SIL's Work in PNG from 1956-2022

Legend:

- **current** SIL engagement
- **current** SIL engagement and at least a **full NT** completed by SIL
- at least a **full NT** completed by SIL
- languages with **previous**, significant SIL engagement
- languages SIL has **not worked with**
- **uninhabited** areas
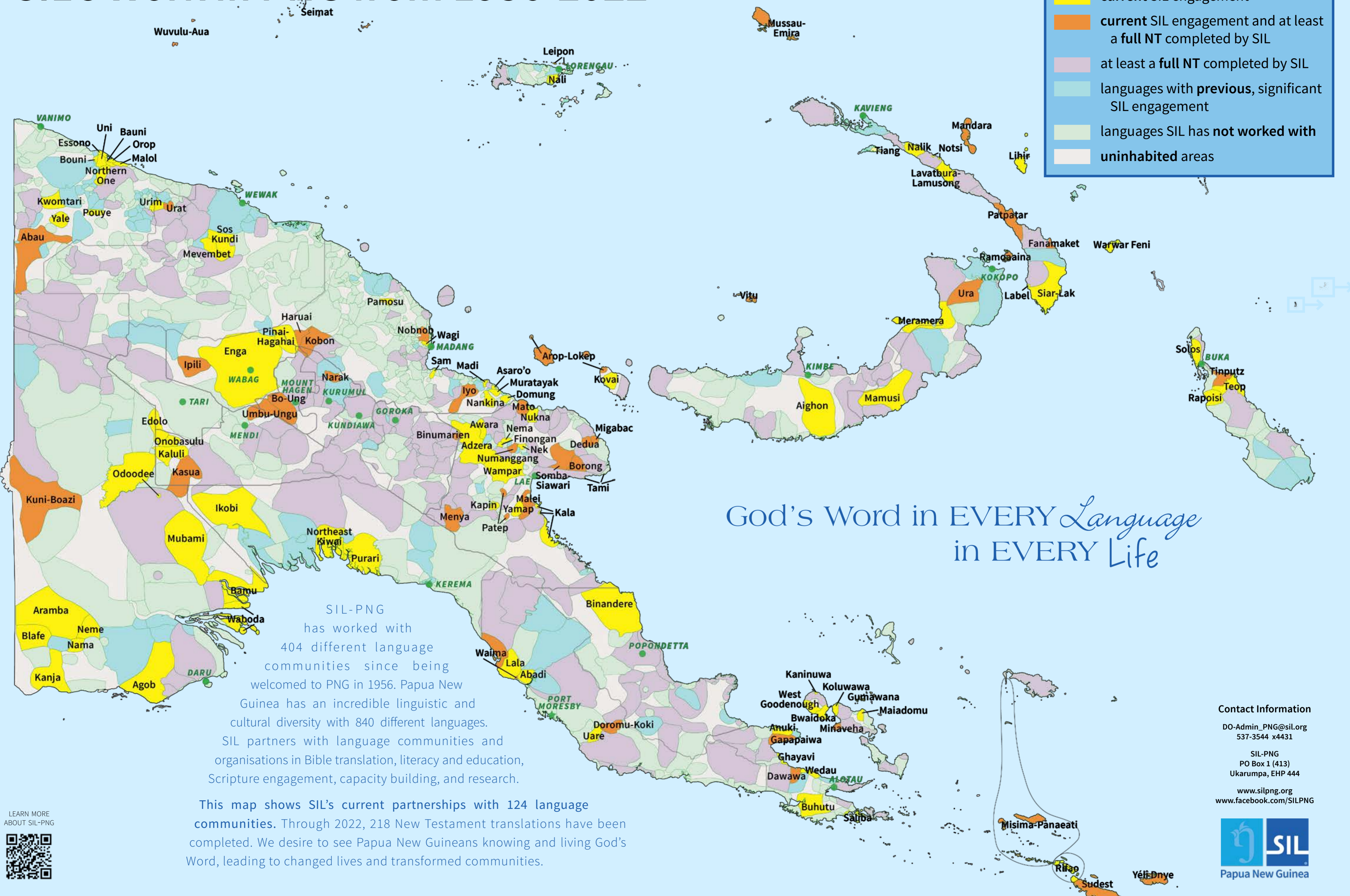
God's Word in EVERY *Language* in EVERY *Life*

SIL-PNG has worked with 404 different language communities since being welcomed to PNG in 1956. Papua New Guinea has an incredible linguistic and cultural diversity with 840 different languages. SIL partners with language communities and organisations in Bible translation, literacy and education, Scripture engagement, capacity building, and research.

