

**Sent:** 28 May 2020

Hello all,

I am still in Ukarumpa, and shall be for the foreseeable future, but I see this time as a blessing, even though it is a change from what I wrote on my yearly plan for 2020. I had planned to be in the village at the moment, working alongside the Kope people to finish the advisor check of Luke. Last week we would have held a Scripture Use workshop on Christian Marriage and Family Life for five people groups in our area. While this workshop has not happened, work is still happening.

Each week I talk with the Kope translation team via HF radio. Some weeks we get a good connection, and have been known to talk for up to an hour. Other weeks it is all static and we give up after 15 minutes of conversation that is not much more than "Sorry, say that again. Over." The team are working on the community checking of chapters of Luke on which we have already completed both a team check (just them) and an advisor check (me plus the team). They take these chapters to others in the community who have not been involved, and read them through together to make sure that the translation is clear, accurate, natural and acceptable. Changes are made as needed, and then they progress to the next stage of back translation, where they turn the Kope back to English, so that a consultant can look at the text for the final round of checking. We have a big back log of community checking needing doing, so I am very thankful that they are using this time to work on that task, as well as on the Back Translation when a chapter has been community checked. Pray that they will continue to be able to gather in small groups to do this work, and that community members will be willing to participate.

At the start of the time of covid-related self-isolation, I wrote myself a job list of things I could do at the computer. I estimated that it was at least six months of work, and two months on, I still think there is at least six months of work on the list! My big job in recent weeks has been reviewing our progress on the Kope dictionary. I have a number of very enthusiastic dictionary contributors, which has resulted in a large backlog of data needing processing and analysis. For a while I have been telling the team that until I have a month or two spare, I will not be able to catch up on dictionary work, so please be patient. Well, I now have the time, and after four and a half weeks of processing dictionary data, still feel like the end point is a long way off! This will not mean a finished dictionary, just that I have reviewed all the current data and made notes on how to move it to the next stage. As I review entries, I label them 'tentative', meaning more information and an example sentence is needed, or 'pending' meaning that we have good information and an example, but that the Kope editors need to give their final approval before I can label them as 'confirmed.' This week I was blessed with the opportunity to email the 'tentative' and 'pending' lists as pdfs to my friends and partners in ministry at Kapuna hospital, who could print them for me and get the documents to Kikori, where someone from the team will pick them up to continue their part of the work. Getting all the pieces of the chain together to get the documents from me, to Kapuna, to a working printer, to Kikori, and to the team, is a real gift. Pray for me as I continue to work on the dictionary, as after a month of dictionary entries, my enthusiasm is waning. Pray for the team, that they will successfully retrieve the documents in Kikori, and be able to continue their part of the work. Once the dictionary is finally through this stage of review, I will be able to return to the rest of the 'to-do' list, and add some variety to my work schedule. The dictionary needed this big focused push, but I'll be glad when it is done.

At the moment, there is no timeline for when I return to the village. The official State of Emergency in PNG is currently until June 6. Thankfully there has been very little apparent spread of covid during this time, so we are waiting to see what the government does next. Pray for them as they make their decisions. Pray also for my leaders in SIL, as they do their best to make wise and God-honouring decisions about how best to continue our work in these unusual and unpredictable times. With many international borders closed, as well as travel routes restricted, it has been very challenging for many friends and colleagues who are not in the country they hoped to be in at this time, and who do not know when they will be able to return to PNG, or be able to return to their home country, depending which direction they are hoping to travel.

While the Scripture Use workshop in Ubuo in May had to be cancelled, I am still hoping to proceed with building the Ubuo Training Centre later this year. Hopefully next year we can re-schedule the workshop, and hold it in our dedicated training building, rather than trekking through the mud to borrow the church for our workshop. When I speak with my team about this building, they are excited about having a dedicated space to do their translation work and to hold workshops, and ask if it will still be built in October. The honest answer is that I do not know. The two big blocks are covid and finances. Hopefully by then the covid situation will have become clearer, and travel for the building team will be possible. The second issue, finances, is in your hands. If you would like to give to this project, please visit [wycliffe.org.au/projects/ubuo-training-centre-png/](http://wycliffe.org.au/projects/ubuo-training-centre-png/) or contact the Wycliffe Australia finance office on [finance@wycliffe.org.au](mailto:finance@wycliffe.org.au). Thank you to those who have already given! To build in October (covid permitting), I'll need to order supplies in about August, so will need a significant portion of the money by then to be able to go ahead as planned.

In our weekly radio skeds, the translation team has told me that another mission agency has been visiting our area, promising to start Bible translation work. This news has been disconcerting, and it is difficult to know how to respond. I do not want to be competing with others, but want God's word clearly available to people in the language they understand best. Pray for me, my team, and my supervisors to have wisdom in how we respond to this situation.

Please keep all the Kope translation team members in your prayers. Some of them are quite elderly and at high risk should covid reach our village. At least one team member has been stuck in Port Moresby since domestic transport became very restricted. Pray for him to belong to good Christian community while he is in town, and for his family who remain in the village.

At the start of this rather long prayer update, I mentioned that I see this season of stopping in Ukarumpa as a blessing. Part of this is being able to catch up on long deferred tasks such as the dictionary. Another factor is that I have enjoyed the chance to be part of Ukarumpa life in a different way, as I connect with friends and colleagues at various well-spaced (usually outdoor) gatherings and meetings. The biggest thing though, is that for the first time in a long time I am stopping in one place, without packing my bags to go anywhere. My come-and-go life of Bible translation, and before that sailing, means that it is more than fifteen years since I slept in one bed for three months straight without packing up to go and sleep somewhere else for a while. Come June 10, I will have slept in my own bed for three straight months! For others this is not an achievement, but for me it is a much needed time of slowing down and being in one place. While I am certainly grieving some covid losses, such as not being with my team in the village, and cancelled plans for family to visit, I am choosing to focus on the good that comes from this time.

I pray that in this time of change and uncertainty, that you too can find the good things to be thankful for, while still being willing to grieve the hard things. In everything, may you rest in the knowledge that God is in control, and that God is love. Even when we cannot see or understand, we are held by a God who loves us.

Blessings  
Hanna

PO Box 1 (158) Ukarumpa, EHP 444, Papua New Guinea

E: [hanna\\_schulz@wycliffe.org.au](mailto:hanna_schulz@wycliffe.org.au)

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M: +675 7900 1475 (also WhatsApp)