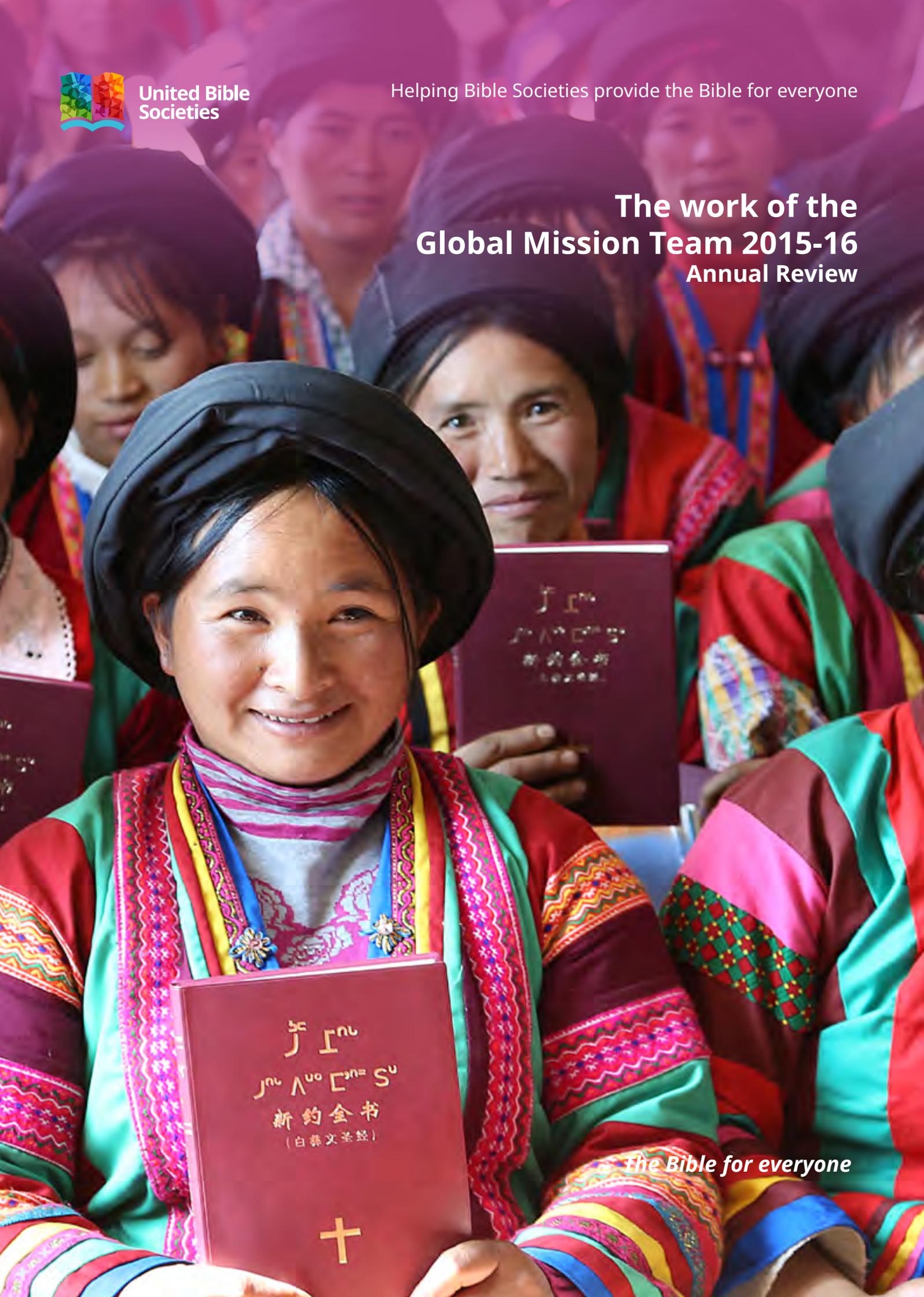




United Bible Societies

Helping Bible Societies provide the Bible for everyone

The work of the Global Mission Team 2015-16 Annual Review



The Bible for everyone



“And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful.”