This map shows SIL's current partnerships with 124 language communities. Through 2022, 218 New Testament translations have been completed. We desire to see Papua New Guineans knowing and living God's Word, leading to changed lives and transformed communities.

LEARN MORE
ABOUT SIL-PNG

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SIL
Papua New Guinea

Map labels (languages and places):

Wuvulu-Aua, Seimat, Leipon, LORENGAU, Nali, Mussau-Emira, VANIMO, Uni, Bauni, Essono, Orop, Bouni, Malol, Northern One, Kwomtari, Yale, Pouye, Urim, Urat, WEWAK, Sos Kundi, Mevembet, Abau, Pamosu, Haruai, Pinai-Hagahai, Kobon, Nobnob, Wagi, MADANG, Sam, Madi, Asaro'o, Muratayak, Domung, Arop-Lokep, Kovai, Enga, Ipili, WABAG, Narak, MOUNT HAGEN, KURUMUL, Iyo, Nankina, Mato, Nukna, Migabac, Bo-Ung, GOROKA, Awara, Nema, Finongan, Dedua, Umbu-Ungu, KUNDIAWA, Binumarien, Adzera, Nek, Borong, Edolo, MENDI, Numanggang, Wampar, Somba, Tami, Onobasulu, Kaluli, Kasua, Menya, Kapin, Malei, Yamap, Siawari, Kala, Odoodee, Ikobi, Patep, LAE, Kuni-Boazi, Mubami, Northeast Kiwai, Purari, KEREMA, Bamu, Waboda, Binandere, Aramba, Neme, Blafe, Nama, Kanja, DARU, Agob, Waima, Lala, Abadi, POPONDETTA, PORT MORESBY, Doromu-Koki, Uare, KIMBE, Aighon, Mamusi, Meramera, Ura, KOKOPO, Ramoaina, Label, Siar-Lak, Vitu, Tiang, Nalik, Notsi, Lavatbura-Lamusong, Mandara, Lihir, Patpatar, Fanamaket, Warwar Feni, KAVIENG, Solos, BUKA, Tinputz, Teop, Rapoisi, Kaninuwa, Koluwawa, Gumawana, West Goodenough, Maiadomu, Bwaidoka, Minaveha, Anuki, Gapapaiwa, Ghayavi, Wedau, Dawawa, ALOTAU, Buhutu, Saliba, Misima-Panaeati, Rifao, Sudest, Yéli Dnye

The Honourable Jimmy Uguro, MP, Minister for Education
Parliament Haus, Waigani, NCD

March 2023

Dear Minister Uguro,

It is with pleasure that I share this report on the work that SIL-PNG has been involved in alongside the speakers of PNG's languages in 2022. The removal of COVID restrictions enabled a re-establishment of our priorities: Bible translation, literacy and education, Scripture engagement, capacity building, and research. These priorities are the pillars of SIL's engagement in PNG and fulfil the essence of our MOU with the National Department of Education.

Bible translation is at the heart of our work. The need is great, with many of PNG's vibrant languages without any portion of Scripture. SIL-PNG is partnering with 124 language communities translating God's Word and other materials of interest to the communities.

Literacy and education are foundational elements in helping communities thrive as they engage in the global community. In Papua New Guinea, low levels of literacy are a critical challenge for the country's development. SIL-PNG works with communities to develop their language by crafting orthographies, creating vernacular books, and training literacy teachers. SIL also produces audio and visual materials for those unable to read.

