

PROJECT NO: 102480

TAX | NON-TAX

Sri Lanka



Literacy for the Young



Overview

Each year, the Ceylon Bible Society aim to run literacy classes through the network of churches and Christian organisations in Sri Lanka, especially in rural, slum and undeveloped areas. These classes increase the access to the Scriptures for those who are uneducated and neglected in the undeveloped areas of Sri Lanka.

The Need

Despite the official literacy rate for Sri Lanka — 92.3% in 2019, in a population of 21.4 million people — there are still a significant number of people in rural areas, slums, undeveloped areas and among ethnic minority groups who do not have proper access to education. These include street children, children and youth in orphanages, underprivileged children, disabled children, those growing up in slum areas and poor children growing up in rural areas who don't even have their basic needs met. The financial crises of 2022 have increased the needs of the people, with 28% of the population facing food insecurity and the poverty rate doubling in the last year. Churches have been trying to reach out to children and young people who have some literacy, but struggle in reading and writing in their mother language. Yet the churches have lacked a systematic approach and have approached Bible Society asking for assistance.

21.4m
people living in Sri Lanka.

1.25m
adult non-literates in Sri Lanka.

7.67%
of people are Christians.

Goals

The goal of this project is to provide reading, listening and writing skills to non-literate youth and children, so they can access Scripture for their own personal growth, as well as contribute to the development of their communities. Planned over three years, the project's focus will be on young people who have little access to education, and to young people helped by churches to improve

their literacy skills, so they can read the Bible for themselves.

The classes will be run in the Sinhala and Tamil languages and include reading Scripture through simple Bible stories (both printed and digital), explaining stories from the Bible and Christian books, and covering simple teachings of Jesus, Gospel parables, songs and other audio material.

In 2023, the plan is to develop Bible Society's materials based on the experience and lessons learned from the pilot programs in 2022. There will also be Training and Capacity-building workshops for 25 teachers each year, so they can have a clear idea of what and how they teach the children.

Impact

At the end of this project, the Ceylon Bible Society expects to have impacted 1,200 beneficiaries.

Utilising the newly revised materials in the weekly 2-hour classes, facilitators will be able to target and serve 800 students per year.

Testimonies

"This literacy class that the Ceylon Bible Society is conducting is a great blessing to our Church. Most of the children in our church are unable to read and write. From this literacy class, we can find such children in our church. God has given us a blessing to find such students and make their future brighter."

Jagath, Pastor of the Gospel Tabernacle Church

"On the first day, the teachers taught me how to read and write letters. From the very first day, I felt that participating in this class will be beneficial to my future...After learning to read and write, my ambition in life is to become a good businessman."

Literacy student, 2022

Prayer Needs

- Pray for the people who are suffering due to the economic crisis in Sri Lanka, as poverty rates doubled in 2022 and many people face food insecurity.
- Pray for enough trained people to facilitate the literacy classes.
- Pray for the Bible Society Literacy team as they travel through the country, training and implementing the program.
- Pray for the protection of participants and their families, as the area is often at risk of natural disaster.