Colossians 3.15 (ESV)

Together, Bible Societies around the world are uniquely placed to make the Bible available for everyone.

Why? Because we're integrated; we work right around the Bible lifecycle to translate, publish and distribute Scripture and help people engage with it. We're interconfessional; we work with all church denominations and traditions. We're independent; we are globally connected, but locally rooted.

And we're incarnational. We believe in the power of God's written Word and we place a great emphasis on making the full Bible available to people.

I'm thankful for the progress we've made in 2015-16. I'm grateful for all that's been achieved during our 70-year mission. The Bible really is for everyone, and together we're working towards the day when people all over the world can access God's Word in a language and medium of their choice.

Michael Perreau
United Bible Societies Director General



Contents

3	6-7	10-11	14-15
message from the Chair	the work of the Global Publishing Team	the work of the Global Partnerships and Communications team	Accounts; the financial information
4-5	8-9	12-13	
the work of the Global Bible Translation Team	the work of the Global Ministry Exchange team	the work of the Global Financial Services and Operations team	

Dear friends and colleagues



It's rare that you hear an award acceptance speech in which the proud recipient takes all the credit. More likely, they'll pay tribute to a litany of people... the manager, the team, the dedicated parents. Because behind all great achievements are the support team.

This report is our tribute to the UBS support team; the Global Mission Team (GMT).

These are the people who work faithfully behind the scenes, in the fields of translation, publishing, partnerships and communications, finance and 'global mission exchange,' to support Bible Societies around the world.

Seventy years ago, at the end of World War Two, Bible Society leaders from countries which had been at war with each other were at a conference together. They realised the great need for the Word of God to rebuild a broken and hurting world. They joined forces and founded the United Bible Societies fellowship.

They saw that through unity, mutual support and connectedness, we're a much more effective team. By working together, we make the best use of our collective expertise. We're more strategic and we work smarter. We're better placed to fulfil our vision: the Bible for everyone.

Today, GMT are at the heart of our global Fellowship; the glue holding our world mission activity together. Their mandate is to:

- Increase our global profile and partnerships
- Mobilise Bible Societies to achieve our mission priorities
- Provide membership support and development, to build capacity

This report outlines the difference GMT has made in 2015-16; from training translators, to supporting website development, to running the finances of small Bible Societies. All this releases our Bible Societies in more than 140 countries to focus on their local mission to provide the Bible for everyone. And through that work, lives are being changed by God's word.

Rudi Zimmer
UBS Global Council Chair

“Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil.”

Ecclesiastes 4.9 (ESV)



Celebrations at the launch of the Mina Bible in Togo, a translation which was part of the '100 Bibles in 1,000 days' project



Creating a quality translation for his people, thanks to our training programme

Fidel Nanantai is a Bible translator in Pucallpa, in the Peruvian jungle. He was invited to attend our training programme for local language translators, part of the largest capacity-building initiative the Global Bible Translation team (GBT) have ever offered.

Fidel was facing challenges in his life, and was sceptical about the impact the training would have. But he went anyway – and it transformed everything for him. Fidel embraced the knowledge and friendship on offer through the course. On graduation day, Fidel had the honour of placing a crown on the head of the programme tutor, as a way of symbolising the fact that he'd found peace with God.

or expats still participate, they do so in a consultative role.

Global Bible Translation team exists to:

- help Bible Societies develop their own translation projects, by training translators and other staff
- ensure UBS stays at the forefront of Bible translation practice through research and development
- maintain and assure the quality of our translations, maintain relationships with partners and provide resources to help Bible Societies fundraise for translation
- offer project support, particularly at the beginning and end of the translation process



Fidel Nanantai, a Bible translator in Pucallpa, in the Peruvian jungle, attended our training

Since graduating, Fidel has joined a group creating a new indigenous mission in Peru. Their aim is to research languages in order to translate the Bible. They also use the research to evangelise to communities, run literacy programmes and preserve the indigenous language and culture.

