

***Sow 1 Billion* in brief**

***Sow 1 Billion* is a world church initiative to distribute 1 billion invitations to study the Bible.**

Each small brochure will use the concept: “Don’t be afraid.” It will attractively and simply present the Great Controversy theme of the battle between good and evil, and will offer a way to receive Bible studies.

The scope of *Sow 1 Billion* is unprecedented. A mere one percent response rate will result in 10 million requests for Bible studies.

Everyone can be involved in *Sow 1 Billion*. It requires no special skills—just a commitment to pass out brochures to friends, neighbors, and people we meet during the course of our everyday lives.

***Sow 1 Billion* will be launched in September 2003**, although this may vary slightly from division to division. By late 2004, divisions will begin reporting on the response they’re receiving.

Two critical issues for *Sow 1 Billion* are distribution of invitations, and follow-up on Bible study requests. *Sow 1 Billion* will rely on a high level of commitment and enthusiasm among all departments and entities of the world church, and on the part of individual church members. The church must also find creative ways to strengthen its capacity to offer Bible studies, through its Bible Correspondence Schools around the world, lay supporting organizations, and local churches.

Adventist-laymen’s Services and Industries is leading out in the development of a **special HopeTalk Web site**, which will offer Bible correspondence courses in up to 100 different languages. These courses can be completed online, and individuals will be referred to a local Adventist church.

***Sow 1 Billion* is closely linked with other outreach initiatives of the church** such as *Go One Million* and *Year of World Evangelism 2004*. For example, *Sow 1 Billion* will provide another outreach tool for *Go One Million*—the plan to mobilize and equip 1 million lay people for evangelism. And the *Year of World Evangelism 2004* will be, in part, a reaping from these earlier outreach initiatives.

***Sow 1 Billion* Timeline**

A general timeline has been developed for *Sow 1 Billion*, setting out goals for preparing and distributing *Sow 1 Billion* brochures, preparing Bible study delivery systems, and reporting back on results.

This timeline is based in large part on a plan of action voted by division Bible Correspondence School directors meeting in Sydney, Australia, earlier this year. It has also been shaped by the work of the General Conference *Sow 1 Billion* Taskforce.

Although general targets are identified, it is understood that some areas face special challenges, and will be forced to move at a slower pace.

2002	
October 9	<i>Sow 1 Billion</i> approved by General Conference executive committee
2003	
March 9-13	Division Bible Correspondence School directors vote plan of action in response to <i>Sow 1 Billion</i> challenge
March 25	Division <i>Sow 1 Billion</i> coordinators discuss issues with their division administration
April 15	<p>Division <i>Sow 1 Billion</i> coordinators to consult with union counterparts to develop a Bible School/<i>Sow 1 Billion</i> strategy.</p> <p>Division coordinators work with division communication departments to develop awareness and communication strategy.</p> <p>Adventist Television Network uplink from the Council on Evangelism and Witness, featuring Go One Million, <i>Sow 1 Billion</i>, Year of World Evangelism 2004.</p>
April 25	Division coordinators develop a Bible School/ <i>Sow 1 Billion</i> strategy; assign responsibility, dates and accountability.
May 1	<p>Division coordinators send to General Conference all information required for the release of <i>Sow 1 Billion</i> funds.</p> <p>Division coordinators send web site address, web master name, and e-mail address to Kurt Johnson, Voice of Prophecy, to begin centralizing online Bible study resources.</p> <p>If division does not have a web site, Bible correspondence lessons to be sent to Kurt Johnson on a disk. These lessons will be hosted by the Voice of Prophecy web site.</p>

July 1	<p><i>Sow 1 Billion</i> coordinators launch division-wide prayer ministry for <i>Sow 1 Billion</i>.</p> <p>Print <i>Sow 1 Billion</i> literature and transport to distribution points.</p> <p>Finalize distribution plan for <i>Sow 1 Billion</i>.</p>
August 1	Finalize strategy for equipping and training church members for local Bible study ministries.
August 15	Print Bible lessons.
September 1	<p>www.hopetalk.org web site launched—portal site for online Bible studies in up to 100 languages. Divisions ensure their web sites are ready to handle traffic.</p> <p>Begin distribution of <i>Sow 1 Billion</i> literature.</p> <p>Communication focus on <i>Sow 1 Billion</i> in Adventist media.</p>
December 1	Submit a preliminary report to General Conference coordinator (see Procedures for Release of <i>Sow 1 Billion</i> funds).
December 31	Number of local church Bible School ministries to equal 10 percent of the number of churches in a conference.
2004	
August	Division coordinators begin assessing response and compiling reports.
June	Division coordinators submit a final report to General Conference coordinator on use of <i>Sow 1 Billion</i> funds (see Procedures for Release of <i>Sow 1 Billion</i> funds).
October	Initial reports from divisions presented to Annual Council.
December	Number of local church Bible School ministries to equal 20 percent of the number of churches in a conference
2005	
December	Number of local church Bible School ministries to equal 30 percent of the number of churches in a conference.

