wycliffe
BIBLE TRANSLATION

Fifty Year Anniversary



2025 | GOLDEN HARVEST

A Commemorative History of Wycliffe South Africa

CONTENTS

Preface ---- 1
Timeline ---- 3
Note from the Authors ---- 6
History ---- 7
Chapter 1 ---- 7
Chapter 2 ---- 11
Chapter 3 ---- 15
Chapter 4 ---- 24
Chapter 5 ---- 28
Chapter 6 ---- 34
Chapter 7 ---- 39
Chapter 8 ---- 44
Chapter 9 ---- 47
Chapter 10 ---- 51
Appendices ---- 54
Vision, Mission, Values, Distinctives ---- 54
Logo: Then and Now ---- 58

PREFACE

How does one capture in words the extraordinary tapestry of faith that has been woven across five decades of Bible translation ministry? This question stood before Harry and Elsbeth Brasem as they undertook the profound responsibility of chronicling the history of Wycliffe South Africa—from its humble beginnings in the early 1970s to the vibrant ministry we witness today.

Their labour of love offers a window into the remarkable characters, accomplishments, and challenges that have shaped our history. Through their careful curation of memories and testimonies, a greater story emerges—one that points unmistakably to Christ Himself. He is the One who initiated this work, sustained it through every season, and continues to lead us forward for His glory among the nations.

As you read these pages, you will encounter stories of breakthrough and transformation, of setbacks overcome by faith, and of lives forever changed by God's Word in their mother tongue. Above all, you will see the fingerprints of a faithful God who delights in using ordinary people for extraordinary purposes.

We extend our deepest gratitude to Harry and Elsbeth for their dedication to this project. Their love for Christ and passionate commitment to Wycliffe South Africa permeates every chapter, creating not merely a historical record, but an invitation to worship the God who has authored this remarkable story.

May this volume inspire a new generation to join the ongoing work God is writing through Wycliffe South Africa, and may Christ be magnified in all that follows.

Alan Webster



WYCLIFFE SA TIMELINE

1930s

Wycliffe began with Cameron Townsend's Caqchiquel translation in Guatemala, leading to the formation of SIL and Wycliffe Bible Translators, which later expanded into new divisions across the world.

1983-1986

In 1983 David and Margaret Abernethy led Wycliffe SA for three years, before Harry and Elsbeth Brasem continued leadership from 1986.

1994

In 1994, Mandela opens borders, enabling travel that expands Wycliffe SA's future possibilities amid global shifts.

2000

Vision 2025 sparks global translation innovation; under Stephen Coertze, Wycliffe SA rethinks its strategy to accelerate Bible translation.

1973-1981

In 1975, after Tony and Mary Williams from Wycliffe Australia rallied churches in Johannesburg, Pretoria, and Cape Town, Wycliffe gained a recognised presence in South Africa. By 1981, 14 individuals had signed up.

1991

All Wycliffe divisions become independent, and Wycliffe SA registers as a South African non-profit. Wycliffe SA's first Board formed with Derek Fivaz as Chairman, Denis Douglas as member, and offices beside the Brasems' home.

1997

Stephen Coertze is appointed as the new Director of Wycliffe SA.

2009

Recognising the importance of oral communication, Wycliffe SA is endorsed to focus on Oral Bible Translation.

2010,2011

Karen Floor becomes the new Wycliffe SA director, and Wycliffe SA forms Regional Translation Services to pursue local partnerships. The first partnership is formed with the Camucuio cluster.

2015

The Himba translation is first fully Wycliffe SA managed translation project.

2017-2018

Translation begins in four new languages: Hambukushu and the Huila Cluster.

2020

LuminAfrica is formed, uniting seven Bible translation organisations in South Africa.
Five translations launch, including Sepulana and the CD Cluster languages.

2022

Wycliffe Links is formed to empower Bible translation and partnerships.

2024-2025

Six new translation programmes are started.
Wycliffe SA celebrates 50 YEARS of existence!

2013-2014

Prayer and awareness raising initiatives are launched, including a Kilimanjaro prayer climb, and the 947 cycle race.

2016

The new Wycliffe SA logo is Born.
Bonifacio Paulo becomes the head of Translation Services.
The Tonga translation is launched.

2019

Stephen Coertze becomes Executive Director of the Wycliffe Global Alliance.
Translation begins in five more languages: Siphuthi and four Makhuwa languages.

2021

Alan Webster becomes the Wycliffe SA Executive Director.

2023

Run for the Bibleless SA launches, the first OBT&T workshop is held, and Psalms that Sing is launched.

50 Year Celebration

RESUME OF WYCLIFFE SA HISTORY

NOTE FROM THE AUTHORS

One Team – One Purpose – God's Word In Every Language

What a joy and inspiration it has been to trace the footsteps of the Lord throughout the history of Wycliffe SA, bringing people from all over the globe to participate in His work, and using South Africans to be a blessing in turn. Each colleague has proved unique with their own personalities, characters and gifts, and it has been a privilege serving with them on the team.

Without exception, all past and present members have faced challenges and personal sorrow, as well as joy in their work. That they have persevered under extreme difficulties is due to their love and commitment, and the Lord enabling and sustaining them. This has resulted in many Scripture translations being completed and made accessible to unreached and Bibleless people— all honour and glory is due to God for making this possible.

Harry and Elsbeth Brasem

The Wycliffe Tree

The fruit is the lives of people who have been given access to His Word in their heart language, and have consequently applied it and been transformed.

The branches are the translation and literacy personnel.

The trunk is the support personnel serving our translation colleagues and various projects with transport, school teachers, administrators, research specialists, accountants and IT specialists, etc.

The roots are the people at home providing prayer, financial support, and encouragement.

Our ultimate goal is that *"They raise their voices, they shout for joy; from the west they acclaim the Lord's Majesty. Therefore, in the east give glory to the Lord; exalt the Name of the Lord, the God of Israel, in the islands of the sea. From the ends of the earth we hear singing: 'Glory to the Righteous One.'"*
Isaiah 24:14-16

CHAPTER 1: SEED SOWN

"But how can they call on Him to save them unless they believe in Him? And how can they believe in Him if they have never heard about Him? And how can they hear about Him unless someone tells them? And how will anyone go and tell them without being sent? That is what the Scriptures mean when they say, 'How beautiful are the feet of those who bring Good News!'"
Romans 10:14-15

1973/4 To 1981 – Tony And Mary Williams

In 1973, a New Zealander arrived in South Africa with an extraordinary vision. **Tony Williams**, left paraplegic after a climbing accident, had met his South African-born wife, **Mary**, at Bible College in Australia. Despite physical limitations that might have deterred others, they felt God's unmistakable call to spread the vision of Bible translation.

Setting up their combined home and office first in Boksburg, then Kempton Park, Tony and Mary, with daughters Andrea and Suzanne, began the patient work of building a movement. They shared Wycliffe Bible Translator's mission with churches and established prayer groups—small gatherings that would prove to have far-reaching impact.

One such prayer meeting, held just around the corner from **Joy Ellis's** (now Boyle) home, became the beginning of a remarkable partnership. When an Australian friend grew concerned about the Williams family's silence, she asked Joy to check on them. Joy discovered not only their well-being but their prayer meeting, launching what would become a 48-year commitment to Wycliffe SA that continued until she was 80 in 2022.

Tony & Mary Williams



Derek Fivaz awarding Mary



Anstice Family





Graumann Family



Allwright Family



Carol Waddell

Meanwhile, **Roy and Rose Tibbit** joined Wycliffe Canada in 1975, beginning five decades of dedicated service that would take them across the globe—from the Philippines to Colombia, Canada to South Africa.

John Bendor-Samuel of Wycliffe UK recognised the growing momentum and initiated annual mini-linguistics courses at Rosebank Bible College in Johannesburg. These intensive three-week January programmes for third-year students utilised Professor **Derek Fivaz** from Rhodes University and Wycliffe members on furlough, creating a pipeline for future translators.

By 1981, when Tony and Mary returned to Australia, their eight years of faithful sowing had yielded remarkable fruit: fourteen South Africans had joined Wycliffe as members, ready to serve as administrators, translators, and literacy workers across the globe. Mary's contribution was later recognised with honorary membership in Wycliffe SA.

THE PIONEER GENERATION

Tim and Audrey Anstice served as administrators in Kenya, with Audrey bringing the missionary heritage of her parents, Harold and Alice Berry, founders of South Africa's World Outreach ministry.
Stan and Cherry Graumann prepared future translators by teaching French to those heading for Francophone countries, later moving to the UK to teach English as a second language.

Linda Poulton contributed through short-term service in Australia, while **Frans and Iris Haenen** served as short-term administrators there as well.

Carol Waddell exemplified the commitment of these early members, joining Wycliffe straight from her second year at Rosebank Bible College. After SIL training at Kangaroo Ground in early 1980, she served four years as Director's Secretary in Darwin, then returned to South Africa for promotional work and recruitment before her marriage to Richard. Together they would often assist in the office when others were away.

Len and Gill Allwright provided crucial continuity, running the SA office for six months in 1978 while the Williams family took furlough. Living in the Williams' Boksburg home, they maintained the prayer meetings and church visits, with Len traveling to Natal to speak at Union Bible Institute at Sweetwater and Durban Bible College. After obtaining Australian citizenship, they took up their assignment teaching at Wycliffe's school in Ukarumpa, Papua New Guinea.

Hut & Camel, Kaisut Desert



Steve & Johanna Pillinger



The Kaisut Desert, where the Swanepoels and Pillingers worked



Swanepoel Family



Dedication of Rendille New Testament



DESERT WARRIORS: THE SWANEPOELS' STORY

Perhaps the most dramatic story belongs to **Nick and Lynne Swanepoel**, whose journey began with SIL training in the UK in 1977. After challenging South African churches with the vision of Bible translation in 1979-80, they headed for one of earth's most challenging mission fields: the Kaisut Desert of northern Kenya.

Living in the settlement of Korr among the nomadic Rendille people, Lynne faced unique challenges teaching literacy to herders constantly on the move with their goats and camels. Morning classes for men, afternoon sessions for women—a schedule that initially frustrated the men until they understood the women's equal need for literacy.

The breakthrough moment came unexpectedly. A Rendille man, frustrated at not finding his teacher at home, suddenly realised he could write a message instead of waiting. This revelation sparked such enthusiasm that students would steal each other's exercise books to practice writing, or scribble messages in the dust on the Land Rover. We don't know who was more delighted, the teacher or the student!

The ripple effects were profound. Men who found faith through literacy classes carried the Gospel to outlying villages. Churches grew organically across the desert. The first baptismal service for fourteen new Rendille believers took place in Korr—in a camel trough, the only available water source in that landscape of lava rock and sand, where a waterhole cut thirty feet deep provided the community's sole water supply.

Their remarkable story was later documented in "Harvest of Trust" and featured in Wycliffe's 1992 publication "Any Given Day in the Life of the Bible," with Lynne gracing the front cover alongside Rendille women. The book showcased fifty translation projects from 800 then in progress worldwide. Between 1994-95, Nick and Lynne established a small Wycliffe office in Cape Town during extended furlough, but lack of suitable successors forced its closure when they returned to Kenya. In 1999, they were seconded to Africa Inland Mission to continue their Rendille work with an expanded church-planting focus.

Steve and Johanna Pillinger supported this desert ministry, with UK-based Steve handling typesetting for African New Testaments (including the Rendille translation) while Johanna provided counselling and prayer support, creating beautiful sketches of women from various language projects.

From Tony and Mary's Kempton Park office to the Kaisut Desert's camel troughs, these pioneers had planted seeds that would flourish across continents, proving that beautiful feet carrying Good News could overcome any obstacle—even mountains, deserts, and physical limitations.

CHAPTER 2: MEMBERSHIP GROWS - THE EARLY PIONEERS

"The rain and snow come down from the heavens and stay on the ground to water the earth. They cause the grain to grow, producing seed for the farmer and bread for the hungry. It is the same with my Word. I send it out, and it always produces fruit. It will accomplish all I want it to, and it will prosper everywhere I send it."
Isaiah 55:10-11

1983 To 1986 – David And Margaret Abernethy



Yvonne Stoffberg



Forster Family

Even before Tony and Mary Williams arrived in South Africa, two remarkable South Africans had already answered the call to Bible translation. Yvonne Stofberg, joining through Wycliffe UK, and Keith Forster, through Wycliffe Canada, became trailblazers whose stories would demonstrate both the challenges and triumphs of cross-cultural Scripture translation.

Yvonne's journey with the Mgili people of Nigeria proved that dedication could overcome seemingly impossible obstacles. When political and religious opposition made her work untenable in Nigeria, she relocated to the UK in 1985 to complete the New Testament—a testament to her unwavering commitment to seeing God's Word reach the Mgili people.

