

# Lebanon: Literacy Skills for Refugees and Underprivileged Communities

## Overview

This project aims to provide children in refugee communities in Lebanon – and in the underprivileged communities who host them – with a Bible-based literacy

course designed to help them back into the formal education system.

## The Need

The number of Syrian and Iraqi refugees in Lebanon is now well above two million people. More than 50 per cent of these refugees are aged 17 or younger.

Integrating these children into Lebanon's school system is a challenge, as they face social, economic and bureaucratic obstacles, as well as language difficulties, particularly in science and math. Many don't go back to formal education, because of these difficulties.

Education exclusion has negative implications for social wellbeing and exposes already vulnerable children to greater risks.

This lack of education can reverberate for generations; these children will have more difficulty in meeting the physical, economic, social and political demands for reconstructing their countries.

According to a study by Human Rights Watch in 2016, more than half of the nearly 500,000 school-aged Syrian children registered in Lebanon are not enrolled in formal education. Some of these children have never stepped inside a classroom.

## Project Goals

Bible Society Lebanon is seeking to provide these children a safe and loving environment where they can take a literacy course - based on the Bible - to help them get back to the formal education system.

The project involves a three-month program of 2-3 sessions per week, which includes reading and listening to Bible stories in a safe and positive atmosphere.

The programs are designed to specifically meet the needs of refugee children. All participants receive their own copies of Scripture along with an audio CD.

The project aims to reach 4,000 Syrian and Iraqi refugees overall, per year.

In 2022, 1,000 children will learn the Arabic level 1 curriculum and 1,000 will learn the Arabic level 2. Also in 2022, due to high demand, Bible Society plans to introduce an English level 1 curriculum, for those who have successfully achieved the Arabic level 2. It is hoped that 2,000 children will learn the English curriculum.

## Impact

The impact of this project can be seen in the improvement in literacy of the children, and in their desire to read more. It has also been observed that the major Bible stories are becoming common knowledge amongst the students.

A number of participating churches have requested that the program be increased in their local community, demonstrating a strong appetite for these materials and training which enable disadvantaged children to learn more about God's message.

## Testimonies

"The Biblical Arabic literacy class is one of the most important and enjoyable programs ...! Watching videos about how did God create the world, Noah, Abraham... motivate me to focus more on the lesson. After the class, a LOT of information are learned! I feel that I cannot keep them to myself so I share them with my family."

- Siham\*, 11 years old.

"I have now the opportunity not only to learn how to read and write but to also know more about Jesus. I want to be a doctor when I grow up, I want to help others and heal them like he did".

-Samir\*, 8 years old, Beirut.

## Prayer Needs

- Pray that Bible Society will be able to show God's love to children who have come from desperate situations.
- Pray that more children will be encouraged and enabled to integrate into the formal education system.
- Pray for those refugees and underprivileged children whose disadvantaged situations have been dramatically increased by the economic and financial crisis in Lebanon since 2020.

\*names changed for security reasons