



United Bible  
Societies

# Serving Together |

2017 Annual Report



# | Serving as one



Dear friends,

**When Jesus prayed for his disciples the day before he died, the Gospel of John records that he asked twice for one thing: That his disciples would be unified. That they would be “one.”**

As I think about the work of the United Bible Societies fellowship in 2017, Jesus’ prayer rings in my ears. Because from email marketing workshops in Thailand to ministry best practice training in Costa Rica, I see our Fellowship working together, serving together as one.

I see the prayers of Christ fulfilled through the work of our Fellowship, and I feel humbled and thankful to be a witness.

As we see in the news every day, working across cultures and geographic boundaries is not easy. But it’s essential to living out our identity as the body of Christ and carrying out the mission God has given us to make the Bible available and understandable for everyone.

*“Holy Father! Keep them safe  
by the power of your name,  
the name you gave me,  
so that they may be one  
just as you and I are one.”*

**John 17:11b**

In the pages of this report, you’ll see a celebration and testimony of how we serve together—Bible Societies, Global Mission Team, and faithful partners—to reach people in more than 200 countries with the life-changing message of Scripture.

You’ll meet Bible translators from Angola who collaborated with a Finnish Bible Translation advisor to produce a Bible translation prayed for by the local church for decades. You’ll see how knowledge of supply chain management traveled to Bolivia and new publishing ideas influenced the team in Lebanon. Both resulted in Bible Societies being able to carry out their ministry more efficiently and effectively.

I hope that you are inspired and encouraged by these stories. And I am also thankful for the role that you played in this incredible mission. After all, God uses us all—serving together as one—to share his Word with the world. We could not do this without you.

May God continue to bless you.  
Gratefully serving together,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Michael Perreau".

Michael Perreau, Director General  
United Bible Societies

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*“Let us be concerned for one another, to help one another to show love and to do good.”*

**Hebrews 10:24**





# Growing together: Capacity building in the UBS fellowship

**For Khoi Lam Thang, the UBS fellowship is not just a professional network. It's a family.**

Khoi, who is General Secretary of the Bible Society of Myanmar, explains that his country was cut off from the outside world for almost half a century. That isolation affected education, communication, technology, and a sense of connection with Christians outside of Myanmar.

But Khoi says that when the Bible Society of Myanmar receives contact from the UBS fellowship, he's reminded, "Oh, I am a member of a family!"

In addition to spiritual support and connection, the UBS fellowship and Global Mission Team (GMT) have provided Khoi and his 17-member team with access to training and networking that has empowered the Bible Society of Myanmar to bring Scripture to those who need it.



Khoi attended the UBS Leadership Academy when he took the position of General Secretary nearly eight years ago, and he has a close, collaborative relationship with his Bible Society's GMT Ministry Resource Facilitator, Arun Sok Nhep.

In addition, his staff have benefited from training in Bible translation that has helped support the 16 Scripture translation projects they're currently overseeing and the 35 translation projects that have launched in the last seven years. After one of his staff members participated in the Publishers' Institute, she can now independently handle the publication process in Myanmar.

Khoi says this network of support reminds him of the African proverb that says, "If you want to go far, go together."

And the Bible Society of Myanmar's experience isn't unique. From digital training to ministry best practices, Bible Societies grew together through capacity building facilitated by the UBS fellowship and Global Mission Team in 2017.

*The following pages contain a snapshot of some of the capacity building that took place within the UBS fellowship in the last year.*

*Khoi Lam Thang is the General Secretary of the Bible Society of Myanmar. His Bible Society has participated in a variety of training events – from Bible translation to leadership development. Photo: David Hadley, Global Mission Team.*

## .BIBLE web training

**Outcome:** Bible Societies were taught to build simple websites on the .BIBLE platform to help them achieve their ministry and fundraising goals.

**Impact:**

- 61 people trained
- 46 Bible Societies represented

*"We were working on the [surinamese.bible](#) website and on the [Caribbean.bible](#) website. We actually managed to do both of them in 2.5 days. It's very much a hands-on training, which I really liked. Because of that... we're actually going to do three other sites.*



*Paul Doth (left) works with a colleague at the .BIBLE Web training in Miami. Photo: Global Mission Team.*

*"On the Surinamese [site] we also put in the New Testaments of the different languages we have in Suriname. We talk a little bit about the Bible Society of Suriname and what the work is that we do in Suriname. And in Guyana and French Guyana we will do the same thing. And we put some of our New Testaments also on there." – Paul Doth, former General Secretary of the Suriname Bible Society*



*Princess Landerito applied what she learned at the Project Engage training to her work at Philippine Bible Society. Photo: Philippine Bible Society.*

## Project Engage

**Outcome:** Bible Societies learned to effectively build online audiences for Scripture engagement and fundraising using both email addresses from YouVersion Scripture downloads and their own digital marketing efforts. In fact, 25 Bible Societies who received training collectively sent 12 million emails to 8 million email addresses received through YouVersion downloads.

**Impact:**

- 80 participants trained across 4 continents
- 64 Bible Societies represented

After attending a Project Engage workshop in February 2017, Princess Landerito, Scripture Marketing Officer at Philippine Bible Society, applied what she learned about email marketing to her Bible Society's online platforms. This helped Princess and her colleagues see online sales more than double from 2016 to 2017. In addition, their email newsletter gained more than 50,000 subscribers from July to December 2017, and their website page views increased 714% from June to December 2017.