Keith Forster's assignment among the Kuna people of Panama presented equally daunting challenges. Working with his Canadian wife Wilma and their three children, Keith tackled New Testaments for two Kuna dialects—San Blas and Paya Kuna—before embarking on the Old Testament translation. When political unrest and persecution of believers forced them from their village home, they persevered from afar. Today, the Kuna people possess not only Scripture in their language but also a hymn book crafted by Wilma, while work continues on the Old Testament.

NEW LEADERSHIP EMERGES

At a Brethren meeting in Fish Hoek, **David and Margaret Abernethy** first heard about Wycliffe through Roy and Rose Tibbit. Roy's parents ran the Wellwood Missionary Home, providing affordable accommodation for missionaries, creating natural connections within the missions community. David, an Irishman who had served in the Northern Rhodesian police (now Zambia) before marrying Margaret and settling in South Africa, possessed an infectious enthusiasm for Scripture and a passion to make it available to others.

When David offered to serve as Wycliffe's local representative in the Western Cape, he brought more than administrative skills—he brought vision. Continuing the mini-linguistics course at Rosebank Bible College, David helped expand the foundation Tony and Mary Williams had laid.

Taking over from the Williams family when they returned to Australia in 1983, David and Margaret made the significant move from the Cape to Kempton Park, with Roy and Rose Tibbit providing temporary assistance during the transition. David's tremendous love for the Bible and infectious enthusiasm would prove instrumental in the organisation's continued growth.

ROMANCE AND CHALLENGES ACROSS CONTINENTS

The expanding Wycliffe family faced diverse challenges across continents. **Arnd and Dindi Strube** began translation work for the Kurds while based in Germany, with Dindi marrying German Wycliffe member Arnd to begin work on Genesis. When opposition forced project abandonment, they pivoted to Myanmar (formerly Burma), where they served in the university's linguistics department. Arnd's exceptional IT gifts later benefited Wycliffe Germany for several years.

Anton Vermaak and his American wife Joy experienced the frustration of bureaucratic delays, waiting years for visas to enter Irian Jaya. When they finally arrived, a severe allergy to local fire ants forced Anton's relocation back to America—a reminder that even the most committed missionaries face obstacles beyond human control.

Romance bloomed at unexpected moments in this global mission community. **Charlotte de Kock**, after joining Wycliffe and attending SIL school in Australia, found herself teaching linguistics when student **Michael Corden** entered her classroom.



David & Margaret Abernethy


Strube Family


Corden Family


Vermaak Family


Floor Family


GUCCI

Their marriage led to a joint assignment among the Torres Strait Islanders north of Australia, where they completed the New Testament and other Scriptures in Yumplatok language for the Yorke Islanders. Michael continues Scripture engagement work among the Torres Strait Islanders today.

MOZAMBIQUE: A STORY OF PERSISTENCE

Perhaps no assignment better illustrated the persistence required for Bible translation than **Sebastian and Karen Floor's** work in Mozambique. Beginning with the Mwani people, they embodied adaptability as circumstances repeatedly forced relocations—from Maputo to Pemba in northern Cabo Delgado province, where erratic water supply tested their resolve, then to the small island of Ibo, back to Pemba, and finally to Nampula.

Harry's visits to the Floors revealed the reality of missionary life beyond romantic notions. In Maputo, he found dedicated servants making do with limited resources. Later, on Ibo Island, he accompanied a work team from Honeyridge Baptist Church to paint Karen's kitchen and install cupboards. Karen's humour about her "charcoal colour scheme"—actually smoke discolouration from cooking over an open fire in the kitchen's centre—captured the blend of hardship and joy that characterised frontier translation work.

Sebastian's gifts eventually led to broader leadership, serving as Mozambique branch director from 2005 to 2008 while working as a translation consultant. In 2010, both Sebastian and Karen took up new South African assignments—Sebastian heading the newly formed Translation Services for Southern Africa, while Karen became Director of Wycliffe SA, bringing their field experience to organisational leadership.

THE LEGACY CONTINUES

David and Margaret's leadership journey took them beyond South Africa's borders in March 1987, when they assumed new assignments with Wycliffe UK before eventually retiring to Northern Ireland. Margaret went home to be with the Lord in 2019, but David, aged 91 (2025), continues his faithful support of Bible translation through prayer and financial partnership—a living testament to lifelong commitment to God's Word reaching every people group.

From Nigeria's challenges to Panama's political unrest, from Myanmar's universities to Mozambique's remote islands, the seeds planted in those early Kempton Park prayer meetings had taken root across continents. Each translator carried forward the same vision that had first stirred in Tony and Mary Williams' home office: that every people group deserves to hear God's Word in their own language. The rain and snow of God's Word, sent out through these dedicated translators, was indeed producing fruit exactly as Isaiah promised—accomplishing all God intended, prospering everywhere He sent it.

CHAPTER 3: DOORS OPENING

"Pray with us that the Lord's message may continue to spread rapidly and be received with honour."
2 Thessalonians 3:1

1986 To 1998, 2016 To The Present - Harry And Elsbeth Brasem

A CALLING CONFIRMED

Both Brasems felt called to missions, and whilst Harry studied at Rosebank Bible College—a mature student of 34 with four children—he faced the challenge of choosing amongst many mission organisations. His B.Th. thesis on "Barriers to Missions Mobilisation in the Local Church" reflected his growing passion.

The required third-year mini-linguistics course brought Harry face-to-face with Wycliffe's vision. There he met **Derek Fivaz, David Abernethy, Steve Pillinger**, and **Hans-Jurgen Scholz**, a German colleague based in Kenya. Derek Fivaz would later serve as Chairman of Wycliffe SA's Board for 25 distinguished years, becoming a translation consultant for several southern African Bantu languages. His unique ability to teach grammar structures common to these related languages could cut two years off translation work. His wife Norma served as medical consultant for South African Wycliffe members.

After graduation, Harry and Elsbeth joined SAAWE (South African Action for World Evangelisation) for 18 months, recognising it as a stepping-stone. Moving to Kempton Park, they maintained contact with Wycliffe, Hospital Christian Fellowship, and the Flemish Mission. SAAWE's requirement of 100 prayer partners per worker proved excellent preparation—many prayer partners became financial supporters, easing transitions between ministries.

AN UNEXPECTED CALL

David Abernethy's persistence changed everything. After meeting Hans-Jurgen in Zimbabwe, David contacted the Brasems, convinced they should replace him and Margaret, who were planning to move to the United Kingdom. The Brasems were surprised—they'd heard nothing from the Lord about this—but promised to pray.

David registered them for SIL at Horsleys Green in July 1986, but nothing materialised. Undeterred, he registered them for QUEST orientation in the US that September. Air-fares had to be paid by August's end—provision came just days before the deadline. Care for their four children during their seven-week absence was also miraculously arranged.

OVERCOMING POLITICAL BARRIERS

South African members faced unique challenges during apartheid's final years. Wycliffe SA operated under Wycliffe Europe Area's cover—the only Wycliffe entity in Africa then. While SIL colleagues worked across Africa doing actual translation, Wycliffe existed to recruit members and present the vision to Christian constituencies.

Political boycotts made South African members problematic for fields to accept. Africa Area advised David to stop recruiting and act merely as a financial forwarding office. David disagreed, and Harry took the stance that South Africans shouldn't be denied the privilege of giving God's Word to others. He prayed for doors to open worldwide for South African missionaries.

God honoured these prayers dramatically. The day after President de Klerk entered Kenya on an official state visit, Harry and Elsbeth flew into Nairobi to visit Nick and Lynne Swanepoel. Elsbeth received red-carpet treatment at the airport—no visa required as a South African, whilst Harry needed one with his Dutch passport.

THE CHURCH CONDITION: WIDE OPEN DOORS

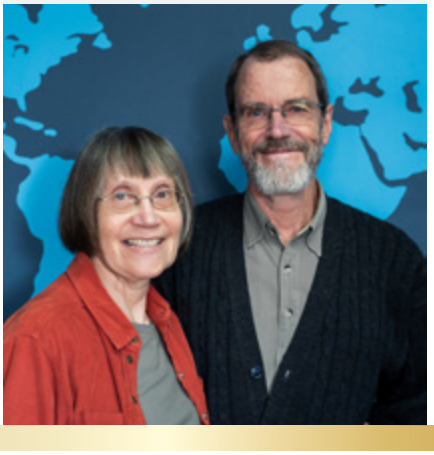
Between 1986 and 1998, South African churches were extraordinarily receptive to missions. The Brasems never needed to contact churches requesting speaking opportunities—invitations poured in. One year, Harry spoke at 41 churches—remarkable considering only 53 Sundays exist annually! They were seldom at their own church on Sundays.

One particular Sunday, seven different denominational churches contacted Harry simultaneously, requesting missions presentations. Choosing which two to accept proved difficult. Beyond these invitations, they visited field members' supporting churches, encouraging continued partnership. Missions weekends introduced Harry to workers from other organisations and future members like **Hendrik and Ronel Groenewald**, who later served in Peru.

Derek & Norma Fivaz



Harry & Elsbeth Brasem



Hendrik & Ronel Groenewald



At a SAAWE camp for prospective missionaries, they met Sharon Langeveld, who later became a Wycliffe member and married Tom Jacob. Wycliffe camps attracted participants including the Groenewalds and June Dickie.

THE POWER OF PRAYER NETWORKS

Wycliffe had always believed in prayer's transformative power. When prayer partners interceded for translators' wellbeing, protection, and effectiveness, powerful change was set in motion. Most people groups Wycliffe members served had never been exposed to Christ's Gospel, requiring consistent prayer. Monthly Prayer and Praise bulletins updated leaders and prayer teams about specific member needs.

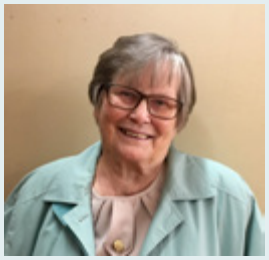
Building on foundations established by Tony and Mary Williams and David Abernethy, prayer groups multiplied. By 1986, existing groups included:

- Florida Group (West Rand) – led by Nan Glasson
- Alberton Group (Johannesburg South) – led by Anthea Grobler, translator Nick Swanepoel's sister
- Fish Hoek Group (Cape Town) – led by Gerald and Ruby Martin, parents of Gill Allwright, who with husband Len worked at Wycliffe's Ukarumpa base in Papua New Guinea

Harry prayed for 10 prayer groups—his expectations were exceeded. By 1988, 11 groups were meeting:

- Windhoek, Namibia – led by Andre van Coller
- Dundee, KZN – hosted by Dolly Roopnarain, led by Cecile van der Walt (later married to Wycliffe Board member Bertie Groenewald)
- Kempton Park, Johannesburg – led by Ampie van Wyk
- Lynnwood, Pretoria – led by Johan van Greunen
- Pretoria Boys High – led by Craig Bloemsma
- Potchefstroom – led by Santie Alberts
- RAU Hostel, Auckland Park – led by Zetta Le Roux
- Rosebank, Cape Town – led by Liz Beute
- Bergvliet Group (Cape Town) – led by Viv and Sonia Hobbs, who initiated birthday card sales to support office running costs
- Kempton Park – led by Harry and Elsbeth Brasem

Additional informal groups met amongst Stellenbosch University students and in Cape Town and Somerset West. In Edenvale, Madge Brown ran meetings from her retirement flat until she was promoted to glory at age 92, when Margaret Denny took over. Marion and George Williamson in The Strand were also faithful supporters.



Winsome Schroder, a faithful intercessor, ran several groups—first in Roodepoort, then Johannesburg, finally in East London. She helped in the office during Stephen and Lezelle Coertze's Australian assignment and was always recruiting prayer warriors. This enthusiastic Wycliffe SA advocate received honorary membership and finished her earthly race in July 2023 aged 93.

Harry's dream was having a full-time staff intercessor. They also invited individuals to adopt Bibleless People Groups for prayer—adapted from Wycliffe USA's initiative. Several people signed on for about three years until lack of field feedback led to discontinuation.

CREATIVE CONNECTIONS

"The Good Seed," a Wycliffe film, aired on national TV. Bernie May's book "Under His Wings" was translated into Afrikaans and broadcast on Radio Kansel.

A small fund-raising project involved collecting empty cool drink cans covered with eye-catching labels. A former office worker introduced these into children's churches with great success. Within months, full tins arrived. This project exceeded fundraising—it involved young children in missions giving, provided church speaking opportunities when collecting tins, and created new avenues for lay involvement.

One Christian school girl felt such commitment to giving Bibles to those without that she filled her can with daily "tuck" money from her parents. These funds helped sponsor a Wycliffe Associate to repair electrical systems in SIL Mozambique homes and the Maputo office.

The Coke cans supported small mission projects too. In the early 1990s, they collected enough to help Rendille widows replace goats lost during terrible drought. Nick Swanepoel purchased replacement goats locally with these funds.

