

Literacy for Growth



Project: 103471
Tax-Deductible

Colombia

Overview

Bible Society Australia is supporting the Colombian Bible Society in collaborating with local churches, SIL Global and other ministries to provide literacy training for the Nasa people, addressing their need to learn literacy, especially among women. This project is also meeting the need for Christians in this community who are non-literate to read and understand the Bible which has been newly translated in their language, Nasa Yuwe. This project aims to empower personal growth, community wellbeing, as well as facilitate engagement with God's Word for spiritual development.



The Need

The Nasa people are an Indigenous people group in Colombia numbering around 186,178. According to the latest census, 20% of adults in the Nasa community are non-literate, with the majority being women. This lack of literacy hampers personal and community development. The region's educational system is inadequately funded, with low teacher salaries, and distant rural schools making learning a luxury for many families. Additionally, the community grapples with the repercussions of drug trafficking, which has led to violence, economic instability, and social issues.

Many Nasa individuals express a desire to read the Scriptures for personal growth and evangelism. However, the barriers of illiteracy and socio-economic challenges hinder their ability to read and engage with the Bible.

- **48,635** adults in the Nasa community cannot read or write; **54.3%** of them are women.
- **60%** illiteracy in some Nasa districts

Goals

The Colombian Bible Society aims to empower the Nasa people, improving their overall wellbeing, and enabling them to access the Word of God in their heart language, Nasa Yuwe, thus fostering a more informed and resilient community. From 2025 to 2030, the Colombian Bible Society will build literacy networks across the areas where Nasa communities live (Cauca, Huila, Tolima and Valle del Cauca) with the aim to start 30 literacy groups each year.

In 2026, literacy courses will be delivered to 450 women, men and children through trained local facilitators. Alongside classroom learning, the project will develop Scripture-based resources, including audio-supported Psalms and Proverbs, biblical and cultural stories, a literacy app and a Nasa Yuwe dictionary. Participants will also take part in Bible reading workshops and, on completion of the course, receive a Bible in Nasa Yuwe to support ongoing reading and engagement with God's Word and spiritual growth.

Impact

The Nasa community will be significantly strengthened as barriers of illiteracy are removed. The project encourages students to imagine new futures, including professional careers and further education. Over time, an anticipated 1,800 graduates will help uplift families and neighbourhoods, creating a positive ripple effect. Improved literacy is also expected to reduce violence, strengthen family relationships, and expand employment opportunities, addressing key socioeconomic challenges. The project equips non-literate Christians to read and understand the Bible, deepening faith and encouraging engagement with God's Word.

In late 2025, the first three literacy groups were established after a successful 'Journey of Language and Identity' workshop, which produced culturally relevant materials, including 10,000 transfer booklets. Fifteen Indigenous literacy facilitators were trained, and a five-member Nasa Literacy Committee was formed to strengthen governance and support long-term, locally led sustainability and the integration of literacy with the spiritual and community use of the Bible.

Impact in Numbers

2,000

transfer booklets were developed and produced during the 'Journey of Language and Identity' workshop in 2025

15

Indigenous members became trained literacy facilitators in 2025.

Testimony

"Every time we talk to Nasa leaders, we see the hunger to learn, but also the desire to teach. For many, this will be their first real contact with reading. But the most beautiful thing is that they will be reading the Bible. There is no more transformative experience than seeing someone read for the first time ... and having them do it in their language, reading the words of God." — Hernando*, Project Partner

*Name changed to protect privacy.

How Your Support Helps

\$50

can help contribute to the cost of printing Literacy Textbooks for 2026.

\$500

can contribute to the purchase of computer equipment for three literacy supervisors.

\$1,000

can help with running workshops for the development of literacy materials.

"All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness ..." — **2 Timothy 3:16, NIV**