

PROJECT NO: 8802

TAX | NON-TAX

Australia



Indigenous Audio Bibles



Overview

Bible Society Australia is working to produce audio Scriptures for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, which provide the gospel in a format communities can readily access.

The Need

A printed Bible, even translated into a heart language, is at times not sufficient for people to Open The Bible for themselves. Some people are unable to fully engage with the printed text of their Scriptures due to poor eye health, low literacy skills, or other reasons.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures are oral cultures; important information is conveyed through story telling rather than the written word. This means that Indigenous communities readily engage with audio content in a way non-Indigenous cultures do not often appreciate or understand.

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Indigenous Australian languages with Scripture translated that don't yet have audio recordings available.

Goals

Bible Society's goal is to ensure all the Indigenous languages which have been translated also have audio Scripture recorded, so that the Bible is accessible to as many people as possible. Also, the audio recordings serve as a literacy tool, developing skills as people listen to the Bible.

In 2023, BSA will be coordinating several Bible Audio Projects including a multi-voice recording of the PEV (Plain English Version) Bible. This translation is specifically designed for Aboriginal audiences in

which English is not a first language.

Plans are underway to expand Bible Society's involvement in Oral Bible Translation (OBT) projects. Currently, BSA assists with Translation Consultancy for Oral Bible Translation in partnership with YWAM's Every Tongue Ministry in the language of Kimberley Kriol. Work commenced on several Northern Territory languages in 2022: the Rembarrnga and Gurindji. There are also plans to hold an OBT workshop for the Ndjebbana language of

Maningrida in the Northern Territory.

Once the Scripture recordings are completed, a mobile App is developed which unites the readings (the spoken word) with the printed text. As the audio is played, the words are highlighted in the text, forming an effective literacy tool. These apps are made available for free download from the Google Apps store and www.aboriginalbibles.com.

Impact

In 2022, Bible Society was involved in Oral Bible Translation work, a new approach to Bible translation. Four traditional language groups (with 833 speakers) in the Kimberley expressed interest in an Oral Bible Translation Project.

Approximately 5,000 people in the Kimberley region of Western Australia speak Kimberley Kriol, all who will have the chance to hear God's word in their heart language.

The Western Arrarnta New Testament Audio Recording will reach approximately 1,000 people in and around Hermannsburg (Ntaria) in the Northern Territory.

The Kriol Audio Recording will reach approximately 30,000 people from Western Australia, across the top of the Northern Territory and into Queensland.

Also in 2022, the Rembarrnga and Gurindji language groups commenced Oral Bible Translation, and initial drafts of Bible stories have already been recorded.

Testimonies

"There's been lots of interest recently in audio recordings of existing translations, as the entire community of a language can listen to a recording of the Bible, but not everyone can read a printed version... Oral Bible translation...makes translation not only accessible as a process to those who can't or prefer not to read and write in their language. But even more than that, the result is already an audio recording, making it easy to distribute to a group of people who are often far more ready to listen to God's word than to read it."
- *Sam Freney, BSA Translation Consultant, 2022*

"I came to the conclusion that the translation was in fact more than adequate, and I realised that the material had been rearranged deliberately to fit into the Kriol discourse structure, and what I was hearing was a genuine translation in which the source text had been dismantled and reworked in the form of the receptor language. I don't think I have seen this process done as clearly before." - *Dr Carl Gross, Bible Society Translation Consultant, who in 2022 attended an Oral Bible Translation workshop in Kununurra, working closely with a team of Kimberley Kriol translators.*

Prayer Needs

- Pray that these audio recordings of Scripture will bless many generations across Australia.
- Thank God that many people who are unable to read can embrace the Gospel and know God's love through the spoken word.
- Pray for more opportunities to record Scripture in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages.
- Pray for capable readers to offer their time and abilities to serve God and his people.

