



Papua New Guinea - 102230

## Rebuilding The Bible Society - *Capacity Building in PNG*

### Overview

There is an urgent need to build the capacity of Bible Society Papua New Guinea (PNG) in order to reach future generations with the word of God.

After a new board and General Secretary were appointed to Bible Society PNG in February 2019, the task of establishing sustainable and impactful Bible based mission work began.

The new staff are working closely with the United Bible Societies global mission team to implement this, with early goals focussed on reinstating services to ensure Scriptures are available to people in PNG.

### The Need

There are more than 880 languages in PNG with more than 300 languages yet to receive any Bible translation. Almost 89% of the approximately 8.5 million people are in the (largely remote) rural areas.

The word of God already has a place in the rural communities of PNG, so the distribution of Bibles to these remote communities is of paramount spiritual importance to the people living there.

Much of the population are uneducated and live in poverty. Literacy is a major challenge; many would not be able to read the Bible. There is a vast need for Bible translation, Bible distribution, literacy and church partnerships, especially in the rural areas.

To meet these needs, it is essential that the Bible Society is present and sustainable. Rebuilding the Bible Society will lay the foundation for effective ministry.



## Project Goals

The goal of this project is to enable the Bible Society to ensure Scriptures are available to all in PNG, so that all people may Open the Bible.

Reaching all people in PNG with the Bible will require accessing very remote communities; ensuring Bible translations are available in people's heart language, enabling access for the illiterate, and providing support to the poor so that they too can engage with God's word.

High poverty and illiteracy make this a challenge, as well as a significant opportunity.

Nearly all villages in PNG have a church and the distribution of Bibles will be channelled through the established churches.

2020 provided an opportunity to lay the foundations for flourishing Bible mission, but further funding is needed to ensure this important work can continue.

## Impact

The distribution of Bibles will have an impact on evangelism and Christian growth: individuals and families will be transformed by Opening The Bible. There will also be freedom to plant new churches, and to continue education in the schools and colleges with God's word, thus reducing illiteracy.

Although the COVID-19 pandemic has slowed the progress of rebuilding Bible Society PNG, the work has not stopped. The team in PNG have been meeting weekly with Bible Society Australia and United Bible Societies staff to ensure continued progress in strategic planning.

## Testimony

"This is a very challenging Vision," says **Verenagi Ravu, General Secretary of BSPNG**. "PNG may claim to be a Christian Country but there are many areas of life that still do not reflect the real meaning of what Christianity is all about. We believe that PNG can only be transformed by the word of God. Despite the many challenges we are facing, it is our dream to reach all in PNG with the word of God."

## Prayer Needs

- Pray for those in PNG, who feel a kinship with Nehemiah in the Bible, who oversaw the rebuilding of Jerusalem's walls after the exile. Pray that they will have the faith of Nehemiah, and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, so that they can rebuild Bible Society PNG for God's mission.
- Please pray for these foundational stages of development, as they are vital in ensuring residents of PNG can access and engage with the word of God for many generations to come.
- Pray that God will provide the right people to be recruited to be part of the rebuilding team.