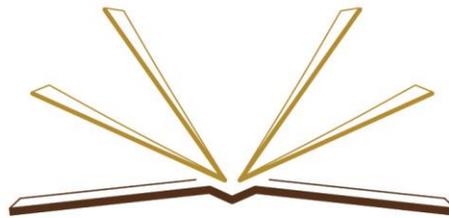


# **The Vision, Mission and Strategy**

**of**



**TheWordForTheWorld**

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BIBLE TRANSLATORS

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## 1. THE NEED

**There are many people groups in the world that are not able to hear God speak through the Scriptures.**

These peoples are among the poorest, least educated, and least healthy in the world. Yet history repeatedly shows that the Church generally grows and individuals' lives are transformed where the Bible has been translated into the vernacular of the people.<sup>1</sup> God's Word is desperately needed in all people groups.

Praise God that approximately 2,500 language communities already have some or all of the Bible.<sup>2</sup> Unfortunately, that leaves over 2,000 languages with no access to God's Word unless someone steps in and changes history.<sup>3</sup>

## 2. THE VISION AND CORE VALUES

**The vision of *The Word for the World Bible Translators* is the glory of God through transformed lives by the power of his Word in everyone's heart language.**

### **Core Values:**

**The Word of God** – God desires to speak to people through the entire Bible. Therefore, our goal for every language in which we work is to translate the entire Bible.

**First-time Bible translations** – We are passionate about giving priority to first-time Bible translations because that is where Bible translation is most needed.

**Respect for all cultures** – Each people group is a blessing from God and has the right to hear God speaking to them in their own language.

**Interaction with our partners** – We see ourselves as co-servants with other ministries, and with our intercessors, volunteers and financial supporters.

**Excellence in serving the Lord** – We dedicate our efforts to pleasing God above all. Our excellence is evidenced through the:

- Integrity of our conduct
- Innovation of our methods
- Discipline of our stewardship
- Combining of sound academic principles and practical skills in our empowering of nationals for Bible translation

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<sup>1</sup> Translation as Mission: Bible Translation in the Modern Missionary Movement by William A. Smalley.

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.biblesociety.org/index.php?id=22>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.wycliffe.org/About/Statistics.aspx>

### 3. THE MISSION

**The mission of *The Word for the World Bible Translators* is to empower nationals to translate the entire Bible for their own people and to ensure its availability and accessibility.**

*The Word for the World* trains nationals in the required skills and provides them with the support they need to accurately translate God's Word into their primary language. *The Word for the World* partners with others to print and distribute the newly translated Scripture, and promote literacy and Scripture engagement where needed.

*The Word for the World* has 31 years of experience in Bible translation, and its unique, mobile training program results in Bibles that are among the most accurate, readily accepted, cost effective and timely (about 7% translated per year) Bible translations in the world.

### 4. EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- Accurate, first-ever translations of God's Word completed (first draft only) in a total of 10 languages by 2015, 15 by 2020, and a total of 35 languages by 2030.
- An average of approximately 10% of the Bible translated annually per Bible translation project (for those projects operating under *The Word for the World's* approach of using three trained nationals).
- Three hundred and fifty nationals (representing over 100 new languages) trained by 2017 to accurately translate God's Word into their respective languages.
- An adequate number of translators, trainers and consultants trained for the projected increase in the number of Bible translation projects.

### 5. STRATEGIES AND TACTICS

#### 5.1. Strategy 1: Partnerships

Partner with other ministries and local churches where they exist to select and train qualified nationals to translate the Bible into their own language, one in which God's Word has never existed. All translation projects are initiated in cooperation with nationals, local churches, and partner ministries. *The Word for the World's* ministry partners include numerous Bible agencies, and a broad range of local churches (Catholic and Protestant) across Africa, southeast Asia and in central Europe. Individuals and major donors are also essential partners.

- √ *The Word for the World* desires to extend ownership of the vision of Bible translation to its ministry partners, where each supporter may become an active team member facilitating the translation of the Bible for a specific Bible-less people group. Bible

translators in the field are thus augmented with team members from whom they receive prayer covering, support and encouragement.

- √ As a member of the *Forum of Bible Agencies International (FOBAI)*, *The Word for the World* collaborates with other Bible agencies to increase the speed and scope of Scripture translation, publication and engagement. Working together, *FOBAI* members accomplish far more than could be brought about independently.

### **5.2. Strategy 2: Training Nationals**

Run a mobile training course that prepares nationals to accurately translate the Bible into the mother tongue of each student. This course consists of formal as well as non-formal (self-study and on-the-job training) components, and is certified as 2 years of a 3-year degree by the *South African Theological Seminary (SATS)*. Run a second mobile training program to enable suitable candidates (mostly nationals) to function as Bible translation consultants (who check translated Scripture against the original Greek and Hebrew). This three-year long consultant development program will consist of an orientation course, self-study and on-the-job training. Establish an agreement with *SATS* to allow our consultant training program to be accredited for Master's and Doctoral studies to further encourage our consultant candidates to pursue higher education.

#### **Tactics:**

- √ The trainers for these classes come from within *The Word for the World* as well as from other individuals and ministry partners.
- √ Students are recommended by their local churches and ministries, and are supported in part by them.
- √ Students have access to continued training through Bible translation consultants and formal courses offered internally or through one of our partner agencies.

