



## Literacy for the Young

### Overview

Each year, the Ceylon Bible Society aims to run literacy classes through the network of churches and Christian organisations in Sri Lanka, especially in rural, slum and undeveloped areas. These classes offer reading, listening and writing skills to non-literate youth and children in Sri Lanka so they can contribute to the development of their communities as well as increase their ability to learn and understand Scriptures.



### The Need

Despite the official literacy rate for Sri Lanka — 92.3% in 2019, in a population of 21.4 million people — there are still a significant number of people in rural and undeveloped areas and among ethnic minority groups who do not have proper access to education. These include underprivileged children and youth. The financial crises of 2022 have increased their needs, with 28% of the population facing food insecurity and the poverty rate doubling in the last year.

Churches have been trying to assist children lacking in basic literacy skills with various literacy programs. Yet these churches have lacked a systematic approach and have asked for Bible Society's assistance.

21.4m

people living in Sri Lanka

1.25m

adult non-literates in Sri Lanka

7.67%

of people in Sri Lanka are Christians

**“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.”**

Matthew 28: 18-20, NIV

# Goals

The goal of this project is to provide reading, listening and writing skills to non-literate youth and children. These include children from underprivileged backgrounds and ethnic minorities ranging from those who are yet to learn to read and write and those struggling to do so.

The classes will be run in the Sinhala and Tamil languages and include reading Scripture through simple Bible stories (both printed and digital), explaining stories from the Bible and Christian books, and covering simple teachings of Jesus, Gospel parables, songs and other audio material.

Plans to implement a syllabus in Sinhala and Tamil are currently in their final stages and being reviewed as the project's main learning materials. There will also be teacher guidebooks and training workshops for the teachers each year.

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# Impact

The Ceylon Bible Society is grateful for the addition of 12 more classes with 229 students and 30 teachers, bringing the total to 20 classes, 350 students, and 50 teachers in 2023. Classes are now held for two days, and educational materials are in the final stages, ready for review. Aside from learning literacy skills, the students have learned good manners, cleanliness and come to an understanding of God's love, while some are introduced to Christianity.

At the end of this project, the Ceylon Bible Society expects to have impacted 1,200 beneficiaries.

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# Testimonies

"This literacy class that the Ceylon Bible Society is conducting is a great blessing to our Church. Most of the children in our church are unable to read and write. From this literacy class, we can find such children in our church. God has given us a blessing to find such students and make their future brighter." Jagath, Pastor of the Gospel Tabernacle Church

"For one year I did not go to school. Because of some sickness I was in hospital for 6 months ... Since I didn't go to school for one year I have forgot all letters. After this class now, I can remember the letters again ... Actually, my education was in a very sad level but now I am very interested in learning and know the importance of education. I thank God and Ceylon Bible Society for giving this opportunity." — Sadunika, Grade 7 student

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# Prayer Needs

- Pray for the ongoing financial support for this project so that it may continue in the future.
- Pray for enough trained people to facilitate the literacy classes.
- Pray for the Bible Society Literacy team as they travel through the country, training and implementing the program.
- Pray for the protection of participants and their families, as the area is often at risk of natural disasters.
- Pray that the literacy students would be empowered as they learn to read the word of God.