OFFICE LIFE AND ADVENTURES

Running Wycliffe SA's office was challenging but never boring. Mail addressed to "Wycliffe Bible Translators" arrived with amusing variations: "Wycliffe Bubble Translators," "Wycliffe Witless Bible Translators," and "Wycliffe Wild Life Translators."

Tony Williams' Mercedes-Benz, adapted for paraplegic driving, became the official Wycliffe SA car, passed through the Abernethys to Harry. This occasionally caused embarrassment—once a pastor criticised luxury vehicles in ministry just before spotting Harry's Mercedes. At an international conference, colleagues questioned Harry about his car; caught off-guard, he simply answered "a Mercedes-Benz" without explanation.

At a May 1993 Waxhaw, North Carolina conference, Harry, Derek Fivaz, and Nick Swanepoel skipped cafeteria lunch for a South African braai, arriving late to afternoon sessions. The wood-smoke aroma gave them away, amusing other delegates.

Harry drove Jim Wilson and Dave Harthan 400km to Swaziland for Mozambique branch's first conference in 1990. Delegates, including Prof. Ulli Wiesemann from Germany, were captivated by South African Cadbury chocolate, taking some home as gifts.

JAARS executive Jim Rainsberger investigated establishing a South African base for flying members to remote areas. After appointments at Jan Smuts (now O.R. Tambo International Airport) and Wonderboom airports, JAARS decided against it due to political situations. MAF (Missionary Aviation Fellowship) was already serving from Johannesburg.



Andy & Debbie Abbot



Dennis Douglas



Piet Meiring

This connection proved valuable years later when **Andy and Debbie Abbott's** 18-month-old daughter Jessie-Fay contracted cerebral malaria. Medical help was days away by fishing boat or a risky beach landing. The airstrip was jungle-overgrown. Prayer groups interceded. A pilot safely landed on the beach, taking the family to hospital where Jessie-Fay recovered. Harry contacted JAARS Executive Director **Butch Barkman**, who had actually flown on that now-overgrown airstrip! At their next monthly prayer breakfast, JAARS raised US$3,000 for airstrip clearing and rebuilding, with locals providing labour.

TECHNOLOGY AND GROWTH

When the Brasems took office, only a typewriter and photocopier existed—no computer or fax. **Pieter Schultz** from Aston Manor sold them their first computer in 1987. Overseas colleagues assured Harry he'd never use the 20-megabyte capacity—"far too big!"

The Brasems wore multiple hats daily, preparing Prayer and Praise bulletins with literal stick-and-paste methods for 1,000 recipients. They managed finances, corresponded with interested people, provided counselling, and built an advisory committee including **Professor Derek Fivaz, Herrich Maboea** (an Ndebele involved with Radio Pulpit), and **Edison Mhlanga**, a Zulu pastor in Tembisa.

THE FIRST WYCLIFFE SA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

As individual Wycliffe divisions worldwide moved towards autonomy, the SA office was requested around early 1992 to draft a constitution and elect a board. Registered as a non-profit organisation, they drew from various sources to find Spirit-filled Christians with passion for giving the Bible to people in their mother tongue.

Professor Derek Fivaz was elected as the first Board Chairman, serving 25 years in this capacity. Key members included:

- **Mike Smit** – former Rosebank Bible College student and Standard Bank IT specialist, who emigrated to Canada but remained a faithful prayer partner
- **Dennis Douglas** – Rosebank Union member who helped with Mozambique group finance and served as Wycliffe SA Board treasurer for 25 years; brother-in-law to translator Keith Forster
- **Jack Olivier** – Maranatha Community Church staff member who became aware of Wycliffe SA

through Tony and Mary Williams

- Colin Gibb – from Weltevreden Chapel, serving with great enthusiasm
- Bertie Groenewald – former DRC mission member in Malawi and founder of literacy mission in Zimbabwe
- Professor Piet Meiring – Truth and Reconciliation Commission participant who spoke at Wycliffe International Conference in Thailand about forgiveness and reconciliation, moving many delegates to tears and spontaneous reconciliation

Other board members have included Professor Elna Mouton, Barb Erasmus, Dr Rodion Krause, Beryl Donkin, Lazarus Phiri, Jonas Khauoe, Marvin Oliver, Sean Mooney (the current Chairman), Antonio Mussaqui, Mzondi Modisa, David Morgan, Sihle Mooi, Susan Nyaga from Kenya. The newest directors joining in 2023 are Roslyn de Braine, Gerhard Marx, and Trudy de Bruin, with Winfred Oppong-Amoako and Rev Ngwenya being brought onto the Board in 2025.

From the start, board members gained reputations of the highest order, forming the organisation's backbone.

PROPERTY AND FACILITIES

The Brasems initially worked from their home at 5 Park Street, Kempton Park, owned by Francis Grim Junior who headed "Bibles for Africa" from Zimbabwe. They later rented the small on-site flat for visitor accommodation before moving the office to nearby Blockhouse Street.

In 1990, SIL Africa Area provided funding to purchase a guest house property (19 Aloe Street) primarily for Mozambique field workers but open to any missionary needing short-term accommodation. This proved invaluable for families evacuated to South Africa for serious medical conditions.

An amusing incident occurred when Hessel Visser brought San translation helpers from Botswana's

54 Pienaar Avenue

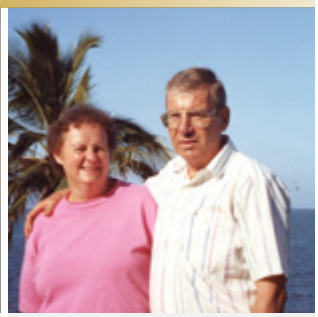




Mezuzah



Hennie & Elaine van den Bergh



George & Francis Turner

Ghanzi district for a July workshop. Kempton Park's winter cold prompted the San ladies to attempt lighting a fire on the kitchen floor!

George and Francis Turner (Canadian short-termers) and then Hennie and Elaine van den Bergh managed the guest house, with young couple Carel and Sylma standing in for a year after the van den Berghs retired.

By late 1991, the property backing onto the guest house (54 Pienaar Avenue) became available. Harry felt led to rent with the option to buy, requiring full payment within six months. The Lord provided the complete purchase price within that time frame without solicitation—only prayer requests to Wycliffe partners. Ownership was acquired on 30 April 1992, with a special dedication attended by friends, supporters, and prayer group members.

Remarkably, the original Jewish owners had placed a mezuzah beside the front door—a small case containing parchment scrolls with Deuteronomy 6:4-9 and 11:13-21 (the Shema). This obedient expression of love for God and reminder of His presence confirmed to the Brasems that the Lord had provided this property for Wycliffe SA.

Later, the adjacent property was purchased, featuring a house and two-bedroom flat for furloughing families—a tremendous blessing to missionaries from various organisations.

VOLUNTEER TEAMS AND SUPPORT

Dedicated volunteers formed the backbone of operations:

- Nan Glasson and Debbie Chiddick – receipting assistance
- Marie, Anne, and Daphne – Prayer and Praise Bulletin packing/posting team, later joined by Margaret, Marlene, and Joy with Rose Tibbit's encouragement
- Denis Douglas – SIL Mozambique Branch books and Wycliffe SA finance oversight. Barry and Kathy Marais recalled Denis's contribution: *"Denis was always there to sort out any financial hiccups of our then, rather laborious, manual finance system! Again and again, he would come to our rescue with his very calm, positive, gentle, persistent manner of doing things"*
- Barry and Kathy Marais – invaluable 26-year service in office administration, finance, and Prayer and Praise Bulletin production
- Jerry and Kathy Haasdyk eventually took over field purchases when the load became too great, also running a small SIL Mozambique guest house.

FIELD VISITS AND MEMBER DEVELOPMENT

Annual retreats at Wyndford in the Free State near Lesotho brought field members on furlough together with the supportive board—special times that **Karen Floor** later reinstituted as "Connect" in 2012.

Harry made invaluable field visits to Ivory Coast, Mozambique, and Kenya, with Elsbeth accompanying him to visit the **Swanepoels**. Karen and Sebastian Floor visited **Michael and Charlotte Corden** in Australia. Supporting churches also made field visits, meaning a great deal to members.

NEW MEMBERS RECRUITED

The Brasems successfully recruited and processed numerous members:

- **Hendrik and Ronel Groenewald** – assigned to Peru for Lambayeque Quechua literacy work, later serving with YWAM as church planters
- **Sharon and Tom Jacob** – assigned to Sudan, serving in Nairobi, Tanzania, and Zambia as translation consultants; Sharon later worked as personnel officer in Wycliffe SA
- **June Dickie** – worked on the Mwani New Testament in Mozambique, later consulting in Nigeria, Comoros, and across Africa, leading trauma workshops based on Psalms
- **Hazel Large** – graphic artist in UK, later literacy specialist in north Africa's Sahel area
- **Andy and Debbie Abbott** – initially replacing the Swanepoels in northern Kenya, then Southeast Asia
- Initial interviews were also conducted with future members **Roelie and Sandra van der Spuy, Hans and Patricia Combrink, Leoni Bouwer, Bev Erasmus,** and **Mariana and Mauritz van der Merwe**.

EUROPEAN ASSIGNMENT AND GLOBAL IMPACT

In July 1997, the Brasems took six months' leave before new assignments. **Len and Gill Allwright** stood in, managing the guest house, prayer bulletins, and church representation with Stephen Coertze as temporary leader, organising a Preview Course before returning to Australia in May 1998.

Harry and Elsbeth moved to Europe in April 1998 as Wycliffe Europe Area office administrators, first in the Netherlands, then Germany. Harry chaired the East European Scholarship Board, making

Barry & Kathy Marais



Tom & Sharon Jacob



June Dickie





A man praying in a church in Mozambique

several visits to Romania. He administered a fund for small field projects under US$500, funded by Netherlands individuals, trust funds, youth groups, and Samaritan's Purse.

Over seven years, approximately R1,250,000 funded 112 projects globally—reading glasses for **Andy and Debbie Abbott's** language community (transforming literacy progress), new tyres for Sebastian and Karen Floor's Mozambique vehicle, Scripture printing, health books, translator training workshops, and much more across Eastern Europe, Asia, Africa, and South America.

RETURN AND CONTINUING MINISTRY

After 18 years with Europe Area Staff, the Brasems returned to South Africa in May 2016 as coordinators for Intercessors for Africa, recruiting prayer warriors for translation programmes in Angola, Namibia, Botswana, Madagascar, Mozambique, Lesotho, and South Africa. They sent frequent prayer updates to enable persevering, committed intercession until concluding this assignment in March 2022, when Ansie van der Merwe took over.

CHAPTER 4: MISSIOLOGY - GLOBAL INVOLVEMENT

"Let the whole earth sing to the LORD! Each day proclaim the good news that He saves. Publish His glorious deeds among the nations. Tell everyone about the amazing things He does."
1 Chronicles 16:23-24

1995 To Present - Stephen And Lezelle Coertze

NEW LEADERSHIP TAKES SHAPE

Stephen and Lezelle Coertze, a pastoral couple with the Afrikaans Baptiste Kerk in Kempton Park, joined Wycliffe in 1996 to eventually replace the Brasems in 1997. Both pursued further studies whilst assisting with deputation and personnel work, attending Field Training in Kenya before returning to serve with Wycliffe SA.

During 1998, the Coertzes attended year-long linguistic training at Kangaroo Ground in Australia, followed by months in New Zealand gaining office administration skills. Winsome Schroder, faithful prayer group leader and supporter, helped in the office during their absence.

Returning at the end of 1999, Stephen and Lezelle took over Wycliffe SA's operations.

STRATEGIC RECRUITMENT AND GLOBAL REACH

The Coertzes successfully recruited remarkable members for worldwide service:

- Ken and Corine Brown worked in translation and Oral Bible Storytelling in Mozambique with the Nahara people.
- Roelie and Sandra van der Spuy served as translators in Azerbaijan, with Roelie later becoming an international translation consultant. Sandra passed away suddenly from a heart attack in 2012.
- Hans and Patricia Combrink worked in Malaysia as translator and teacher.
- Wendy Lock taught missionaries' children at Faith Academy in the Philippines—crucial support since children's educational needs often force missionary families to leave the field prematurely. Bible translation requires years of dedicated work, making educational stability essential. Faith Academy, founded nearly 70 years ago by pooling

missionary organisation resources, serves Southeast Asia. With 175 language dialects in the Philippines and 62 New Testaments completed by 2022, many remain needed. As Wendy explained: *"It is a privilege for me to support this amazing work by teaching and loving the children of missionaries, so parents can do their front-line work of bringing the Good News to people in their heart language."*

- **Leoni Bouwer and Bev Erasmus** began Madagascar work in the late 90s, involved in Bible translation for several languages plus literacy work, joined by members from other Wycliffe entities including Romania. On 6 April 2022, they launched "Together in Bible Translation"—a website tracking Madagascar's Bible translation history, growth, and development with project updates and impact stories. They've witnessed incredible harvest—Malagasy pastors, evangelists, and faithful co-workers sharing the Gospel through the Jesus Film, discipling people afterwards. Villages reached, witch doctors converted, cattle thieves transformed, hundreds hearing about Jesus, churches scattered throughout Bara communities by Christ's power. Over 500 villages have been reached.

