

**Sent:** Wednesday, 24 June 2020

Hello all,

Yesterday (23<sup>rd</sup>) is when I was scheduled to return from my second village trip this year, instead I have been in Ukarumpa since March 10, and continue to be thankful for what God is doing at this time. While it was not my plan, I trust that it is God's.

My big news is that after *seven* weeks, I have finally caught up on Kope dictionary work! While the dictionary is not finished, this stage is, and as a team we can now move forwards with a clean slate, rather than a messy backlog of information. The under-construction dictionary has been uploaded, so go have a look at [www.webonary.org/kope](http://www.webonary.org/kope) to see what I have been working on. Praise God that we have made it this far, and pray that the Kope diaspora will access the online dictionary, and that as a team we will be able to keep moving things forwards.

In other good news, I *might* have a new team member! I have mentioned previously that I would like to see the work I am doing with the Kope and Anigibi people expand to more languages in the area, initially using an Oral Bible Storying approach. Expanded work means expanded needs for staffing etc. A colleague has been praying about joining this expanded work, and it is looking like a 'yes'. This is very exciting for me! Please pray for wisdom in decision making and planning for all of us.

Part of working towards expanded work in our area, is the building of a translation and literacy training centre in Ubuo (my village). Thank you to everyone who has already given to this project, but there is a long way to go. If you are able to help us reach our goal of building in October, please visit [www.wycliffe.org.au/projects/ubuo-training-centre-png](http://www.wycliffe.org.au/projects/ubuo-training-centre-png) to make a donation. I realise that finances and fundraising in a time of recession is challenge for each of us, but this season will pass, and the need for access to the Bible in the language my Gulf neighbours best understand, will remain. Please help me to meet this need. If we build in October, I am hoping to re-schedule the Christian Marriage and Family Life workshop that was cancelled in May for early 2021, as our first workshop in the new building.

Having made it through my enormous dictionary task, I am now able to work on some other tasks. Lately I have been focussing on literacy materials. This means reviewing recently collected stories and edits, and formatting them to the next stage of production. I am thankful for friends here who have been helping to type up the collected stories, and to clean up the hand-drawn pictures so that they will print well. I have also been able to attend some short courses and workshops here in Ukarumpa. Having the time and place to share with colleagues facing similar challenges, and sharing insights and resources with each other, is a big encouragement to me.

I continue to talk with the Kope translation team via HF radio each week. They have been continuing to do community checking of Luke, as well as receiving some dictionary work from me, via friends at the nearby mission hospital. Those same friends were able to send me some of the work that the team has completed in recent months. This is a connection that I am very thankful for! While there is some cold and flu going around the village, that is not unusual for this time of year, but pray that it is nothing more.

It is currently rainy season in Gulf, so everything is very muddy. It is also windy season, so while some boats have resumed travel from Kerema (the capital of Gulf Province and onwards connection to Port Moresby) to our area, it is a dangerous time for travel. Pray for safe travel for those trying to get home after being stuck in other places due to covid travel restrictions. While some restrictions changed with the end of the State of Emergency in PNG, a health act means that there is still a

cautious approach to life. With the recent diagnosis of a new covid case in Port Moresby, I assume that covid is around in the community, even though it has (thankfully!) not had the devastating approach that I was afraid of. Why it is behaving quietly in PNG, I do not know, but I am thankful that it is.

June is traditionally the goodbye month in this community. Ukarumpa International School follows the US school year, as most of the students are from the northern hemisphere. This means that graduation is in June, with an exodus to passport countries soon after. This year the exodus happened in early April, when there was a repatriation flight, and those who are attempting to leave now, face a multitude of challenges. The only place to fly to from Port Moresby is Brisbane, but you need special permission to transit Australia, which comes at the last minute. Domestic transfers are also banned, so people have to fly International out of Brisbane, and there are no direct flights to the US from Brisbane at the moment, and few third countries they can travel through. This places a lot of stress on anyone trying to leave. Also, with all the international travel restrictions, no one has been returning. Since March we have only said 'goodbye' to friends and colleagues, without a single 'welcome.' To only see friends leaving, and not returning, is emotionally tiring. Please pray for those who are going, that they can find a path home. Please pray for those trying to return, that borders will open, permits be granted, and travel happen safely, healthily, and without costing a fortune. Pray for those of us who stay, that we may be a loving community to each other through this challenging season.

Among all this, I am doing fairly well. The grief of goodbyes, including to some close friends, and of not welcoming back other close friends who were scheduled to return by now, has hit me hard in the last week. I'm sure this grief wave will pass, and I think it important to work through grief rather than deny it. Still, please pray that it will pass soon. I also have a sore throat, so pray that it would resolve with no other symptoms developing. There are many good things going on, and I am thankful to be spending this season with this community, including being thankful for an extended time here, rather than my usual pack-n-go life. At the moment I'm hoping to return to Gulf in early September, but it is a plan I am holding loosely.

Thank you to each of you for your prayers, gifts, and encouragement. It is good to share this journey with you.

Blessings  
Hanna

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