

## **Press Release**

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### **Bible translation projects nearing completion for three indigenous languages**

Three indigenous Bible translation projects, started through the support of Bible Society in Australia (BSiA), are continuing through private donations and individual church support. The projects are in Nyoongar, south west Western Australia; Dhurga at Mogo near Bateman's Bay NSW and in Yumplatok (Torres Strait Creole).

Rev Dr John Harris, former Translation Consultant with BSiA for 12 years, has continued to work on these three projects on which indigenous Australians have worked faithfully for many years.

"It is a great joy to see lives changed as a direct result of expressing even just a verse or two of Scripture in an Aboriginal language, particularly those oppressed and threatened languages that others care little about, but which are still the most powerful vehicle for the gospel," said Dr Harris.

"I have been greatly encouraged by the generous financial support I have been able to raise to enable these projects to continue. Through preaching and personal representation to churches and individuals, I have been able to raise over \$30,000 which goes directly to the projects concerned. I am grateful to God for this seal of his blessing on the work," he said.

With support from BSiA and Bible Society NSW, the Nyoongar project (WA) completed a first draft translation of Luke's Gospel two years ago. The Nyoongar people were the original inhabitants of the south west of Western Australia.

"This still needs thorough group revision and consultant checking again. However, I made direct representation to the Anglican Diocese of Perth who made a donation of \$1,000 with more to come. The Churches of Christ have also given generously to the project. This was immensely encouraging for the team members and they took up the revision again with enthusiasm," said Rev Harris. "A generous private donation means that I will be able to visit them to check the revisions later this year," he said.

"Translation in the Dhurga project at Mogo, near Bateman's Bay, continues enthusiastically, centred around Tom and Muriel Slockee at the Boomerang Centre at Mogo, the Anglican Aboriginal outreach centre. After BSiA and Bible Society NSW support for Dhurga ended, I remained part of the team and worked with them voluntarily. The Australian Board of Missions (ABM) has set aside \$10,000 to support this project which will ensure its continued viability. By visiting churches here in Canberra I have also been able to raise several thousand dollars in donations to the project," said Dr Harris.

The third project is the work being done in the Yumplatok language, also known as Torres Strait Creole.

“The first ‘mini-Bible’, is nearing completion with dedicated input and support from two hard-working Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL) teams,” said Dr Harris

“Their major need is proper checking by an accredited translation consultant and I have continued therefore to do this in an honorary capacity as I have been involved in the project for more than a decade. At the moment I am able to carry out checking by email which costs me very little except in time. The Anglican Diocese of North Queensland has also generously undertaken to pay for the publishing of the mini-Bible next year,” said John.

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