VISION 2025 AND STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

In 2000, Wycliffe International (later Wycliffe Global Alliance) adopted Vision 2025—Bible translations in every language to begin by 2025. This task required strategic partnerships with other missions, local churches, Bible societies, sharing personnel and resources whilst enabling local and national leadership through mentoring, training, and funding.

In 2004, Wycliffe SA became part of Wycliffe Africa Area whilst maintaining dual Europe Area membership.

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE AND GLOBAL LEADERSHIP

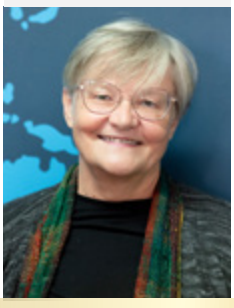
The Board gave Stephen freedom to pursue academic studies in Missiology, gaining his doctorate in 2007. This led to international recognition as a missiology authority, sharing expertise worldwide. He served as Director for Missiology on the Wycliffe Global Alliance Leadership Team in 2007, eventually being elected Executive Director of Wycliffe Global Alliance in 2021.

In 2007, Lezelle Coertze became a leading Member Care resources person in South African mission agencies, continuing through the Africa Member Care Network.

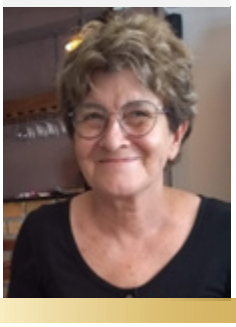
Stephen & Lezelle Coertze



Bev Erasmus



Leoni Bouwer



Wendy Lock





A Rendille man reading the freshly completed New Testament in his own language

THE ALLIANCE VISION

In April/May 2022 Translation Matters, Stephen explained: *"Wycliffe South Africa is part of an alliance of over 100 Alliance organisations. Each is gifted differently and brings its own unique set of skills and contributions to the Bible Translation movement. One thing we all have in common, though, is our desire to see individuals, communities and nations transformed through God's love and Word expressed in their languages and cultures."*

The Alliance offers leadership, influence and service within the movement, engaging in Bible translation, Church relations, prayer, people services, funding, training, and speciality services. Global events—pandemics, natural disasters, geopolitical, economic, social and religious challenges—impact their work, yet Bible translation flourishes through God's working.

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENTS

Numerous members have gained doctorates and degrees across various fields:

Leadership and Theology:

- **Stephen Coertze** – Licentiate in Theology (Cum Laude) 1990; Magister Artium (Theology) (Cum Laude) 2005; Philosophiae Doctor 2007 (University of Pretoria)

Translation and Linguistics:

- **Keith Forster** – BCOMCA (Witswatersrand); BBEd (Columbia International University);

MABEL (Dallas Theological Seminary)

- Wilma Forster – BSc (University of Manitoba); BSN (Columbia University)
- Sebastian Floor – MA Biblical Languages (Northwest University); PhD Philosophy, PhD Ancient Near Eastern and Biblical Languages (Stellenbosch University)
- Karen Floor – BA English and Mathematics (Northwest University); MA Theology and Leadership (University of Roehampton)
- June Dickie – BSc Maths and Psychology (Rhodes University); MBL (UNISA); MA Biblical Exegesis (Wheaton College); PhD Biblical Studies (University of KwaZulu-Natal)
- Hans Combrink – BA Theology; BA Honours Greek; BTh Theology; MTh New Testament; PhD New Testament (in process 2025)

Specialised Studies:

- Angela Taylor – BSc Hons (Witwatersrand); PhD Hebrew University of Jerusalem; MA Ancient Philology (Polis Institute); ACSM-EP certification
- Bonifacio Paulo – Master in Theology; PhD Old Testament (Stellenbosch University)
- Busisiwe Paulo – Degree in Humanities (University of Eswatini); Masters Literature/ African Languages (Stellenbosch); Masters Linguistics and Bible Translation (BISA)
- Tshegofale Siele – Bachelor of Commerce in Accounting (Wits University)

Hazel Large, Steve Pillinger, Helen van der Walt, Sizukiwe Vimbani, Sarah Odwa – also achieved advanced degrees.

Remarkably, international Wycliffe colleagues have achieved doctorates through South African institutions: Elke Meier (Germany) and Kirk Franklin (Australia, Stephen's predecessor in the Wycliffe Global Alliance) through UNISA; Ruben Dubei (Romania) completing Bachelor of Theology through SATS.

GLOBAL IMPACT AND FUTURE VISION

From Stephen and Lezelle's pastoral beginnings in Kempton Park to Stephen's role leading the Wycliffe Global Alliance, their journey exemplifies how dedicated individuals can influence Bible translation worldwide. Through strategic partnerships, academic excellence, and unwavering commitment to reaching every people group, they've helped position Wycliffe SA as a significant contributor to the global mission of proclaiming God's glorious deeds among all nations—exactly as 1 Chronicles declares.

CHAPTER 5: A NEW WAVE

"For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea."
Habakkuk 2:14

2010 To 2021 - Karen Floor

REGIONAL LEADERSHIP AND STRATEGIC EXPANSION

Karen Floor was elected to replace Stephen Coertze as Wycliffe SA director in 2010, with husband Sebastian taking leadership of Regional Translation Services for Southern Africa. The Board mandated him to pursue regional Bible translation partnerships.

Support services to overseas members extended to regional partners. Wycliffe SA was asked to play "second fiddle" in new partnerships across Angola, Namibia, Botswana, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Malawi, and the Indian Ocean Islands, including Madagascar and São Tomé.

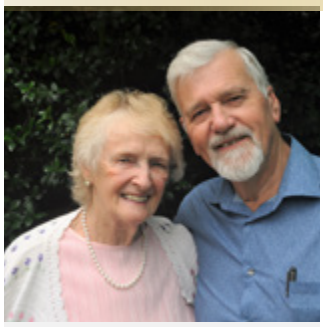
Challenges emerged: lack of technical infrastructure for locally-driven projects and language surveys revealing far more languages needing translation than originally believed. This prompted a revised strategy addressing 120 instead of 80 languages! Many speakers were from oral societies, requiring "Oral Bible Translation" methods. The original support constituency began dwindling, necessitating fresh approaches to engage younger generations.

THE MACEDONIAN CALL

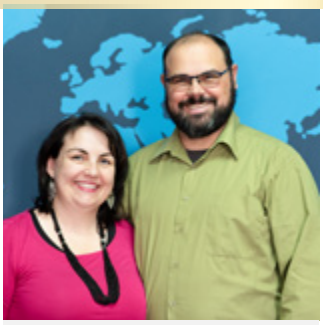
Sebastian received a "Macedonian Call" from YWAM workers in Angola: "Come over and help us do translation work." This led to numerous invitations and involvement of The Seed Company, a sister organisation.

Karen & Sebastian Floor





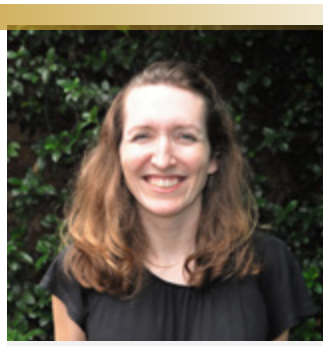
Roy & Rose Tibbit



Ansie & Sarel van der Merwe



Mpho Tsekwa



Jennie Tsekwa

Roy and Rose Tibbit assisted Karen in the office after serving in the SIL guest house for 10 years, playing key roles in establishing support bases for regional services. Roy handled communications, Rose managed prayer ministry, before serving together in member care. They returned to Canada in 2021, after celebrating 50 years faithful service in Wycliffe.

FRESH VISION AND CELEBRATIONS

Karen provided fresh vision to put Wycliffe SA on the map again, recruiting new partners with initiatives to capture the wider Christian community's attention and partnership. During her tenure, Wycliffe SA celebrated its 40th anniversary with special events, including a celebration at Rosebank Union Church with Board members, VIPs from other entities, Wycliffe members, prayer partners, and supporters—a very special occasion!

NEW TEAM MEMBERS

Riaan (South Africa) and Emese (Hungary) Ferreira were assigned to Nigeria as IT specialist and Bible translator.

Josh and Laura Dyer (USA) helped with office IT and communications whilst waiting for Botswana visas for translation work.

Lindsey Alexander (USA) joined as field coordinator for Zimbabwe and Angola, later marrying South African **Eric Trusler**. She shared service time between Wycliffe USA and SA before moving to Wycliffe USA counselling and debriefing work.

Eben and Phia le Roux joined as translators for the //Ju'/hoansi (slashes reflect click sounds) San in northern Botswana, establishing a Bible School and overseeing Hambukushu translation work. Phia provided education for local children and practical help.

Dr Kitoko Nsiku worked from the Edenvale office, establishing Training for African Bible Scholars seminars. He, wife **Angele**, and four children later returned to the DRC.

Ruben and Maria Dubei, a Romanian couple with two children, came after eight years in Ghana—Ruben as Scripture-in-Use coordinator, Maria in personnel. Ruben did Oral Bible Storytelling training with the Tonga project (Zimbabwe) and San (Botswana), whilst Maria assisted **Sharon Jacob** in personnel. Recalled to direct Wycliffe Romania in 2015, Ruben was appointed Wycliffe Global Alliance Europe Area Director in June 2022—the first Eastern European in this post.

Ansie Swanepoel served with YWAM in 2010, became a Wycliffe SA member in 2012, spent six months learning Portuguese in Brazil in 2013, then served as field coordinator for Zimbabwe, Botswana, and Namibia. She later married Sarel van der Merwe. Ansie serves as prayer coordinator and research officer, assisting Alan Webster. Sarel handles IT needs, office maintenance, and heads Bible Storytelling Workshops whilst pursuing theology studies with a view of serving hands on in translation work.

Durk Meijer (USA) was seconded to assist with Oral Bible Translation from Cape Town for several years.

Jennie Tsekwa served from 2017 (volunteering since 2015) as HR consultant, then Head of Personnel and Organisational Development on the leadership team. An MK (Missionary Kid) who grew up in the Philippines, Jennie concluded her role in December 2021 to continue in Bible translation movement through coaching, diversity and inclusion facilitation, and writing projects. Her husband Mpho became Field Coordinator, serving excellently until March 2024.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES AND PARTNERSHIPS

In 2012, Prayer Finishers campaign, administered by Diane Grunewald via a dedicated website, brought prayer partners together around completion of the Kuna Bible (Keith and Wilma Forster, Panama), the Yumplatok New Testament (Michael and Charlotte Corden, Torres Straits), and the Kimwani New Testament (Sebastian and Karen Floor, June Dickie). All three translations were completed and celebrated.

In July of 2012, the first annual team retreat, called "Connect" was held. This has become a highlight event on the annual calendar, enabling the team to take time out to connect with God and each other. With Wycliffe Australia's support, Wycliffe SA launched Africa Alive—a strategic vision to bring all sectors of God's people in South Africa into partnership, uniting African hearts alive to God's purpose to bless all nations.

In 2015, Wycliffe SA entered a three-year partnership with The Seed Company's Growth Partners to promote local capacity for starting remaining Southern African work within the decade.

CREATIVE FUNDRAISING

Pieter and Marelise Engelbrecht produced plays "The Word Came with Power" and "The Chained Book," raising funds through drama. Pieter later worked in marketing Wycliffe SA globally, organising the WordAlive Benefit Concert with Soweto Gospel Choir on 2 September 2017 at Wanderers Club (afternoon and evening). This fundraising and prayer recruitment event commemorated 500 years of Bible translation, recruiting new intercessors for Oral Bible Translation projects.

Karen ran road races and climbed Mount Kilimanjaro to recruit prayer partners for translation projects, joined by Wycliffe SA supporters on Drakensberg climbs. Fellow Kilimanjaro climber Bernardine Easton and husband Grant initiated a Wycliffe SA cycle team for the annual 94.7km road challenge, raising support for:

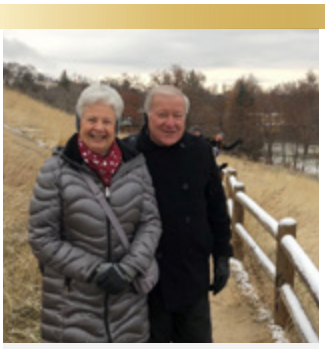
- 2015: Himba translation project
- 2016: Tonga translation



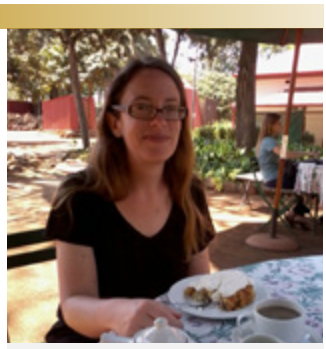
Hennie Blomerus



Tshegofalo Siele



Hal & Jean Kemp



Linda Jordan

- 2017: South African Sign Language
- 2018: Siphuthi translation
- 2019: Makhuwa Cluster translation

COVID-19 prevented further participation, so Wycliffe SA held a 2020 movement campaign—people sponsored swimming laps, running distances, cycling kilometres, reading Bible chapters daily—raising funds for the Sepulana project.

