



# Wycliffe Today

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## Year of the Bible *Hope in the storm*

**MARCH  
2020**

Stories:

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- » Praise you in this storm
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- » Rising from the ashes
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## Editorial from the CEO



The disciple Luke tells two remarkable accounts of survival at sea in the face of a storm.

In the first account he is with the other disciples in a boat on the sea of Galilee when a sudden and violent storm threatens to sink the boat. The disciples decide to wake Jesus up saying, 'Master, Master, we're going to drown!' Jesus gets up, rebukes the wind and the raging waters, and the storm subsides, and all is calm.

In the second account Luke is on a much bigger ship which is caught in a storm. This time the ship takes a violent battering for 14 days, nobody is able to eat during that time, and all the cargo and tackle is thrown overboard as the crew awaits their inevitable death by drowning. Eventually the boat hits a sandbar and the stern is broken to pieces by the pounding surf. Somehow, everyone makes their way to shore, many by clinging to planks and other pieces of the wrecked ship.

In each story, all the passengers make it safely to shore. So why is it that God sometimes allows us to go through such terrible storms in our life? Why can't we just wake up Jesus and get him to make everything calm?

In this edition, we look at ways in which God has strengthened and sustained Wycliffe members in their ministries throughout difficult times. We pray that you will be encouraged and reminded to trust God and his Word as the steady anchors in whatever storms you are facing.

Max Sahl

## Trauma Healing Workshop

2020 has started with a number of world conflicts and natural disasters, including devastating bushfires here in Australia. If you or someone you know has experienced any loss, grief, abuse, violence or trauma, there is help available. Wycliffe Australia is taking expressions of interests for Trauma Healing workshops.

These workshops help care for hurting people using the book *Healing the Wounds of Trauma: How the Church Can Help* and its associated program. This proven approach uses applied Scripture and best mental health principles to address spiritual and emotional wounds caused by trauma from conflicts, disasters, and abuse. If you would be interested in taking part in a Trauma Healing workshop, please contact Roslyn Nicolle [personnel-manager@wycliffe.org.au](mailto:personnel-manager@wycliffe.org.au)



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## Transformed by the Word

# Jesus, storms and cushions



by Lyn Wake

Many of us will face 'life storms', those sudden circumstances that paralyse, overwhelm and disempower. Like the disciples in Mark 4 who were trapped in a sinking boat, terrified in the throes

of a furious storm, I too have tried to 'wake up' Jesus, calling out in my despair, 'Lord, don't you care if I drown?'

Life storms tend to reveal where our fears are based and where our faith is placed. My family is facing another life storm with yet another cancer diagnosis to hit the extended family. My first reaction is fear. But I want to navigate this one by faith. By putting into practice the life-saving lessons I have previously learned when swamped by life storms, already I find myself more anchored and assured as I face this new tempest.

One of those lessons is the importance of 'cushions'. Mark says that during the storm, Jesus was in the stern, sleeping with his head on a cushion (Mark 4:38). Jesus was not disturbed by the storm; he was able to rest in the knowledge that the Father was with him. Now as I journey through life storms, I look for the 'cushions' Jesus is holding out to me. Those cushions may come in the form of loving friends and family or in the gifts of material provision and shelter. In fact, there are countless blessings offered to us by the grace of God to help 'cushion the blow' of our trials.

But the best cushion is Jesus, the Word of God. As I receive all that he offers me in the midst of my life storm, joy rises. As I rest securely with him and lean into his comfort, peace floods in. He is with me and with just a word, he is able to quiet my soul and silence every storm.

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*In what ways has Jesus cushioned you through your life storms?*

*How can you cushion others through their trials and sorrows?*

*Be transformed by the Word as you engage with: Mark 4:35-41 and Psalm 27*

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**2020 is the Global Year of the Bible.**  
Discover more at [www.bibleyear2020.com](http://www.bibleyear2020.com)

## Remembering Bethany

David and Lyn Wake have been serving with Wycliffe Bible Translators Australia since 1998. In March 2010, their eldest daughter, Bethany, began a year-long struggle with an aggressive brain tumour which would eventually take her life, just shy of her 16th birthday. Despite the incredible grief the family has suffered, Lyn says that they have been given hope through God's promises:

On the surface, this story is absolutely devastating and in no way do we deny the agony of pain we have suffered, and still feel, as our hearts have been wrenched in two.

