



United Bible
Societies



Global Mission Team 2016-17 – Annual Review
Helping Bible Societies provide the Bible for everyone

“Let us give thanks to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! Because of his great mercy he gave us new life by raising Jesus Christ from death. This fills us with a living hope...”

1 Peter 1:3 (GNT)



30 years after the Chernobyl disaster, the Bible Society in Belarus is continuing to support affected communities. (Photo: Anatoli Hreben)

Cover photo: This young mother is a regular participant in a Scripture listening group in Ghana. She was delighted when she was given a Bible by the Bible Society of Ghana. (Photo: Kim Carter/ American Bible Society)



A significant year

What a year it's been for the Bible Society movement and for the Global Mission Team! We spent the first part of 2016 working hard to deliver the World Assembly in Philadelphia, in May 2016 – an event attended by over 350 people from around 150 countries. The World Assembly, which drew together our Bible Society leaders according to our governance bye-laws, gave us the **Philadelphia Promise**. This pledge, which was drawn up by all Bible Societies, will guide our fellowship through the changing challenges and opportunities in Bible mission. This shared agreement allows us to work together with even greater focus, and reminds us that we truly are stronger together.

We were richly blessed during that time, and I thank God for the spirit of togetherness and the passion that drives our unique ministry. The Fellowship has been working hard since then to see the **Philadelphia Promise** take shape in projects and partnerships around the world.

We are making great strides in our mission, and I feel our fresh energy for the **Philadelphia Promise** will see the Bible's message of love and hope speak into communities that need it most – communities blighted by war, disease, inequality and injustice. I feel we're readying ourselves for ministry in a rapidly urbanising, technologically developing world. And I feel we're more prepared than ever to be a voice for the lonely, poor and marginalised people in our societies.

As you read about the progress that's been made by the Global Mission Team over the past year, please pray that God's wisdom and guiding hand will continue to steer us in the coming 12 months, as we work with our very best efforts to share God's living hope with people everywhere.

Michael Perreau
United Bible Societies Director General



About the Global Mission Team

Think of the Global Mission Team (GMT) as the glue that holds our mission activity together. We're the support team that keeps the Fellowship on the frontline of Bible work. We support Bible Societies all over the world, and our staff are based in nearly 40 countries.

Our mandate is to:

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

We do this through five teams, looking after:

- Financial services and operations
- Bible publishing
- Bible translation
- Communications and partnerships
- Ministry exchange

In last year's report, we stated that in 2016 we would:

- 1 Deliver the World Assembly in Philadelphia
- 2 Conduct a process to generate the fellowship's strategic priorities for the following six years
- 3 Develop key partnerships that advance the Bible cause

You'll read in the following pages how we have achieved these goals, and supported the Fellowship during 2016-17. If you have any questions, or you want to access GMT advice and training, you can contact us at any time at **communications@biblesocieties.org**

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Global Bible Translation

The 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



The East Lisu people in China were one of 30 communities to receive their very first Scripture in 2016. © UBS CP/Jared WONG

"It would not be possible to do our work without UBS"



Speakers of four dialects of Kenya's Luhya language recently celebrated the launch of their own Bible

*Of the **839** Bible Society projects funded through the ISP in 2016, **231** were translation projects – and we supported all of these*

Case study

More than 50 Bible translations were launched in 2016 – and many of them simply would not have been possible without the support of the Global Bible Translation team.

In Suriname, the smallest sovereign state in South America, our team has been helping with a revision of the Sranan Tongo Bible. The language is spoken by 95% of the population, and its earliest Scripture – a New Testament – dates back to 1829. A full Bible was translated by an American

missionary in 1997, but the Surinamese people longed to have God's Word translated by a mother tongue Sranan Tongo-speaker to capture the natural flow and rhythm of the language.

On October 28, 2016, the new Sranan Tongo Bible was dedicated in Suriname's capital, Paramaribo, with great joy and celebration – and local translators paid tribute to the Global Bible Translation team.

"It would not be possible to do our translation work without the UBS training

courses we attended, or without the help from Samy Tioyé, our Global Translation Advisor," said one of the translators. "In 2015 Samy worked with us to prepare a workshop for church leaders, to explain the purpose and level of the revision and discuss changes we were proposing. Samy visited us twice a year to check our translation. He often makes suggestions to improve the accuracy of our revision which will help people understand God's Word more clearly."

