

## **"FAITH COMES BY HEARING . . ."**

If you had to learn a foreign language to become a Christian, would you be a Christian today? What hope would you have if you lived in a culture that had no written language? Furthermore, how would you exist if you couldn't read? These questions have become the driving force behind **LANGUAGE RECORDINGS PNG**, part of Global Recordings Network. Their aim is to make the gospel message available worldwide, in a form other than the written word.

### **DID YOU KNOW?**

Amazingly, recent statistics tell us that there are still over 1.1 billion illiterate people in the world. That means that nearly one-third of the world's population cannot read.

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There are over 8,000 languages and dialects spoken in the world, and over 5,200 languages and dialects have not yet been reduced to a written form. In order to reach these various and different groups of people, Language Recordings produce cassettes of carefully-selected evangelistic messages and basic Christian teaching. In addition to being in local languages, they are often also prepared with a special cultural slant for the particular cultural group to be reached.

To make the initial recordings of the new languages, field recordists usually go to wherever the target language is actually spoken. The latest professional, portable recording equipment is used, and the process can take from one to ten hours for a four- to five-minute message, depending on the

ability of the language helper. Master cassettes are then produced, and the cassettes copied and distributed.

**Distribution:** Although Language Recordings distribute cassettes themselves, most of their main outlets are through other missionary and evangelistic organisations, churches, Christian support groups, and individuals. Bible translators, working in all parts of the world use them as a first means of contact with unreached tribes. Several literature-distributing missions equip their teams with evangelism cassettes, to meet the needs of the many non-literate people they encounter. Medical ministries in developing countries can play cassettes by the bedsides, or in the waiting rooms, of their clinics. Other ways of distributing the cassettes are through port ministries, relief agencies, and through all types of evangelistic outreaches.

**Origin of the Mission:** Over the years, Language Recordings has grown dramatically from its miraculous conception back in 1938, when an American missionary, Joy Ridderhof, home from Honduras, suffering from malaria, had the vision to bring the gospel on gramophone record to the people she worked with in Honduras, in their own language. These were enthusiastically received, and it was not long before missionaries from other parts were requesting records. She recorded languages, and distributed many thousands of these records throughout the world. As Gospel Recordings grew and developed, audiocassettes were introduced, and soon the organisation was sending out hundreds of thousands of these. Today, there are 25 centres and bases situated throughout the world, all supporting the work that this lady had started from her own home all those years ago.

**Language Recordings PNG** has its office and recording studio based at CLTC, near Mt Hagen, and is used as a recording and distribution centre for the many cassettes that are sent out each year.

**What are we doing?** To date, Language Recordings has over 5,400 languages recorded, and a target has been set to record another 1,000 languages over the next five years. Last year saw a record number of 26 field recordists trained worldwide, and from our own PNG office here in at CLTC, another staff member has been trained recently as a field recordist. This will enable the PNG office to record languages of the many different language groups living in this country. They will also travel to other countries to assist in recording new languages.

**Materials available:** We can learn a lot from the communicating style that Jesus used, by using word pictures for His listeners that spoke clearly to the needs of their hearts. Language Recordings has employed this simple story-telling technique in its 120 scripts. The recorded languages are accompanied by colourful, illustrated picture booklets and flip charts to help the people to hear and see the message.

**The Messenger Tape Player:** To ensure that people can hear the messages on cassette, Language Recordings has developed an intriguing hand-crank cassette player that can be used in places without electricity or batteries. These players are portable, yet robust, and are used extensively by local pastors, evangelists, missionaries, and outreach groups

to proclaim the **Good News** to those people who have never heard.

## **YOUR HELP IS REQUIRED**

A recent report from one of our bases in Liberia stated that over 300 people in a village had given their lives to the Lord following a distribution of our cassettes. One man in the village asked, "When did you receive this good news?" Our distributor answered, "In 1995." The man who had asked the question was so angry and irate as he had just recently buried two of his relatives. He cried, "Why did it take you so long to come?" Time is short, and we feel there is an urgency to reach the lost. We at Language Recordings PNG are committed to bringing this **Good News** to those who are waiting to hear. If you would like further information about the mission, or if you would like us to share about the work at your church, house group, or prayer meeting, please contact us at:

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