The "Run for the Bibleless" started in 2023, inspired by BTL Kenya, inviting churches to sponsor fun runs/walks for Bible translation:

- 2023: Great success increasing Bible translation awareness in local churches
- 2024: 402 fun runners, 79 volunteers at the Bunny Park in Benoni; 112 runners elsewhere (Moreleta Park, West Rand); 82 churches/groups involved
- 2025: 400 runners at Bunny Park and Pretoria venue; relay race with Bibles as batons proved a highlight; approximately R110,000 raised

In 2020, the Bible Translation Collaborative formed with seven organisations (now called LuminAfrica) with Christian foundations giving financial investment.

Hennie Blomerus, Head of Finance, launched Foundation 5000 (F5K) in 2022—a vision to build a foundation of 5000 regular contributors establishing a steady, reliable base for Wycliffe SA to build capacity, increase Bible translation work, grow teams, upgrade skills, offer more training, fund partnerships, and develop initiatives supporting Bible translation.

SHORT-TERM STAFF AND INTERNS

Under Karen's leadership, numerous interns and short-term staff joined:

Administration and Finance:

- Dave and Terry Hotchkiss (USA) – administration and maintenance
- Annelize Mynhardt – finance department oversight
- Carol Tindell – finance assistance
- Corine Govender, Tendai Nyamukoho, Mbali Makhubo, Nadine Manthe, Tsepanang Abu Basuto – finance
- Albert Smith – general office manager
- Hendry Mashile – office management assistance

- Cathy Knoeber (USA) – multiple office assistance terms

Communications:

- Nicola King, Karen Min – communications
- Craig Nyatondo – communications intern

Tshegofalo Siele provides essential financial management for field projects across southern Africa, ensuring translation teams can focus on their linguistic calling.

Americans Hal and Jean Kemp began serving in 2012 with office assistance and Wycliffe deputation. Returning in 2013, Hal became The Seed Company field coordinator for 11 projects spanning Angola, Malawi, Mozambique, Guinea Bissau, and the Indian Ocean islands.

Jean led the "UnfoldingWord" project—developing free biblical content and technology tools—while converting documents for BILD International. Her expert typesetting work brought Scripture to life across multiple languages:

- Zambia: Luke in Shanjo
- Mozambique: Psalms and Proverbs
- Angola: Genesis, Matthew, Mark, Philippians in Nyaneka-Mwila
- Zimbabwe: Mark in Tonga
- Madagascar: Matthew in Ntandroy and Tesaka
- Guinea-Bissau: Marijaku New Testament
- Botswana: Genesis in Thimbukushu for the Hambukushu people

Linda Jordan, an American Language Survey specialist, conducted vital survey work in Angola before returning to the US to train future survey workers globally.

Canadian couple Roland and Susan Seiler revolutionised operations from 2012-2021. Roland developed sophisticated software for the Finance Department and provided systems support across southern Africa, later establishing IT technical support services for SIL. Susan's expert typesetting met critical needs for completed Bible translations in Mozambique.

Mauritz and Mariana van der Merwe returned from the UK to rejoin the team. Upon their retirement, Hennie Blomerus became Head of Finance, with Sharon Kemp contributing valuable financial expertise.

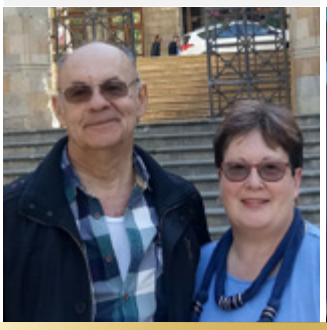
Mbali Makhubo



Roland & Susan Seiler

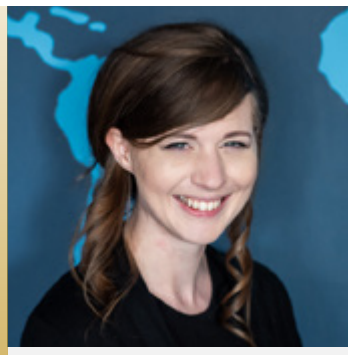


Mauritz & Mariana van der Merwe



Sharon Kemp





Jen Pillinger



Angela Taylor



Bonifacio & Busie Paulo



Beaulla Mpinyuri

Jen Pillinger joined as photographer and videographer, documenting field projects and creating promotional videos for events like the 947 Cycle Challenge. Her high-quality visual storytelling now anchors the Media and Communications team.

Angela Taylor launched "Alpha with Angela" on YouTube in 2019, making Biblical Greek accessible worldwide. After establishing her Mexico foundation with SIL colleagues, she created a home studio in South Africa. By August 2025, her achievements included:

- 13,600 students enrolled
- Grammar Lessons 1-10 plus usage guide completed
- Lessons 36-37 covering advanced grammar and stories
- DOOR International investigating Deaf community adaptations
- Spanish translations in progress

Dr. Bonifacio Paulo and wife **Busie** joined in 2016. In 2021, Bonifacio assumed Translation Services leadership from Sebastian Floor. Early 2022 saw them relocate to Nampula, Mozambique, as resident translation consultants while Boni continues departmental oversight.

Beaulla Mpinyuri has served faithfully as receptionist and office manager since 2016, providing warm welcome and essential support.

Sebastian and Karen Floor's remarkable journey began in 1987 with 20 years of Bible translation in northern Mozambique. Later joining Wycliffe SA during leadership transition, they addressed translation needs across southern Africa for 11 years, with Karen serving as CEO.

Both continued in specialised roles: Sebastian in translation consulting and training, Karen in organisational development and inter-collaboration. Their 2021 Cape Town relocation enabled Karen's LuminAfrica assignment and international Wycliffe service, while Sebastian transitioned leadership to Dr. Paulo, continuing translation consultation, Psalms training for African pastors, and Kaaps translation collaboration.

"How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news of peace and salvation" Isaiah 52:7

What a blessing these faithful servants have been, ensuring God's Word reaches every tribe and tongue across southern Africa.

CHAPTER 6: NEW DEVELOPMENTS

"Now glory be to God! By his mighty power at work within us, he is able to accomplish infinitely more than we would ever dare to ask or hope."
Ephesians 3:20

LEADERSHIP TRANSITION

Alan Webster assumed the Executive Director role in March 2021, supported by his wife Andrea and five children. This transition marked a new chapter as several team members moved to different assignments:

- **Roy and Rose Tibbit** returned to Canada
- **Jennie Tsekwa** transitioned to counselling and mentoring
- **Lindsey Trusler** left to care for her young children while continuing as a personnel worker with Wycliffe USA.
- **Hellen de Bruijn** joined as communications intern. Hellen, now a full member of staff, has boosted Wycliffe SA's social media profile with followers around the world.



Alan Webster

REMEMBERING HAZEL LARGE

Wycliffe SA mourned the loss of beloved member **Hazel Large** in November 2021. Beginning her journey in 1985 at age 24, Hazel served with distinction across multiple assignments—starting as Graphic Artist with Wycliffe UK's Communications Department, then joining SIL West Africa in 2004. Her remarkable contributions included:

- **Niger**: Facilitating the Zama literacy programme from 2004
- **Mali**: Serving as Literacy Consultant from 2016, spearheading the "Begin with Books" project (200 books in two Malian languages, 20 in Malian Sign Language)
- **World Bank Programme**: Creating curriculum for reading skills in two Nigerian languages for primary schools

Hazel's courage in serving where few dared to go, combined with her warmth and love, blessed countless lives.



Hazel Large



Combrink Family



Helen van der Walt



Hellen de Bruijn

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS AND EXPANSION

Church engagement intensified as special Wycliffe teams visited Gauteng congregations, generating significant interest, financial support, and prayer commitment for Southern African projects.

A ground-breaking collaboration emerged with YWAM Potchefstroom for survey worker training in Oral Bible Translation and Scripture Engagement. YWAM launched OBT 1000 (targeting 1000 Oral Bible Translations) while recruiting 10,000 intercessors. Their comprehensive approach included:

- Three-month survey work courses
- Master's Degree in Linguistics from Hawaii base (2021)
- 40 YWAM members trained in survey work
- 10 members pursuing Consultant training through Wycliffe/SIL Cape Town

During this period, LuminAfrica challenged its member organisations to be "Praying organisations that also translate the Bible."

DIGITAL INNOVATION AND GLOBAL LEADERSHIP

Hans Combrink spearheaded multiple transformative initiatives in 2021. His Digital Training Library (DTL) development revolutionised Bible translator education through online learning platforms serving translation teams, checkers, and consultants. Partnering with Fuller Theological Seminary for the Every Tribe Every Nation Impact Alliance, Hans led curriculum development for all DTL certificates, launching Certificate 1 in Translation Foundations with 6-8 additional certificates following in 2022. His responsibilities expanded to include oversight of the Committee on Bible Translation (CBT)—guardians of the New International Version—ensuring alignment across the NIV family of translations. He organised the annual CBT meeting in Washington, D.C. (June 19-July 3, 2022).

Serving as Chair of SIL International's Board of Directors and LuminAfrica Board member, Hans oversaw the launch of 23 new translation programmes during 2020-2021, all generously funded by local and international investors. He became LuminAfrica Director in 2025.

EXPANDED TEAM AND SPECIALISED ROLES

Rolf and Tarryn Hagemann partnered with Wycliffe SA in 2022, providing crucial member care for international and local missionaries.

Helen Cobbald, originally seconded from Wycliffe UK in 2019, developed communication structures and Translation Services support while completing her Master's in Contemporary Missiology (Scripture Engagement). Her work included creating Scripture Engagement resources for southern African languages and researching poetry in oral Biblical translation. Following her marriage to Jacques van der Walt (April 15, 2022), she launched Wycliffe Links in June 2022—connecting God's people to develop Bible translation and build mission capacity through strategic partnerships across southern Africa and beyond.

PSALMS THAT SING: REVOLUTIONARY TRANSLATION METHOD

This pilot initiative (January 2022-December 2024) tested innovative Psalm translation methodology, beginning with the Kaaps Community in Western Cape (March 2023). The exceptional community response demonstrated the power of translating Psalms into the heart language and setting them to music.

The multi-modal 10-step approach involves poets and musicians facilitating poetic translation, internalisation, and performance within their communities. The goal: all 150 Psalms translated and available in audio, video, and print formats.

"Alive in Kaaps" performance by the Kaaps Psalms that Sing team



Facilitation Team:

- Sebastian Floor, Helen van der Walt, June Dickie (South Africa)
- Benjie and Rhoda Leach (UK)
- Murray Salisbury (UK)
- Milton Watt, J (Pseudonym) (USA)

Pilot Languages:

- Cokwe (Angola)
- Ekoti, Meetto (Mozambique)
- Kaaps (South Africa)
- Kom (Cameroon)
- Wantu (Malawi)

This methodology proved invaluable for reaching Bibleless people groups, often catalysing formal Bible translation projects. The next 3-4 year phase will build on a remarkable initial progress.

Further details: www.psalmsthatsing.org

NEW TEAM MEMBERS (2023-2025)



Sarah-Odwa Madyibi

Sarah-Odwa Madyibi (January 2023-December 2024): Personnel/HR administrator bringing corporate expertise to structure team roles and align them with Wycliffe SA's strategic vision.

Sizukiwe Vimbani (2023): Initially Psalms that Sing Administrator and Intern Project Facilitator, later becoming Anglophone Field Coordinator while maintaining PtS responsibilities.



Sizukiwe Vimbani

Busani Mcingolwane: Church Engagement and Partner Development Coordinator, mobilising resources while inspiring Kingdom contributions.

Mesuli Tshele: Resource Mobilisation specialist, engaging existing foundation and church relationships while establishing new organisational partnerships.



Busani Mcingolwane

Noziqhamo Skele (2024): Business Management graduate from Tshwane North TVET College, providing administrative support to the Finance department.

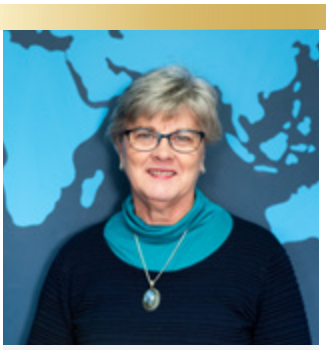
Rina Blomerus (April 2024): Wife of Wycliffe SA Head of Finance Hennie Blomerus, providing Member Care for local and international Bible translation workers.