Our staff made 321 translation project visits

Our achievements in 2016:

- Of the 839 Bible Society projects funded through the ISP in 2016, 231 were translation projects – and we supported all of these
- We helped to complete translations in 61 languages spoken by over 428 million people
- 30 languages, spoken by 95 million people, received their very first Scripture in 2016:
 - 17 communities received their first Bible
 - 6 communities received the New Testament for the first time
 - 7 people groups now have portions of Scripture
- We also helped produce 28 new Bible translations and revisions, and three study editions, all with the potential to reach over 333 million people
- Braille Bible portions were made available in Spanish, German and Kirundi for the first time
- We partnered in 16 projects to translate the Bible into sign languages



The Surinamese people longed to have the Bible translated by a native speaker – and the Global Bible Translation team helped make it possible

- 36 capacity building workshops took place, and 722 people benefited from these
- Our staff made 321 translation project visits
- 177 new languages and 273 Scriptures were added to the Digital Bible Library® (DBL)
- Scripture is now available via the DBL in a total of 1,134 languages in 1,474 editions. The total audience for these languages is 5.2 billion people
- UBS has supplied more than 80% of the full Bibles held in the DBL and these have an audience reach of 4.9 billion people

We partnered in 16 projects to translate the Bible into sign languages



Martin Feuerstein reads from the Braille edition of Matthew's Gospel in the new revision of the Luther Bible, launched by German Bible Society in 2016

Global Bible Publishing

The 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



Our achievements in 2016:

- Bible publishing and distribution projects made up 159 of the 839 projects funded through the ISP in 2016. More than 45 million Bible readers benefited from these activities
- The team organised five Publishers' Institute workshops, completed the writing of at least 18 modules and assessed 20 people to help build capacity among local staff



Bible Society staff receive training from our Global Bible Publishing team in supply chain management to optimise their process and save money

The team organised five Publishers' Institute workshops, completed the writing of at least 18 modules and assessed 20 people to help build capacity among local staff



35 Bible Societies received consultancy support on intellectual property issues



Our achievements *continued*

- 71 people from 38 Bible Societies attended the Publishers' Institute workshops
- Eight mailings about copyright issues were sent to Bible Society staff around the world
- 35 Bible Societies received consultancy support on intellectual property issues
- UBS's intellectual property policy has been distributed to all Bible Societies
- Income from royalties up to October 2016 was US\$66,000
- The 'Just Right' inventory optimisation system, developed by the Publishing team, was launched in the Americas and Africa, to help Bible Societies analyse and manage their stock
- Workshops on the 'Just Right' system were held for 44 Bible Societies, and it's already being implemented in nine Bible Societies

Case study

Top rating for supply chain management training

A five-day workshop to help staff from 15 Bible Societies better manage their supply chain and inventories was rated as very good or excellent by around 90% of people who attended.

The training, which took place in Tanzania in August 2016, was practical and hands-

on, presenting delegates with real world problems to solve using the new 'Just Right' inventory optimisation model. More than half of the 35 delegates said the content was very good, and a third rated it excellent. Everyone said the training was valuable for their work.



The work we put in to help Bible Societies improve their publishing and financial management means more people around the world receive God's Word at a price they can afford, and in a format they can use.
Photo: © Clare Kendall

71 people from 38 Bible Societies attended the Publishers' Institute workshops



Global Ministry Exchange

The 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** by linking up ministries which need funding, time or talents with Bible Societies that have the ability to share these things
- **Monitor and evaluate** Bible Society projects, 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



GME Ministry Resources Facilitator Mauril Koudoha (4th from left) with the staff of the Bible Society in Gabon

*“Mauril was like a coach. Thanks to him, we were able to **completely reorganise** the way we work and **improve our financial situation drastically**. His advice and constant availability was a big help!”*

Our achievements in 2016:

- We facilitated the International Support Programme (ISP), through which 839 international projects benefited from US \$32.3 million investment
- For the first time, the whole ISP cycle was facilitated through our new online platform, Solomon
- Every Bible Society had an assigned Ministry Resources Facilitator, who provided strategic support, helped to ensure projects were professionally designed and helped optimise funding opportunities
- 81 Bible Societies received visits and support, compared to 55 Bible Societies in 2014 and 78 in 2015
- 1,500 individual actions to support Bible Societies were recorded in 2016
- The team provided support to more than 110 Bible Societies every month
- More than half the Fellowship were helped more than 20 times
- Two thirds of all projects submitted to the ISP received some funding
- 449 ministry and Bible engagement projects were funded in 2016, including projects for children and youth, and marginalised communities. These will reach 234 million people
- A quarter of the team's time was given to helping Bible Societies gain project funding through the ISP. Nine per cent of the team's time was spent building capacity in local Bible Societies, and 10% of their working hours were spent supporting the World Assembly
- Eight Bible Societies became members of UBS at the World Assembly, with support from the Global Ministry Exchange team

Eight Bible Societies became members of UBS at the World Assembly



GME Ministry Resources Facilitator Graham Baxter (2nd from right) and board members of the Palestinian Bible Society celebrate the successful application for UBS membership

Helping Bible Societies join the Fellowship

Eight Bible Societies joined our Fellowship at last year's World Assembly, marking the culmination of years of hard work to ensure they met the Global Council's criteria. Our team were at the heart of the process – helping to overcome challenges presented by different contexts and needs.

Bible Society in Gabon started working towards membership in 2006, recruiting 20 staff members and launching three translation teams. But several years ago, an audit carried out by Mauril Koudoha, their Ministry Resources Facilitator, exposed several areas in need of work.

Mauril linked up the local team with colleagues in Congo, and together they made vital changes – paying off debts, bringing in annual general meetings, improving financial management and broadening their income streams.

It worked. Bible Society in Gabon became a UBS member last year, and General Secretary Georges Thierry Mabiala said, "Mauril was like a coach. Thanks to him, we were able to completely reorganise the way we work and improve our financial situation drastically. His advice and constant availability was a big help!"

Palestinian Bible Society also joined the UBS Fellowship in 2016, supported by Ministry Resources Facilitator Graham Baxter. Reflecting the complexity of the region, the team there previously operated under three legal registrations, and had to become a new not-for-profit company in order to meet the UBS criteria.

Nashat Filmon, General Secretary of the Palestinian Bible Society, said, "Graham helped us by reviewing our application, advising us accordingly, supporting the process, submitting the application and celebrating its endorsement. We are grateful for this backing and support."

Faroese Bible Society decided to register as a separate organisation from the Danish Bible Society several years ago, reflecting the islands' own language, independent church, national identity and autonomous governance. Its aim is to concentrate on Bible advocacy and engagement.

Terje Hartberg, Head of Global Ministry Exchange, helped put together the membership application over many months. He met with Faroese and Danish Bible Society staff, visited board members and church leaders, and promoted the Bible Society through radio interviews and local meetings.

Bergur Joensen, Chairman of the Board of the Faroese Bible Society, said, "Terje's knowledge, wisdom and patience helped us through the application process. He gave us hope and pushed us in the right direction, always showing an interest in what was going on in our Bible Society."



Georges Thierry Mabiala, General Secretary of the Bible Society in Gabon, said GMT input helped him reorganise the way the team worked

Global Partnerships and Communications

The Global Partnerships and 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

Our achievements in 2016:

- We provided communications support before, during and after World Assembly, sending more than 20 newsletters, publishing regular prayers and news updates (including videos) on the World Assembly website, and producing printed materials
- We launched the UBS Learning Zone, providing staff with 24-hour access to learning resources, all in one place. We have over 80 video resources, case studies or presentations grouped by themes



Participants in the Africa Fundraising and Communications Workshop held in Accra, Ghana, in October 2016

Case study

Equipping teams to fundraise

Forty people from 18 Bible Societies across Africa gathered in Ghana, in October, for a unique training event organised by the Global Partnerships and Communications team.

The aim was for Bible Society staff to improve their fundraising and communications, focusing on local fundraising efforts and using websites and social media more effectively. The week-long training also aimed to foster understanding between 'resourcing' and 'implementing' Bible Societies.

A team of experienced fundraisers and communications professionals from around the world, as well as the Partnerships and Communications team, led the training and facilitated as the group shared experiences. One participant said afterwards, "I strongly recommend other Bible Societies to

attend, for the growth of their organisations. It is a good start to get rid of dependency syndrome." Another called for future, similar meetings, and said, "We need to maximise our achievements and explore new and emerging ideas."