However, like Beth, we too are coming to know the healer of all broken hearts and through the anguish, Jesus has begun to reveal some beautiful things to us that run far deeper than what our eyes can see.



BE Blessings is the 'beauty from ashes' ministry God has given Lyn and the Wake family as they now support and encourage others who are suffering and bereaved. Read more about Bethany's legacy at [be-blessings.com](http://be-blessings.com).



# PRAISE YOU *in this storm*

by Belinda Fox

*I've faced my fair share of storms in my 10 years of living in Papua, Indonesia. One thing I've realised is that there are two ways you can respond to a storm.*

You can ride it out and then look back and see how God was at work. Or you can cry out to him *in the midst* of the storm. Praise him *in the storm*. The choice is ours to make.

In March 2019, Sentani—the town I call home—was ravaged by severe flooding and landslides. Hundreds of lives were lost and thousands of families lost their homes and all their belongings. After two nights of abnormally heavy rain and more on the forecast, we were all wondering how our town could possibly endure any more rain.



As this crisis was taking place, I was in Australia on home assignment. But although I was physically removed from the situation, my heart was fully in Sentani; breaking for my brothers and sisters in their suffering. As I wept and prayed, God brought to my mind the Casting Crowns song 'Praise you in this storm'.

The song talks about struggling to understand why God hasn't stepped in to save the day. 'It's still raining!' But through the rain God whispers, 'I'm with you.' That's the message God had for the people of Sentani in the midst of their storm—that he was in control and he was with them. I sensed God's leading to make a video (with Papuan Malay subtitles) using the song and a collection of photos people had taken depicting the devastation of the flood. That video ended up being viewed over 100,000 times. God's promise of his presence in the storm brought great comfort.

Two of the worst-hit areas of Sentani happened to be right at the foot of two hills—one being the campus of the Hillcrest International School and the other the complex of buildings where our Papuan Malay Bible translation office is located along with other translation teams' offices. Several thousands of people whose houses were washed away in the villages below these two hills sought refuge at these locations.

In the days that followed, these people experienced the love of Christ in very practical ways. The mission community, along with church, government and local organisations, provided food, shelter, medical care and a listening ear to those who had lost everything. What a beautiful picture of the body of Christ at work.

After the fourth straight night of rain, something truly amazing took place. People began to gather to worship God publicly in these places! Even before the storm was over, they chose to praise God, anchor their hope in him, and trust in him for deliverance.



Knowing God is with us is one thing, but praising him in the hard times is another. The chorus of that Casting Crowns song ends by saying, 'Though my heart is torn I will praise you in this storm'. May we, like these remarkable Papuan people, learn what it means to praise God in the storms of our lives and cling to his goodness, whatever circumstances we face.

# 'Give us your fuel, Lord!'

Imagine being separated from your family at the height of a natural disaster. Landslides have cut off access to major roads. There is no transport, electricity, food or clean water. What would you do?

For Budy, the decision was simple: pray to God and trust that he would provide, just as he had seen him do as a translation facilitator working in a remote location. A miraculous five second phone call confirmed his family were alive.

After he graduated from Bible college, Budy lived in a remote village as part of his mission training. He joined Kartidaya (a Wycliffe Global Alliance partner), married and started a family. Then in September 2018, Budy was faced with one of the biggest challenges of his ministry. While he was working in a village 85 kilometres from his home recording the Jesus Film, a massive 7.5 earthquake hit his home city in Central Sulawesi, Indonesia. The earthquake was followed by a three metre high tsunami, which brought mass destruction in its wake.

Budy prayed with the team. They felt they had to try and make it back to the city. The long journey started with a strenuous 24 hours of walking over mountains, through deep valleys and cutting through thick forests to make it to the main road. There they were told there was one motorbike they could hire and very little fuel. They prayed again and miraculously they were offered five motorbikes and just enough fuel was found to make the treacherous ride back.

The level of destruction shocked them. Buildings decimated, roads destroyed and ongoing tremors forcing people out of buildings and into the fields. No-one was untouched by the tragedy. For Budy, it was a great relief to know his wife and two children were safe.

An immediate evacuation of the city was ordered for women and children and the next morning a very full Hercules army plane departed for Makassa with Budy's wife and children on board. Again they were separated with uncertainty all around them. An American friend offered Budy his car so he could drive to another airport to the north. 'It doesn't have much fuel left', he warned.

