

Vanuatu



Vanuatu Bible Translation

Project: 102850
Non Tax Deductible



303,009

people in Vanuatu

80-90%

(approx. 234,000 people) belong to the
Christian faith

138

indigenous Oceanic languages

Overview

This project seeks to reach the people of Vanuatu with God's word by making the Bible accessible through its translation in their heart languages. This project involves four new translations of the New Testament, and the revision and digitisation of existing Scripture translations in other languages.

The Need

In Vanuatu, 80-90% of the 234,000 Christian residents face a language barrier, as many do not have Scriptures in their own language and find it hard to read other languages. Vanuatu is home to 138 indigenous languages in a population of over 300,000, and each language averages only 1,760 speakers. While English, French, and local trade languages are generally understood, they are not enough to meet the needs of many Vanuatu Christians' faith practices. Research affirms that reading Scriptures in one's dialect in church contributes immensely to people's understanding of the Scriptures.

The need to translate God's word into these languages is urgent, despite the smaller number of speakers in each language.

Goals

This project aims to produce four new translations of the New Testament, a revision of two existing Scripture translations and the digitisation of three Bible translations. The goal of this project is to see the speakers of these languages understand the Scriptures better, so they are more equipped and encouraged to apply God's word in their lives. Training workshops to educate people on the new scripture products being produced will also be a critical part of this project.

In 2025, the activities and goals for each of the project's translations are as follows:

- **Mele New Testament:** reviewing the book of Acts and Romans, typesetting and proofreading the Gospel of Mark, launch of the Gospel of Matthew
- **Ahamb (Axamb) New Testament:** final proofreading, printing and launch of the Gospel of Luke
- **Erromango New Testament (revision):** final review and typesetting of the Gospel of Mark
- **Futuna New Testament:** reviewing the Gospel of Mark, drafting and reviewing Bible study questions
- **Lelepa New Testament:** reviewing the book of James, Matthew and Philipians
- **Ngunese translation (revision):** comprehensive reviews of various Old Testament books

Impact

This project has the potential to make a lasting impact on the people of Vanuatu as it addresses their spiritual and cultural needs through the translation and provision of God's word in their heart languages. Those who speak these languages are equipped and encouraged to better understand Scripture and therefore apply God's word in their lives.

As the project proposes to research more languages for possible translations in the future, it is helping preserve Vanuatu's diverse linguistic heritage, ensuring that even small language communities have access to Scripture.

Prayer Points

- Pray for the people of Port Vila and surrounding communities as they recover from the devastation caused by the 7.3 magnitude earthquake in January. Pray for comfort, strength and resilience as families rebuild their lives and homes.
- Pray that despite challenges, the progress of this Bible translation project will continue to bring hope and encouragement to the people of Vanuatu.
- Pray for the translators' training and for the successful continuity of their work. Pray that God blesses them with wisdom, strength and commitment.