



82513 – Myanmar
Project Fact Sheet 2022

Myanmar: Literacy Through Listening

Overview

In partnership with churches, the Bible Society of Myanmar is running the 'Literacy Through Listening' program, which focuses on the Sgaw Karen and Asho Chin ethnic groups as well as the Myanmar native speakers.

The Need

The population of Myanmar is about 54 million, with between 80- 89% practicing Buddhism. Christians constitute around 6.2% of the population. The government recognizes 135 different ethnic groups and estimates that there are about 200 spoken languages in Myanmar. The main ethnic groups are Kachin, Kayar, Kayin, Chin, Bamar, Mon, Rakhine and Shan.

While literacy rates across the country have improved dramatically in recent decades, there are still many people who need access to an education in literacy.

To date, the government has not encouraged literacy development for ethnic minority groups in their respective mother languages.

Sgaw Karen people have the biggest population among the ethnic minorities, and the largest Christian population. Surprisingly, there are many illiterate Karen communities, particularly in remote areas. Asho Chin communities also experience very low rates of literacy, and have a sizeable Christian population (around 40%).



Project Goals

This project will mainly focus on raising literacy levels in 100 villages among Sgaw Karen, 50 villages among Myanmar speaking communities and 30 villages among A sho Chin speaking communities. The project aims to improve literacy rates in these three languages using audio material. Scripture portions for new readers, New Testaments and comics will also be made available. Workshops, training sessions and village visits will take place in different communities for an initial period of five years.

In 2022, the goal is to reach 1,500 adults among the Sgaw Karen people in rural areas, through 100 classes. Ten workshops will be held for 100 new facilitators. January to March will be book and material preparation time; in April to June awareness of the course will be built in the target areas; July to September will be the learning period, and October to December will be the presentation of certificates of completion.

Impact

Eradicating illiteracy will help the people to be able to claim their basic human right and access Scripture for themselves and gain the knowledge of the Gospel.

It is expected that the Karen people will genuinely receive the light of God's love through the literacy books, as these books are Bible based and contain tasks

relating to God's love.

The use of the books will impact students, as they are not only for literacy skills but also for their spiritual growth in the knowledge of God.

Testimonies

"Although I am Karen, I cannot speak and read Karen well. Whenever I think about that I feel so shy... God knows my feeling and HE open the door for me to learn Karen language... Because of this class I can read and write our mother language. Now I can know the meaning and pronunciation exactly and deeply. Whatever I learn from this class I will share to our next generation. I am deeply thankful to God for giving me this opportunity..."

- Law Eh Paw Wah, Nyaung Lay Bin Village.

Prayer Needs

- Please pray that this literacy program will be well established in the rural villages and accepted by the people.
- Please pray also that this project will play a vital role in bringing the Gospel to those searching for truth.
- Pray for safety and wellbeing of the Bible Society staff and local facilitators.