Guidelines for *Sow 1 Billion* Brochures

1. The brochure must contain an invitation to study the Bible—this is its primary purpose.
2. The back of the brochure is to contain contact information where an individual can request Bible studies (postal addresses and/or phone numbers and/or internet addresses).
3. The theme of the brochure should be based on the Great Controversy: the struggle between good and evil. Divisions are also encouraged to use the idea of living in an uncertain world: “Don’t be Afraid.”
4. The brochure should not be “information heavy,” but should simply serve as a means to capture people’s interest, raise questions, and offer a way to find answers.
5. While the purpose, theme, and basic design concept of this brochure should remain consistent around the world, each division or union is encouraged to make sure the photos, layout, language, and text are culturally appropriate.
6. Divisions and unions are encouraged to ensure that the size of the brochure makes it easy for individuals to carry easily, and hand out during the course of their day-to-day activities.
7. On request, the design template of the sample brochure will be made available to each division in an electronic format (either as a Quark, Pagemaker, Adobe Indesign, or PDF file). Divisions and unions are free to adapt and use this template.

Procedures for Release of *Sow 1 Billion* Funds

Before receiving *Sow 1 Billion* funds, divisions must:

1. Provide a list of the names of division and union *Sow 1 Billion* coordinators.
2. Provide a list of languages into which the brochure will be translated, and the countries in which it will be distributed.
3. Comply with the *Sow 1 Billion* Brochure Guidelines in preparing their brochures.
4. Prepare a comprehensive plan for distribution of the brochures.
5. Prepare a comprehensive plan for ensuring that there is a strong follow-up infrastructure in place before distribution of the brochure begins. This plan must assess and improve readiness in areas including:
 - a. Bible correspondence schools
 - b. Internet Bible studies
 - c. Local churches
 - d. One-on-one Bible studies by individual church members
 - e. All other means available for delivering Bible studies

After receiving *Sow 1 Billion* funds, divisions must:

6. Submit a preliminary report six months after receiving the funds. The report should detail the number of brochures printed, languages in which they were printed, countries in which they have been/are being distributed.
7. Submit a report one year after receiving the funds, documenting distribution of the brochures, response to brochures, and follow-up to requests for Bible studies. The report should also show that *Sow 1 Billion* funds were used for the purpose of printing the brochures, with the understanding that any excess funds must be returned to the General Conference at this time.

Critical issues for *Sow 1 Billion* coordinators

The General Conference *Sow 1 Billion* Taskforce has prepared the following materials for division *Sow 1 Billion* coordinators. It is intended to highlight important issues and suggest creative models in five important areas:

1. Communication strategy.
2. Inter-departmental cooperation.
3. Distribution of *Sow 1 Billion* brochures.
4. Delivering Bible studies.
5. Working with other global evangelistic initiatives.

1. COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

Raising widespread awareness of *Sow 1 Billion* is a key challenge. Lay people, pastors and church administrators around the world need to understand the goals of this outreach initiative, and hear the call to participate.

In this task, each division *Sow 1 Billion* coordinator should engage his communication department in helping develop a communication plan.

A communication plan should:

A. Identify audiences to be reached, including:

1. Church members in the pew
2. Pastors
3. Church leadership
4. Adventist communication channels

B. Identify different communication channels that can be use to share information about *Sow 1 Billion*.

C. Develop key message points about *Sow 1 Billion* that can be used to communicate the urgency of the initiative, and inspire church members to catch a vision for being a part of the distribution and follow-up effort.

D. Develop a timeline for building a communication momentum, and identify the methods to be used.

2. INTER-DEPARTMENTAL COOPERATION

Sow 1 Billion will rely on the support and participation of all departments of the world church to:

- A. Help ignite a sense of excitement about this worldwide effort.
- B. Help solicit the involvement of all church members.
- C. Be directly involved in distribution through activities or events sponsored by the department.

Ideas for encouraging departments to work together in raising awareness of, and encouraging participation in, Sow 1 Billion.

- A. In-house communication. We first need to raise awareness of *Sow 1 Billion* among our own colleagues and departmental leaders.
- B. Request department directors to assess their planned programs and events over the coming year, and indicate how these could be used to raise awareness of *Sow 1 Billion*, and encourage participation. For example, youth rallies, Pathfinder events, women's ministries events, etc.
- C. Request departments to feature *Sow 1 Billion* regularly in their newsletters and communications.
- D. Request the Ministerial Association to place special emphasis on *Sow 1 Billion* in its communications, highlighting the vital role of local pastors in facilitating distribution.
- E. Contact Adventist professional associations, soliciting their support in raising awareness and distribution.
- F. Introduce *Sow 1 Billion* at all institutional board meetings over the coming year, in order to solicit active support, and participation in distribution. (Health food industries, publishing houses, health systems, educational institutions.)
- G. Place *Sow 1 Billion* on the agenda of teachers' meetings and other workers' meetings over the coming year.