SIL-PNG collaborates with local churches and church leaders as we partner with the speakers of PNG's languages. Scripture engagement activities are a specific area of focus as we come alongside individuals and communities. We desire to see individuals and communities applying Scripture to their daily lives. Engagement activities include Oral Bible Storying, Culture Meets Scripture workshops, Scripture Application and Leadership Training courses, and more.

We strive to build capacity in every area of our work. This is accomplished through one-on-one mentoring in language development work in villages throughout the country, as well as through training courses at SIL's Training Centre in Eastern Highlands Province and at other centres. We are building teams of Papua New Guineans to work in translation, consulting, linguistics, literacy, Scripture engagement, and more.

SIL-PNG is recognised as a source of accurate research on the 840 languages of Papua New Guinea. We use this data to strategically engage in language development in PNG and share it with others so they can do the same. Partners in PNG's International Decade of Indigenous Languages (IDIL) effort are relying on this data as the foundation for strategic planning. In 2022, SIL-PNG presented data at the two IDIL consultations at SIL's Centre in Eastern Highlands Province and at APEC Haus in Port Moresby. In addition to contributing to Ethnologue's record of PNG's languages (www.ethnologue.com), SIL-PNG produces orthography and phonology descriptions, grammar papers, and dictionaries in PNG's languages.

We are pleased to partner with the government of Papua New Guinea through an MOU with the National Department of Education. Our efforts are only possible through partnerships with the government and churches of this beautiful nation. Through the support and partnership of your Ministry, SIL looks forward to continuing the work that we began together in 1956.
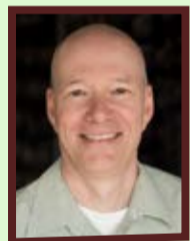
Yours Sincerely,

David Barton
Director, SIL-PNG

the Seimat website

When it comes to literacy and education, the solution that best serves people is often both/and, rather than either/or: both written Scripture and audio Scripture; education in both local languages and languages of wider communication. The both/and approach gives speakers of PNG's languages the best chance to thrive.

Delivering both/and solutions is not easy! Consider the case of the Seimat language community, isolated at sea in the west of Manus Province. SIL-PNG has come alongside the community for Bible translation, literacy, and education. Despite being one of the most isolated of PNG's languages, the Seimat people have learned to read their own language and have a New Testament, a picture dictionary, illustrated story books (print and audio), and a website dedicated to the Seimat language – www.kakaiseimat.com! The website was launched at the beginning of the International Decade of Indigenous Languages – an example of what may be possible for other languages in PNG.

How did this all happen? The Seimat community committed to working together to learn to read and write their language. The parents and teachers learned to read and write Seimat and then taught their children to read and write. Now the Seimat children are better equipped to learn to read English and succeed in their further education.

SIL-PNG's Education for Life (EFL) initiative employs another both/and strategy: the Bloom book-making tool. Bloom is used to produce single and multi-language books, talking books, comic books, books for the blind, sign language books, and books with interactive activities. The free Bloom Reader mobile phone app allows Bloom books to be read offline, increasing usability in areas with limited internet access. These materials can be used by individuals and in the classroom setting; a pilot program has been run in 30 schools in three provinces. Papua New Guineans are using Bloom to make books in their own language!

