

Wycliffe's Big Idea Receives Big Donation

Wycliffe Bible Translators kicked off National Bible Week earlier this week by launching one of its most ambitious Bible-translation projects ever.



[] After nearly 2,000 years of slow-to-no progress, the tedious work of Bible translation accelerated rapidly during the 20th century.

But now, with the Bible already translated into thousands of languages, the world's largest Bible-translation organization has unfurled plans to tackle the remaining 2,200 in a single generation.

With the use of new translation technology, leaders at Wycliffe USA describe their "Last Languages Campaign" () as a global, "full-sprint" effort to start a Bible-translation program in every language that needs one by the year 2025. That means approximately one-third of the world's languages.

Though the massive initiative is estimated to cost Wycliffe nearly \$1 billion over the next 10 years, a recent \$50 million anonymous donation could give the project the kind of kick-start it needs for setting out to achieve its goal

Wycliffe reported the large unexpected gift, which was earmarked for the Last Languages Campaign, two weeks before unveiling the new initiative.

"People without a written language need one," wrote the anonymous donor. "Literacy is a key to helping people work their way out of poverty and to resist oppression by others. Children who first learn to read in their own language are more likely to become literate and to stay in school than those who first learn in a different language."

Bob Creson, president of Orlando, Wycliffe USA, praised the generous donor for taking what he said was “a bold step of faith.”

Financial markets plunged worldwide, but the anonymous donor’s audacious multi-million dollar gift will help Wycliffe reach “more than 200 million people in Bibleless language communities with the life-changing message of the gospel,” Creson said.

Bible translators say people comprehend the Bible best when it is written in the language they speak in their own home.

Wycliffe works with thousands worldwide in translating what professionals call “the world’s most effective missionary”—the Bible.

Aside from learning to speak, write and eventually translate the native tongues of remote villagers worldwide, Bible translators stress the important communal side effects of maintaining a Bible-translation program, such as literacy, water-purifying systems, and AIDS and human rights education. **-Paul Steven Ghiringhelli**