



United Bible Societies

# Global Scripture Access Report

## 2016 Annual Progress

## 2016 – Reaching Further

In 2016, Bible Societies assisted in the completion of translations in **61 languages** spoken by over **428 million people**.

**2016 was ‘a first’ for no fewer than 30 languages**, spoken by over 95 million people. **17 communities now have their very first Bible**, 6 have a New Testament and 7 communities have their first, or additional, portions of Scripture.

Languages are constantly developing so Bible Societies are also committed to revising existing translations and providing new translations, when requested, to help as many people as possible engage with the message of the Bible today. In 2016, this resulted in a further **28 new translations and revisions** plus 3 **study editions** with the potential to reach over **333 million people**.

## Giving thanks



**30 First Translations** spoken by 95 million people (*17 Bibles, 6 New Testaments, 7 portions*)

**31 New Translations, Revisions & Study editions** spoken by 333 million people (*16 Bibles, 5 New Testaments, 7 Portions, 3 Study editions*)

*For full details of the languages published in 2016 see the Appendix.*



Alexander M. Schweitzer, United Bible Societies Head of Global Bible Translation, commented:

“Pursuing our mission to help people access the Bible in their heart language, United Bible Societies in 2016 has provided first translations as well as new translations and revisions for over 60 language communities. This is an incredible privilege as well as a continuing challenge. Please pray for the Bible translators and the teams supporting them, so that 2017 will also bring significant progress in this vital mission.”

## Reaching Visually Impaired People

**285 million people** are estimated to be visually impaired worldwide, of whom 40 million are blind. A Braille Bible usually consists of more than 40 bulky volumes, making the transcription and production a significant undertaking. To date only 44 languages have a full Bible in Braille. In 2016, new Braille portions were made available in Spanish (Dios Habla Hoy), German and Kirundi.



## Sign Language Scriptures for the Deaf Community

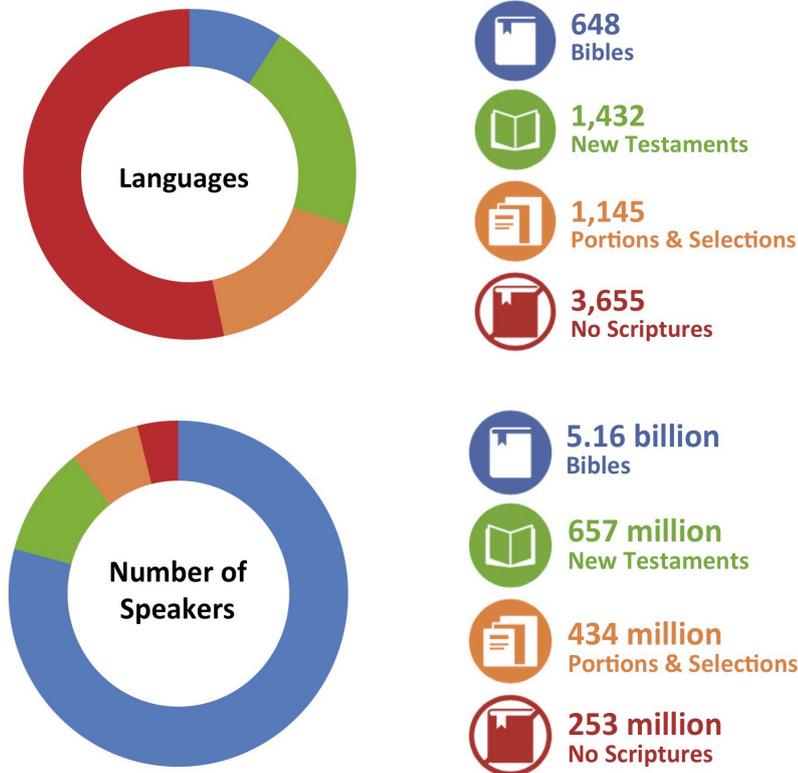
Sign Languages are the first or 'heart' language for **70 million Deaf** worldwide and there are over 400 unique sign languages. The New Testament is only available in American Sign Language and this is the largest portion of Scripture currently available in any sign language.

The UBS, in close partnership with other international ministries, is seeking to meet this Scripture need for what is now recognised as a major unreached people group. Bible Societies are currently partners in **16 ongoing projects** and another 9 are in the planning stages. In total, these projects have the potential to reach **12.1 million Deaf** who so far have no access to the Bible in their sign language.

