

Annual Report, 2024



Introduction

"Sing to the Lord, all you inhabitants of the earth! Declare his salvation from day to day; tell of his glory among the nations, of his wonders among all peoples! For the LORD is great and greatly to be praised; He is awesome above all gods" [1 Chronicles 16 v 23-25].

We thank God for all his blessings during 2024. We have witnessed his strength on a daily basis through the activities carried out to advance his work. Thanks to your prayers, we have made significant progress in our literacy and evangelization programs. We have also experienced his protective hand in our travels, and seen his miracles performed in the face of certain challenges.

Background and challenges

The year 2024 was marked by persistent challenges, notably illiteracy among young people, especially those from rural areas and marginalized populations. However, we continued our efforts by developing innovative approaches to strengthen the impact of literacy and evangelism within our communities.

1. Ministry in the Lokpa environment

Organization of literacy classes in Lokpa communities

Literacy campaigns in the Lokpa community have become an essential pillar of our activities. Each year, they grow in scope and are a concrete response to the educational and spiritual needs of this community. The impact of previous campaigns, marked by transformed lives and success stories, encourages us to redouble our efforts to achieve our goals and honor our commitments. These testimonies of transformation, where the Word of God touches hearts through literacy, are the

catalysts that drive us to overcome challenges and aim ever higher.

By the grace of God, with your unfailing support and that of the local churches, we opened 51 literacy classes in 2024, enabling almost a thousand people to learn to read and write. These classes have given many young people and adults the joy of mastering the written word in their mother tongue, Lokpa. The results are more than encouraging: lives transformed and faith enriched through reading the Bible.



However, the challenges remain significant: many people living in the villages still cannot read or write, either in Lokpa or in the official language. Over the past two years, our activities have focused on two priority groups: young people and women. This strategic choice is explained by the particularly positive impact of literacy on these groups.

For young people, literacy opens up new prospects for employability, while for women it represents an opportunity to strengthen their role within their families and communities, while deepening their relationship with Christ.

Literacy is more than just learning to read and write. It is a powerful tool of transformation, capable of strengthening communities and sharing the love of Christ. Every classroom opened, every person trained, is a victory against illiteracy and a step towards a better life, both spiritually and socio-economically.

Pastor training

In March 2024, we organized literacy training for pastors from the Lokpa community in Foyoo. This event brought together 41 pastors and aimed to encourage them to integrate literacy into their pastoral work, particularly in churches where many are illiterate.

Pastors have been trained to use literacy as a tool for evangelization and spiritual empowerment, particularly in the face of sectarian influences and the security threats posed by terrorism and jihadism.

The most memorable moments of the course were the sharing sessions and the testimonials that brought the event to a close. Here's one of the testimonials we've gathered for you.

Testimony: Pastor Abalnorou Bernad



"We've just completed a three-day training course on literacy and evangelism. Today, we are all aware of the jihadist and terrorist threats that are already present in our environment. In addition to this external threat, we have an internal threat characterized by the departure of members who are not very firm in their faith towards churches that promise worldly riches to all who attend them. This state of affairs in our churches is simply due to the fact that many of our members are illiterate.

They don't read the Bible themselves, as they are unable to decipher its contents. Unable to read the Bible for themselves, they are more likely to be influenced by the teachings of the sects proliferating in our villages. The training has been an eye-opener, and I'm committed to instituting literacy classes for both adults and children in my church. I will also consider this literacy activity as part of my pastoral activities."

2. Ministry in the Sola environment

Organization of literacy classes in the Sola communities

Our commitment to the Sola environment is an adventure rich in both positive impacts for the communities we accompany and enriching experiences for our team. Every year, we see how literacy transforms lives, strengthens faith and opens up new perspectives for the beneficiaries of our programs.

During the year, we organized the opening of 9 face-to-face literacy classes in Benin, run by local churches and dedicated volunteers. These classes have enabled many young and adult learners to discover the joy of reading and writing in their mother tongue, Sola.

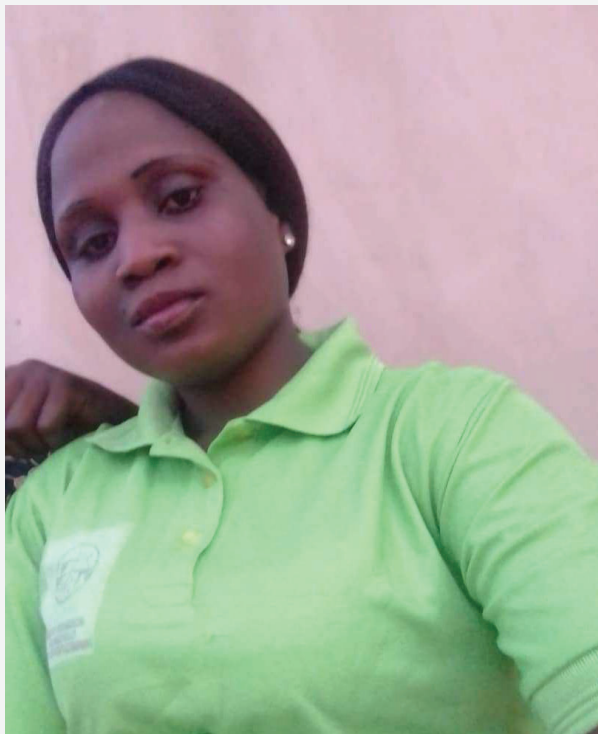
This year marks the third year of our work in the Sola environment, and we

never cease to see God's power at work in our activities. Every class, every course, every interaction is evidence of His grace and support. We see a remarkable dynamism, driven by the faith and determination of learners, teachers and volunteers.