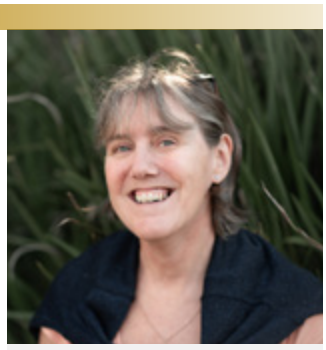
Mesuli Tshele



Noziqhamo Skele



Rina Blomerus



Carol van Heerden



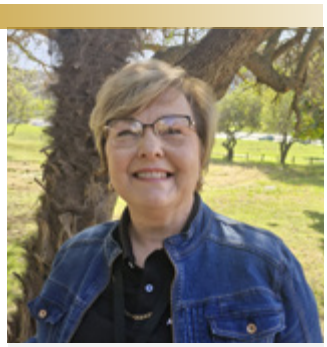
Jadreque Buanaite



Marcelina Neto



Joey Fourie



Lenthia Erasmus

Carol van Heerden: (May 2024) Senior Field Coordinator, liaising between field projects, prayer teams, Wycliffe SA, and funders to ensure smooth operations and prayer coverage.

Jadreque Buanaite (June 2024): Hub Field Coordinator for Mozambique, based in Nampula province. With four years of Biblical training in Zambia and ministry experience with Harvesters Ministries, he now serves Wycliffe SA.

Marcelina Neto (June 2024): Hub Field Coordinator for Angola, organising between Wycliffe SA and translation projects while identifying opportunities to serve regional language communities.

Joey Fourie (July 2024): Project Accountant on the Finance team bringing expertise in financial systems, prayer ministry, and commitment to sharing God's Word.

Lenthia Erasmus (March 2025): Full-time intercessor fulfilling Harry Brasem's vision for dedicated prayer ministry. With extensive Jericho Walls experience, she recruits prayer partners and intercessors for Wycliffe SA—demonstrating God's perfect timing and provision.

Through these new developments, God continues accomplishing "infinitely more than we would ever dare to ask or hope," expanding Wycliffe SA's capacity to serve Bible translation across the region and beyond.

CHAPTER 7: BRINGING IN THE SHEAVES

"All we have accomplished, He has done for us."
Isaiah 25:12

Translation Projects Our Members Have Been Directly Involved In

For a more comprehensive list of the language communities in which Wycliffe SA members have been involved, please visit our website www.wycliffe.org.za

Here are some of those countries and languages:

- Angola: Cokwe, Oluhumbi, Olukuvale, Olukwando, Holo, Kisuku, Olucilenge, Oluhanda, !Xun
- Australia (Yorke Island Torres Strait): Yumpla Tok
- Azerbaijan: Irall
- Botswana: Hambukushu
- Cameroon: Kom
- Côte d'Ivoire: Bete
- Ethiopia: various Jesus Film
- India: various Jesus Film
- Kenya: Rendille, Suba
- Lesotho: Siphuthi
- Madagascar: Antakana, Tsimihety, Betsimisaraka Avaratra, Betsimisaraka Atsimo, Antembahoaka, Antemoro, Tesaka, Sakalava Analalava, Sakalava Beslampy, Masikoro, Bara, Tanôsy, Ntandroy, Kananga
- Malawi: Wantu
- Malaysia: various
- Mali
- Mayotte – French territory near N. Mozambique
- Mozambique: Kimwani, Ekoti, Meetto, Nahara, Kiibo, Kichokwe, Kikabe, Kikhuxanga, Esaka, Marrevoni, Xirima, Marenje, Phimbi, Makhuwani
- Namibia: Himba

- Niger
- Nigeria: Migili, Kibaku
- Panama: Border Kuna and San Blas
- Papua Indonesia: Isirawa, Moskona
- Peru: Lambayeque Quechua
- South Africa: Kaaps, Sepulana
- South Sudan: Murle, Baka, Didinga, Keliko, Tennet, Laarim, Toposa, Dinka Cam
- Sudan: Laru, Katcha, Lumun, Tocco, Dagik
- Tajikistan: Zaburi Davud project
- Tanzania: Kinga, Ndali
- Uganda: Aringa, Lubwisi, Lugungu, Lugwere, Lunyole
- Zambia: Shanjo, Nkoya, Kwamashi, Fwe, Makoma, Kwanga
- Zimbabwe: Tonga

Typesetting has been done in many more languages. Our Finance Department serves some Sign Language translations and written programmes in financial management.

Having access to language communities gives Wycliffe SA members and staff, through our partnerships with intercessors and other service providers, the opportunity to see transformation come to individuals and communities. The opportunities for Kingdom impact are endless. Here are some stories where impact has been made.

KEITH AND WILMA FORSTER

In September of 1971, with our three-month-old baby daughter, we made the 14-hour river trip by motorised dugout canoe to our tribal assignment among Panama's Border Kuna* people. The tiny village was located on the Colombia/Panama border in the dense tropical rainforest of Panama's Darien Gap. On arrival, we knew not a word in the Kuna language. Day after day, we would walk around the village, notebook and pencil in hand, writing down the words people uttered. There was not a single believer in the village. At our request, the chief assigned a young, 18-year-old man "to teach us the language!" His name was Ricardo. A more faithful helper we could not have asked for - BUT - Ricardo did not know Jesus. Ricardo's wife, Loyda, did not know Jesus.

Little by little, understanding of the language came. We began to tell simple Bible stories. We were thrilled when a few people committed their lives to Jesus. Ricardo committed his life to Jesus. Suddenly, it was as though a light came on. I clearly remember the change that transpired. What to that point for Ricardo had been "just stories from a Bible," suddenly took on special meaning, spiritual significance. It was beautiful.

As the years passed, we began our initial attempts at translating the Word. Translation workshops were held in Panama City. We brought Ricardo and his wife to the city as resources for translating portions of Scripture. For us, after hours meant Ricardo and his wife would eat with our family, join our family for a fun evening of a game or a visit, followed by devotions. Before Loyda came to the city, her father told her, *"Do not listen to any of their talk about their Bible!"* Loyda obeyed her father! When

devotions would begin, she would literally turn her chair backwards, and cover her head with a scarf so she "could not hear" the Bible stories. When the story was over, she would turn her chair around to join us again.

FAST FORWARD: Years later, Loyda accepted Jesus. Ricardo's four boys, all of whom are now men with families of their own, are following Jesus. Ricardo and Loyda live in Panama City, and Loyda is THE leading Bible study teacher for the congregation in Panama City. Ricardo and Loyda's youngest son is now a Kuna church pastor!

TRUE STATEMENT! *"So is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it."* Isaiah 55:11. Praise God from whom all blessings flow!

*Panama is home to two linguistically distinct Kuna languages, Border Kuna and San Blas Kuna. Border Kuna villages are located on both sides of the Colombia/Panama border. The homeland of the San Blas Kuna are islands located off Panama's Caribbean coast - an archipelago of 350 coral atolls, 65 of which the Kuna inhabit, located off Panama's Caribbean coast.

TOM AND SHARON JACOB

Shanjo translator Pastor Enoch Walubita travelled extensively by ox cart showing the Jesus Film in the many Shanjo villages and he filed this very encouraging report:

> *In Namanguzu village, about 60 people gathered to watch the Jesus Film. When we came to the crucifixion part, many sobbed uncontrollably when they saw how their sinless saviour was being treated, and 18 people received Jesus Christ and committed their lives to him!*
>
> *At Nzilu village, over 150 people gathered and to me it was like a conference meeting going on. This is where a mighty revival took place because when we came to the crucifixion part of the film, it was like a funeral taking place as people cried loudly, and 41 people gave their lives to the Lord.*
>
> *At Shaba village, we arrived late because our ox cart had a flat tire on the way. But people were anxious to see the film, and so they waited. When we arrived, it was almost 9 pm. We managed to show the film until about 1 am. There was joy and jubilation among the people. And some copies of the Gospel of Luke were bought by the people.*
>
> *Still other people in villages who had just heard of the Jesus Film were sending to us to ask us to take the film to show them. This awakening was so big that we even felt pity for my oxen we were using in all these long travels. But we trusted God, who was working among His people to bring about the salvation of all these precious souls.*
>
> *Some people from villages far away would come with their ox carts to take us to their villages just to have the Jesus Film shown to them as well.*

We give glory to Jesus for the salvation of precious souls and the extension of His kingdom.

JUNE DICKIE

Anli Juma

Our elderly stylist, Anli Juma (a dedicated participant in the local mosque), gave this response when I was accused of running over someone's duck on the way to work (on a muddy road, with many holes making little lakes): *"Just pay him. We are people of the book, and he is not."* I liked the way he saw us as both "on the same side". Indeed, he had shown himself to be so by his happy acceptance of all the biblical text, including Mark 1:1 - *"The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God"*.

Shikito

On a visit to Pemba, where I lived and worked for about 20 years, I wanted to connect with my co-worker and dear friend, Shikito. We were not able to get hold of him by mail or phone, so we took a taxi to his home and found him there. It was such an amazing and memorable reunion, showing me again the depth of the relationship that had been forged through many years of working (and struggling) together.

STEVE PILLINGER



Sammy Ntumi and the Ahanta NT. (2008).

Sammy Ntumi was the main translator of the New Testament into his own language, Ahanta (Ghana). Finally, it was ready to be typeset! He flew to the UK, where he worked for many weeks with Steve to see the text in a floppy disc being transformed into properly laid out Scripture text. When Steve was finally able to print out a draft showing what the final result would look like, Sammy took it in both hands, his face beaming. Then he began to dance, up and down, up and down while clutching the booklet, laughing and exclaiming, *"The Ahanta New Testament! The Ahanta New Testament!"*. The full NT was later printed and dedicated and is now widely available.

KEN BROWN

The effects on attitudes towards the Bible and the Gospel (Nahara people) in Mozambique

Five of the narratives we translated were stories from the life of Joseph. People have commented on how those stories have helped them to forgive. Someone from the Village C group retold the narrative of Joseph spontaneously and said:

> *[I like] the story of when [Joseph's] brothers left him in Egypt. Afterwards, when he saw his brothers, he welcomed them; he received them really well, so he gave them food and ate with them. I like this story because it teaches us to forgive our brothers and sisters when they hurt us. And it's not only our brothers but also any person; we should forgive them when they offend us.* (Village C1)

Others I interviewed expressed how, after listening to the Nahara Scriptures and radio dramas, they could forgive their neighbours and family, thus restoring community. Rosa said that she always walked in the dark before she started to follow Yisa's (Jesus's) words, but not since she

followed Yisa's story. When [she found] the path of truth, Yisa's words helped her. *"In my heart, they help me not to argue with my neighbour and help me to forgive my neighbour. It's helping me"* (Village E).

Musa said formerly he didn't know the Word. *"Life wasn't good, but when we started listening to the Word, the [Bible] stories, life became much better. Now, my neighbours and family are happy with me, but before, I did not live well with these neighbours, friends, and family"* (Village E).

Chale told of how he was robbed of part of his maize crop when the wife of his friend and neighbour had been sending her children into his fields to steal the corn cobs and sell them at the market. The police had arrested her and called him to press charges against her. He overcame the feelings of revenge, forgave her, and didn't press charges against her. In fact, he gave her a lift home from jail on his motorbike (Ali and Chale, audio recording).

Rosa recalled how listening to the Lord's Prayer on the radio helped her to forgive. "*The one who hurt you, you must be her friend and must forgive her. When you don't want to forgive others [you will find] God won't forgive you"* (Village E).

Ernesto, a leader in the Memba district, recalled how the recordings of Nahara oral Scriptures and radio dramas on a MegaVoice player that he had given to his neighbour helped her forgive another neighbour of hers:

> *A neighbour of ours had difficulty forgiving and kept bitterness in her heart. She could not release forgiveness and have a peaceful relationship. But one day she got the MegaVoice player and heard it talking about forgiving, "If you don't forgive, neither will God forgive you." She said, "So! I need to learn this and apply it because I want to live in peace with God, but for me to have peace with God and for God's forgiveness, I also need to forgive. I want peace with my neighbours. And she decided. She took a step and started doing some kind activities, greeting, visiting her [neighbour's] house, and establishing a good relationship. That friendship of theirs grew, and health and peace were restored. I saw that impact. I saw a person transform.*

"So then neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but GOD who causes the growth." 1 Corinthians 3:6

CHAPTER 8: ORAL BIBLE TRANSLATION PROGRAMMES - SOUTHERN AFRICA

"Now glory be to God! By His mighty power at work within us, He is able to accomplish infinitely more than we would ever dare to ask or hope."
Ephesians 3:20

The Heart of Oral Translation

National translators gather in specialised workshops to master the art of Bible Storytelling—learning to internalise, tell, and teach Scripture narratives for ministry contexts. Each project team carefully selects stories that resonate most powerfully with their people group's cultural and spiritual needs. The profound impact becomes evident through testimonies like this from a San (Bushmen) Bible storytelling group: *"We need stories like this to take away the wounds in our hearts!"*—their heartfelt response after encountering the transformative truth of the Good Samaritan story.

