



Bible Knowledge in High Schools

Overview

Bible Society Australia is supporting three Anglican Dioceses in Tanzania who are running a program to promote and support the teaching of the Bible Knowledge subject in secondary schools, as well as providing all the teaching materials (free of charge) to schools that are willing to teach the subject.



The Need

Tanzania has an international poverty rate of 44.9% within its 65.6 million population (2022 World Bank data). Government secondary schools (attended by 90% of students) are typically poorly equipped and some lack teachers for all the core subjects. While the majority of Tanzanians identify as Christians (63%), their knowledge of the Bible is shallow because most households do not have a Bible.

Bible Knowledge is an optional subject in the government curriculum for all secondary schools in Tanzania, but unfortunately, very few schools offer this subject often because of the lack of expertise and teaching materials. Most schools and parents cannot afford all textbooks for core subjects let alone for optional subjects. With proper funding and support, this program aims to reach as many students in secondary schools across Tanzania as possible.

63%

of Tanzanians identify as Christians

2.3m

secondary school students in Tanzania

100k

Bible Knowledge students as of 2023
across the 3 dioceses

"All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness,"

2 Timothy 3:16, NIV

Goals

The program will promote the Bible Knowledge subject among local schools. It will enable interested schools to set up the Bible Knowledge course by giving them textbooks, reference Bibles, a teaching guide, sample class tests and answers, and general advice on getting started. The program will also support teachers new to the Bible Knowledge subject with regular visits, advice and further resources if needed. A professional development seminar will be provided mid-year to help improve outcomes and encourage isolated teachers to persevere.

The program already has 130 secondary schools (an increase from 115 in January 2023) teaching the Bible Knowledge subject via three neighbouring Anglican dioceses: 31 in Kagera, 51 in Lweru (46 in January 2023) and 48 in Biharamulo.

By January 2024, the three dioceses aim to increase the number of participating schools by 5 each (15 new schools), meaning that 145 out of the 292 secondary schools within the three diocesan boundaries will be participating. However, there are many more secondary schools to reach, and more work needed to retain the schools already teaching on Bible Knowledge.

Impact

This program has great potential for reaching thousands of youths within the dioceses. It can give students a deep understanding of the Bible, and students tend to grow in faith in God when they grow in their knowledge of the Bible. This program will help to grow the Kingdom of God and promote Christian unity. It will also help ensure that more leaders in Tanzania will have a stronger Christian grounding, having potentially huge long-term benefits for Tanzanian society.

The recent success in the 2022 national exams further highlights the program's positive trajectory with 1,371 students achieving a 68% pass rate in the Bible Knowledge Form 2 exam and 728 students attaining an impressive 95% pass rate in the Bible Knowledge Form 4 exam. These achievements signify significant improvements compared to the previous year and notably surpass those of certain core subjects.

Testimonies

"In studying Bible Knowledge ... I know that the Bible will help me in my life because the Bible tells me how to live in a society different from my friends ... I hope to serve God in my life because since I was young, I really liked to serve God, so I really believe that I will become a pastor because I like to preach the good news to people so that they repent their sins." — Shalom, Form 2 student at Kaigara Secondary Class

Prayer Needs

- Please pray that more schools and teachers would be interested in teaching the Bible Knowledge subject, with the support of the program.
- Pray that students would be eager to learn more about the Bible, to deepen their understanding of God and his love for them, which would in turn impact their lives.