



South Sudan - 100525

Literacy for Non-Literate Shilluks - *Bible Engagement in South Sudan*

Overview

This literacy project aims to bring growth and reconciliation to people in South Sudan - one of the world's most troubled nations.

By providing Bibles to Shilluk Christians in their native language and offering literacy classes to help people learn to read and write, this project will give Christians the ability to read and put into practice the word of God.

The Need

In the ten years since they received their independence, social unrest, armed conflicts, tribal disputes and other challenges continue to impact the daily lives of the South Sudanese. South Sudan has a high rate of illiteracy; according to a 2018 Global Report on Literacy, only 34.5% of the population is literate. With 70 major ethnic groups – each with its own language – only 1 out of 10 women and 3 out of 10 men are able to read in any language.

The high rate of illiteracy in South Sudan is due to the armed conflicts that devastated Sudan for decades before the split of the country in 2011, and the suffering incurred by the longest-running civil war in Africa.

The Shilluk people in particular (of whom about 45% are Christian) were badly affected by the conflict. Illiteracy concerns mostly women above the age of 15.

It is in this context that the Bible Society considers this literacy project a priority, to help Shilluk Christians read the Bible in their own language. A focus on adult literacy is crucial for many areas of life: reading the Bible, learning basic rules of sanitation for their homes, selling or buying in a marketplace, and helping children with schooling at home.



Project Details

This project will enable Shilluk churches to help the non-literate communities around them to read and understand the word of God and thereby empower them to receive the message of love, hope and reconciliation in the context of a troubled world.

In 2021 the goal is to teach 1,000 students (500 women, 200 men and 300 children). It is hoped that in imparting literacy skills, they will be able to improve their family health, be able to read the Bible for themselves and participate in both church and social activities.

Bible Society believes that each graduate of the literacy project will in turn reach 10 non-literate family members, friends or neighbours.

Measuring Impact

It is hoped across the four-year life of this project the whole Shilluk people group, 1 500 000 people, will be impacted.

The project will focus on teaching literacy to the Shilluk people. It is anticipated that literacy will have a great impact on the Shilluk people, including helping people to learn how to build better relationships and minimize conflicts between communities.

Being able to access the Bible themselves will help Shilluk Christians to become an example to others when it comes to reconciliation and living in harmony, for the rebuilding of their nation. The word of God has power to bring healing for the many who have lost loved ones in the conflict, who may be living with bitterness and hatred.

Testimony

Monique is just one of the many who has benefited from the literacy class by the Bible Society in South Sudan. She says, "Before I was not confident enough to participate in singing and reading of the Bibles, because I could not read and write. But now after joining literacy class, I have gained confidence in serving my Lord by joining the choir and reading of the Bible to the congregation. I can read the Bible to my family and pray to God with full understanding of His Word."

Prayer Needs

- Pray for those who will take the step to begin literacy classes.
- Pray for the volunteers - that volunteer numbers would increase and that these people would be equipped to teach effectively.
- Pray for peace and reconciliation in South Sudan.