In 2022, EFL published e-books in 10 PNG languages and produced 514 e-books for the Ministry of Education in English, Tok Pisin, and PNG Sign Language as part of the government's disability inclusive policy. These both/and solutions have a broad appeal and lead to increased literacy and education.
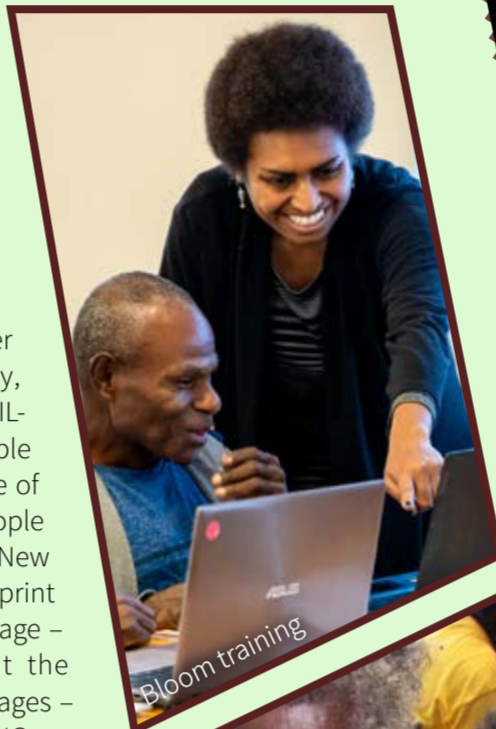
Bloom training

finding both/and solutions

A great deal of SIL-PNG's capacity building happens in village contexts as on-the-job training during the translation process. Scripture engagement, literacy, and other training are also provided in village settings.

The Culture Meets Scripture course (CMS) is an example of village-based capacity building. A CMS course in a Morobe language saw participants considering cultural practices and asking tough questions like, 'Why are we afraid of the dead?' They examined what the Bible says about God's power and protection. They realised that God has power in their lives, much greater power than the spirits have. Courses like CMS give Papua New Guineans new tools to make sense of the world around them. One local CMS staff reported that he brought CMS home to his extended family to evaluate long-standing customs, choosing to align their practices with the Scriptures.

SIL's Training Centre in the Eastern Highlands Province also plays a significant capacity-building role. It offers a variety of courses attended by participants from all over PNG. Courses in 2022 included the Translators' Training Course, Paratext 1 (translation software), and Greek 1.

Another course in 2022 was Discover Your Language. It is an introduction to linguistics

(morphology and syntax) for PNG Bible translators. Participants spend four weeks with mentors, teachers, and other translators. They are trained to see and appreciate the uniqueness and the beauty of their languages and their grammatical structures, and to apply that insight to translation work.

During the course, participants and mentors produce a Tentative Grammar Description from the languages represented by students. Sometimes this is the first-ever documentation of their language. The naturalness of materials translated into students' languages is improved through their awareness of the structure of their language.

With 840 languages, many of which have had no development so far, there are ample opportunities for language and translation experts to get involved! SIL-PNG has worked with 404 different language communities since 1956, completing 218 New Testament translations. Partnerships with language communities and development organisations – in Bible translation, literacy and education, Scripture engagement, capacity building, and research – will make it possible to see the Bible in every language, every life.

building capacity in the classroom

Discover Your Language course

Greek 1 course

building capacity in the village

Kope Luke Dedication

Kope Luke Dedication

storybooks in Kope

This is a summary of the work accomplished and materials printed by SIL-PNG personnel in 2022. The list is not exhaustive. Many of the listings include the ISO code of the language, a three letter code listed in brackets. The ISO codes are standardised, internationally acknowledged codes used to identify languages.

Academic Presentations

American Anthropological Association Conference presentation by Dave Troolin: *Enabling Peace through Violence: Overcoming Liminality in Papua New Guinea*
LSPNG online presentation by John Brownie: *Deictic Noun Phrases in Mussau-Emira* [emi]
LSPNG online presentation by René van den Berg: *The Pronominal System of Urat; a Torricelli Language* [urt]

LSPNG online presentation by Robbie Petterson: *Tone Patterns of Kope Verbs; Koravake Literacy Phonics School* [kiw]

Academic Work

Orthography and Phonology Description (OPD) completed in Aighon [aix] by Nathan and Siobahnne Duhe
OPD completed in Domung [dev] by Jonathan and Jenny Moe
OPD completed in Finongan [fag] by Chris and Amy Rice
OPD completed in Ghayavi [bmk] by Scott Baillie
OPD completed in Kope [kiw] by Hanna Schulz
OPD completed in Leipon [lek] by Zak and Laura O'Leary
OPD completed in Maiadomu [mzz] by Alex and Karla Watt
OPD completed in Nama [nmx] by Jeongseok and Sunyoung Park