We launched the UBS Learning Zone, providing staff with 24-hour access to learning resources



The Bible on Facebook: changing lives

Braima, who lives in Guinea, was ill and was due to go to hospital when he believes God directed him to our Digital Bible page on Facebook. "I had never heard about this, but one day I was searching Facebook and came across the Digital Bible. So I sent a message to say hello," said Braima. "The admin replied and I told him about my health issues. He said he would pray. From that day, every pain has gone away, in Jesus name!"

More than 10 million people now follow our Digital Bible Facebook page

Our achievements *continued*

- We uploaded 131 news stories to UBS Community and added 6,000 resources to the multimedia database, which now contains almost 74,000 searchable files
- 4,786 registered users visited the UBS Community site more than 45,000 times, with an average visit lasting almost five minutes
- Bible Societies downloaded resources from our database around 24,000 times
- We trained more than 25 Bible Societies around the world in communications, fundraising and/or web development
- Traffic to our public website nearly doubled in 2016, with more than 325,000 visits mostly from mobile devices
- More than 10 million people now follow our Digital Bible Facebook page
- The UBS Facebook page grew by 72% to more than 300,000 followers. Our Spanish Facebook page, Sociedades Biblicas Unidas, has nearly 1.5 million fans



Delivering the World Assembly

In May 2016, over 350 people representing more than 150 Bible Societies working in 200 countries spent a week together in Philadelphia to plan for the future of Bible ministry. This was the World Assembly, a meeting which happens once every six years, and our theme was **'God's Word: Living Hope for All.'**

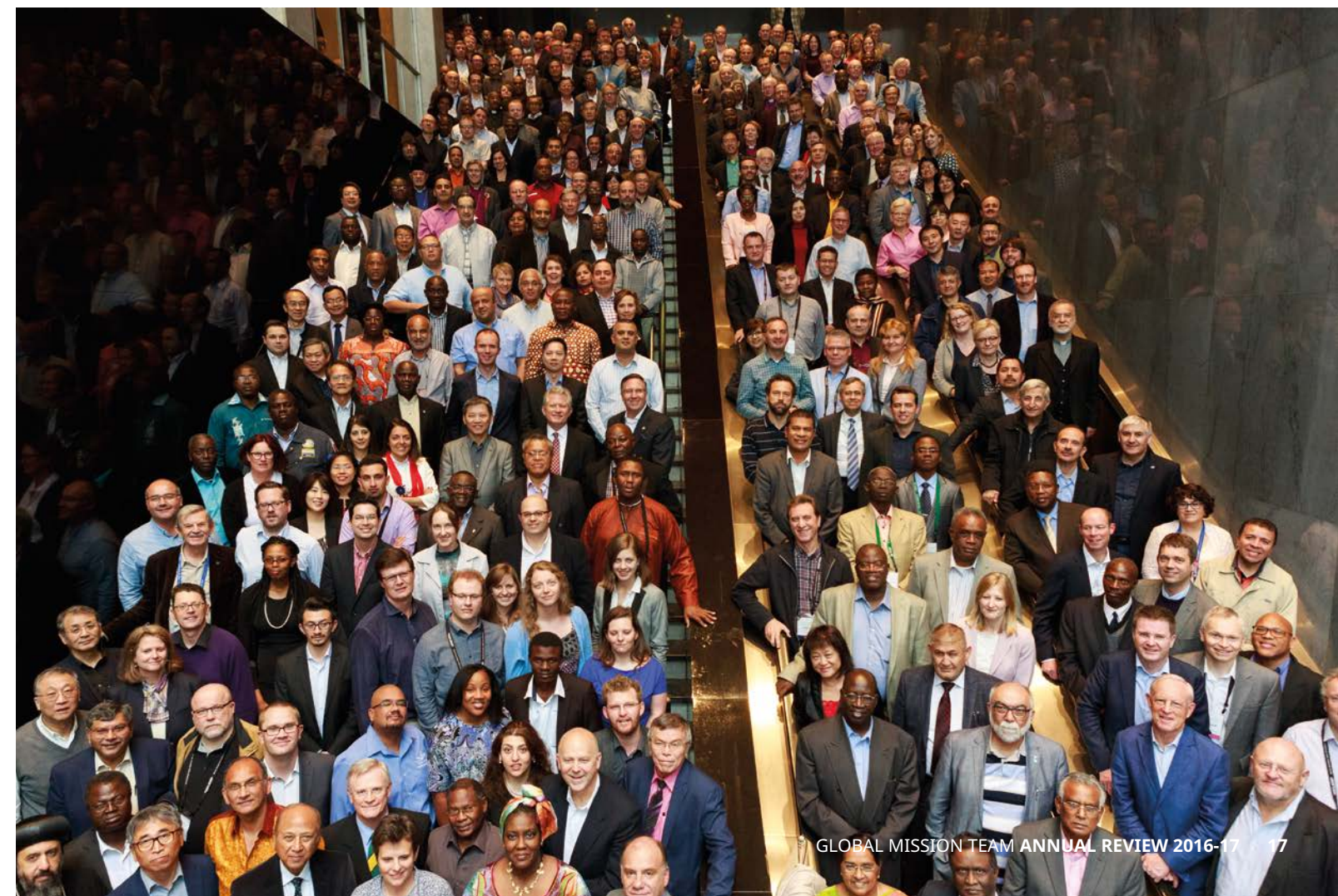
The Global Mission Team helped to plan, deliver and facilitate this milestone conference – and are now helping Bible Societies to implement the strategic outcome, **The Philadelphia Promise**, which will guide our work until 2022.

