

Wycliffe NEWS

They who have ears, let them hear...

The gospel is being proclaimed now to more people than at any other time in the history of mankind. Despite this, there are still many *who are not really hearing or who cannot hear this message*. What is the reason for this?

If they can't read...

According to various surveys, four billion people around the world find it difficult to learn or communicate through reading and writing (www.oralbible.com). Instead they do so as they have for generations – by word of mouth.

Roadblocks to the gospel...

The majority of these people face two problems. The first of these, and the bigger problem, is that *the gospel message doesn't reach them in the language of the heart*. Wycliffe Bible Translators have been working for decades to overcome this by translating the Word of God into all those languages in which it has not previously existed. Unfortunately, however, the existence of a translation does not always provide a final solution to the other problem, namely that in these people groups *verbal communication is often more accepted than written communication*. Many times it has happened that following the publishing of a newly translated Bible or Scripture portion, the people have not been comfortable using it because the written word is a foreign thing in that culture. Sometimes even the commencement of literacy classes in the area does not resolve the problem.

On average it takes 15-20 years to produce a translation. This is a tremendous investment of time and energy for this life-changing message to sit on the shelf getting dusty.

The same message in a different way...

Wycliffe members recognised that it is vital for people to get to know the Scriptures regardless of the way it is presented. Because of this we make sure that where necessary, whenever a translation is finished, alongside the printed Scriptures, the translation is also produced in whatever medium is most acceptable to the given people group. ▶

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**Wycliffe
Hungary**

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chairman

Drs. László Gonda
vice-chairman

Sándor Molnár
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László Baczynski
financial adviser

**Bernát H. Kovács
Terry Lingenhoel
Tivadar Szegedi**
council members

Attila Kovács
director

Helen Kovács
personnel
co-ordinator

Zsuzsanna Zentai
communications
co-ordinator

Martin M. Robb
finance
co-ordinator

► JAARS, the technical branch of Wycliffe (www.jaars.org) has been working on the production of alternative, culturally acceptable media (e.g.: video, audio cassette, filmstrip, music and drama) which can be used along with the written word to spread the life-changing gospel message.

We believe it is God's desire for the message to touch the hearts and minds of people regardless of which medium is used to bring the message to them. For this reason we must be open to use types of media that can provide more openings than simply the written word. When choosing appropriate media, we ask the advice of local Christians as well as the opinions of partner organisations that specialize in *non-print media*. One of these is the organisation *Faith Comes by Hearing* which recently entered into an international partnership with Wycliffe. Of course, it is not our goal that some other medium would take the place of the written word in the long term, but that it would supplement the written word until such time as the literacy level of a given people group has been strengthened.

Please apply!

Wycliffe is looking for applicants who are interested in this kind of ministry. When we give presentations we often say that Wycliffe is like a large umbrella: alongside Bible translation and linguistics there are many other opportunities for service. If you would like further information on these, do not hesitate to contact us in the office.

written by Attila Kovács based on the book: Making Disciples of Oral Learners

News from the wider Wycliffe world — Partnership

The completion of *Vision 2025* relies heavily on other organisations that partner with Wycliffe to help to make the Word of God available either by reading or hearing in every language. One such partner – with whom Wycliffe is forging ever closer ties at an international level – is the aforementioned *Faith Comes By Hearing* (www.fcbh.org), whose goal is that everyone should be able to hear or listen to the Scriptures on audio cassette in their heart language. In this way, the message of the Bible can be spread not only in book form, and what's more people groups can be reached who have not yet begun literacy programmes in their language. The organisation is working to make recordings in all the languages where Wycliffe has already completed a translation.

According to *UNESCO* statistics, there are **1 billion illiterate adults** in the world today. This number represents about 26% of the world adult population. Two thirds of illiterate adults are women; therefore one in every three women cannot either read or write.



A selection of stories from the 'Faith Comes By Hearing' ministry:

An Asian woman's story:

'Before listening to the Audio Bible programme I didn't know the love of the Lord Jesus Christ and the true God. My family and I were idol worshippers. Life was totally full of chaos and emptiness before knowing the Lord Jesus Christ. I was terribly sick and vomited blood. I visited so many physicians and took the help of witchcraft and my family deities, but could not find any result. I was totally broken in grief and left without any hope.

'I was invited to attend a prayer session. After some time they played the New Testament Audio Bible and I heard something like this: "If you believe you will receive what ever you ask for in prayer." I felt great comfort in my mind and soul. For the first time I was encountered with the holiness and love of God. Those words which I listened to in the Audio Bible listening session touched my heart and I felt that God is directly speaking to me through the tapes. After that the pastor prayed for me. And unbelievably I got deliverance from the sickness and my health was restored miraculously.

'I feel an immeasurable comfort in my life after accepting Jesus Christ into my life. I believe that He has forgiven all my sins and I got deliverance from my past sinful life. He is the only way, truth and life to reach heaven. Listening to the Audio Bible programme gave me an opportunity to reach nearer to the Lord Jesus Christ. It helped me to accept Jesus Christ as my personal Saviour and to know and follow the true living God.'

Philippines, the Tagalog language:

Pastor Ariel is praising our God for the programme of Faith Comes by Hearing, because it reaches and strengthens the lives of every individual. The Word of God is really powerful: it is like a double edged sword piercing through the soul.

Pastor Ariel is really praising God because the Audio Bible tapes help a lot in changing the life of their church members: some are being convicted of their vices, others come close to their family and come closer to the Word of God, and some unbelievers became interested in listening and are willing to join their Bible Study.

Ghana, the Konkomba language:

A Konkomba woman shared the following: 'Hearing I Corinthians 13 is what most affected the women of this community. We saw that without love we were nothing. We gathered and discussed this and love became our aim. This pursuit changed all of us, brought love into our families, and they have been changed. Thank you for the Audio Bibles. We love them because many of us, especially the women, cannot read.'

Tanzania, the Swahili language:

In one of the listening groups, while listening to the verse that says don't let the sun go down on your anger, a wife and husband who had been separated for two years asked each other for forgiveness, and that evening the wife went back to her husband's place. Next week in the listening group, when they asked for any testimonies, the couple just laughed and smiled. African men feel too proud to show that they are emotionally broken, but the guy was so broken that they both cried, saying God has been good to them because for two years they had let the sun set while still being angry at each other.

Wycliffe Bible Translators, Hungary is part of one of the largest international, interdenominational Christian mission organizations.

In Hungary it operates as an officially-recognised, non-profit association.

Our activities are financially supported by donations. Tax rebates can be obtained for donations given in Hungary – at the end of every calendar year we issue a donation certificate to anyone who requires it.

For those who would like to make donations in Hungary, this can be done either with a postal cheque or by bank transfer to the following account:

**K & H Bank
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Those living abroad who would like to give a donation should contact their local Wycliffe office.

We would like to thank you for your gifts!

Wycliffe
Bibliafordítók
Egyesülete

3300 Eger
Markhót F. u. 2.

Tel./Fax:
(36) 412-170

E-mail:
wo_hungary@
wycliffe.org

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*'So then faith comes by hearing,
and hearing by the word of God.'*

Romans 10:17