Bible Society employees from different African Bible Societies pose for a group photo at the April 2017 Publishers' Institute workshop in Uganda. Photo: Ashaka Alex.

## Global Bible Translation training

**Outcome:** Bible Societies were equipped to efficiently produce high-quality translations for the millions of people who are still waiting for Scripture in a language they can understand.

**Impact:**

- 373 Bible Society translators, translation officers, and support staff trained in translation best practices
- 64 countries represented among attendees

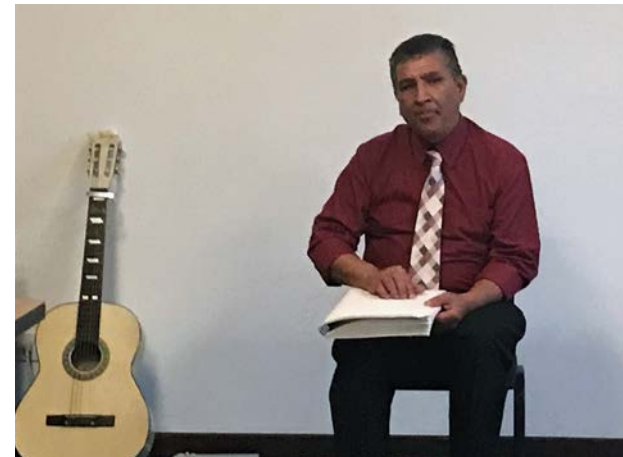
*"I thank the almighty God for the opportunity given to me to participate in this training. The topics and issues covered in the training are very relevant to the business of Bible translation and the task of the translator. The section on translation theories and practice is indispensable. Generally, it is an orientation that should be a "must" for all incoming translators."* – Translator who attended the translation training workshop in Kenya



Participants from Anglophone African Bible Societies receive certificates after completing Bible translation training in Kenya.

*"And so encourage one another and help one another, just as you are now doing."*

**1 Thessalonians 5:11**



During the training, Pastor Marios (pictured here) spoke to Bible Society members about ministering to people with visual disability. He shared, "There's nothing like holding a real book in Braille in your hands and touching God's Word with your fingers." Photo: Bible Society of Costa Rica.

## Best practices training on reaching People with Visual Disability

**Outcome:** Five Bible Societies in Latin America were equipped to reach people with visual disability by forming a joint cluster project with a shared strategy and language.

**Impact:**

- 14 participants trained
- 5 Bible Societies represented in the workshop

*"We had to take off our own shoes, put ourselves in the shoes of blind people, and then start walking! A mixture of theoretical and practical learning elements helped us in the process: Shirley, a blind staff member of the Bible Society of Costa Rica was one of the leading presenters at the workshop. We had blind people taking devotions. We experienced a dinner in the dark and a theatre performance, blindfolded."* – Ingrid Felber-Bischof, training facilitator

## Audience-led program design workshop

**Outcome:** Bible Societies were empowered to incorporate the needs of the people they aim to reach into the planning and implementation of their work, which is a key part of the Philadelphia Promise.

**Impact:**

- 17 participants trained
- 14 Bible Societies represented in the workshop

*"[The workshop] helped put perspective into making a project. We think we know what's good for the audience, but unless we try to find out who they really are and put ourselves in their shoes, we wouldn't really find out what kind of specific needs they have that we can try to respond to."*



Leizl Ocampo. Photo: Sarah Starrenburg, Global Mission Team.

*"[The workshop] is going to help us streamline the kind of projects that we pursue. There are a lot of ideas, but we have to really prioritise which ones we should pursue and which ones are the wisest decisions."* – Leizl Ocampo from Philippine Bible Society.



*A member of an Umbangala church in Cazenga, Luanda, Angola, dances for joy at the news that the Bible is being translated into her language. Photo: Pedro Moco, Bible Society in Angola.*



# I wonder whether God knows us?

*Umbangala speakers in Angola on track to receive New Testament in their own language*

**For Umbangala speakers in Angola, the upcoming launch of the Gospel of Mark is not just an exciting milestone. It's an answer to years of prayer.**

"[Umbangala-speaking Christians] prayed for 20 years that this project would start," says Dr. Riikka Halme-Berneking, a Translation Consultant on the UBS Global Mission Team who has supported the Umbangala translation team since 2010.

"[When you consider these prayers, the project] did not start actually in 2009, it started in the last century," Riikka explains.

Those prayers were sparked by the Umbangala-speaking community's deep desire for the Bible in their own language. Although the Bible is widely available in Portuguese, the official language of Angola, the lack of Scripture in Umbangala makes it difficult for native speakers to practice basic expressions of their faith—from praying and understanding difficult Scripture passages to sharing about their faith with neighbours.

"Many people don't speak Portuguese, don't understand Portuguese. They only understand Umbangala," explains António Baptista, an Umbangala speaker and member of the Umbangala Bible translation team.

That's why he and two fellow Umbangala speakers—Baptista Mateus Maquengo and Domingas Fernando Ita—have responded to the call from Umbangala-speaking church leaders to translate the Bible into their native language.