Fidel is one of a new wave of Bible translators around the world; local, mother tongue speakers who are leading indigenous translation projects. These days, in the few projects where missionaries

It means there's a great need to train people like Fidel in the fields of linguistics, anthropology, translation theory, biblical studies and history. Between 2013 and 2015, 351 translators from Africa, the Americas and Asia Pacific have attended our workshops.

And the training is having a tremendous impact. The quality of translations is improving every year. Translators feel a sense of dignity and empowerment. Many are pastors as well as translators, so the training they receive in biblical studies means the local church benefits from better quality Bible teaching.

There are social benefits too. Translators are equipped and prepared to run literacy programmes, and are also more likely to engage in local government affairs with authority and confidence.

So, for every person like Fidel who's attended training, a community is being changed for good through God's word.

Our achievements in 2015-16



11 languages received their first full Bible in 2015

6 first New Testaments were translated

5 languages received their first Bible portion

10 other new or revised translations were completed



1,201 translations in more than 900 languages are now in the **Digital Bible Library**

100 Bibles have been translated in 1,000 days. The final one was due to be completed in May 2016

We've proved it's possible to complete a New Testament translation in 3.5 years and an Old Testament translation in 7 years. Two successful pilot projects in Zambia – the Ila and Nzenga translations – were completed in 2015. This was carried out with support from Every Tribe Every Nation, a strategic alliance of the world's key Bible translation agencies

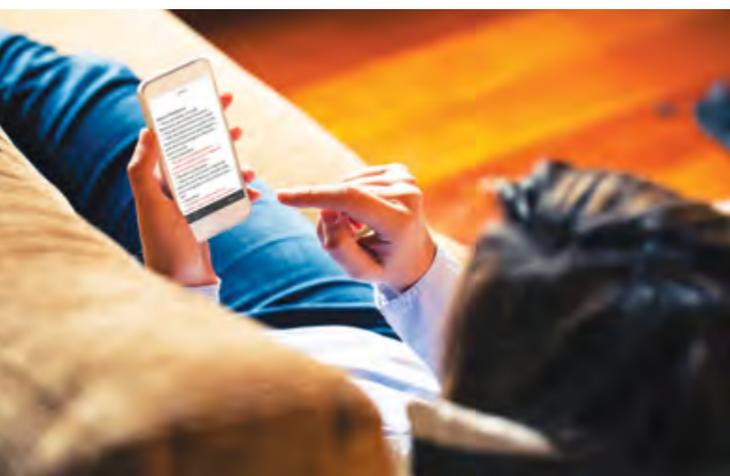
20 Bible Societies are now involved in **translating Scripture into Sign Language**, thanks to our support



A global Bible app, developed with our help

When Bible Society of Brazil came up with an idea to develop a Bible app for smartphones and tablets, the Global Bible Publishing (GBP) team stepped in to ensure this could become a global tool.

The app (short for 'application') makes a country's Bible translations available in one place, on iPhone and Android smartphones. Now, it can be downloaded in Spanish, English, Norwegian and South African languages. It's currently being developed for people living in an Islamic context. By the end of 2016, the aim is to have more than 40,000 downloads a month, from over 90 Bible Societies offering the app in their local languages.



The Bible app offers every Bible version available in a country, in one place, for free. Users can buy additional content such as study Bibles

Nelson Saba, Digital Publishing Strategist for UBS, explained the role his team played in globalising the app. "Nine out of 10 times, if a Bible Society develops a digital product, it will be for its own context. The challenge is

that, over time, the Bible Society realises it's expensive to maintain; more expensive to maintain than develop. Many Bible Societies are then forced to abandon the project.

"This is where GBP comes in. We ensure that we create a global solution, with the potential to be scaled up. We can offer economies of scale by potentially rolling out a project out 147 times. We have the knowhow and the ability to coordinate across the world.

"Brazil, in fact, could have developed the Bible app more cheaply on their own, but they would have had ongoing maintenance costs which GMT will now pick up. They also had a sense of being part of a fellowship; that they could create something that would benefit many other Bible Societies."

