November 2016

TRANSLATION *Matters*

Dear Friends,

What a year this has been!

Sitting down to write something to you, I am overflowing with thankfulness to the Lord for His hand of guidance and provision throughout 2016. What a joy to have seen all that has happened in partnership with you!

At this time of celebrating the greatest Gift ever given, in the person of God's only Son, Jesus – the Word who came into this world to demonstrate the love of God – we dedicate this edition to every people group that has not yet received the gift of God's Word in their own language, so that they may know Him as Emmanuel, the Word who became flesh and came to dwell among us.

Did you know that it costs about R500 to get one verse translated into just one language? I invite you, in the spirit of seasonal generosity over Christmas, to consider sending a "Truth Hamper". That's the picture that comes to mind as the Word goes out to these waiting people groups, that one day soon, they too will have the joy of hearing God's Word in the language of their hearts. Now that's priceless!

Thank you for partnering with us to see the gift of God's Word brought to every language community on earth – spreading the knowledge of His glory 'til it covers the earth, as the waters cover the sea! (Hab.2:14)

Karen Floor, CEO

Carrying the Word of God to the people



Reaching out to hold the first Scripture in their own heart language



Excitement mounts as Makonde women gather for the dedication of their Bible



STARTING AT THE VERY BEGINNING

By Ansie van der Merwe, Field Coordinator

"The Hambukushu people are nameless", explained an impassioned Pastor Johannes Kamwanga from Namibia, who was clearly delighted to talk to our team. "There is a Thimbukushu New Testament, but why did they not start with the Old Testament? Are we not good enough to have the Old Testament like the other languages do? We can't teach people the new things if they don't even know the old. We have to start at the beginning. Our children do not understand. Preachers don't understand, and don't preach clearly because they are using someone else's words. This vision for a Bible translation is from God. We just need help, but we will do it".

In 1999, Johannes and some of his friends attempted to translate the Old Testament, but they did not know where to turn for help, and so they did not complete the work.



Paulus Chapi (left) approached us to do the translation and Johannes Kamwanga (right) wants to complete the work this time

I visited the north-western part of Botswana from 1-8 October 2016. The aim of the trip was to meet with church leaders and the chiefs to talk about a potential translation for the Hambukushu people. Although there is a Thimbukushu New Testament available in Namibia, it is not usable by the Hambukushu people in Botswana, because Setswana has diluted the Thimbukushu language. The people do not learn it at school and so they can't read it.



Ansie with the church leaders and chiefs

I was struck by the many needs in the area – economically there aren't many jobs, socially there are so many issues regarding HIV and family, and spiritually they are struggling. Pastors are often not trained, and have to interpret the Bible from Setswana and English, which results in many misunderstandings about key issues. The church mixes their traditional beliefs, and fear of evil spirits and ancestors with their faith. We want to support their vision to make the Bible accessible, so that they can find the truth for themselves and transform their communities.

We received a lot of input from the chiefs and pastors, who strongly desire a translation of the Old Testament and some oral stories. They formed a translation committee to oversee the translation and to make decisions regarding the project. We are excited about the ground work that has been done and look forward to getting started on the translation for the Hambukushu, a people eager to start at the very beginning, a very good place to start.



Hambukushu family crossing the Kavango

Photos by Ansie van der Merwe and Phia le Roux

CHECKING IN ON THE TONGA

By Ruben Dubei

Orality consultant, Ruben Dubei, visited the Tonga Bible Translation Project in Binga, Zimbabwe from 25 September to 9 October 2016. He checked all of the 62 oral stories completed so far; 7 were finalised and the rest needed some minor corrections. The finished stories are: Genesis 9:8-17; Exodus 16:1-12; Numbers 21:4-9; Deuteronomy 18:15-19; Deuteronomy 31:1-8; Revelation 21:1-8 and Revelation 22:1-5.



Photos by Ruben Dubei

Hard at work checking one story at a time

Ruben reported back as follows:
I was surprised by the quality of most of the translations. The stories seemed to flow naturally and with expression. The motivation, ownership, organisation and diligence of the people involved is something I have rarely seen during my experience in Africa. They even worked during the night to record stories (a second draft to replace the first which was not done well, or to record some lost recordings) when everyone was asleep and there was no noise, for the sake of a quality recording. It was a blessing to work with such a dedicated group of people. I definitely see this as a successful project.

I found that checking in a big group was more effective for two reasons – the group was able to identify some problems that would be difficult for a non-speaker of the language to detect, and the translators were able to learn in the process. During the evaluation session, the translators expressed that they were grateful for what they had learnt, not only about the Bible, but also about translation work and about their own language.



Ruben Dubei with the Tonga Translation Team

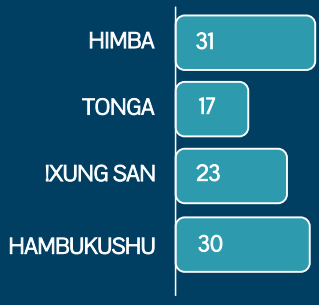
One Sunday, the group visited two churches where they presented the project. Much to my delight, I found that the Tonga language is vibrant in all sectors of the society; in church, communities and homes. This provides good soil for the seed of the Word to be planted, to grow and to produce fruit.

INTERCESSORS FOR AFRICA REACHES 100 – AND BEYOND

By Harry & Elsbeth Brasem

We are thrilled to have reached 101 intercessors that have committed to pray every day for one or more of the four people groups we are praying for. Our team continues to grow and we know without a doubt that God hears every prayer.

Penelope, a personal supporter and prayer partner living in the USA, shared one of our newsletters focusing on the Tonga project with her neighbour, Peggy Pennington. Peggy and her late husband, Jack, had served in northern Zimbabwe amongst the Batonga people many years back. Their ministry had been with ten schools in the Binga district and Peggy had also worked on a Tonga dictionary. She was delighted to hear news about the Batonga people, since she and Penelope have been praying for the Tonga project. When they received the last issue of "Translation Matters", Peggy immediately recognised several of the Batonga translators from their photos – students that she and Jack had taught. Imagine her joy and excitement in seeing the "fruits" of their work and realising that she had been praying for them all along.



Number of intercessors as at 5 November 2016

To join Intercessors for Africa, send an email to harry_brasem@wycliffe.org.za



JOY! TO THE WORLD

Karen and Sebastian Floor were recently featured in the November 2016 edition of JOY! Magazine. The article was entitled "Called to the frontline of grassroots translation" and followed their journey as they heeded the call of God to do Bible translation work in Mozambique. Read the article online at www.joydigitalmag.com/news/called-frontline-grassroots-translation.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2016

On Monday 24 October 2016, Board members, staff and other stakeholders gathered for our AGM. Chairman of the Board, Piet Meiring, gave the opening address and CEO, Karen Floor, reported back on a very eventful year. We recognised Harry and Elsbeth Brasem for 30 years' service with Wycliffe and June Dickie for 25 years' service.



Chairman of the Wycliffe SA Board, Piet Meiring, giving the opening address



AGM attendees enjoy chatting over tea



Showing appreciation to Board members



Translation Consultant, Bonifacio Paulo, closes in prayer

Photos by Roy Tibbit

HELP SAVE TREES

We are constantly updating our database, so if any of your details are going to change, please let us know. If you would prefer to receive this newsletter via email (and save some trees in the process), please send a request to nicola_king@wycliffe.org.za.

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BIBLE TRANSLATION

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