

WYCLIFFE GLOBAL ALLIANCE



ANNUAL REPORT 2020



GREETINGS IN JESUS' NAME



Typically, an annual report serves as a useful tool to measure an organisation's year-to-year progress and trends. But because of the pandemic, no year in the Alliance's 12-year history compares with 2020. Along with the immense, globally shared challenges, this was a momentous year for the Alliance in terms of our structure and global commitment. I think you will find consistent themes represented in this report—themes like collaboration, innovation, resiliency, stewardship and, above all, our deep dependence on God.

As you may know, our fiscal year runs from 1 October to 30 September—meaning we were just three months into FY2020 when the entire world changed. The closing days of calendar year 2019 brought the identification of the novel coronavirus and a new disease, COVID-19. The World Health Organization declared a global health emergency in January 2020. The virus spread quickly in Asia, including Malaysia where the Alliance Leadership Team (ALT) had planned to gather in February.

By March, the world faced a pandemic. International travel, which has been a frequent and familiar part of our working practices, soon became difficult and in many cases impossible. The ALT and the Alliance Board moved their meetings online and the Alliance teams for communications, prayer, operations, etc., found ways to connect virtually. Some area meetings have taken place in person where restrictions were reduced, but this was the exception rather than the rule.

All of this made for a rather unusual transition for me into the role of Alliance Executive Director. We had planned a handover ceremony, celebrating and thanking Dr Kirk Franklin for his 12 years of leading the Alliance. This became a [virtual event](#) held 3 June, with video messages from Kirk, myself and several of our board members. I hold those moments as precious, and a time when all of us together reaffirmed the Alliance's mission, vision, purpose and values—even amid new global realities.

New opportunities arose from the move into this virtual space; some are outlined in this report. Other milestones were not easy. A number of farewells to team members took place at a distance. Mundara Muturi, who served on the ALT for many years, ended his assignment. We appreciate his great contributions to the Alliance. And we mourned the 1

February passing of [Dave Crough](#), who most recently served as the Alliance's Special Projects Coordinator.

With total dependence on God, the Bible translation movement moves forward into uncertain territory. As we discern what he has in store, it is with this deep commitment ever in mind: making the Scriptures available to all people, as soon as possible. This report expresses a glimpse of God's goodness, and also your contribution to, and participation in, the ministry of Bible translation. Thank you. May he continue to use us all as he continues to transform lives everywhere.

In his hope,

Dr Stephen Coertze
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

MISSION AND VISION

The Wycliffe Global Alliance exists to see individuals, communities and nations transformed through God's love and Word expressed in their languages and cultures. It is a network of approximately 100 organisations working in more than 2,000 languages. A [Covenant/Statement of Commitment](#), signed by each Alliance organisation, sets out the basis of our relationships.

The Alliance is led by Executive Director Dr Stephen Coertze and a [leadership team](#), with strategic oversight from the [Alliance Board](#).

More about the Alliance [vision and values](#), [beliefs](#) and [audited financial statements](#) can be found on the Alliance website, wycliffe.net.



2020 HIGHLIGHTS

New Executive Director - On 3 June, Dr Stephen Coertze assumed the role of Executive Director of the Wycliffe Global Alliance. Stephen succeeded Dr Kirk Franklin, who had held the role for 12 years and pioneered the move from an international organisation to the Global Alliance. [[Watch the virtual transition ceremony.](#)]

Covenant/Statement of Commitment II - Area Directors began working with organisations on signing the revised Covenant/Statement of Commitment. Because of travel restrictions, the process moved online. Each signing included representatives of the organisations, the Alliance Area Director and the Alliance Executive Director.

Changes to Funding Structure - A key element of the Covenant/Statement of Commitment is the agreement to an annual fee that Alliance organisations contribute to the functioning of the Alliance. At the June Board meeting, after input from Alliance organisations, we moved to an annual fee model that is more equitable and reflects our values and [principles](#).

Global Connect - The quadrennial gathering of the Alliance would have been a significant highlight of 2020 and the first such gathering on the African continent. It would have been a chance to celebrate the signing of the covenant statement and mark the first leadership transition in the history of the Alliance with leaders from around the world. The pandemic made such a gathering impossible.. Instead, Stephen Coertze's address to the Alliance was made available by video and 28 discussion groups convened virtually to reflect together.

Wycliffe World Day of Prayer - The day of prayer focussed on the concept of "Shalom in a VUCA (Volatile, Uncertain, Changing, Ambiguous) World". This was a deep and valuable reflection for the season we are all in.