## A Bible translation for the Church

The Umbangala translation, which is sponsored by the Bible Society in Angola with support from the UBS Global Bible Translation team, has received interdenominational support from Umbangala churches who know firsthand the difficulty of living as the body of Christ without Scripture in their own language. Such leadership and ownership by local churches is one of the key principles in UBS Bible translation, as expressed in the *UBS Translation Needs Assessment* tool and the **Common Framework** guiding the approach to Bible translation.

Many of the challenges faced by Umbangala Christians in these churches are basic, but fundamental, practices of faith—such as simply reading the Bible as part of a church service.

"At this point we read the Portuguese Bible, and it [is simultaneously] interpreted into Umbangala," António explains. "Sometimes the preacher knows the two languages, so he can do both. Other times there is simultaneous interpretation going on."

But that method often causes difficulty and misunderstanding.

"It depends on who is doing the reading and who is doing the interpretation," Domingas adds. "If you have a good interpreter they may use language people understand. Other times they may use words that are difficult [for] people to understand."

When the passages are complex or nuanced, it becomes even more challenging.

"Many times, even the reader doesn't understand the text because it's so complicated," António says.



*Children in the capital city of Luanda, Angola. Although the country's official language is Portuguese, many Angolans primarily speak other local languages. Photo: Francois Sieberhagen.*

## Translating Context

Riikka explains that Bible readers with access to Scripture in their first language often take the complex process of understanding the text for granted.

"In translation, the Bible comes close to us so that we can make our own connections to the text from our own context—directly and not via some interpretation done somewhere else," she says.

As Riikka works with the translators, she helps explain the background and context of the biblical text so that they can incorporate this understanding into their translation of the Bible into Umbangala.

"Our translation makes it easier to see the context," adds António. "They will be able to interpret it through the context because they can read the text in their language—the whole text and not just a few verses here or there."

## Practising faith in Umbangala

But speaking in the Umbangala language when practising the Christian faith has not only been difficult. At times, it has met with disapproval.

In churches where the officially spoken language is Cokwe, with its own Bible translation, praying or praising God aloud in Umbangala is forbidden. António explains, "For them, it would have been a scandal. The explanation was that God does not understand this language."

Some Umbangala-speaking Christians learned Cokwe because it was a way for them to access and share Scripture.

Baptista shared that when he was 13 or 14, he learned Cokwe so that he could read the Bible and use it to evangelise.

"When the Gospel was brought to me, pastors gave me the Bible in Cokwe. And that's how I learned my Cokwe, because it was the proper Bible," Baptista says. "Practically, I learned the Cokwe language with the Cokwe Bible."



*Dr. Riikka Halme-Berneking (center) at the launch of the Umbundu New Testament, another Bible translation project she supported in Angola. Photo: Joyce van de Veen, Netherlands Bible Society.*



## Supporting Bible translation around the world

Producing a high-quality Bible translation is a team effort. Local language speakers always take the lead on Bible Society translation projects, but a group of advisors from the Global Bible Translation team support the local translators by conducting trainings and consulting on individual translation projects. This support helps ensure that the Bible translation is both accurate and relevant to the community. Here's a glimpse at how the Global Bible Translation team supported Bible translations around the world in 2017:

.....  
**390** in-depth (minimum of 3-day) working sessions with individual Bible translation projects around the world  
.....

**69** countries benefitted from in-depth working sessions with the Global Bible Translation team either virtually or in person  
.....

**200** Bible translators received training on subjects such as translation best practices and ParaText technology  
.....

**66** Translation Officers, who provide national or regional support to Bible translation projects, received training  
.....

All this investment in high quality Bible translations has produced exciting results:

In 2017, new Scripture translations

launched in **49 languages** spoken by **580 million people**.

Of all those translations, **20** were “firsts” that are spoken by more than

**14 million people**.



*The Umbangala translators attended a translator training course with other Bible translators in July 2015. Photos contributed by Dr. Riikka Halme-Bernekking.*

### Umbangala as the language of prayer

Yet, despite the many obstacles, using their own language is essential to the practice of the Christian faith for many Umbangala speakers.

When António attended church as a child, he used two languages: Portuguese and Umbangala. The Bible was only in Portuguese. So were the teachings at his church and school. But there was one activity that he reserved for Umbangala—prayer.

“I find that when I pray in my language, it feels closer to my heart. That’s why I like to pray in Umbangala. I’ll not do it aloud. I’ll talk to myself quietly.”

Language is also an important key to unlocking for Umbangala speakers an understanding of how God views and relates to them.

Domingas recalled an Umbangala speaker once asking her, “I wonder whether God knows us if we don’t have the Bible in our own language.”

It is questions like this that spur the three-person team to continue translating the Bible into Umbangala.

Baptista explains, “We have been waiting for this to happen for a long time . . . many people went through these areas ... missionaries ... Catholic priests ... many people, but no Scriptures. We are really looking forward to it.”

A young man, Samuel, frequently tells the translators “We want to see these Scriptures before we die. We have to pass this on.”

### Working toward an urgent goal

The Umbangala translation team has made significant progress toward this goal since 2009, despite the fact that they’ve had to do foundational work with the language, which has never existed in written form before this translation.

“We have translated the whole New Testament, and three books in the Pentateuch, and Ruth and Jonah,” Baptista reports. “Now we are translating Judges and Numbers and Psalms.”

The church is awaiting publication of these translations, which are in various stages of review.