In 2016, the ViBi Team in Japan completed Leviticus 1-14 and Luke 1-6 so, for the very first time, Japanese Deaf people had the whole Christmas story available in their language. In Lithuania, Hungary and Thailand the teams continued well with Mark's Gospel and in Cuba the team made good progress with the first 11 chapters of Luke. In Mexico the team published the DVD of John's Epistles, which was in demand even before it was dedicated. The DVD of Jude also made a big impact; after the dedication in June a Deaf pastor signed, 'Thank You, God, for giving us Your Word!'



## Scripture Access Today<sup>1</sup>



There are currently **6,880 languages** in the world spoken by over **7.4 billion people**.<sup>1</sup>

**648 languages** (spoken by over 5.1 billion people) now have a complete Bible and a further **1,432 languages** (spoken by 657 million people) have a New Testament.

This leaves **434 million** people with **only some portions of Scripture** and a further **253 million** people with **no Scripture translated** in their language at all.

United Bible Societies is committed to working towards the day when everyone can access the full Bible in the language of their choice. Bible Societies are currently working on over **400 translation projects** around the world.

<sup>1</sup> Figures as as 31.12.2016. We thank Bible Societies, Wycliffe Global Alliance and progress.Bible™ for their help in compiling these statistics. 6,880 languages (7,099 languages less 219 languages with no reported first language speakers – Ethnologue). Figures for the number of first language speakers are based on the best available data, which in 2016 totalled 6.5 billion, less than the actual world population of over 7.4 billion.

## Scripture Access & Engagement

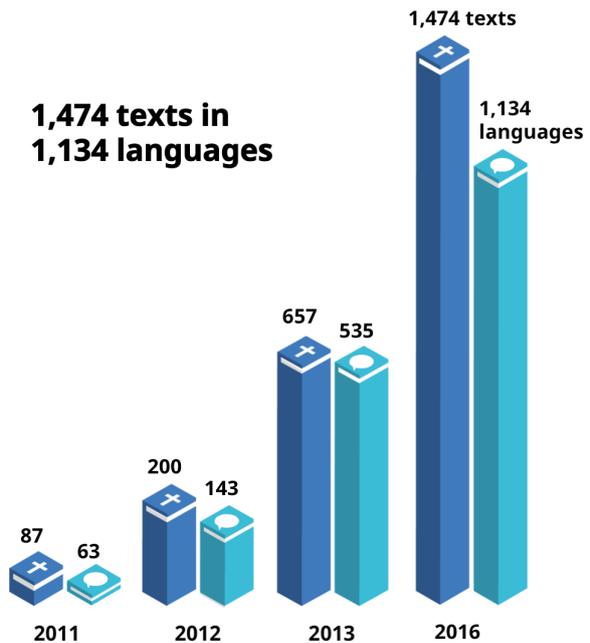
The increasing use of the internet offers people greater choice in how and where they connect with the Bible.

### Digital Bible Library®



'The Digital Bible has helped me share God's Word with my friends, relatives and fellow Christians, because all it takes is a single click and there it is!'

*Jacqueline Trevino,  
Bolivia*



The Digital Bible Library® (DBL) is central to our strategy to make the Bible as widely and easily accessible as possible. By the end of 2016, the DBL contained **1,474** Bibles, Testaments and portions in **1,134** languages. These languages are spoken by over **5.2 billion people**. Significant progress was made last year in adding audio Scriptures, so there are now 403 audio Scriptures in 345 different languages.

The DBL is owned and maintained by United Bible Societies in partnership with other Bible agencies and with the support of the Every Tribe Every Nation alliance. It makes the Bible accessible by providing Scripture texts to the public through partners such as BibleSearch and YouVersion.

## Appendix

In 2016 United Bible Societies assisted in the completion of Scriptures in 61 languages spoken by over 428 million people.