ESSENTIAL SUPPORT SYSTEMS

Successful oral translation programmes require comprehensive support infrastructure:

Financial Provision:

- Translator salaries and training costs
- Transportation for remote communities
- Computers and recording equipment
- Workshop materials and facilities

Quality Assurance:

- Consultant verification for accuracy
- Regular project reviews and feedback
- Training updates and skill development

Communication Network:
Field coordinators serve as vital liaisons, ensuring seamless communication and accountability between ground-level translators and their financial supporters. This connection maintains project momentum while building trust across the entire support network.

Prayer Coverage:
Dedicated intercessors provide the spiritual foundation through persistent, fervent prayer for each project's success and impact.

GLOBAL TRANSLATION LANDSCAPE

The scope of Bible translation needs has dramatically expanded since early estimates. Where 1960s projections suggested 2,000 world languages, current research identifies 7,396* languages globally.

Current Translation Status:

- 776 languages with complete Bibles
- 1,798 languages with New Testament portions
- 1,433 languages with some Scripture portions
- 4,007 languages with ongoing translation work

These statistics underscore the magnitude of remaining translation needs and the critical importance of Oral Bible Translation programmes in reaching language communities that may never receive written Scripture.

**The statistics are continuously being updated as new information comes to light.*
Source: www.wycliffe.net/resources/statistics/

GRATITUDE AND RECOGNITION

The achievements of the past 50 years stand as monuments to faithful partnership and sacrificial commitment. Special recognition belongs to:

Prayer Partners and Financial Supporters: Without their unwavering dedication, persistent prayers, and generous financial sacrifices, these translation accomplishments would have remained impossible dreams. Their faithful commitment has sustained countless projects across decades of service.

Family Members: Husbands, wives, children, parents, and siblings have played indispensable roles in ministry success. Their support, understanding, and often personal sacrifice have enabled translation workers to serve effectively across Southern Africa and beyond.

The Lord God Almighty: Ultimate gratitude belongs to our sovereign God, who graciously invites us to join His mission of reconciliation, forgiveness, and salvation to peoples worldwide. His mighty power working within us continues accomplishing infinitely more than we dare ask or hope.

As Oral Bible Translation programmes continue expanding across Southern Africa, each story shared, each heart touched, and each community transformed reflects God's relentless pursuit of every tribe and tongue. The work continues, sustained by faithful partners and empowered by His limitless grace.



CHAPTER 9: OUR TRANSLATION PROGRAMMES ARE MULTIPLYING

FAITH-FORWARD EXPANSION

Despite financial challenges, Wycliffe SA chose faith over fear. Rather than scaling back, the Translation Services team stepped boldly forward—resulting in 23 active programmes today. Only six remain workshop-based, with the majority now operating full-time. Several recent transitions to full-time status mark significant forward momentum.

New opportunities continue emerging across the region as God opens doors throughout Southern Africa.

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

Mozambique
Three translation consultant interns received scholarships for nine months of intensive Hebrew language study in Jerusalem, Israel. Having returned with enhanced expertise, they now successfully apply their knowledge to assist Mozambican language groups in translation work.

Angola
The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church Bishop has invited Wycliffe SA to undertake an Oral Bible Translation and Transcription (OBT&T) programme in Kimbundu—Angola's second most spoken language with over nine million speakers. While a written translation exists, it lacks widespread usage. The Church believes an oral, updated version would prove more accessible and impactful for their communities.

South Africa
Wycliffe SA maintains close partnership with Hands with Words, supporting their Video Bible production in Sign Language for the Deaf community while training representatives from other southern African countries in Sign Language ministry.

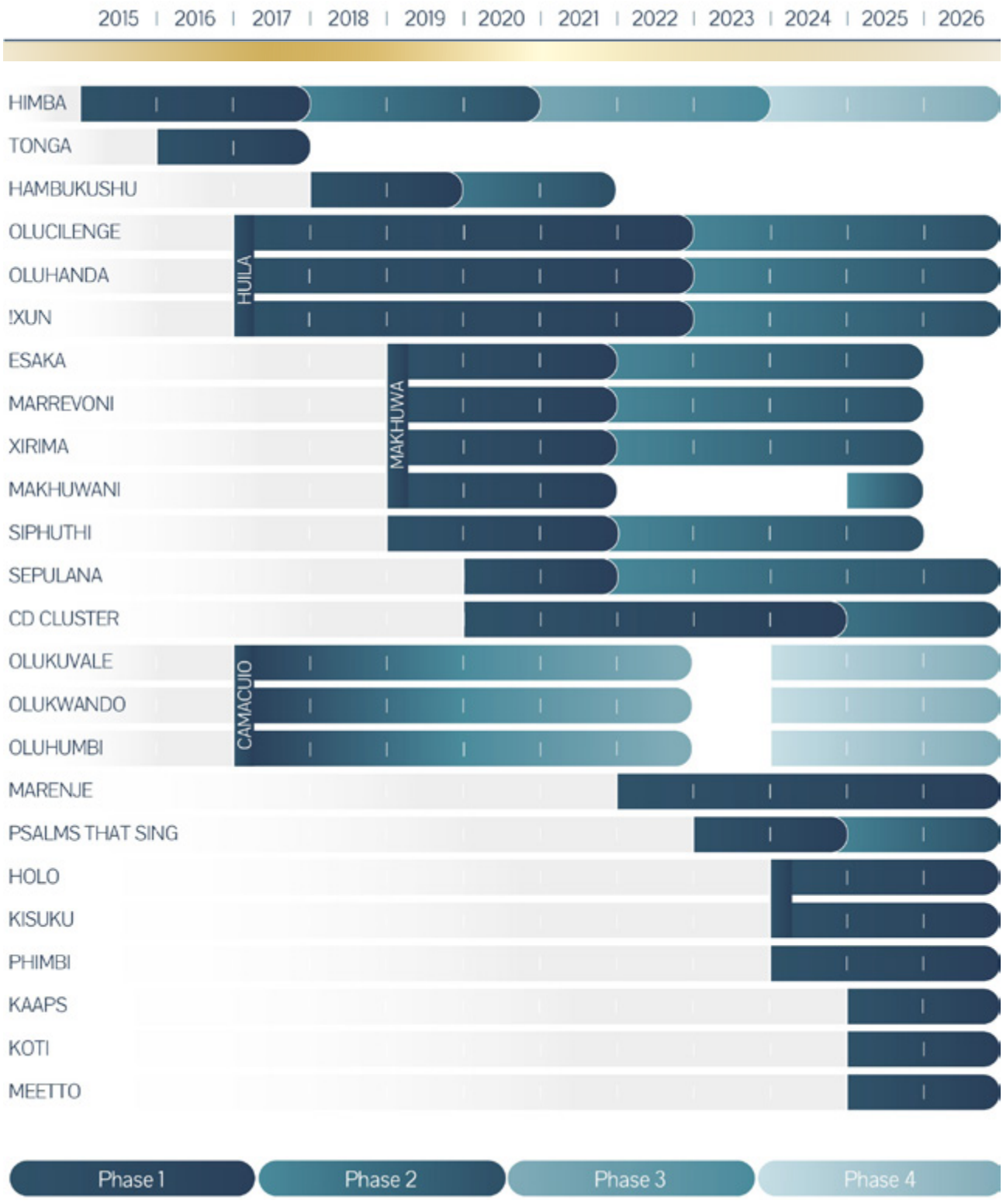
Northern Cape and Southern Namibia: Exploration of translation needs in the Oorlams language is underway, with survey work currently in progress.

Eastern Cape: The Bhaca programme advancement is planned, with initial meetings scheduled to determine next steps.

Botswana
Local partners have invited investigation into translation needs across six different languages. Active engagement focuses on building strong, collaborative relationships to serve these linguistic communities effectively.

This multiplication reflects God's faithfulness in providing resources and opening hearts across Southern Africa. Each new programme represents communities who will soon hear Scripture in their heart language—fulfilling the vision of every tribe and tongue having access to God's Word.

PAST AND PRESENT TRANSLATION PROGRAMMES



TRIBUTES

MICHIEL SMIT

Former Board Member



Looking back:

Michiel mentions special memories of the Bible Translation course at Rosebank Bible College in 1984 and his fond memory of many Wycliffe SA members. He goes on to say: Another special Wycliffe memory that I have is that I proposed to Brenda at Wyndford Holiday Farm after the Board Retreat on February 26, 1995. Our thirtieth wedding anniversary is on September 23rd, and we will be celebrating it on a cruise (first ever) at the time of the Jubilee celebrations. However, we will be rejoicing with Wycliffe SA!

Looking forward:

As Wycliffe South Africa celebrates 50 years, I'm reminded of Hebrews 12: You are surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses cheering you on. Many of those witnesses have been part of your race and have passed the baton to you. Thank you for accepting the baton; don't grow weary, don't lose heart; keep running, with perseverance, enduring the hills and the heat, with your eyes fixed on Jesus.

Michiel Smit

JACK OLIVIER

Former Board Member



My involvement with Wycliffe began before it became an autonomous entity in South Africa. In the beginning, it was managed by Tony and Mary Williams. Tony was wheelchair-bound and was not able to do many of their household maintenance tasks, and so Mary asked the church which we attended to make an appeal for a volunteer to help them from time to time to change light bulbs, prune shrubs, and perform other household and garden tasks. I volunteered to help them and consequently got to know more about the work of Wycliffe in translating the Bible into the languages of people groups who did not have the scriptures in their own mother tongue.

As a result, I met Harry and Elsbeth Brasem, who took over the Wycliffe SA administration from Tony and Mary when they left to return to their home country, Australia. When Harry and Elsbeth were asked to register Wycliffe Bible Translators as an independent South African organisation with a local board to manage its affairs in South Africa, I was invited to become one of the first board members of the mission.

This involved helping with the registration process and other legal requirements.

I was privileged to serve on the board for many years and witness and partake in the growth and development of Wycliffe SA, from a small beginning to what it was when I left.

I am deeply grateful that I was able to contribute to the growth in some small way. It is my earnest prayer that our Heavenly Father will continue to bless and use Wycliffe SA to achieve its goal in making the Living Word of God available to those who so desperately need it.

Jack and Lorraine Olivier

TONY PITWOOD

Key Intercessor



A Personal Message

The best way for me to congratulate Wycliffe South Africa is by remembering the wonderful ways in which our gracious Lord has used them and the translation of Scripture to reach so many people who have never heard of Jesus. We serve a faithful prayer-answering God who delights in hearing and answering earnest, fervent, passionate, and persistent prayers for the translators and consultants. I'm so pleased to hear of communities being affected by the stories and songs that they hear in their own tongue (God really cares about us – He speaks our language!) What an encouragement to continue praying!

Tony Pitwood

DR REG AND LORETTE CODRINGTON

Long-time supporters and prayer partners

Message of Congratulations

It is with great joy and gratitude to God that we send greetings and congratulations to Wycliffe SA as you reach this very significant and God-glorifying milestone of 50 years of Bible translation. Having had the privilege of a small role in the preparation of Harry Brasem for ministry when I taught at Rosebank Bible College from 1977 to 1989, it has been wonderful to watch Wycliffe SA's progress through the eyes of Harry and Elsbeth, and marvel at God's grace and provision over all these years as you have put the Word of God into the hands of so many people in a language they can understand. Both of us have a passion for the study of the Bible at the level of ordinary people, and it has been a thrill to mark the various milestones as Wycliffe has played such a vital role in translating the Scriptures into the vernacular for so many on our continent and elsewhere. We pay tribute to all those who have worked tirelessly, often in very difficult circumstances, to fulfil our Lord's commission to make disciples of ALL nations, and we pray that God will continue to raise up new generations of translators who can take over the baton from those of you who have run so well for half a century.

With our love and constant prayers,

Reg & Lorette Codrington

CHAPTER 10:
MOVING FORWARD

Pressing On: The Next 50 Years of Wycliffe SA

2025 is more than a milestone. It marks the close of a Jubilee cycle—fifty years of God's faithfulness—and the opening of a new chapter that will shape the next fifty. If the pioneers who laid Wycliffe SA's foundation in 1975 could look at us today, they would see a ministry transformed. What began as a handful of faithful workers has become a vibrant movement, deeply woven into the fabric of Bible translation worldwide.

As the global Wycliffe family celebrates the culmination of Vision 2025—ensuring every language community has begun a translation—we stand in awe of what the Lord has done, and in anticipation of what He is yet to do.