How the Global Mission Team made World Assembly possible

- We booked the venue, set the agenda, arranged the speakers, sent out invitations and took bookings. We facilitated Bible Societies wishing to pay travel expenses for colleagues in other countries
- We sent out more than 20 newsletters before, during and after World Assembly, publishing regular prayers and news updates
- We produced all the brochures, booklets, documentation and follow-up material for World Assembly, in English, French and Spanish
- We uploaded almost 50 films to the Learning Zone, covering all key speeches and many seminars
- We facilitated the discussion around our strategic priorities, which had been going on for almost a year, in order for Bible Societies to arrive at the **Philadelphia Promise**
- The World Assembly was almost completely paperless: our team ensured all sessions, agendas and details were available via an app, and we ran an IT helpdesk throughout the event



The Global Mission Team helped to plan, deliver and facilitate this milestone conference



Global Financial Services and Operations

The Global Financial Services and Operations 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

Our achievements in 2016:

- All Bible Societies used our current accounts, and more than US \$100 million passed through these in 2016, including grants, Bible production invoices, education fund transactions and other financial settlements
- Almost 15,000 transactions were processed
- Leaders from nine Bible Societies received training on developing business plans and managing cash flow
- A number of Bible Societies received loans, including Bible Societies in Suriname (to complete their pension arrangements), Cameroon (new Bible House), Belgium and Panama
- The loan facility was restructured to apply criteria and targets, and a Property Stewardship Fund is being formed
- Bible Societies continued to depend 24/7 on our IT infrastructure, including project management via Solomon, UBS Community and eCommerce services
- We processed hundreds of online donations and sales for Bible Societies every day
- We hosted more than 200 websites (including some which received 200,000 visitors per month) and processed over 45,000 emails a day for 75 Bible Societies with no local or in-house technical support and equipment
- We helped make the .bible domain available, in partnership with American Bible Society, to create thousands of new URLs for Bible ministry



Case study

Training to ensure good financial management

In August 2016, General Secretaries and business managers from nine Bible Societies – many of them new to their roles – attended a training workshop in Nigeria to improve their governance and financial management.

The workshop covered the development of strategic and business plans, managing cash flow and roles of the Board and Executive personnel. Kobus Hennipman, Treasury and Banking Controller, said, "Participants appreciated the exposure to the Fellowship, and seeing how we are able to help one another in leading and managing Bible Societies."