Their journey would be 600 kilometres but they only had enough fuel to make it 200 kilometres. Budy prayed: 'Give us your fuel, Lord!' This was a very appropriate prayer, as the men were worn out and exhausted from their experiences.

Every time they were about to run out of fuel, they came across a roadside stall selling just the amount of fuel they needed to make it to the next town. The remaining fuel was just enough to get them to the airport so Budy could fly to Makassa to be reunited with his family!

After such a harrowing experience, Budy was uncertain about returning to the area. Yet, after a few weeks had passed, he was confronted with the memory of something the people in the village had said to him: 'Why would you leave us alone? You are our leader. You have come here to share your holy book with us. You must be together with us'. It was clear what he had to do. Once the earthquakes had settled, the family returned to continue the translation projects.

Budy wants to encourage you that, even when a situation looks bleak, you can trust that God will guide you through the storm:

**When you follow Jesus, you must obey him. You cannot trust your own plans but you must trust in him. If he calls you, he will take care of you. It is not always easy but he will protect you. Always trust him.**



## PRAY FOR BUDY:

- *Budy is passionate about bringing God's Word to the 518 languages in Indonesia still without any translation of the Bible.*
- *He says that the partnership Kartidaya enjoys with Wycliffe Australia has enabled him to invest in his team so they can grow their work.*
- *They have completed translations for the books of Luke, Mark, 1&2 Thessalonians, 1&2 Timothy, Titus and Acts, with Matthew almost ready for checking.*



# Rising FROM THE ASHES

by Deb Fox

*Warren and Jessie have a special place in their hearts for the people of South Asia.*

They travelled there in 1966 and, in the 10 years that followed, a close relationship was established with a local university to research unwritten languages. It was a wonderful opportunity to develop friendships and connections with a local community, and start generating a dictionary. Over the 10 years, they and colleagues were able to produce 51 pieces of literature in 21 different languages of the country. The people were hungry for their languages to be developed.

God's hand seemed to be on the entire situation. Things were progressing well. That was, until one fateful day in May 1976. Many foreign missions were assumed to be guilty of anti-government activity. The university was ordered to break their contract and the organisation was given three months to get out.

Everyone was devastated. This had been their life, their calling. How could it all end so quickly? As people gathered in sadness to farewell the place they had called home, a friend came to give a message about death and resurrection. He had recently lost his wife to cancer but he shared about the hope that he could rejoice in, knowing that she would continue living with Christ.

Little did the team know that the words he had spoken about resurrection would also ring true about the language development projects they had started! Over time, some members were able to revisit the country on tourist visas and the people experience greater freedom. Around 10-12 projects were restarted and flourished!



Jessie shares:

We had to learn to work with God's timing, rather than our own. We were disappointed when projects needed to close down or didn't go the way we expected. But we've learnt that when the situation seems hopeless, we need to remember that there is always hope in Christ. When we can't change anything else, we can ask God to change hearts. When we can't see how to move forward, we just ask God how to take the next step. God asks us to be obedient—the Holy Spirit does the rest.

Warren and Jessie are returning to South Asia this year for the dedication of the Godavari\* mini Bible. They are thankful for the translators and translation consultants they have been able to work with over the years. What a blessing to see the doors God has opened for translation! The experiences they have been through have strengthened their faith, proving that 'in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose'. Romans 8:28 (NIV)

# 'A reminder that God saved me for this purpose'

## Netty's Story

*The first response for many people with a life-threatening injury is not to praise God.*

But Netty says it was the beginning of God leading her to the place he wanted her: serving him as a translation facilitator with Kartidaya .

When Netty was 11 years old, she was hit by a truck while riding to school. She was rushed to hospital but her parents were told to prepare for the worst. The prognosis did not look good. Netty sustained severe head injuries. Doctors explained to her parents that she would most likely die or have severe mental problems if she survived, and told them to pray. She spent several weeks in Intensive Care and endured two major operations. Netty's parents prayed that God would protect their daughter and use her for his glory. To their surprise, she awoke from her first operation and announced, 'I want to be a pastor!'