Throughout the process, they’ve had support from Riikka, who has guided them through how to produce a high quality Bible translation.

“The Umbangala translation is here because she is here,” António says.



*Above: Umbangala translators at work. Below: Umbangala translators at a radio station after recording a 7-minute program about Bible translation in their own language. They are from left to right: António Baptista, Domingas Fernando Ita, and Baptista Mateus Maquengo. Photos contributed by Dr. Riikka Halme-Bernekking.*

*“As the scripture says,  
‘How wonderful is the coming  
of messengers who bring  
good news!’”*

**Romans 10:15b**

“The translation is now walking with its own legs. She is the one who has helped us to make connection with the Ministry of Culture in our country and help figure out with them how to write our language,” he continues.

“In the past, there were no clear spelling rules, and now it is clear how we write our language. And thanks to her, we have gotten far. She has also taught us how to use ParaText software and helps us check and correct the text.”


The translators are fully invested in this work that they know will be life changing for Umbangala speakers.

António relates, “We feel very honoured to have this opportunity to finally have Scriptures in our language and want to work hard to make it happen.”

He reflects, “Having the Scriptures in this language is a great lift for the people—for people who have been thinking that God does not know this language, and will see that God does understand and know this language.”

And Domingas believes this knowledge will change hearts in her community. “I think when we have it, many people will come to God. So, it is very important to us, because in our communities there are many people who need this.”



A group of people, including a young girl reading a book, gathered outdoors in front of a brick wall. The girl is holding a black book with gold text that reads "OTESTAMENDU YOKALIYE". She is surrounded by several other people, including a man on the left and several women and children. The background shows a brick wall and some greenery.

The Umbundu New Testament was launched by the Bible Society in Angola on November 25, 2017. Umbundu is the most widely spoken indigenous language in Angola, and there are more than 4 million speakers in the region. Now Umbundu speakers like Adriana can read Scripture in the language that is close to their hearts. Photo: Joyce van de Veen, Netherlands Bible Society.

*"I gave great leaps of joy in my house. At last I have my New Testament."*

– Adriana Capombo, a 12-year-old Umbundu speaker pictured here reading the New Testament in her language



# Streamlining Bible delivery

*Supply chain management training helps Bible Societies make sure Scriptures are in the right place at the right time.*



*César Humerez Montaña is the National Director of Bible Distribution at the Bolivian Bible Society. Photo: Contributed by César Humerez Montaña.*

**César can tell you exactly how many Bibles the Bolivian Bible Society has placed in every church and institution in Bolivia in recent years.**

Most people are not familiar with the behind the scenes detail that goes into supply and delivery, but this is César Humerez Montaña's calling and work. César is the National Director of Bible Distribution at the Bolivian Bible Society. He intimately knows the challenges and roadblocks to fulfilling ministry, and undertakes his work with great care.

"We have 9 subsidiaries in different cities of Bolivia [with] the mission of meeting the direct needs of the Christian churches and institutions in the country. We also serve the indirect distributors of Bible products, who require the availability of all kinds of Bibles, New Testaments, theological books, consultation books and educational books, as well as materials for distribution to the audiences."

Faced with the ongoing challenge of avoiding overstocked products while maintaining an adequate supply of fast-moving Bibles, César is constantly looking for ways to improve inventory management.

When he learned of a United Bible Societies Supply Chain Management Workshop, he was eager to participate. Promotion for the workshop had caught his attention, because many of its topics addressed his need to improve service levels while driving down costs.

César attended the workshop, held in Miami in 2017 and hosted by UBS Global Publishing (GBP) in collaboration with the Americas Publishing Committee. The 5-day workshop was designed to help leaders like César tackle pressing issues and better fulfill their mission mandate.



*A woman reads from Scripture materials produced by the Bolivian Bible Society. Photo: Bolivian Bible Society.*

The 20 participants from 14 Bible Societies who attended the training engaged in practical and hands-on training that was adapted to the United Bible Societies reality. While he was there, César was able to work through problems in real world situations and share experiences with colleagues who faced the same challenges.

César learned to apply the 'Just Right Inventory' methodology that has been developed by the Global Bible Publishing team to help supply managers better analyse and optimise inventory to 'just the right' levels of stock. He and the other participants were also introduced to Streamline, a new demand forecasting and inventory planning software that is currently being implemented in United Bible Societies.

He returned to Bolivia from the workshop armed with resources he felt sure would make a difference. Looking back over the year, he shares, "This training helped us better guide our approach regarding stock management and the implementation of best practices. Streamline is an extraordinary tool; using it generates better purchases and a better Bible distribution."

In fact, this training helped César and the Bolivian Bible Society reach an historic distribution milestone in 2017.

"In 2010, when we did not use inventory management techniques as now, we distributed 120,560 Bibles," explains César. "Now, in 2017, using better techniques and

*"Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as though you were working for the Lord and not for people."*

**Colossians 3:23**

the inventory management software Streamline, we have distributed 301,525 Bibles, which is up to now the highest number of Bibles we have ever distributed during our 44-year history of the Bible Society of Bolivia in our country. We consider this a blessing."

Ralph Libier, United Bible Societies Global Supply Chain Coordinator, facilitated the training that César attended. He reports that two supply chain management workshops were held in 2017 – one in Asia and one in Latin America. Between the two, they trained 36 people from 28 Bible Societies to efficiently and sustainably manage product supplies.