In addition to these core global functions, the Alliance made progress on other projects that will have a significant impact. These included:

- Working with partners such as SIL, Biblica, Fuller Seminary, YWAM and others, at developing programs to train and equip translators, consultants and others to serve the Bible translation movement.
- Reviewing global systems necessary to manage finance and data that have legal requirements and that impact multiple organisations.

- Building community wherever possible within and between areas. Aiding the creation of virtual spaces that enable Alliance organisations and others to work together and build relationships.
- Continuing to listen, learn and reflect on Bible translation movements and what God is saying to our community.

CONSULTANT TRAINING

There has been an ongoing, multiagency discussion about competency-based consultant training. This sees the identification of consultants moving from more traditional academic knowledge to the demonstration of skills through experience and competencies.

It's exciting, because this conversation is occurring not only within the Alliance but also with historic partners such as SIL along with organisations who have joined the Bible translation movement more recently, like YWAM.

A new process is being developed for identifying and authorising new, capable consultants across domains such as translation, linguistics, literacy, Scripture engagement and oral Bible storytelling. Under this new approach, local consultant development groups recommend appointments to a local governing board for approval. In Cameroon, for instance, these steps have seen consultant numbers increase from four to 15, plus three appointments in Sudan.



AROUND THE AREAS

Each of the four Alliance areas hosted gatherings in 2020, creating space for relationships to be deepened, partnerships to be built and projects to be advanced among Alliance organisations. The move to more online meetings has allowed for broader participation both among and within areas.

John Roomes, Director of Wycliffe Caribbean, put it like this:

“What this pandemic is teaching us all is that God’s mission will continue regardless of circumstances and that we are learning new ways to function with every challenge we face. Certainly, the world has become even more ‘flat’ as we are experiencing more of the ‘unique global community’ of our world. Various people of different nationalities attend our various online events from their own spaces/ locations, and at different times.”

Among the results of this increased collaboration:

- Asia Pacific Area has been working on a collaborative funding event.
- Americas Area has been looking more deeply into the themes of generosity and stewardship.
- Africa Area held its own virtual, regional conference that looked at barriers to participation in the Bible translation movement.
- Europe Area began developing a Church Engagement Academy.

People from all four areas have mentioned how corporate prayer has deepened. While the Wycliffe World Day of Prayer saw a number of organisations partnering with others to pray together, each area also has devoted time to gather online to pray with each other.

FINANCES

INCOME

Total funds contributed to the Alliance in FY2020 were 1,734,675 USD. All of these funds came from the Alliance organisations and include the 0.35% contributions, assessment income and project funding. This is a reduction of 321,930 USD compared to FY2019. The Alliance also received interest and other income amounting to 189,087 USD.

EXPENSES

Direct operational and project expenses came to 1,207,419 USD. This led to a surplus of 716,343 USD. This is a record in the history of the Alliance but it is mostly due to unspent budgeted travel and meeting expenses because of global COVID-19 restrictions and changes.

More financial details can be found in the [official finance statements](#) published on the Wycliffe Global Alliance website. The FY2020 report will be published following the March 2021 meeting of the Alliance Board.

Please note: The Alliance's funding structure is changing significantly in FY2021. A new annual fee model will replace the historical system of 0.35% contributions and assessment income is gradually reducing, making way for new funding models which are in development. The Alliance's good financial position and support of Alliance organisations are helping to make this transition as smoothly as possible.



2020 PUBLICATIONS

[Leading in the Certainty of Uncertain Times](#) by Dr Susan van Wynen.

This research focused on the potential for Christ-following leaders to develop a theological and missiological posture in response to the current volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous (VUCA) world context. The research looks at how the attitudes and actions of the corporate world have influenced those of Christian organisations and Christian leadership. The corporate world primarily focuses on strategies for overcoming the challenges of the VUCA environment, but this research explores how Christ-following leaders might benefit from looking more deeply at what VUCA represents, rather than merely accepting and reacting to it.

[The Future of the Bible Translation Movement Survey](#) by Dr Kirk Franklin and Dr Susan van Wynen.

During the last two weeks of April 2020, an online survey was offered to the directors of Wycliffe Global Alliance organisations. The purpose was to identify what the Bible translation movement could look like during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. It was a means of determining how Alliance organisations were affected, thus far, by the crisis and it offers a glimpse of how leaders are thinking about and preparing for the future.

[Searching for Shalom: Transformation in the Mission of God and the Bible Translation Movement](#) by Dr Kirk Franklin.

This study explored the Old Testament vision of shalom and its relevance to holistic mission, Bible translation, transformational development and the world's challenges and trends.

[A Missiology of Progress: Assessing Advancement in the Bible Translation Movement](#) by Dr Kirk Franklin.

This paper examined the questions: How do we know what God considers progress in the Bible translation movement? What milestones will be theologically significant in the coming decades?



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