While she was recovering, Netty had a lot of time to read. One of the books that her father bought her made a particular impression. It was a compilation of stories about a missionary working in Papua, Indonesia. Some years later she read about a group of Bible translators working with different language communities throughout Indonesia. Netty says that sparked questions in her mind. One of these was:

Don't we already have the Bible in Bahasa Indonesian? Isn't that enough? I was reminded of the story in Acts 2



about the Holy Spirit falling on the Apostles, allowing them to speak in other languages. **It was then that I realised how important it is to hear God speak to us in a language we understand. That is why we need to translate God's Word—how will others know about Jesus if they cannot understand the words that describe him?**

Looking back Netty realised how much her life had been impacted by that accident. 'It was a scary time but God saved my life and it gave me purpose. So I said I would give my life to him. I prayed to God in my heart, "Please send me!"' After graduating from Bible College in 2006, God answered Netty's prayer by putting her in contact with Kartidaya. She attended orientation and completed some linguistics training before travelling to Central Kalimantan to do literacy work. In 2010 she was asked to facilitate a translation program. Netty is amazed that God used a painful situation in her life to initially call her into the work she loves and to draw her deeper into his Word:

God healed me but my right eye is still impaired. When I feel sad about that I am reminded of Psalm 8. I am no more than dust but God still chooses to use me! God chose to save me that day. He still uses my eye as a reminder of his love for me and his power in my life. He kept his call in my heart and led me to do his will. I know this journey is not about me—it is about him. When the New Testament is finished I believe God will rejoice with us.

## Isn't Jesus a Western god?

by Alfinda Herman

Alfinda and her husband Aidan are preparing to head to Eastern Europe with their two young sons to work among the Roma people in North Macedonia. During one of their church visits, Alfinda was chatting with a Chinese student, Dean\*. Alfinda explains:

Dean had been attending church for a while but when I asked him if he trusted in Jesus, he answered 'No, I grew up in China. Jesus doesn't feel real to me. I think he is a Western god'.

Dean's reply gives insight into one of the challenges of cross-cultural gospel ministry, whether in Australia or overseas. When a person encounters Christ in a culture different from their own, and through a second (or third) language, the question of identity is a big deal.

**MORE**

Read more about how having Scripture available in the Romani language is strengthening identity and providing hope for the next generation. [wycliffe.org.au/isnt-jesus-a-western-god/](http://wycliffe.org.au/isnt-jesus-a-western-god/)

To support the Hermans go to [wycliffe.org.au/member/aidan-alfinda/](http://wycliffe.org.au/member/aidan-alfinda/)

\*Name changed for privacy reasons



**Gwenneth Marjorie Gibson**  
24 January, 1927 – 30 December, 2019

# HONOURING GWEN: *Only the beginning for this 'code breaker'*

By David Cummings

Gwen Gibson was a special colleague who served faithfully with Wycliffe and SIL for 45 years, working with the Kanite and Inoke languages in Papua New Guinea. Gwen committed her life to the Lord at the age of 16 and grew up in a home where God's Word was highly valued: her father even represented the British and Foreign Bible Society.

Initially, while unsure of where the Lord would take her, Gwen worked as a bookkeeper and a housekeeper in a mission hospital in Vanuatu. She soon realised she would need further training if she was to be effective in the work to which she felt called.

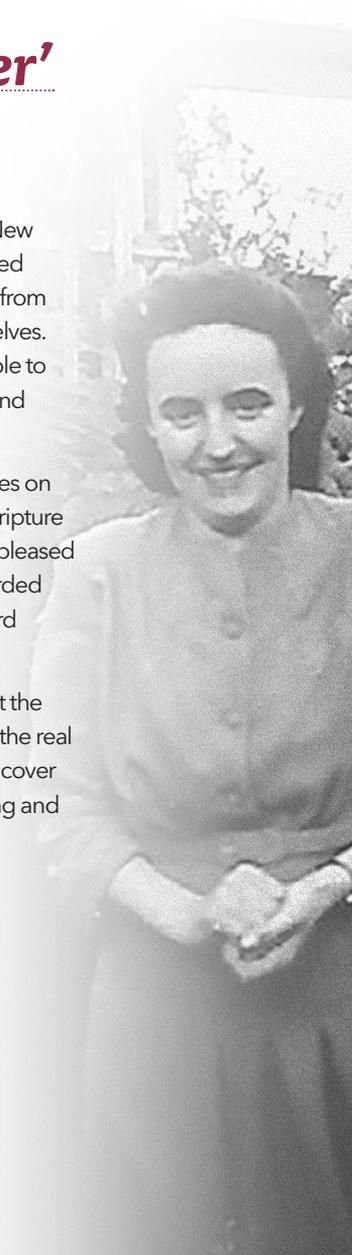
When she returned to Australia, Gwen studied at the Melbourne Bible Institute before joining the Summer Institute of Linguistics. She was accepted for translation work and the Lord then called Gwen to team up with Joy McCartney to live in a remote village among the Kanite people of Papua New Guinea.