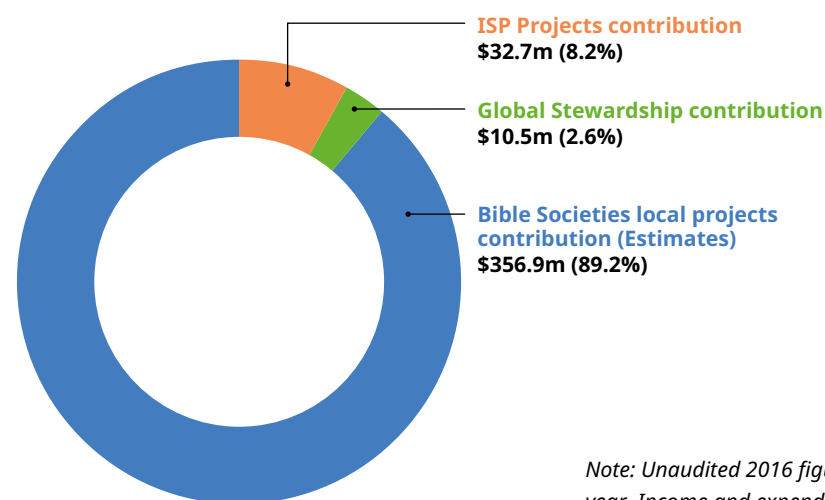
Financial information 2016-2017

The UBS fellowship total income fluctuates each year at around \$400 million, depending on exchange rates and various activities.

About 90% of the Fellowship total income is spent directly by Bible Societies in their countries for local programmes in translation, publication, distribution, literacy, engagement and advocacy. This has been a constant across previous years.

The remaining 10% total is around \$45 million. The majority of UBSA expenditure, \$32.8 million (73%) went to grant payments through the International Support Programme. In 2016 over 130 Bible Societies received grant payments for more than 800 projects addressing needs in Translation, Scripture Supply, Advocacy, Youth and Children, Digital and other special audiences. The support was received from sister Bible Societies all over the world, and the Global Mission Team is responsible for the monitoring of those projects and ensuring good stewardship of the funds.

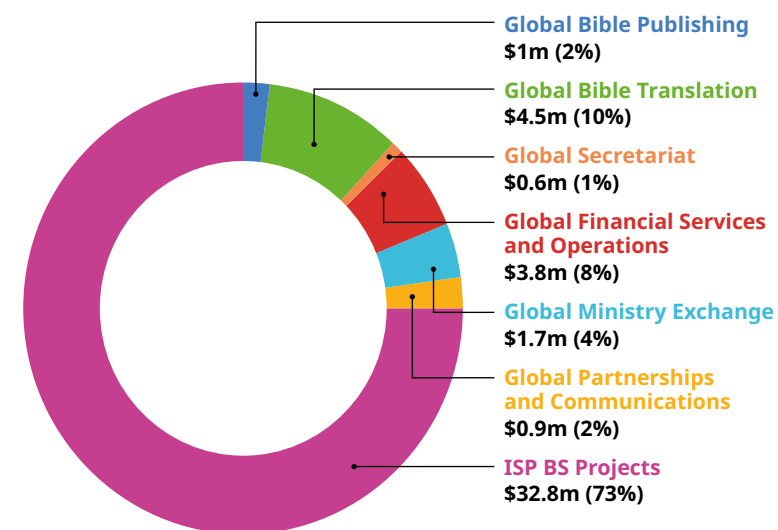
United Bible Societies 2016 Global Economy



Through the Global Stewardship Fund, \$10.5 million was used to cover part of the cost of the Global Mission Team, largely used in capacity building, projects support and monitoring, publishing and staff development as well as exploring the new opportunities offered by the digital revolution in communication. Some of these activities attracted more than \$2 million of additional support from various partners and operations, with help being directed especially but not exclusively to small Bible Societies to provide support for their existing challenges.

We thank God for his continued blessings on our financial operations, both at local and global levels, which enable us to continue serving and impacting people all over the world.

UBS ISP Projects and Global Mission Team 2016



*More than
US \$100 million
passed through
our current
accounts in 2016*

Note: Unaudited 2016 figures. Full statutory accounts will be available later in the year, Income and expenditure figures could differ because of timing differences in the receipt and expenditure of the funds. All figures are in US Dollars (million)



“And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.”

Hebrews 10:24-25 (ESV)



United Bible Societies

www.unitedbiblesocieties.org



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To visit the UBS Community Site, Learning Zone and Solomon, log in to
<https://login.biblesocieties.org>

The Bible for everyone

The Fellowship is incorporated as United Bible Societies, a corporation registered in the state of Delaware, USA, in 1946. The affairs of the Fellowship are administered on its behalf by the United Bible Societies Association (UBSA) from its registered office at UBS UK Hub, Stonehill Green, Westlea, Swindon SN5 7PJ, England. UBSA is a company limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales no. 2264875. Registered charity no. 800058.