

# Bangladesh

TAX  
Project No: 72123



## Literacy Skills for Underprivileged Women

### Overview

The Bangladesh Bible Society (BBS) are reaching non-literate women with the word of God through a literacy course in the rural areas of Bangladesh, giving them the opportunity to read and write, as well as listen and interact with the Bible. In turn, the skills they learn enable the women to teach their children, impacting their families and their church communities.



### The Need

There are around 172 million people in Bangladesh, and only around 74% are functionally literate. Most people in rural areas cannot read the Bible, or any book. Women living in remote areas of Bangladesh are poor and have had very little opportunity to access an education.

Many of these non-literate adults have a desire to learn and study. Some have the Scripture available to them, and are hungry for the word of God, even though they are not able to read it. They are eager for an education, so they can read God's word.

Although the Christian population of Bangladesh is at 0.3%, in the target communities of this literacy course, the majority have Christian faith; the Garo community are all Christians, the Santalis are 95% Christian, and the rest are Bengali Christians.

# 172m

people in Bangladesh

# 74%

of the population are functionally literate

# 61%

of the population live in rural areas

**"I seek you with all my heart; do not let me stray from your commands."**

Psalm 119:10, NIV

# Goals

The ultimate goal of the project is to teach literacy skills to 1,500 women each year.

Each year, 500 women begin the literacy classes in 75 rural classes, with the program lasting for three years. They meet five days a week for 1.5-hour lessons, in which they listen to lessons and learn to read with the help of a facilitator. The goal is that they will be able to read the newspapers, books, and the Bengali Common Language Bible.

BBS plan to distribute 500 Bibles each year to those who join the literacy classes, along with literacy books, audio Scripture for the classes, and 50 sewing machines for the third-year groups to share. The goal is to see 500 students graduate each year.

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# Impact

Each student will be impacted as, by gaining literacy skills, they are encouraged towards independence in supporting their families. In the final year of studies, BBS provide sewing machines, cattle and small aids for farming also. In addition to this, graduates gain the necessary literacy skills to deal with government communications, legal matters and health related issues.

The women will come to understand the word of God through the curriculum and share their experience among their children and their neighbours. The indirect impact of this project each year is 6,000, as each student influences at least 4 people, passing on their new skills to their families.

The impact of the project increases again as each woman is able to participate and preach in their church communities and local gatherings.

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# Testimonies

"Before attending this class I could not read any book ... I desired to read and write but I did not have any opportunity to do so. Even I did not know Bible stories. I was so curious to know about Jesus Christ, and my desire has been fulfilled after attending this literacy class. I personally came to know Jesus from stories which are given in the literacy books and CDs. I decided to lead my life according to the teaching of Jesus because I received him in my life." — Mina, 45-year-old wife and mother and a new believer.

"The teaching from the Bible stories in literacy class helped in my life and changed me. I realised that I got peace from Jesus that brings a joy in my life. I got the opportunity to know Jesus deeply during these classes. I learned how to love my neighbors, even love my enemies." — Protima, 40-year-old mother of four children. She came from a Hindu family, but was interested to know Jesus, and joined in the literacy class in her village church.

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# Prayer Needs

- Pray that God would give the students wisdom to learn, and perseverance to continue through the three years of study.
- Please pray for the first-year students who struggle to read and write. Pray that God gives them wisdom to learn.
- Pray for protection and provision for the participants, as they also strive for stable food, shelter and good health.
- Pray that the yearly monsoon season and the heavy rain it brings would not affect the lessons.