Gwen and Joy both recognised the loving way the Lord brought them from such different backgrounds to be on the same team. They were among four or five translators that helped unlock a major grammar 'code' in the verbal system of the Eastern Highlands of Papua New Guinea. This was a huge breakthrough for other translation teams working in the area.

Twenty-two years later, they celebrated the Kanite New Testament dedication. The next 12 years was devoted to translating the Inoke dialect—sufficiently different from Kanite that the people wanted the Word for themselves. Gwen also gave much of her time to teaching people to read and write as well as cooking, sewing, first aid and other life skills.

Gwen's life here on earth is finished but her work lives on in the two language communities that now have Scripture and a growing interest in the gospel. Gwen was so pleased to know that the New Testament is now being recorded into audio format so people can listen to God's Word in their own mother tongue.

What a great comfort and joy to know that this is not the end of Gwen's story! 'For [her] it is the beginning of the real story. All [her] life in this world . . . had only been the cover and title page.'<sup>1</sup> We have been inspired by the loving and gracious servant heart of Gwen Gibson.



<sup>1</sup> C.S. Lewis *The Last Battle* (The Chronicles of Narnia), Harper Collins, London, 1998, 115.



Like you, we believe in Wycliffe's mission. For over 22 years, our pre-paid funerals have continued to create hope from sadness, because our profits are proudly re-invested back into Wycliffe's work.

Find out more at [bethelfunerals.com.au/wycliffe](http://bethelfunerals.com.au/wycliffe)



# Ministry Resourcing

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**Wycliffe**  
Bible Translators



## *What is Wycliffe Ministry Resourcing?*

Wycliffe Australia's Ministry Resourcing department seeks to support the work of our members and organisational partners on the field. We are committed to building strong relationships, with an emphasis on mutual respect, trust, collaboration and prayer.

Our three main objectives are to:

- work closely with national Bible translation organisations under the Next Step Development initiative
- support strategic partnerships with SIL International
- support Australian members on the field with their project needs

# The Power of Partnership

*In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.*

*Philippians 1:3-6 (NIV)*

## Consultant Development (Project Code 8807)



Experienced trainers, exegetical advisors and translation consultants are critical to the translation process. Scripture translation is being conducted by local translators in more languages than ever before, with 2686 known translation and language projects currently in progress throughout the world.\* The need for an effective pathway to develop more trainers, advisors and consultants to support these translation projects has never been more urgent.

Developing consultants comes with significant financial costs. We have created a project for those who are interested in helping to raise up more consultants. We also need your prayers as we start this challenging venture into new territory.

**Target: A\$20,000**

\*Wycliffe Global Alliance statistics current as at October 2019

### Next Step Development Projects

The mission of Next Step Development is to hear and understand what God has put on the hearts of our national colleagues, and through prayer to come alongside and support their vision and strategies for Bible translation. Next Step is currently working in close relationship with Wycliffe Global Alliance partners from PNG, Vanuatu, Solomon Islands, Indonesia, Philippines and two countries in South Asia.

To see more Next Step projects, go to [wycliffe.org.au/projects/](http://wycliffe.org.au/projects/)

### Wycliffe Relief and Development Foundation Projects

Wycliffe Relief and Development Foundation is a separate company owned by Wycliffe Australia, which works through local partners to improve the practical aspects of life in marginalised communities. We aim to demonstrate Christian compassion and provide practical assistance in literacy and education, disaster relief, medical and basic health support. Donations to the Foundation are tax-deductible.

For WRDF projects, visit the WRDF website [wycliffefoundation.org.au](http://wycliffefoundation.org.au)

### Australian Member and SIL Projects

Wycliffe Australia is committed to helping our field teams and the organisations they work with to thrive and serve effectively in their communities. Ministry Resourcing can help with providing funding for computers, village housing, travel costs, delivery of training, consultants and other services.