The Bible app offers Bible translations for free, and also has premium content such as study Bibles available to buy. By doing this, it reconciles free Scripture distribution with economic sustainability. The look of the app can also be branded or localised as it launches in different countries, so that it reflects the branding of local Bible Societies.

Within the first 30 days of the app launching in Brazil, in August 2015, it had been downloaded 12,000 times. Since then, it's been downloaded around 7,000 times a month. Another encouraging statistic is the average length of time each person spends using the app: six minutes. "This is a very good metric of Bible engagement," added Nelson. "This initiative is one of many projects under the new UBS digital strategy designed to empower Bible Societies to fulfill their mission, in an economically sustainable way, in the digital space."



As well as pioneering the publication of Bibles digitally, we're also supporting Bible Societies to manage stock and orders

Our achievements in 2015-16

The first **UBS Digital Publishing Strategy** was rolled out, to give a global focus to our online activity. It concentrates on three areas:

1. Content creation
2. Content distribution
3. Community engagement



7,000: the average number of downloads per month of our new UBS Bible app, launched in August 2015

Six minutes: the length of time each user spends using the UBS Bible app – which is very high!

60 Bible Society leaders and staff attended our Trends in Publishing summits, and received help to design, implement and manage publishing projects more effectively

May 2015: the **Publishers' Institute was launched**. In its first year, it assessed the publishing capacity of more than 25 Bible Societies, to create development plans for each

190 staff from 45 Bible Societies attended our supply chain management workshops



12 people, representing eight Bible Societies, attended the first Publishers' Institute meeting in Asia

17 Bible Societies benefited from a new system which helps them plan for demand, and replenish stock more effectively

Global Bible Publishing team exists to:

- help Bible Societies produce relevant, high-quality and cost-effective Bible publications
- identify opportunities for Bible Societies to work together
- offer training in aspects of publishing, including distribution, supply chain and intellectual property management, and digital strategy and development



Tej Jirel, General Secretary of Nepal Bible Society, who received support from the GME team to develop a response strategy in the wake of the devastating earthquake in April 2015

When a devastating earthquake shook Nepal on 25 April 2015, thousands of people lost their lives and many more were injured. Whole villages were reduced to rubble, and the damage to roads hampered the relief effort.

The Nepal Bible Society was by no means unscathed. Bible House in Kathmandu was damaged and although no staff were injured, they were all emotionally impacted in some way. But their determination to offer aid and Scripture support to their fellow Nepalis was unshaken.

Three months after the crisis, Tej Jirel, General Secretary of Nepal Bible Society, was flown to Singapore to meet André Minnaar, from the Global Ministry Exchange (GME) team.

Global Ministry Exchange



New direction borne out of disaster, thanks to our support

Their aim: create a long-term strategy that would meet the growing need for the Bible in Nepal.

“Since I joined Nepal Bible Society in 2003, it’s been my heart’s desire to prepare a document with our vision, mission and strategic priorities,” said Tej. “My meeting with André fulfilled my desire. With his active involvement, I was able to set our objectives and develop an outline of a strategic plan. I was so happy to accomplish this long-awaited dream.”

The strategic plan was submitted to Nepal Bible Society’s board and was adopted with minor changes. It will now serve as a basis – and provide a context – for all Bible mission in Nepal over the coming years.

Tej said, “My prayer is that in response to this earthquake, many good things would take place in Nepal and many people would come to know their true God. Christians and churches are very much involved in helping people affected, and our strategy is to provide Scripture to churches and earthquake survivors.”

André added, “Meeting with Tej was also a practical way of demonstrating our solidarity and empathy with him and his team, and provide a sense of not being alone in the midst of this tragedy.”