Country/Territory	Language	Scope	Type	Speakers
Burkina Faso	San	Bible	First*	200 000
Cameroon	Musgum	Bible	First	164 400
Cameroon	Kapsiki (Psikye)	Bible with Deuterocanon	First	52 500
China	Black Yi	Bible	First	800 000
China	East Lisu/Lipo	Bible	First	250 000
China	Wa, Vo	Bible	First	40 700
Crimea	Crimean Tatar**	Bible	First	573 540
Democratic Republic of Congo	Lendu	Bible	First	761 100
India	Naga, Tangsa (Tase)	Bible	First	40 100
India	Nyishi	Bible	First	209 923
Indonesia	Mongondow	Bible	First	230 000
Mozambique	Gitonga	Bible	First	224 000
Russian Federation	Tatar**	Bible	First	5 184 610
Russian Federation	Udmurt**	Bible with Deuterocanon	First	339 800
Thailand	Karen, Pwo Northern	Bible	First	60 000
Uganda	Lumasaaba	Bible	First	1 120 000
Uzbekistan	Uzbek**	Bible	First	24 042 100
Cambodia	Bunong (Cambodian)	New Testament	First	37 500
Canada	Cree, Northern East (Coastal James Bay)	New Testament	First	5 310
Colombia	San Andrés Islander Creole	New Testament	First	12 000
Myanmar	Lautu Chin (Lutuv)	New Testament	First	15 000
Myanmar	Mro Khimi Chin	New Testament	First	75 000
Philippines	Bicol Rinconada	New Testament	First	385 000
Canada	Ojicree (Ojibway, Severn)	Portion - Gospels	First	10 500
Egypt	Egyptian Colloquial Arabic	Portion - Habakkuk (pilot)	First***	58 412 000
Fiji	Koronubu-Ba (Fijian, Western)	Portion - Mark	First	5 000
Burkina Faso	Gulmancema	Portions - Deuterocanon	First***	1 042 500



Cameroon	Lamnso	Portions - Deuterocanon	First***	240 000
Canada	Inupiaq	Portions - Genesis (12-50), Obadiah, Esther	First***	13 000
Mauritius	Mauritian Creole (Morisyen)**	Portion - Genesis	First***	1 135 000
Cambodia	Confidential	Bible	New	200 000
Democratic Republic of Congo	Alur	Bible	New	1 367 000
India	Manipuri	Bible	New	1 500 000
India	Khasi	Bible	New	1 600 000
Kenya	Oluluyia (Oluwanga, Olumarama, Olushisa, Olutsotso dialects)	Bible	New	850 332
Kiribati	Kiribati	Bible	New	116 311
Suriname	Sranan Tongo	Bible	New	126 400
India	Sadri	New Testament	New	10 000 000
Zambia	Ila	New Testament	New	82 900
Zambia	Nsenga	New Testament	New	562 100
India	Rajbanshi	Portions - Gospels + Acts	New	5 000 000
Lithuania	Lithuanian	Portion - Mark (pilot)	New	3 020 380
Poland	Polish	Portions - History & Prophets books	New	39 818 740
Denmark	Danish	Portions - Judges, Daniel, Jonah (pilots)	New	5 520 860
Ukraine	Ukrainian	Portions - Pentateuch, Psalms & Proverbs	New	34 598 620
Turkey	Kurdish Kurmanji	Portions - Ruth, Ecclesiastes, Jonah	New	15 126 130
Kyrgyzstan	Kyrgyz	Portions - Ruth, Esther & Jonah	New	4 568 480
Cambodia	Khmer	Bible	Revision	15 900 000
Cameroon	Fulfulde, Adamawa	Bible with Deuterocanon	Revision	999 500
Germany	German	Bible	Revision	98 000 000
Myanmar	Hakha Chin	Bible	Revision	125 000
Myanmar	Falam Chin	Bible	Revision	107 300
Myanmar	Jinghpaw	Bible	Revision	940 000
Myanmar	Confidential**	Bible	Revision	10 000
Paraguay	Enxet	Bible	Revision	3 840
Tuvalu	Tuvalu	Bible	Revision	12 510



India	Boro (Bodo)	New Testament	Revision	1 348 675
Indonesia	Napu	New Testament	Revision	6 100
		Study Editions		
Myanmar	Lacid	New Testament	Study edition	31 800
Pakistan	Urdu	Bible (Fire Study Bible)	Study edition	68 579 630
Taiwan	Chinese	Portion - Acts	Study edition	23 000 000
		Braille Editions		
Costa Rica	Spanish - Dios Habla Hoy	Portions - Proverbs, Romans, 1 & 2 Corinthians, Galatians-Philemon	New	
Germany	German - Luther Bible, 2017 revision	Portion - Matthew	New	
Burundi	Kirundi	Selection	New	

\* Published in 2015 but not included in the 2015 report

\*\* UBS support to partnership project

\*\*\* First translations of these portions - other books of the Bible have been translated in these languages.