See more Australian Member and SIL projects at [wycliffe.org.au/projects/](http://wycliffe.org.au/projects/)

# Trauma Healing for Children (Cameroon)

(Project Code 8898)



# Computer Support for Local Translators in PNG

(Project Code 8405)



Since 2016, regions of north-west and south-west Cameroon have been facing continual violence. According to UNICEF, over 300,000 school-aged children have been displaced as their families seek refuge in places that they hope are a little safer. Armed groups in control of the region have enforced a no-schools policy, with 80 per cent of all children denied schooling over a number of years.

The goal of the trauma healing project is to equip teachers, parents and guardians of these children to help them deal with the trauma they have experienced, and return to normal life and a better future through educational opportunities. The aim is that, at the end of this process, 90 classrooms of internally displaced children will be healthier and making progress towards achieving social and educational goals.

SIL Cameroon has devised this project as a one-year program that will involve 30 teachers per year, replicated in different areas in a second and third year. It is hoped that a similar trauma healing program can be developed for the whole country, with the assistance of the government. WRDF's financial contribution is during the initial pilot stage.

## The program has four components:

- 1) Teacher training for 30 teachers, based on material developed by Women's Health Goulburn North in Australia
- 2) Implementation of the training
- 3) Sharing and practice meetings after six months
- 4) Creating awareness among host families towards the traumatised children, so that they might be able to use the same principles to help in the process of healing