3. DISTRIBUTION OF *SOW 1 BILLION* BROCHURES

Each division coordinator is requested to:

- A. Address with their unions and conferences the issue of *strategic* distribution of *Sow 1 Billion* brochures. While conditions for distribution will vary greatly around the world, each local region will need to develop a plan for distributing the *Sow 1 Billion* brochures in a way that avoids duplication of efforts, and covers the greatest possible territory.
- B. Encourage the creation of *Sow 1 Billion* committees not only at the union level, but at the conference and local church level. These committees would have a special responsibility for ensuring that the brochures are distributed according to each region's distribution plan.

The following suggestions are intended to assist divisions in developing their own distribution strategies.

- A. ***Ideas for encouraging individual church members to commit to distributing a specific number of brochures:***
 - a. Special promotions in the local church during "Church Life" time.
 - b. *Sow 1 Billion* posters in every local church.
 - c. Advertisement in the Sabbath School Bible Study Guides.
 - d. Official letter from conference/mission president to be read out in churches.
 - e. Assigning goals for conferences/missions, institutions, local churches, and individual members to encourage personal responsibility.
- B. ***Ways to build partnerships with different Adventist organizations and lay supporting groups for the distribution of brochures:***
 - a. All church departments and services working together (see inter-departmental cooperation ideas).
 - b. All Adventist schools mobilize the student body for "Special Distribution Day."
 - c. Adventist hospitals and clinics serving as distribution centers for visitors and patients.
 - d. Publishing house and ABC/HHES workers distributing to customers, friends and relatives.
- C. ***Ideas for *Sow 1 Billion* promotional events to build lay involvement:***
 - a. Personal & Sabbath School Lay Congresses.
 - b. Youth Congresses.
 - c. Literature Evangelists' Conventions.
 - d. *Sow 1 Billion* Promotional Month.
 - e. Camp meetings.

D. Possible Distribution Strategies

- a. Literature display rack in every church.
- b. Saturation campaigns, by giving territorial assignments to church member groups.
- c. Local church develop plans for “Literature Distribution Week” or “*Sow 1 Billion* Week,” when all members will be encouraged to participate with the motivation to reach individual goals.
- d. “Saturation Drive” as part of groundwork for all evangelistic series, especially during the Year of Evangelism 2004.
- e. Pathfinder Clubs campaign.
- f. Dedicating a “Pocket to the Lord.”
- g. House-to-house distribution.

4. DELIVERING BIBLE STUDIES

Sow 1 Billion is not just about distributing 1,000 million invitations for Bible study; it is also about being prepared to handle the volume of Bible study requests generated.

It is important to identify every avenue of Bible study delivery, and consider how each delivery system can be enhanced.

Bible study delivery methods include:

- A. Bible Correspondence Schools, and Bible study ministries operated by lay supporting ministries.
- B. Online Bible studies, either posted on a Bible Correspondence School web site, lay supporting ministry website, or division web site.
- C. Local church Bible School ministries (known in North America as “Discover Bible Schools”).
- D. One-on-one Bible studies by church members (using printed lessons, or DVD lessons).
- E. Small group Bible studies by church members.

Existing plans for increasing the church’s capacity to deliver Bible studies include:

A. Expansion of local church-based Bible School ministries

Bible Correspondence School directors from each division met earlier this year, in part to discuss challenges presented by *Sow 1 Billion*. They voted a plan of action to increase the number of Bible School ministries operating in local churches. These local church ministries would be affiliated with one of the church’s 110 Bible Correspondence Schools.

The plan of action calls for new local church-based Bible Schools to be established according to the following formula:

December 31, 2003	The number of church-based Bible schools to equal 10 percent of the number of churches in a conference.
December 31, 2004	The number of church-based Bible schools to equal 20 percent of the number of churches in a conference.
December 31, 2005	The number of church-based Bible schools to equal 30 percent of the number of churches in a conference. Further, the capacity of the total number of Bible Schools will be equal to the church membership of each conference.

B. Development of special Internet site for online Bible study delivery

Adventist-laymen’s Services and Industries is leading out in the development of a web site that will bring together the church’s existing online Bible study lessons. The goal is to maximize the resources that already exist—the web site will offer Bible study courses in up to 100 different languages, from a variety of sources, including: Voice of Prophecy, It is Written, Bible Correspondence Schools, and Amazing Facts.

This unique web site, www.hopetalk.org is being developed by Tagnet, a lay supporting ministry. Bible studies can be fully completed online. “Location recognition” software will allow the web site to refer individuals to an Adventist center near them—such as their closest union or division office.

The Hopetalk address can be listed by divisions on the *Sow 1 Billion* brochure as one of the contact options. Those divisions or unions that choose to list a local web site address can also link to www.hopetalk.org

6. WORKING WITH OTHER GLOBAL EVANGELISTIC INITIATIVES

Sow 1 Billion cannot work in isolation—it must be seen as a part of the world church’s other evangelistic efforts, including *Go One Million* and *Year of World Evangelism 2004*. These three initiatives do not compete; they work together in a complementary way toward common goals—refocusing the church on mission; energizing and involving lay people; and inviting as many people as possible to learn about God’s saving love.



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