



86224 - South Africa
Project Fact Sheet 2022

If you can read you can learn, Literacy in South Africa

Overview

In a country that is desperate for change, Bible Society is working to offer hope with God's powerful word through South Africa's greatest chance for the future – its children. This project provides Bible-based literacy material for use in teaching basic literacy skills to

foundation (primary) level students in disadvantaged areas. This assists them greatly with their formal education through the school system, as well as introducing them to the Bible at a very early age.

The Need

South Africa has suffered extreme poverty, violence and a history of racism. Almost 22% of South Africans (over 12 million people) live in extreme poverty, living on less than US\$2.34 a day and unable to afford basic nutritional requirements. Education is critical for the development of the country, but the system is experiencing real challenges.

Many primary school students, especially in disadvantaged areas, cannot read or perform basic addition.

More than 80% of students from disadvantaged beginnings will not reach the highest level of school. Part of the problem lies in early childhood development.

In poor areas of South Africa (about 50% of the population) children are not exposed to literacy in their earliest years. Many children do not have the privilege of attending Grade R (reception class) and are already behind when they start Grade 1.

Project Goals

The target audience for this project is children from poorer areas who attend government schools in the foundation phase. In order to reach these children, the “Do and Learn” program was adapted into a Bible-based program and published into South African languages.

The goal of this project is to promote basic literacy, as well as Bible literacy, in the first three years of formal schooling, through Bible based literacy material.

The goal is to help children beginning their formal schooling, and also assist those further along, who have just started to read. As well as helping the children become literate, it will also give them familiarity with the Bible from an early age.

In 2022, the project will continue the roll out of three literacy booklets, distributing a minimum of 100,000 sets. The literacy materials provided by Bible Society will also include posters, flash cards, children’s booklets and teacher manuals. They have been developed so the program does not need a highly qualified teacher to work through the materials.

Because of the hindrances of the pandemic over the last two years, Bible Society’s literacy material will play an even more significant role in 2022, as it will assist teachers in catching students up on the reading and numeracy skills they missed out on developing.

Impact

In 2021, 92,205 literacy books (across three levels of learning) were distributed to students in need.

The impact of this project will be seen among young children from mainly disadvantaged areas, who will benefit

from receiving basic literacy training which will help them with their formal education.

The full impact will be seen as the children succeed in their progression through formal schooling. The project will also introduce the Bible to children at a very early age.

Testimonies

“Thank you so much for the literacy materials. They opened a door to talk to the children about the Lord.”

- Mrs Niva from Concordia Primary School in Boksburg, Gauteng

“These booklets are age-appropriate, and they are also grade-appropriate and if you can look at them, they are user-friendly. These books could restore the moral values of our children, like respect, loyalty, dedication, commitment, and above all love. This material could be used as a tool to build and nurture our learners to be responsible citizens of this country.”

- Mrs Zanele of the Free State Education Department, a speaker at the launch of the Sesotho material by Bible Society.

Prayer Needs

- Pray that the children would leave the foundation phase as better readers with increased numeracy skills.
- Pray that the children would learn about God from an early age as they Open The Bible.
- Pray that the skills and material the children receive may also help their parents who cannot read and write to acquire these skills.
- Pray that 100,000 booklets will be distributed over the next year.