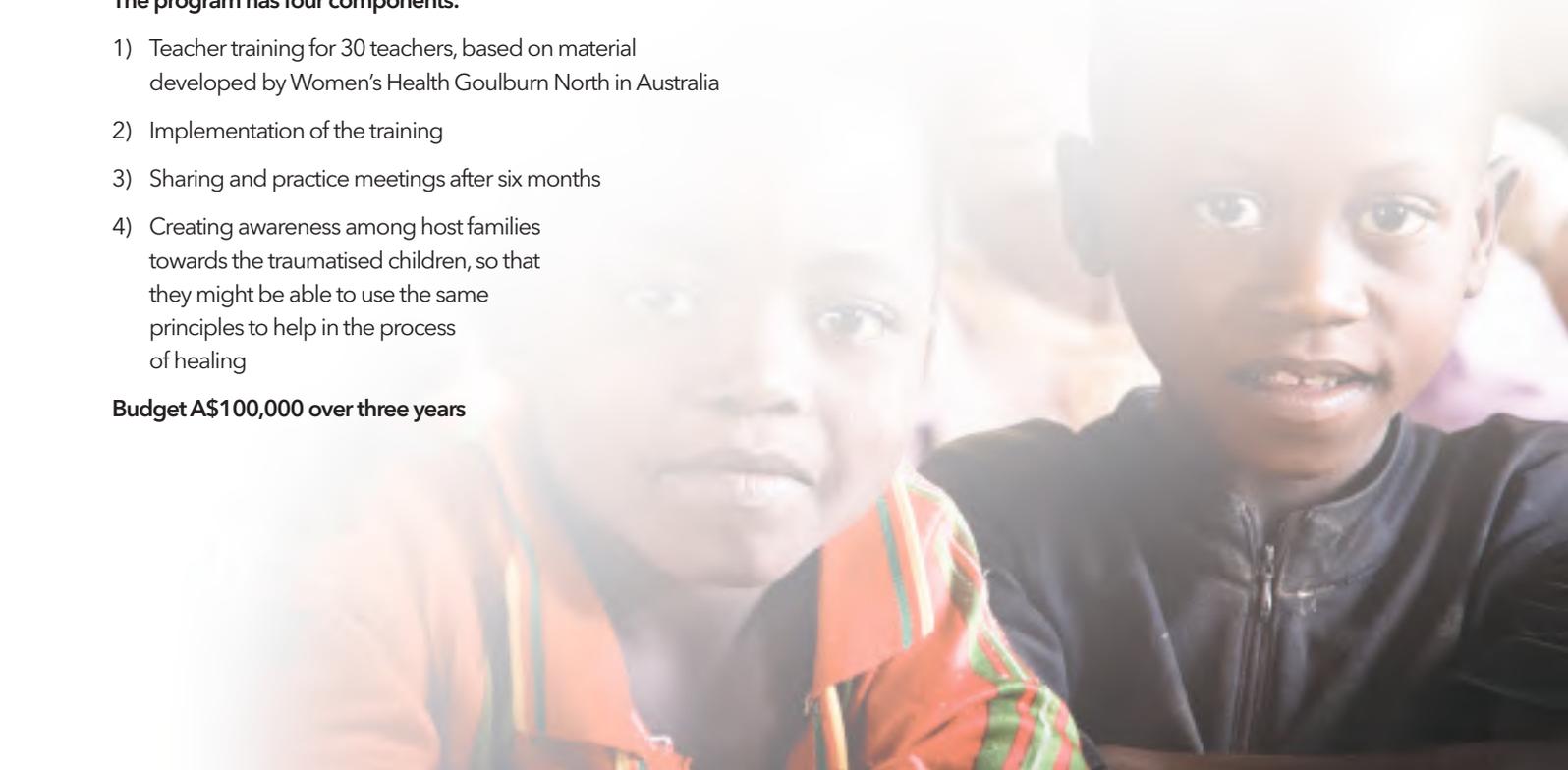
**Budget A\$100,000 over three years**

The Alotau regional centre in Papua New Guinea has 20 computers that have been used for several years by local translators for a range of translation projects. Computers that were once used for specific programs are now available to teams working independently on translation projects and as a regional resource for other East Papua Region translators to make use of when in town.

Most batteries have degraded to the point that the machines will only work on mains power or for 15-30 minutes on battery, making them unsuitable for village use.

A gift of \$40 will replace a laptop battery to give a computer new life and enable translators to continue their vital work.

**Our partnership target for 2020 is \$9000. If we receive extra funds, this will go towards the following year's target.**



# The legacy of a 60-year friendship and Scripture engagement

*Dr Joseph Havel is a retired forestry officer now living in Western Australia. He has been a faithful supporter of Bible translation through the years, giving in various ways to Vision 2025 projects, Next Step Development projects and Wycliffe members, including friends, Richard and Aretta Loving (d). Dr Havel shares the story behind the deep friendships he formed in Papua New Guinea that gave him a heart for Bible translation:*

By Dr Joseph Havel, Western Australia

My contact with Richard and Aretta Loving started rather informally but it lasted for 60 years. Back in 1957, I was working as a forestry officer for the Australian administration of what was then the Territory of Papua and New Guinea. I was working at Bulolo, a gold mining and timber town.

The project employed several hundred local workers, mainly hired in the highlands for a period of 18 months at a time. Some of the people we employed were from the Awa language group. On Sundays, I used to drive up to their camp in the rainforest above us, to run an adult Sunday school class. This was only possible because of an Awa translator and foreman, Yeda.



I used a New Testament in Neo-Melanesian (now called Tok Pisin) – a trade language used for contact between locals, administrators, traders and missionaries. I would read the lesson and make comments on it in Tok Pisin and Yeda would translate it into Awa.

A few months into our lessons, I had a visit from a rather tall American, not unlike Abraham Lincoln in looks, who introduced himself as Dick Loving. He explained that he was involved in translating the New Testament into the Awa language and he wanted to know who was running the Awa Sunday school class. When he found out that I was theologically sound, Dick gave me a partial copy of the Awa NT translation, and showed me how to read it phonetically.

After the translation for the Awa New Testament was completed, the Lovings moved around PNG before eventually heading to East Africa. By 1997, they were back in Papua New Guinea at the Ukarumpa centre, working on a revision of the New Testament translation. We continued correspondence and I supported them through Wycliffe.

I kept my contact with the Lovings afterwards until replies stopped in 2018. It was only recently that I learned that they passed away to be with the Lord ahead of me. I am grateful for the contact I had with them. Our friendship opened doors for me to experience firsthand the power of people receiving God's Word in their own language. My connection to Wycliffe over the years has influenced my understanding and appreciation for mission and how we can all play a part in God's work.

**MORE**

*If you are thinking of leaving a legacy to Wycliffe, go to [wycliffe.org.au/support/make-a-bequest/](https://www.wycliffe.org.au/support/make-a-bequest/) for details. If you would prefer to talk directly with someone about this, please contact [ceo@wycliffe.org.au](mailto:ceo@wycliffe.org.au)*