Scripture use initiatives. Currently, Wycliffe has 350 people from the UK and Ireland serving over 580 million people who speak over 320 languages in over 60 countries. Of the nearly 7,400 or so languages spoken worldwide today, only 779 have the Bible. Around 1 in every 5 people do not have the Bible in their language, but Wycliffe and our partners continue to unlock God’s word for every heart. As a result, translation of the Bible into people’s languages is one of the critical needs in world mission, to enable the growth of evangelism and discipleship ministries.

3. Wycliffe and its partner organisations are currently involved in about three-quarters of global Bible translation efforts.