Ralph speaks about the improvements in César's area, "The training and the software has helped Bolivian Bible Society to optimise the way that they calculate their Scripture requirements, taking into account key inventory parameters like required customer service levels, safety stock levels, supply lead time and order cycle time. What's next for the Bible Society is to continue using the system to monitor performance and look for opportunities to further improve their supply chain."

## The 'Just Right Inventory model' is currently being used in



## A Streamline pilot is currently being implemented in





# Seeds of faith

*Supporting the Church under pressure in Morocco*



"I will make the wilderness  
a pool of water, and the  
dry land springs of water."

Isaiah 41:18b

**Morocco. It's a country where giving someone a Bible could land you in prison, where openly going to church can mean you lose your job, and where believers can even be killed for their faith in Jesus.**

But the Bible here is changing people's lives, the Church is growing – and the support of the United Bible Societies fellowship is making a profound difference.

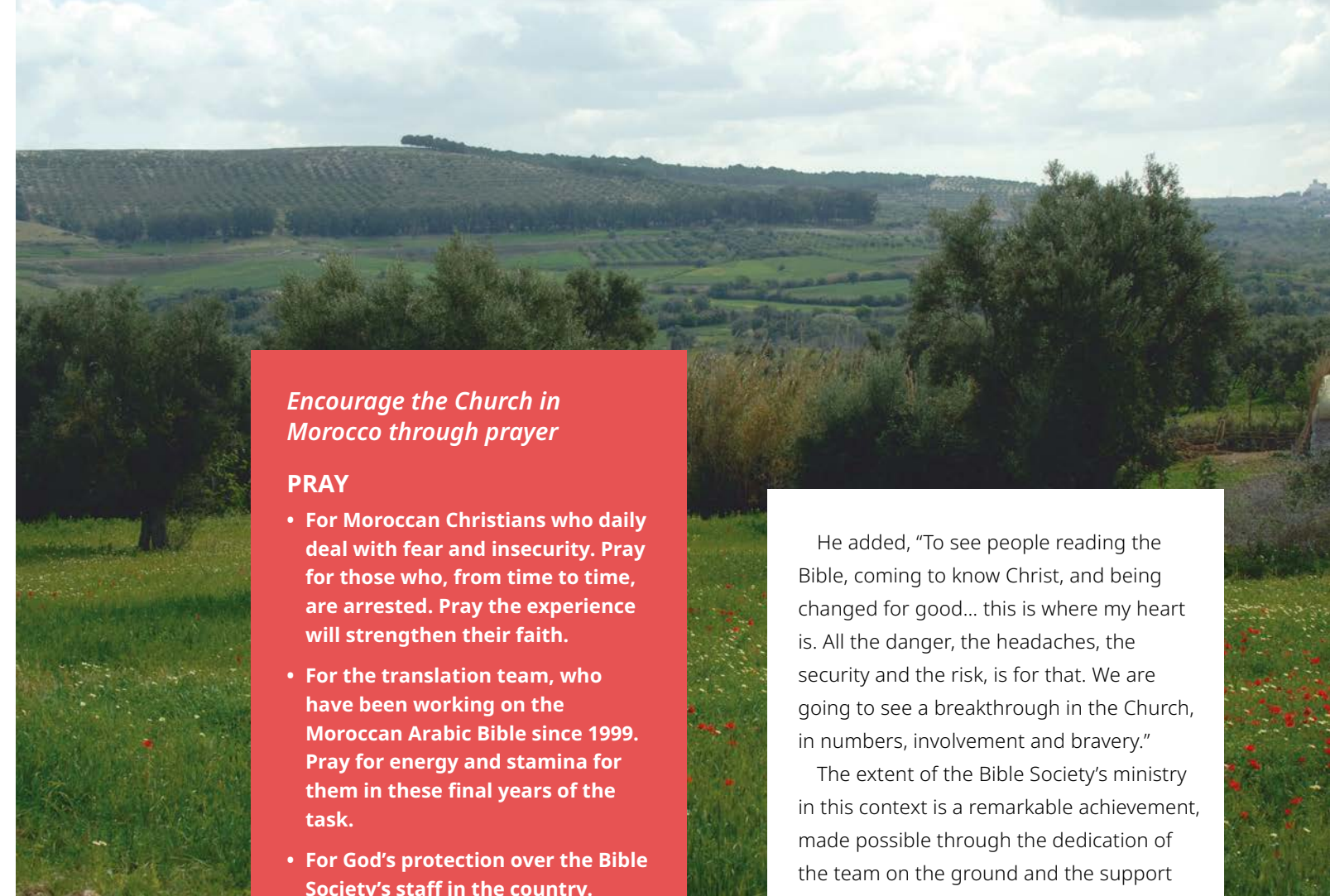
Almost everyone in Morocco – 99% of the 34 million-strong population – is a Muslim. Islam is the state religion, and the King of Morocco claims his position as a descendent of the Islamic prophet Muhammad. Christianity is seen as the foreigners' religion, and the Bible is considered to be distorted and corrupt. In 2010, about 150 foreign missionaries and their families were expelled from the country in a government crackdown, and Christians came under increasing pressure.

But since then, the Church has been growing – and it's an indigenous, local Church fuelled by the provision of Scripture in Morocco's everyday language.

