

Dr John Bendor-Samuel 1929-2011

It is with sadness that [Wycliffe Bible Translators UK](#) reports the death of Dr John Bendor-Samuel, Director-Emeritus of Wycliffe UK, following a road traffic accident close to his home on 6 January 2011.

Together with his brother David, John was largely responsible for the establishment of Wycliffe Bible Translators in the UK. He and his wife Pam served in Peru and Brazil and in the 1960s and subsequently John pioneered the cause of Bible translation across Africa, where he was responsible for encouraging Bible translation in many countries, including Ghana, Nigeria, Togo, Cameroon, Ivory Coast and Ethiopia.

John and Pam were among the first to be trained at a Summer Institute of Linguistics course in the UK, and for many years John combined his overseas service with a role as director of the SIL training school in Britain.

From the mid 1980s, John served in a number of international leadership roles, first with [SIL International](#) and secondly with [Wycliffe Bible Translators International](#). During the 1990s, John was elected to serve as Executive Director of Wycliffe UK, a role which he held for seven years. At the time of his death, John was engaged in research into the history of Bible translation in Africa.

John was widely respected both as a statesman in the world mission movement and as an expert in West African linguistics. He co-founded the Forum of Bible Agencies and was a regular speaker and lecturer in the UK and around the world. For many years, he served on the board of the Linguistic Society of West Africa and was editor of the Journal of West African Linguistics.

“John’s vision to see the Bible translated into vernacular languages inspired people all round the world to become engaged in the work of Bible translation, but above all, he was, quite simply, one of the finest Christian men I have ever known” – Roger Welch: Board Chair, Wycliffe Bible Translators International

“John was a towering figure on the international mission scene. He was well known and widely respected around the world for his passion for God’s word and the needs of minority people groups. He was also a humble and devoted disciple of Jesus Christ and a wonderful example to those who knew him.” – Eddie Arthur, Executive Director, Wycliffe Bible Translators UK

John is survived by his wife Pam, and their five children and fifteen grand-children.

[Wycliffe Bible Translators](#), the UK's biggest Bible translation organisation, works with partners worldwide to ensure that every community around the world has access to a Bible in a language that they can fully understand. In more than 70 years of history they have been involved in the translation of 745 New Testaments and 27 complete Bibles, reaching around 114 million people. Wycliffe staff are currently involved in over 1,500 active language programmes representing 2.6 billion people, with additional work being undertaken by other organisations in a further 500 languages. However there remains a massive need, as statistics show that there are around 340 million people from 2,078 languages still waiting for translation to begin.

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Photos can be downloaded from: www.wycliffe.org.uk/pressreleases

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