Two years ago, we launched an innovative distance learning project based on the Sola Primers mobile application. This initiative, which seemed ambitious at the outset, has borne encouraging fruit, as it has enabled us to launch online courses for Sola nationals in the diaspora, particularly those living in Nigeria, alongside face-to-face courses. The results are positive, and give us hope for the future of this type of project.

Testimonials

Sobao Pierrette



"My name is Sobao Pierrette and I live in Cotonou. For me, literacy is a real blessing. In addition to the literacy classes I attend at a center, the app has become my personal reading teacher. It's a great joy for me to be able to make progress

every day. If all other ethnic groups could benefit from such an innovation, it would be wonderful. We Solas are fortunate to have access to this life-changing technology. Thank you from the bottom of my heart, and long life to you!"

Chabi Leke Minsi



"My name is Chabi Leke Minsi. I didn't have the chance to go to school, but today, literacy classes are a golden opportunity for me. I'm learning to read and write in my mother tongue, and the Sola application allows me to revise at my own pace after class. The Bible teachings shared in the WhatsApp group also help me enormously in my faith and learning. I encourage all young people, like me, to join these online courses. It's a unique opportunity not to be missed!"

Pastor training

In April 2024, a literacy training course was organized in Anandana for pastors from the Sola community. This workshop, which brought together 45 participants, aimed to equip them to use literacy as a lever for evangelization in a context

marked by animism and security threats.

The most enriching moments of this training were the sharing sessions and testimonials that brought the event to a close. Here are a few testimonials we've gathered for you.

Testimonial 1: Teacher Adamou



"I'm very happy to take part in this training. In the time I've spent here, I've come to understand how literacy is an evangelism tool that facilitates church planting. In our very fetishistic and gospel-hostile environment, literacy will enable us to reach the villages where the divinities that prevent followers from seeing the reality of the gospel sit, as it provides an excellent bridge for witnessing. I urge all pastors and members of the "Yesu Yoriye" association to attach themselves to this tool, as it helps to develop the good spiritual health of the churches."

Testimonial 2: Pastor Assibi Walila

My name is Assibi Walila, and I'm a pastor in Nigeria. Despite the distance, the Sola application enables me to give literacy classes in my village, where we all speak Sola.



This application is a real literacy teacher: it teaches us how to put letters together to form syllables, and then words. As an evangelical pastor, the primer is also of great use to me, as it contains Bible verses that enrich my ministry. I was fortunate enough to take part in the pastors' conference in Benin, and this reinforced my conviction that this work is a blessing for our people. May God protect you and give you the strength to continue working for the development of the Sola. Thank you so much!

3. Ministry in Fulani communities

Organization of literacy classes in the Fulani communities

The year 2024 marks the third consecutive year of our Fulani literacy activities. It has been particularly rich in significant progress and inspiring experiences, testifying to the power of God at work in our programs. Thanks to God and your support, we have exceeded our initial objectives.

Initially, we had planned to open 7 formal literacy classes. However, thanks to divine providence and the commitment of our teams in the field, we were able to open 13. These classes have enabled several young people and adults to learn to read and write in Fulani, their mother tongue, to discover Christ for some,

and to strengthen their relationship with him for others.

One of this year's most striking experiences was the opening of home-based classes for learners of the Muslim faith. These people, often victims of persecution or social pressure when they take an interest in the activities of Christian communities, were unable to attend formal classes. Thanks to this initiative, we were able to reach entire families, share Christ's love with them, and see lives transformed. These home-based classes have been a tremendous bridge for evangelism, enabling Muslim people to discover Jesus and experience His grace.

The results of this campaign are a source of great joy and motivation for us.

Testimonial 1: Aissatou Ibrahima



"I'm the mother of one child, and my father and mother are beef farmers. As the first daughter, I had to help graze the animals. So, as you can see, like many of us here, I didn't go to formal school. So, I couldn't read or write. I seized the opportunity of opening literacy classes in our camp to learn to

read and write in my mother tongue. I'm very happy to be able to read the biblical texts contained in the Primer and the New Testament."

Training Fulani evangelists

A training course for Fulani evangelists took place from April 29 to May 1, 2024 at the Bougou evangelization station. The aim was to encourage evangelists to integrate literacy as an essential activity of their mission, especially in a region where over 90% of the population is illiterate.

Testimonial from evangelist Emmanuel (Bougou)



We've just completed a three-day training course on literacy and evangelism. Today, we are all aware of the threats posed by Islamist terrorism in our environment.