Back in 2012, the first Moroccan Arabic New Testament was published, printed and made available online. Now, five translators are working on the full Bible. Supported by the Global Bible Translation Team, they are on track to complete the task by the end of 2020 and see the first Moroccan Arabic Bible published in 2021.

Today, it's thought there are up to 40,000 Christians in Morocco. Some say there are tens of thousands of additional believers who keep their faith a secret for fear of repercussions. And more and more people want to know about Jesus.

The team in Morocco receive around 100 requests a week from people who want a Bible. They supply as much Scripture as they can, put every seeker in touch with their local



*Encourage the Church in Morocco through prayer*

## PRAY

- **For Moroccan Christians who daily deal with fear and insecurity. Pray for those who, from time to time, are arrested. Pray the experience will strengthen their faith.**
- **For the translation team, who have been working on the Moroccan Arabic Bible since 1999. Pray for energy and stamina for them in these final years of the task.**
- **For God's protection over the Bible Society's staff in the country.**

Christian community, and follow up with church-wide training in how to read and understand God's Word. They even organise workshops for writing worship songs in Moroccan Arabic, and have produced five professional albums using Moroccan words and traditional melodies.

It's a ministry that is changing people's lives. The man who leads the Bible Society in Morocco has to remain anonymous because of the dangers associated with his work. But he told us about one woman who approached him years ago for a Bible:

"She had come to faith after watching Christian TV, and I provided her with a Bible and connected her with a pastor. Her husband was a tough, ex-military man, feared by his family. But now he, too, is a Christian. Their four boys and one daughter are all believers, and some are training to be house church leaders. When you see this family together, they have love and kindness among them."

He added, "To see people reading the Bible, coming to know Christ, and being changed for good... this is where my heart is. All the danger, the headaches, the security and the risk, is for that. We are going to see a breakthrough in the Church, in numbers, involvement and bravery."

The extent of the Bible Society's ministry in this context is a remarkable achievement, made possible through the dedication of the team on the ground and the support of the Global Mission Team. One of the Philadelphia Promises, the statements of intent that will shape our work until 2022, is to resource mission where Christians are under pressure. This means the United Bible Societies fellowship offers sustainable help to colleagues in Morocco – through prayer, translation consultancy, funding and supportive relationships. The man who leads the work in Morocco added, "One of our core values is partnership. Everyone is standing somewhere and God is using all of us as his partners."

The verse which inspires the mission in Morocco is Isaiah 41:18 (ESV) – "I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water."

Our colleague said, "Morocco is a dry place when it comes to faith. When I look at the situation, it's easy to be discouraged, to think we are never going to make it. But we hold onto God's promise, and I believe will use our ministry to make the spiritual wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land of Morocco a spring."



# A shared mission through a shared system

*Solomon helps Bible Societies support ministry around the globe*

**"The head teacher takes my hand in hers. She thanks us for our visit and asks me to pass this message on to potential donors:**

**'These pupils are children today but will be adults tomorrow. Your Bible gift will provide a better future for Haiti through these children.'"**

Ann-Catherine Kvistad, Norwegian Bible Society's Head of Fundraising, was reflecting on a recent visit to schools in some of the most dangerous and deprived parts of Haiti's capital, Port au Prince. She had travelled there to gather stories and photographs for a fundraising campaign to support a Haitian Bible Society project to provide Scriptures for school children.

"It was a profound experience to see the need and opportunity for myself and then to be able to describe that to people back home," she says.

But Ann-Catherine is rarely able to visit the many projects Norwegian Bible Society supports. In fact, most days are spent at her desk in Oslo. So how does Ann-Catherine source material that she can use to raise funds for them all?

As well as being in regular contact with Bible Societies, she relies heavily on Solomon – the Fellowship's online project and grant management system.

"As a fundraiser, Solomon is such a useful tool for me," she says. "I use it all the time to check projects that we are supporting. I look at the project updates so I can let donors and management know how things are progressing and if there are any issues.

"I also use it to find details that are really important to donors, such as the cost per Bible or Scripture item. This is all really important because donors find it very rewarding to know exactly how much their gift may achieve. In addition, the ability

to provide details shows that we know what the project is all about, and this creates trust and helps nurture long-term relationships with supporters."

And Ann-Catherine is not alone. Edna Rabago, Digital Communications Coordinator at Canadian Bible Society, also uses Solomon extensively in her day-to-day work. "I need relevant, compelling and up-to-date information about the projects we support. If there was no Solomon it would take so much time to gather this. But on Solomon I can find out what the need is, how the project is addressing the need, and what difference it is making in people's lives," Edna explains.

"In December 2017 alone, our projects page on our website raised over CAD\$3,000."

In New Zealand, Solomon helps staff feel part of the Fellowship's global mission.

"We have a weekly chapel gathering with our whole staff focusing on individual Bible Societies and their projects," explains Bible Society Programme Director Stephen Opie.

"The leader gathers information from Solomon, particularly the prayer points. This has really helped increase our staff's understanding of the global mission and the breadth of work that the Fellowship is carrying out."

The information also helps Stephen identify and report on projects that align with Bible Society New Zealand's strategic objectives.

"Without [Solomon], it would be much harder to understand how a project works and report on progress confidently to donors."