220 people attended our Roundtable Exchange meeting

Our achievements in 2015-16

799 international projects benefited from \$32.7 million investment. This was facilitated through the International Support Programme (ISP), which the GME team is responsible for

 **1,375 project reports** were processed through the Project Registry, keeping donors connected with how their money is having an impact

Solomon, our new ministry information system, was launched in 2015 to replace the old Project Registry. It’s easier to use, is more interactive and cuts down admin time. It also includes new areas to register proposals, talk about strategy, and lodge questions and answers

4,117 days of support were provided to Bible Societies

78 Bible Societies were visited

17% of our time was invested in capacity building, equipping national Bible Society staff to solve their own problems and face the challenges of the future

May 2015: we hosted a unique **three-day meeting in Mexico**. Staff from eight countries – half of whom were deaf – gathered to talk about Sign Language translation. More than 400 sign languages globally need Bible translation. There’s now a strategy to address this

220 people from 100 Bible Societies attended our Roundtable event, to generate ideas for improving Bible projects in the future

Global Ministry Exchange team exists to:

- connect ideas and people by sharing good practice and fresh thinking, and linking up with partner ministries
- connect resources, linking up ministries which need funding, time or talents with Bible Societies that have the ability to share these things
- monitor and evaluate, ensuring donors can have confidence their funds are used wisely by Bible Societies
- manage reputation and risk, through a careful and confidential alert process
- manage Bible Society offices that are not yet full members of United Bible Societies

Our achievements in 2015-16

In 2015 we launched **new UBS branding**, to strengthen and raise our global profile

Almost 10 million: the number of people currently following our Digital Bible Facebook page. This has grown from some four million followers since 2010



35 people from 13 Bible Societies in South East Asia **received training in fundraising and communications.** The workshops were delivered by eight trainers from the UK, USA and Australia. All participants said they'd recommend the training to others

65,000: the number of times our 2015 Easter video campaign, the first of its kind, was watched on YouTube

We **relaunched UBS' website** and more people are engaging with us online as a result



68,000: the number of photos and videos now in our online multimedia library. In the last three months of 2015 alone, more than 2,000 new resources were added and 3,600 photos were downloaded

The Communications team exists to:

- ensure effective communications within the UBS fellowship and to external audiences
- raise the global brand and profile of United Bible Societies
- help Bible Societies develop their digital mission
- provide multimedia content for Bible Societies to use in their own fundraising and communications
- link with partners and agencies



Mere Katonivere and Filomena Dautai, from Bible Society in the South Pacific, learn how to create and manage a website at a training workshop in Athens, Greece

Reaching a new generation via the internet, as a result of our training

In a team of less than 20 people, where the focus is on translation, production and distribution of the Bible, it can be impossible to know where to start if you want to create a Bible Society website.

That was the case for Bible Society in the South Pacific, based in Fiji. Until two members of staff – Mere Katonivere and Filomena Dautai – signed up to our Global Web Project, and attended a workshop in Athens in 2015.

The pair had been participating in the project, which helps smaller Bible Societies establish an online presence, for a year, tuning in for monthly webinars (online seminars) and reading through resources online. The program, combined with the face-to-face training in Greece, has completely transformed what they're capable of.

"Through this training, we uploaded a video with Scripture verses to our website," said

Mere. "We have never done this before! Within two days, 378 people had watched and shared it, people were commenting... They like these videos, they like it more than text."

Filomena added, "Our young people have smartphones and tablets, and people use the internet more than they read newspapers or listen to the radio. We need to be using that technology! It's very important for Bible Society to interact."

The women have learnt to use web technology to their benefit, rather than be wary of it – and have picked up ideas from colleagues in other Bible Societies who attended the training.

Their website, bible.org.fj, now boasts news, prayers, a verse-of-the-day, links to their shop catalogue as well as online audio Scripture. It features Twitter and facebook links, and a photo gallery.

Snow Praditngam, who was on the Global Web Project training team, added, "This year I've worked with about 20 Bible Societies, setting up new websites and training people

in how to use the different features on offer. It's all about helping them to harness technology in order to communicate more effectively with their audiences about their work, and about the Bible.

"Each Bible Society has different needs, according to their context, so it's a great learning experience. It's inspiring to see participants sharing their knowledge and skills with each other."