We are doubly concerned, because in addition to this external threat which complicates our mission, we face an internal threat: other people think that we Fulani are involved in terrorist and jihadist actions. This situation in our region is mainly because a large proportion of our population is illiterate, making them more

What's more, the few members of our community present in our churches and evangelization stations do not read the Bible themselves, as they are unable to decipher its contents.

This training has been an eye-opener, and I'm committed to instituting literacy classes for both adults and children in my church. I will also integrate literacy as a component of my evangelism activities."

4. Ministry in Yom

The opening of literacy classes in the Yom language continued in 2024. Demand for Yom Primers has been strong, and several NGOs have used our Primers to open classes. We praise the Lord for this progress and for the positive impact of these classes in Yom communities.

5. Dendi Ministry

In 2024, we continued our efforts to support translation and evangelism work in the Dendi environment, with the aim of planting the first churches for this community. With this in mind, we printed the Primers with biblical content previously developed.

A total of 2,000 copies in two books have been produced and made available. This material represents a major step forward in promoting reading in Dendi and strengthening the spread of the Word of God within this community.



From December 8 to 14, 2024, the Encounter Church team led a dual mission to Benin, combining a medical mission with a training mission. The initiative took place in the villages of Gaounga and Tchatchou, in the Fulani and Lokpa communities, with the aim of meeting the physical, spiritual and educational needs of the local population.

Medical mission

The medical mission was led by a team made up of **Dr Hsiao** and **Dr Lee**, who came especially for the occasion, in collaboration with **Dr Troukou** and **Dr Olude**, local doctors from Benin. Their work was multidimensional and included:

- **Awareness-raising:** Awareness-raising sessions on public health topics such as hygiene, disease prevention and basic care were organized for pastoral families and village populations.
- **Medical consultations:** Free consultations were offered to hundreds of people, enabling them to diagnose and treat a variety of ailments.
- **Care and dressings:** The medical team also provided care and dressings for wounds and chronic sores.
- **Finding solutions for complex cases:** Some more complex medical cases have been identified, and solutions have been sought, notably by referring patients to appropriate healthcare structures.

This medical mission has alleviated a great deal of suffering and strengthened the bonds of trust between the local communities and the Encounter Church teams.



Training mission

Alongside the medical mission, a **training mission** was organized for pastors and pastors' wives from the **Lokpa** and **Fulani** communities.

- **Pastor training: Pastor Michael Lee** led training sessions for local pastors. These covered essential topics such as pastoral leadership, evangelism in difficult contexts, and integrating literacy into ministry. Pastors were equipped to better serve their communities and respond to the spiritual and social challenges they face.
- **Pastors' Wives Conference: Dr. Jennifer Edic** led a special conference dedicated to pastors' wives. This conference covered topics such as the role of women in the church, managing Christian homes, and the importance of education and health for families. These moments of exchange and sharing enabled participants to feel encouraged and equipped to support their husbands in their ministry while strengthening their own faith.





Training for pastors, Conference of pastors' wives and medical mission, Gaounga, December 2024



Fulani Literacy classes for Muslims in Bougou, December 2024



Donation of literacy kits, Bougou, May 2024



Donation of literacy kits, Bethlehem, May 2024

TABLE 1. TRAINING TEACHERS AND EVANGELISTS

Languages	Period	Locations	Number of participants	Comments
Lokpa	March 2024	Fooyoo, Bariénou district	41	Pastors and Evangelists
Sola	April 2024	Anandana, Copargo district	45	Pastors and Evangelists
Fulani	May 2024	Bougou, Bougou district	13	Teachers from evangelization posts.
Total	–	–	99	–

TABLE 2. PARTICIPANTS IN LITERACY CLASSES IN BENIN VILLAGES

Languages	Number of classes	Number of students	Number of people who are literate	Comments
Lokpa	51	1296	1267	–
Sola	09	347	319	These results pertain exclusively to the Benin Sola community. The classes opened by participants from Togo, Nigeria, and Niger, who attended the training session in April 2024, are not included.

Fulani	13	493	465	These are the results of villages that received a grant of teaching materials to boost their literacy and evangelization activities.
TOTAL	73	2136	2051	The evaluation was based on the ability to read and write the texts proposed by the evaluators.

Conclusion and outlook for 2025

The year 2024 has been one of progress and transformation for Literacy Benin. Thanks to your prayers and support, we have been able to touch many lives through our literacy and evangelism programs. However, the task remains immense, and we must continue to strengthen our impact in the face of persistent challenges.

Outlook for 2025:

- 1. Expand literacy classes:** Continue to expand literacy classes in the 5 languages of intervention (Dendi, Fulani, Sola, Lopka, Yom) in rural areas.
- 2. Ongoing training:** Organize regular training courses for pastors and evangelists to strengthen their skills in literacy and evangelism.
- 3. Logistical support:** Acquire a vehicle to facilitate team travel to remote villages.

We are grateful to you, our partners, for your continued support and commitment to our mission. Together, we continue to work for Christ to share his message of hope and love.

May God bless you abundantly!

The Literacy Benin team