OPD completed in Nek [nif] by Isolde Kappus and Katri Linnasalo
OPD completed in Teop [tio] by Julie MacKay
OPD completed in Titan [ttv] by Steve Clover
OPD completed in Wagi [fad] by Bo-Young Jeong and So Hyun Kim
Sociolinguistic and Literacy Study completed in Nama [nmx] by Jeongseok and Sunyoung Park
Sociolinguistic and Literacy Study completed in Teop [tio] by Julie MacKay
Studies in Kope published by Hanna Schulz and Robbie Petterson: Data Papers on PNG languages volume 64, containing 1- *Introduction to Kope* (Schulz) 2- *Kope verbal morphology* (Schulz) 3- *Kope discourse* (Petterson) 4- *Kope tone* (Petterson) [kiw]
Survey Reports completed in Northeast Kiwai [kiw] and Purari [iar]

Orthographies

Stage 1, Trial Orthography created for: Aighon [aix], Domung [dev], Ghayavi [bmk], Leipon [lek]
Stage 2, Orthography approved for: Finongan [fag], Kope [kiw], Nama [nmx], Teop [tio]
Stage 3 Orthography established for: Maiadomu [mzz], Nek [nif]

Training and Workshops

Computer Software
Basic Computing Workshop
Logos 9 Course
Logos 10 Course
Paratext 1 Course
Paratext 9.1 Course

Linguistics
Discover Your Language Workshop (x2)
Vernacular Creative Phonics (VCP) Course (x3)

Literacy
Disability Inclusive Writer's Workshop
Vernacular Path to English (VPE) Course

Scripture Engagement
Culture Meets Scripture (CMS) Instructor Training (x3)
CMS Workshop (x2)
Healing the Wounds of Trauma Instructor Training
Healing the Wounds of Trauma Workshop (x6)
Mini-Scripture Application and Literacy Training Course (SALT) (x4)
SALT Course (x4)
SALT Instructor Training (x2)
SALT Patrol (x2)
Scripture Engagement Instructor Training (x2)
Scripture Engagement Workshop (x3)
Sunday School Workshop

Translation
Greek 1 Course
Initial Skills Course
Oral Bible Storying Workshop
Pre-Translators' Training Course (TTC)
Song Writing Workshop
Translation Consultant Training
TTC 1 (Translators' Training Course)

Vernacular Work

Audio Recordings
Bugawac [buk] Scripture portions
Halia [hla] New Testament and songs
Imbongu [imo] New Testament
Kope [kiw] Scripture portions and songs
Menya [mcr] songs
Numanggang [nop] Scripture portions
Pinai-Hagahai [pnn] Scripture portions
Saliba [sbe] New Testament
Teop [tio] Scripture portions
Ura [uro] New Testament
Yale [nce] Scripture portions

Media
Bola [bnp] Mark video dubbed
Finongan [fag] Bloom stories
Gapapaiwa [pwg] Mark video dubbed
Teop [tio] Scripture portion video dubbed

Printed Materials
Abau [aau] literacy materials
Arop-Lokep [apr] picture dictionary

Fanamaket [bjp] educational materials
Finongan [fag] educational materials
Misima-Panaeati [mpx] calendar
Nek [nif] song book
Nema [gsn] picture dictionary, literacy materials
Notsi [ncf] literacy materials
Nukna [klt] literacy materials
Seimat [ssg] literacy materials
Tiang [tbj] picture dictionary, literacy materials
Warwar Feni [hrw] literacy and educational materials

Scripture Materials
Book of Luke dedicated in Kope [kiw]
Full Bible printed in Nobonob [gaw]
New Testament printed in Kaluli [bco]
New Testament printed in Lokep [apr]
Scripture portions in: Edolo [etr], Ipili [ipi], Kope [kiw], Madi [grg], Maiadomu [mzz], Seimat [ssg], Sudest [tgo], Teop [tio], Yale [nce]