

Egypt: Literacy for Adults and Children

Overview

The Children and Adult Post Literacy project aims to build on newly learnt literary skills in students of all ages and prevent a relapse into illiteracy. This project makes Scriptures available, accessible and affordable to adults and children.

Additionally, the project facilitates personal and spiritual development as individuals accept responsibility and take initiative for their ongoing learning.

The Need

The quality of education in Egypt is low on the world scale. Teaching styles can sometimes be rigid; pupil participation is not encouraged enough. Many schools have poor infrastructure. Children often fail to properly learn literacy skills and a lack of practice can cause them to fall back into illiteracy.

Without this life skill, opportunities are limited, and personal confidence is also reduced.

This need is greater than ever, as children have missed out on school and church activities during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Those who are illiterate often have poor communication skills and difficulties in focusing, listening, and understanding.



Project Goals

The Children and Adult Post Literacy Project has been running for 23 years, with the aim of benefiting the lower socio-economic segment of Egyptian society, particularly in the North. It is continuously recruiting new students and new teachers, seeking to expand into new churches and new areas.

Using a participatory method, the project not only helps the students to develop their reading and writing skills but encourages them to develop personal responsibility and a desire for change. The programs begin with well known Bible stories and passages, progressing on to more complex ones. Each student also receives a package containing Scripture portions, exercise books, audio material, games, exercises and activities that contribute to their reading and writing skills.

Operating throughout Egypt, this project is intended predominantly for school children (90 per cent) but also for adults who have just learned to read and write.

Each year, the aim is to impact 10,000 students over a period of 18-24 months. The project will run 700 classes led by 500-800 trained volunteer facilitators, trained and encouraged by 21 supervisors. There are usually 10-15 students per class, and they meet weekly.

It takes about 1 1/2 to 2 years to go completely through the program, but there is wide variance. All program materials are subsidised to minimise costs and allow for greater participation.

Impact

The impact of the program is seen as students develop a lifestyle of literacy, ensuring a continuity of learning. This impact is encouraged by the curriculum, which follows the philosophy of education by participation, a very different from the style of learning generally used in Egyptian education system. Learners are encouraged to think for themselves, discuss and participate in the process.

The impact is further seen in that those who are involved in the program nearly always become involved in the church. Their improved literacy skills make church more meaningful to them, as they are better able to participate and contribute.

Testimonies

"Inside myself, when I (was) alone, I was angry with myself because I feel I am a liar...(But) now I am free from pretending! I really know how to read and write. Actually, I am fluent in reading the Bible, which is more difficult than any schoolbook. Now I share in reading of the prayers in church. I do not need to lie anymore. I am not pretending anymore."
Bishoy, 11-years-old, 5th Grade.

Prayer Needs

- Pray for efficiency and creativity in developing new resources and flexible programs for Bible engagement, especially in the context of the ongoing COVID pandemic.
- Pray for a better understanding of the Scriptures for all students who take part in this project.
- Pray for security and a continued increase and growth in the program, despite the political uncertainty and upheaval of the country.