



Reading and Writing through the Scriptures - *Literacy in Togo*

Overview

Togo, officially the Togolese Republic, is a country in West Africa bordered by Ghana to the west, Benin to the east and Burkina Faso to the north. Togo is a tiny slip of land (a width of less than 115 km from east to west), with a population of approximately 8 million.

This project is designed to help illiterate women in poor rural areas learn to read and write through the Scriptures.

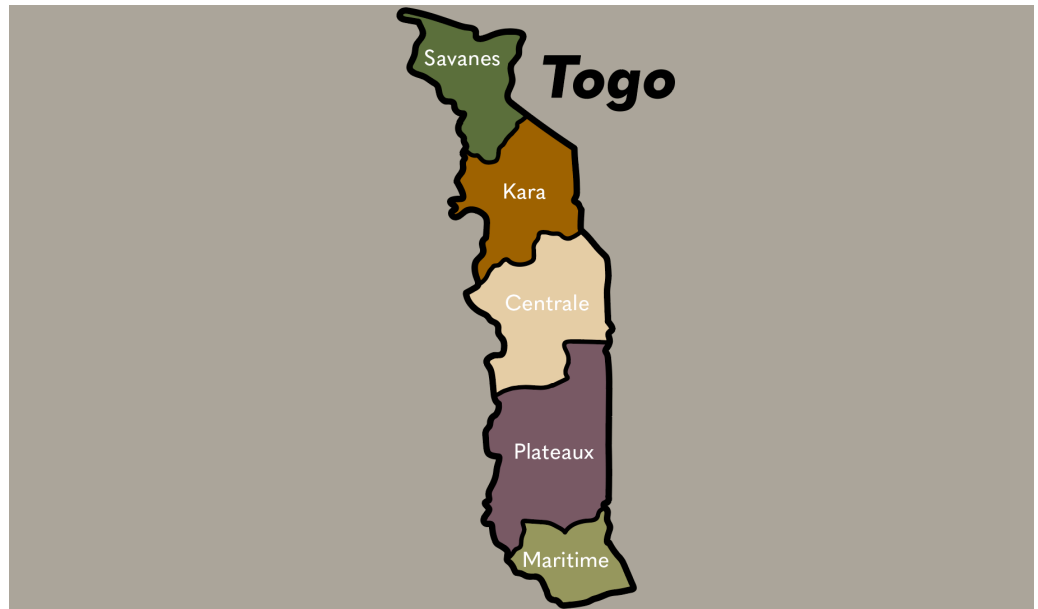
39 distinct languages are spoken in Togo, although its official language is French.

The two most widely spoken indigenous languages – Ewe and Kabiye – are ‘national languages’ and are used in formal education and in the media. These two languages, along with Ikposso, Bassar and Lama, are the literacy focus of this project.

The Need

Two fifths of Togo’s population are illiterate. However, there is a region and gender divide which sharply accentuates that figure. The Savanes (Savannah) in the north is the poorest region with a poverty rate of 90.8%. Illiteracy and poverty go hand-in-hand. Illiteracy in that region is close to 70%. Central’s poverty rate is 80.2%, with illiteracy at 42.2%.

Poverty also leads to early drop-outs from state-funded education. The most dominant age category of out-of-school children is between 12-15 years.



Project Goals

Bible Society of Togo has developed the project to align with major education objectives set by the government:

- To extend literacy and non-formal education programs to illiterate young people and adults aged 15-45 and to children aged 9-14 excluded from the education system.
- To reorganise and strengthen the institutional framework for literacy and non-formal education.

This project will enable the beneficiaries to read and write their mother tongue. Using the Literacy and Evangelism International (LEI) model, the program will initially focus on up to 1,000 illiterate women.

The Project will be offered in five languages: Ikposso, Lama, Kabiye, Bassar and Ewe, impacting up to 4,000 people (including the students, family members of those attending class, along with teachers and supervisors) in villages located in Plateaux, Centrale, Savanne and Kara.

Impact

That participants will be empowered by their increased literacy in their heart language. This will have a flow on effect across families and communities.

As they grow in confidence, these newly literate adolescents and adults will have a stronger connection to the Word of God, giving the beneficiaries a renewed sense of Jesus' love for them and their families.

Testimony

"Since finishing these (literacy) classes, we have been doing family worship every day...We have found a solution to some of our problems and we understand even better how God loves us through the Lord Jesus." - **A participant from the Kara Tchinchindaa Parish**

Prayer Needs

- That funding will be available to ensure the training workshops and literacy classes can begin on schedule.
- That those most in need may find places in the classes.
- That local churches and partners will appoint facilitators for the program.