

# Solomon Islands

TAX

Project No: 103046



## Opening Eyes Through Literacy

### Overview

Bible Society Australia is partnering with the Bible Society of the South Pacific and the Literacy Association, Solomon Islands, to implement the literacy project, 'Open My Eyes'. This project is aimed at increasing literacy, and equipping people to read and engage with the Scriptures, which have now been translated into many local languages.



### The Need

While 90% of Solomon Islanders surveyed had some formal schooling, functional literacy rates in major provinces can be as low as 7 to 17%. Young people lack the education and experience they need to find paid work, which is a major problem in the Solomon Islands.

There is good availability of Scriptures in local languages, with the New Testament translated into 19 languages so far, and the full Bible into three, including the Pijin language, which is widely spoken.

However, with literacy rates so low, reading the Scriptures — let alone understanding them — is a struggle for many people. Many youths and adults also struggle to participate in church activities because of illiteracy, and are deprived of the confidence they need to participate in their communities. The lack of functional literacy constrains the life and livelihood of many Solomon Islanders.

# 680,000

people live in the Solomon Islands

# 75

languages have been recorded in the Solomon Islands (4 of which are now extinct)

# 7-17%

rate of functional literacy in major provinces

# 97.4%

of the population are affiliated with Christianity

**"Open my eyes that I may see wonderful things in your law."**

Psalms 119:18, NIV

# Goals

This project's goal is to collaborate with local literacy agencies and churches to promote reading and writing, specifically with a focus on languages in Malaita Province, known for its linguistic diversity, including Baeggu, Kwaio, and Fataleka.

By 2026, the project aims to empower 1,500 individuals to attain literacy in their native languages. Through 10 annual literacy training events, literacy teachers will be equipped with skills to teach literacy to others, and to pass on the training they receive.

Through developing literacy, this project aims to enable involvement in community activities, address youth unemployment and other social issues such as domestic violence and sexual exploitation of women (linked with illiteracy). An additional aim of the project is to deepen the connection between participants and the Scriptures, encouraging daily Bible reading and study. This will enable them to actively engage in church.

In 2024, the plan is to enrol 480 students with 10 teachers, aiming for 300 graduates. 1,500 literacy primers, supplementary reading materials, and 500 copies of Scripture will be distributed.

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# Impact

Around 1,000 people will be impacted directly by this project, learning literacy skills, and being equipped to read and engage with the Bible, actively participate in church and community life, and better their lives and livelihoods.

In addition to this, school children will also benefit as the community are able to supply trained literacy teachers from the course, to conduct after school literacy classes. Children will also benefit as their parents learn to read, as will church communities by the increased participation of their newly literate members.

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# Prayer Needs

- Pray for agencies and churches working together on improving literacy in the Solomon Islands.
- Pray for funding for effective implementation of these plans, to help increase functional literacy amongst youths and children. Pray for young people who lack the education and experience to find paid work, a major problem in the Solomon Islands.
- Pray for women for whose lack of literacy increases their vulnerability to gender-based violence and sexual exploitation.