United Bible Societies
Alliance biblique universelle
Sociedades Bíblicas Unidas

The new UBS brand was launched to raise our global profile among partners and donors



The finance team processed thousands of transactions during the year, with a total value of \$20 million

Our achievements in 2015-16

146 Bible Societies benefited from our banking services, including current accounts

Millions of Bibles were produced, thanks to our **pre-financing and payment system**

16,000: the number of transactions we processed during the year, with a total value of \$170 million

3 loans issued during this period, to Bible Societies which cannot access credit in their countries

 **\$5.2 million:** the total amount of money currently on loan to Bible Societies

1,000: the number of children of Bible Society staff who benefit from UBS-matched contributions to an education fund

The Finance team exists to:

- provide international financial transaction services to Bible Societies
- provide current accounts to Bible Societies, make international payments on their behalf and maintain the accounts of the grant programme
- equip the Global Mission Team to achieve its mission through effective use of people, money, IT and facilities

72 Bible Societies, which do not have in-house experts to fix email or website problems, used our **Information Technology support services**

Building a translation centre to serve western Africa thanks to our \$1m loan

When Bible Society of Nigeria developed an ambitious plan to build an Institute for Computer Assisted Publishing (iCAP), to serve translation teams across western Africa, money was always going to be a challenge.

The \$1.4m building would also include a warehouse to support Bible distribution and a guest house which would be run commercially to raise vital funds. So, in October 2014, the Bible Society team lodged a request with GMT's finance staff, for a \$500,000 loan. Last year, they asked for a further \$500,000 to complete phase two.

Treasury and Banking Controller Kobus Hennipman said, "We have a loan fund of \$13m which Bible Societies can tap into, so when Nigeria came to us, we assessed their proposal and drew up a repayment plan. We charge subsidised interest, roughly 3-4% per year, which is very manageable compared the 16% they'd be paying on a local loan repayment."

The building is now due to be finished by June 2016, and will soon be hosting translation workshops for the region. Dare Ajiboye, General Secretary of Bible Society of Nigeria, said, "This was a timely loan, and was God's intervention. We would still have gone ahead with our building project, but it would have taken far longer."

Three Bible Societies have received loans for capital projects like this in the last year. They – and other Bible Societies around the world



– are supported by four Financial Account Managers, who also provide pre-financing to stop the gaps between the purchase of Bibles, for example, and the revenue generated by their sale.

In addition, our team provide international banking services to the whole Bible Society fellowship for a central cost of just \$500,000.



Dare Ajiboye,
General Secretary of Bible Society of Nigeria

Global Mission Team: financial information 2015-16

The total income of the UBS fellowship fluctuates each year between around \$350 and \$400 million depending on activity and elements such as exchange rates.

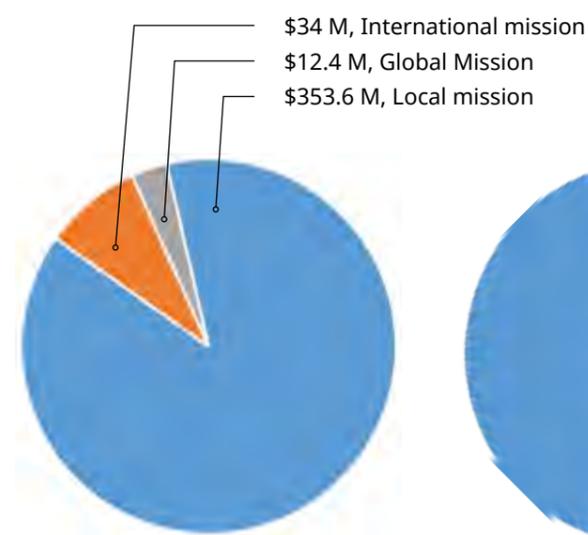
As in previous years, around 90% of the Fellowship's total income is spent directly by Bible Societies in their countries. This resources many programmes, from translation, to publication and distribution, to literacy, engagement and advocacy.