### **5.3. Strategy 3: Translation Projects**

Empower nationals to establish and provide leadership for translation projects in the target languages in partnership with local churches and other ministries.

#### **Tactics:**

- √ A project ideally consists of a team of three translators, a tester and a project leader, all of which are typically nationals.
- √ Review committees are made up of local church leaders from multiple denominations that *The Word for the World* trains in basic interpretation and translation principles.
- √ *The Word for the World* partially funds the set-up and operation of the new project, purchasing computers and other equipment. Local churches and partner ministries assist as much as possible.
- √ Consultants (from both inside and outside the organization) check the translation as it progresses, and work with the team to make improvements where possible.

### **5.4. Strategy 4: Printing and Distribution**

Partner with printing/publishing organizations (like Bible societies or local printers as appropriate) to print and distribute Scripture portions (as they are completed) and ultimately the entire Bible. (*The Word for the World* always strives to translate the entire Bible.)

**Tactics:**

- √ This process usually requires final manuscript checking by the publisher as well as additional funding from *The Word for the World*.
- √ *The Word for the World* members distribute many of the Scriptures themselves, as well as through the *United Bible Societies*, other ministries and local churches.
- √ The printing and distribution of Scripture portions and the New Testament stimulates feedback that *The Word for the World* incorporates to enhance the accuracy and naturalness of the final publication of the complete Bible.

**5.5. Strategy 5: Literacy Projects**

Where the literacy rate is low, and no other ministry or organization is involved with literacy work, start literacy projects, using primers typically compiled by *The Word for the World* members and based on the Bible to teach people to read and write.

**Tactics:**

- √ *The Word for the World* partners with churches and even local governments to set up and staff the projects, training nationals to become literacy teachers.

**5.6. Strategy 6: Scripture Engagement**

Strive to involve local churches in the entire process to assure the new Bibles are well received and properly used.

**Tactics:**

- √ Church leaders are invited to attend some of *The Word for the World's* classes that would be useful to them (e.g. Exegesis, Introduction to Greek and Hebrew, Missiology, etc.).
- √ Encourage all of *The Word for the World's* workers to be actively involved in their local churches.
- √ Promote “literacy evangelism” where *The Word for the World* members establish literacy projects.
- √ Partner with other agencies, such as *Africa Ministries Network*, to train pastors.
- √ Develop partnerships with ministries, such as *Faith Comes by Hearing*, who specialize in Orality as an important part of the process of Scripture engagement.
- √ Partner with *The Jesus Film Project* to produce copies of the film using new translations.

**5.7. Strategy 7: Continuing Ministry**

Once a project is complete, *The Word for the World* encourages its members to continue in Bible translation as project leaders, trainers, and ultimately even consultants (with further training, often through *SATS*); or to become leaders in their church and community, even to plant new churches where needed.

## 6. ANTICIPATED GROWTH OF *THE WORD FOR THE WORLD*

Since 1984, *The Word for the World* has empowered nationals to translate 6 complete Bibles, 18 additional New Testaments, 2 additional Old Testaments, and hundreds of books of the Bible. *The Word for the World* now has about 150 students in training, and is involved with 64 Bible translation projects. **This represents a steady 30% increase in projects per year for the past six years.** *The Word for the World* expects this pattern of growth to continue in light of the tremendous need, the proven effectiveness of its ability to empower nationals to translate the Bible, and the huge doors that have remained opened to *The Word for the World* in new areas of Africa as well as Eastern Europe and southeast Asia.

### 6.1. Managing Growth:

*The Word for the World* recognizes the planned growth calls for some changes within its organization. To accommodate the growth, *The Word for the World* has made or is making the following changes:

1. Training up nationals to be national/regional leaders, as well as providing advanced training for some to enable them to become Bible translation consultants.
2. Aggressively recruiting and training additional Bible translation consultants. This includes institutionalizing *The Word for the World's* own training course for Bible translation consultants.
3. Recruiting and preparing more people to help train the nationals to keep up with the increase in annual training sessions.
4. Pursuing funding from a broad range of sources:
  - a) churches linked with each project
  - b) *The Word for the World's* regional and country directors
  - c) individuals, businesses, churches and foundations in South Africa, the UK and the US
  - d) partnerships with other ministries
5. Working with indigenous churches to increase their contribution for Bible translation.
6. Establishing new fundraising approaches to encourage supporters to involve others in their circles of influence.
7. Pursuing additional qualified individuals to serve as members of the various national and international Boards of Directors for *The Word for the World*.
8. Expanding the US support base by formalizing key partnerships that recognize *The Word for the World's* unique role in accelerating global Bible translation.
9. Streamlining some of its operations and training methods for easier reproduction. Examples of this would be utilizing video recordings of lectures and CDs for teaching materials.

## 7. GETTING INVOLVED

If you would like more information on any of the above opportunities, have any questions or would like to discuss other partnership possibilities with *The Word for the World*, please contact:

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Further information may also be obtained from *The Word for the World's* website at [www.twftw.org](http://www.twftw.org)

Thank you for taking the time to learn about how God is using *The Word for the World* to advance his Kingdom. Please prayerfully consider partnering with *The Word for the World* in this strategic work of God.