Solomon is managed by the Global Ministry Exchange (GME) team, which is continually improving the system to bring more value to the Fellowship. Over the past few years several new features have been added, from Storytelling on Solomon, which

allows Bible Societies to publish stories and upload photographs related to their projects, to Solomon+, which presents key data about the International Support Program and Bible Society work.

"As the Bible Societies work towards making the Philadelphia Promise a reality, Solomon is helping to support and facilitate their efforts, keeping us all connected in practical and meaningful ways," comments GME Systems Coordinator Mark Cook.

But Mark knows that the implications of Solomon go beyond tracking projects.

"Across the world Solomon has also become a platform where people are sharing stories of life transformation and prayer pointers, and where they can get 'big picture' data to help them understand the scope and scale of the work we are all doing together in every corner of the world."



*Ann-Catherine Kvistad, Norwegian Bible Society's Head of Fundraising, looking at Solomon at her desk in Oslo, Norway. Photo: Hans Sagrusten, Norwegian Bible Society.*

*Ann-Catherine Kvistad visited this head teacher, pictured here with some of her youngest students, on a recent trip to Haiti. Photo: Andrea Rhodes, Global Mission Team.*





# Learning together

*Publishers' Institute helps Bible Societies learn and grow together.*

**While attending the UBS Publishers Convention in South Korea several years ago, Ani Baboghlanian heard an announcement that she knew was meant for her. United Bible Societies planned to start the UBS Publishers' Institute and would be accepting 25 people for registration.**

Ani was the second person to sign up. She hasn't stopped learning since.

"I attended every publishing workshop and seminar from that time [2015]," shares Ani.

Learning is a lifelong habit for Ani. She has worked in four different positions since she began serving as a bookshop keeper for the Bible Society in Lebanon 33 years ago. Her roles have transformed and progressed over the years, providing her with a wealth of practical experience—especially in the area of publishing.

This past year, she assumed the role of publishing manager. Ani and her team take care of everything in the publishing process for the Bible Society in Lebanon—translation, typesetting, layout, proofreading, production, and even marketing. The knowledge she has acquired from the Publishers' Institute helps her with this work.

The UBS Publishers' Institute is designed for leaders, publishing managers and staff of Bible Societies. Its purpose is three-fold: to train Bible Societies on publishing issues and trends as well as their impact on Bible publishing and distribution; to connect Bible Societies to collaborate and work together; and to inspire Bible Societies to think proactively, innovate, and create new products and methods of Bible distribution in the digital era.

The workshops and learning experiences

have had a real impact on Ani and her work. "[They] have very much helped me as I am working at the Bible Society to improve the way that I'm working at the publishing in Lebanon." She continues, "The publishing process module gave me instructions step-by-step [for] what I have to do to reach a quality Bible at the end."

Ani is a shining example of a student who is giving back in the way that the program designers intended. "In Cape Town, South Africa, ...I introduced a presentation about how the Bible Society in Lebanon does the publishing in Lebanon," Ani explains. "I shared about our experiences and [how] we have a strategic plan [of what] we should be doing for the next 5 years."

She tells about sharing her success with colleagues from other Bible Societies, "This group was the African countries group. [I was] invited to go so [they] could see what a small Bible Society like Lebanon [is] doing. I think the experience made them very happy."

Ani is also passing along what she has learned with her own colleagues at home, "After the Publishing Convention, I prepared the presentation for our colleagues here in Lebanon ... so they can also know what's happening in the publishing department." She adds, "Sharing with others what I learned will help the organisation to be more effective in its production."

There are a few more modules, projects, reports and readings to complete before Ani graduates from the Publishers' Institute; she is on track to finish early next year. Meanwhile, she implements her learning. "We have ... a target to have 12 new products, one new product a month, during this year."



*Ani Baboghlanian, Publishing Manager at the Bible Society in Lebanon, is pictured with her Bible Society's refugee Bible that was on display at the Publishers' Convention in March 2017. Photo: Global Mission Team.*

Ani is an advocate for the institute and encourages other Bible Societies to enroll their staff. "Publishers' Institute is available for everyone to know and learn. We can learn from each other."

Ani is just one of many across the Fellowship who have benefitted from this training. This past year, Publishers' Institute offered 56 Fellowship members from 34 Bible Societies the opportunity to network and learn about topics such as content development, print and digital publishing, production, and intellectual property management.

Participants continue learning through the online platform and mentorship.

Each of the four Publishers' Institute events, which were organized by the Global Bible Publishing Team, provided capacity building for a different audience: Anglophone Africa, Francophone Africa, the Spanish speaking world, and Anglophone Asia. Modules from the Publishers' Institute were translated into French and Spanish to expand access to the information.

For Ani, the Publishers' Institute was the perfect addition to her on-the-job training over the years. "This Publishing Institute complemented my experience," she says. "It made it a whole package for me."



A year in review:

# UBS finances in 2017



Dear friends,

**As I reflect on 2017, I am filled with gratitude at the opportunity to see God at work through the gifts of his people.**

In the first full calendar year after the adoption of the Philadelphia Promise at the 2016 World Assembly, we saw even greater unity and collaboration in carrying forward key elements of the Bible mission that unites us all.

This work was reflected in the stewardship of the UBS fellowship. Within the UBS economy, we saw Bible Societies carrying forward ministry in their own countries as well as serving and supporting each other through the International Support Programme (ISP).