Earlier this year, the Lord impressed on my heart that this Jubilee is to be a Golden Harvest. Since October 2024, He has confirmed this word in remarkable ways: the privilege of hosting the Global Gathering in South Africa, the launch of new funding partnerships, the growth of our project portfolio, and the establishment of Hebrew training hubs in Mozambique and South Africa. These are not isolated achievements—they are seeds for the future.

We rejoice in new members being processed for service, and we celebrate the accreditation of the first two indigenous oral-culture consultants, with more on the horizon. Scripture engagement through Wycliffe Links is opening doors among churches, Christian businesses, and community leaders. Together, we are witnessing God's Word bring life through ethno-arts, literacy, children's literature, sustainable farming, and holistic community development. And there is more to come!

God has also placed us at the forefront of Oral Bible Translation and Transcription (OBT&T). What once seemed like a passing trend has become mainstream, and by 2026, we will begin developing a new generation of OBT consultants. Our financial management continues to serve Sign Language Bible translations in the region, and we count it a privilege to support the Deaf in southern Africa.

Significantly, the Lord has led us to give emphasis to, and even begin translations with, the Old (or Original) Testament. In partnership with the Whole Word Institute, training translators in Hebrew allows them to translate directly from the source into their heart language. Might this be a glimpse of Isaiah's prophecy of five cities in Africa (Egypt) speaking the language of Canaan (Isaiah 19:18)?

The past fifty years have given us not only a firm foundation but also a springboard. The Golden Harvest is not seed to consume, but seed to sow (2 Corinthians 9:10). Our role is to serve the

Kingdom, the Church, language communities, and God's mission in the world. We plant, we water—but it is God who brings the increase.

Looking ahead, I believe we will see unprecedented collaboration across "ecosystems" of ministries, united to see the Kingdom come in every sphere of society. The unreached will not only be reached—they will become radiant witnesses of Christ's glory to the nations.

Equally, we sense the call to raise up the next generation. Africa is a young continent, filled with children and youth seeking purpose. We honour the giants who have paved the way, but we also pray for new pioneers—like the Himba boy who, earlier this year, stood before our Board and retold the baptism of Jesus with such simplicity and depth that it moved us to tears. That moment reminded us: the Word of God speaks to the soul of Africa.

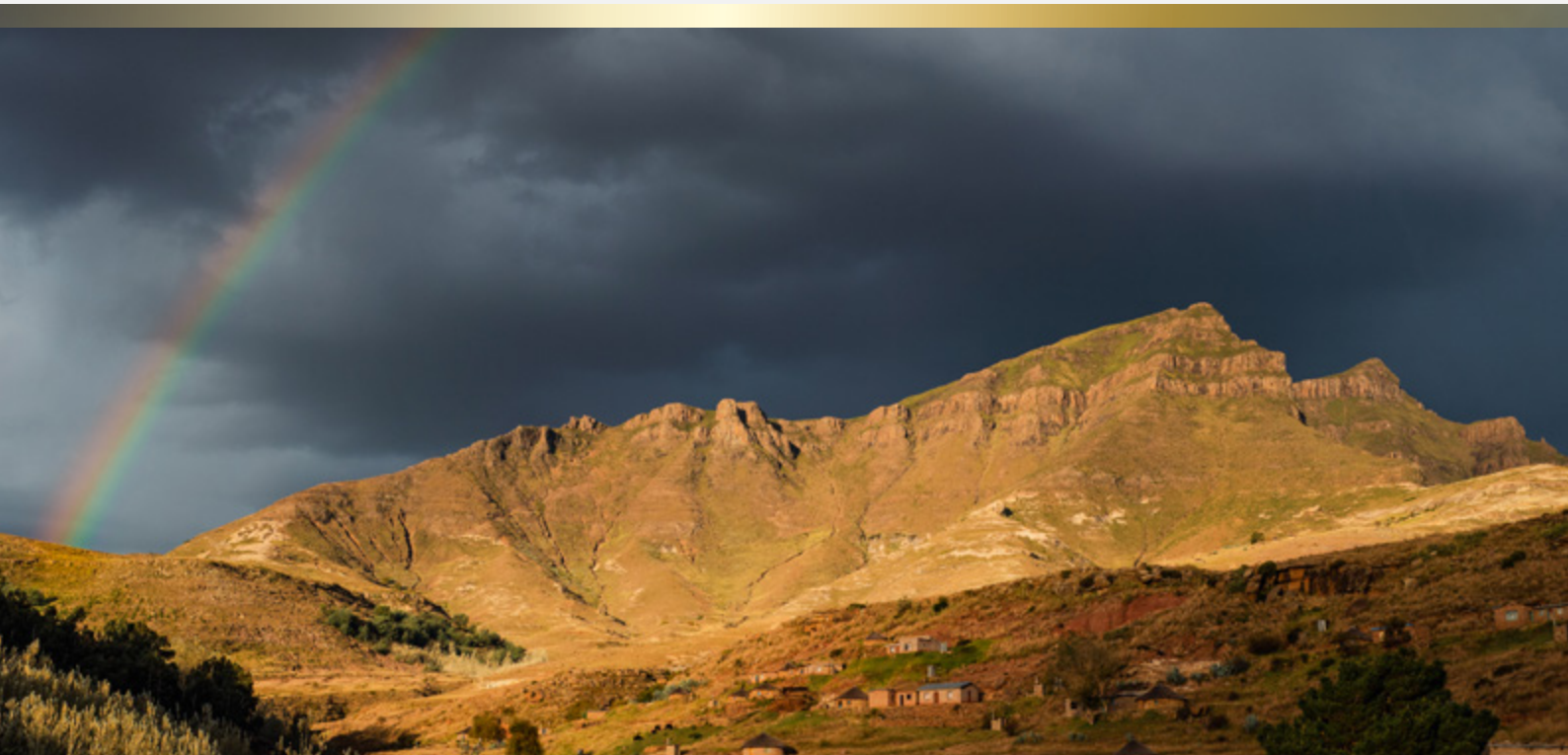
Most of us will not be here when Wycliffe SA celebrates its centenary in 2075. But we can live today in such a way that future generations will thank God for the sacrifices we make now. As Gaylord Nelson once said, *"The ultimate test of a man's conscience may be his willingness to sacrifice something today for future generations whose words of thanks will not be heard."*

So let us press on. We are part of a Kingdom that cannot be shaken. We are stewards of a calling bigger than ourselves. As Paul reminds us:

"One thing I do: forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus." Philippians 3:13–14. May we run this next leg of the race with all our strength, eyes fixed on Christ, until His glory fills the earth.

Alan Webster,
Executive Director

A rainbow over the mountains in Lesotho, on a trip to the Siphuthi translation




Wori Haqqqane Yeesso Kiristo Miinsan

VISION & MISSION

Vision

Transformed communities meaningfully engaging with God's Word.

Mission

We serve local language communities through strategic partnerships to facilitate the translation of and engagement with God's Word towards transformed lives.

VALUES

His Glory

We seek God's glory among nations' communities and seek every opportunity to give God all the glory. God-centered, bold, courageous and obedient; and in humility, always pointing to God.

His Word

We pursue the transforming power of the Word of God in our own lives and work passionately to share this with those people who still need to hear it in their own language.

The Church

We believe in the centrality of the Church in the fulfilment of God's mission on earth. The Church is the bride of Christ, and our attitude and the way we speak about the Church should always mirror the love of Christ for His bride.

Prayer

We are led by the Holy Spirit as we pray. Prayer is the fibre that runs through all we do, every decision we take, everyone we meet with and every project we are involved in.

Authentic Relationship

We follow Jesus and have an authentic relationship with Him. We honour and respect all people, and endeavour to guard, strengthen and restore our relationships.

Strategic Partnerships

We delight in working together in community for the sake of advancing His Kingdom through Bible translation in partnerships. We consider it a real privilege to participate in the Bible Translation Movement and joyfully serve all.

Local Community

We respect and understand the dignity of the individual within the community. We value the local community's needs and expressions and serve them by coming alongside to help empower and honour their place in the community.

DISTINCTIVES

Full Bible - Both Original (Old) & New Testaments

While there is good reason for Bible translation to start in the New Testament, only 10% of language communities have a full Bible in their Mother tongue. Many of the foundational truths of Scripture are laid in the Original Testament, and Wycliffe SA, in our discussions with the leaders in the language communities, supports the request for a full Bible to be translated. The Old Testament is the first division of the Christian biblical canon which translates to the need for Hebrew knowledge as the Old Testament originates from the ancient religion of Judaism and makes up 75% of the Bible.

Community Transformation

While all Bible translation seeks heart and life change in individuals and communities by accessing God's Word, this will not happen automatically. Wycliffe SA emphasises transformation and seeks to partner, through Wycliffe Links, with individuals, Churches, Businesses, and Missions partners, to support local communities and seek ways to empower for change. The deepest desire is to focus on a holistic approach that meets physical and spiritual needs.

Scripture Engagement

Is a quality control tool and a step towards transformation, to encourage and equip the translation teams and translation communities to engage with the translated Scriptures in a way that is appropriate to their context. Ideally, a champion or Scripture Engagement team is appointed and trained to effectively implement plans to engage the community with God's Word.

Development of Indigenous, Oral-Culture Translators and Consultants

We believe the best people to impact the language community are people from within the community or close neighbours. We have experienced that consultants from an oral-culture background have an instinctive and intuitive knowledge on how to work well with oral communities. As most of our projects are with oral communities, the desire is to raise local capacity to translate God's Word so that the translations are natural and relateable. The whole translation process, using local teams, helps to bring dignity to communities that have often been marginalised. Moreover, the consultant and exegete better have an understanding of the target language.

Language Development

Transcription has opened an opportunity for language development in oral communities. For example, using the transcribed texts, in Participatory Language Discovery (PLD) the Marenje and Siphuthi programmes have discovered a lot of general knowledge and some linguistic features used in their languages. Before, they only spoke through tacit knowledge, but now they are aware of the parts of speech they are using. They discovered the most commonly used connectors, i.e. 'but', 'then', after'. Also, some letters are not reflected in the Marenje alphabet.

OBT&T and Sign Language

At the moment, Wycliffe SA's preferred methodology for translation is called Oral Bible Translation and Transcription (OBT&T). This has been shaped by the language communities in which we work. The full-time projects work to a rhythm to produce an average of a chapter per week which is translated, community reviewed, consultant checked, recorded (as an audio), and transcribed. We use technology to assist the teams, but do not want to embrace tools like Artificial Intelligence if the community benefits more by being hands-on in the process. In dynamic transcription, the team has the opportunity to edit the text as they listen and write/type. We support Sign Language translations and pray for the Deaf to receive a Bible in their heart language.

Financial Services

Wycliffe SA's Finance Team not only provides excellent financial management of the projects that we manage, we also provide financial management to others. Due to the majority of our projects being cross-border, we serve both the teams on the ground as well as the funding organisations to provide regular and accurate reporting and accountability. This means we are able to provide processing and reporting in three currencies, and be a seamless link between first-world systems and transactions in remote, rural communities.

Language Community Centered

Translation is done best in the community itself, for a sense of ownership and so that the finished products can be taken to the people immediately. Training of the translation teams is done on-the-job so that decision-making is in the hands of the local community. Also,during the training, the team is familiarised with the working environment they will become part of, and a hands-on experience. Wycliffe SA personnel should always be considered as the guest supporters and not the leaders of the project.

Local Church Focused

It is a joy to serve the local Church and to serve with local churches. Wycliffe Links brings the Church in southern Africa closer to the translation communities for mutual blessing and encouragement. We partner with local churches to equip them in their mission and discipleship, and connect them to language communities for prayer, visits and equipping. We encourage “mission tourism” so that people from all over the world can experience first-hand what God is doing to transform lives and communities through His Word. The stories of transformation documented and published as videos, stories and social media is intended to inspire believers and congregations in service God in His mission to reach nations.

Himba women celebrating at a Scripture dedication



LOGO

The Wycliffe SA logo hasn't always been what it is today. In 2016, the old logo was replaced by a new one.

Old Wycliffe SA Logo



New Wycliffe SA Logo



Through our vision to see people meaningfully engaging with God's Word, and our mission to serve local language communities to this end, we will see the spread of God's Word and lives transformed as people receive the scriptures in their heart language. This explains our choice of Habakkuk 2:14 as the biblical basis for our overall vision and brand motif –

"For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea".



The sphere

represents our work in the global context, in that what we do also contributes to Bible translation worldwide

The dark blue wave

represents our work in the global of the rest of Africa, in that what we do is aligned with the rest of the continent

The light blue wave

represents our direct reach which is in Southern Africa



1 Syringa Place
29 Smith Avenue, Edenglen, 1609
Johannesburg, South Africa
wycliffe@wycliffe.org.za
www.wycliffe.org.za
+27 11 452 2714/5



Wycliffe Bible Translators South Africa NPC,
Registration Number 1991/002557/08, PBO
Reference Number 930012884