The remaining 10% totals around \$46 million. The largest share of this, some \$34 million, goes towards supporting projects through the International Support Programme. Around 870 projects in 146

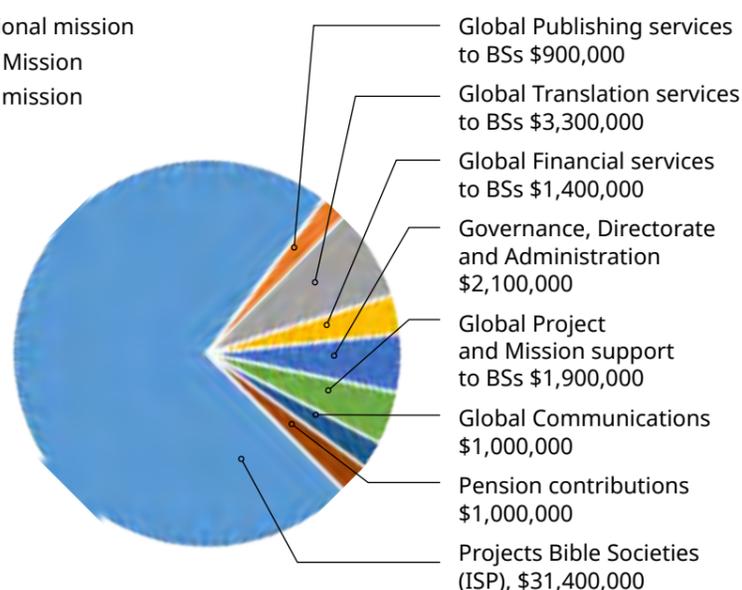
Bible Societies have been supported in this way in 2015-16. The projects selected could not be funded locally, so only happen with the support of grant-giving Bible Societies. The Global Mission Team is responsible for monitoring these projects and providing essential on-the-ground services to ensure good stewardship of the funds.

The remaining \$12.5 million covers the cost of the Global Mission Team's support to Bible Societies – including capacity building, financial management, support for publishing and staff development. Many smaller Bible Societies would struggle to survive without this support and infrastructure.

Total Fellowship income US\$ 400 million



UBS ISP projects and Global Mission Team



Unaudited 2015 figures. Full statutory accounts will be available later in the year. Income and expenditure figures differ because of timing differences in the receipt and expenditure of funds.

We thank God for our ongoing financial provision. For many Bible Societies, publishing remains their main source of income. Others have developed fundraising income. Some Bible Societies, especially in minority contexts, exist thanks to external funding from partner Bible Societies.

Global IT services

During 2015, more than 72 Bible Societies continued to depend on the UBS IT infrastructure for support, including 40,000 emails processed daily and the maintenance of 200 websites.

Several special projects are also supported by the team, including:

Making radio broadcasts available to download in Paraguay, so Paraguay Bible Society can reach young people through 500 radio stations in 17 countries.

Large-scale Bible sales in Egypt, through 17 bookshops. We provide systems to process bookshop sales in real time, as well as finance and donor database management.

An online fundraising solution in Canada, which processes hundreds of dollars every day.

An online store in Mexico to process Bible sales.



Human Resources

The Global Human Resources Team provide support to the Global Mission Team and the wider Fellowship. Support in 2015-16 included:

Induction programme for new Bible Society leaders. This event, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in May 2015 was attended by 18 people from around the world.

The UBS Academy of Leadership and Management. In 2015, 14 participants from 12 countries formed the fifth cohort of students. Participants learn to manage themselves and others, lead organisations and take a global perspective on their work. A key issue for these students was performance assessment.

Localisation of employment. The remuneration review which began in 2013 was concluded this year.

Supporting the Global Mission Team. The HR team recruited 33 new staff members and supported 24 people as they left the GMT. At the end of the year, the core GMT comprised 80 full-time equivalent staff. The total team numbers 107 full-time equivalent staff, spread across 39 countries.

**“And though a man might prevail
against one who is alone, two will
withstand him—a threefold cord
is not quickly broken.”**

Ecclesiastes 4.12 (ESV)



**United Bible
Societies**

United Bible Societies, UK Hub, Stonehill Green, Westlea, Swindon, SN5 7PJ, England

Tel +44(0)1189 500 200 Email comms@biblesocieties.org

www.unitedbiblesocieties.org  @UBSBible  UnitedBibleSocieties