*"Each one, as a good manager of God's different gifts, must use for the good of others the special gift he has received from God."*

**1 Peter 4:10**

Within the Global Mission Team, it was a privilege to work toward serving the Fellowship as a collective body. From working to build the capacity of Bible Societies around the globe to creating systems that allow us all to benefit from economies of scale, it was an honor to serve Bible Societies—and through them, the Church—in the last year.

We are grateful for your role in this vast effort, and give thanks to God for this truly incredible opportunity to serve him together with you.

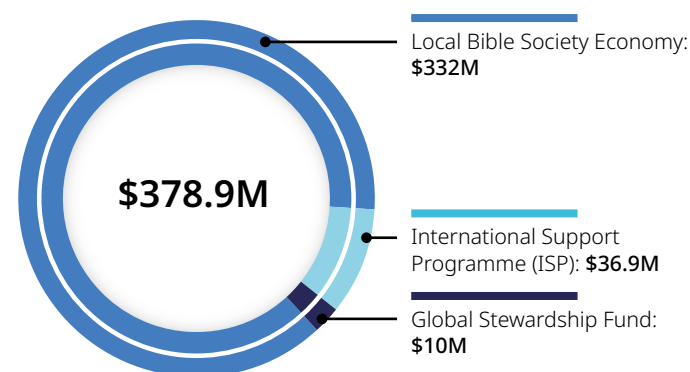
In faithful service,

*A. White*

Adrian White,  
Chief Operating Officer,  
United Bible Societies Global Mission Team

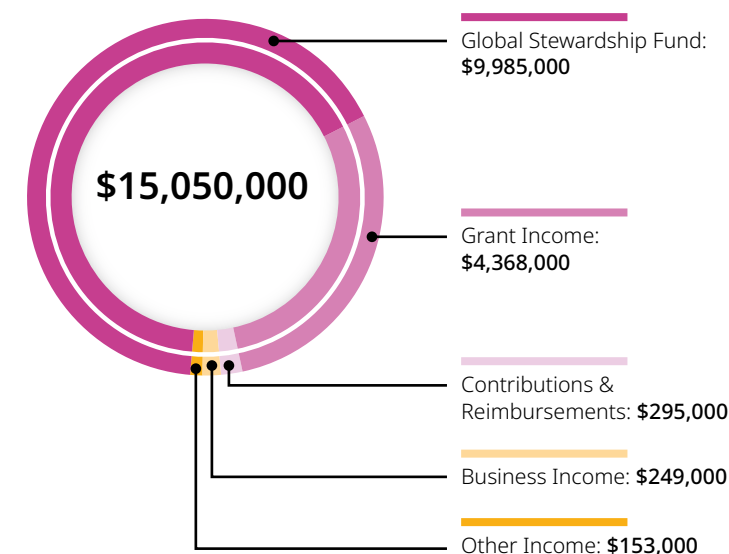
## UBS fellowship 2017 global economy

The UBS fellowship economy is made of of three components: Local Bible Societies' economies, grants given from Bible Societies to each other through the International Support Programme (ISP), and the Global Stewardship Fund, which supports the work of UBS and the Global Mission Team.



*Fellowship global income based on best estimates and information.*

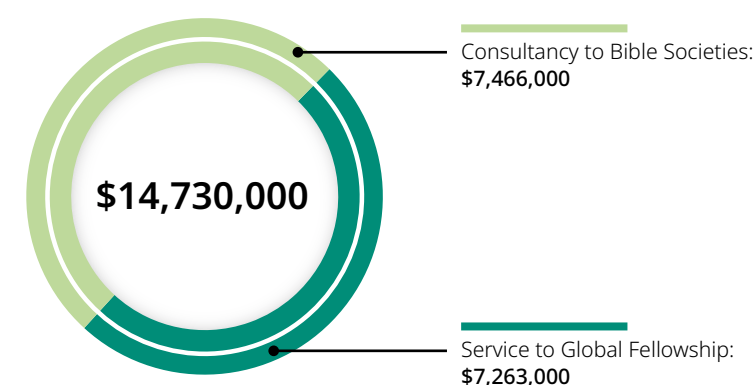
## UBS Global Mission Team income



The UBS Global Mission Team received nearly two-thirds of its 2017 operating budget from the Global Stewardship Fund. However, it also received designated income for specific projects from grants through the ISP.

The Global Mission Team received a smaller amount of income from staff who gave lectures or provided services to other organisations (Contributions & Reimbursements); property rental income, sales and royalties of copyrighted materials, and bank interest (Business Income); and reimbursement for seconded staff, insurance, and other small enterprises (Other Income).

## UBS Global Mission Team expenditures



The two key categories of expenditures were used to (1) assist individual Bible Societies through consultation in a variety of areas – from translation and publishing to finance and fundraising – and (2) serve the larger UBS fellowship through activities including supporting the governance structure, support an infrastructure for grant management, facilitating communication in the Fellowship and providing a global infrastructure in ministry areas such as translation and publishing.

In 2017, GMT expenses fell slightly below our income. The difference between income and expenditures was added to reserves that support expenses that are not proportional annually, such as disaster relief, World Assembly, and Triennial Translation Workshops, among other things.

*Financial figures were compiled pre-audit and are subject to audit confirmation.*





Photo: Pablo Langlois, Bible Society of El Salvador.



**United Bible  
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***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.